

Uppingham in the 18th Century

by

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Uppingham in the 18th Century

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Introduction

At the commencement of the 18th Century Uppingham was a thriving market town servicing a rural hinterland. Rural life had remained virtually unchanged since medieval times with the system of common fields, tenant farmers and for the most part absentee landlords. The enclosure of common grazing and arable land under the 1770 and 1799 Enclosure Acts changed the balance in favour of the larger landowners as small tenant farmers were at a disadvantage when they could not augment their own land resources by access to the common field system and the messuage, a farmhouse with land annexed, often became unviable. The landscape of Uppingham which had incorporated farms within the Town began to change and there is evidence in new building of some prosperity, no doubt a reflection of the buoyant service industry and the rise of the middleman in that period. There was no industrialisation in the immediate locality but inevitably workers must have been lured towards the big cities and the factories as agricultural practices changed. Less farm labourers were needed for animal husbandry and the threat of the workhouse loomed large. Change though was inevitable as farming yields had to be maximised to feed the cities and landowners could see the potential for enhanced profits. It should be noted though that the agricultural revolution in terms of improved farming practices started much earlier than the 18th Century but the institutional changes which created larger farms and thus more income for the landlords had its roots in the period under review. (Williamson 2002). The road system would ensure that the bustle of commerce would continue but it was in this century that Oakham took over as the County Town. The new canal system being established throughout the country which could move freight more quickly and to which Oakham became linked in 1802 was in prospect in 1785 but this does not explain the shift in importance much earlier in the Century. The changes in the Legal System as it became more centralised and Oakham Castle a more attractive venue may be relevant. In 1694 John Sellar the mapmaker cited Oakham as the County Town but in 1717 William Redmayne, on a set of playing cards produced originally in 1676 but still on sale in 1754, cited Uppingham as its 'chiefe' Town so in perception it seems they were running about equal in importance during the first part of the Eighteenth Century but as the Century progressed Uppingham was falling into second place. (Deadman and Brooks 49 and 42). A study of *Magna Britannia et Hibernia 1720 – 1730* found that the Rev. Cox stated '...Uppingham is a market town and the best in the County' (p.513) but later on 'tho' now the second in the County' (p.530). This would seem to bear out the premise that Uppingham had been the more important Town and give an end date of 1730 when the balance shifted.

Farming

The Midlands had, by and large, a pattern of townships with large areas of common pasture land and open arable fields so whereas in other regions of the country in previous centuries a bundling up of strips for inclosure happened piecemeal, inclosure, as a result of the existence of their larger fields came somewhat late to the Midlands. These regions were called Champion Regions dominated by nucleated villages, and extensive and usually tightly regulated open heavy clay soil fields running to the edge of town. There was little waste or common grazing land. (Williamson 2002). Uppingham could be so described. The development of the mortgage in the 17th century made the purchase of land easier and was another factor which helped create larger parcels of land as landlords bought up struggling tenanted farms. These were increasingly turned over to pasture. The owners were for the most part petty traders or aspiring professionals and the land leased out for income. In the early part of the century the population growth was sluggish and cereal prices low which might account for the move to animal husbandry. In Rutland three fifths farmland was laid to permanent grass and two fifths to convertible husbandry featuring long grass leys (Crutchley 1794, 12). Another development across the region was the building of farmhouses within the farm lands which had not been possible for the farmer when strip farming prevailed. This does not seem to have happened in Uppingham. In the period under review older farmhouses could still be seen within the town and Baines Farmhouse for example with a date stone of 1787 at 28 High Street West would appear to have been built or modernised in the Eighteenth Century. (Plate 1) These were held in severality and where they survived continued to be so.

Inclosure

The Parish of Uppingham contained 1,463 acres of land. There were three open fields Brand, Lound and Wood, as well as the Wilkershaw Cow Pasture and Many Bushes Pasture, the greater part of which were inclosed in the reign of George III under an Act of Parliament in 1770. In further inclosures in 1799 part of Beaumont Chase was annexed and commoners received land free from deer (Ryder, 2006). Beaumont Chase, 463 acres, was an extra parochial district within the ecclesiastical parish of Uppingham. In the 1799 Inclosure it was formed into a parish. The Brand to the South where horse races were held until 1783 was inclosed at the same time (Victoria History 61 and 95). It could be said that the closes, the early fenced fields for young stock or other crops as planting became more divers, were the early Inclosures but they were generally farmed in common.

