

The following is a copy of one of EAB Barnard's excellent pamphlets on places of historic interest in & around Evesham:



**The Story of Dresden House, Evesham
by E.A.B. Barnard, F.S.A. (1914)**

This brick-built mansion was erected early in the reign of William and Mary by one Robert Cookes, who originated from the wealthy Cookes family of Bentley, near Redditch, who held much land in that neighbourhood. It is of interest to note that Sir Thomas Cookes, Bart., of Bentley, a cousin of Robert Cookes, bequeathed a sum of £10,000 to restore Gloucester Hall, Oxford, to the dignity of Worcester College, which it had lost at the Dissolution. The money was granted in 1714 by the trustees appointed under the will of Sir Thomas, he having died in 1701, at which time the baronetcy, of which he was the second holder, became extinct. It had been created in 1664, the first Baronet being Sir William Cookes, father of Sir Thomas and uncle of Robert Cookes. Sir William had also local associations, his wife being Mercy, daughter of Edward Dineley, of Charlton. He was an attorney and the steward of the Rudge estates, which had passed into that family in 1664. His father was Thomas Cookes, of Bidford Grange, gentleman, and his mother Isabel, daughter of Edmund Jones, of Sambourne, gentleman.

Presumably, the building of his house was completed in the year 1692, for that date still figures upon a fine leaden spout-head upon the south side of the house, together with the initials "R.C." and the arms of Cookes, viz.: Argent, two chevronels, between six martlets gules three, two, one. In 1696 he was made a member of the Evesham Corporation, and on October 5, 1697, he was elected Mayor of the Borough, which office he again filled in 1731. He died full of years in 1747, and his gravestone was in existence in All Saints Church when May published the second edition of his *History of Evesham* in 1845. It, with many others, has since disappeared, probably at the restoration of the church in 1876. The inscription was as follows:

Here lies the body of Robert Cookies, Esq., descended from the ancient family of the Cookes of Tarbick [Tardebigge] in this county. He was twice mayor, and more than 46 years justice of the peace in this corporation. He died January 29th, 1747, aged 83.

Another inscription, now also gone, commemorated his second wife, who was many years his junior. She was born Jane Feild, the daughter of Nicholas Feild, one of a prominent family in Evesham at that time. She predeceased her husband in 1741, at the age of 38. Doubtless Robert Cookes resided at his new mansion during all the period from 1694 until his death in 1747, and here would have died his two wives and, apparently, a little daughter named Jane.

The property now passed into the possession of another daughter, Elizabeth, but whether by his first or second wife is uncertain. Elizabeth Cookes had married William Baylies, who was born in 1724 and who assisted his father in the profession of an apothecary in the town. The monuments to the memory of the father and mother of Dr. Baylies are still to be seen in All Saints Church. They are thus inscribed:

(Arms: Sable eleven mullets, or; quartering, argent upon a chief of the first three battle-axes of the second in pale).

Near this place Lies inter'd the Body of William Baylies, Gent. He was born Jan. 11th, 1683, Dy'd Feb 14, 1760. Aged 77. Of whom it may be truly said that He was a Stranger to the Arts of Fraud both in Principle and Practice; a Strict Observer of Justice and Fidelity, in his private and publick Connections; and a usefull Member of Society, By constantly preserving a due Regard to those virtues which constitute an honest Man.

Near this place is deposited the Body of Ann Baylies, daughter of the Rev. Mr. Theo. Fletcher, Rector of Godington in ye County of Oxon, late wife of William Baylies, Gent. of this town, Apothecary, who finish'd her Course the 23 day of February 1732, in ye 44th year of her age and 15th year of her marriage. She was of an engaging disposition, genteel Behaviour, generous Temper, prudent Conduct, and exemplary Piety; adorn' d with every female Vertue; which attracted ye highest Esteem of her Friends, the sincerest love of her Relations, and ye most endearing affection of her Husband, who erected this Monument of her Merit and his irreparable Loss.

