

# THE RIVER VER

## A MEANDER THROUGH TIME

Jacqui Banfield-Taylor

Based on the original notes of Ted Banfield

This first major and comprehensive work on the River Ver reveals a fascinating story from source to confluence and prehistory to the twenty-first century of a chalk stream that has shaped not only the local landscape but the lives of its people past and present.

Chalk streams are scarce and fragile ecosystems: of the 163 chalk streams in the world, all but two are in the UK. From its source at Kensworth Lynch in the foothills of the Chilterns, the River Ver when in full flow meanders south along its valley for around 24km through Markyate, Flamstead, Redbourn, St Albans, Park Street and Bricket Wood where it meets the River Colne.

With a foreword by the renowned television presenter and wildlife photographer Chris Packham, the book tells of the Ver's long and interesting history, including geology and archaeology, milling and watercress growing and problems with abstraction, along with abstraction and flow charts and comprehensive records and details of a selection of local flora and fauna. Included is a fascinating list of bygone words, many local, connected with rivers and water. There are wonderful personal memories and experiences sprinkled throughout the book of people who have lived, worked and played on or near the river, helping to bring the past to us here in the present, all complemented with over 300 photographs, images and maps, many never before seen in public, and some going back more than 250 years.

The River Ver: A Meander Through Time makes it clear how valuable and important our chalk streams are and how vital it is to raise their profile and that of the rich diversity of wildlife they support. This beautifully written and illustrated book will encourage readers to take an interest in exploring and caring for this superlative resource and its surroundings and help to give the River Ver its rightful importance now and for future generations.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacqui Banfield-Taylor has spent most of her life living near the River Ver in St Albans where she was born and raised until moving to Bricket Wood with her husband Bruce – a Park Street boy!

The daughter of the local author and historian Ted Banfield, she was bought up to appreciate, care for and love the countryside, its flora and fauna and its waterways especially the River Ver where many happy hours have been spent with her family, friends and dogs!

She was a contributor to her father's books including writing, photography and research and writes regularly for the local village magazine.

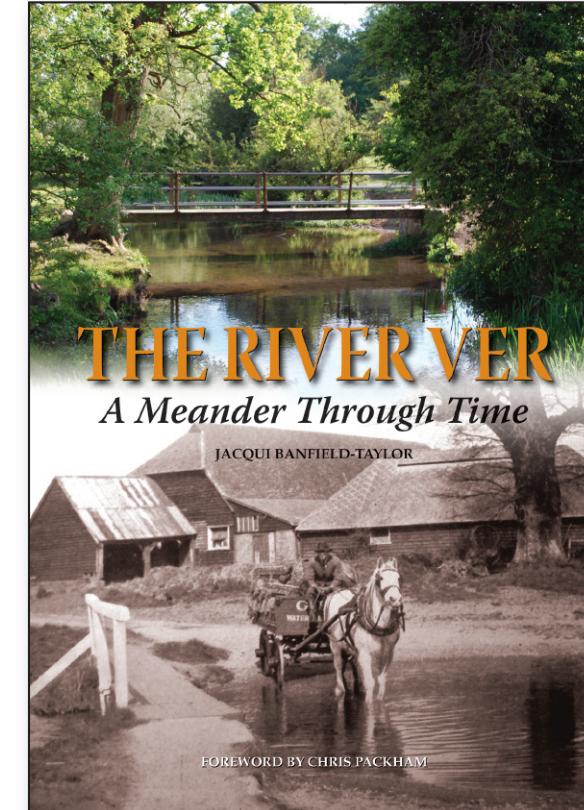
Her interests are many and varied and include walking, painting, reading, writing, theatre, photography – she has had work published in national magazines – early British and domestic history, local history and visiting, photographing and researching old churches and ruins.

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Above: Family  
tiddling at  
Redbournbury 1930s.

*Left: Mr Quick who worked the watercress beds from Harpenden Lane northwards to the Osiers.*

*Right: The adorable water vole.*



A photograph of a river flowing through a grassy landscape under a blue sky with white clouds. The river flows from the bottom right towards the top left, surrounded by green grass and small yellow flowers. In the background, there are fields and trees under a bright sky.

The river after passing under Watling Street 2009.



Cress packers, the ford at Waterend Lane 1870.