There were earlier instances of formal Inclosure. In 1769 Robert Hotchkin Esq was granted 'the right to inclose a certain road called the Upper Lane leading from the High Street to the East end of Uppingham to a certain place called The Hogg Hill beginning at the said High Street North and ending at the North East corner of the dwelling house of the said Robert Hotchkin'. Also 'to inclose another road beginning in a certain street called Horn Lane to the above mentioned dwelling house of the said Robert Hotchkin' (C202/157/8-29)

The Inclosure Map of 1804 charts the layout of Uppingham after Inclosure but there also exists a comprehensive survey of agriculture in Rutland published in 1809 (Pitt & Parkinson). It is not possible to tell exactly when the data was collected but the rainfall chart runs from 1791 – 1798 so we could suppose that it would help build up a picture of land use at the end of the 18th century after the final process of Inclosure had been completed.

Transport Routes

A major change in the period under review was the development of the road system throughout Rutland. Uppingham as a market town was of strategic importance for local trade but as the cities expanded it would inevitably become a useful link in the national food supply chain. At the start of the Century there would, of course, have been a network of footways leading to and from Uppingham linking the various villages but there is no direct evidence that any important East/West route existed through Uppingham in the early 1700s for that development we must look to the mid-century and the Turnpike Roads. There was a major East/West route between Stamford and Oakham which linked to Leicester to the West and the Great North Road to the East but in the early eighteenth century it would seem trade in and out of Uppingham used the North/South route probably helping to supply an expanding London.

There was from early times a North/South link from Oakham to Rockingham and this was followed by a second North/South route which forked from the Oakham to St Neots road, just to the South of Oakham. The latter appears on maps by the late seventeenth century. A study of the various maps of Rutland (Deadman and Brooks) has lead me to the opinion that the original route, and this seems quite logical, took the traveller from village to village and in this case from church to church. The route runs from the centre of Oakham, its Parish Church, through Brook where there was also a Priory and then linked Ridlington, generally accepted as the Mother Church at the time of Domesday, with its sister churches in Ayston and Uppingham. It has been suggested (Rogers 8) that the entry into Uppingham ran past what is now the Crown and left Uppingham to the South through the twitten, now Reeves Lane, and the current footpath to Lyddington but a study of these County maps has drawn me to the conclusion that the earlier droving road followed much the same route as the road does today as it leaves Uppingham. The identification of the Little Crooked House in Hopes Yard as an early hall house and possibly the oldest extant dwelling in Uppingham might ultimately have some relevance in identifying the line of the road as it entered the centre. As the road was coming from the direction of Ayston and focussing on the church it is my view that the entry to the town would be further to the West than the Crown but I have no direct evidence to support this position. The road would then have proceeded down Scale Hill, the

current London Road, to Lyddington and thus through to Rockingham. Robert Morden's map of 1695 (Deadman and Brooks 51) shows a road entering Uppingham somewhere to the East of the High Street but this road is the later fork from the main Oakham/ St Neots road. He does show the exit route down Scale Hill. The maps of the late seventeenth century that I have seen, so far as the routes from Oakham to Uppingham, show the main Oakham/St Neots road and the fork which took the route past Martinsthorp[e] and Preston. The older route via Ridlington is not shown. Morden's map of 1695 was reprinted in 1701 by Herman Moll, a Geographer, with the addition of a compass and some alterations but no change in this respect. At the start of the eighteenth century the perception appears to be that the main route through Uppingham was the fork from the Oakham/St Neots road.

It was somewhat surprising that H Moll in his 'A New Description of England and Wales. A new and correct set of maps of each County - Rutlandshire' printed in 1724 clearly shows only the older North/South route out of Oakham and the main route from Oakham to St Neots which runs to the East of Uppingham. Interestingly he has omitted the route past Martinsthorp[e] and Preston but included the older route through Ridlington even though his reprint of Morden in 1701 differed. Was there confusion or a professional difference of opinion? The 1724 map does not show an East/ West Route (Deadman and Brooks 59). Mapping was not an exact science in this period but does reflect common perception of what was important. A study of the maps of Rutland available from 1701 to 1759 (Deadman and Brooks 52 – 81) shows that the perceived major North/South route varied from map to map but that eight showed the ecclesiastical route via Ridlington and only four the spur from the Oakham/St Neots road. None showed an East/West route. The first to show that was a map made by Emanuel Bowen in 1761 and the route follows the line of the existing A47 through the Liefeld forest to Uppingham (Deadman and Brooks 82). Perhaps a point of interest is that Kitchin in 1751 shows the older route via Ridlington as the 'greater direct road' and the second route past Martinsthorp[e] and Preston as the 'cross road' (Deadman and Brooks 73). Nevertheless as the century progressed the latter route seems to become dominant as seen in several examples in the 1760s. (Deadman and Brooks 89 -97).