(Arms: Baylies impaling Fletcher)

William Baylies the younger went to Aberdeen soon after his marriage, and continued his studies there until he took the degree of M.D. on 18 Dec, 1748. He and his wife were not destined to live long together in the mansion, for Elizabeth Baylies died seven years after her father, upon April 28th, 1754, at the early age of 27, and her thriftless, but presumably amiable, husband, erected what May rightly describes as "a costly monument" to her memory. It still maintains its place upon the west wall of the Derby Chapel in All Saints Church, the least seen of any of the old monuments in the church, and by far the largest and most handsome of them. It must have cost Dr. Baylies a good round sum of money, and, for its period, it is well designed and executed. There is no sculptor's name upon it, and one cannot help wishing that Dr. Baylies had left there for posterity a replica of his wife's face, as did Edward Bulstrode when erecting a monument to the memory of his wife in another part of the church some forty years before. The monument is adorned with the arms of Baylies – with, over all, in an escutcheon of pretence, Cookes as an heiress. The inscription upon it runs thus:

Near this place, within her family vault, lies the body of Elizabeth Baylies, wife of William Baylies, of this town, M.D., and daughter of Robert Cookes, esq., nephew to Sir

William Cookes of this county, bart. She was born April 6th, 1727, and died April 28th, 1754, aged 27.

“Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere, Manes.”

Cull round her tomb each object of desire,
Each purer frame, informed with purer fire.

Bid her be all that cheers or softens life,
The tender sister, daughter, friend, and wife,
Bid her be all that makes mankind adore,
Then view this marble and be vain no more.

Their only child, an infant boy, had died, in 1749, and May also noted a now vanished inscription to his memory.

After his wife's decease William Baylies, who does not seem to have married again, remained for a little time in Evesham, and it may have been during this period of his life that, having inherited his wife's mansion and other considerable property in the borough, he commenced that extravagant and wild period of his life which is attributed to him, and which he seems to have abandoned when he settled as a physician at Dresden some ten years afterwards.

Probably Evesham was not large enough to suit the ambitious desires of Baylies, and it seems that about the year 1756 he was practising in Bath, where he stayed for several years. On 7 August, 1757, he was elected a Fellow of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, and in that year he published *Reflections on the Use and Abuse of Bath Waters*, which involved him in a dispute with Dr. Lucas and Dr. Oliver, the two chief doctors in that city.

He issued a pamphlet concerning this quarrel: “A Narrative of facts demonstrating the existence and course of a physical confederacy, made known in the printed letters of Dr. Lucas and Dr. Oliver, 1757.” But the controversy ruined Baylies's practice, and he returned to Evesham. In the year 1761 political excitement of one sort and another induced Dr. Baylies and his brother-in-law, Thomas Cookes, who had succeeded his father as an attorney in the town, to present themselves as Parliamentary candidates in the Tory interest against the two John Rushouts, father and son, who were returned by the Whigs. Dr. Baylies petitioned against the return, alleging that Sir John Rushout and himself had received the majority of voices, and ought to have been returned. Probably the doctor threw away large sums of money over this affair, and finally the petition was withdrawn late in the year.

The next year Dr. Baylies was made one of the Capital Burgesses of the Borough, and about this period of its history the Cookes' mansion no doubt witnessed some stirring scenes. Dr. Baylies had inherited from his wife other important property in the town, which included the premises at 12, Bridge-street, known until recently as Tower House; the former tanyard and buildings near the Bridge, and a wharf and premises opposite on the other side of the river. His affairs becoming more and more involved, as time went on Dr. Baylies raised considerable sums of money upon his property, “partly by mortgage and partly by illegal means,” says May.

Soon after his electioneering experiences Baylies again left Evesham, this time finally, and removed to London, where, on 8 November, 1764, he was appointed physician to the Middlesex Hospital. He became licentiate of the College of Physicians in London on 30 September, 1765, and made himself notorious by the magnificent entertainments he repeatedly gave in Great George-street, Westminster. The inevitable crash came at last,

and, pressed by scores of creditors, he was forced to leave the country. His real property was then offered for sale under a conveyance in trust, obtained from him while at Bristol, whither he had gone presumably to get his passage abroad. The purchasers' deposits were received, and immediate possession was given, but from the involved condition of the estate the title could not be completed.

