

Buildings and People of a Rutland Manor

LYDDINGTON, CALDECOTT, STOKE DRY AND THORPE BY WATER

Rosemary Canadine
Vanessa Doe
Nick Hill
Robert Ovens
Christopher Thornton

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LYDDINGTON MANOR HISTORY SOCIETY

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Published in 2015 by Lyddington Manor History Society,
22 Main Street, Lyddington, Oakham, Rutland LE15 9LT
www.lyddingtonhistory.org.uk

The Society is grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a generous
grant towards the cost of researching and producing this publication.

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ISBN 978-0-9934821-0-6

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Designed by Peter Ling.

Printed and bound in Malta by Gutenberg Press Ltd.

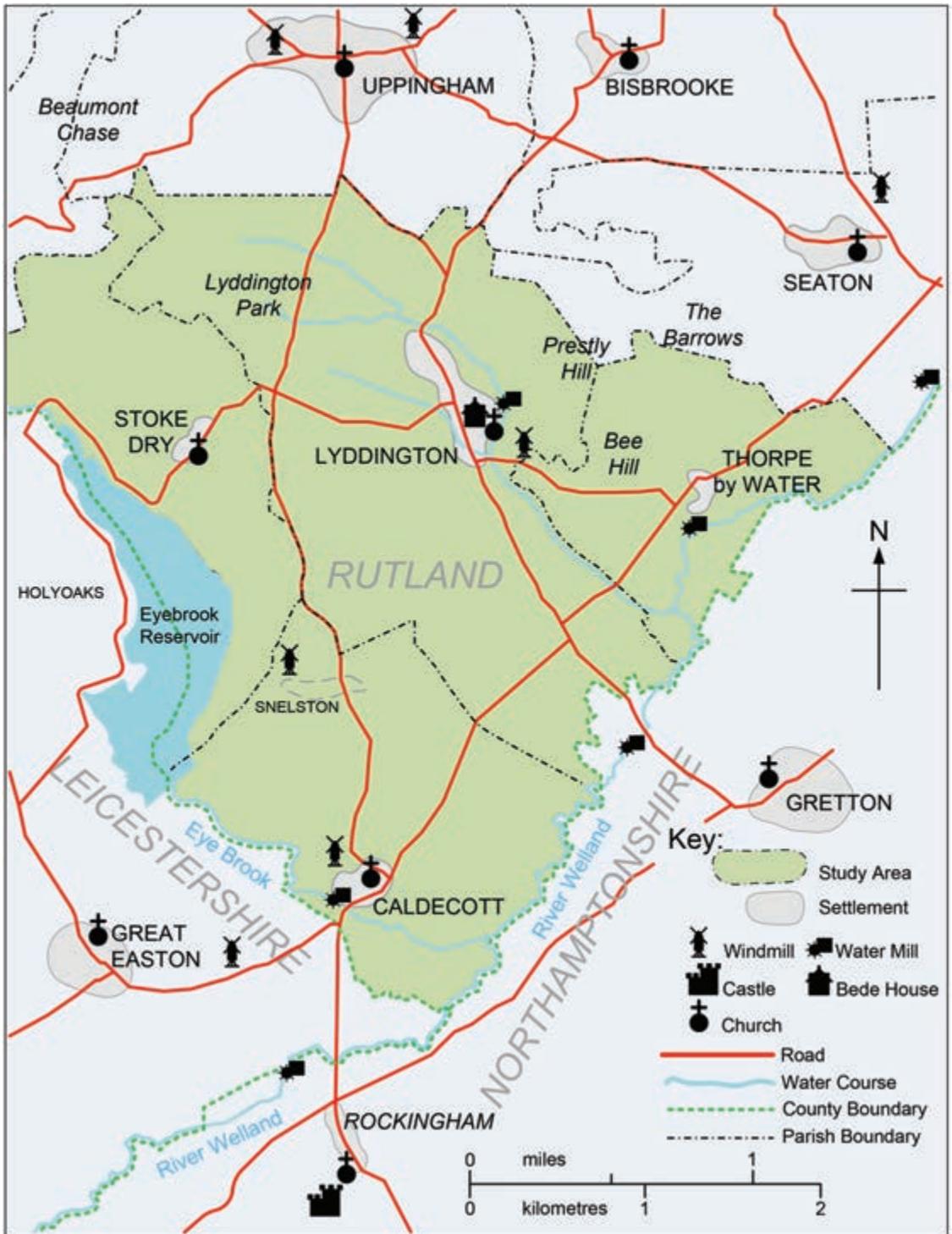


Figure 1 The Lyddington Manor Project study area. (Robert Ovens)

Maps of the villages in the Project Study Area
(Based on the Ordnance Survey Series 1 Map of 1886)

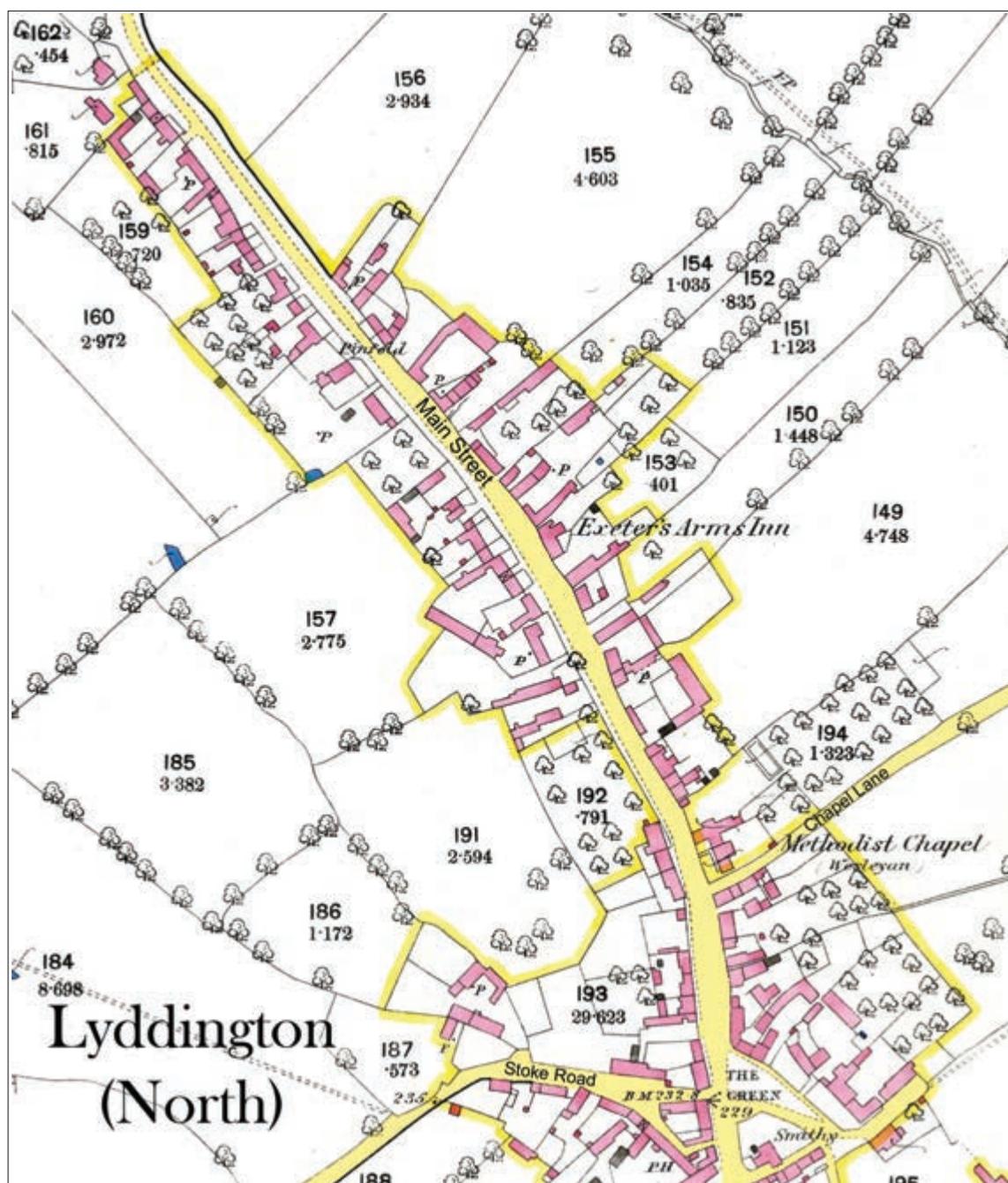


Figure 2 Lyddington (North). (RCM)

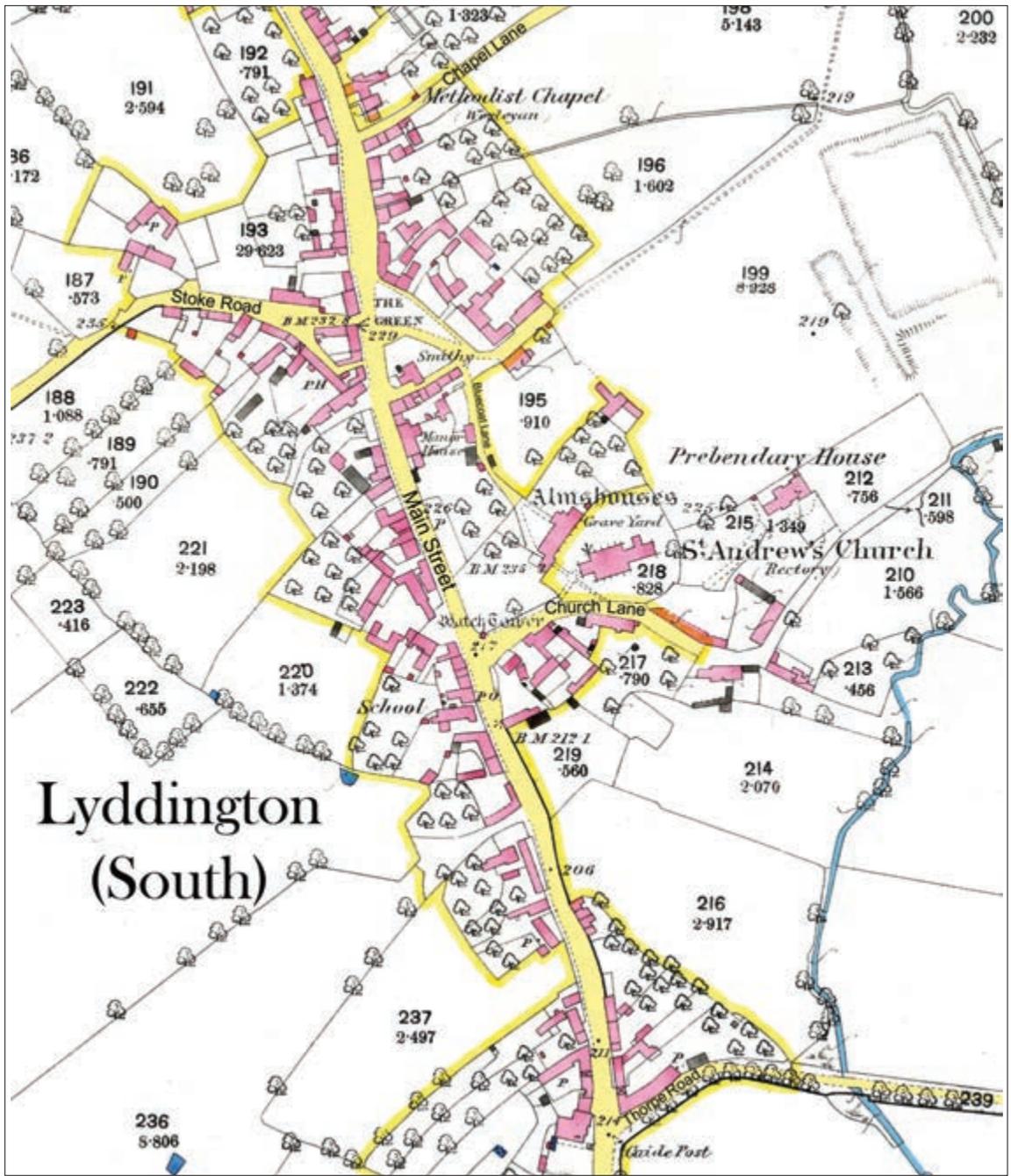


Figure 3 Lyddington (South). (RCM)

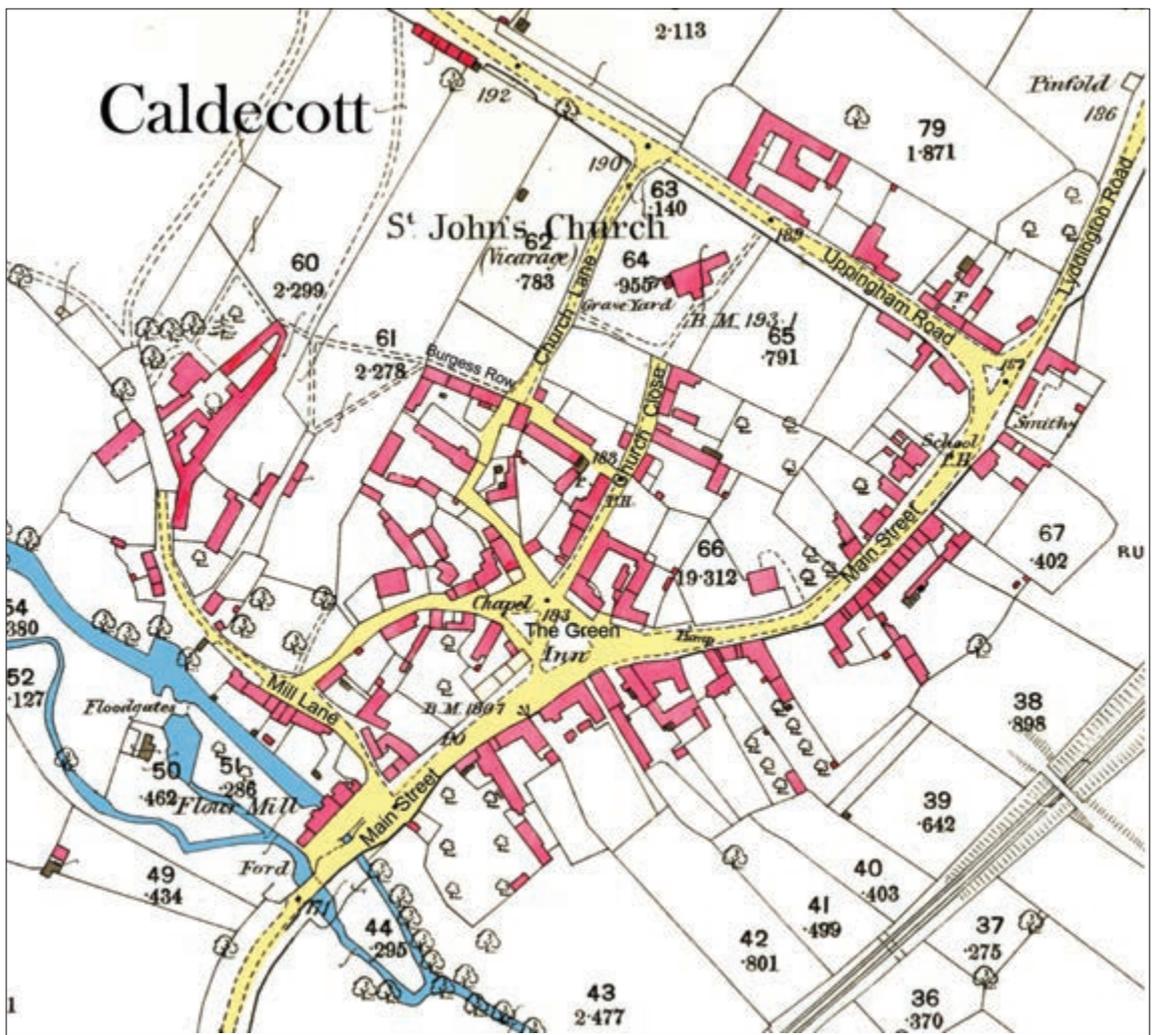


Figure 4 Caldecott. (RCM)

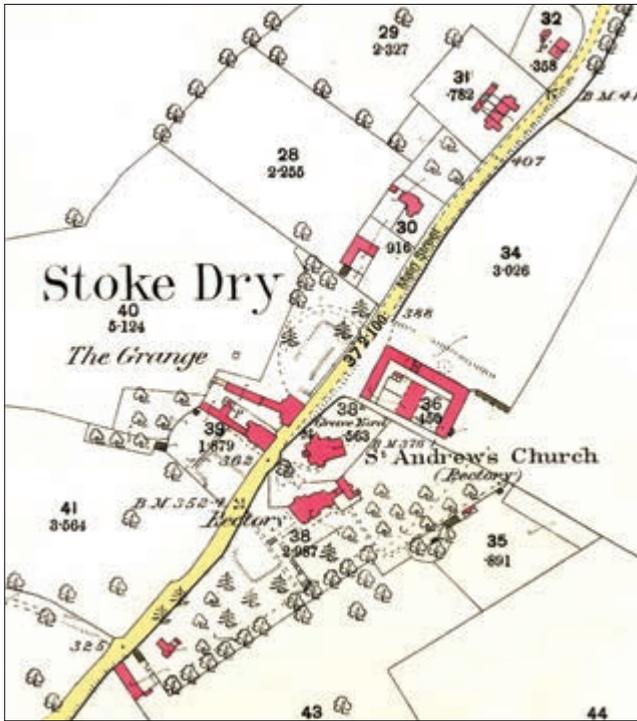


Figure 5 Stoke Dry.
(RCM)

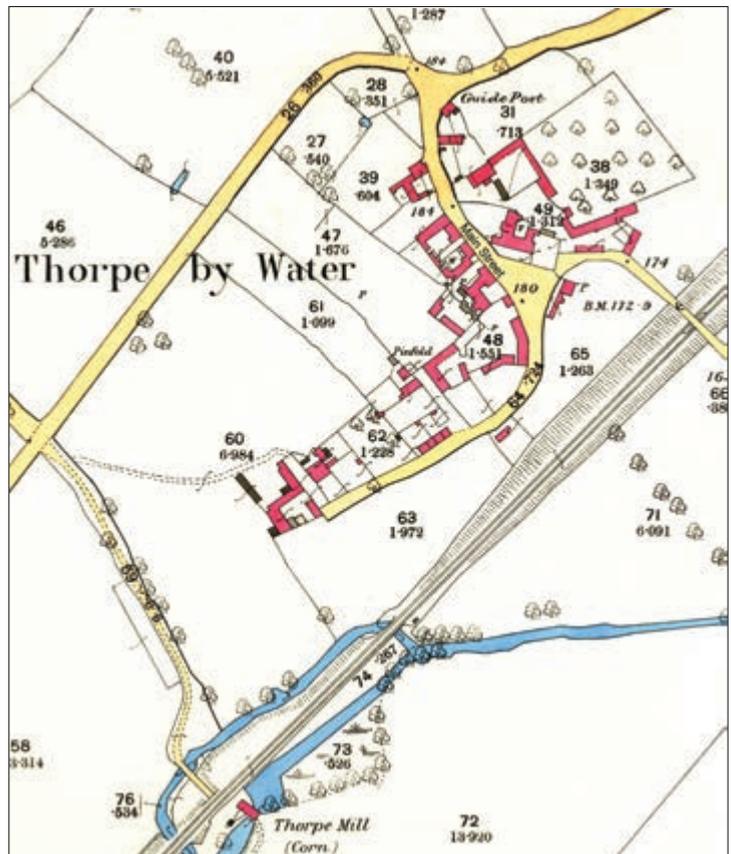


Figure 6 Thorpe by Water.
(RCM)

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Acknowledgements

Lyddington Manor History Society would like to thank:

Many local residents, for giving access to and providing deeds and photographs of their houses;

The National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund for financial support and, in particular, Sarah Clurow and Laura Summers, our Grant Officers, for their advice and support;

Miranda Rock, House Director, and Jon Culverhouse, Curator, Burghley House Preservation Trust, for giving free access to the Exeter archive at Burghley House for this project;

English Heritage, for support and access to their reports on Lyddington Bede House;
Dr Christopher Thornton, for advice and support throughout the project in his role as mentor;

Dr Robert Howard of Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory, for advice and for tree-ring dating services;

Caldecott History Society, The Institute of Historical Research Library at the University of London, Lincolnshire Archives Office, Monumental Brass Society, Northamptonshire Record Office, Rutland County Museum, Rutland Local History and Record Society, the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, and The National Archives, for help and support;

Professor Michael Jones, Dr David Crook and, from Langham Village History Group, Anthony Wright and Mike Frisby, for advice in setting up the project;

Richard Gilbert of Leicester University for help in indexing property transactions in sixteenth and seventeenth-century court rolls;

Professor Alan Rogers for help and advice;

Dr Nat Alcock, for advice on documentary research;

Hilary Crowden for advice on information sources;

Dr Clive Jones for advice on local geology;

Dennis Wright and Chris Race, former residents of Caldecott, and Doug and Joan Clarke, the late Hugh Clarke and Roger Hickenbotham of Lyddington, for access to their collections of local historic information and photographs;

Michael Webb of Langham and Peter Lane of Uppingham for local historic information;

Catherine Murray for use of her original notebooks from the local listed building re-survey of 1985;

Stephen McKibbin of MCWebs, for advice and the design, construction and maintenance of the Society website, www.lyddingtonhistory.org.uk.

IMAGE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All photographs, maps and drawings are by the respective authors unless otherwise acknowledged.



BURGHLEY

As House Director of Burghley House Preservation Trust, it gives me great pleasure to see that the members of Lyddington Manor History Society have been able to use the Exeter archive so effectively and fruitfully in their research and in the production of this book. I am sure everyone will enjoy reading about the many ancient buildings in the manor of Lyddington and the people who lived in them.

Rosemary Canadine started working, as a volunteer, on the archive at Burghley in 2003. Her initial task was to gather together documents and maps from rooms in the house and the estate office and organise the new Archive Room housed in the stables. Once she had digitised the catalogue that had been partially completed in the 1970s, she catalogued the remainder of some 2000 volumes, amongst which are the thirteen volumes of Court Rolls for the Manor of Lyddington dating from 1707 to 1925. She tells me that the earlier Lyddington Court Rolls and papers, now all held in the Muniments Room at Burghley, were found in a wooden chest bundled together with those of another manor. It is these that have enabled the members of the Lyddington Manor History Society to trace the historic owners of so many houses in the Manor.

I understand that the authors of this book have also found many other documents in our archive helpful, such as maps, rentals, surveys, leases, letters and accounts. I am sure they will have used them well and I am very glad that we have been able to support their efforts in this way.

Miranda Rock

Introduction

This book is the culmination of a four-year project on buildings and their occupants in the Manor of Lyddington. It has focussed on the ordinary village houses and farm buildings, which have never been studied in detail before, rather than churches or the Bede House. So why and how did we undertake the project? It all began in 2009 when I met Dr Christopher Thornton, a historian from Essex, and Robert Howard of Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory. Chris had been appointed by English Heritage to look into the history of Lyddington Bede House and Robert to assess its potential for a programme of tree-ring dating. Lyddington Bede House, formerly a palace of the bishops of Lincoln, is one of the major secular monuments of the Midlands and has been under the guardianship of English Heritage since 1984.

When Chris arrived in the village the custodian pointed him to my door. We sat down at my kitchen table and discussed the questions he had been given. Chris subsequently drew on my archive of material, did his own extensive research and we twice visited Burghley House together. We got to know one another well.

Robert Howard told me that when he first visited Lyddington, he was immediately struck by the number of old buildings in the village. No tree-ring dating had ever been done here and Robert approached me asking if there was any potential for this. He wanted to know if any local history or survey projects were being undertaken or whether any keen locals might be interested in starting one. He raised the question of funding. Perhaps, he thought, we might secure a grant from a Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and local authority combination or even from private individuals who wanted to know how old their house was. He said that the Tree-ring Dating Laboratory had recently finished such a project in the village of Norwell, in Nottinghamshire. It had gone well and another similar project had started in Wiltshire.

Robert explained that dendrochronology or tree-ring dating is used to produce a date when the timbers used in a building were felled. As timbers were used 'green', within a year or two of felling, the process can provide very accurate dates for the construction of buildings studied. Very little such dating has been carried out in Rutland, particularly for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the apparent date of many of the village buildings. Robert said that, if it could be combined with a survey of the buildings, it would enable a scientifically-based chronology to be built up for the local houses and their features. Also, Lyddington was evidently an important place in medieval times, with the former bishop's palace, and it might well be possible to discover houses pre-dating 1600, of which very few were known.

The other compelling reason for undertaking such a project in Lyddington was the extent of the documentary evidence available. Manor court rolls and rentals for the Manor of Lyddington with Caldecott dating from the later

fifteenth century are all held at Burghley House, where I am archivist. I had catalogued them but because I had concentrated in my own researches on the medieval history of the Manor, these remained largely untapped. I approached the curator and was given permission to scan and make publicly available all the documents I could find in the archive that pertained to the Manor. There were a huge number and I knew that deciphering them and collating the information they contained would be a very big task but, together with the dendrochronology, they offered the rare and exciting possibility of reconstructing the history of every property in the Manor. The potential was enormous and could lead to an understanding of the social and economic development of the post-Reformation Manor.

Professor Michael Jones and his wife, Elizabeth, who ran a similar Heritage Lottery funded project in Norwell, provided advice and ideas about undertaking such a project. They stressed the importance of having local support, local involvement, and a locally based organisation. Advice and guidance was also sought from people in other villages that had received Heritage Lottery funding for similar projects and offers of help were generously given. It was clear that an important part of all successful projects had been community effort and support, so I approached local individuals and groups that might be interested and able to help. One significant feature of many such projects was training. We would need people with skills for surveying, documentary work, not to mention publicity, photography and IT as well as all the things that would keep a Society going, such as book-keeping, organising events and catering.

It was obvious that a local organisation would be needed to manage this project and support for the formation of a Society was sought. An open meeting in November 2009 was well attended and a committee formed at an inaugural meeting on 15th January 2010. The ancient Manor of Lyddington had at various times comprised Lyddington, Caldecott and Snelston (which has disappeared), Stoke Dry and part of Thorpe by Water. To incorporate them the new Society became Lyddington Manor History Society. The first Committee meeting was held on 22nd January 2010.

We approached the Heritage Lottery Fund and submitted a pre-application form in March 2010. The feedback we received was positive but suggested we were being somewhat over ambitious. It was recommended that we focus on thirty buildings. It was advice we should perhaps have heeded but didn't!

Before submitting a final application, we invited Chris Thornton to become our project mentor. He agreed and, in due course, wrote the first chapter of our book. We also decided to undertake a pilot project on one house; the house we chose, because it had suitable timbers, was 5 The Green, Lyddington. We presented our results in St Andrew's Church, Lyddington, with an exhibition of photographs and source documents in November 2010. Success gave us confidence and we submitted our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project entitled 'Historic Buildings and People of a Rutland Manor' the following February. In May 2011, we heard our application had been successful and in July the project was officially launched. The aims we set and were agreed by the Heritage Lottery Fund were:

- To involve local people from the manor of Lyddington and the surrounding area in researching, understanding and publishing the history of their own

community, including how their ancestors lived and worked in the past

- To enable local people to discover, interpret and disseminate the social, economic and cultural history of the villages in the Manor of Lyddington, paying particular attention to local houses and the people that occupied them
- To ensure continuing commitment to the conservation of the local built environment through the education of the community in its history and significance
- To build an archive of historic records on the Manor that is available for future study
- To protect and preserve original material by making electronic copies available, hence reducing the necessity for handling

The Society had and continues to have a membership of about seventy people. For Society members and supporters we provide a series of monthly talks by eminent speakers on a variety of related subjects. We also participate in events organised by other groups such as the Council for British Archaeology, conduct guided walks and give talks to other societies.

I would like to recognise the efforts of more than twenty members of the Society and various other supporters and helpers in the successful completion of this project.

The historic building survey team was led by Nick Hill, who lives near Lyddington and has been researching the vernacular architecture of the area for many years. Lyddington resident, Robert Ovens, joined forces with Nick, and together they completed surveys of over seventy properties in the four villages. In most cases this involved detailed measurement of the building and the production of floor plans, so that the development of each house could be properly understood. After appraisal by the building survey team, particular buildings were selected for tree-ring dating. Of these, Robert Howard was able to date eighteen successfully, employing radio carbon dating on one early timber which had proved impossible to date from its pattern of tree rings. Whenever a detailed survey was completed or a house dated, a full report was produced and a copy given to the house-holder who had kindly welcomed us into their home. The reports generated particular excitement when buildings were discovered to have medieval origins, much earlier than previously thought.

To underpin the building survey work, and set it in its wider economic and social context, Dr Vanessa Doe was drawn into the project. With her background in local history research, she was asked to build up a detailed picture of life in the four villages and provide insights into the pattern of building development up to the end of the eighteenth century.

With the help of many who endured the tedium of scanning for hours on end, we built an enormous archive which contains all the Lyddington and Caldecott manor court rolls plus many leases, surveys, maps and rentals that have been found in the Exeter archive at Burghley House. There was never going to be sufficient time to scan all the relevant documents but we did about a third of them, producing over 17,000 high quality images. We concentrated on the ones which would enable us to trace house histories and reconstruct the economic and social history of the Manor. Many of them were fragile and had to be carefully handled. Beetles, mice, dirt and damp had taken their toll

but the information they contain is now protected and they need not be touched again. Those who helped with the scanning were Christine and David Cleminson, Ian Munro, Robert Ovens and the late Brian Stokes and his wife Pam.

Very few of those who initially volunteered to help on the documentary side were able to read the earlier documents and we therefore set up a palaeography group which met faithfully one afternoon a week until October 2014, after which they continued to work independently. We lost a few members through illness or other commitments but the final group of four all became very proficient, and not only in reading documents; they gained new IT skills too. The team transcribed well over a hundred wills and every probate inventory we could find as well as accounts, letters, surveys, leases, rentals and manor court presentments. They also indexed property transactions in manor court rolls, analysed data and constructed spreadsheets to collate the roles of individuals within the Manor. Their work was indispensable in tracing the history of the houses in the manor. This group included Eric Moss, Pamela Ormrod, Robert Ovens, Tessa Redmayne, the late Brian Stokes and Janice Tattersall.

We also gathered another collection of documentary material, almost as large as that collected from Burghley House. It includes census records, directories, parish registers, parochial documents, deeds, photographs, maps, taxation records and wills obtained from record offices, libraries and museums plus many secondary sources, deeds and other information kindly provided by residents within the Manor. Other members who provided support or supplied additional documentary evidence included Ian Bottrell, Andrew Davidson, Vanessa Doe, the late Wendy Harnett, Ian Munro, Jeremy Rider and Peter Tomalin.

From all this information, detailed house histories were drawn up. For each house, every property transaction, fully referenced, was tabulated and placed in a folder with copies of all cited documents plus maps, photographs and any other information that might have been collected. The folders were then returned to the house-holders and, just like the building reports, generated considerable interest and excitement.

Thanks to the skill of our webmaster, Stephen McKibbin, we have been able to make many documents available to members via an online archive. Scans were converted into PDF files and compressed before they were uploaded onto a protected area of our site. Access to this has been limited to those working on the project but, now that is complete, everything that may be published will be made publicly available. This includes, with permission from the Burghley House Preservation Trust, all the documents from the Exeter archive that we have scanned plus many of our own transcriptions and reports.

The last phase of our project has been the writing of this book, a collaborative history, to which many already mentioned have contributed. Robert Ovens was responsible for its production, working with and co-ordinating the authors, copy-editor, indexer, designer and printer.