The development of the Turpike road system was extremely beneficial to Uppingham. The North/South Turnpike Road from Nottingham to Kettering through Uppingham established in 1753-4 followed the existing route from Oakham past Preston but now bypassed Lyddington running directly to Caldicott and then to Rockingham (Cossons 48). Uppingham, therefore, had no local competition for its goods and services. However, of even more importance in 1754 the Turnpike Trust was set up to manage a road from Leicester to Peterborough via Uppingham and Wansford (The Great North Road) and Uppingham at last had its cross road. A map of 1785 prepared by Emanuel and Thomas Kitchen (Deadman and Brooks 78) shows this and rather more clearly in 1767 when the late Emanuel Bowen and Thomas Bowen's Atlas Anglicanus printed for Thomas Kitchen was published (Deadman and Brooks 94). It was no surprise that Ayston dropped a direct road down to this new super highway as can be seen on John Cary's map of 1787 (Deadman and Brooks 105). The ancient route from Oakham via Ridlington and Ayston to Uppingham became defunct for any serious movement of goods and Uppingham arguably became more prosperous as evidenced by the fine, new Georgian style enhancement of the High Street.

Manors

The Town was divided by and large into two Manors, The Rectory Manor and Preston Manor. There was a third Manor, Scarlies, which was held by the Manor of Preston by fealty, suit of court and yearly rent of 3s.4d but it had disappeared as a Manor before Inclosure. (Victoria History p. 98). Preston Manor was the larger and was held by Henry Fawkenor from 1696 – 1708, John Merriman from 1722 – 1727, Thomas Ridlington 1729 – 1737 probably as a feoffee, William Bradgate to 1747 and the Earl of Gainsborough for the rest of the century. To get a sense of Town economics a study of the Exton papers regarding the Preston Manor for 1748 and 1749 taken as an example (LRO DE3214 130/3 &4) show an annual income from commercial rents of £218.17.8 and £220.17s.8d respectively. Chief rents totalled £5.7s.10, Copyholder rents Fine Certain £7.15.0d and Fine at Will £1.5.8 unchanged over the two years. This included the rents of the shambles and stalls £10.18.8 and market shops £16.13.6. The tenanted Manor House brought in £16.5.0d, Tod Piece £11.0.0, John Freeman's farm £36.17.0 and John Pursell's two farms £52.6.0. Altogether 18 commercial entries. The £2.0s.0d difference in chief rents is accounted for by the increase of rent for Tod Piece. Otherwise the income was static over these two years as it was in 1750, 1751 and 1752 (LRO DE3214 5,6,7). After Inclosure the Chief rents do not include income from the market but other income listed as chief rents, Fine Certain and Fine at Will remain the same. As yet I can find no reason for this.

The outgoings shed a light on the daily life of the town and the obligations of landowners. The years 1748 and 1749 give a flavour. Land tax was due on the farms, and on Beaumont Chase. In 1748 this amounted to £11.11s.3d. This amount included a half year's tax on Beaumont Chase and another entry notes Joseph Hickman was paid a salary of £10.0.0 to look after Beaumont Chase. However, in the 1749 payments there is no mention of Beaumont Chase at all. At the moment this is also unexplained. In 1748 two levys were noted for the Church and poor but again no mention in 1749 so this seems an ad hoc call for funds. There does not seem to have been a levy paid towards a Constable in 1748 but it was noted in the 1749 account that a levy of £0.5s.10½d was paid. An entry in the account of Rutland Court Quarter Sessions dated 17 July 1746 states 'Martinsley vacant by the death of both Chief Constables' and from an entry dated 9 October 1746 'Chief Constables resurrected' (DE2301). Possibly a similar situation occurred in 1748. Law and Order was kept on a County basis and a sum of £0.11s.8d was paid to Mr Hickman for taking Mallard to Goal in February of that year. The Preston Manor held the market which had to be kept in good order and in 1749 for example there was a cost for making new shambles paid to Francis Birch, Carpenter, John Ward, Mason and Ambrose Mould, Slater, altogether £112.10.10 out of income. As there was no beast market that year perhaps the opportunity was seized for building.