The purchasers thus retained possession of the deposits only, excepting the property in Bengeworth, the title to which was completed by the determination of the holder, who followed Dr. Baylies into France and forced him to sign the necessary documents. After the exciting life which he had been leading for many years Dr. Baylies settled as a physician at Dresden, where his skill induced Frederick the Great to send for him in 1774 to reside in Berlin. For this statement there is the authority of the Earl of Malmesbury, who in vol.I p.116 of his *Correspondence*, writes:

"The dread he (Frederick the Great) has that any about him should perceive him breaking, overcomes every other consideration, and he increases his illness by the pains he takes to conceal it. He has, under pretence of introducing inoculation, invited Baylies, an English physician settled at Dresden, to reside for some time at Berlin. He is expected tomorrow (Nov. 13 1774) and I have the best reason for believing that at this present moment his Prussian Majesty is consulting him at Potsdam in the most private manner."

Presumably the attendance and advice of Dr. Baylies was very beneficial to his Royal patient, for Frederick the Great did not die until 1786, when he had reached the age of 74. It is said that at an early interview with Dr. Baylies the Emperor remarked to him that to have acquired such skill he must have killed a great many people, and that the doctor replied, "Not as many as your Majesty."

Baylies died at Berlin on 2 March, 1789, and left his library to the King of Prussia. A portrait, now become very rare, of him, by H. Schmid, engraved by D. Berger was published at Berlin in 1783 beneath which he is styled – the original. is in French – as "Privy Councillor and Physician to the King of Prussia, and Member of the Royal Colleges of London and Edinburgh." I have failed to trace this portrait, however, either in Berlin, in Dresden, or at the British Museum. A copy of it was exhibited by the late Mr. George Lavender Eades at the Worcestershire Exhibition of 1882, but this is also untraceable now.

Baylies was the author of the following works (besides those already mentioned):

1. "Remarks on Perry's Analysis of the Stratford Mineral Water"; Stratford-on-Avon, 1745.
2. "A History of the General Hospital at Bath"; London, 1758.
3. "Facts and Observations relative to Inoculation at Berlin"; Edinburgh, 1781, of which a French translation – there is a copy in the British Museum – was previously issued at Dresden in 1776.

When Dr. Baylies left this country the mansion passed into the ownership of the Lavender family, of the firm of Messrs. Phillips, Lavender, and Byrch, attorneys, and it is stated that the actual sum paid for the property at that time was £40 – some even say £30. It is also said that Mr. Lavender followed Dr. Baylies to Dresden in order to obtain the title of the property.

In process of time the mansion became the premises of the Old Bank, as it was styled, the partners in which were Messrs. Oldaker, Day, and Murrell, and afterwards Messrs.

Oldaker, Day, Lavender, and Murrell. Joseph Wesley Lavender, who followed his father in possession of the house, was manager of the Bank and also practised there as a solicitor. He married Frances Rodd, daughter of Richard Rodd, Mercer and Draper, of Evesham, and there were three daughters by the marriage – viz, Frances Ann, of whom more later; Ann Rodd Lavender, who married George Eades, gentleman; and Mary Louisa Harriet Lavender, afterwards Mrs. Moore.

Joseph Wesley Lavender was a Captain in the Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry from 1803 – 1807. A man of fine physique, he is said to have measured three feet across his shoulders. Some of his Memorandum Books, covering the period from 1799-1819, are still in existence in Evesham and are of much interest. Articles concerning them will be found in *Evesham and Four Shires Notes and Queries* (Vol.I. pp.114-124), and they throw much light on the life as led in Evesham and in the Cookes mansion at that period.

Of the other partners, Charles Oldaker was a member of the firm of Charles and George Oldaker, Mealmen, Fladbury, and George Dale was a Bengeworth coal merchant. Of him it is written*:

“When a valuation was made for the commutation of the tithes of South Littleton, Shinnell was owned by George Day... He was an enterprising man, and in early life had been dependent on manual labour, but having become ostler at the Crown Hotel, Evesham, in the coaching and posting days, when an ostler was a much more important personage than at present, he contracted for the supply of horse corn for that establishment. Having become a good market man, he launched out, and with the help of some persons of substance in the neighbourhood, made a considerable and profitable business in the corn trade. His rise was rapid, but he was given to speculation, and eventually declined even faster than he rose. Meanwhile he farmed largely, and established the brickyards at the upper end of Bengeworth, and built the house there now called Prospect House, but originally the One Elm.”