Rosemary Canadine, September 2015



SECTION ONE

The Manor in the Middle Ages

Christopher Thornton

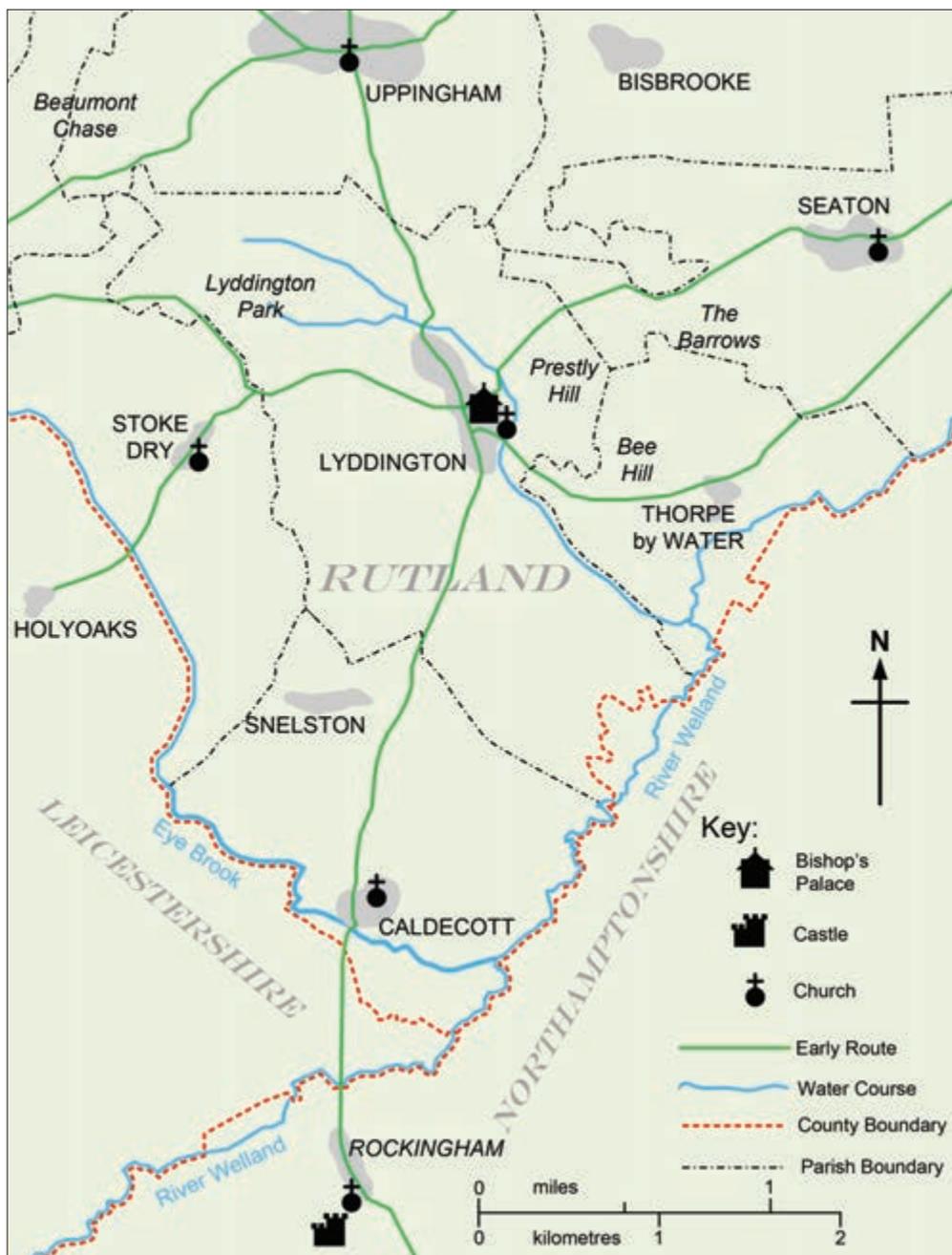


Figure 7 The principal settlements, boundaries and landscape features relating to the Manor of Lyddington in the Middle Ages. (Robert Ovens)

The Manor in the Middle Ages

Although this book is principally concerned with the people and buildings of the Manor between the late sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries, a summary of earlier developments helps to explain the origins of local settlement, and patterns of social and economic life, and enables the significance of later changes to be more fully assessed. At the core of the medieval Manor of Lyddington lay the large nucleated village of the same name, now best known for the surviving part of the palace of the bishops of Lincoln which was converted to an almshouse in 1602 (Lyddington Bede House).¹ The whole estate, however, covered a far greater area, as shown in **Figure 7**, also encompassing Caldecott, the abandoned settlement of Snelston (in Caldecott parish), Stoke Dry and a small part of Thorpe by Water. To the north the Manor abutted against the high ground of Beaumont Chase near Uppingham (over 500ft above sea level), and it then stretched south and east down to the valley of the river Welland, to the Eye brook on the west, and to another brook running through Lyddington and along its eastern boundary with Thorpe (all about 150ft above sea level). The lands of the Manor fell administratively within the bounds of the medieval royal Forest of Rutland, which may have delayed the spread of settlement and farming in some areas. Nevertheless, from the later Anglo-Saxon period there developed the typical Midland pattern of nucleated villages surrounded by open fields, many traces of which still survive in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks.

The Manor lay astride an important route for communications, shown in **Figures 7 and 8**, part of an ancient way from London to Nottingham, which passed from Rockingham across the Welland at Caldecott and then through Lyddington on its way to Uppingham. This route (now the B672) was later superseded by a new turnpike road along the higher ground to the west, built in the mid-eighteenth century (now the A6003). On the original route, roughly in the centre of Lyddington, just to the north of the village green, there was a crossroads. From that point, one route led west to Stoke Dry, and another east towards Seaton and Seaton Grange skirting the north of Prestley Hill and the Barrows. Thorpe by Water was reached by another local route that left the southern end of Lyddington village and ran east past the south side of Bee Hill. The Manor's inhabitants benefitted from access to river communications, plenty of fresh running water, and good local soils of loam and clay, with ironstone available from the surrounding hillsides for building (see pages 38–9, 49–50).

The documented history of the Manor and estate begins with the entry in Domesday Book, recording its ownership by a Lincolnshire thegn called Bardi

Figure 8 The main route heading north from Rockingham Castle crossed the Welland at Caldecott, passed through Lyddington and travelled on to Uppingham. Note the prominence given to Lyddington's park, established by the Bishop of Lincoln in 1215. (Christopher Saxton 1559, amended by P. Lea 1579)



in the time of King Edward the Confessor (1066). Bardi, who was a significant landowner elsewhere, subsequently lost all of his estates, possibly in the crisis years of 1069–71 that witnessed the Northumbrian rebellion, a Danish attack and William the Conqueror's 'harrying of the north'. It was probably also in that period that Lyddington was granted to the bishop and his Cathedral church at Lincoln.² By 1086 the bishopric's estate included Lyddington, Stoke Dry, and Caldecott (including Snelston), probably part of Thorpe by Water, and also Holyoaks (Leicestershire) on the western side of the Eye brook, and therefore covered a large block of land perhaps up to 5,000 acres in extent (about 2,000 hectares). Study of the early forms of local place-names suggests that the composition of this 'multiple estate' may have been ancient. The name of Lyddington, the estate's 'central place', may derive from the 'farm or estate called after (or associated with) a man named Hlyda', while the names of Caldecott (literally 'cold huts'), Thorpe (perhaps 'outlying, dependent, farm'), and Stoke ('outlying farmstead' or 'dependent dairy farm') all suggest secondary settlements. A dependent relationship between Caldecott and Lyddington may also be revealed in ecclesiastical arrangements, for Caldecott's church was a daughter chapel of Lyddington's church.³

Archaeological excavations carried out in the 1970s and 1980s on the site of the later bishops' palace have demonstrated that a high-status residence, within a defensive 'ring-work' enclosure formed of a rampart and ditch, already existed in the late eleventh century. The precise line of the defences remains uncertain, but their general area is depicted in Figure 9. It seems that they were relatively modest in scale, suitable for protecting a manorial site rather than representing a powerful military stronghold. They may have been constructed by the bishop or his feudal tenant(s), although conceivably they could have



developed from a hall or estate centre owned by Bardi or his predecessors. The combination of the early manorial enclosure and an adjacent church suggests an early origin, and the general location of the complex has many features suggesting an optimal settlement site. It lies on a low hill spur about 225ft above sea level, with a gentle slope immediately to the north and slightly steeper slopes on the other three sides. As a whole, the village is reasonably sheltered between the higher ground to the north and west towards Uppingham and to the east towards Prestley Hill and Bee Hill. Supplies of fresh water come from springs in the west of the parish, and from the brook running along the eastern boundary of the parish which also provided water power for milling.

Initially, the bishops may have spent little time at Lyddington themselves. They used many of their outlying estates to support feudal sub-tenants who could provide the knight service demanded by the king, and a sub-tenant called Walter had been installed at Lyddington by 1086. A sub-manor was also

Figure 9 Reconstruction of the possible layout of Anglo-Saxon and early Norman Lyddington. (Robert Ovens)

recorded at Snelston in 1243, presumably comprising most or all of that small settlement. The Knights Hospitaller held land in Caldecott in 1246, as did the Cistercian monastery of Pipewell in Northamptonshire by the sixteenth century.⁴ Nevertheless, the bishop appears to have retained or re-established control over most of the estate, for in about 1225 the bishop's demesne (his 'home farm') and his tenants were surveyed in Lyddington, Caldecott (including land at Snelston), and part of Thorpe by Water. In the 1522 muster rolls, the bishop was still recorded as chief lord of Lyddington and Caldecott, but was not recognised as such at Thorpe by Water. Most of Thorpe lay within several other manors and in 1522 Edward Catesby, lord of the Manor of Seaton, was recognised as its chief lord.⁵

A different situation developed at Stoke Dry, where the Neville family had become established as feudal sub-tenants by the thirteenth century. The bishop remained overlord there, but held no demesne land and only a small amount of tenanted land. In 1313 the Manor was granted by John de Neville to Roger de Morewode and his wife Joan (who was probably John's daughter). It then descended in the Morewode family for most of the fourteenth century. By 1419 it had passed to Roger Flore, several times speaker of the House of Commons, whose granddaughter married Everard Digby. Although Everard, a Lancastrian supporter, was killed at the battle of Towton in 1461, his family ultimately benefitted from the Wars of the Roses and his eldest son and heir (another Everard, d. 1509) was able to retain Stoke Dry. It became the family's chief residence throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and family members were buried and commemorated in the parish church, one example being provided in **Figure 10**. The Digbys remained socially and politically prominent, although as Catholics they were sometimes regarded as politically suspect and a later Everard Digby was executed in 1606 for his role in the Gunpowder Plot.⁶

Lyddington's large and impressive church of St Andrew is the result of a complete rebuilding in the fourteenth century and extensive remodelling in the fifteenth century, but it certainly existed by 1163 when its ownership by Lincoln was confirmed by Pope Alexander III. Although it was not recorded in Domesday Book, the church's location next to the late Saxon or early Norman defended enclosure hints at an earlier origin, as do the early dates of the churches that served Lyddington's dependent settlements. At St Andrew's church in Stoke Dry there are magnificent carvings of foliage and human and animal figures on the shafts of the chancel arch of c. 1120, as shown in **Figure 11**. Even the more modest daughter church of St John the Evangelist at Caldecott has a small Norman window in the south wall of its chancel. These surviving traces of Norman work imply that a church of at least similar, but probably much earlier, date formerly stood at Lyddington.⁷

The rebuilding of Lyddington's church, presumably on a much grander scale than the original one, reflected not only its location next to the palace, but also that it was held by important clergymen from Lincoln Cathedral. About 1190 Bishop Remigius reorganised his Cathedral church of Lincoln into a chapter of secular clergymen called canons, who were headed by a dean. The property of the Cathedral was soon divided between the bishop and his dean and chapter, with some of the canons' lands being held in common and some



Figure 10 Incised stone slab memorial to Jaqueta Digby (née Ellis, d. 1496), wife of Sir Everard Digby (d. 1509), in the south aisle of the church of St Andrew, Stoke Dry. (rubbing by E.W. Axtell-Gardener, reproduced from *Rutland Magazine*, vol. 2, 1905–06)

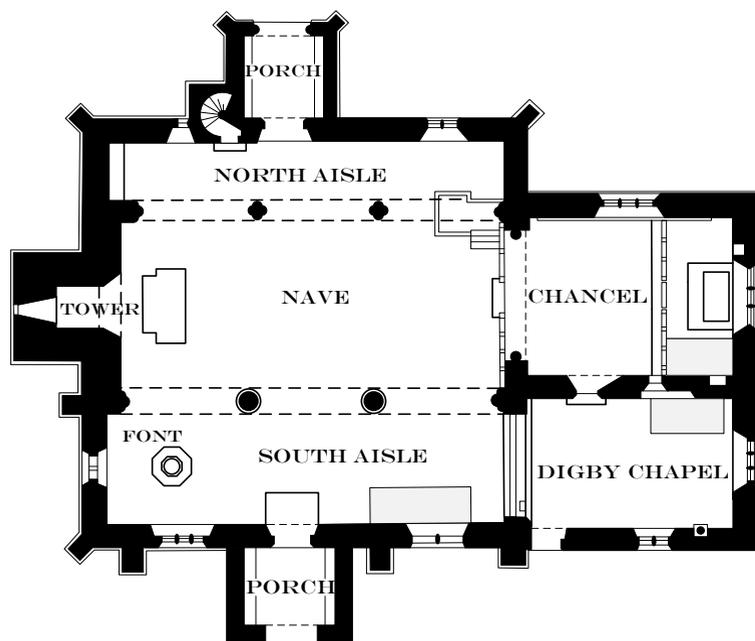


Figure 11 (a) Plan of Stoke Dry church. The church has a Norman chancel, with later enlargements of nave, tower, north and south aisles, and chapel. (Robert Ovens)
(b) Decorated Norman shaft from chancel arch of Stoke Dry church, the earliest depiction of a bell-ringer in Rutland. (Robert Ovens)

used to create prebends (endowments), attached to particular stalls in the Cathedral church held by individual canons. While the whole Manor was apportioned to the bishop's share of the estate, the local church, advowson and rectory at Lyddington were used to endow a prebendary canon (see page 62). These men have been described as almost like 'mini-bishops', for they exercised local powers of ecclesiastical visitations, courts and probate, but often their records were poorly kept, and those from Lyddington do not begin until the seventeenth century.⁸ Lyddington's Prebendal House, effectively the rectory, was located immediately east of the bishops' palace and church, and in 1535 its estate had an annual value of £20 0s 8d, of which tithes contributed £2 0s 1d. Although the prebendaries were important and wealthy clergymen they frequently failed to provide adequate services for the churches under their control, and in 1277 Bishop Richard Gravesend therefore created vicarages for many of the Cathedral's churches. At Lyddington the dual clerical appointments of prebendary and vicar continued thereafter.⁹

The bishops of Lincoln and their palace at Lyddington

The history of Lyddington was transformed by the development of its manorial enclosure into a palace for the bishops of Lincoln. Archaeological excavations have revealed that a substantial stone hall was built in the centre of the site (to the north-west of the later Bede House), probably in the mid-twelfth century. The palace may therefore have been established by Robert de Chesney (bishop 1148–63), but the first direct references to the personal presence of a bishop at Lyddington occurred when Bishop Hugh of Wells granted indulgences to all

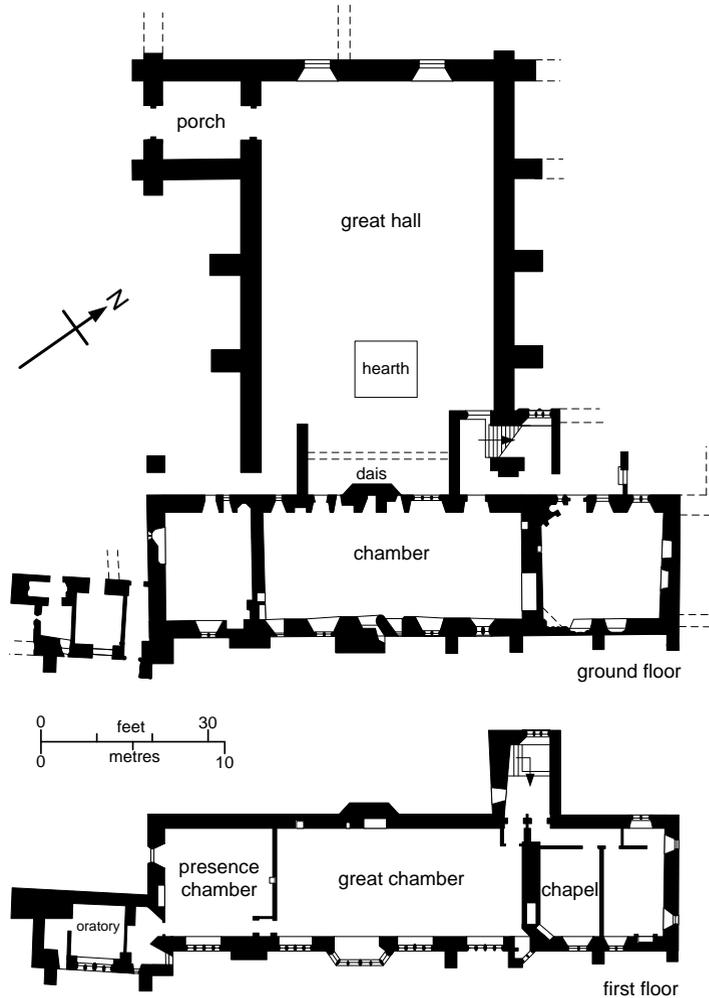


Figure 12 Conceptual reconstruction plan of the bishop's palace at Lyddington in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. (Robert Ovens, after C. and P. Woodfield, 1981–2, 1988)

those who contributed alms for the construction and repair of Rockingham Bridge over the river Welland in the period 1217–18 to 1230.¹⁰ Shortly afterwards, Lyddington was operating as residence and administrative centre for Robert Grosseteste (bishop 1235–53), the famous ecclesiastical statesman, theologian, scientist and mathematician. It would also have been used for entertaining royalty, influential noblemen and government officials, especially as it lay close to main routes passing north through the county of Rutland. During the episcopate of Richard of Gravesend (1258–79) the accommodation was sufficiently impressive to host King Edward I in 1275, 1276, and 1279, and it continued to be used extensively by Gravesend's successor, Oliver Sutton (1280–99).¹¹ In the fourteenth century the palace was upgraded under Bishop Henry Burghersh (1320–40), including a new and very large ground floor hall to replace the earlier one, the remodelling of the chamber block (the bishop's private accommodation, now the existing Bede House range), and the apparent construction of a new precinct wall on a different alignment than the former



enclosure.¹² A conjectural reconstruction of the main buildings from this time is given in **Figure 12**, while a view of the south front of the surviving bishop's chamber block, is provided as **Figure 13**.

Later bishops also stayed regularly at the palace and frequently entertained royal guests, suggesting that it remained a favoured residence. For example, William Alnwick (bishop 1436–49), keeper of the privy seal and confessor to Henry VI, used Lyddington as a base while visiting religious houses in Leicestershire. He also spent Christmas at Lyddington in 1440–1. Stained glass associated with him in the hall and great chamber of the Bede House suggests that he remodelled the accommodation. More comprehensive updating apparently occurred under bishops John Russell (1480–94) and William Smith (1495–1514), while building work that occurred c. 1509–10 was possibly in anticipation of a visit from the newly crowned Henry VIII.¹³ Certainly, recent tree-ring dating has indicated that building work was undertaken in several phases, with work of the mid fifteenth, late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries identified.¹⁴ Bishop William Atwater (1514–21) used the improved palace for both short stays and occasionally for more prolonged summer visits of five to six weeks duration.¹⁵ In 1541, his successor John Longland (1521–47) hosted what must have been a magnificent and staggeringly expensive three-day visit from Henry VIII, Queen Katherine Howard and the royal court. The Queen's letters written to Lady Rochford from Lyddington were later used at Katherine's trial for infidelity with Thomas Culpepper, also travelling in the king's entourage; all three were executed.¹⁶

Kings, nobles and leading clergymen appreciated the finest of entertainments, and in the Middle Ages most major aristocratic residences had a deer park, in which the lord and his guests could hunt. An important stage in the

Figure 13 The south front of Lyddington Bede House, the chamber block of the bishop of Lincoln's former palace converted to an almshouse in 1602. Although the building is principally of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century date, its core may well be earlier. (Pugin Studentship Prize drawing, *The Building News*, c. 1893–4)

development of Lyddington's palace was thus indicated when King John granted a licence to Bishop Hugh of Wells, allowing him to enclose part of the Forest of Rutland to create such a park in 1215.¹⁷ It was later known as the Great Park, and its boundaries can still be traced on the ground by the remains of its bank and ditch, as shown in **Figure 14**. Within its bounds, a lodge would have provided facilities for the forester or park-keeper and for hunting parties, possibly on the same site as the lodge marked on nineteenth-century maps. In the later thirteenth century, Bishop Sutton threatened to use his powers of excommunication to deter potential poachers, although the addition of stone walls, apparently created by Bishop Burghersh in the early 1330s, may have been a more practical response to such criminality.¹⁸ King John's grant had allowed the bishop to appoint a forester to look after his woods, to hold a private forest court (swanimote) and keep out dogs.¹⁹ In 1487–8, the bishop's swanimote was held at the 'old cross' in Lyddington, but local inhabitants also continued to fall under the jurisdiction of the forest laws and were sometimes convicted in the royal forest courts for poaching and other offences.²⁰ The Great Park was still a major landscape feature in the later sixteenth century (see **Figure 8**).

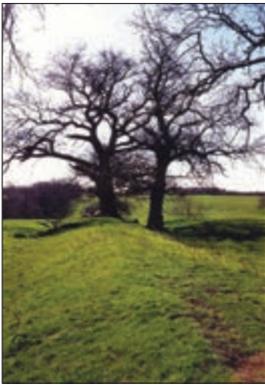


Figure 14 The surviving earthwork boundary of the medieval Great Park at Lyddington, founded after King John granted the bishop of Lincoln the right to enclose part of the Forest of Rutland for a deer park in 1215. (Peter Tomalin)

Aristocratic leisure pursuits gradually became more sophisticated over the Middle Ages, reflected at Lyddington in the establishment of a second, smaller, park called the Little Park, measuring 3½ acres, which lay to the east of the palace on former agricultural land. It was first recorded in 1348–9 and may have been part of the palace's development under Bishop Burghersh.²¹ 'Little Parks' of this type have been identified elsewhere, and probably included features such as orchards, pleasure gardens and an enhanced, perhaps ornamental, setting for such palaces. Another significant landscape change was the creation of an outstanding set of large fishponds. As **Figure 15** shows, these were adjacent to the Little Park, and perhaps contemporary with it. The fishponds constituted a major piece of landscape engineering of a type that could only be undertaken by wealthy landlords such as bishops. Such ponds played an important role in supplying the household with freshwater fish, for the dietary rules of the church forbade consumption of meat during the six weeks of Lent, on festival days and on Fridays and Saturdays. The ponds could also have provided opportunities for walking, boating, and picnicking, and formed part of a panoramic view from the palace through the Little Park and across the valley, to the rising wooded ground on Prestley and Bee Hills to the east.

More prosaically, the Lyddington estate also provided the bishops with valuable income from the rents and services of the Manor's tenants, and from the Manor's demesne land (the 'home' or manor farm). Economic assets were already substantial in 1086 when the bishop and his tenants had land for sixteen ploughs (probably somewhere between one and two thousand acres of arable), 28 acres of meadow, woodland measuring three furlongs long by two furlongs wide, and two mills.²² A significant discovery made by the current project has been that the eighteenth-century barn within the Little Park contains timbers from a large late fourteenth-century aisled barn, which may have stored the harvests or tithes from either the bishop's or the prebendary's estate (see page 119–20). An account roll from 1487–8 reveals the payment of rents from



tenants and cottagers in Lyddington, Caldecott (including Snelston), and Stoke Dry, while the demesne farms in Lyddington and Caldecott were leased out for a fixed rent. The demesne farm in Lyddington was particularly valuable, comprising 292 acres of land divided between the three great open fields of the parish – Netherfield, Middlefield and Parkfield (later Upperfield). By that date the bishop also had three mills, one in Caldecott, one in Thorpe and one called ‘Falleysmylne’ in Lyddington. The income derived from the whole estate in 1487–8 amounted to £69 14s 7d, and, after expenses were taken into account, some £48 10s 2½d could be taken in cash.²³

Many landlords established new markets and fairs on their manors in the Middle Ages to take advantage of rising commercial activity and to access goods and services for their own households. In 1215 the bishopric was granted permission to hold fairs three or four days a year and markets one day a week in all of its manors, and it is probable that a market and fair was established at Lyddington shortly afterwards.²⁴ The marketplace was located to the north of the palace and a remnant of the area, which was probably larger in the Middle Ages, survives as the village green. The lower part of the shaft of a market cross, possibly thirteenth-century, is located near its original site on that green.

Figure 15 Aerial photograph of the ‘Little Park’ adjacent to the bishop’s palace. The church and the chamber block of the palace, now the Bede House, can be seen bottom left, the Prebendary’s House was located bottom centre. On the right of the view (east) are the earthwork remains of the medieval fishponds. (Open Source Image: 2015 Google Images/2015 Bluesky)

It was standing in 1796, vandalised in 1837 but preserved locally and set up again in 1930.²⁵ In 1285 the bishop complained that his Lyddington market was being undermined by one at Uppingham. The dispute rumbled on throughout the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and included a violent attack by the men of Uppingham upon Lyddington's fair, its officers and the merchants in 1366. Although Lyddington seems to have temporarily won the struggle in the fifteenth century, Uppingham ultimately prevailed as the local market centre.²⁶

People, occupations and wealth

In contrast to our extensive knowledge of the bishops and their estate, evidence relating to the local population in the Middle Ages is comparatively slim. The total of four slaves, 26 villagers and 24 smallholders recorded in Domesday Book suggests that about 250 people may have lived within the bishop's estate in Lyddington, Stoke Dry and Caldecott by 1086.²⁷ A later survey of the bishop's estate about the year 1225 recorded that two men held land in return for military service in Caldecott and Stoke Dry, and nine free tenants held large farms for which they paid rent in both money and (relatively light) services to the bishop. Of lesser status were 32 customary or unfree tenants (otherwise known as villeins in the Middle Ages) at Lyddington and Thorpe by Water, and a further 29 at Caldecott and Snelston. These tenants owed both monetary rents and heavier labour services on the lord's demesne farm, including ploughing, harrowing, haymaking, carrying and even brewing. Their own strips of lands and those of the lord's farm would have been largely intermixed in the open-field systems that surrounded the principal settlements of Lyddington and Caldecott, evidence of which survives in ridge and furrow earthworks, as shown in **Figure 16**. Their work obligations would have been managed and organized by the Manor's reeve (tenant foreman) and bailiff (professional manager). There were also at least 41 cottagers, some of whom bore occupational surnames including Shepherd, Smith, Carpenter, Cooper, Sutor (meaning Cobbler), and Fuller (a type of cloth-worker). The total number of tenancies (113) may indicate a population of about 500 to 600 persons, double that of a century and half earlier.²⁸

Medieval population generally reached its peak in the early fourteenth century, and thereafter declined due to the arrival of the Black Death in 1348–9 and subsequent plague epidemics. Nevertheless, Lyddington's population level may have proved buoyant due to local prosperity and resulting migration into the area. By this time, the palace had developed into an especially favoured residence for the bishops, and the inhabitants also benefitted from a local market and fair and access to the remaining parts of the Forest of Rutland (providing a source of woodland grazing, underwood and game). The first collection of a new poll tax in 1377 revealed that Lyddington then had the largest population of all thirteen rural settlements in Rutland's Wrangdike Hundred. Moreover, in terms of numbers of taxpayers, the 152 at Lyddington fell not far short of the 167 recorded for the nearby small market town of Uppingham, while the larger centre of Oakham had just 334. As there were



also 85 taxpayers at Caldecott, 83 at Stoke Dry and 39 at Thorpe by Water, a total of 359 male and female inhabitants in the area over the age of fourteen were liable for the tax. If these numbers are adjusted for the age structure of a pre-industrial society, the Manor's population may have lain above 600 persons, despite the impact of plague.²⁹

The local population continued to benefit from the wealth generated by the visits of the bishop, his household and vast numbers of visitors and suitors throughout the later Middle Ages and into the Tudor period. Assessments in the muster rolls of 1522 and for the lay subsidy of 1524–5 indicate a minimum adult (male) tax-paying population of around 130 for the whole Manor, and again a possible total population of around 600 persons. In 1524–5 the inhabitants of the parish of Lyddington alone paid the second highest amount of tax out of 54 parishes in Rutland, only just exceeded by Oakham, although Lyddington's relative position was skewed by the great individual wealth of Edward Watson (assessed at £200 in goods), apparently the richest man in the county of Rutland.

The individual settlements within the Manor varied in wealth and social structure. In 1524–5 Lyddington had an economically varied population, which included a substantial class of wealthy husbandmen assessed up to £20 each, alongside many men assessed on goods at 40s or wage earners at 20s. Despite the presence of many solid farmers, Caldecott was overall a poorer community,

Figure 16 Aerial photograph of Caldecott revealing evidence of the ridge and furrow of former open fields surrounding the settlement. The main road from Rockingham is on the bottom left (south) of the view, crossing the railway and Eye Brook into the main village street. The pre-Turnpike route to Lyddington leaves the village and runs to the right of the view (east). (RAF Aerial Survey, January 1947; Rutland County Museum)



Figure 17 Memorial brass of Edward Watson (d. 1530) and his family. Watson, registrar to several bishops, was an important local landowner and farmer who held the leases of Lyddington's prebendal estate and the royal castle and park of Rockingham. (Monumental Brass Society)

for while it had half the population level of Lyddington, it had only one fifth of its wealth. In both communities, about 20 percent of the men listed in the muster roll, identified as servants and labourers, were described as 'young men & poor', presumably because they had no land or goods worth valuing. Stoke Dry had a more sharply-defined social structure, for it was dominated by Sir Everard Digby (d. 1540), who had lands valued at £120 in 1524–5. Beneath Digby were three men with £10 in goods, one with £7, three men with 40s, and 11 men assessed at either 26s 8d or 20s in wages. Most of these lesser inhabitants were Digby's tenants, labourers and servants. Thorpe by Water may have been similar, for it had a small population dominated by a few wealthy individuals such as Christopher Sheffield, gentleman, and William Harrison and William Uffington, although they were both described as husbandmen.³⁰

At the upper end of the social scale, service to the bishops remained one key path to local importance. In the early sixteenth century, the bishop's principal local officer was the bailiff John Stangar, who managed the bishop's demesne farm, orchards, gardens and parks. He was appointed for life, paid a large annuity and dressed in his lord's livery (uniform). All the tenants within the Lyddington estate were commanded to give him their attention, help and comfort in the exercise of the office. In the 1522 muster roll, he had lands worth only £4, but goods worth £50, presumably reflecting how well he was paid.³¹ An even wealthier episcopal servant, and one whose family settled in Lyddington, was the aforementioned Edward Watson, registrar to several bishops of Lincoln. He married the niece of Bishop Smith and leased Lyddington's prebendal estate. When he died in 1530 he left many bequests to the local community and he was buried in Lyddington's church along with his family, their memorial brass being reproduced in **Figure 17**. As already noted, Watson was the highest-ranked local taxpayer in 1524–5 by a wide margin, and he was also the only local man to return a full set of arms and armour in the 1522 muster roll.³² The local clergy must also have played a significant role in the community, and economically most of them were in the same league as the wealthier husbandmen. In 1522 the incumbent of Stoke Dry held a parsonage valued at £10 and goods assessed at 20 marks (£13 6s 8d); the vicar of Lyddington had land worth 20 marks and £10 in goods; and the parson at Lyddington land worth £24, but no goods. The priest at Caldecott was poorer, reflecting the subordinate nature of his church, and only had land worth £6 and goods of 26s 8d. The relative incomes and values of the clerical appointments were broadly similar in 1535.³³

An exception to the general pattern of a buoyant local community occurred at Snelston. This place had always been a small and poor settlement, perhaps created in the earlier Middle Ages as settlement and farming extended onto higher land in the north of Caldecott parish. Snelston was recorded separately in taxation records up to the early fourteenth century, but later on it appears to have been subsumed in the returns for Caldecott. Surviving earthworks, used to reconstruct the settlement in **Figure 18**, suggest that it comprised a single street, orientated east to west, with house platforms on either side. The site was later cut in half by the eighteenth-century turnpike road. A settlement at Snelston still existed in 1487–8, when a toft and seven virgates of land (indicating several hundred acres of farmland) brought the bishop rents of 70s 6d.³⁴ The community possibly lingered on into the early sixteenth century, but it seems to have been abandoned shortly afterwards. Likely reasons for its abandonment include a small and declining population, migration of remaining residents in search of better opportunities, and engrossment and enclosure of the fields for grazing.

The Manor and its tenants were closely controlled and carefully managed by the bishop. As well as a standard manorial court to which all his tenants owed attendance, the bishop had also been granted royal or public court rights known as the 'view of frankpledge and court leet' for Lyddington, Caldecott and Stoke Dry, which dealt with more major crimes, public nuisances and national legislation such as the assizes of bread and ale.³⁵ From the later fourteenth century, however, there was a general improvement in the personal

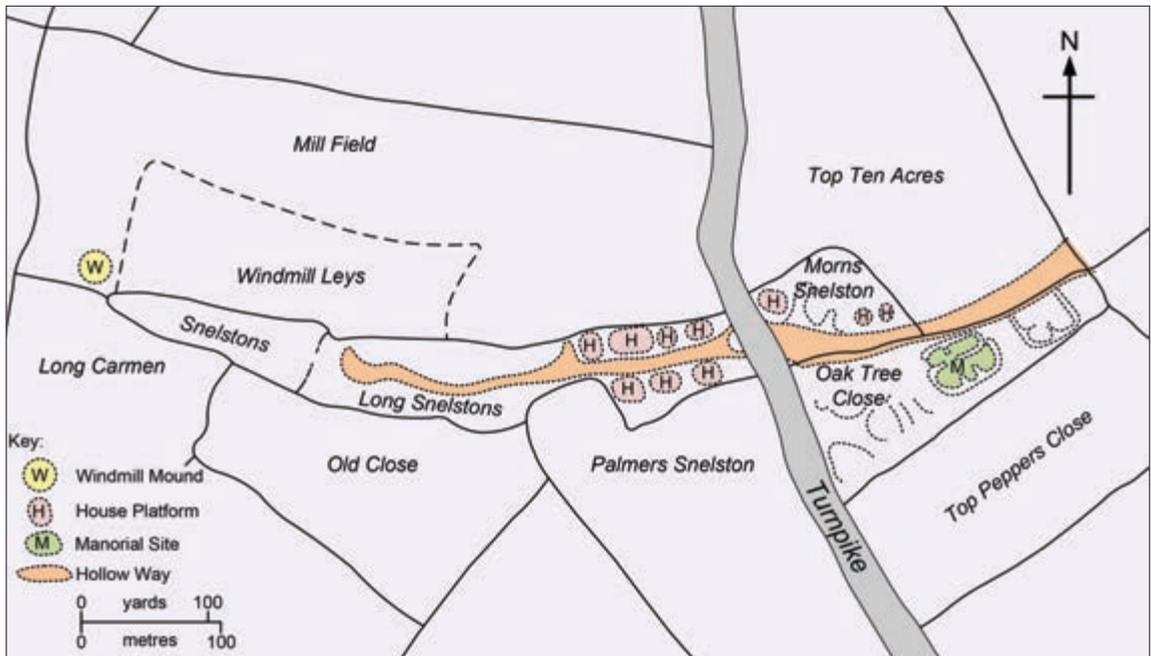


Figure 18 Reconstruction of the deserted settlement at Snelston, north of Caldecott, showing the later field names. It was perhaps finally abandoned sometime in the sixteenth century and its land turned over to grazing. Earthworks, in the form of a hollow way and house platforms, are still visible. (Robert Ovens)

status of customary (unfree) tenants. Landlords generally found it impossible to maintain their tenants' servile status, as wealth was redistributed among the smaller population, wages increased in response to the scarcity of labour and new opportunities arose to accumulate land. The change may have been somewhat slower on the manors of conservative clergymen, and some of Lyddington's serfs only gained their freedom as late as 1545.³⁶ By this time their servile status must have seemed increasingly anachronistic, and when Bishop John Longland emancipated John Sismey (Scismer) of Thorpe by Water in 1534 in order that he might marry a free-born woman, the bishop stated that 'seince all men from the beginning were born free, we think it a pious and meritorious act to restore to their pristine and natural liberty those whom the law of nations has subjected to servitude'.³⁷ A parallel development occurred with the transformation of the Manor's medieval customary tenures into copyholds, whereby incoming tenants gained greater security of tenure through possession of a copy of the court roll entry authenticating their possession of the holding. As a result of these changes the way was open for greater social mobility, and in later centuries the Sismey family, for example, became important landowners in Caldecott, Thorpe by Water and Lyddington (see pages 60–1, 63–4, 80).