It is no surprise that the Beast Market was suspended. Thomas Baker, Squire of Lyndon Hall from 1759, kept a Weather Journal and noted that in 1748 there was 'a long and sore murrain or plague now destroying the horned cattle' (Kington 24). Generally farming conditions were difficult. In 1748 he observed a tendency for wintry conditions to extend into March during a cluster of years which resulted in an alarming reduction of the growing season. He also mentions in 1748 period swarms of locusts (Kington 18.) In

the century as a whole the people of Uppingham would have experienced the great storm of 1703, earthquakes in 1748 and 1750, a tornado in 1749, a great meteor in 1783 and also in that year the 'haze or dry fog from a number of Icelandic volcanic eruptions (Kitson 46,57, 511,212). In real terms, such a suspension of the Beast Market would have affected the whole economy of the Town from the Landlords to their employees. Not only would there be lost revenue from the trading of animals but staff would still have to be paid. For example there were payments to be made to John Thorpe to compensate. He was given 20s a half year until the Market was reinstated. (LRO DE3214 130/3).

The Steward's duties were not confined to collecting and accounting for rents. The Manorial Court was held on a regular basis and the administration of the Court Baron and Court Leet had to be accounted for. Mr Cumbrey's Account for the year ending Michaelmas 1748 includes an account of the Manorial Court entertainment expenses for May 1748 as follows:

Gentleman's dinner	£1. 5s. 0d
Wine	4s. 0d
Cyder and ale	5s. 0d
15 Jurymen	15s. 0d
5 men eating and ale	6s. 0d
Servants	2s. 0d
	£2. 17s. 6d

There was also a repeat bill on 1 November 1748. In addition there was a note 'gave all the butchers and bakers 2d to buy a mug of ale the custom always' In 1748 there were 38 butchers and 40 other tradesmen. (LRO DE3214 130/3).

The Rectory Manor provided an income for the current Rector who was often domiciled elsewhere. The Advowson rested with the Bishop of London in this period as it had since the reign of Edward VI (1547 – 1553). A Glebe Terrier of 1705 (LRO MF495) lists 28 rents bringing in £1.6s5½d which by 1760 according to a Suit Roll of 16 October had increased to 39 rents including the Constables for the Wash Pond and Pepper's Windmill which brought in £3.4s9½d. As the land area had not increased the conclusions could be drawn that there was a considerable amount of infilling or that a number of properties were sub-divided. In 1752, to compare with the Preston Manor, there were 36 Chief Rents bringing in £3.1.0%. The Parsonage in 1752 consisted of a kitchen, 2 parlours, 7 chambers, 1 pantry, 1 brewhouse, 1 cellar, 1 millhouse, 2 barns, a coachhouse, 1 stable, 1 garden, 1 orchard, 1 courtyard. (LRO DE1784/18) In addition to the rents from properties the Rector had 120a.0r.20p. of land over 14 fields in the Lound Common Field south of the Turnpike Road to Stamford, 10a.0r.23p. in two fields running on down to the stream from the Back Way plus 33a.3r.4p in the Brand Field to the West of the Kettering Turnpike Road and rights in Wilkershaw Cowpasture. It is also noted that in the South Field (Brand Field) the Rector had 'one other close lying North and South under the houses of Austin, Curtis and John Bullock containing two acres the Butt Close West' (LRO DE1784/18). Interestingly there is a small area in the corner of the Brand Field which on the 1804 Enclosure Map is marked for Manorial right and now is the Rectory Farm. There is no evidence that a Farmhouse was there in the 18th Century. In so far as the 18th Century is concerned it is tempting to think that the Rector housed his Farm Manager and labourers in the area between Leamington Terrace and the Back Way.

