

OXFORDSHIRE FROM THE AIR

Jason Hawkes

While in many people's minds it will be the City of Oxford that dominates this county, Oxfordshire itself contains many landscape and historic gems that are often missed from the usual guidebooks. In this book of aerial photographs the concentration has been as much on the lesser known places as on the major tourist sites.

Although not a large county, it is ranked 22nd in size with an area of around 1000 square miles (c.2600km), and with a population of 635 000, because of its historic connections, especially through the university, it remains one of the most visited of all English counties. Through the landscape winds the River Thames, bordered by ancient towns and quintessentially English villages. The vast stately home of Blenheim Palace (birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill) contrasts with the simply beauty of the prehistoric White Horse carved into the chalk hillside at Uffington.

The fascinating aerial photographs in this book are selected to provide the reader with an overview of a variety of landscapes and settlements, with many historic sites included. The principal attraction of aerial photographs is that they are literally a bird's-eye view, allowing us to look down on the landscape from a perspective that we never normally see. Such pictures reveal to us things that are normally hidden from view, and often surprise us when we find that what we had imagined the layout of the land to be is in reality quite different. The best practitioners of this genre of photography also strive to capture an aesthetic in the images they take, and these pictures, sometimes quite abstract in appearance, are often strikingly beautiful in their own right.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Hawkes is one of the country's best-known photographers specialising in aerial photography. From his base near London he travels worldwide to produce images for books, advertising and design. Since 1991 he has provided photographs for major international companies including Nike, HSBC, Ford, Rolex, Toyota and BP. The images in this book and the sister publications in the series were specially commissioned by Halsgrove.

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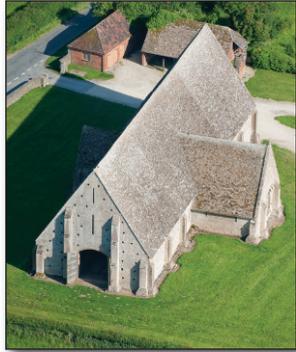
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The vast thirteenth century Tith Barn at Great Coxwell is now in the care of the National Trust.



A panoramic view over Cowley, one of the major suburbs of Oxford.



Right: The magnificent Blenheim Palace is a unique example of English Baroque architecture.



Example of a double-page spread.



Left: East Oxford started to become a suburb of Oxford City in the nineteenth century. Today the historic Churchyard of St. Mary and John provides an important green public space in an urban setting with its well-kept grounds.

Below: Magdalen College, Oxford, was founded in 1480 as Magdalen Hall. It is one of the constituent colleges of the University of Oxford and is regarded by many as the most beautiful.



Raddliffe Square sits in the centre of the city of Oxford surrounded by historic Oxford University college buildings.



Henley-on-Thames during the construction of the marquee for Henley Regatta, held annually in early July. It was first held in 1839 and since has become the world's premier event of its kind.