It is difficult to reconstruct where all the people of the Manor lived in the Middle Ages, the pattern of their tenements, and the nature of their housing from documentary evidence alone. The manorial enclosure that preceded the bishops' palace, together with the adjacent church, were undoubtedly core elements within Lyddington's early medieval village plan. Archaeological evidence revealing occupation along the line of Main Street, immediately to the north of the enclosure, perhaps as early as the tenth century, has informed the

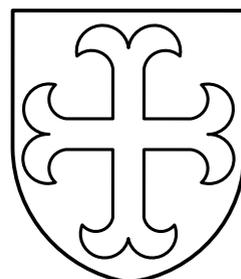
reconstruction provided in **Figure 9**. It seems probable, therefore, that the medieval pattern of a nucleated village and surrounding open fields had become established well before the Norman conquest. The settlement's plan probably changed as the episcopal palace developed, and especially when a market was established in the thirteenth century. Many medieval settlements were re-planned around new marketplaces, and the examination of plot boundaries on much later maps suggests that a new rectangular marketplace was accompanied by a group of regular house plots on its eastern side. This pattern is similar to other medieval planned layouts associated with new markets established by seigneurial lords, including the bishops of Lincoln. Lyddington's market area was probably larger than the surviving green, for it was apparently later reduced by infilling and encroachment. The existing long linear appearance of the village travelling north-west may be explained as the settlement spreading along the main road towards Uppingham in line with population growth. This project's programme of building survey and tree-ring dating has uncovered just sufficient evidence in the village's surviving houses to confirm that the settlement had already developed in this way during the Middle Ages (see page 122).

From the bishops to the Cecils

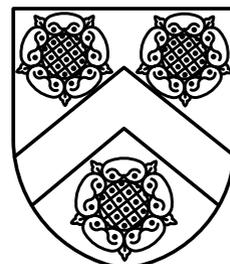
The Manor of Lyddington remained a possession of the bishops of Lincoln until the mid-sixteenth century, a time when many wealthy bishoprics were dispossessed of their estates by the crown. After Bishop John Longland died in May 1547, the Protestant government of Edward VI, led by the protector the Duke of Somerset, began to strip the diocese of its land. Longland's successor Henry Holbeach had his income more than halved, and included amongst the spoils was a grant of Lyddington and Spaldwick to King Edward VI on 26th September 1547.³⁸ Lyddington was subsequently granted by the crown in May 1548 to Sir Gregory Cromwell, the son of Henry VIII's late minister Thomas Cromwell, and to his wife Elizabeth, daughter to Edward Seymour and aunt to King Edward VI. Gregory and Elizabeth's principal residence was at Launde Abbey (Leicestershire). However, the grant included a reversion to Gregory's friend William Cecil, secretary to Edward VI, and his wife Mildred, whose coat of arms is shown in **Figure 19**. After Gregory Cromwell's death in 1551, Lyddington passed to his widow, Elizabeth, who married Sir John Paulet, Baron St John, in 1554. Ownership of the estate passed to the Cecils on Elizabeth's death in 1568.³⁹

The Cecil family had long been in royal service. William's grandfather David and father Richard had both served Henry VII and Henry VIII. In 1520 they were appointed as joint keepers of the royal Manor of King's Cliffe (Northamptonshire), which was later to become a Cecil possession. The acquisition of Lyddington must have suited the family very well, because William's father, Richard, had already built up an estate in the East Midlands, especially around Burghley (Stamford, Lincolnshire) and other places in Northamptonshire and Rutland. William Cecil was the most important statesman in Elizabethan England, serving as secretary to Elizabeth I (1558–71) before finally becoming her Lord Treasurer (1571–98). Like so many estates in the sixteenth century,

Figure 19 Coats of arms of principal landowners in Lyddington Manor.



William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln (1436–49)
(Robert Ovens)



William Smith, Bishop of Lincoln (1495–1514)
(Robert Ovens)



Sir William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, KG. (Burghley House Preservation Trust)

Lyddington had therefore passed from the church to a rising lay family with close connections to the Tudor court and government, and thereafter it has remained in Cecil ownership as part of the estate of the Earls or Marquesses of Exeter until the present day.⁴⁰

The fortunes of the bishopric's former palace after 1547 are poorly documented, but it seems unlikely that the estate's new owners (first the Cromwell family and then the Cecil family) maintained it. Certainly, William Cecil was richly rewarded by the crown and he built three spectacular houses, designed to impress royalty, neighbours, friends and visitors: (i) the family's inherited house at Burghley, Stamford, remodelled 1556–61 and again from 1575; (ii) Cecil House, Westminster, built in the years after 1560; and (iii) Theobalds, fourteen miles north of London on the road between the capital and Stamford, bought and developed after 1564. His sons (Thomas, Earl of Exeter, and Richard, Earl of Salisbury) also concentrated on equally magnificent houses at Wimbledon and Hatfield.⁴¹ In this context, maintaining Lyddington would have been both costly and of little purpose, and most of the palace may have been demolished in the later sixteenth century. Only the bishops' former personal apartments survived, to be converted by Thomas Cecil into the magnificent almshouse known as Lyddington Bede House. The demolition of the rest of the former palace at Lyddington and the change of landlord and management must also have had significant implications for the livelihoods of local inhabitants. The impact of these changes, and of wider shifts in economy and society, upon the people, buildings and landscape of the Manor, are among the themes explored in the following chapters.



SECTION TWO

Social and Economic History 1550–1800

Vanessa Doe

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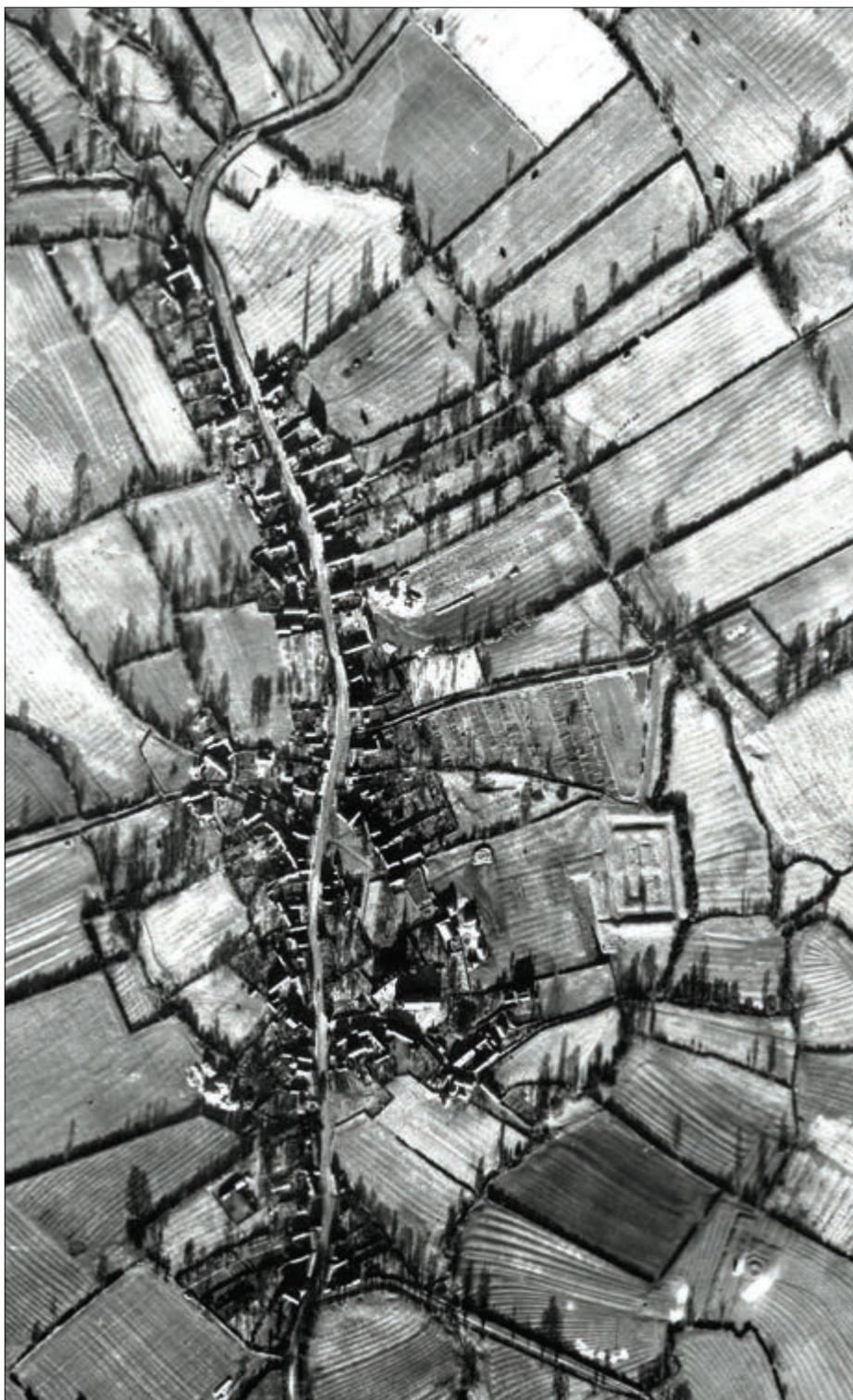


Figure 20 Aerial view of Lyddington village, showing the long narrow village with the crossroads at the centre. RAF Aerial Survey, January 1947. (RCM)

Topography

The previous chapter gave a detailed account of Lyddington Manor in the medieval period. This section of the book aims to take up the story when the Manor changed hands in the mid-sixteenth century and describes the many adjustments that took place in the community as a result.

The bishop's palace in Lyddington had no place in Cecil's plans, although in the 1560s it must have remained relatively intact, along with its setting in the Little Park with its orchards and fishponds, and the Great Park for hunting to the north-west of the village. The village itself remained in its linear form and the surrounding farmland continued to be cultivated in open fields (see pages 68–71). However, the economic and social life of Lyddington went through a period of great change in the last half of the sixteenth century. With the departure of the bishop, Lyddington no longer had a resident lord or the many visitors or suitors at the palace bringing business to the village, nor was there employment in the service of a great estate. The palace itself was left to decay and the building materials re-used in the village and elsewhere. The Bishop's Great Park existed for a number of years, but was eventually leased to a local landowner, cleared of trees, and grassland closes laid out within its boundaries. The fishponds were abandoned and the Little Park leased as grazing; the barn there, much reduced in size, probably built out of the remains of the medieval structure.

Whereas in the Bishop's time, his well-rewarded servants may have built and furnished some magnificent houses, they had all disappeared by 1600. The Survey commissioned by the Cecils in 1563 showed 32 houses and 45 cottages in the village of Lyddington, 77 households indicating a population figure of about 350. Caldecott had 32 households and a population of about 145. For a number of reasons, the further calculation of population is difficult in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but it seems that if Lyddington did not actually reduce in size, it failed to follow other villages in a period of growth and expansion. It seems to have been much reduced by the changing circumstances.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Lyddington village retained many of the features from its medieval past. Its layout was unaltered (**Figure 20**). The recent buildings survey has uncovered medieval building work at both the north and the south ends of the village street (see **Figure 77**). Neither branch of the crossroads at its centre had developed a great deal, although Mullions, a house beside Stoke Road on its south side, had medieval features, (see pages 117–18, 278) and on the eastern arm (now Chapel Lane), the corner

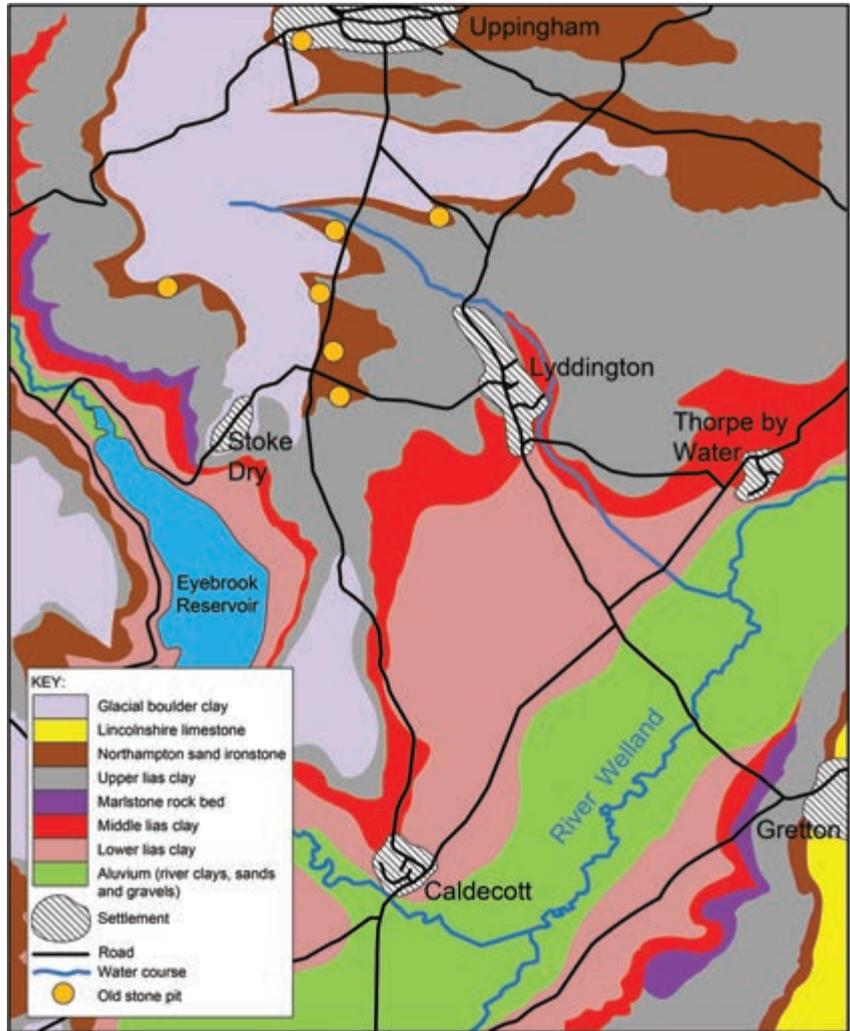


Figure 21 Geological map of the Lyddington area. (Robert Ovens)

plot was listed as a cottage in the 1563 Survey of the Cecil estate. It is now occupied by Swan House (see page 295).

The Layout of the Settlements and their Fields

At Lyddington the stream flowing south down the eastern side of the valley into the Welland may have determined the site of the early village on a clay mound, occupied in the seventeenth century by the remains of the bishop's palace, the church and a probable marketplace on what is now The Green. From this centre, the village (as we know it) spread out north and south to form one long main street (see Figure 20). The village and its fields covered just over 2,000 acres of cultivable land, much of which may have been cleared

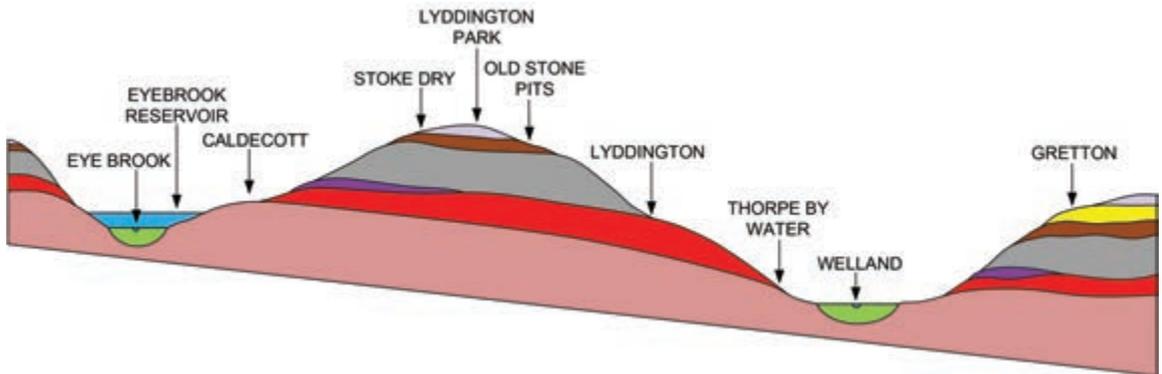


Figure 22 Geological section of the Lyddington area. (Robert Ovens)

over time from the forest (see page 20). As can be seen from the geological map and section (Figures 21 and 22), Lyddington, like Caldecott and Thorpe by Water, lies in an area of lias clays, with alluvial soils in the flat valley bottom. On the slopes above Lyddington and Stoke Dry are beds of ironstone from the Northampton Sand formation, which are capped by deposits of boulder clay on the higher ground towards Uppingham. The stone used so widely for local buildings in Lyddington, Caldecott and Stoke Dry came from quarries along this band of ironstone, where the material was readily accessible and not buried more deeply under the boulder clay (see page 124). In Thorpe, the closest source of stone was the Lincolnshire limestone from the escarpment along the south side of the Welland valley, so the buildings here are of limestone, not ironstone. In the Lyddington area, the available outcrops of ironstone were not extensive enough, nor easily accessible enough to provide stone for boundary walls in any of the villages of the Manor. Old enclosures were most usually found fenced with hedging containing hawthorn, blackthorn, elder and other shrubs. There were few enclosures, though: Lyddington will have had the typical featureless, windswept appearance of many open field villages in the Midlands with few natural features, except in the closes belonging to the farms along the village street (see pages 68–71 and Figures 167, 326).

Building plots were laid out on both sides of the main street and for a short distance along the line of Stoke Road running west from the village centre. By the seventeenth century, buildings on these plots mainly had houses lying parallel to the street, with service buildings and farmyards behind (see Figures 326, 368). The plots on the east side of Main Street, running between the street and the stream, were appreciably larger than the plots on the west side. It is likely that some village industries were located there. The survey of Lyddington completed in 1563 showed there were tan yards, a malting kiln later known as the ‘common furnace’ and a corn mill in this part of the village.

The name of the stream down the eastern side of the valley is uncertain. It was matched to the west of the village by other water supplies from a spring line to the west of Main Street north from Stoke Road. These springs supplied enough water for tanning vats in the eighteenth century and for washhouses in the nineteenth century, but they have mostly been run into culverts and filled in today. Both the springs and the main stream provided fresh running water. The main stream to the east of Main Street was utilised to provide water power for at least one corn mill (see page 47), and later to provide water for the

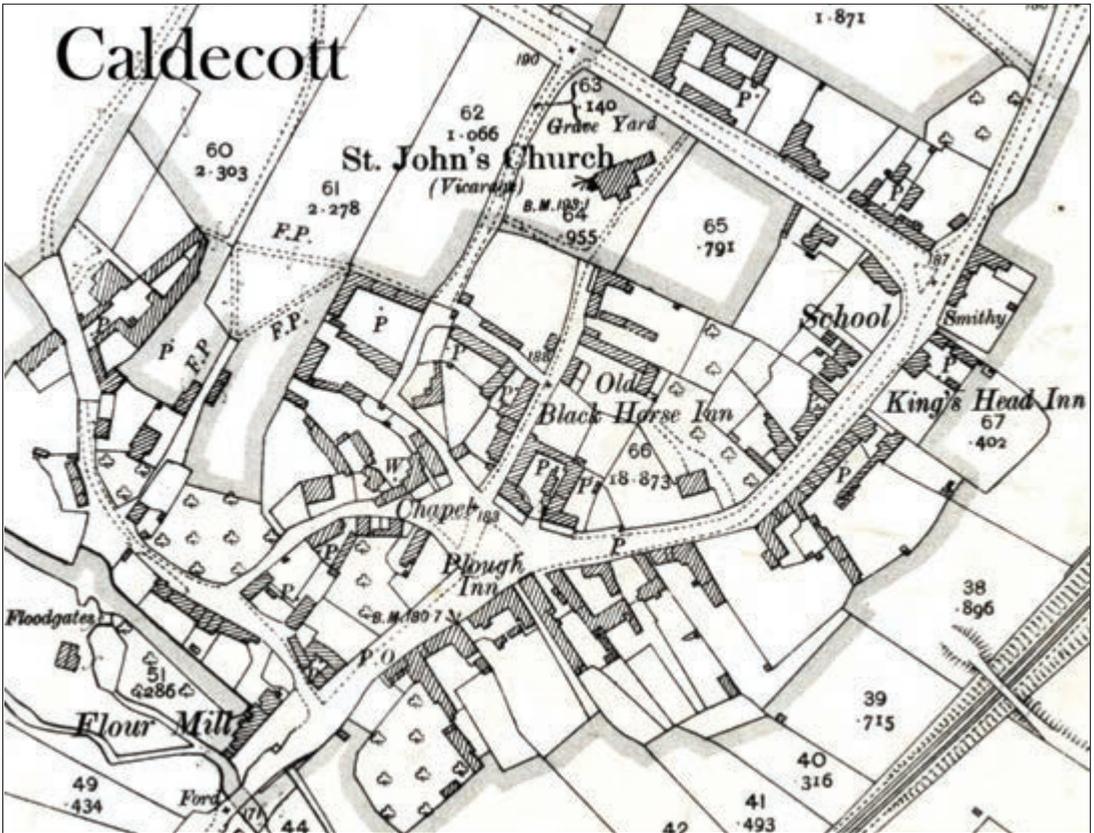


Figure 23 Caldecott village from the Ordnance Survey Series II map of 1904. (RCM)

tanneries established in the closes behind the north-eastern developments along Main Street. Maltsters in Lyddington may also have used this source of water for their steeping, although spring water may have been more suitable. A spring, known as 'The Goat', rose to the west of Main Street, then ran over the road and into a channel on the northern boundary of the Little Park, eventually running out into the main stream. (see page 283 and Figure 24).

In contrast to Lyddington's marked linear development, Caldecott was a compact rectangular settlement with a green towards its south-western side, near the watermills and the river crossings (see Figures 4, 23, 169). There are some indications that it was laid out originally on a grid system, suggesting a possible planned settlement from the medieval period. It occupied a prominent site near the confluence of two important rivers: the Welland, the county boundary with Northampton; and the Eye, the boundary between Rutland and Leicestershire. It occupied a strategic position by their respective crossing points, the bridge over the Welland built and maintained by the Bishops of Lincoln, and the ford over the Eye. Fertile land was farmed on the hills to the north of the village where the open fields of Caldecott and Snelston lay. The village of Snelston became depopulated, probably in the late fifteenth century, and is now a deserted village site, bisected by the later turnpike road, now the A6003¹ (see Figure 18). Caldecott, like Lyddington and their neighbour to the east at Thorpe

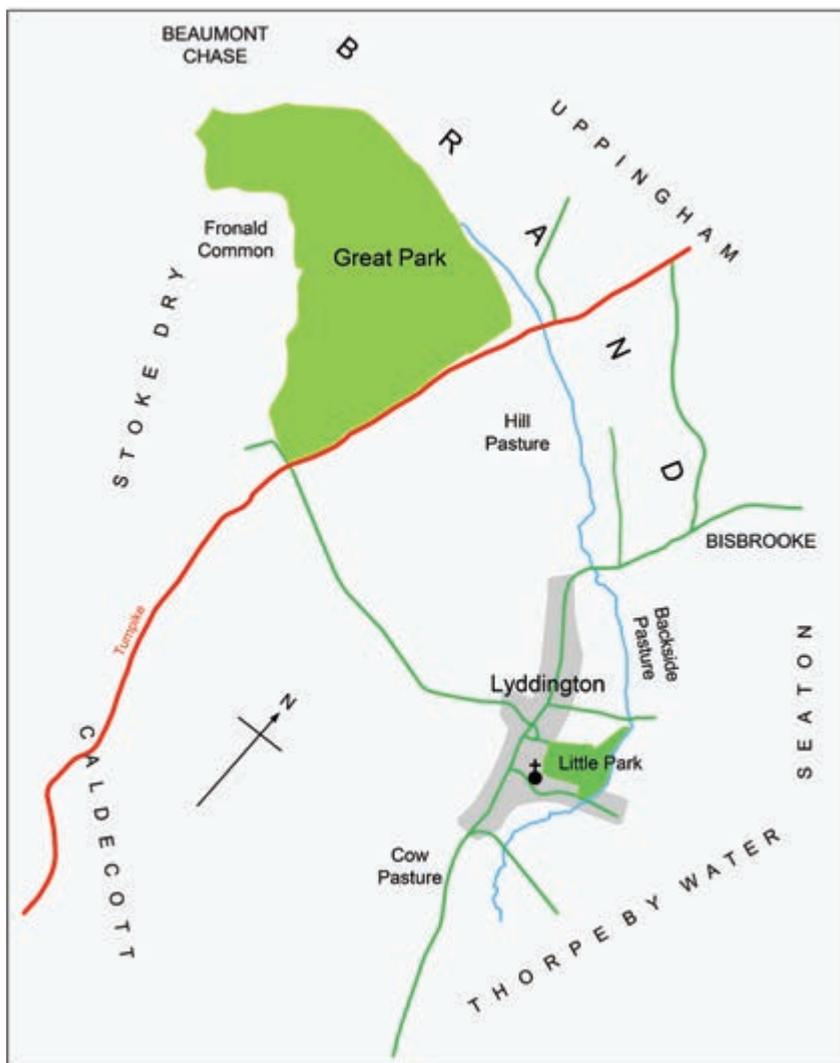


Figure 24 The Bishop's Parks in Lyddington. (Robert Ovens)

by Water, not only had a good and productive arable acreage farmed in common on the open field system, but also excellent and extensive grassland, mainly farmed in common in strips as meadows on the northern banks of the Welland.

Stoke Dry village lay on the west side of the Manor on the west-facing slope of the ridge above the river Eye, bounded on the north by Lyddington Park and the woodland of Beaumont Chase. To the south its boundaries were the open fields of Caldecott and Snelston, and an area of farmland on the west side of the river Eye known as Holyoaks. It was originally a small compact settlement of one street, with the church (Figures 5, 25) and the old Manor House on the south side. The ground here between the village and the river was hilly, and therefore not very suitable for arable cultivation. Presumably, though, the village had some open arable fields at some point in the past, but in about 1626, most

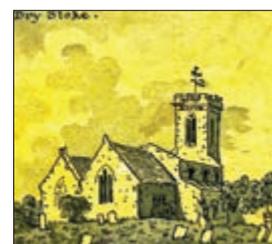


Figure 25 Stoke Dry Church from north-east in 1797. (RCM)

of the village was enclosed and the villagers turned to pastoral farming, rearing cattle and sheep in fenced grassland enclosures² (see **Figure 300**).

Lyddington, like most open field villages when fully developed, contained its large cropping units or Fields broken down into furlongs, in which strips of arable cultivation lay (see pages 68–71). These were surveyed in 1569 soon after the village came into the hands of the Cecils,³ and at intervals by the Burghley estate until all the village landholdings were broken up into individual farms or allotments by the process of Enclosure by Act of Parliament in 1799. The map of the Enclosure in 1804 shows the ‘old closes’ around the farms in the village. The same map can also be used to trace the boundaries of the five open fields farmed in common (**Figure 26**).

To the north-west, between the village and the Bishop’s Park was an area known as Park Field, later Upper Field. It ran right up to the Park wall along the line of the later turnpike road and went for a distance along the southern boundary of the park toward Stoke Dry, probably as far as The Fronnal, a steep triangular area of common held jointly between the two villages. It crossed the line of a track, which was then called Cromwell Seke or Crumwell Gate, later Wood Lane (now Stoke Road) and ran southwards to the boundary with Caldecott arable fields and an area of Lyddington’s open fields called Holbrook. This was a relatively small open field area, which lay between the Upper Field and Middle Field. Middle Field lay to the south-west of the village, bounded on its western edge by Caldecott’s open fields and to the east by Nether Field. Nether Field, formerly East Field, lay to the south of the village, bounded on the east by the brook, the boundary with Thorpe by Water. Through the Nether Field ran a lane or a trackway south from the village. This is now the Gretton road and leads to a bridge over the Welland and Gretton mill. In the sixteenth century, this track led from the village down to the meadows on the banks of the Welland. At harvest time, a fence had to be erected across the arable lands in Nether Field for access from the village with carts and horses. To the south-east of the village was a much smaller area of open field on the slopes of Bee Hill, north of the lane to Thorpe. It was known as Windmill Field and lay around the windmill. To the north of that were two ancient closes, Chantry Close and Prestley’s Close lying on the east side of the brook, on the western edges of Prestley (Priestley) Hill. They were already enclosed and leased as freehold pastures in 1569.

In Lyddington, there seem to have been, certainly by the sixteenth century, extensive areas of common grazing. This consisted not only of the open commons, but large areas taken from arable production to provide grazing for the village cattle. The main cowpasture (**Figure 24**) was on a hilly area to the east of the Park wall, later called Hill Pasture, watered by streams rising from springs in the Great Park. Cattle could be driven up to the pasture from the village via Stoke Road. The line of the old drove is now the footpath, running north-west and quite steeply uphill from the point where Stoke Road bends to the south-west. There was also a cowpasture to the south of the town in Nether Field where there was a regular supply of water. It lay beside the stream to the south of the Windmill Hill and east of Copper Hill. It was also fed by a stream, rising in Jettys Close, crossing Stoke Road and turning south-eastward to cross Main Street to the north of No. 17 Main Street, where there was a mortar (sand)

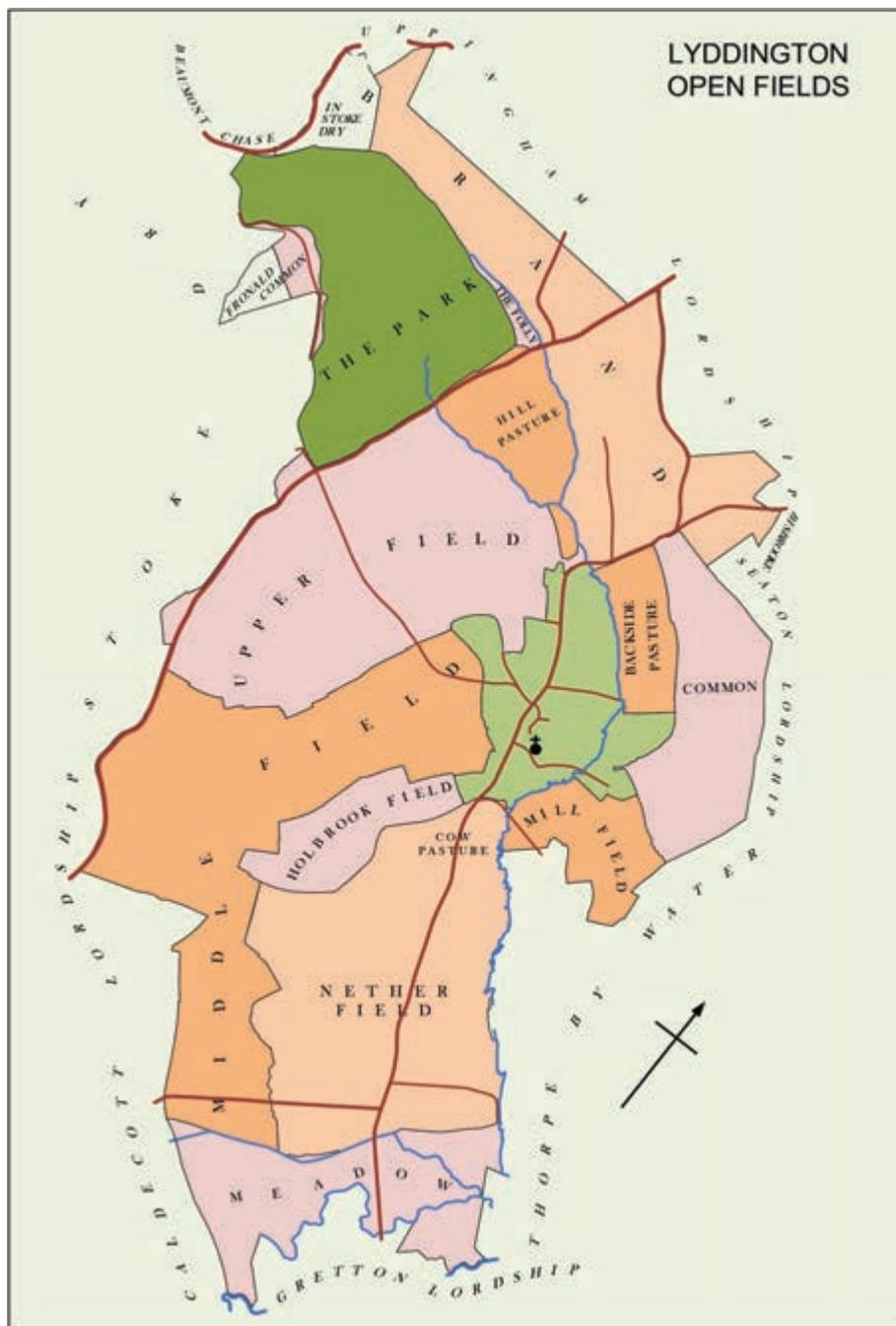


Figure 26 Map of Lyddington fields and commons based on the Lyddington Enclosure Map of 1804. (Robert Ovens)

pit. In the cowpasture area at the north end of Nether Field, it fed two ponds, clearly shown on the 1848 estate map. Another area used as cowpasture, called Backside pasture, lay to the east of the village on the side of Prestley Hill. It lay in an area probably considered too steep to be ploughed.