Justice

Regional justice was administered on a rotating basis between Oakham and Uppingham, Quarter Sessions being held in the schoolhouse in Uppingham. In attendance would be an appointed Coroner, Chief Constables for the Hundreds, Bailiffs for the Hundreds and Jurors. On 17 July 1760 for example the Session was held in Uppingham and Uppingham provided four Jurors but the number appeared to vary. Amongst the business of that day was the 'licensing of Con Hill of Uppingham (a married man) to be a carrier, a buyer and seller of butter, cheese, eggs, fish, fowl, rabbits and all other victuals (except game) for one year'. Charles Ayre and William Rudkin stood surety. (LRO DE2301 p. 181). Also the Court dealt with the sentencing of petty criminals, bastardy, breach of Sunday trading laws, return of Poor to their own Parishes and Inclosure issues. Rioting was fairly commonplace across the country as a result of the hardships engendered from both agricultural and industrial reform. Offenders were treated leniently at first but this attitude hardened as the century progressed when London suffered the Gordon Riots in 1780. The French Revolution of 1789 and other unrest on the Continent also unsettled the propertied classes who administered justice. (Langford 433/434). At a Quarter Session in Oakham on 4 October 1764 before Robert Hotchkin Esq, William Chapman, Joyner, is noted as having been involved in a riot in Uppingham on 10 August 1764. He was bound over in the sum of £10 to appear at a later date to answer the charges (LRO DE2301 p.222). A Militia was also raised three times in 1759, 1762 and 1765 presumably to deal with civil unrest in Rutland (LRO DE2301 p. 255). I have not found any further evidence of a riot in Uppingham nor can I find any note of the sentence William Chapman received.

Town Layout and Buildings

The structure of the Town remained in essence the same as it had been since the Medieval period with the Market Place and Church at the centre. The Wednesday and three day July 19, 20 and 21 Market granted to Peter de Montefort[i] in the Reign of King Edward I (1272-1307) was integral to Town life in the 18th Century and the conducting of the business of buying and selling animals needed to be supported by a range of service facilities. In 1769 it was described as 'neat, compact, well-built modern town' with a market for 'horses, horned cattle and coarse linen cloth' (Adlard & Browne, Rutlandshire 10).

To the East was to be found the Hall with its Tudor building at the road (50/52 High Street East) and the Preston Manor demesne estate, to the West the Hall that is now the Thring Centre with its Tudor building at the road (Tudor House, High Street West) and the Scarlies Manor demesne estate incorporated into the Preston Manor during the period. The two Halls one to the West and the other to the East were thought to have been occupied originally by two branches of the Fawkeners family. The Hall to the East was extensively remodelled in the 18th century, the south front being entirely of that period. (Plate 2) In the 18th century there were no resident Lords of the Preston Manor.

To the West running South was the Rectory with the adjacent Rectory Manor demesne estate. To the West of the church was the Wash Pond and to the East the Pounds and closes for the confinement of animals with easy access to the market. Some of this land was subsumed into the graveyard extension of 1724. Scale Hill was much steeper than it is now and coaches and traffic more normally turned off and came behind the

Church and up Horn Lane before arriving at the Falcon which had been built in the Market Place in the 17th century as a coaching inn. There were a number of Inns in Uppingham. The Falcon built in the 17th century had the stabling to accommodate the needs of the regular stage coaches using the toll roads but there were a number of other more modest establishments to cater for commercial travellers and probably to offer the working man some respite from the overcrowded dwellings of the townspeople. The entrance to the stabling and yard at the Falcon has now been incorporated into the current Hotel. The rents for many of these Inns were underpinned by mortgages and the Stewards papers of the Rectory Manor give examples of conditional surrenders and warrants to discharge. For example William and Ann Ironman customary tenants of The Chequers, an Inn which stood on Scale Hill soon to become the Turnpike Road, made a conditional surrender on 1 October 1745 to John Cooke of Uppingham a Bookseller. (Private Collection) It would seem from the records that many small businessmen as well as the more wealthy were in the business of lending money and that they came from all over the County and even Country.

As the century progressed there is evidence of some prosperity as buildings in the commercial heart of Uppingham acquired elegant Georgian fronts (Plates 3,4 and 5). This thriving market town could attract, for instance, Richard Newcomb who set up as a Printer and Bookseller in 1781 (Newton and Smith 69). It would take a structural survey of each building to know whether the buildings in the High Street that exhibit Georgian facades were Georgian buildings or renovations and this is, of course, impossible as they are in private ownership. For example at the rear of Culpins at the corner of the then Horn Lane, now Queen Street, (Plates 6 and 7) there is evidence of a much earlier building but the Crown Inn seems to be a new Georgian building (Plate 8) although it is hard to believe that there was not an earlier building on this important site in the centre of Uppingham.