Benjamin Murrell, the fourth partner, is said to have survived the failure for many years. He was 58 years old in 1840 when he deposed in a Chancery Suit pending at that time that he was very intimate with Joseph Wesley Lavender and was for many years in co-partnership with the said Lavender as a Banker in Evesham aforesaid... from 1810 to the time of Lavender's decease (in 1829). Benjamin Murrell lived to be a very old man, and it is said that he was teaching arithmetic at Dresden House School in 1868, in which case he would have been 86 years old, and one can well believe that he had gone a little beyond his work.

In 1840 Benjamin Murrell was living next door to Dresden House, at 27 High-street, and his neighbours on the other side were the “Mesdames Slater and Weale. Ladies' School.” Before 1765 these two houses, Nos. 27 and 28, High-street, had constituted an inn known as the Three Tuns, but just prior to that year they had become two tenements in the possession of Thomas Dodwell, maltster, and John Smith, hosier, and were, so runs an old deed, the property of “William Baylies, late of the Borough of Evesham but now of the parish of St. George in the Fields, co. Middlesex, Doctor of Physic.” These houses apparently came into the possession of the Lavender family when they went to live in the Cookes mansion. After J.W. Lavender's death his estate went into Chancery, and it was not until May 13, 1840, that these houses, together with other eight lots of property in the borough, were put up for auction at the Crown Hotel here, “with the approbation,” so runs the sale bill, “of Sir William Horne Knt, one of the Masters of the Court of Chancery by order of the said Court.”

When, later on, the Bank failed, it is related that a violent end overtook all the partners. In his paper on the Evesham family of Stratton, which appeared in No. 374 of this column, Mr. G.M. Stratton writes:

"John Stratton began to borrow money from a private Banking Company which had an office in High-street, Evesham... He kept on borrowing money until they would let him have more... In the meantime the Bank directors had criminally committed themselves so much that they were all afraid of being arrested, and all came to a violent end. One of them, to prevent being arrested, leaped out of an upper window of the Bank Building (Dresden House), and died from his injuries. Two others committed suicide, the one by cutting his throat; the other by hanging; and the fourth, in returning home to Badsey (? Fladbury), was thrown out of his carriage and died from his injuries."

However, we have just seen that Murrell lived to a good old age, and that George Day was alive in 1838.

I have been fortunate in becoming possessed, by the kindness of Mrs. Cooper, of two interesting relics of the Old Bank. One of these is the large brass plate which was affixed to the front door, and upon which this inscription is made:

OLD BANK Open from 9 till 3.

The other relic is a bank stamp, the die of which reads: "Re-issued by Oldaker, Day, and Murrell. " It was evidently used for stamping bank notes. I am told on excellent authority that the Old Bank also issued its own notes, some of which were still in existence a few years ago. Unfortunately they were destroyed not so long ago, together with many other documentary evidences concerning the Bank. A search amongst all available sources has up to the present proved unproductive of the actual date when the Old Bank commenced business; of any details of its career; or of the facts concerning its suspension of payments, and the consequent results. Enquiries made of members of old Evesham families have also failed to elicit very much information concerning the partners in the Bank.

The Bank could not, all things considered, have been a very large concern, and I can find no reference to it in the files of the Worcester papers in the year 1829, at which time it seems to have suspended payment, nor does May make any mention of it in either edition of his *History*, the first of which he published only five years, later**. However, the "Worcester Journal" of Wednesday, July 1, 1829, and the "Worcester Herald" of July 3, 1829, contains this notice in their columns:

"On Sunday night, J.W. Lavender, Esq., of Evesham, age 49. Sincerely regretted."