Pasture was also found in places among the open field arable furlongs. Many strips, farmed on the 'up-and-down' system, were managed as grass leys for a period before reverting to arable. There were also grass baulks lying between the furlongs or irregular shaped strips. These were often grazed, but animals had to be tethered or fenced in to protect the crops. Some leys were enclosed and became permanent pasture, like Jettys close to the north of Stoke Road and possibly Holbrook. This was apparently down to pasture in 1625, for which five villagers paid £2 rent,⁴ but may have reverted later to arable cultivation.

The Commons in Lyddington lay mostly in an area called the Brand, lying on the north side of the village and running as an extensive area of 'waste' from Beaumont Chase in the west to Bisbrooke and Seaton to the east (Figure 24). This area of common was used by Uppingham, Bisbrooke and Seaton as well as Lyddington, Stoke Dry and Thorpe by Water, and there were arguments as to how this area should be allotted to the many different interests among the inter-commoners, which delayed the Enclosure of the villages until the end of the eighteenth century. Villagers also had right of common in Lyddington Great Park until the trees were grubbed up and the land enclosed in the early seventeenth century (see pages 48–9). Wood Lane, a track, now used as a bridle path and the continuation of Stoke Road, ran north-west from where the road from Lyddington to Stoke Dry bends towards the south, and crossed an area known as the Fronnal (Fronald) where Lyddington and Stoke Dry both held common rights. It continued, skirting the boundary of the Bishop's Park into areas of 'sales', farmed woodland with fenced coppices, providing underwoods for fuel, bark and poles. Beaumont Chase at the end of Wood Lane was also used for wood-grazing and was a significant source of underwood, fuel and building timber. Another important area of common lay to the east of the village, above Backside Pasture on the northern slopes of Prestley Hill. It was crossed by the track from Lyddington to Seaton and there were common rights held there by Seaton and Thorpe by Water.

Thorpe and Caldecott were open field villages of the traditional type, with open field arable, meadow on the banks of the Welland and commons on the upland areas to the north (Figure 27). Caldecott used the western parts of the Brand and wood pasturage in Beaumont Chase, while Thorpe had pastures on the Barrows, and also shared the upper slopes of Prestley Hill with Lyddington. In many ways, these were typical open-field villages, as found throughout the Midlands. The countryside to the west of Lyddington was, by contrast, not given over to arable cultivation on a large scale, but was an area predominantly farmed for stock-rearing, particularly sheep farming. Such open field cultivation as was used there will have become a liability as animal husbandry became more important in terms of profitability. It is not surprising, then, that the whole of Stoke Dry was enclosed by the 1620s. In 1627, the then Lord of the Manor, Kenelm Digby, came to an agreement with the rector of Stoke Dry parish, Reverend Humphrey Stevens, over the allocation of tithes. There were probably some areas of open field cultivation on the ridge to the east of the village along which the later turnpike road was built, but the landscape from Stoke Dry to Stockerston (and possibly even Horninghold) was broken down into enclosed pastures held, not in common, but in individual ownership.



Documentary sources confirm this was sheep-rearing country (see **Figure 300**). The parish rates in Stoke Dry in the early eighteenth century, for example, were not based on rental value, but on the number of sheep kept, rated by the hundred. Celia Fiennes, during her stay in Uppingham in 1698, was told of a grazier in Stockerston with over 2,000 sheep.⁵ She observed the sheep to be 'very large fine sheep', a point echoed by Defoe on his tour of the Midlands (see page 67).

Figure 27 Aerial view of Thorpe by Water showing remnants of open field farming. RAF Aerial Survey, January 1947. (RCM)

Communications

Lyddington lay on a crossroads, but for some reason never developed along the east-to-west approaches. The important road from the south came via a crossing on the Welland between Rockingham and Caldecott and ran out of Caldecott past the church turning eastwards after the village to follow the line of a footpath running northeast to enter Lyddington just south of the line of farms at the southern end of Main Street. It ran on up the village past its northern end, where, encountering the steep slopes of the Brand, it probably ran upwards diagonally in a north-westerly direction across the contours to the top of the Brand, from whence it made its descent into Uppingham, as it does today.

The centre of Lyddington also formerly had a road approaching directly from the east, surely the direction most likely to be used by the bishop and his



Figure 28 Woodland in and around Lyddington Manor c.1610, from John Speed's Map of Rutland.

entourage, and the route by which goods from Lyddington could be exchanged in Stamford. A part of this route may be preserved as Chapel Lane, which bridges the stream at its eastern end and continues as a bridleway to Seaton, past Seaton Grange. The line of this trackway from Lyddington appears to have been straightened by the Enclosure award boundaries and the later planting of a wood on Prestley Hill. The path may well have descended Prestley Hill diagonally in a south-westerly direction, to enter the village through the Little Park and onto a track to the Green. It may, on the other hand, have bridged the stream at Chapel Lane, as it does today, to turn south onto a still-existing path, and approached the town through the Little Park along its northern boundary (Figure 20). A second eastern route came from Thorpe by Water over the south side of Bee Hill to join Main Street at the south end of Lyddington. This may have been used as another route to Seaton, but low-lying ground around Thorpe would have been difficult to negotiate, and it may have

been mainly used a footway for Thorpe people at the west end of the settlement there, to attend their parish church in Lyddington.

The approach from the west was by Stoke Road, an ancient track leading from Lyddington to Stoke Dry (**Figure 20**). In the 1569 terrier it was known as Cromwell Syke, but later became Cromwell Lane, and ran from the village westwards over the open fields to the south-eastern boundary of the Park. There it branched, the southern part entering Stoke Dry past the church, and the northern section, now a bridleway and known as Wood Lane, continuing along the Park boundary to Beaumont Chase. Either of these routes could have been used to descend to the Eye Brook crossing and so into Leicestershire, and the market and fairs at Hallaton and other towns, including Leicester.

The north-south route from Uppingham through Lyddington to Rockingham was part of an important long-distance route for goods and livestock from Nottingham, on their way through Northamptonshire to the London market and the markets and fairs on London's northern approach, including Northampton and Bedford. By the mid-eighteenth century, there were moves to build a turnpike road from Nottingham to Kettering, crossing Rutland through Oakham and Uppingham. The Act setting up the Trust and agreeing the route was passed in 1755 (see pages 102–5).

Mills

The Lyddington village survey in 1563 shows that, at that time, the village had a corn watermill, a windmill and a horse mill. Rented by the township, there was a (presumably communal) malt mill and a malt kiln, the latter probably in Chapel Lane near the western bank of the stream where Kiln Field is today. It later became the town 'furnace' and probably changed its use several times over the years as farmers built their own malt kilns and bread ovens. It may latterly have become a lime kiln.

The watermills were mentioned in a lease to George Sheffield in 1636.⁶ He leased from the estate one watermill in Lyddington called Fuldimill, a second watermill in Thorpe by Water on the Welland, a windmill 'upon the hill' and one horse mill. These were leased for 21 years at 4 guineas and 8d a year. The horse mill is not mentioned again, but the windmill, on the slopes of Bee Hill at the southern end of the village, continued in use into the nineteenth century and its remains can be clearly seen on the ground today. Both the watermills also survived in use. The one on the Welland at Thorpe by Water was still run by the Sharman family from Lyddington at the time of the Thorpe Enclosure Award and map in 1853. The watermill in Lyddington, on the stream to the east of the village, was leased to Daniel Luff in 1735, as the latest of a long line of millers.⁷ (see pages 314–15) When he retired in 1747, repairs had to be agreed on all three mills, two watermills and one windmill in Lyddington, before Edward Sharman would accept the lease, so the mill may have struggled on to the middle of the eighteenth century.⁸ By the time of the Enclosure Award map in 1804, it had gone (see page 318 and **Figure 397**).

In 1563 there was also a tanyard. Later, several tanyards were located on the relatively flat ground on the west bank of the stream and behind the houses

and farm buildings on the east side of Main Street. (see page 291) Very little now remains of this thriving village industry, which lasted until the early nineteenth century (see pages 56–8).

Woodland

The wooded area known as Great or Bishop's Park in Lyddington lay outside the cultivated area of the village, on the upper slopes to the north-west, beyond the line of the Turnpike road between Uppingham and Caldecott, and bounded on its northern edge by the Brand, an area of common, and to the west by Beaumont Chase. The whole of this area in the early medieval period had been within the large wooded area in the west of the county of Rutland, designated a Royal Forest by the Norman kings and protected by the Forest Laws. When the bishops left Lyddington in 1547, their hunting park survived the disappearance of most of the palace and its surroundings. It features on early maps of Rutland down to the mid-seventeenth century (Figures 24, 28). It is one of the few features in the Manor to have been mapped. In 1730, the Steward's Accounts show a payment of £113 8s made to Tycho Wing for surveying.⁹ The map of 'Lyddington parkes' was produced by Wing in 1726. It shows the whole area of the 'great park', measuring at that time 217 acres and 27 perches; it had by then all been enclosed and laid out in grass fields (see Figure 303).

Woodland was, of course, vital to the lives of villagers, providing fuel, building materials and fencing as well as woodland grazing. Bark was used for tanning in the several villages in Rutland, with running water and good supplies from coppiced woodland. There was also an opportunity to develop alternative occupations using woodland crafts: making gates, carts, hurdles, wooden trenchers and other necessary wooden objects. Wood-grazing for animals whose owners had rights there was a useful source of keep.

In Lyddington, the Bishop's Park was still wooded and leased as woodland to William Sheffield in 1612. Beaumont Chase lay to its west with 'sales' of coppiced woodland, managed to provide bark and poles, between the Park and the Chase. A survey of the woodland was prepared for the estate by William Sheffield and Kenelm Walls in about 1630.¹⁰ They listed the contents of the 'sales' and valued all the timber trees, mainly oak and ash of various sizes. The total value of the oak trees was £426 and the ash trees about £24. The underwoods were worth about 40s an acre.

The process of 'disparking' the Lyddington Great Park and converting the land to agriculture began in the early seventeenth century. When William Sheffield leased the park from the estate, it was still wooded. A subsequent lease to his son George in 1636 recites the conditions of the earlier leases to his father. There was first a lease of 1612, in which the Earls of Exeter reserved for their own use all the 'woods, underwoods and trees standing growing or being within the said park' with freedom to sell and carry away.¹¹ The tenant had to preserve the trees and underwoods during the term of the lease and fence and enclose 'such coppice' as was growing on the premises, and keep them from 'destruction and biting cattle'. It also recited a subsequent lease of 1625, a new lease to William Sheffield, in which it is made clear that the Earl

of Exeter had cleared the Great Park of trees, coppices and underwoods, which were 'felled grubbed up and sold', leaving the land free of the burden of maintaining the same and ready to put to agricultural purposes. Taking account of this, the lease requires William Sheffield to pay an annual sum of £20 in addition to his rent. In 1635, William Sheffield was succeeded by his son George as the Earl's tenant, and there was some query as to whether he would be required to continue with the annuity of £20 agreed with his father when the park was cleared of trees. In the final version of the new lease in 1636, this annual sum of £20 was payable in addition to the rent.

Further evidence that the Park had been converted to pasture in the 1620s is the appearance of the tenants in 1626 in the churchwardens' rates. The churchwardens had been alerted to the fact that there were tenants in the Park, not necessarily with other land or property in Lyddington, and they were escaping the parish rate, or levy. By then about 80 acres of Lyddington Park appears to have been enclosed, the trees grubbed up and the area laid down to grass and leased as grazing. There is further evidence of the extent of enclosures in the Park in 1652, when George Sheffield's tenants were required to give a bond to the Earl of Exeter that they would not plough the land they rented, and if they did so the Earl would raise their rents by £3 per acre.

The initial 'disparkment' occurred in about 1626, probably at about the same time as the open fields at Stoke Dry were being converted to grass closes. The early clearing of the Lyddington Great Park took in about 80 acres on the southern boundary. The remaining acreage, including about 50 acres around the Park Lodge known as the Lawn, had been cleared by 1707 when a lease was granted to Richard Sherwood of Lyddington Park, grazier, of the messuage in Lyddington Park called Park House, two closes of about 50 acres called the Lawns and 10 acres in two closes called Britains Closes. The lease was for 21 years at £40 per annum.¹² A further lease of 1708 transferred the parkland, along with the sheepwalk on the Brand for 360 sheep, to William Brown, weaver, together with the 'piece of ground in Lyddington whereon the sheep pens belonging to the said sheepwalk now stand together with the said pens'.¹³ On the Enclosure Map, this piece of ground is named as Sheepcote Close and is shown as a triangular enclosure lying on the most northerly of the two streams which, after their confluence east of the sheepcote, flow down through the village. From the sheepcote, the ground forms a funnel shape, running north-westerly onto the Brand. The northernmost part of this ground, marked as Hill Close, was also used as cowpasture, but it must have been fenced to prevent cattle straying onto the common. By that time, further enclosures had taken place along the northern boundary of the Park to complete the work begun in the 1620s, enclosing the whole of the 217 acres mapped in 1726 by Tycho Wing.

Building Materials

There was no shortage of building materials in Lyddington. The Enclosure Award mentions five quarries, three of them stone quarries, all within the parish, one mortar pit and one gravel pit (Figure 21). However, there were

more ironstone pits than appeared on the Enclosure Map (see pages 58–9). Evidence from the manor court suggests that many small quarries were dug when stone was needed and then filled in, so there was continuous small-scale quarrying until after enclosure, when the stone quarries were more organised.

It would appear from the manor court presentations, which refer to these small quarries, and the danger to people ‘passing and repassing’ if they were not fenced, that the quarries were actually open in the village street. The overlying clay in the village, however, makes it unlikely that there were any accessible deposits of ironstone close to the main street. There are extensive remains of disturbance caused by quarrying to the north-west of the village, which show up particularly well on aerial photos. There is an area to the south of the upper end of Stoke Road, which is marked as a quarry on the 1804 Enclosure Map and subsequent maps of Lyddington in the nineteenth century. There may also have been quarrying in the Hill Pasture to the south of Sheepcote Close. The gravel pit was on the west side of the turnpike road to the south of the junction with Stoke Road. It was used extensively, not only for building work, but for the maintenance of the road.

There were two mortar or sand pits in Lyddington, one at the south end of Main Street near No 17. The stream rising from a spring in Jettys Close crossed Main Street at this point, and could be used to cover the slaked lime. The other mortar pit (for which there is documentary evidence, in a seventeenth-century lease, and on the Estate Survey map of 1848) was in the meadows along the line of the road from Caldecott to Thorpe. There was often standing water in the meadows, which may have been sufficient to preserve the lime for short periods. The churchwardens’ accounts for the materials used to repair the steeple in 1630 included mortar from the village’s own supply ‘from the meadowside’.

In addition, there were a great number of trees of all sizes belonging to the estate in Beaumont Chase and the ‘sales’ nearby. A valuation of the woodland for the Earl of Exeter about 1630 list trees by price, and values the underwood at about 40s an acre.¹⁴ Supplies for building could have been felled in Beaumont Chase or brought from other parts of the Burghley estate woodland. An account of the process is given in the churchwardens’ accounts for Uppingham in 1635–6, when timber was needed to build a new bell frame in the tower.¹⁵ They sent a representative to Tilton Wood to choose and purchase two suitable trees, calling on Lyddington to lend their pulleys to move them. It appears they dug sawpits in the wood and carried the required lengths to Uppingham by cart. In Lyddington, it appears that some of the timber was brought out of the woodland and sawn on site. In 1747, when Watson Cave was putting up a building, he was fined by the manor court for digging the sawpit in the street and leaving it unfenced, and also for obstructing the street with his wood. The timber in Lyddington was used not for timber-framed walling as in other parts of the country, but for roofs, floors and internal partitions. The main material for walling was invariably the local stone.

PART TWO

Community

This chapter looks at the people who lived in the Manor from the mid-sixteenth century up to 1800. A wide range of documents have been used to try and bring the community to life, including probate records, wills and inventories, manor court proceedings, the parish registers and the records of parish officials, particularly the churchwardens. The survival of records is not the same for every village. Lyddington has excellent churchwardens' accounts over a long period, but this is not the case in Stoke Dry and Caldecott. The latter villages, though, may have better preserved parish registers. Because more accessible information is available, a picture tends to build up with a greater emphasis on Lyddington than on other parts of the Manor. Thorpe by Water, for example, with only a small area at the west end in Lyddington parish, rarely features in either Manor or parish documents.

Population

The Bishop left his estates in Rutland to the Crown in 1547 and the Manor of Lyddington eventually passed to William Cecil of Burghley. In January 1563 a survey was made of his Rutland property. It included a list of all the houses and cottages in Lyddington and Caldecott, the people who occupied them, the rents they paid and the services they owed.¹ Assuming a household size of about 4.5 people, the 77 households in Lyddington in 1563 equated to a population of about 350 and the 32 households in Caldecott to a population of about 145. By the time of the Hearth Tax in 1665, the number of households had increased in Lyddington to 111, a population of about 500.² In Caldecott, the increase in population was even more dramatic, rising from 32 households in 1563 to 51, giving rise to a population of about 230 in 1665. These figures were little changed at the time of the first census in 1801, when the population of Lyddington was 527 and that of Caldecott was 306. It appears that the population in the Manor was increasing in the seventeenth century up to about 1660, but that little significant change occurred in the eighteenth century (see page 175).

This broad-brush approach to population gives a useful overall view of the likely number of households. Small-scale population movements, the results of disease, poor harvests and other local events, are not well documented in the Manor. Probably the greatest problem in counting the population of the Manor was the absence of the ecclesiastical census data from 1563, 1603 and again

for 1676. No returns were made for Lyddington Manor villages in the Diocesan returns owing to their status as prebendal holdings in the gift of the diocese of Lincoln. However, Stoke Dry, which was not part of the Manor in the seventeenth century, was included in the 1676 census. At the time of the Hearth Tax, it had twenty households, six of which were exempt. The population may have been about 90. In 1676 it had 75 communicants, of whom thirteen were Catholic recusants. There was clearly an increase in population to take account of the families of communicants. It was at this time still a relatively prosperous village, perhaps owing to the fact that enclosure had already taken place in the 1620s and there were well-established wealthy graziers profiting from fattening cattle and sheep (see pages 45, 53–6).

The local taxation returns or levies, a copy of which was drawn up annually by the churchwardens, should be a useful way to count the number of households in Lyddington.³ Unfortunately, the list of villagers paying tax includes those renting only land and these cannot be separated from householders in the assessments. There is, in addition, no way of knowing the extent to which poor households were included. The Hearth Tax appears to show there could well be up to one-third of households missing from the parish rates through poverty. The parish registers are not particularly suitable for use as a source for relatively small-scale population movements, although some figures are available in the eighteenth century from the registers of baptisms and burials.

The first national census was recorded in 1801, and thereafter every ten years. A census of Rutland villages was published in 1795 in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the source of which is unknown. The populations of the parishes of the Manor from the first four available returns are:

	1795	1801	1811	1821
Caldecott	313	306	245	274
Lyddington	568	527	495	594
Stoke Dry	62	61	57	52
Thorpe by Water	108	100	69	80

Interestingly, the first four years of the census in the Manor show declining populations in the villages, but the reasons for this are not clear.

Housing

In the periods when an increase in the housing stock was needed, it was partly met by dividing existing properties, or creating new tenements as infill in the yards. This probably started taking place in the seventeenth century (see page 174). There are records of new or rebuilt housing in the rolls of the manor court from about 1680 to 1700, and again in the mid-eighteenth century from the 1740s. In 1763 the property of Watson Cave was divided in two when he surrendered to the Manor Court his copyhold house with barns stables and outbuildings, retaining the orchard and garden, to be separated by a wall or fence seven feet high and sold to John Williamson.⁴ Francis Gibbins was fined

in the manor court in 1746 for building this wall without the permission of the court, but it evidently remained, for the division of this copyhold property is recorded in the manor court.⁵

In 1689, the presentments in the manor court listed two newly-erected cottages and five newly-erected tenements ‘contrary to the customs of the manor’.⁶ The fines were small, but their construction would be recorded by the Burghley Estate so they could be added to the rental. The tenements would have no common grazing rights, but the cottages would have the usual manorial rights to graze their animals allowed by their stints (a recorded share of animals), on the common or on grassland ‘leys’, or headlands in the open arable fields. An Act of 1589 laid down that no cottage was to be built without four acres of land of its own. The intention was to avoid cottagers becoming destitute, but this Act was only occasionally referred to in the presentments to the manor court and was probably widely ignored.⁷

There is no evidence of an overall design for the village street in Lyddington, or the other villages in the Manor, imposed by the Earls of Exeter. In Lyddington and Caldecott, the manor court implemented their rules according to the customs of the Manor. The court was largely concerned with the practical problems arising from building work. Obstruction of the roadways, the digging of stonepits, inadequate chimneys and the danger of fire were all referred to in presentments to the court. Architect-designed estate villages were not common until later in the eighteenth century, when the image of the estate, particularly in its landscape setting, became an important consideration. Lyddington was too remote to be much influenced by the estate, being a considerable distance from Burghley and its park. The business of new building in the village would in any case be a matter for the estate steward and the manor court.

There was, however, a different situation in Stoke Dry. In the eighteenth century, the Manor had been purchased by Lord Powys, whose main residence was at Lilford Hall, near Northampton. He had the village mapped by Vincent Wing in 1756⁸ (see **Figure 300**), showing the few remnants of the housing stock, and eventually sold the estate to the Earls of Exeter at Burghley in a complicated arrangement completed in 1777. In 1858 the estate renewed some of the cottages in Stoke Dry (see page 272). These cottages were carefully laid out and built, but the design was based, not on the local vernacular tradition, but on classical design of urban terraces. This rebuilding marked the end of the vernacular tradition in the manor.

Occupations in the villages of the Manor

Throughout the period from 1600 to 1800, the rural community in the Manor of Lyddington would be engaged in multiple occupations, but their main livelihood was farming. There were very few possible alternative livelihoods and those, in any case, did not necessarily separate people from the land, but were carried out alongside their farming activities. This was also likely to be the case in all the villages in the Manor until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when the changes brought about by enclosure increased opportunities for profitable alternative occupations, improved by better travel and marketing

opportunities. What we know of occupations in Lyddington and the villages of the Manor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries comes from a wide variety of sources. Occupations are given in a number of documents, such as copyhold transfers, leases and occasionally in the parish registers, but the most useful sources are probably the probate records, especially a set of 118 wills and other probate documents in the collection of the Lyddington prebendal court in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, studied for this project.⁹ Information on occupations is often, however, incomplete. The rich (inhabitants of higher status, many of them with landholdings outside Rutland) usually left wills to be proved in London, in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC), now in The National Archives. There were only four individuals described as gentlemen in the sample from the prebendal court probate records: John Allen, Joseph Pretty, Robert Peach and John Massey, but there were at least twenty five of the gentry whose wills are in The National Archives in the records of the PCC. The poor, of course, were unlikely to make wills, so labourers and smallholders with cottage rights are under-represented.

Parish registers, although generally poor in recording occupations in the Manor, have produced some good results over short periods. In the last half of the eighteenth century, the Caldecott registers give a number of occupations, and there was a similar short period of recorded occupations in Stoke Dry. The probate records, for example, do not mention horse dealers, but there was one recorded in the Stoke Dry burial register: Richard Wade in 1791. There was also a school dame in Stoke Dry burial register in 1757.

Probate records in the prebendal court show that farming predominated, accounting for 40% of those named as such, but featuring in almost every will. Even where an alternative occupation is given as the main occupation in a will or inventory, almost everyone still farmed some land. Farmers ranged from the Murdock family, farming mainly copyhold land from their house and yard at the north end of the village, to the Sharman family, whose wealth derived principally from milling and baking, but who nevertheless farmed a sizeable holding in Lyddington. A younger son, William, was described as a farmer in 1802.

In Stoke Dry, a well-established area of grassland enclosures, there were several shepherds. There were also shepherds recorded in Lyddington in the early eighteenth century, but none in Caldecott. The Caldecott parish registers record a significant number of husbandmen among the farmers and labourers in the mid-eighteenth century.

The wealthiest people in the farming community were the men who had built up a business fattening cattle or sheep, the graziers, four of whom are represented in the sample in Lyddington. There were graziers in Stoke Dry: James Oliver and other members of the Oliver family in the early eighteenth century, and Conyers Peach and the Bryans at the end of the century. In the period covered by the wills in The National Archives there were nine graziers, and several described as 'farmers and graziers'. A notable Lyddington grazier was John Brown, who, in 1785, was living in Lyddington Park Lodge with his wife and family and held grassland in the park and on the adjoining common, the Brand. The Brown family also farmed in Caldecott (see page 231). In 1763, a William Brown was a victualler or alehouse keeper in Lyddington, but his will does not tell us which house he used for his trade. Where farming was

the secondary occupation, the farms could be small, but the continued connection with the land and the farming community was maintained. A flax-dresser, Daniel Curtis of Lyddington, farmed on a modest scale.¹⁰ His will in 1767 shows he had two holdings, each a quarter of a yardland in extent, one typically containing three acres of arable and an acre of meadow. Similarly, the Caldecott chandler William Bringhurst, worth £8 16s in 1658, had one cow worth £2, and racks and a 'horse troff' in the stable.¹¹

The food and drink trades accounted for a relatively small proportion of the sample from the prebendal court records. There were probably several bakers, whose names occasionally arise in the manor court presentments if they infringed the assize of bread. Jonathan Adcocks, baker, and Edward Sharman, both from Lyddington, were fined in the 1730s for selling bread too light and 'not according to the assize'. Bassett the baker is recorded in the churchwardens' accounts in 1750. In Caldecott, the Nubon family were bakers in the early eighteenth century. There were also several butchers in both Lyddington and Caldecott. The Marvin family in Lyddington are good examples of a long-established trade, carried on alongside their farm, being passed down the family, like their land. The Rowlatts were butchers and farmers in Lyddington. We have the probate inventory of Samuel, who died in 1738. He had equipment on his farm to slaughter and butcher animals. Another butcher in Lyddington was John Wadland, who lived for a time in 5 The Green, but was living in Swan House when he died in 1813. There were butchers in Caldecott: Henry Middleton in 1766, and Edward Muggleton in 1812. No butchers were recorded in Stoke Dry.

The building trades were a distinct group in Lyddington. Good craftsmen were much in demand in the eighteenth century. In Lyddington, the building trades were dominated by the two families of stonemasons in the village, the Clarkes and the Drakes. (see page 58). Carpenters were also represented in the Manor, the Mantons and the Waterfields in Lyddington and Edward Ward, Thomas Deacon and the Browns in Caldecott. The Browns were also millwrights (see page 263).

The clothing and leather trades included the tanners (see page below). The cordwainers, including the Cant family of shoemakers, were in Lyddington in the 1660s, and in the 1740s John Russell and Robert Hill were shoemakers, with Henry Winter in Caldecott. Along with the leather trades, wool and textiles workers were a surprisingly small group. There were woolcombers, probably processing the by-products of tanning, and some domestic weaving. We have an inventory of John Ridgley, a weaver, in 1727 (see page 279).¹² Richard Sharp, weaver died in 1736 and Christopher Sculthorpe, weaver died in 1800 in Lyddington. There were two families of weavers: the Olivers in 1712 and the Harveys, in 1802 in Stoke Dry; and John Vines, a weaver, died in Caldecott in 1785. These were probably men who obtained raw materials locally, possibly obtaining dye from the woad man in Stoke Dry, recorded in the parish baptisms in 1750, and who wove cloth for local use. There were two tailors: John Roberts, who died in 1764, and his son Thomas, who died in 1821. There was one hosier in Lyddington: Robert Freeman, buried in 1740. The tailor in Caldecott was John Martin in 1761. Two surprising additions to the textile and clothing trades were a staymaker in Caldecott, Hugh More in 1807, and a

Caldecott milliner, Jonas Francis, who died in 1640.

There was one retail shop recorded. In 1713, George Larratt, a grocer, left his house in Lyddington, together with the shop, his 'workhouse' and his stock in trade to his son, William. Trade Directories record basically the same range of occupations as discussed above. By the early nineteenth century, however, there were more retail shops. The only reference to a shop in the eighteenth century is that of George Larratt. There are no other references to shopkeepers in the village or elsewhere in the Manor, and in the eighteenth century Lyddington people perhaps took advantage of the greater range of commercial activity in Uppingham.

Tanning

Tanners were probably a relatively wealthy group in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, able to add substantially to the income from their farms. The main centre for tanning in the southern half of the county was Morcott. There was also a large tannery in Barrowden on the north bank of the Welland, where there was a water-powered bark mill (**Figure 29**). In Lyddington, the tanners occupied sites to the east of Main Street on the west bank of the stream. Water from the brook filled the series of pits in which the skins were treated. All the materials the tanners needed were available in the locality, either in the village or nearby. Both cattle and sheep were reared for meat and tanners supplied a ready market for their skins. The lime used to start the process by cleaning the skin could be found in the limestone quarries in the hills on the south side of the Welland, for example in Gretton. The bark could be collected in the woodlands to the west of the village, dried in barns and either ground locally in horse mills or possibly purchased already powdered from the bark mill at Barrowden. The series of pits used the tannin from the bark at different strengths to alter the texture and colour of the skins. The stream was available for washing during the process of treating and cleaning the skins. In some areas, the tanning pits were lined with slate or stone, but in Lyddington, the pits will have been dug into thick, impermeable clay. Although we have documentary evidence of tanning in some locations to the east of Main Street, no physical remains of the pits can now be seen.

A tannery in the village was listed in the 1563 survey of Lyddington. The will of Edward Watson, a lawyer and one of the Bishop of Lincoln's most trusted advisors, as well as one of the wealthiest men in Rutland in the 1522 and 1525 taxation lists, had a tannery listed among his assets (see page 31). In his will of 1530, he bequeathed to the church of Lyddington 'all my stock of leather and bark being in my tanhouse'. The rents of these premises were to be used to appoint a priest to pray for the souls of the departed and to 'teach poor men's children'. His stipend was to be £6 yearly. When the tanyard was no longer viable and the raw material on the site at Edward's death used up, the copyhold was to be sold. There is no evidence to indicate whether or not this early tanning site continued in use into the seventeenth century. Tanners cannot be identified in the village again until the Pretty family arrived in Lyddington, probably in the 1670s, and set up at least two tanneries on the banks of the stream to the east of the village (see page 291). Eventually, there were several successful branches of the family, but in the early eighteenth



centuries it was the branch headed by a succession of Clement Prettys, who were the tanners. In his will of 1720, Clement Pretty left £10 to his eldest son, Clement, a tanner.¹³ Clement the younger had already set up his tannery in Bulwick in Northamptonshire. His younger brother Peter was a tanner in Lyddington, and it was to him, as the youngest son, that Clement senior left his Lyddington property, his tanyard and his farm land. His probate inventory shows he had a substantial three-bay house with a hall, parlour, kitchen and brewhouse on the ground floor and three chambers above.¹⁴ In his yard he had the usual stock and crops of a Lyddington farmer, including sheep and cattle, barley, malt, wheat and hay. The total value was £102. He lived at 54 and 56 Main Street which were then one house. (see page 292)

His eldest son Clement appears to have left his business in Bulwick and returned to Lyddington. When he died in 1761, he left to his wife Ann the room in his house 'called the parlour near the brewhouse' and the use of his furnishings. His executors were to maintain the tanyard and the tanning business for the benefit of his son John, a minor in 1761. A sum of money was left to pay for John's apprenticeship as a tanner.¹⁵

A second tannery close to Clement's was worked in the early eighteenth century by Peter Pretty. His son John, also a tanner, was admitted to his father's property at what is now Avalon, 58 Main Street, in 1739, but quickly appears to have been in financial difficulties. In 1743 he agreed to sell to the Earl of Exeter all his goods for £80, including his stock-in-trade, his farm stock and implements, and his furniture. The inventory drawn up at the time shows a house with hall, parlour, kitchen, buttery, brewhouse and dairy on the ground

Figure 29 This mill at Barrowden on the River Welland was used as a bark mill. (RCM)

floor with three chambers. In his yard he had seven cows and eight horses. In his barn, he had barley, threshed and unthreshed, and in his bark house, he had a 'large quantity of bark', scales and iron weights, nine hides and a cart.¹⁶ There were no details of the valuation of individual items. The manor court rolls show that in 1749 John Pretty and his wife sold the copyhold of what is now Avalon, 58 Main Street, with the 'tan vat yard' to Conyers Peach, a tanner from Morcott. The Peach family, in addition to their tanning interests, were wealthy graziers originally from Stoke Dry.

Of the two tanyards, only the house and the farm buildings, including the barns, are still standing. Nothing now remains above ground of the tanyard pits on the east side of 56 and 58 Main Street. The tannery at 58 Main Street had probably gone by the time of the enclosure award in 1804. Conyers Peach died in 1805, leaving the tanyard property to his son Robert. When Robert died in 1813, he left his property to two daughters and the tan pits disappeared from the property description in the manor court rolls. The Pretty family of tanners continued to occupy 56 Main Street until 1861. It was not, however, listed as a tannery at the time of the enclosures, nor was it referred to as such in the terrier to an Estate Map in 1848.