To the North of High Street East is an open area today used for recreational purposes called Tods Piece. There is an entry in the church Wardens Accounts dated 17 January 1748 (LRO DE 1784/18) that the Earl of Gainsborough rented Todds Piece [sic] at the yearly rent of one penny, then bought it from the Parish and then returned it back to the Parish on 29 September 1752. It remains an open space and amenity for the Town to this day.

Uppingham School was a long way off but the old Grammar School building adjacent to the Church and hospital founded by Archdeacon Robert Johnson were in existence. The latter is now incorporated into the Uppingham School Library.

The buildings were of local ironstone from the local quarries or in brick from the local brickworks and windmills were evident on the skyline. Self-sufficiency in materials and services was the order of the day.

Church

The Church had fallen into a gentle decline following the sequestration of the Church's assets during the Interregnum and all evidence points to it continuing to be neglected into the 18th Century. In the period under review the Chancel measured 37' x 16', the nave of three bays 41' x 21' with North and South aisles extending to about half way up the chancel. There was a West Tower and according to Victoria History 'two miserable porches' to the North and South.

The Rector from 1689 – 1744 was William Standish, followed by the appointment of John Jones also known for his editing of Horace. There is a letter to Thos. Lord Bishop of London dated 18 July 1752 stating that the parishioners were in favour of Mr John Jones succeeding his Father also called John Jones, the late Rector. The document was signed by 40 parishioners. (LPL Sherlock 3). However, it seems this petition was in vain and James Harwood was appointed Rector from 1752 – 1755 when he resigned. There is also a letter from A. Laybourne, Master of the Grammar School dated 11 August 1752 shortly after the burial of John Jones on 20 July, to the Bishop telling him 'Here is a dissenting meeting house, which they tell me, is greatly crowded as the preacher is an ingenious and pious man, in his private character unexceptionable. The richer sort of people have made it almost a rule to absent from Church in a morning, the only time they have a sermon,' He asked for a Minister who would 'treat the weighty points of religion in a cool, serious and pathetic manner'. (LPL Sherlock 3). Perhaps the Rev Harwood did not measure up.

John Rogers was Rector from 1767 – 1775. During his term there seems to have been something of a revival. A Gallery was installed 17 November 1770 (LRO DE4796/58) and a number of bells. The third, sixth, seventh and tenor bells in 1772, the treble and second in 1773 and the fourth and fifth originally in 1772 but recast in 1895. Also an organ was purchased in July 1777 from St Mary's Nottingham and an organist appointed on 1 July 1777 (DE1784/19). As seen in the review of the Parish Registers the number of those baptised was outstripping the number buried in the second half of the Century and numbers had risen significantly from the second quarter so extra seating in the Church could be a necessary development especially as the Church had a smaller footprint than it does today. (Appendix 1.) The new Galleries were in the North and South aisles projecting in front of the arcades and the West end of the nave. They could seat 233 adults and 64 children. A new Town Clock was agreed on 28 May 1776.

The Church had endowments during the period. In 1701 Richard Pakeman gave £100 to buy land, 20s to be paid to Thorpe Satchville and the remainder to the poor in Uppingham on St Thomas's day. In 1720 William Allebon gave 20s to the poor to be distributed on St Thomas's Day. In 1721 Mary Standish gave £50 to buy land, rent to be given out in bread each Sunday to six poor widows.

The Twelfth Century Churchyard that was bounded to the north by the Market Place, West by Swan Yard and the Grammar School, South by the thoroughfare from Leamington Terrace (Wash Pond Lane) through to South View and East by Scale Hill had become full. Petitions were made in 1720 and a new Southern extension to South View taking in Wing Close was incorporated in 1724. It is thought that this area had been used as a plague pit from the time of the Black Death in 1348. In 1784 a row of lime trees was planted at the boundary between the old and new churchyards to mark the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Grammar School.