This simple announcement is fraught with sad interest, for many people have heard of the tragic end of the then owner of the Mansion. Either on account of a condition brought about by an excessive use of alcoholic stimulants, or, as others say, in order to escape arrest for certain alleged defalcations, Lavender managed to elude the vigilance of those who were watching him in his bedroom, and reaching the window threw himself some 15 or 20 feet down upon the stone courtyard, and added a tragedy to the pages of the Mansion's varied history, the bedroom and the window remain with little architectural alteration since that summer Sunday night in 1829, and from the bedside the elaborate system of bolts and bars can still be worked which gave admission to the Bank parlour beneath, only at the will of those who were using the bedroom. The parlour is the small room behind the larger room on the left hand side of the entrance hall, and upon the door of this larger room can still be read the word "Bank." The bolts and bars of the shutters of the parlour are still there, very strong and serviceable.

In a room approached. through the Billiard Room in the north wing, which wing is said to have formed at one time the Banqueting Hall, but is now divided into rooms upstairs and downstairs, a Savings Bank was carried on later in the history of the house, the late Alfred Huband. The doors of these rooms are massive, and they open on pivots in lieu of hinge. The mantelpieces here, and elsewhere in the house, are in imitation of the Adam's style, and are of plaster moulded upon oak. Nearly all the rooms are panelled. The domestic offices are naturally somewhat extensive, and a large gun rack is a conspicuous object over the wide kitchen fireplace.

The cellars and vaults differ from many of the Evesham cellars, in that they contain no carved stone at all. They, too, are extensive, and contain many wine bins. One of these is at the bottom of the staircase outside the cellars, and in it was placed, usually by the master of the house, the wine for the day's supply, for which the butler was responsible. Upon one of the bins in an inner cellar is a card with the inscription, "28 Sep., 1817 (Laugher)"; and upon another, "1820. (Morris) . Forged Sack Bin." Other bins are inscribed "Sherry," Port," and "Fine Clout," this last being, one may suppose, claret. I believe that the names in brackets refer to the wine merchants who made the supplies, but I have no direct evidence that such is the case. Both names were not uncommon here at that time. Racks for the accommodation of casks of beer were by no means forgotten in the cellars, and one of the outdoor buildings connected with the Mansion was used as a brewhouse for many years, the furnace still being in evidence there.

It is of interest to note that when Mrs. Cooper was first of all associated in the management of the Young Ladies' School which, as most people know, was conducted at the Mansion for many years, each pupil was allowed a glass of beer at dinner, and half a glass at supper; each servant was allowed a pint a day, and the cook three pints a day; whilst the man of all work received two quarts per day, and the consumption of beer per week was 18 gallons. It was at the time that the Mansion became a school that the appellation of Dresden House was given to it, of course, on account of its connection with Dr. Baylies. This was some fifty years ago.

After the death of Mr. Lavender in 1829, I believe that his widow, Mrs. Frances Lavender, continued there for some years. In 1834 a Mr. Robert Cassels is described as living at Evesham Old Bank. Some twenty years later the premises were tenanted by a Mr. Beasley, who carried on the business of ironmonger there, and there are still people in Evesham who can remember being pots and kettles and other such ware hanging from the handsome iron railings before the house and arranged up the sides of the steps leading to the front door and depending from the fine wrought iron supports of the projecting canopy.

At some time about this period of its history the house is said to have been let to several Evesham gardeners as a store house for fruit and vegetables.

Mr. Beasley vacated the premises after a tenancy of four years, and Mrs. Lavender returned to her old home, and lived there for many years, adding to her income receiving four ladies as paying guests at £100 per annum each. She died there on March 25, 1876, at the age of 93, after a widowhood of forty-seven years. Her daughter, Mrs. Frances Farrell, widow of John Farrell, New Brentford, surgeon, had lived with her for some years, and predeceased her in 1874. On the death of Mrs. Lavender, the property passed to her son-in-law, George Lavender Eades, who on October 7, 1876, conveyed it to the Misses Eliza Cooper and Harriette Codrington Watts, who continued the Ladies' School which

had been opened upon the premises about 1860 by Mrs. Frances Farrell and Mrs. Moore, daughters of Mrs. Lavender.