Building Trades

As in many country districts, the building trades in the Lyddington area in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tended to run in families, and they were probably able to secure sufficient work without having to resort to secondary trades. In the first half of the seventeenth century, work on the church was carried out by glaziers of the Sumpter family. The Drake family of stonemasons was already well-established by the mid-seventeenth century. The Clarke family of stonemasons appeared in the Lyddington Parish Registers in 1730, when Robert Clarke, mason, married Elizabeth Sharpe. Two of their five sons were stonemasons: William, born 1734 and Hugh, born 1739. Hugh married Elizabeth Broughton in 1757 and it was from this marriage that the extensive family of Clarks, builders and stonemasons have descended, continuing into the twenty-first century.

In 1745, Robert Clarke and Thomas Drake, both masons, were fined by the manor court. Robert Clarke was fined 1s 6d because he had not fenced his stone pit 'to the great danger of the inhabitants' passing there. Edward Arnsby from Thorpe by Water was fined for the same offence, and Thomas Drake for working a stonepit without a fence and failing to fill it in again to make it safe. The Drake stone pit was in Middle Field 'against the Park Wall'.¹⁷

Any documentary sources which might have thrown some light on the workings of the stone quarries in Lyddington and Caldecott have not been accessible in the Burghley archives. Presentments to the manor court appear to show, however, that pits were opened as needed and then filled in, but they were not likely to have been dug near the village centre where the new building work was taking place. The depth of clay deposits in this part of the valley covered the sandstone used for walling, rendering it inaccessible, so the stone would have to be carried down into the village from quarries to the north and west (see **Figure 21**). The five stone pits listed in the 1804 enclosure award were all on the slopes to the north and west of the village, on the Brand, near

the Park and the approach to Stoke Dry, and to the south of Stoke Road in Lyddington Middle Field.

When the Manor House at 22 Main Street was rebuilt by the Earl of Exeter's estate in 1757–8, Thomas Drake and Francis Gibbons were named as masons and a Mr Birch as the carpenter in the building accounts.¹⁸ (see page 317) Gibbons was probably also a carpenter. In the 1740s he had been fined in the manor court for digging a sawpit and leaving it unfenced. The glazier working on the new house was John Hand, who in the 1760s was an official of the manor court. His baptism in 1700 was recorded in the Caldecott parish register. The brick-maker was Edward Hall. The slaters were Ambrose Mould and Frances Dickens. Edward Hall, Ambrose Mould and Francis Dickens do not appear in parish records in the Manor and may have been from outside the immediate area.

Malting

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, drink appearing in documentary sources is invariably ale. Probate records from Lyddington Manor and the villages nearby show that even modest houses often had a brewhouse, mainly as part of the house or sometimes as a separate building nearby in the yard. Almost all farms grew barley, and the malting took place wherever a steeping vat could be housed, a floor made available for the seed to germinate and a frame made over a hearth to bring the barley to a temperature where germination would cease and the grain become dry. Grinding the dried grains of barley could be done by hand using quern stones, although some farms probably used a horse mill. Malt mills are mentioned in the eighteenth century among the outbuildings of some large farms, but we do not know what kind of buildings they were.

In the 1563 Survey of the Manor, villagers in Lyddington were provided by the 'township' with a malt mill, probably the kiln, 'where sometime was the common furnace'. It was rented from the estate for 16s 8d. This kiln was presumably housed in a building with a drying floor and other equipment for communal use. In the same survey, Laurence Meadwell held a lease 'for certain years yet enduring' from the Bishop of Lincoln of a water mill, a windmill and a maltmill, for which he paid 66s 8d. Nothing now survives of the old village malt kiln except the name of the field in which it stood, Kiln Field, on the south side of Chapel Lane. The 'furnace' continued in use, perhaps as a public bakehouse, and was apparently used latterly as a lime kiln.

Lyddington was not an ideal place in which to establish a malting business, mainly because of poor communications and the difficulties in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of moving heavy loads of grain or malt by road. By contrast, at Stamford, for example, using the river network and the newly-finished (1690) canal to give them access to waterways, a large number of maltsters were active in the town by the early eighteenth century (see pages 101–02). In Lyddington, a branch of the Pretty family set up as maltsters in about 1750, presumably to supply mainly the local market with malt for brewing. John Pretty, son of Peter Pretty, a tanner, was described as a maltster in his will of 1773.¹⁹ John was born in 1715. By 1758, he was building a new barn in his yard at the Homestead (81 Main St), with his initials and the date

inscribed on a plaque mounted over the main opening (see **Figure 213**). The barn, used for storing crops, may have housed his supply of barley. The malthouse and kiln were probably located in the two-storey building at the rear of the property, now converted into a cottage (see page 285).

John had one son, Joseph, born in 1736, who inherited his father's malting business and by the time of his death in 1809, he had become sufficiently wealthy to be styled a gentleman. He was unmarried; he left to his housekeeper, Elizabeth Lattimer, the parlour in his house and a room over it for her lifetime, and an annuity of 40s per annum to be paid out of his estate.²⁰

The Distribution of Wealth

Although we lack the personal information we might have found in probate inventories, or the detail that would enable us to be definite about the wealth of individual Lyddington inhabitants, the rating assessments of the churchwardens' Income Accounts²¹ give a good picture of the relative wealth of people in the village, probably excluding the poor. These records show that by the beginning of the seventeenth century there were already large differences in wealth between the village aristocracy and less well-off households. Because detailed churchwardens' accounts only survive for Lyddington, wealth distribution in the rest of the Manor cannot be investigated.

The earliest rate assessment for the parish levy was recorded in 1625 as 'a layer (levy) made by the churchwardens and the rest of the inhabitants, 16 October 1625'. The wealthiest individuals in that year, paying the greatest amount in tax, were William Sheffield (10s), Thomas Smythe and Mr Pecke or Peche (possibly Peach), Robert Harrison and Mr Ridgley (8s), Simon Ward and Mr Rudd (6s), Edward Pelsant (5s), and Mr Moore and Anthony Wynter and Laurence Stanger (4s). Abell Barker from Lyndon also paid 5s to the Lyddington churchwardens and must have counted as an inhabitant, perhaps as the result of a sizeable landholding in the village. In the 1630s and 40s various methods were tried to assess the rates more fairly; for example, in 1633, the churchwardens tried taxing the local population on the basis of their livestock at 2d a cow and 4d per score of sheep, but the most wealthy still came from the same families, the Sheffields, the Harrisons, the Sismeys, John Ridgley and Eusebius Pelsant. By the mid-seventeenth century, rates were usually levied on a proportion of the amount people paid in rent on both land and houses. In 1664 and 1665, the rate was 3d in the pound.²²

In 1665 the Hearth Tax provides a useful check on the pattern emerging in the local church rates, although the Hearth Tax and the parish rate assessments do not always match. The wealthiest person paying rates was Edmund Sismey, paying 7s 6d in the same year as the Hearth Tax return. Sir Eusebius Pelsant paid 3s 4d but paid the largest amount in Hearth Tax on eleven hearths in the Prebendal House (see page 166). The second-largest house was the Sismey house, with six hearths. Other rate-payers with large houses were Mr Beebie and the Smiths, who each had five hearths and Mr Neubon and Moses Allen, who had four each. Lyon Faulkner, who appeared to be in arrears with his parish rate, was among the wealthy in a house with four hearths. In

1667 he was renting the thirty-acre meadow, the Little Park and 'Stangers Close'. This was all valuable grassland and the rates he paid will have reflected this. In 1665 William Ward paid 4s 7d in the rate assessment. His house was taxed on three hearths. Considering the Hearth Tax alongside the parish rates shows that it was not so much the number of hearths that indicated a particularly wealthy occupant. Many houses of the more prominent taxpaying villagers in Lyddington in 1665 had only two hearths.

William Sheffield, succeeded by his son George, had been the highest ratepayer for many years between 1625 and 1665, but the last record of George paying parish rates was in 1644. His house in Lyddington in 1665 had three hearths. In a rental of leasehold estates in Lyddington in 1662 he appears to have been renting 'the scite of the mannor and Gatehouse' for which, with the Little Park and land elsewhere, he paid £20 3s 1d in rent.²³ At one time he lived in Parr's house, which, from descriptions of its surrounding land and cottages, may have been 3 The Green. In 1676 his son William appeared in the list of those living in the parish, but with no assessment for payment. His father's death was not recorded in the Lyddington Parish Registers and it is possible the family had land elsewhere. The Sheffields appeared to have died out in Lyddington by the end of the century.

With the exception of the Prebendal House, which has now been demolished and rebuilt, but was recorded in two descriptive surveys in 1649 and 1728, few of the substantial houses in Lyddington in 1665 can be confidently matched with standing examples. Some of these more interesting dwellings may be identified by tracing their occupants in the House Histories. Some houses were rebuilt after 1665 (such as Swan House or The Hermitage in Lyddington) and some may have been converted into cottages or tenements in subsequent centuries.

In the course of the eighteenth century, many of the families who had prospered in the seventeenth century continued to do so. There was, surprisingly, very little change among the top ranking Lyddington families. The Sismey family maintained their wealth and status from the 1630s, when they moved their base from Thorpe to Lyddington, until the end of the century when in documents connected with the enclosures they were said to be 'of Leicester'. The Pelsants however had died out in Lyddington by the mid-eighteenth century. They had married into the Buswell family with estates in Clipsham and Cadeby in Lincolnshire. Their eldest son, Eusebius came back to Lyddington to manage the prebendal estate, but this eventually had to be sold to pay his debts and the family had gone from the area by the 1730s (see page 62). The Sismey family were joined by the Prettys, the Ridgleys, the Allin and Allen families and the Hills, all of whom took a prominent role in village affairs for much of the seventeenth century and continued to do so up to the end of the eighteenth century. The Larratts were noted among the wealthy in 1676 and retained their position until the 1770s.

In 1700 the churchwardens' rate was 2d in the pound on rents of both land and houses in the parish. Edmund Sismey had been succeeded by his son John as the highest ratepayer at 9s 6d. John Mason and James Murdock paid 6s 8d, and William Allin 5s 11d. The remainder of the twelve highest payers, Thomas Ward, John Reynolds, James Hill, Moses Allen, William and Clement

THE PREBENDAL ESTATE IN LYDDINGTON MANOR

Prebendaries were senior members of the clergy who contributed to the administrative work of the diocese. They had their place in the Chapter of Canons and held a prebendal stall at the rear of the choir in the cathedral. Their position was a form of benefice. They were paid an independent stipend derived from a grant of land in the diocese. The prebendal farm in Lyddington was one such holding in the gift the Bishop of Lincoln. It provided an income from rent, if not farmed directly, and with the tithes from the locality the Prebend was well endowed. A prebendary from Lincoln was appointed by the Bishop to the farm in Lyddington Manor. He derived his income from this land and, with the great tithes of the whole Manor including Caldecott and Thorpe, he was a prosperous and important member of the community. The Prebendal House and its farm outbuildings was the largest in the village in the 1660s. The house had eleven hearths in 1665. There was nothing else in the village of comparable size at that time.

For much of the seventeenth century the Lyddington prebends and those who farmed the prebendal holding were members of the Pelsant family. They appear to have been living in the house during the Hearth Tax in 1665. They feature in the parish registers, pay the parish rates, became officers in the manor court and took on many public duties. As a part of their living they had been granted the right to hold a probate court, usually presided over by their appointed official, from which they took the fees. The records of this probate court have not survived before the 1660s but there is a good run of wills, and some inventories from about 1720 onwards, now preserved in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland (see page 156).

The Pelsants came from Market Bosworth and Sutton Cheney in Leicestershire. William Pelsant held the living there before being given a Prebendal stall in the Cathedral in about 1617. William married Judith, daughter of Eusby Paget of London. She died in 1652. William and Judith's three sons were Henry, a scholar at Trinity Hall Cambridge, Eusebius, knighted in 1642, and Robert of Grays Inn who never married. In 1653 Eusebius married an heiress,

Ann Buswell daughter of Sir George Buswell of Clipston. Their eldest son Eusebius Pelsant (he changed his name to Buswell in 1703) came to Lyddington as tenant of the prebendal farm. In the Land Tax of 1712 he was by far the wealthiest farmer in the Manor, paying £28 in tax representing nearly 500 acres, for his land in Lyddington and Caldecott

The prebendal estate in Lyddington was surveyed in detail in 1649. Parliament intended to sell it and other diocesan property to raise money. The Prebendal estate in Lyddington, Caldecott and Thorpe by Water contained four yardlands in Lyddington (about 120 acres) and one yardland in Caldecott. The annual income from rents on this land amounted to £40 although the surveyors believed that with 'improvements' it could be worth £236 8s 4d. The Caldecott great tithes were valued at £80, the Thorpe tithes at £8 and the Lyddington tithes at £126 per annum. The estate was eventually sold for £599 in 1650, but appears to have been returned to the Pelsants after the Restoration.

In 1649 there was 'a mansion or prebendal dwelling house' consisting of a hall, parlour, kitchen, pantry, larder and cellar and on the 'second storie' six lodging chambers. It was built of stone with a slate roof and contained eight bays of building. Outside was a malting house, a malt kiln and brewhouse, a dovehouse stocked with pigeons, two stables and barns in twelve bays of building, the site being to the east of the churchyard. It had two acres of yards and gardens with the street on the south side. (Figure 30)

In 1728 the house and the farm was leased to Robert Larratt and, when shortage of money brought the Buswells to consider selling the estate, it was described as a Handsome Capital House pleasantly situated on rising ground. By then it had sixteen bays of outbuildings, a dove house, paddock and orchard 'well secured with a neat stone wall'. There was also a yard with its own water supply to a stone trough. The new barn was commissioned by the Buswell's agent Christopher Horton in 1738 (see page 192) but on its completion the family appears to have left Rutland for estates in Derbyshire.

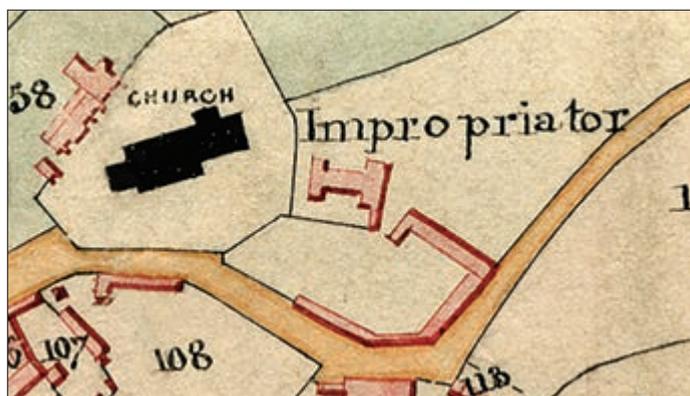


Figure 30 A section of the Burghley Estate Map of 1848, showing the location of the prebendal house. This original house was later demolished and a new house built nearby. (BH, Archive Exeter Archive)

Pretty paid 3s to 4s 4d. The Poll book for Rutland in 1710 lists for each village those entitled to vote.²⁴ Most were prosperous farmers and had substantial wealth. In Lyddington, the expected names of the senior inhabitants were listed, including William Brown, John Pretty, Clement Pretty, Thomas Ward, George Larratt, Robert Smith, James Tiptaft and Edward Hill. The Sismeys were not included; perhaps they voted elsewhere.

By 1719, the prebendal estate had been leased to John Larratt. The Sismeys were becoming increasingly wealthy by the mid-eighteenth century, paying £1 17s 6d in tax compared with James Murdock paying 18s 8d and John Chapman, Moses Allen, William Allin, Walter Smith and Thomas Pretty paying between 16s and 17s. The tanners, Clement Pretty and Conyers Peach, each paid 6s 8d respectively. In 1761 the Sismeys were still the wealthiest family in the village. Edmund Sismey, gent., paid £1 7s 7d, and his contemporaries John Allen and James Tebbatt paid 16s 3d each. Samuel Pretty and Robert Larratt paid 13s 3d and Edward Sharman 10s 7d. By 1792, on the eve of enclosure, Thomas Pretty had joined the high status group in Lyddington and paid £1 15s in rates. James Ridgley paid £1 13s 4d and John Roberts whose family connections were in Thorpe, Glaston and Wardley paid £1 10s 8d.

The wealthy villagers in Lyddington were both churchwardens and officers of the manor court. Their control over the lives of the villagers was extensive. Little escaped either the authority of the manor court or the parish officials, all of whom were drawn from a select group of wealthy local men. The appointment of individuals to their respective roles in both Manor and parish is recorded in the documents both of the manor court and of the parish. All the individuals with high assessments in the church rates took their turn to perform public duties.

Social Structure in Lyddington

The gentry, yeomen and husbandmen

The gentry in Rutland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would occupy a place in the social order between a yeoman and a baron. They were certainly wealthy, but in Rutland the source of their wealth is not easily identified. It

was unlikely that they worked the land directly, but they bought and sold farms and good management contributed to their success. They often held lands in many different parts of the East Midlands, so instead of using the local church courts to prove their wills, it was more usual for them to do so in the PCC in London. It is not always easy to see whether they were allocated gentry status by their own admission, or by their contemporaries and neighbours. It is often easier to distinguish between the two in probate inventories, where description of status was recorded by members of their local community (see pages 60–3, 156).

Fortunately, Lyddington's records show the gentry in the village in the seventeenth century were not entirely self-selected. The churchwardens who collected the parish levies or rates listed the local gentry separately in their assessments. From 1645, onwards the gentry's contribution to the rates was listed at the head of the list of commoners, whether or not they paid the most in tax. In 1675 the list was headed by Sir Eusby (Eusebius) Pelsant, knight, 6s 3d, Lyon Faulkner, gent, 12s 6d, John Beeby, gent, 4s 6d, Ezekial Johnson, cleric, 6s 9d, Larrance Peach, gent, 2s 4d, Edward Allyn, gent, 1s 3d, and John Sismey, gent, 16s. These seven men were Lyddington's aristocracy, not in their own estimation, but in the opinions of the villagers, some of whom were wealthier and were assessed for higher contributions. For example, the Murdock family for all their wealth and the part they played as churchwardens and officers in the manor court only achieved gentry status at the end of the eighteenth century. Edward Allin was already styled gentleman when he moved to Lyddington from Lyndon, Rutland. Although he came from outside the village in the 1660s he was immediately listed among the top villagers. He moved into the village in 1666, and started paying rates in 1668, but to begin with he paid only 1d. Similarly in 1679 Anthony Faulkner joined the elite but paid only 6d in rates. From the 1680s the gentry are referred to as 'Mr', but the intention to differentiate between them and the other villagers, whatever they contribute, is clear. The practice of listing them at the head of parish affairs had been discontinued by the 1720s.

A great many farmers in Lyddington and other parts of the Manor would have described themselves as yeomen or husbandmen. These were people who farmed the land directly. Probate inventories in other areas would show more substantial wealth for yeomen, but the distinction in Lyddington and Caldecott is not really clear. Aspiration to yeoman status appears to be more pronounced in the seventeenth century. In the early eighteenth century, the register of baptisms in Lyddington lists as yeomen Moses Allen, William Allin, John Croden, Robert Smith, William Pretty and James Tiptaft. All these later became members of the gentry. Without a far more detailed examination of many families in the Manor, there is no satisfactory explanation of how and why these changes of social rank took place.

Poverty and the Poor in Lyddington Parish

The population of Lyddington included not only the gentry, the wealthy households in the community, the many farmers of varying degrees, who were the backbone of the community, and the small group of tradesmen who made a living alongside the central role of the farmers; it also included the poor. Studies of taxation returns, particularly of the Hearth Tax have shown that a large

section of the population of householders in rural communities were too poor to pay tax. In Rutland villages in 1665 a minimum proportion of 34.5% came into this category. These however were householders living with at least one hearth and there may have been others in greater, more abject, poverty who have left no record.

The parish of Lyddington had an ambivalent attitude towards the poor and sought where possible to exclude them, particularly if they came from outside the village. This may have been partly the result a general dislike of strangers, a kind of rural xenophobia, but also because they were afraid they would become a financial burden on the parish rates. We know from the records of the manor court that the rules against offering lodging in the village to outsiders were strictly enforced with heavy fines. This was particularly so in the seventeenth century, even before the Act of 1662 regularised action taken by parish overseers against strangers from outside the parish taking lodgings or renting accommodation in the village (see pages 87–8).

Over the years, many poor people who travelled through Lyddington were given small sums of money by the churchwardens, many of them with hard luck stories, such as the loss of possessions in fires, in shipwrecks and by accident. In 1628 they gave 6d to a poor man ‘that had his goods burned’ and 8d to two poor men who had loss by fire. In 1629 they encountered a man who ‘had his goods burned in a most lamentable manner by Gunpowder’ a mile from the town, to whom they gave 5s. The same year they gave 4d to a poor man from Ireland with ‘loss by fire’ and the same to a ‘sefaring man’ that had loss upon the seas. However, these were small sums of money on the face of it, given to keep people from destitution, and mainly given to ‘travellers’ or ‘passengers’, some of them with ‘passes’ or ‘letters of request,’ to keep them on the move. There were only a few occasions when money was actually given to the poor of Lyddington. In 1639 the churchwardens gave 1s 8d to widow Faulkner ‘when she and her household were sick’.

In the 1640s, with the Civil War imminent, there were many Irish and Scots travellers on the road, fifteen of whom in one year were sent on their way with a few pence. After the Restoration the rivalries between Protestant and Catholics were a continual threat to peace, particularly in Ireland. From 1669 to 1682 the town appears to have been thronged with ‘travellers’, including soldiers, many of them identified as Scots or Irish in the churchwardens’ accounts for 1669.²⁵

The parish office of Overseer of the Poor was created by Act of Parliament in 1576. The overseers, to be nominated for an annual term by the churchwardens, and to be appointed by the local Justice, were to take charge of the ‘wool, hemp, flax or iron or other materials’ collected to set the poor on work, such materials to be provided by a tax or levy and the products sold to pay for further stocks. Poor people refusing to work were to be confined to a ‘House of Correction’.

In Lyddington, there is no surviving documentary evidence of the Overseers of the Poor appointed in the seventeenth century nor do their accounts survive. However, it is clear that appointments were made and the business of dealing with the poor was ongoing. This is borne out in the survey and valuation made of the prebendal estate in Lyddington prior to sale in 1728. Listed as outgoings

were the levies made by 'the Poor' (the overseers) and for the Constables' rates. The estate paid 2s yearly on each assessment. Lyddington workhouse is listed among the householders at the end of the scrapbook of poor law documents,²⁶ but the location of the actual building is not clear.

The village also, of course, had the Bede House, founded by William Cecil in 1602 and endowed by him to provide accommodation for the poor on his Rutland estates. The endowment was funded by an estate at Kings Cliffe in Northamptonshire, which in the mid-to-late nineteenth century was still paying £116 per annum from rents. The statutes, published in 1601, made provision 'for the relief and setting to work of certain poor needy and impotent people' to be chosen by Cecil and his descendants. There were rooms for twelve alms-people or Bedesmen, two female nurses or housekeepers and a warden. However, the Lyddington Bede House was not restricted to offering places to Lyddington people alone. Applications for a place came from all over the estate and not everyone who was selected actually lived there. Unmarried men or widowers were supposed to be resident, but married men lived with their families and received an annual stipend.

It had long been recognised that there were provisions in the various Acts from 1388, including the Beggars Act of 1598, for returning beggars who were able-bodied but refused to work to their own parishes. In 1662, a new Act was passed limiting the responsibility of the parish overseers to people either born in the village or who had acquired legal settlement there under a number of tests. Settlement could be acquired by renting a property worth £10 a year, by working for a year and a day in the parish, by apprenticeship, or by marriage, which allowed women to take the settlement of their husbands. They could also gain settlement by living in a parish for forty days, provided they had been registered on arrival and had their names read out in church, or by becoming a parish office-holder. It became increasingly difficult under these rules for the poor to move from village to village, however willing they were to work. As a result, settlement certificates were introduced in 1697. These documents were a record of their current place of settlement and the guarantee that they would be taken back there if they became a charge on another parish. Some examples of settlement certificates for people intending to live in Lyddington are preserved among papers in a scrapbook of documents relating to measures taken under the poor law acts from 1662 onwards. They include apprenticeship indentures, the earliest dating from 1690; bastardy bonds, the record of the sums of money promised on bond by the fathers of illegitimate children likely to become a burden on the parish; removal certificates; and accounts of the costs of examinations in the magistrates court and the cost of actually taking people back to their parish of settlement.²⁷

Only one charitable bequest to the poor was administered by the parish in Lyddington. In 1792, James Ridgley left a piece of land in the parish of Lyddington called Frognall (Fronnal) for the use of the cottagers in the parish. This was an area of common lying beside Wood Lane in Stoke Dry, shared in the Enclosure Award of 1804 between the two parishes. There were no charities listed in Caldecott or Stoke Dry.

PART THREE

Farming

When it comes to a general picture of the working countryside in the southern part of Rutland, the observations of travellers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries describe the background in useful detail. Celia Fiennes, in her 'Journey' of 1698 crossed Rutland on her way from Peterborough to Leicester, through Uppingham (named in some editions as 'Cottingham'). As she left Wansford and arrived in Duddington, she noted the numerous stone quarries, 'and that all the house walls are built of stone as in Gloucestershire'. She commented on the 'very rich' red land with good corn of all sorts and saw the valley bottoms wooded', which she took to be full of enclosures. She made her way to Uppingham, a 'neate market town', and viewed their Saturday market, where there were 'great quantities of corn, leather yarn and cattle' and 'very large fine sheep'. So many people came to the inns, she reported, that the landlord might have a hundred horses in his stables.¹ Daniel Defoe, in his *Tour of the Midland Counties* in 1725, was also particularly impressed with the livestock of the region and noted the importance given to breeding and feeding cattle, the amazing size of sheep, the thickness of their fleeces and the meat on their backs, which 'furnish the city of London with their large mutton in so incredible a quantity' (Figure 31). The horses too were worthy of note (Figure 32), being great black coach and dray horses, the 'largest in England, of which so great a number are continually brought up to



Figure 31 A Leicester Longwool Sheep in 1871. (RCM)



Figure 32 A black working horse of the type described by Daniel Defoe. (Author)



Figure 33 A plough team of Oxen. (Robert Ovens)

London one would not think this little area (around Leicester) would be able to supply them'.²

Lyddington and Caldecott were probably typical of many of the open-field villages in the East Midlands, although being founded on middle lias clay they may have lacked the 'rich red land' noted by Celia Fiennes. They were not untouched by improvements in transport and the growing number of links with the outside world, but to all appearances they remained deeply conservative, and the rhythm of village life seems to have been largely undisturbed for almost all of the two centuries leading up to Parliamentary Enclosure in 1799. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the principal occupation was farming. It may, in many cases, have taken place at subsistence level. The more enterprising may have made a surplus to sell. The wealthy, who were able to increase the farm size and improve their equipment, probably also increased their use of the markets. They accumulated land where they could, particularly pasture, and built up farming estates, both as leaseholders, freeholders and, within the Manor, as copyholders on the Exeter estates. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Lyddington was, as we have already seen, a community in which inequalities of wealth and status were becoming clearly marked. This trend continued in the eighteenth centuries as agricultural production became more specialised and response to market conditions more necessary.

The open fields

Sometime in the early Middle Ages, the villages in the Manor of Lyddington were laid out in an open-field system (see page 27), with large unfenced areas

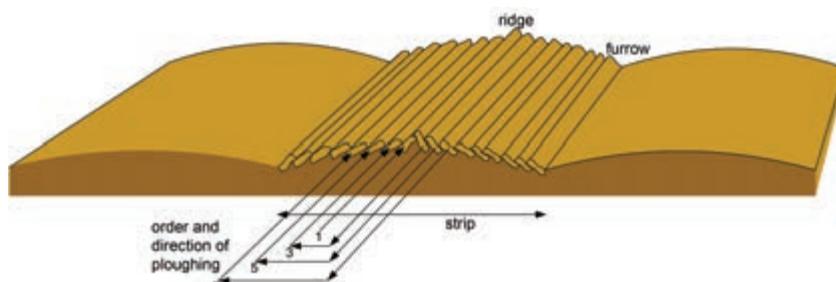


Figure 34 A diagram showing the process of ploughing that created ridge and furrow

of arable cultivation where the land was divided among the villagers as strips of roughly an acre each. This was about the area which could be ploughed in a day. On heavy soils, a team of several draught animals, either oxen or horses, would be needed, which, to avoid trampling over the cultivated ground nearby, would need to leave the strip at an angle, creating the appearance of a reversed 'S' shape. Strips were often ploughed in the same direction each season, leaving characteristic ridge and furrow features in the landscape (**Figures 33 and 34**). Strips were unfenced, hence the 'open' appearance of the land.

Strips were located within furlongs and the furlongs lay within large cropping units or Fields. Lyddington had three main fields: Upper Field at the north end of the village, bounded on the west by the Great Park; Middle Field to its south; and Nether Field to the south-east, bounded on the east by the stream (see **Figure 26**). The fields were cultivated in rotation and each year one was left fallow (without crops). The village meadow land on the rich grassland on the north bank of the Welland river was also divided, unfenced, into strips, on which villagers made their hay. There was also grazing land or common held in stints, each villager having the right to graze only a specified number of animals both on the common and on the fields after harvest and during fallow seasons. The open-field system had four main elements:



Figure 35 Surviving ridge and furrow strips in the fields to the West of Thorpe by Water in 2015. (Open Source Image,; 2015 Google Images/2015 Bluesky)

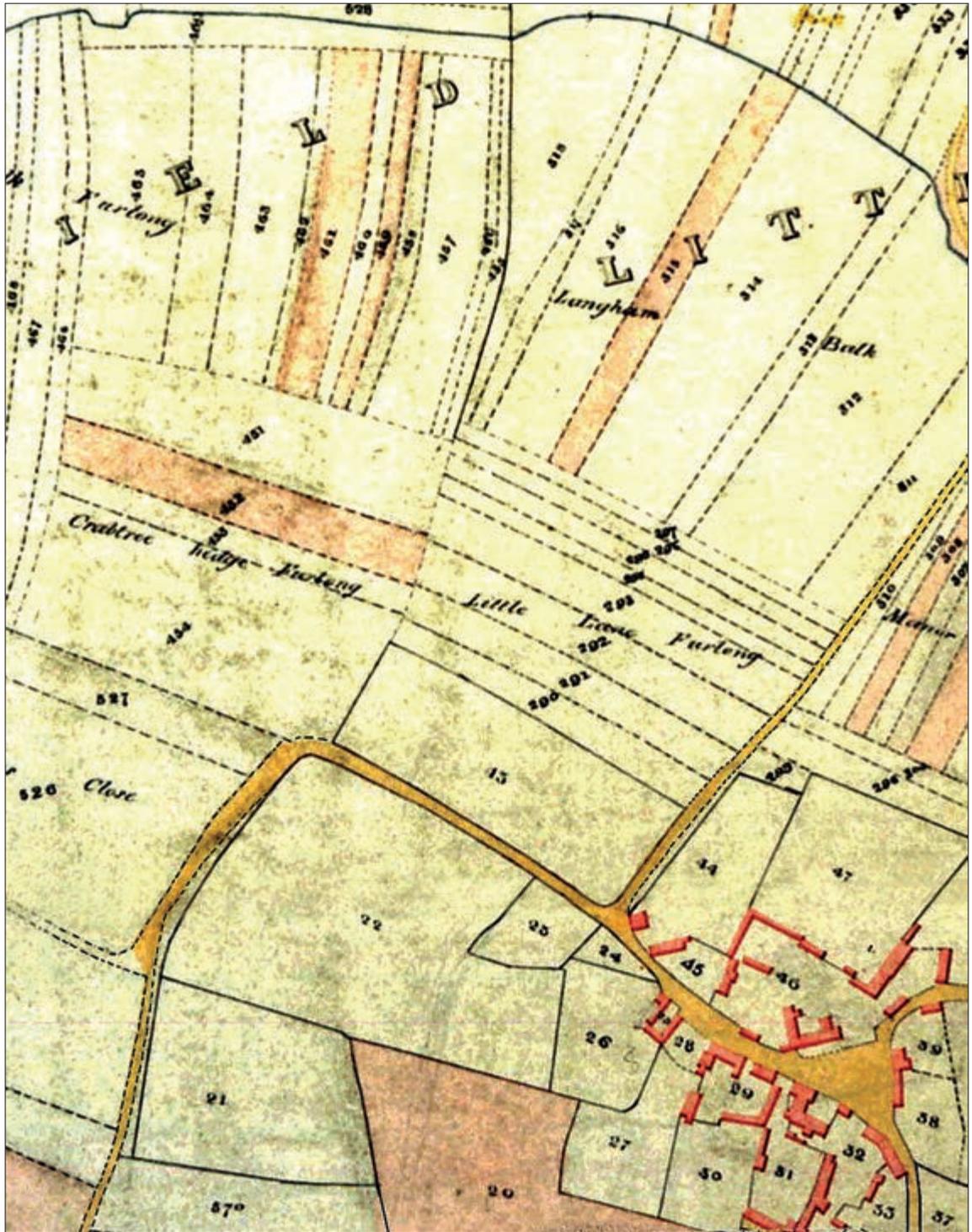


Figure 36 Thorpe by Water Open Field strips from the Tithe Map of 1848. (RCM)

- arable and meadow, divided into strips distributed over the whole cultivable area of the parish (Figures 35 and 36);
- the right to use the whole area of arable and meadow for common grazing after harvest;
- there would be an area of common or waste (poor land) with access limited to the agreed stints or allocations of the villagers; and
- an organisation to oversee the system and make decisions, for example about crop rotations.