Non-conformism was well established in Uppingham in the previous century but a meeting house, probably for Particular Baptists, was built at some time in the eighteenth century. A Presbyterian congregation who had been meeting in a back room near the Parish Workhouse in Orange Street in 1717 purchased a barn and two cottages in the Preston Manor from a widow named Rebeca Tookey with seating for 160. (Collett 165). There was also a Certificate granted in 1777

to Protestant Dissenters who had set up in a barn belonging to the dwelling house of John Broughton (Collett 173). To which of the first two Meeting Houses Mr Laybourne was referring in his letter to the Bishop quoted above I cannot say with certainty but most likely the Presbyterian/Congregationalists. There are only 15 baptisms recorded from 1785 to 1799 in the Registers of the Congregational church and there are Dissenter burial plots to the North of the Parish Church so it is assumed that people still looked to the Parish Church for rites of passage.

Just as the Lords of the Manor were responsible for the commercial running of the Town the Church played an integral part in what we today would call social services. At a time when most people would go to church to have their babies baptised, be married and have the dead buried the Church Registers (LRO.DE1784) are a valuable source of data. For instance an analysis of the Registers 1701 – 1799 show that in the first half of the Century the number baptised were more or less the same as the number buried but in the second half the number baptised began to rise showing that the population was increasing. The Registers reflect the health of the Town for example there was an epidemic of smallpox in 1767 and a small epidemic of diphtheria in 1771 which resulted in death.

It is possible to tell the people of influence from their involvement in the running of the Church and Town. The Overseers of the Poor and Churchwardens fall into that category. The Church was administered by two Churchwardens, one appointed by the Rector and one by the Parishioners. In 1729, for example, this was Mr William Falkner, Gent. And Mr Foster, Apothecary.

The Poor were the responsibility of the Parish and in 1762 the Church owned a Town Cottage and Town House to aid poor relief. Also there is evidence of a Bond 'Thomas Bradgate and three others, churchwardens and overseers of the poor and twelve other inhabitants of Uppingham to William Warren of Uppingham, gent. For £150 to build the workhouse' dated 20 September 1740 (LRO.DE4796.54). This building was situated on the corner of North Street East and Orange Street. The Act of 1723 enabled Parishes to combine to erect a workhouse but there is no evidence of any other Village financing this particular project. The financing of poor relief came from a levy of inhabitants and the Market shops which fluctuated in number. In 1707, for example, there were 9 shops, one belonging to Mr Larratt though paid nothing, and 127 inhabitants. The total levy for that year called for on five occasions from the shops and inhabitants came to £32.19.7. The disbursements were £33.14.5½ a shortfall of £0.14.10½. The ledger though seems out of order and includes some rents owing. It is not clear where the funds to cover the shortfall came from. (LRO. DE1784/25.)

Conclusion

During the course of this research a picture has emerged of a Town that started the Eighteenth Century as the more important of the two Towns in Rutland but ended it in second place. However, in the Eighteenth Century this is not a story of decline. Its market ensured that it did not fade into oblivion and, in fact, the East to West Turnpike Road and the bypassing of Lyddington by the North to South road actually increased the demand for its goods and services. There was prosperity and this can be seen by the newly fronted buildings, the variety of shops and number of inns which

emerged during the period. The working man fared less well as Inclosure which was, by and large, completed during the Century took away a right to farm land in the common fields and to pasture livestock. The result was a reliance on wages which, if there was unemployment, meant falling back on Parish relief and the threat of the workhouse blighted the lives of many. The Church superintended the social services and had a significant input into the life of the Town but much of the land was owned by absentee landlords who relied on their Stewards to collect rents. Local co-operation gave way to distant imposition as people became solely employees and the laws that governed their lives were made elsewhere.

The period under review saw a move from a system of regional justice to that of national justice and a general centralisation of administration through legislation and this seems the most likely reason for the shift in importance away from Uppingham. Oakham had a designated Court room at the Castle, itself an important building, and a much more convenient facility than the Old Grammar School. It was understandable that local government administration would become centred in Oakham rather than continue to be shared with Uppingham as new legislation was enacted. In many ways Uppingham had experienced its 'Golden Age'.