In 1887 the property passed to Mr. Joseph Cooper, who had recently married the above-named Miss Watts, and became the private residence of Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, a portion being still reserved, as it is to this day, for the purposes of a school. Mr. Cooper died on November 6, 1913, leaving the property to his wife, and. it was sold by her instructions upon June 22 last, the property passing to Mr. S.W. Smedley for the sum of £3,310.

The ascent of the house is made by a handsome series of three flights of oak stairs, consisting of sixty-eight low treads. The windows of the staircase are curiously designed to avoid the payment of the old Window Tax as much as possible. On the first floor is the large drawing room, now divided into two rooms, one of which has never been papered or painted since 1856, and yet the colours have scarcely faded at all, and the whole is in excellent condition. The attics are curious, and the wide spout which carries the rain through the interior of one of them is probably unique in Evesham.

The view from the roof is very extensive, and must have been particularly attractive in the old days before the thick red line of brick began to make itself so apparent upon the outer limits of the town, At that time very few of the buildings were visible from the garden, from the bottom of which was the fine vista of Clark's Hill. This view was obtained from an opening in the enclosing wall, and was focussed by the two slender pillars, formerly connected by a railing, which still stand to this day, melancholy memorials of the joyous days in the eventful past, when ladies and gallants would wander down the paths and gaze across the river up to the terraced and wooded hill beyond. Now all is changed, and a modern street replaces that foreground of green and fertile meadows. The garden is approached by steps at the end of the ample stone-paved courtyard, where there is a tree in which for many years a much-used bell was hung, upon which was the inscription:

Haste away
Without delay.
1748.

Recently the bell has been removed and sold, and is now, I believe, in daily use at the Manor House, Badsey. Passing through the little tunnel constructed beneath Brick-kiln-street, formerly called Brittain-street, then up another flight of steps, and one is in what is even now a fair and delectable spot. But time has dealt harshly with its principal features in memory of which the very trees and flowers would seem to droop. The garden is lately bereft of the tall stone sundial which stood in the central alley surmounted by a small iron weathercock, above which was a pennon bearing the initials of "R.C.," Robert Cookes, and the date "1720." The sundial, I am informed, is now at Cambridge.

Across the lawn a little distance away, still stands the imposing summer house, a wooden tower known for years and years as "The Temple." It consists of an arbour built of brick, upon which are erected a first and second floor consisting each of a single room well furnished with windows from which fine views of the vicinity can be obtained. These floors are approached by an external staircase at the back. The lower room, until recently, was completely panelled with woodcarving which, tradition says, came from Evesham Abbey. May thus describes it:

"Among the fragments of the Monastery, which we are bound to notice, is some delicately carved panelling of oak, preserved in a summer-house upon premises of the late Mr.

Lavender in High-street... The panels are oblong, and are seven in member, separated by mullions which include small effigies carrying shields, standing under spiral canopies. Tracery in unison with that employed in windows of the Tudor style occurs in the head of each panel, and also in the sur-base. In the latter situation the central panel presents within an enriched quatrefoil the addition of a mitre and crosier in pale, with the monogram C.L., which at once identifies it with the additions made in Abbot Lichfield's time to his church and monastery. The panels would seem to have formed part of a wainscot within one of the private apartments of the Abbot."

It is interesting to note that May employed one of these designs for a frame to the gilt title which he had stamped upon the back of the 2nd edition of his *History* published in 1845. The ceiling of this room, which has now been sold, was cleverly moulded in paper-pulp, and consisted of lines of plain quatrefoils, between which were placed, alternately, a sunflower and a daisy. The upper room also has a wainscot of carved wood of rather curious design, a design I have also encountered in small portions of carved wood which have been found of recent years during the demolition of old houses in the town. Whether or not this panelling really came from the Abbey – some say from the church of St. Laurence when it fell into ruins in the middle of the 18th century – must, I suppose, remain an open question

It seems strange that, apart from the Abbot's chair, no vestige of the large quantity of valuable woodwork which the Abbey and Convent must have contained should have been known to exist at any time since the Dissolution, with the exception of these comparatively insignificant remains. It has been suggested that this woodwork was being carved locally for Abbot Lichfield, when the crash came, the severity of which, as is very evident, he had never anticipated, and it may have been sold as an interesting relic of abbatial times, although it had never ornamented any part of the Convent. Even then this frail work had too eke out a very precious existence – such were the times – of at least 150 years before it came into the possession of the Cookes family. It may be said that the *Victoria. Counties History of Worcestershire* is sceptical, and attributes it to the 17th Century, one authority being convinced that it is of a period contemporary with the building of the "Temple." May, who is inclined to attribute its style to the Tudor Period, evidently failed to note the varieties it contains, varieties in keeping with the complex style of the building itself.