The system of communal farming as described above demanded that, in the interests of the whole community, villagers came together on a regular basis. Joint decisions needed to be made to hold the system as far as possible in equilibrium, maintaining a balance between the arable and livestock interests of smallholders, for example, and ensuring that as far as possible the interests of ordinary farmers were not overrun by the activities (particularly the livestock interests) of the wealthy.³ In all open-field villages the coming together of the whole community on a regular basis was necessary to keep track of, and if necessary adapt, customary farming procedures. In Lyddington and Caldecott, the manor court was held twice a year in the Hall of the Bede House and presided over by the Steward to the Burghley estate (see page 87 and Figure 45). It was the forum for many decisions and corrections, which enabled the system of communal farming to function efficiently. Almost every head of household in Lyddington and Caldecott owed suit at the Lord's court and was supposed to attend each sitting. A list was provided by the Constable of the inhabitants of the villages of Lyddington and Caldecott, and the Freeboroughs, who were senior officials elected by the court to serve on an annual basis, supplied details of their tenure, whether freeholders, copyholders, leaseholders or tenants at will. Those not attending the court without good reason were fined. Officers were appointed at the Michaelmas court to be the eyes and ears of the court over the next twelve months, and to present to the court those who had broken the rules and not conducted themselves in accordance with the customs of the Manor (see page 87).

Many presentments were made concerning problems with livestock. These highlighted the ongoing tensions between the needs of livestock farmers or graziers, and the customs of arable farming in an area where there were few fixed boundary fences and where uncontrolled livestock in the wrong place could do a great deal of damage by straying onto growing crops. A pound (secure enclosure) was provided in Lyddington towards the north end of Main Street. It was larger than in many other villages, and was used not only for sheep and swine, but for restraining cattle and horses. The Pinder, who kept the pound secure and fined the villagers who, from time to time, broke their animals out of it, was appointed annually by the manor court.

The rules or 'customs' of the Manor were well known to most, but every so often a decision was made to write them down. We have a complete list written in 1682 of the forty items,⁴ which if not observed would result in a fine or 'paine'.⁵ Many of these concerned the regulation of open field agriculture, including restrictions on the movement of livestock to protect crops and avoid overgrazing (see pages 87–8).

Crops

Lyddington, like many similarly-sized Leicestershire villages on clay soils, grew its arable crops in three main cropping units or fields. The usual pattern was for them to be cropped in rotation with one field fallow, left without crops and available in autumn and winter for grazing livestock. Using probate inventories, W.G. Hoskins' seminal study of Wigston Magna, published as *The Midland Peasant* in 1957, identified the main crops grown in open fields throughout the clay farming regions of Leicestershire at the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁶ He found that on a three field rotation in a typical Leicestershire village, just under 50% of the land would be growing peas and beans, about 40% barley and only 7% wheat or wheat and rye. Wheat, even though it became more widespread in the eighteenth century, is not an easy crop to grow on clay soils, particularly if ploughing and preparing the seedbed has to take place in wet weather.⁷ Wheat and rye were sown in the autumn, but the peas and beans went in during January or February, along with any oats. Barley was sown in the spring. These arable crops spread the work of ploughing, preparing the soil, and sowing the seed throughout the winter months. After harvest all the arable fields and the meadows would be thrown open and people who might have put fences around their strips of grass leys within the village fields were required to open their gates as well, to allow free range over the whole area. For example, in 1688 Daniel Eliot of Caldecott was fined for 'not opening the gaps in his close at Snelston when the harvest was in' and William Kirby, also of Caldecott, was fined for 'keeping his close after harvest'.⁸

The land around Thorpe was also farmed on the open-field system (see **Figures 35 and 36**), the three main cropping units or Fields being East Field (bounded on the south by the river Welland), North Field (bounded by the slopes of Prestley Hill) and West Field, which included the slopes of Bee Hill and adjoined the Lyddington open fields to the west and meadows along the Welland to the south-west. Surveys or terriers of Thorpe farmers show that their land was distributed in small parcels among those of other villagers in the main fields. Strips or 'lands' set out for arable cultivation were held within furlongs, a division of the main Field, sometimes fenced or hedged but more often unfenced, bounded by grass baulks, or headlands. Some areas within the fields and furlongs were, from the sixteenth century, grassed over and held as leys. There were very few closes or enclosures in the village of Thorpe, except around the village centre where a home paddock could be used to feed some livestock near the house and farm buildings (see page 339 and **Figure 42**). The meadows, like those in Lyddington and Caldecott, were on the banks of the Welland. They were also divided into strip holdings and were the main source of winter fodder for village livestock. Farmers in Thorpe had common rights for a limited number of sheep, cattle and horses on the common grazing land on the upper slopes of Bee Hill, Prestley Hill and the Barrows, supplemented at certain times of the year by grazing in the arable fields and meadows after harvest and on the grass baulks and other grassed areas within the village fields. This system, inconvenient and inflexible though it appears, survived in Thorpe by Water until the middle of the nineteenth century. The Tithe Award map of 1848 shows a complete system of open field strips arranged in named furlongs

(Figure 36). The Enclosure Award, when it eventually came, was completed in 1852.⁹

Both the hay harvest, usually taken early summer in Lyddington, and the harvesting of arable crops later in the year seem to have required a number of temporary fences to prevent stock straying onto crops and keeping clear a way for the wagons and carts bringing home the harvest. In 1695, Nicholas Manton was fined for taking away his fence between the field and the common way before harvest was in. The Customs in 1682 required that 'everie person shall make his hedge by meadow Gate by the first daye of Maye or within six days after and so continew them till the feildes bee carried in paine of 6s 8d'. A 'gate' in this context was a way or a path. Most of the Lyddington village meadows were located to the south of the village centre on the banks of the Welland, and 'meadow gate' was presumably the route taken by villagers and their carts, probably on the line of the present lane to Gretton, which crosses the arable land in Nether Field south of the village. The 'fences' were temporary structures, made probably in many cases from cuttings from growing hedges or branches from the woodland. Some larger farms will have had hurdles to put in place to make a temporary fence. These sometimes appear listed among the farm equipment in probate inventories.¹⁰

There are few probate inventories for Lyddington, and consequently, although arable land was held in three main Fields and we can assume a similar rotation to that at Wigston Magna, we lack evidence that the same crops were grown in the same proportion. Such documentary material as we have shows that peas and beans were an important crop, maybe partly because they were relatively easy to cultivate on the heavy clay soils in parts of the Midlands, and were much valued as animal feed to keep draught animals, sheep and cattle through the winter. Peas were used to feed sheep and the haulm was used as fodder. According to Marshall,¹¹ beans were fed crushed or kibbled to horses, although, as with all high protein feeds, he notes that feeding should be matched with work. Wheat and barley were also grown, but in what proportions in the Manor, it is impossible to say with any certainty. Barley was probably grown more extensively than wheat and malted locally to make ale (see page 59). It may also, from the 1670s, have been sold on from the village to merchants in Stamford and elsewhere, carried in the wagons, which, certainly by the eighteenth century, were replacing the smaller, more limited carts for transport among more prosperous farmers in the region (Figures 37 and 38).

Although the details of farming practice in Lyddington in the seventeenth century are difficult to reconstruct from the surviving documentary sources, it seems likely that most, if not all, Lyddington villagers farmed mixed holdings with arable crops and livestock complementing each other, the former providing the fodder crops to feed the necessary draught animals and the latter providing manure to improve the arable strips. Good probate records for Lyddington would throw light on many aspects of farming practice and although such records are very scarce for Lyddington, the Local History Society at Great Easton (a similarly-sized Welland valley village a short distance to the west of Caldecott) have made an excellent collection of their probate inventories and have kindly made them available to us.¹² The details of farms show a pattern of mixed farming, with barley being the main grain crop, and pulses grown as



Figure 37 A typical country cart with a tipping body so it could be used for carrying manure as well as the usual loads of farm produce. (RCM)



Figure 38 This farm wagon was made in Lincolnshire between 1775 and 1799 and used on Westfield Farm, Preston, Rutland. (RCM)

winter fodder for animals. To a lesser extent, wheat and rye were grown in Great Easton open fields and sheep-farming was their main use of grassland. Missing in the Great Easton inventories were the large numbers of village cows that featured in Lyddington and probably Caldecott in the seventeenth century. Keeping cattle, particularly dairy cows, was clearly important enough for Lyddington parish to make an annual investment in the provision of one or more bulls for communal use and to set aside three areas in the open arable fields to be used as cow pastures (see Figure 26).

Livestock

The numbers of cattle and sheep in Lyddington were recorded in the parish levy of 1633, when the churchwardens devised a scheme to raise the annual parish rate on the value of livestock, charging 2d for a cow and 4d per score (20) of sheep.¹³ The record of the levy thus provides a snapshot of the farm stock kept in that year. In Lyddington in 1633, it is significant that of the 86 households who paid parish rates only five were without a cow. The largest herds, kept by Mr Harrison and Mr Sheffield, were very limited. They each had ten cows; Mr Digbie had eight; Michael Reynolds, Widow Browne and Anthony Winter each had seven cows; and Thomas Ward and Everet Stanger had six. Many villagers paid the rate just for one cow, some had between two and five. The rate or levy shows there were at least 120 cows in the village in 1633, more than one bull could look after effectively over the season.

The parish bull makes his appearance in the churchwardens' accounts of income and expenditure from the mid 1620s.¹⁴ He may, however, have been

a feature of village life much earlier. Until the 1640s, only one bull was provided to serve the village herd of around 120 cows, but in 1641 a second bull was purchased, and by the 1650s there were three bulls, each costing between two and three pounds.¹⁵ These were usually sold on each year in the autumn fairs and new bulls purchased the following spring. Occasionally, the parish made a small profit on the sale, but it was more usual to sell the bulls at a loss, and in 1658 and 1659 the parish had to raise a loan to keep the scheme going. The fact that the bull purchase was clearly seen as a sensible investment by the churchwardens suggests that there was rather more than milk for domestic consumption at stake. Dairying and particularly cheese-making may well have been an important part of the village market economy in the seventeenth century (see page 76). Again documentary sources cannot substantiate this. There are not enough probate inventories for Lyddington to draw any sort of general conclusion on farmhouse production of butter or cheese. Only one of the four surviving inventories for Lyddington in the seventeenth century mentions dairy production. Clement Sherwood in 1658 had a cheese press, a cheese rack and some shelves.¹⁶

There were two areas identified in 1569 as cow pastures kept specifically for the village herd (**Figure 26**). One, amounting to nineteen acres, was in Upper Field and lay in an area of hilly ground to the east of the Park wall, with streams down either side. Known as Hill Pasture, it had been taken in from arable production and at some stage converted to grassland. It was clearly identified by name in the enclosure award of 1804 and aerial photographs show the underlying ridge and furrow throughout. The Nether Field to the south of the village also had its cow pasture, an area of fourteen acres of grassland on Copper Hill, probably lying on the bank of the brook. The manorial customs forbade the keeping of any extra (bye) cattle in the village fields: 'noe man shall keepe anie bye herds on paine 5s'. In 1681, Richard Morris of Caldecott was fined 2s 6d for keeping a bye herd.¹⁷

Sheep flocks in the 1633 rate or levy were relatively modest, with only three flocks in Lyddington of a hundred or more. Mr Harrison had 200 sheep, Simon Fowler 120 and Richard Lane 100. Many people had no sheep at all, or kept small flocks of five to ten animals. The largest sheep flocks in the Manor were probably kept on the drier pastures of Stoke Dry. In 1656 and 1659 the churchwardens there raised their rates at 12d per hundred sheep, recording the considerable size of flocks in that parish. Mr Busby paid £6 in the levy for a thousand sheep; Mr Chamberlain paid for three hundred head and there were three more parishioners who paid for over one hundred, and ten kept a hundred or fewer. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, flocks in Lyddington may have been increasing as well. In the first half of the seventeenth century the Lyddington sheepwalk, the manorial right to put sheep on the Brand, was leased to George Sheffield. The right or stint was for 360 sheep to be run there by the lessee. The lease included the Sheepecote close at the north end of the village, where there was a grass enclosure. Permanent sheep pens were leased as part of the 'walk'. In 1688 Mr Fancourt was fined for overcharging the common in the 'upper pasture' with his flock of 'ninescore' sheep (180). From the numbers involved, it appears that he may have taken on the lease of the sheepwalk after it became vacant and allowed his flock to stray

DOMESTIC CHEESE PRODUCTION



Figure 39 Cartoon by Rowlandson entitled 'Dr Syntax in the Dairy' from *Dr Syntax Tour* c.1790. ('The Tour of Dr Syntax in search of the Picturesque')

This illustration of a scene in a typical country dairy is taken from one of a number of prints by Thomas Rowlandson commissioned by Ackermans of London for publication in instalments in a monthly publication. It was used, with others, by George Coombe to illustrate his poem on the exploits of the Reverend Dr Syntax as he set out like the Rev William Gilpin and his followers in pursuit of the picturesque views. Coombes was gently mocking Gilpin's fashionable works.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries surplus milk was made on the farm into butter or cheese, or both. The milk was brought into the dairy in a wooden vessel with a handle, seen on the floor beside the dairy maid. It was then left in bowls to separate. In the illustration the earthenware bowls containing milk have been set out on the shelves around the dairy and left to separate. The cream rising to the top was skimmed off for butter making. The milk in the bottom of the bowl was poured or drained into containers for cheese making.

The butter 'stand churn' made of wood with iron hoops, and with a handle from the plunger fitting on the top, is on the right of the picture. It

is a wooden conical shaped vessel with a plunger down the centre. Making butter in a churn like this was hard work. The plunger had to be kept below the surface of the cream to avoid frothing, and the time it took for butter to form could vary depending on the temperature. Sometimes butter took more than two days of continuous churning to thicken sufficiently.

Cheese was made usually from milk. This was first heated in a cheese kettle, a valuable object made of copper or iron. Rennet was added to encourage the milk to set and form the set junket or curd in warm milk and a little salt was used to act as a preservative. The remaining liquid, the whey, was drained and then fed to livestock. The curd was packed into bags and left to drain. When it was sufficiently solid it was put into round moulds and eventually the final extraction of the whey was completed in a cheese press like the one shown behind Dr Syntax. The wooden screw was turned to lower the press and the remaining whey was squeezed into the bucket below.

Cheeses were then put on racks or boards to dry. The cheese rack and the store of cheeses is behind and above the dairymaid's head

from the Brand; or he may have been running a separate enterprise on Lyddington commons. We do not know.

The three open fields in Lyddington were farmed in rotation as was usual, with one field left fallow each year. Two fields were allocated each year to grow the village grain crops of wheat and barley in one, and the fodder crops of peas, beans and oats in the other. The manor court records that stock strayed into the pea field in 1670, when George Dolton was fined for two horses found there. Oats seem to have been grown in the same field as the pulses. In 1654, Charles Bennet was fined 2s 6d by the Lyddington manor court for trespass with horses ‘among the peas and oats’. In Lyddington it was often horses causing problems. Twelve of Lyon Faulkner’s horses had to be rounded up in 1680 and impounded. It seems they were then let out twice by his servant Marjorie Smith, and at his death in 1681 he had still not paid his fine for ‘breaking the pound’.

Caldecott presentments show that, as in Lyddington, there were a number of cows kept in the village and three inventories in the 1650s and 1660s record cheese production. Anne Ward, in 1660, had a cheese rack in one of her chambers and a cheese press in her kitchen (Figure 39). Thomas Redshaw in 1657 had cheese in his chamber and in 1658 Robert Skelhorne’s cheese was worth 10s. His three cows and a heifer were worth £10.¹⁸ There was no record of a communal bull or of a village cow pasture. There were, however, regular presentments in the manor court for cows straying into the arable fields. In 1689, four Caldecott people were fined 1s each for their cows ‘lying in the field at night time’. The same rules of the manor court applied in Caldecott as in Lyddington, and in 1690 William Browne was fined 3s 4d for keeping a bye herd.¹⁹ In 1685 John Freeman tried to buy a right to keep a cow in Caldecott by hiring a cow common (an allocation of grazing rights) from William Morris ‘contrary to orders’. Freeman was fined 3s 4d and Morris 2s. There were also many problems with horses. Although there is only a short run of accounts for the quarterly horse fair at Hallaton, in the 1720s there were at least two people from Caldecott buying and selling on a regular basis, mainly the traditional black carriage horses with white hind socks mentioned by Defoe (Figure 32).

Of all the villages in the Manor, Caldecott seems to have had the largest population of swine, perhaps kept on by-products of the dairy herd. Considerable numbers were presented each year for damage to the arable crops in the village fields, eleven in 1681 alone. In 1733 the field searchers found eighteen pigs or swine in Caldecott fields, each one costing its owner 2d in fines.

Farming in the Eighteenth Century

Lyddington and the Manor’s other villages in the eighteenth century probably differed only in minor details from the general picture of earlier farming described above. In Lyddington in 1700 the open fields were certainly still growing grain crops, as well as peas and beans for winter fodder. The two fields under cultivation were generally referred to as the ‘Peas Field’ and the ‘Wheat Field’, although barley was also grown in both fields. When in 1746



Figure 40 A typical farmyard scene with a thatched corn stack. (RCM)

William Larratt of Lyddington, farmer, was sold up for the recovery of his rent, he had crops in the two fields under cultivation that year: the Wheat Field where he had two acres of wheat and two roods of barley, and the Peas Field where he had two acres and one rood of peas and one rood of oats.²⁰ In his closes he had a further seven acres of barley and ten-and-a-half acres of peas, along with his stock of 22 wether sheep, two young black horses and two cows. Hay from his meadow ground of thirty acres had been sold in Uppingham for £18. The value of his total farm stock and crops came to £68 15s.

In the eighteenth century, the pattern of open-field cultivation in the Manor of Lyddington may have appeared to continue as usual, but, as in other villages in the Midlands, appearances may have been deceptive. Livestock was becoming more profitable than arable farming, but the more wealthy farmers in Lyddington, who were unable to increase their livestock in the open fields and commons, had to respond, both by creating grass leys among the arable strips, or by acquiring grazing land elsewhere. They still had houses and buildings in the villages, keeping their horses and equipment in their barns and hovels (Figure 40) and using the village open fields for growing their arable crops.²¹ It seems unlikely that William Fancourt's (see page 75) flock of 380 sheep (19 score), for example, could be kept entirely on the Lyddington commons, and he, like other graziers from the village, probably had pasture land elsewhere, in his case possibly in Glaston where he had his family home. Wills often indicate if there was additional land outside the Manor. Edward Allen, who had originally come to Lyddington from Lyndon, Rutland, in the 1660s had land in Edith Weston and in Kings Cliffe in Northamptonshire, while Edward Ireland's will of 1671 shows he had land at Eaton, Nottingham and locally in Bisbrooke, where his cows were pastured, and in Uppingham, Morcott and Barrowden. Everard Stanger in 1653 had a grey filly 'depasturing in the Fens'.

Robert Harrison of Thorpe in 1638 had land in Tinwell and Glaston. William Baxter in 1780 had additional land at East Farndon, Little Bowden and Clipston.

By 1720, Lyddington parish ceased to support a communal bull. By this time, individual farmers probably had their own. At the same time, as elsewhere in the region, cattle-keeping was becoming more focused on the market for meat. The open fields, while still primarily used for arable crops, may also have contained increasing numbers of grass leys on which stock could be either penned or tethered. Grass leys feature in terriers of the open fields from the sixteenth century, but the proportion of grass to arable lands in the open fields cannot, as in parts of Leicestershire, be reconstructed, and also we do not know whether in Lyddington these were temporary grass leys or permanent ones.²² The Lyddington Field Book of 1743 gives the total arable acreage of the Estate as 167 acres, the area of grass in the Fields as 33 acres with 44 acres of meadow. The total area of the farmland controlled by the estate in Lyddington was 245 acres.²³ In spite of the shortage of grazing, the rules of the manor court against enclosure were strictly enforced. The fine for ‘inclosing of anie part of the field ground’ was £5 per acre.²⁴ In 1680 Edward Allin was fined £3 for inclosing certain leys of the Middle Field near his homestead, now known as ‘Bay House’. They were known as Sismey’s leys, and lay behind his house to the west. The accumulation of strips in open field furlongs was probably viewed as the first step towards enclosure. In 1688 Richard Waterfield was fined 10s for acquiring a quarter of a yardland (about six acres), ‘bought by single acres out of several years leys without the knowledge or the consent of the jury or right of common’.

Where we do have evidence of farms and farming practice in the eighteenth century, the leases and terriers in the Burghley archives are not always easy to use. The problem lies in assessing the size of farms where land was held from the Manor by a variety of tenures, copyhold, freehold, leasehold, and as tenants at will, making the whole picture in most cases impossible to assemble.

One possible approach to the puzzle over the ownership and size of farms may be to use the Land Tax assessments, particularly the early assessment of 1712.²⁵ This document is a particularly complete early record of the Land Tax in Rutland. It is, however, not always easy to interpret. The tax was supposed to be paid by the owners of land. This was, in practice, often ignored by the assessors, who found it easier to collect the tax from the farmers known on a particular holding. Some landowners, like Eusebius Buswell in Lyddington, owning what remained of the prebendal estate in the parish, seem to have paid the whole of his tax of £28 and presumably collected it from his tenants later. The Earl of Exeter also paid tax of £3 8s for meadow land, perhaps in hand in 1712, but there is no record of him paying for the remainder of his land in the Manor. The small farms, the thirty or so with less than five acres, will all have been tenants, probably copyholders of the estate; the greater number with farms of up to twenty acres were also likely to hold copyhold leases and only some of the more wealthy individuals on more than fifty acres were likely to hold some of their land freehold. Nevertheless, however complicated the detail, the comparative ranking of individuals by size of holding can be deduced from these taxation lists.

The real surprise is to see how very small the individual holdings of some villagers actually were and that strong signs still remain in 1712 of the well-established peasant economy virtually at subsistence level. In Lyddington; over 40 of the 73 landholders seem to have held less than ten acres, a total of only 10% of the parish area. Sixteen landholders had 10 to 50 acres. The fourteen highest taxpayers, with holdings over fifty acres, held around 70% of the parish land. Only two of these, Edmund Sismey and Eusebius Buswell, held a hundred acres or more. In Caldecott, 17 of the 40 landholders held less than ten acres, representing about 8% of the parish area. Sixteen landholders, a rather larger proportion than in Lyddington, had 10–50 acres. The seven highest taxpayers, with holdings over fifty acres, held around 50% of the land. Of these, the two largest landholders, one of whom was again Eusebius Buswell, held a hundred acres or more. There was a similar proportion of small landholders in Thorpe, where eight of the 20 landholders held less than ten acres, though this amounted to only about 3% of the parish area. A further eight landholders had holdings of 10–50 acres. However, nearly 75% of the parish land was held by the four highest taxpayers, with land of around a hundred acres or more. In Stoke Dry, the large landholders were again dominant. Three of the fourteen landholders held under ten acres, amounting to less than 2% of the land. Six landholders had 10–50 acres, but the five highest taxpayers held over 75% of the land. The largest landholder, Conyers Peach (who also acted as assessor) had around 320 acres, about a third of the parish land.

Fortunately the Caldecott farms seem to have been surveyed as a group in 1758 and a summary of eleven holdings drawn up by the estate.²⁶ Of the farms surveyed, none was very extensive. Caldecott was a community where there were mainly small farms, probably farmed for subsistence. The largest in 1758 was 38 acres farmed by Mr Blackwell, but most were less than twenty acres, the smallest being that of William Skelhorn containing four acres (see pages 28–9).

By the mid-eighteenth century, farms in Lyddington and Thorpe were beginning to increase in size. In 1722, when Christopher Nevison died in Thorpe by Water, his inventory provides a snapshot of early eighteenth-century farming in the Manor. It lists his farm stock and equipment, as well as the contents of his house. It suggests a large and prosperous farm, growing peas, beans, oats, wheat, rye and barley. Some of the barley was at the kiln in his yard waiting to be malted, and there was a valuable crop of hay to feed his livestock. His livestock included ten cows, five calves, five heifers, fifty sheep, a sow and 32 store pigs and the yard poultry. His horses, probably all kept for his own use, were a gelding, seven mares, two colts, two fillies and two foals. His equipment included five harrows and three ploughs, harness for seven horses, three wagons and three carts. In his store were cheeses, a cheese board and cheese rack worth £6, and 'pit coals' in another barn, perhaps for domestic use or possibly for malting. His inventory was made in 1723 and it shows that he was worth £422. Of this his household goods and furnishings were valued at £162, and his stock, crops and farm equipment at about £260 (see page 340).

A good example of the process of engrossing in Lyddington would be to take one of the Pretty family farms, starting out in 1718 with nine acres, and

increasing in size by the acquisition of adjoining land until, by the end of the century, it was a very substantial holding of over two hundred acres. A terrier of this farm, when in the possession of Clement Pretty, was made in 1718. Twenty years later, another survey was made when it was inherited by Peter Pretty.²⁷ The survey showed the farm was still very small, containing only nine acres, the same as in his father's time, mostly held in strips in the open fields, three acres in the Upper Field and the same in the Middle Field, some of which was grass ley, two-and-a-half acres in Nether Field, and one acre in the meadow. However, an inventory of Peter Pretty's farm indicated that this referred only to his copyhold land and underestimated his total acreage. He had seventeen acres of wheat and barley in one field, eight acres of peas in another, hay in the meadow and in leys in the (arable) field worth £12, with more hay in his close in the Park, ten sheep and lambs, two cows, six calves and five horses 'with husbandry gears' worth £20 and various implements including two ploughs, a wagon and carts worth £14, the whole worth £116 15s.²⁸

Peter Pretty's farm was divided on his death between his two sons, Samuel and Joseph. By then more land had been taken on and the farm consolidated and increased in size. One addition in 1726 was the sixteen acres that had been held by John Chapman. This holding was in strips in all three arable fields, six acres in Upper Field, four acres in Middle Field, both of which included strips of ley grass, two acres in Nether Field and three acres of meadow. In 1756 Joseph Pretty acquired John Allen's farm of 38 acres. He also leased the Little Park, containing nine acres of grass and a large stone barn (Figure 41), the use of which was shared with Samuel. Samuel and Joseph probably each farmed about the same acreage, but it is Samuel's farm in Lyddington that is described in detail, set out in the agreement with James Hurst the estate steward in 1757.²⁹ It contained just over a hundred acres in all, about fifty acres of which was arable and included about fifteen acres of grass ley and twelve and a half acres of meadow. In the open fields were 29 acres and two roods of arable land in the Upper Field, seven acres two roods and a half of grass or ley ground in the same field, 25 acres one-and-a-half roods of arable land and two acres



Figure 41 Little Park Barn in 2011. (Robert Ovens)

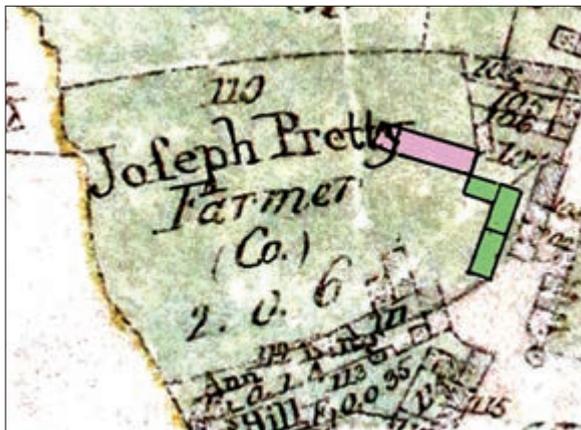


Figure 42 A section of the Lyddington Enclosure Map of 1804, with Joseph Pretty's farm in Lyddington highlighted. (ROLLR)

twenty perches of grass or ley ground in the Middle Field, nineteen acres three-and-a-half roods of arable land and five acres one-and-a-half roods of grass or ley ground in the Lower or Nether Field and also twelve acres and two roods of meadow land. He also had enclosed pasture in the Great Park in two closes containing about six acres. According to the agreement, he had half of the 'slate barn', the slate roof distinguishing it from the neighbouring Prebendal Farm barn built in 1738 (see **Figure 41**), which was thatched. It stood near the Home (or Little) Park, half of which he leased and the other half was leased by his brother Joseph. His rent was £54 per annum, and the land was held on an annual basis. The manure arising on the farm was to be laid there, and none of the grass ground was to be ploughed. There were no other restrictions and no improvements or new crops were mentioned.

A similar terrier or survey of Joseph's farm would have been useful, but unfortunately does not exist. It was, though, probably of a similar size to Samuel's and distributed through the fields in the same way. Joseph died in 1785. His probate inventory lists the contents of his house, his farm stock, equipment and crops (**Figure 42**).³⁰ His household possessions were worth £35 including cheese stored there worth 14s 6d. The house had a hall, parlour and kitchen, brewhouse, cellar and dairy, two chambers, a men's room and a cheese chamber. The total value of his farm was £445 14s 6d, so his household goods only accounted for a relatively small proportion of his wealth. His crops of wheat, barley, beans and hay worth £209 2s accounted for nearly half his worth. His bean crop was the largest and most valuable, being worth £79. It was distributed in five 'hovels' in his yard, more hovels at Park Close and in the 'slate barn there'. His wheat was worth £62, his barley £40 and his hay, some of which was in his High Park close, £22 10s. His livestock included his horses, four of which were worth £7 10s each, six old horses worth £15, a young mare and two foals. The four would be the highly-valued plough team, available also to pull his wagons (**Figure 38**). There was harness for four, cart saddles and britchins (breeches) worth one guinea and nine pairs of other gears, collars and beams. He had only two mares to breed from and it seems most likely that he kept his horses for his own use on the farm.

He had a few cows, comprising three old cows, three milch (milk) cows

with six calves, so possibly all these cows were suckling, and three heifers. The cows were worth about £3 each. Dairying may not have been a commercial proposition on this farm, the cattle instead being kept to provide milk for home consumption. His 33 ewes and 40 lambs and the 'ten Bad (sick) sheep' in the Homestead close were hardly commercial either so it appears that the main commercial output on this farm was arable production, with sufficient hay and beans to provide no more than feed and winter fodder for the draught animals.

His equipment bears this out. He had two ploughs and five harrows, three wagons worth £19, and four carts (see **Figure 37**) and the harness to go with them and various small tools, halters, rakes, forks, shovels, a screen and fan, troughs and sacks. He also had five hovels worth one pound each and three dozen hurdles to use as temporary fencing or for folding sheep on his arable strips in winter.³¹

It is often said that the main specialisation of Midland farmers was meat, beef and mutton, sent on the hoof to the London market and reared on the rich pastures of the Welland valley. Lyddington, Caldecott and Thorpe should all have benefited from this trade, and yet there is nothing to show that their Welland valley lands were held outside the open-field system. They were closed in spring until the hay harvest and were open to common grazing after the hay had been gathered. There is no evidence that there had been any adjustment of stints there that might enable farmers to graze their livestock more efficiently. We simply lack the source material and it may become available in due course. These low-lying riverside lands often flooded in winter, forming natural water meadows, guaranteeing a potentially valuable early growth of grass. It must have seemed wasteful to the farmers to leave it to mow for hay later in the summer.

When Lyddington villagers began to consider the advantages of enclosure, as they did from the early 1760s, the prospect of dividing the meadows and establishing livestock fattening regimes, as well as the advantage of improving the arable lands to include new crops, must have seemed irresistible.

Enclosure

Perhaps as a consequence of joint action taken by the villagers over the route of the turnpike in 1754, by 1761 Lyddington farmers were petitioning the Earl of Exeter to proceed with procuring an Act of Parliament to enable enclosure to take place. The idea was being strongly promoted by the rector, Mainwaring Laughton, and was supported by Mr Sismey, 'a very considerable proprietor', 'who understands the Nature of Improvement and who is at any time ready to furnish your lordship with particulars'. Mainwaring's interest, as he admitted, was that he was in debt and in need of the regular income from the commutation of the tithes, which usually took place at the same time as enclosure, and would also secure 'comfortable provision for my wife'.³² A subsequent letter signed by eighteen men from Lyddington and elsewhere, presumably representing the landed interest, stressed the great advantages of enclosing the open field, much of the commons and the Brand and noted that the village was 'already in great measure inclosed' and 'only subdividing would be needed

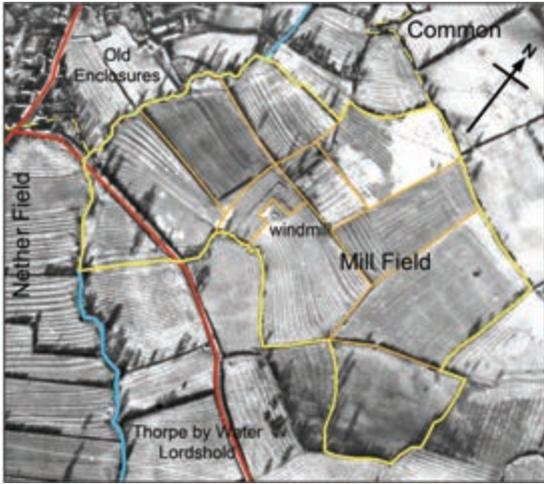


Figure 43 An aerial view of Mill Field, Lyddington, with the surviving ridge and furrow providing evidence of former plough strips. RAF Aerial Survey, January 1947. (RCM)

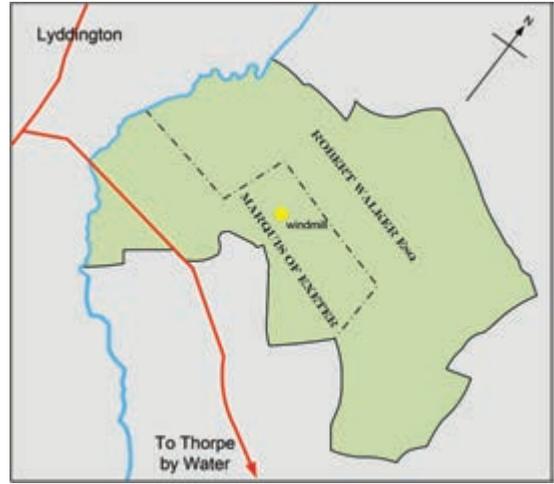


Figure 44 This map shows Mill Field in 1804, after enclosure. (Robert Ovens)

thereby greatly lessening the expense'. They also noted that enclosure would lessen the number of disputes over rights of common and tithes which were 'greatly to the disquiet of the said parish'.³³

It was 1798 before the process of passing the bill in Parliament began and the next steps towards enclosure were underway. The bill passed through Parliament and was enacted in 1799. The process of surveying the parish, settling disputes and finally making the new allotments for enclosure was completed by 1804 and the award and the definitive map of the new field layout were finished in 1805. John Palmer, clerk and solicitor to the enclosure, kept an account book, which has been the subject of detailed analysis.³⁴ It gives a fascinating insight into the whole process of village enclosure and the problems and expenses involved.