PLATE 1: Baines Farmhouse, 28 High Street West, Uppingham (Page 2)



PLATE 2: Hall, off High Street East (Page 4)



PLATE 3: Georgian fronts, High Street East, North Side (Page 4)



PLATE 4: Georgian fronts , High Street East, North Side (Page 4)



PLATE 5: Georgian fronts, High Street East, South Side (Page 4)



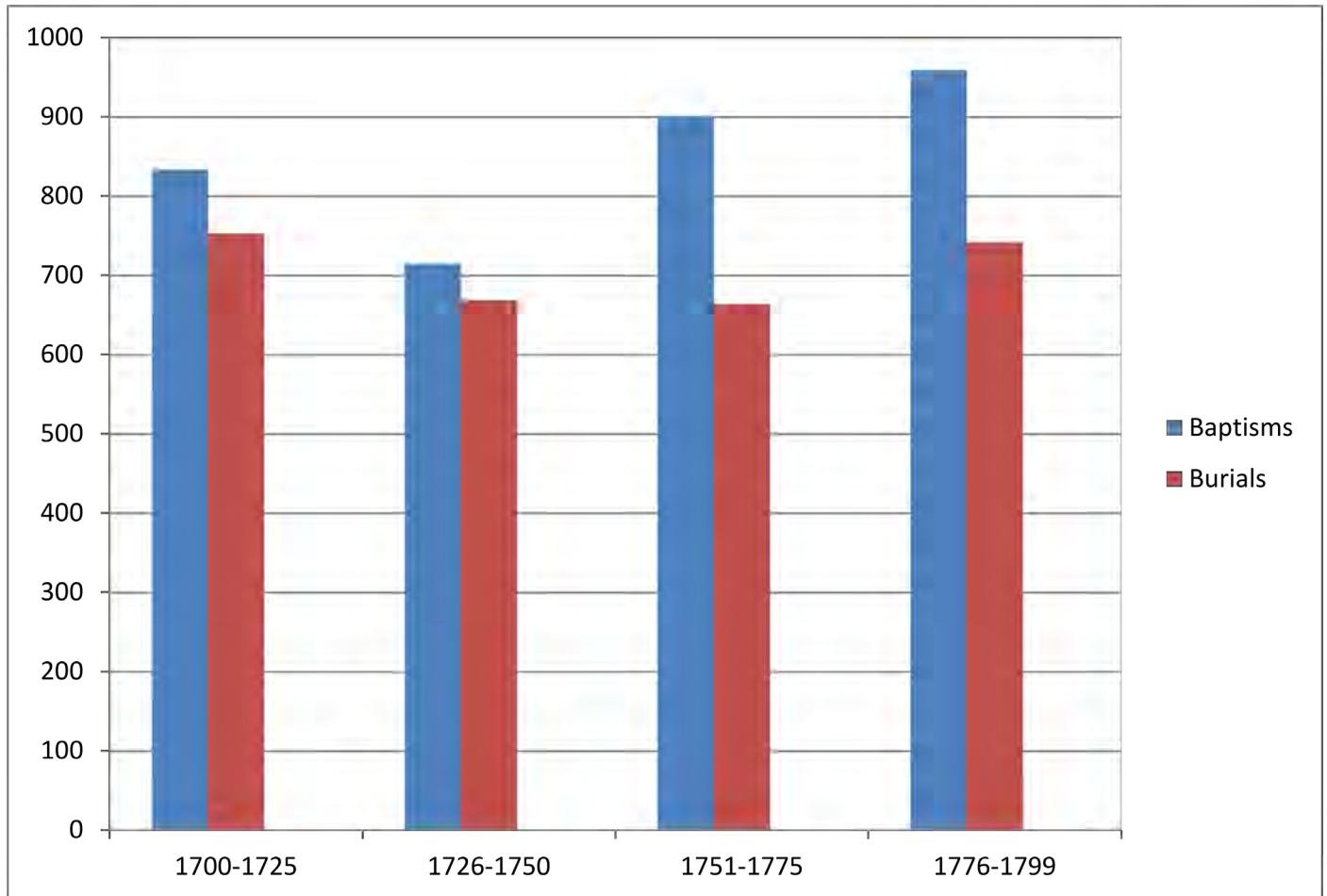
PLATE: 6 & 7 - Culpin & Sons, Butchers, Corner of High Street East, South Side and Queen Street (Page 4)



PLATE: 8 Crown Inn, High Street East, North Side (Page 4)

Parish Registers 1701 - 1799

Baptisms and Burials



Note: The records for the years 1726 – 1750 were in poor condition and difficult or impossible to read so the figures for that quarter are not absolutely accurate. Notwithstanding as a population indicator the number of children baptised were more or less the same as the numbers of those buried in the first half of the Century so the population count remained fairly stable. The figures for the baptised rose steadily through the second half of the Century but burials remained much the same which indicates that the population was increasing.

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