On the other hand, Dr. Richard Pococke, who visited Evesham on May 26, 1757, writes*** that he:

"went to see Dr. Baillie's garden, which is prettily laid out in wilderness, etc., with a hermitage... He has also made a turret two stories high with stairs round the outside of it, and the lower room is adorned with several carvings in wood taken from the church."

Of course, there is no evidence that Dr. Pococke actually saw the carvings himself, but it is scarcely likely that anyone would tell him that they were antique if they had only recently been made. "The Temple" is now bereft of all the carving. In the early part of this year it, and the familiar mace-like ornament which crowned the roof, passed into the possession of a London firm of antique dealers, and, together with these relics, went, for an inclusive sum of £250, the great Jacobean mantel of elaborately carved oak which formed the front of the summer arbour facing "The Temple" on the other side of the lawn. It was found to be in a somewhat decayed condition when it was removed. The mantel bore the arms of the Borough in the central panel – without the bordure bezanty — and on the dwarf pilasters on either side of the panel was an effigy which no doubt depicted

King James I., whilst in the outside pilasters on either side was a younger and beardless face, that of Henry, Prince of Wales, the royal patron of Evesham, at whose instance our Charter of Incorporation of 1604 was obtained.

Tradition has it that this mantel was formerly in the Town Hall, and moved from thence in the Eighteenth Century. This is by no means impossible. The mantel may have stood over a fireplace at the south end of the large room, and may have been placed there soon after 1604 – that is to say, some five and twenty years after the Hall had been erected. Here it may have stayed until 1728, at which time Sir John Rushout and Mr. John Rudge paid for the expense of adding the Council Chamber, and the removal of the fireplace and the mantel would be rendered necessary perhaps. Mr. Cookes was at that period beautifying his garden, and it seems quite likely that he may have purchased the mantel and erected it there to form an arbour in which to place the famous Abbot's chair which, after many vicissitudes, is now safely housed at Abbey Manor. The chair had been a fixture in the Almonry, which became an inn some time after the Dissolution, and in 1664 it passed, with the Abbey site, into the possession of Mr. Edward Rudge.

According to May, Mr. Cookes, as steward of Mr. Rudge's estate, removed the chair to his own residence, and there it remained until the sale of Dr. Baylies's effects consequent upon his flight to the continent. However, Dr. Pococke (op. cit.) says: "In one part (of the garden) is the Abbot's chair... which was kept in an ale-house until the Doctor (Baylies) rescued it."

Another feature of the garden was the stone labyrinth, which has long since disappeared, many of the stones now forming the pavement of the paths. In the rockery is a carved corbel, which doubtless came from the Abbey.

In conclusion I gratefully thank Mrs. Cooper and Mr. Harry J. Smith for their kind help in the compilation of this article without which it would have lacked much interesting information.

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Under the 1995 regulations copyright extends retrospectively 70 years from the end of the calendar year of the author's death. EAB Barnard died in 1953 (after 1925), meaning the copyright is held by the estate of EAB Barnard until 2023. We have not been able to find a contact for Mr Barnard's estate – if you know please get in [contact](#) (and thank you!) – but we feel confident he would have approved his important local history work being shared with a wider audience.

Notes

* Contributions towards a *History of the Parishes of North and South Littleton*. R. F. Tomes, "Evesham Standard," 1891.

** Since these lines were written I have seen a document date 18 December, 1840, in which it is stated that the proportional sum due from the estate of J.W. Lavender, when the bank failed, was £2,058 1s. It is clear, therefore, that the failure was comparatively upon quite a small scale. The same document also refers to "J. Spurrell, one of the cashiers of the said Bank."

*** *The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke*. The Camden Society, 1889.