The Lyddington Enclosure involved breaking up the open fields and awarding comparable acreages to farmers (Figures 43, 44). Instead of the new land remaining in strips, it was allocated in compact blocks, which could be fenced, resulting, in theory, in a new layout of farms for Lyddington and Caldecott (Figures 43 and 44). Because of intercommoning (joint use by adjacent villages) on the Brand and the re-allocation of the commons, it also affected Uppingham, Bisbrooke and Seaton. The whole complicated process took forty years to complete.

PART FOUR

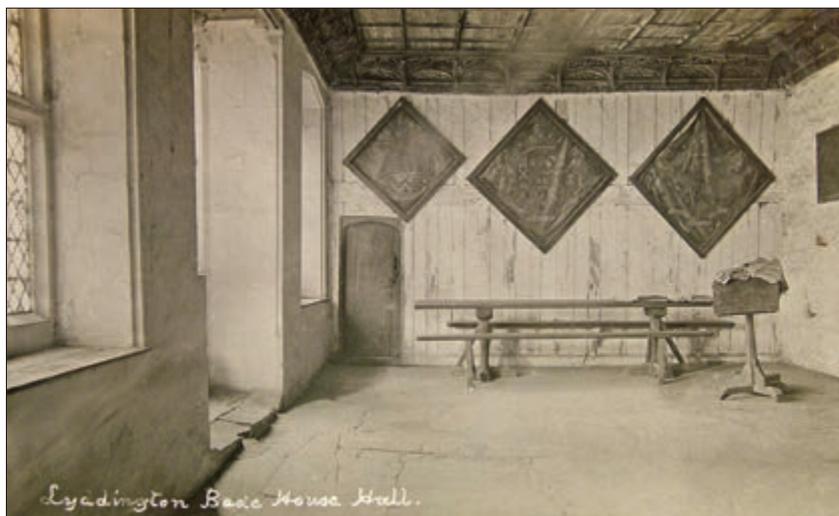
Manor and Parish

Local government in Lyddington in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came within the jurisdiction of two authorities: the manor court, a survivor of the ancient authority of the feudal Lord; and the relatively new authority promoted by the Tudors, the parish, answerable to the Justices of the Peace.

In Lyddington, the manor court was held throughout the medieval period when the Manor was held by the bishop, but passed into lay hands during the sixteenth century, and it may well have been quite unusual in maintaining such strong links with the old system during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many other estates were changing. By the middle of the sixteenth century, the old institutions of manorial authority were, in many parts of the country, beginning to crumble and decay. The breakdown of the old order was speeded up by the dissolution of the monasteries and the sale and redistribution of large quantities of land by the Tudor court. It depended largely on local conditions whether the old manorial system survived or not. In the case of the estates in Rutland, given into royal hands in 1547 by the bishop of Lincoln and eventually passing to the Cecil family, the manorial system was maintained. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Burghley estate continued the practice of holding regular courts in Lyddington and elsewhere for the benefit of tenants. The courts held in Lyddington included Caldecott and a small area on the western edge of the village of Thorpe, also part of the Manor and parish of Lyddington.

Nevertheless, over the country as a whole, a new system was needed to administer legislation at local level by the mid-sixteenth century. The parish, where in some cases there had been regular meetings of a vestry to manage ecclesiastical affairs, thus bringing the community together on occasions, was seen as a viable alternative to the manor court. It was to be supported by (and responsible to) the newly reformed magistracy, the Justices of the Peace.¹ As a result, where matters of national concern were involved, such as the maintenance of a usable road network or the replacement of a system of almsgiving to the poor, the parish under the supervision of the Justices was thought to be the better option for creating and maintaining a consistent (and hopefully permanent) system of local government. Tudor legislation placed an important range of local government issues formerly dealt with by the manorial court baron, or perhaps more usually the court leet (see page 359), into the hands of the parish and its vestry. Its role was further extended by legislation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the beginning of the seventeenth

Figure 45 The Great Hall at Lyddington Bede House. The painted panels are funerary hatchments. (RCM)



century, the parish had, in most places, become the ultimate unit of local administration.²

In Lyddington the records show how this significant change of direction from the manor to the parish in local government worked out in practice. There might, in the Manor of Lyddington, have been cause for conflict between manor and parish, but both jurisdictions seem to have worked out their own sphere of interest and influence. The most influential people in the community did their turn of duty both as churchwardens in the parish and as Freeboroughs, or head men, of the manor court. The village is extremely fortunate in having excellent records from the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries of both of these important and influential institutions, the parish and the manor. The former, consisting mainly of the churchwardens' accounts, have been deposited in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland by the parish, and the records of the manor court are in the private family archive at Burghley House.

The Manor Court

The manor court in Lyddington appears to have merged the business of a court Baron, dealing with property, creating and exchanging copyhold, and a Court leet, which took the 'View of Frankpledge'. The swearing of this by those who attended the court underpinned a system of mutual responsibility and undertook to enforce the 'customs of the community', which in this case included the management of communal agriculture. The Court Leet was also responsible for enforcing consumer legislation. The Assize of Bread and Ale was dealt with here, the jury deciding the fines for light bread or weak ale. It also took some responsibility for the highways. It was the manor court who fined individuals that did not perform their statutory labour duties, although it was the parish who usually appointed the Surveyors.

The court sat in March and in October under a Steward of the Burghley

estate. Between court sittings, officers, known as Deciners, were appointed to note property transfers. These notes would then be taken to the next court and recorded or enrolled. The spring court dealt mainly with court baron affairs, including property transfers. In the autumn, the presentments by the officers of the court to the jury took up much of the business. They presented people who had committed offences or misdemeanours against the customs of the Manor, often in connection with the practices of communal agriculture. These were discussed by the jury and the appropriate fines or penalties levied. These usually amounted to a few pence for each offence. Everyone on the list of suitors was expected to attend the court, almost certainly held in the hall of the Bede House (Figure 45). Constables prepared a list of all the inhabitants of the Manor owing suit, and Freeboroughs recorded their status, as freeholders, leaseholders, copyholders or tenants at will.³ If all the suitors attended the court, decisions on matters of importance would become general knowledge in the community, but the proceedings were not supposed to be made more widely-known. In 1689 George Dolton was fined 5s for disclosing the secrets (discussions) of the Juries.⁴ The customs or rules of the Manor were probably well known to all the inhabitants of Lyddington and Caldecott, but, occasionally as in 1682, they were written down. The list of 'paines' or fines give us a clear picture of the business of the court and throws some light on the farming methods of villagers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see page 67–84).

Of the forty items on the list of 'paines', only seven dealt with matters beyond the organisation of common field agriculture. These mainly dealt with obstructions of the highways in the Manor and of the village streets. Muck hills or 'Compas' (compost) were often mentioned in the presentations and offenders who were obstructing the highway by making 'muck heaps' in the street were fined up to 6s 8d. Any encroachment on the 'Kinges high waies' or on the village commons was dealt with severely with a fine of up to 20s. In 1654 Kenelm Waterfield had laid wood in the street to the 'annoyance of his neighbours' and opened a stone pit 'upon or neere the high waye'. In the same year, six villagers were fined because they 'had made and continued Incroachments upon the Towne Street'. This probably establishes that, under this rule, the alignment of buildings along the road frontage was a matter for the manor court. There were strict penalties for those whose buildings projected too far into the street.

In order to avoid the ever-present risk of fire, the manor court made it an offence to have a fire in a house 'without a sufficient chimney'. Whether this implied that chimneys were to be made of stone (or whether wattle chimney hoods were sufficient) was not clear, but there were several presentations for not keeping chimneys in repair. For example, in 1660 Ann Lambe was fined 6d because she 'had not repayered her Chymney.'⁵ It was also an offence to carry fire in the village unless in a closed container. The fine for every such offence could be up to 10s but in 1654 Nathaniel Ducker was only fined 4d when he 'carried fyer openly'.⁶

It seems to have fallen to the manor court rather than the parish vestry to try and limit the numbers of immigrants hoping to settle in the village. Anyone who provided lodging for a foreigner or stranger, either in their own house or

by leasing cottages or tenements to them, had to provide a bond of £40, an extraordinarily large sum of money. This was to be deposited with two specially-chosen jurors to 'discharge the town of any charge that may happen by their abode then or at any time' and was to ensure that the lodgers or strangers were put out of the town when the year was up. If they continued to reside in the village, a further bond had to be deposited by their landlord at the discretion of the two bond collectors. Failure to obey this rule resulted in a fine of 10s.

There is no evidence that the two jurymen appointed to collect these bonds were Overseers of the Poor, but clearly one of the purposes of this rule was to avoid having to pay poor relief from the village rates to people who had no right to be there. It was regularly invoked from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, even before the Act of Settlement in 1662 gave such arrangements the force of law. For example, in 1653 William Neubon and Robert Manton were fined 5s and 3s 6d respectively because they 'have letten howses to forreyners and have not given bond to the Towne according to the order of this court'.⁷ In 1660 Robert Pole 'hath taken in an inmate'. In 1663 Hugo Pridmore was fined because he has 'forreynors' in his house. It presumably applied mainly to people seeking work as labourers and not those with already established trades. It was not thought likely to have been the means of denying the village any immigrants at all, but as has been shown, with other seventeenth-century legislation on Settlement and Removal, the draconian stance taken by many parishes is likely to have made it very difficult for poor people to move around rural areas to find work.⁸ By invoking this rule and applying the Act of Settlement too rigidly, villages could deprive themselves of enterprising people with expertise wishing to start a new life in the village.

Although there was no fine or 'paine' mentioned in 1682, it is clear from the record of presentments that the village kept a sharp eye out for any increase in the numbers of dwellings in the village. The creation of additional properties, both by the division of existing buildings or the creation of new cottages, was noted by the court and the owners or developers fined. The fines were not prohibitive, but having these additions recorded by the court enabled the estate to make provision for rent or to create a tenancy at will.

In 1662, three villagers, William Peake, Thomas Lanke and William Walker, built a 'house on the waste'. They are listed as tenants at will and paid 1s a year rent.⁹ In 1688 and 1689 when it seems house-building was taking place in the village, Richard Waterfield was 'Anoieing the street' with a dunghill, stone and wood, and John Sismey was fined 5s for a newly-erected cottage. In 1689, five new tenements had been built. Tenements were technically free of manorial duties, but had no automatic right to any stake in the fields and commons of the village. Cottages, however, had both rights and obligations to the Manor, and as a consequence paid more in fines. The two cottages built in 1689 and 1690 for which the fines were recorded show the higher cost: 10s in the case of Mr Sismey's cottage as against 1s fine for the builders of the tenements.¹⁰ Widow Roberts, with a 'new aracted cottage' was fined 1s. In 1668 Mary Roberts had been presented for 'stocking [livestock] for a cottage without right of common' and fined. The situation was evidently confusing and it is not clear how a person living in a tenement or as a tenant at will

acquired a cottager's rights. A note of the 'customs' presented to the Steward in about 1660 'as desired' by James Tiptaft as the Freeborough at that time, deals with the fines for the transfer of copyhold.¹¹ The Steward took 3s 4d for the copy and one shilling fine; the crier, hired to spread the news of a transfer of a property through the village, was paid 4d; and the Freeboroughs, who often received the request for a transfer in the court, received 4d. The dealings with tenants at will are not recorded, but presumably cottage rights had to be purchased and thereafter recorded in the copyhold transactions.

The Parish

The responsibility of the Parish in local government had at its heart arrangements to deal with three main problems in the countryside in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: petty crime, the state of the roads, and arrangements to support the poor. Alms and other support for the poor had become less certain following the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the reluctance of the population generally to give alms to the poor on a regular basis. There was also the problem of dealing with able-bodied vagrants, the 'sturdy beggars' who, if left unchecked could cause among other things, problems of law and order. The basis of the parish system of poor relief was established in the great Elizabethan Poor Law, enacted over the four years between 1597 and 1601, which brought together all the earlier legislation concerning the treatment of the poor already enacted during the Tudor period. It gave up entirely on the principle of voluntary almsgiving as a means of raising money to support the indigent poor and to set to work those capable of employment. Voluntary alms, or charitable giving directly or through the church, had been a major part of the old way of supporting the weak, but the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s had thrown the whole burden on individuals or the parish church, all of whom were enjoined by successive Acts in the 1540s to do more. Even when in 1549 the voluntary system of almsgiving was strengthened by invoking the displeasure of the bishop on those who failed to make the appropriate contribution, it was clearly unworkable. From 1572, with fines imposed on those who failed to pay and the threat of being taken to court by the Justices, there was still no improvement. In 1597 the system of voluntary almsgiving was abandoned and the parishes were given powers to raise money by a rate or levy on all the inhabitants to do what was necessary in dealing with the poor, the 'impotent' incapable of work, and the sturdy beggars or vagabonds able-bodied and capable of work but thought to be too idle to find employment.

The parish meeting or vestry was charged with appointing by rote or nomination the churchwardens and the three principal officers: the Overseers of the Poor, the Surveyors of the Highways and the Constable. These were, like the churchwardens, empowered to raise rates. In Lyddington there are only the records of the churchwardens' rate or levy and their accounts of expenditure.¹² There are in any case no accounts for the income and expenditure of the Surveyor of the Highways or the Overseer of the Poor, although there is a scrapbook in ROLLR of documents generated by cases dealt with under the

Poor Law.¹³ The earliest document in this collection is dated 1690. In the Manor of Lyddington, the Constable was appointed by the manor court leet. It is not now clear what his function in the parish was, as unfortunately no records of his activities have survived.

The churchwardens' rate was usually raised to finance their duties towards the upkeep of the parish church (**Figure 46**), provide church services with (for example) bread and wine, and to cover the expenses of Visitations and other necessary meetings in the diocese. In 1660 (the year of the Restoration not only of the monarchy but the old diocesan control of church affairs), the preamble to the collection described its purpose as 'a levy made the 15th day of January 1660 by the churchwardens and others of the inhabitants of Lyddington for the repair of the church and for painting the Kings Arms'. The earlier preambles to the collection of the parish rates, however, do not specify the purpose of the collection and in practice this income was used for many other purposes: the distribution of small sums of money to poor people travelling; vermin control; and a surprisingly large proportion was, in the seventeenth century, used for the purchase and maintenance of a parish bull.

The primary purpose of the levy raised by the churchwardens in Lyddington (as elsewhere) was to keep the church and churchyard in good repair, ensure that the interior was clean and fit for services to be held there, and that the pulpit and the pews were mended. They also were responsible for maintenance of the clock, vital to the life of the village and a cause of endless small problems, for which they appointed a clock-keeper (paid annually); the churchwardens were also responsible for the church bells, the most reliable means of communication over the whole parish. They also took care of the vestments and saw to the purchase of appropriate Prayer Books. It was their responsibility to provide paper and parchment and to keep the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, which had to be produced at the annual Visitation of diocesan officials. This was one of the meetings they attended in their official capacity, usually held in Gretton for parishes in their region. They also attended the court (probably the probate court) held by the Lyddington Prebend, Mr Lamb's court, which may have been a magistrate's court, and others. In 1627 they attended the annual diocesan Visitation held in Gretton, for which they charged 9d in expenses. By 1638 the expenses for attending the Visitation had risen to 7s, plus 'diet for ourselves and sidesmen' at 5s 6d. In the 1630s, Mr Pelsant (the holder of the Prebendal estates in Lyddington) held a court, possibly his probate court, which they attended at a cost of 1s 8d and they 'layd out at the monthly meeting at Uppingham' 6d.

The parish church was expected to be a meeting-place for the whole community and, even after the Reformation, almost everyone would expect to be baptised, married and buried by the church. Lyddington was the main parish in the Manor, and its churchwardens maintained the parish church. Caldecott and Thorpe had chapels of ease in the medieval period. Caldecott acquired its own parish church (**Figure 47**), but the chapel in Thorpe was apparently in decay by the end of the sixteenth century. Although there is now no sign of any religious building in Thorpe, the chapel is mentioned in a will of 1510 and as an abuttal on the north side of the Hall Close in 1567 and 1597. When challenged over his failure to attend church services in Seaton in 1604, Anthony

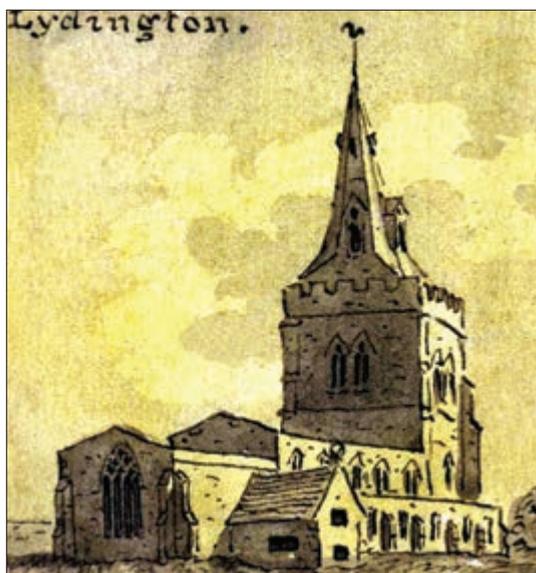


Figure 46 Lyddington Church in 1797. (RCM)

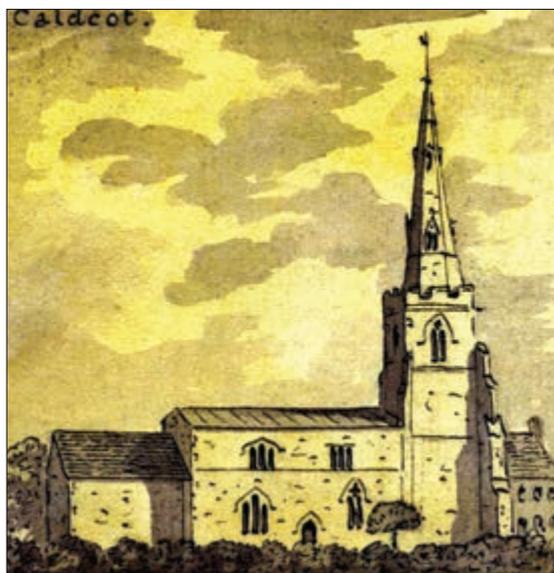


Figure 47 Caldecott Church in 1797. (RCM)

Rowlatt was able to claim he had been at worship in his local chapel in Thorpe. It seems to have stood on ground to the north of the Hall (now the Manor House) in Thorpe, but moulded stonework (possibly from the chapel) has been found in part of the Old Manor House, rebuilt around 1678 (see page 337).

Even in the upheavals establishing the crown as head of the church in the reign of Henry VIII and the growth of the protestant religion under Edward VI and Elizabeth, the parish church remained the focus of village religious observance. In 1559 the Elizabethan Act of Supremacy reinforced the powers of the crown in relation to the church in England. The clergy were required to subscribe to the Act of Supremacy on oath. Church attendance was compulsory on Sundays and Holy Days, and only the order of service in the English Prayer Book was permitted. The first national Prayer Book, in English, was produced in 1547, revised in 1552 and continued with minor alterations until 1660. As this led on the whole to much longer services with readings, psalms and sermons or homilies, many churches began providing pews and seats in church.

The Civil War and the setting up of the Commonwealth had also provided the impetus for establishing communities of Dissenters (Quakers or Baptists or other sects) outside the parish system. The most notable dissenters in Lyddington Manor were established in Thorpe by Water in the seventeenth century, and were Baptists. The most important figure in this movement was John Osborne, who had purchased a manor in Thorpe in 1615 (see page 338). He served in the Commonwealth army during the Civil War and was a member of the Midlands Committee from 1642. After the Restoration in 1660, the old order of church discipline was revived and the importance of diocesan control over the parishes became once again a source of grievance to many who hated

the discipline imposed on religious observance by bishops, and also objected in particular to the paying of tithes to maintain the local clergy. In 1659, Osborne petitioned Parliament against the imposition of tithes and published a pamphlet, *An Indictment against Tithes*, published in London that year.¹⁴ Back in Thorpe he refused, as did many dissenters of all persuasions, to pay the tithes on his property, and was imprisoned in Oakham in 1668, where he died in 1689, aged 84. In his will he left provision for the small Baptist congregation in and around Thorpe, and they continued to meet in his house (see page 338).

Maintenance of Lyddington Church and Churchyard

In 1660, in an early surviving record of parish expenditure on the church, the churchwardens used their income to pay for repairs to the pulpit and the 'grate'. They paid 2s for a new lock for the bell house and 6s 8d for 'keeping the clock'. The clock probably had to be wound each day.¹⁵ There was usually an annual payment of about 2d for oil for the clock, and periodically the rope was renewed. In 1637 a sum of 3s 4d was paid to the 'ropper' for a clock-rope, possibly from a roper in Uppingham where there is known to have been a rope yard. In 1657, though, the new rope for the clock came from a 'ropper in Greaton' (Gretton). A glazier was evidently repairing a window, or was perhaps working on the 'nue window' mentioned in the accounts of 1629 and for which he was paid 15s.

When the church porch was rebuilt in 1629, the main expenditure was on carriage of materials. Three loads of blue stone cost 1s 6d for carriage. A further five loads of stone, three loads from Kelham Fowler and two loads from Everatt Reynold, cost 2s per load. A theale, possibly the keystone for the arch of the new window, cost 1s 6d. The glazier William Sumpter was paid 13s 4d for his wage, which suggest he had ongoing work in maintaining the windows. He purchased 'five stone and twelve pounds of lead' in 1649 and paid £1 12s 6d for solder. It seems the windows in the parish church were of fragile construction and liable to be damaged by the wind. In 1661 a sum of 13s was 'paid to the glazier for the windows which the great wind brake'. Keeping up with such damage meant that the glazier was needed so regularly that he was paid an annual salary. In the seventeenth century, he probably worked over a wood fire to solder the lead frames for the window glass, but in 1710 coal was purchased for the glazier for 3s 3d and regular annual payments for coal for him followed. In 1728 Thomas Drake was paid 6d to open up the chimney in the schoolhouse so the glazier could make a fire there.

In 1630 the churchwardens were paying to have the steeple repaired, needing ropes as well as building materials, lime from Gretton and Cottingham, and sand from Bisbrooke. Mortar came from the villages' own supply 'from the meadowside' where a mortar pit, shown on the 1848 estate map, was located. In 1649, six loads of stone were used to mend the church wall and a new rope was purchased for the 'great plummit'. In 1656 four loads of stone were brought from Ketton, as well as three quarters of lime, costing 11s and five hundred slates at 4s. The waggoners were paid 9d and 3d was 'expended on the masons', probably for food and drink. In 1702 a quantity of wooden board was purchased, apparently to put a floor in the church. In 1719 the churchwardens paid 6d for fetching John Brown, a carpenter from Caldecott,

to measure the church floor. Thomas Manton was paid for 'flooring the church with board'. Forty-eight feet of inch board was purchased at one-and-a-half pence per foot, costing 6s. More board was purchased in 1722 from Thomas Manton, Everard Billing and Edmund Sismey. Thomas Colwell was paid 2s 6d for taking the 'old lead' to Uppingham and bringing the wood down. In 1729 the old lead was taken off the battlements, and for its renewal, sand was purchased from Bisbrooke along with two quarters of lime.

Churchwardens' Other Responsibilities

In 1660, on the Restoration of the Monarchy and the return of Charles II, a painter was hired to set up a new painted panel of the King's Arms costing £3, and widow Ireland was paid 2s for four days' hay for the painter's horse. In 1688 they paid 1s 6d for a 'booke' for King William and Queen Mary and 1s for a book for the Prince of Wales. In 1690 they paid 1s 6d for 'books of thanksgiving for the Kings safe return' at the end of the campaign in Ireland. These were probably books of prayers in keeping with the liturgy established by the Prayer Book. There is no mention of painted arms for George I, but in 1724 on the accession of George II a new board showing the King's Arms was commissioned, painted by Thomas Pine at a cost of £5 5s. On Coronation Day in December 1728, 12s was spent on ale and the ringers. Another Book of Common Prayer was purchased from Mr Cooke the bookseller for 18s in 1728.

The churchwardens also had the responsibility for making sure the services in Lyddington were properly conducted from the appropriate Prayer Book. Religious belief and observance were highly-charged political issues during the seventeenth century. In the early part of the century, the rise of Protestantism in England and in parts of Europe faced old, established Catholic alliances. Later, in the 1640s, there was a continuing threat of war and civil unrest in Scotland and Ireland. Thus the use of the appropriate forms of prayer was as significant in remote parts of the provinces as it was in the towns and cities, as part of an attempt to exclude Dissenters and quieten the threat of anti-government rebellion.

In 1626 the churchwardens purchased two paper books for 8s 6d and parchment for 9d. In 1631 Mr Rudd, the vicar, was paid 4s for writing the register and sending it to Mr Bugdin, but his more usual fee would probably be the 1s 6d he was paid for writing the register in 1640, with 5d for parchment. It appears to have been the incumbent's job to keep the registers up to date, the churchwardens supplying him with parchment or paper and paying him a small annual fee.

The churchwardens were responsible for keeping the church clean and ready for services. The church linen and vestments were washed on a regular basis, paid for by the churchwardens. In 1626 they paid 3s 4d for washing the surplices and the communion cloth. Regular cleaning of the interior of the church is, however, rarely mentioned until the beginning of the nineteenth century. By 1801, churchwardens were paying to have the church cleaned on a regular basis, for about 2s 6d annually, although in 1829 William Hill was paid 6s to clean the walls and windows, which took him four days.

There is no account for an organ in the church, but there were 'singers', for whom the churchwardens held an annual feast. In 1792, the meat, bread

and ale it supplied cost the parish £2 2s. The singers, it seems, were accompanied by a small group of instruments, for which new strings and reeds were purchased from a shop (Drakards) in Stamford in 1811. Bass strings cost 5s 6d and a bass reed 1s 6d. 'Clarionette' reeds cost 1s 4d.

The churchwardens of the parish had, certainly since legislation in 1538 and probably long before, been charged with responsibility for the control of vermin in the parish and they kept the gunpowder to shoot crows, and nets to catch starlings in the church. In the 1720s, there was a worrying number of owls reported in the church. Powder and shot was issued to Thomas Warren to 'kill the owls in the church' and on 28 June 1724, 'young Coup' was paid 6d for shooting an owl. However, their main interest seems to have been in collecting and removing hedgehogs, a source of several small sums of money paid to the poor. A successful hedgehog-catcher was Joseph Lanke, who had built himself a cottage 'on the waste'. In some years, money was paid out to him and others for a considerable number of hedgehogs at 2d each, for foxes at 1s each, and on one occasion, a badger.

Education

In the sixteenth century, a school was established in Lyddington with a bequest by Edward Watson in 1530. The proceeds from his tanyard were to be used to pay a priest to educate five poor children (see page 56–8). There is no account of a building or schoolroom being provided at that time. In 1721 Mary Parham, who had married and was living in Lenton in Lincolnshire, left in her will £300 to purchase land, a third of the income from which was to be used to provide instruction to five poor children in Lyddington so they could read and write.¹⁶ Her connection with the village has not been established.

A schoolhouse in Lyddington was first mentioned in the churchwardens' accounts in 1728, when a builder, Thomas Drake, was paid 6d to open up the chimney so the glazier could make a fire there. This building must have had the right sort of fireplace and been near the church. The schoolhouse was re-roofed in 1792 and Mr Cave made desks for the school in 1791 and 1798. The village schools may have sent pupils to Uppingham School, founded along with the Oakham School by Archdeacon Robert Johnson in 1587. Uppingham would provide a stepping-stone to a lucrative career in the law, awarding as it did scholarships to Cambridge University. The foundation of these schools was supported by the Cecils of Burghley as leading Protestants.

Charitable bequests, administered by the churchwardens, included alms given to poor people passing through Lyddington, who were mostly attended to by the churchwardens on a case-by-case basis, mainly in those instances where only small sums of money were involved. However, there were also charitable bequests to be administered. In 1792 James Ridgley left a piece of land in the parish of Lyddington called Froggnall (Fronnal) for the use of the cottages in the parish. This was an area of common lying beside Wood Lane in Stoke Dry, shared in the Enclosure Award between the two parishes.

Transport and Trade

In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, two major changes in the transport infrastructure of the region were taking place. First a major improvement in the roads of the region began by setting up what became known as Turnpike Trusts, organisations set up by Act of Parliament to build and maintain important roads and to pay for them and their maintenance by collecting tolls. These better-built roads with well-made surfaces allowed for more wheeled traffic, and carts and wagons were no longer as hampered by deep mud in the winter. These improvements also resulted eventually in increased stage coach traffic, which allowed people to travel more widely throughout the country.

The second major infrastructure project to reach completion in 1673 was the building of the Welland Navigation, the canal to by-pass the major blockages in the river Welland to the east of Stamford, giving traders access by water to the coastal ports of King's Lynn and Boston. Although this may not have had a direct effect on marketing agricultural produce from Lyddington, it was nevertheless a significant attempt to provide Stamford and its farming hinterland with access to the overseas trade, particularly for barley and malt.

Local Communications, Markets and Carriers

In the seventeenth century, villagers in the Manor, as elsewhere, were selling some of their surplus produce, and buying goods from outside the village. As the road system around Lyddington developed in response, it became clear that the eastern arm of the crossroads at the village centre was declining in importance. With only the Swan Inn and a few cottages along what is now Chapel Lane, and no development east of the village green along the northern boundary of the Little Park, there is little to suggest that much traffic was using this route into or out of the village in the seventeenth century. There was undoubtedly a continuing use of the markets and fairs in Stamford, but goods must have followed an easier route than the one from Lyddington direct to Seaton via Seaton Grange. An alternative route to Stamford was via Thorpe by Water and south of Seaton, keeping to the sides of the hills above the floodplain of the Welland, and then on to Stamford via Morcott and Ketton (see **Figure 48**).

The route west out of Lyddington gave access to the Leicestershire markets and fairs, particularly those at Hallaton, Billesdon and Market Harborough¹ (**Figure 49**). Hallaton was probably the most important livestock market after

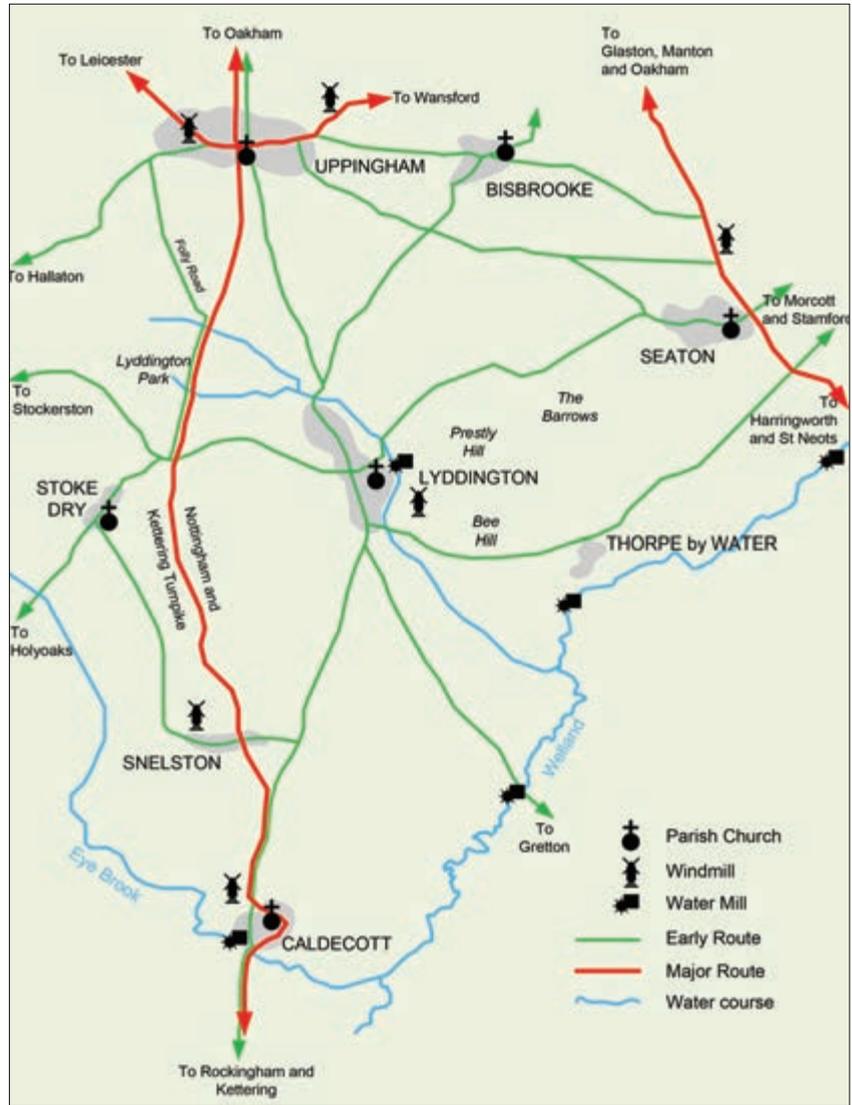


Figure 48 Road network in the district around the Manor. The minor roads and paths (the old routes) are shown in green and the main roads from the turnpike period are in red. The Nottingham to Kettering turnpike (now the A6003) is to the west of Lyddington. The rumpike from the Great North road at St Neots passed near the eastern edge of the Manor between Haringworth and Glaston, continuing via Oakham to Richmond in Yorkshire. (Robert Ovens)

Uppingham and Stamford for Lyddington farmers. They bought and sold bulls there and the sales records of the Hallaton quarterly horse fairs show that Lyddington villagers regularly bought horses there in the early 1720s. The King and Morris families from Caldecott seem to have been regularly selling to buyers from all over Leicestershire and may have been dealers.²

The most frequently used route in Lyddington was the ancient road running north-to-south along the main village street. The most convenient crossing of the Welland was at the bridge between Rockingham and Caldecott. Approaching from the north, it was preferable to the deep clay at the bridge below Gretton. The Rockingham route gave access to the markets and fairs in Northamptonshire and seems to have been an important stage in the movement of cattle to the



Figure 49 The locations of local livestock markets in the seventeenth century. (Robert Ovens)

south, on their way to the markets supplying London. Lyddington farmers frequented the fairs at Rockingham and even ventured on to Weldon, Kings Cliffe, Corby, Brigstock and Northampton (Figure 49).

The route coming north from Caldecott to Lyddington left Caldecott near the church, following the present line of the turnpike road for about half a mile across an area of ground known as Saltmere or Saltmore, until it came to the open fields to the north of the village. There it turned to the east, at a location referred to later as Ash Hedge Corner, and followed the line of what is now a footpath to enter Lyddington village at the south end of the village street. This route kept as far as possible to the slopes of the hills forming the watershed between the Eye Brook to the west and the Lydd to the east, avoiding the direct route up the valley where there was deep clay and a shortage of stone and gravel to maintain a surface.

At the north end of Lyddington village, travellers had to negotiate the Brand (see page 41 and Figure 24), a large hilly area of common grazing land lying between Lyddington and Uppingham. From the north end of the village, the route took a diagonal route across the contours of the Brand, before crossing a steep valley into Uppingham, entering the town past the church and into the marketplace. This would, however, have been very difficult terrain for carts or wagons and probably only suitable for horses and those on foot.

There were, however, at least two easier routes into the town (Figure 48). What is now a bridle road known as Folly Lane or Gypsy Hollow gave access to Uppingham marketplace via the present High Street West. Gypsy Hollow branched west from the north end of a bridleway running along the eastern boundary of Lyddington Great Park, and could be accessed from Lyddington via its route to the west, up Stoke Road. It then turned north along the bridleway to the east of the park. This would seem an obvious route to Uppingham, but the bridleway was narrow and very difficult to negotiate except on foot or horseback owing to the steepness of the hills along the east boundary of Lyddington Great Park. This bridleway can still be seen as a hollow way on

the east side of the later Turnpike road. It crossed Hill Pasture, one of the village cow pastures (see page 43).

There is little information on carriers in south Rutland in the seventeenth century, but, as in the rest of the Midlands, it seems likely that wheeled vehicles could only be used in dry weather and many goods went by packhorse. The evidence that packhorse trains were used throughout the region is in the hilly terrain crossed by narrow tracks or hollow ways, and the crossing points of rivers and streams with narrow bridges for packhorse transport (Figure 50).

Livestock Markets, Fairs and Long Distance Droving

Until the latter part of the eighteenth century, most people travelled to market on foot or on horseback, and livestock for sale would have to be driven or walked to their destination. The location of markets was at least partly determined by the distance covered by their regular visitors on foot. As a result, a number of markets for exchange of local products grew up in a relatively small area. As specialist markets grew in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the distances traders were prepared to travel increased. Locally, the greater number of traders travelled between one and six miles, although nineteen or twenty miles travel to a specialist market was not unusual.³

Cattle, sheep and poultry destined for sale could all cover long distances on foot with their drovers. Long-distance droves of cattle would usually be of 200-300 animals, attended by the drover, his assistants and their dogs. The main drove routes brought young hill-bred Welsh and Irish cattle to the grass fields in the Midlands. There they would be sold to local graziers at markets and fairs. The principal ones in the local area were Market Harborough, Northampton or Leicester. In the autumn, after a summer fattening on grass, they were sold on to butchers, some being driven to the London markets, others sold in Midland towns.

The drove route via Uppingham and through Lyddington was almost certainly heading for the Welland crossing south of Caldecott. Some drove cattle may have been sold to local graziers in Uppingham where there was a thriving market, noted by Celia Fiennes visiting the town on a market day in 1689.⁴ The drove cattle must have passed through Lyddington on the old post road, now Main Street. When the route of the new Turnpike, which was to cross Lyddington and Caldecott open fields, was being discussed in 1755, local people were concerned that large herds of drove cattle would cause problems when they crossed Lyddington and Caldecott open fields 'where never was road before' and that extra 'pinherds', or pinders, would need to be appointed to control the cattle and prevent straying into the crops. The pinders in Lyddington were appointed annually by the manor court and their purpose was to record incidents involving animals and to impound stock if the situation was not under control. Extra pinders would have to be paid, a cost to the parish.

Lyddington was within reach of a number of markets and fairs in Leicestershire to the west, Stamford to the east and Northamptonshire to the south and east, and of course it was within easy reach of Uppingham and Oakham to the north (Figure 49). What little documentary evidence we have for the



Figure 50 A seventeenth-century packhorse train. (RCM)

links between Lyddington and local markets and fairs is found mainly in the surviving churchwardens' accounts from 1625 onwards. As mentioned earlier, it was common practice at this time for Lyddington churchwardens to buy bulls for use in the village cattle herds. The transactions appear in the churchwardens' accounts surviving from 1625 until the first decade of the eighteenth century. Most of the main livestock markets in the region were used for this purpose (Figure 49).

Although there was certainly trade in corn, pulses, hay and other farm products at this time, there are few surviving accounts either of farmers or of the dealers who purchased their crops. We therefore lack documentary evidence that might provide a clear insight into this trade. Heavy and bulky goods like corn could not reach markets without some form of suitable transport. Up to the end of the sixteenth century, they may simply have been carried in panniers by pack horses (Figure 50). As trade (and consequently the size of loads) increased, wheeled vehicles drawn by horses or oxen became essential means of transport.

Highways

The Highways Act of 1555 was an early attempt to make roads more suitable for wheeled traffic and give impetus to the marketing of all kinds of farm produce. It placed the burden of upkeep of the highways on parishes. Surveyors of Highways were to be nominated annually, and they decided on the

maintenance work needed and supervised its execution. The work was to be carried out by able-bodied labourers, some with carts, provided by each family in each parish on days announced in advance.

There is no evidence in the records of Lyddington or Caldecott that the provisions of the 1555 statute were implemented by the parish. There is no documentary evidence that Surveyors of the Highways were appointed until the mid-eighteenth century when discussions about the route of the turnpike were underway. A Surveyor of Highways, as required by Statute, does not appear in the list of manor court officers, nor is there any reference in the parish records to their selection or any Surveyors' accounts.

Although it was the parish that was charged by the Act with responsibility for the roads, in Lyddington the manor court seems still to have assumed some of their ancient duties towards the Highways. There are a few references to road-building in the presentments to the manor court.⁵ It was the Manor Court that fined John Kerbie of Caldecott 2s when he 'neglected to carry Stone at the comen day' in 1654.⁶ Francis Jerman was also fined for not helping to gather stone for the highway. It was also the manor court that fined villagers for blocking the roads in the village with dunghills, building materials and other obstructions, but there seems to be no record of their involvement in surfacing the roads outside the village, or the maintenance of the bridges according to the provisions of the 1555 Statute.

Only the roads with firm foundations across well-drained land would be passable in winter. Lyddington had its main approach roads laid out as far as possible on the sides of hills, avoiding the deep clay, particularly on the low-lying land between Lyddington and Caldecott. It was clear from discussions about the route of the new turnpike road that people were well aware of the difficulties of road-building through the valley to the south of the village, where there was difficult deep clay in winter and insufficient stone and gravel to make a durable surface.

The Stamford Canal

Other transformations in regional communications may also have affected the Manor, chief among them being the building in the 1650s of the Welland navigation (the Stamford Canal). A visitor to Stamford today can see at once that this was a prosperous medieval town. Its wealth came in medieval times from its wool market and the varieties of the cloth made in the town. This prosperity depended on its position on a network of waterways, linking it to the east coast ports of Boston and King's Lynn. As a result it could trade with the important markets, both along the coast and on the Continent, and act as an inland port for imported goods. Its market was a point of exchange with its neighbours in the farming regions around. As the demand for Stamford cloth gradually dwindled in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the waterborne trade died away and the lack of river traffic may have caused the river Welland to silt up. The town had also allowed mills to develop along the river, until, by about 1500, it had become cut off from its main waterways to the coast.

Although the road system was improving slowly under the Tudors and



Figure 51 The remains of Deeping St James High Lock on the Stamford Canal in 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Stamford was becoming an important staging post on the Great North Road, the carriage of heavy goods such as grain by cart was slow and probably largely seasonal owing to the extensive areas of clay on many routes. Townsmen were well aware that the main cause of the decline of Stamford in the sixteenth century was the lack of good access to the overseas and coasting trade that the town had enjoyed in the past. What they needed was to reverse the situation and re-open the Welland to river traffic.⁷

The Welland Navigation Act was signed by Elizabeth in May 1571, and there the matter rested because of lack of funds. In 1621 James I was petitioned by the aldermen to regularise the situation and enable the town to raise money to pay for the work on the 'new river'. The town received a charter by which they were able to raise £2,000 for this venture. They believed they could recover the capital expenditure on their new waterway by charging tolls on the river traffic. Various offers of finance were received including one from the Earls of Exeter, but for various reasons the burgesses felt unable to proceed, until in 1664 the town received an offer from Daniel Wigmore. He agreed to invest £5,000 in the scheme. The work was carried out and the canal was opened in about 1670. In return he was to receive the tolls until at least 1674, later extended to 80 years. The tolls generated about £500 a year in the 1690s which was considered to be a good source of income.⁸

The canal resulted in the increased export of corn and other heavy goods from the region by providing greatly increased capacity over long distances and an efficient and speedy means of doing so. The barges on the waterways held about fifteen tons of produce and one horse could pull up to five barges. Their movement was not usually weather-dependent, whereas carts were limited to about one ton and needed suitable weather to use the existing tracks and roadways.

The use of wagons to move farm produce (see **Figure 38, 52**) would have increased capacity over carts, and there is documentary evidence that by the

Figure 52 Waggon and Horses by T. Atkinson c.1812 shows the perils of taking loaded wagons down steep slopes. The horses are managed by a horseman on foot, not by using the reins. (Private Collection)



eighteenth century many medium-sized Lyddington farms had wagons and horses. These, however, would be unable to compete with river traffic over long distances and would be dependent on weather conditions. They would, however, have been suitable for transporting grain and other crops over the relatively short distance of ten miles or so from the Manor to Stamford. The main export from Stamford was malt and barley and other corn crops from the region. The main import seems to have been coal, which was distributed inland, mainly by merchants from Spalding.

The existence of waterborne trade from Stamford for arable crops must have had a significant effect on farming in the town's hinterland as well as on the stone quarries, and other industries like the bell foundries producing goods that were difficult to move by road.

The Turnpike Road in the Eighteenth Century

The main route along which the town of Uppingham and the villages of Lyddington and Caldecott had developed was a road of more than local significance. By the late middle ages, it had become one of the principal routes between Nottingham and London. In some years, particularly in the mid-seventeenth century, Lyddington Churchwardens' accounts indicate that the road through the village was thronged with travellers or 'passengers'. It was clearly part of an important route, probably used mainly by travellers on foot or horseback. There was a post route to Lyddington via Kettering and it is said to have operated from the Swan Inn in the centre of the village. The post was delivered on foot or on horseback, and to begin with no vehicle was involved. There may at this time have been some reluctance to commit wheeled vehicles

to the Lyddington route because of the heavy clay to the south and steep hills on the northern approach.

Through Rutland the Nottingham to London route was probably fairly passable through Oakham to Uppingham, but south of Uppingham between Lyddington and Caldecott travellers will have encountered the clay soil that made travel so difficult in Defoe's time. The 'clayey, dirty part' which he claimed to have encountered occurred in places across the whole of the Midlands, which were 'perfectly frightful to travellers' (and of course their horses) when the clay was soft and deep. In the 1720s he was a great advocate for a system of road-building undertaken by Turnpike Trusts set up by Act of Parliament to build or improve a specific stretch of road.⁹ Their appointed surveyors were often experienced professionals and able to build roads with the right materials, creating proper surfaces to cross difficult areas.

The parish system of maintaining roads, set up in the sixteenth century by the Highways Act of 1555, appeared not to have been followed in Lyddington or Caldecott and no record has survived of the activities of Surveyors or the collection of their rates. It was therefore interesting to find that among the documents in Burghley there were Surveyors from the parish of Lyddington taking part in the discussions on the new Turnpike Road through the parish. They had a well-organised system for road maintenance with 125 households that they could call on for 'statute labour' and 21 teams of men with carts, each team carrying six loads of stone a day. The men were paid 10d a day and the teams 5s a day.¹⁰

A new road on the north-to-south route through central Rutland was being discussed in the 1750s. In 1755, after several years of planning, an Act of Parliament was passed setting up a Trust to build a new Turnpike Road from the north end of Bridgeford Lane in Nottingham to the Bowling Green in Kettering.¹¹ As this was a long stretch of road it was divided into two sections. The first was from Nottingham via Melton Mowbray to the Crown Inn in Oakham, and the second was from Oakham to Kettering via Uppingham. One of the most difficult stretches was between Uppingham and the Welland crossing at Caldecott. This was because of the steep hills near Uppingham and the deep clay and shortage of suitable materials in the Welland valley. Contemporary maps show that the pre-turnpike routes south of Uppingham headed for Lyddington before continuing to the crossing over the Welland south of Caldecott. However, the turnpike surveyors were not happy with building a new road that passed through Lyddington village and then had to cross the deep clay to the south.

Among the Burghley archives is a collection of documents that record the discussions taking place in 1755 between local people in Lyddington, the surveyors employed by the Turnpike Trust, and the Trustees, who were meeting regularly at the Falcon in Uppingham. The route south of Uppingham needed much discussion and consideration of alternatives. Finally, two possible solutions were put forward. The first was to make use of the old Post Road which, from the south, ran from the Welland crossing north of Rockingham through Caldecott and Lyddington and then climbed up the Brand to enter Uppingham from the south. The alternative was to build a new road from Caldecott across the open fields to Lyddington Great Park (referred to as Stoke

Park) and then across the Brand and on into Uppingham (Figure 48). Both routes entered Uppingham down a steep slope into the valley on the south side of the town, followed by an equally stiff climb beside the church into the marketplace.

The argument for either of these routes was not clear-cut. Lyddington villagers wanted to retain their 'ancient' Post Road, but could appreciate how much the extra traffic on the Turnpike might damage the surface of their village street, resulting in more work for their statute labour. They were equally concerned that the new road from Caldecott by Lyddington Great Park would be over their open fields. Other concerns were that their cow pasture, which lay on the slopes to the east of the Park, would be subject to endless problems from 'trespass' of drove cattle and that Lyddington cattle would stray onto the Brand.¹²

The Trustees were also concerned, regarding the alternative new route, about the steepness of the hills along the eastern edge of the park which were said to be too difficult for carriages to negotiate. Initially the surveyors seemed to have preferred to build the turnpike along the old route of the Post Road through Lyddington village. This route was low-lying, however, and was over heavy clay soils to the south of the village, where road-building materials, particularly stone and gravel, were not easily found and the cost of their carriage could add appreciably to the cost of a road. These materials were, however, readily available in nearby quarries for the Great Park route (see pages 45–6 and Figures 21, 22).

After several attempts to establish an accurate measurement of the two routes, and to estimate their cost, it was shown that the lower road through Lyddington village would cost £1,310 6s 8d, provided sufficient gravel could be found, plus £125 if the gravel was insufficient and had to be brought from outside the district. On the other hand, the Great Park route, the top road, would cost £927 13s 4d, taking into account the necessary adjustments to the hills. This lower cost was mainly due to the easy availability of good road-building materials. When both routes were measured again by the surveyors, the top road was found to be 2 miles 7 furlongs, and the lower road only slightly longer by 32 poles (approximately 160 metres).

The damage to Lyddington due to building the turnpike along the top route in purely financial terms was estimated at £92 15s, which may have included some recompense for the disruption to the arable crops. Residents complained that they would lose the income from travellers passing through the village, and have all the damage of the new turnpike without any profit from it. This latter concern was unfounded; they seemed to be unaware that the new road would be maintained at the cost of the Turnpike Trust. They petitioned the Earl of Exeter to support their preference for the route through the village, but apparently to no effect. The Trustees chose the top route by Lyddington Great Park for the new road and Lyddington village was effectively bypassed.

Both the Uppingham and Lyddington sections of the new road caused problems. In 1804 the Trustees appointed William Dunn, the engineer who had built the Melton to Oakham canal, to attend to the problem of the steep slopes on the approach to Uppingham. His plan involved moving earth from the tops of the hills and laying it in the dips. Further work of this kind was

undertaken in the 1820s, but the approach to Uppingham from the south remained a problem for horse-drawn vehicles. The slopes of the hills (as laid out by the Turnpike Trust) were too steep to be negotiated safely and there were several fatal accidents recorded in the *Stamford Mercury*. In 1811 the Leeds mail coach overturned on the descent into Uppingham, injuring passengers. In the same year, a wagon of Mr Peach's, heavily loaded with wheat, ran out of control in the descent into Uppingham, overturned and threw Peach's son off the top of the load under the wheels 'and little hope is given of his recovery'.¹³

The roads in Rutland built by the Turnpike Trusts created a network that improved communications, both for travellers and trade, and opened up access to village communities and their markets. The system was superseded by the coming of the railways in the 1850s and the Turnpike Trusts were eventually wound up. The Turnpike Trust on the road through Uppingham and Lyddington was closed in 1873.

Great Roads and the Manor

by ERIC MOSS

The local roads and tracks between and through the villages of the Manor to local markets have been outlined above. For many villages, these would have been the only routes they knew, or needed to know. At the start of the period covered by this book, only a few inhabitants would, like the passing drovers and wagoners, require to travel longer distances. Frequently these, again like the above, would have learnt routes from their experienced fellows. It was not only a question of direction, but road conditions and safe stopping-places. Exploring travellers, like Celia Fiennes, would have made frequent stops to ask advice. This would have been relatively easy when mounted or on foot; coaches had hardly ventured outside the streets of the capital.

Road maps as we know them today did not exist at the start of the period. Roads were not the fixed, engineered features of the landscape we see now. If one became blocked, traffic diverted round the obstacle, taking the best alternative in the conditions. Maps of the day would show the market towns and the larger villages (usually depicted by an outline of the church with tower or spire) in relationship to rivers – the major obstacles to travel. The best maps had started to indicate bridges over these barriers, but the government had major concerns about securing the country's borders.

There was a significant change to this situation when in 1674, John Ogilby, a surveyor acting for the Crown, walked from Rockingham, through Caldecote, up the main street of Lyddington and on to Uppingham. His assistants pushed a way-wiser, a handcart like a bodiless wheelbarrow, and counted the revolutions of the wheel to accurately measure distances. In addition to informing the government, the information was published as a series of ribbon-maps of the 'Great Roads' in a book entitled *Britannia Depicta*. Being the size of a paving slab and with beautifully detailed engraving, this was not a volume to take on your travels: more a volume for a rich gentleman's library. It did, however, have type-printed instructions for the journey. In the absence of modern large-



Figure 53 This c.1736 strip map is based on John Ogilby's survey of 1674

scale road-building and development, both maps and text remained current for many years. This led to them being used as the basis for subsequent surveys, revisions, and republishing, in forms more practical for the traveller on the road. The maps were reduced in size and bound with soft boards so that they could be folded and put in a pocket. A reduced number of strips of the ribbon were put at the side of a simplified, stylised text to make a truly pocket-size volume that came to be known as a road book (Figure 53).

By the latter half of the eighteenth century, the availability of this information had increased both the desire to travel the country by coach and, in consequence, the number of complaints about the state of the roads. This brought on more development of turnpikes as developers realised people would pay tolls in order to travel in more comfort and at greater speed. In turn the improved roads meant that coaches could be more lightly-built and therefore faster again. By the end of the nineteenth century, coaches were averaging the heady speed of around ten miles per hour and able to travel at night. A coach passenger could leave London at 8pm and be in the Manor by the early hours of the morning.

How did this impact on the Manor? The route through Lyddington surveyed by John Ogilby became part of the Great Road from London to Oakham. Another route left the York Road (through Stamford) at Eaton Socon (St Neots) and skirted the Manor as it passed between Harringworth and Seaton on its way to Oakham, Melton, Nottingham and ultimately Richmond in Yorkshire. The nearest one west of the Manor went north via Market Harborough and Leicester. By the 1790s it became clear through trials that letters could be carried both faster and more cheaply by coach than the post boys on horseback then in use. The mail to Leeds initially went via Market Harborough, Leicester and Nottingham, but with increasing volumes and the completion of the turnpike from Kettering, via Caldecott and Uppingham, to Nottingham, this became the route for the Leeds Mail. This incorporated the Great Road from Kettering to Caldecott, bypassed Lyddington to follow today's road to Uppingham, and a new section through Preston to Manton, linking there to that other Great Road from Seaton. The good coaches, including the mails, changed horses every six to twelve miles depending on topography. Most would have changed in Kettering, Oakley (at then the New Inn, now the Spread Eagle in Corby) and possibly the Plough in Caldecott (not the current building, but on the opposite side of the road) (see page 232) before getting to the Falcon in Uppingham (not the present building, which dates from the 1890s).

This means that the Plough was a 'coaching inn' as we would know it from our reading of Charles Dickens. An inn was legally able to accommodate travellers overnight, whereas a tavern could only supply food and drink. The Swan in Lyddington was bypassed before the age of the stage-coach had really begun. In addition to supplying horses under contract to the stage-coach proprietors, they could also provide post horses to independent travellers with either their own carriage, one they rented, or one rented from another inn. This hiring of horses involved payment of a tax (Post Horse Duty) at the inn, before paying the turnpike toll at its gates.



SECTION THREE

Vernacular Buildings

Nick Hill and Robert Ovens

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PART ONE

Introduction

This chapter examines the vernacular buildings of the area: the ordinary village houses and farm buildings, rather than the churches or the Bede House. Our study focuses especially on the seventeenth century, a formative period for the development of local vernacular architecture. Many stone-built houses of this date still survive, lining the village streets and giving the area much of its attractive character.

The building survey work carried out for the project has been very extensive. In all, 71 properties have been examined in the four villages, with detailed inspection and analysis of the exterior and interior. The surveys included any farm buildings or outbuildings of historic interest at each property. Buildings dated after 1820 were generally excluded from the study, as this was not the focus of the project. With a few exceptions where access was not possible, all of the more interesting properties have been surveyed. In Caldecott, the study was able to include all eighteen listed properties. The large number of listed buildings in Lyddington meant that twenty have not been studied in detail, though the exterior of all the village properties has been examined wherever accessible.

In most cases, the survey included measured plans and other drawings, with full reports produced for 49 properties. Briefer reports were produced for the other 22 cases, where later alterations meant more detailed study was not warranted. A good selection of plans and cross-sections from the surveys are included in this chapter to illustrate key points, but the full archive of building reports is much more extensive. The survey work was carried out by two members of the Lyddington project team, with building analysis by Nick Hill and all drawings produced by Robert Ovens. Following the survey work, buildings of interest were selected for tree-ring dating, carried out by Robert Howard of Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory. Grant aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled an unusually extensive programme of tree-ring dating to be carried out for this small study area. Tree-ring samples were taken for a total of 22 buildings, with dates established for eighteen of these. A summary of the tree-ring dating methodology and results is included at the end of this chapter. Of course, none of the survey work would have been possible without the kind permission of the house owners, who have been very supportive of the project throughout.

The Lyddington Manor project has offered an unusual opportunity to undertake a very comprehensive study of a small settlement area. Only a small number of villages in England have had their buildings surveyed so completely.

It has also been possible to set the study in a wider context, as the author has carried out research on the vernacular buildings of Rutland, east Leicestershire and north Northamptonshire over a 25-year period, with over 120 other building surveys.

Studies of vernacular buildings often have architectural development as their principal focus, with little accompanying documentary research. For the Lyddington project, detailed research has enabled the buildings to be set in their wider social and economic context. Documents such as wills, inventories and accounts are also used in many parts of this chapter to explore not only how buildings were constructed, but how they were lived in and used by local people.

PART TWO

The Medieval Period up to 1600

Documentary records for the four villages of the Manor indicate that there was a substantial population throughout the medieval period (see pages 28–29), with a considerable number of houses. However, very few buildings from the period before 1600 survive and the remaining evidence is often fragmentary, with a great deal of later alteration. The story of the earlier village houses has therefore to be pieced together from the clues which remain. New discoveries made in the course of the recent project have added considerably to our knowledge. Only three houses were previously identified (in the schedule of listed buildings) with surviving fabric from before around 1600. The total now stands at ten.

The standard type of house in which the bulk of the local population lived throughout the medieval period, right across the English Midlands, was of cruck type. A cruck frame was made from a pair of large, curving timbers which reached from near ground level right up to the apex of the roof (Figure 54).

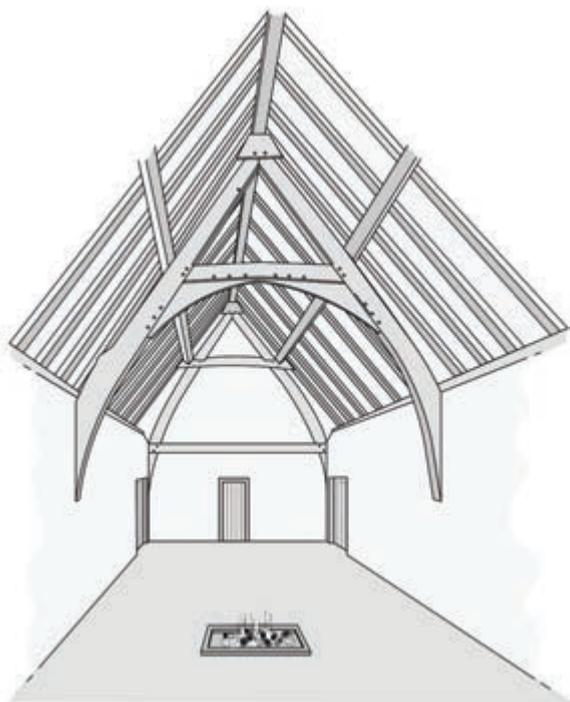


Figure 54 A medieval open hall, with a central truss and open hearth. Drawing by Robert Ovens, based on 4 Church Lane, Lyddington.

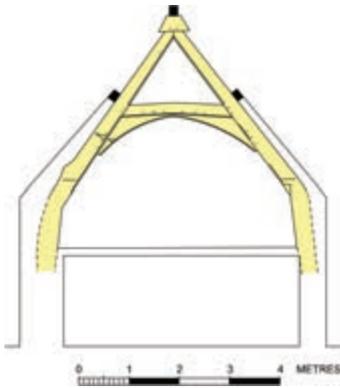


Figure 55 Cruck truss at 4 Church Lane, with first floor inserted in the seventeenth century.



Figure 56 The upper section of the cruck truss, now at first-floor level.



Figure 57 The apex of the crucks, with heavily sooted timbers from the medieval open hearth.

Cut from suitably shaped oak trees, crucks were readily able to provide a tall, open hall, the principal living space of a medieval house. The hall had no first floor, but was open to the roof timbers. At its centre was an open hearth, with no chimneystack. The smoke drifted up and found its way out through the thatch or a louvre at the ridge, so the roof timbers gathered a thick covering of soot.

Surviving evidence has now been found for five cruck buildings in Lyddington. In Caldecott, one further example survives and another was recorded before demolition in 1970. In the whole of the rest of Rutland, only seven remaining cruck buildings have been identified, but no doubt there is much more evidence as yet undiscovered. In the nearby village of Great Easton (Leicestershire), one mile west of Caldecott, a long-term programme of research

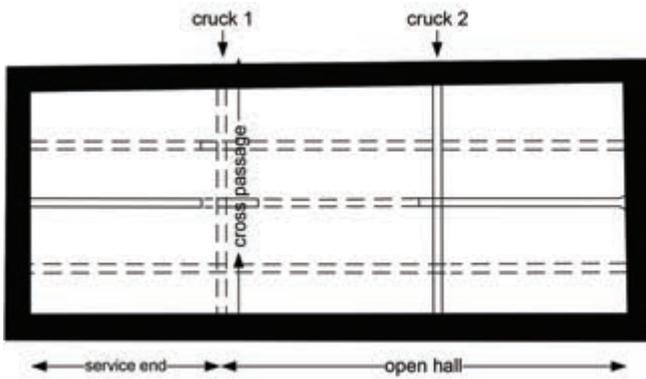


Figure 58 Reconstructed plan of 4 Church Lane, showing fifteenth-century roof timbers.

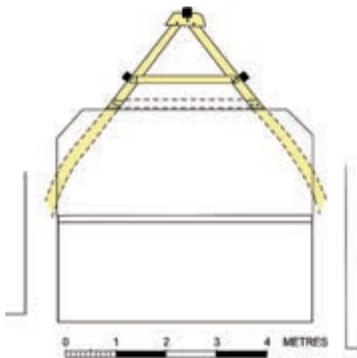


Figure 59 Cruck truss at Avalon, 58 Main Street, Lyddington. The collar has been cut out and inserted at a higher level.



Figure 60 Smoke-blackened apex of the cruck truss at Avalon.

has uncovered evidence for nine cruck buildings, often in a fragmentary state or disguised by later alterations. Cruck buildings in the Midlands typically date from the fifteenth or first half of the sixteenth century, though there are some earlier and later examples.

The most complete cruck building in the survey area is at 4 Church Lane, Lyddington. This was briefly described in the re-survey of listed buildings in 1985, but has been fully investigated as part of the recent project (Figures 55–57). It has been radiocarbon-dated to c. 1405–40. The surviving cruck truss is of high quality, with tenoned joints instead of the usual lapped timbers and fine arch-braces. The two cruck blades, of elbowed form, would have been made from a single oak tree with a main trunk and large angled branch, cut in half to create a matching pair. The lower part of the blades is buried in the stone walling, but they would originally have extended down to just above ground level. At the apex, the blades are tenoned into a very deep saddle. Across the country, a variety of apex joints are found in cruck buildings, but this is the standard type for this area.

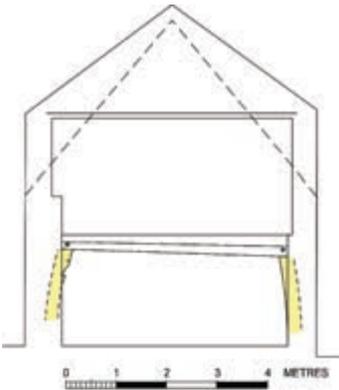


Figure 61 Cut-off cruck blades at 6 Main Street, Caldecott.



Figure 62 The former cruck truss at 3 Main Street, Caldecott (The White Hart), under demolition in 1970. The building was recorded by Alan McCormick. The cruck building was of two bays, with its gable end to the street. The cruck blades are elbowed, with a lapped collar, but the apex has been cut away. (Alan MacCormick)



Figure 63 Cruck blade removed from 3 Main Street, Caldecott during demolition in 1970.

Throughout England, most smaller medieval houses had a very standardised form. The principal feature was the open hall, which formed the main space for living and cooking. The entrance to the hall was normally at the ‘low’ end, where a front and back door formed a cross-passage. Beyond the central hearth, at the ‘high’ end, the owner of the house and his family sat at their dining table. On the other side of the cross-passage there was usually a separate space, sometimes with a first floor above it, which was used for services and storage or as a bedchamber. In slightly larger houses there might be a further room, beyond the ‘high’ end, with a more private parlour/bedchamber on the ground floor and a best bedchamber on the first floor.

At 4 Church Lane, very unusually for the area, enough evidence survives to allow a reconstruction of the original medieval plan form, which fits the standard type for a three-bay hall house (Figure 58). Surviving ridge and purlin timbers indicate that the hall was of two bays, with a second cruck truss (now lost) to the east. This cruck truss probably formed a closed partition, with the cross-passage running alongside it. Beyond the partition there would have been a third bay, with a separate service room or chamber. The fine surviving cruck truss would have stood at the centre of the open hall. In the attic, the timbers are still heavily sooted from the smoke of the central hearth. Two carpenter’s assembly marks are visible on the west side of the cruck blade and arch brace. These would have been placed on the best side of the truss, facing towards the ‘high’ end of the hall. Evidence indicates that the original external walls were built of stone, not timber-framing. Although much re-faced, the front north wall and the west gable are unusually thick, at around 850mm. The typical width of stone walls in the seventeenth century in local houses is around 600mm, and a wall thickness of over 700mm has been found to be a reliable indicator of a pre-1600 date.

The next-best surviving cruck in the survey area is at Avalon, 58 Main Street, Lyddington. Here the smoke-blackened upper part of a cruck truss was discovered in the roof void, though still covered up below (Figures 59–60). Tree-ring dating of a single timber, a re-set collar, suggests a tentative date of c 1388–1413; quite early for surviving crucks in this part of England. The cruck truss here is of more typical form for the area, with a dovetail-lapped collar, rather than the high-class tenoned joints and arch braces of 4 Church Lane. Sooted ridge timbers suggest the original building was of three bays or more, but the plan form cannot be recovered. The remaining examples of cruck buildings are very fragmentary. At 6 Main Street, Caldecott, parts of a cruck truss are visible on the ground floor, though cut off above when the house was rebuilt in the seventeenth century (Figure 61). Evidence of cut-off cruck blades also survives at 2 Main Street and 37 Main Street, Lyddington. All of these cruck blades are built into walls of characteristic early type, of 750–850mm thickness and with an internal batter (i.e. the wall thickness reducing from base to top). The sixth and final example is a cruck apex saddle, re-set in the wall of an eighteenth-century extension at the White Hart, Lyddington. Presumably the original building had a cruck-framed roof until alterations of this date. At 3 Main Street, Caldecott (formerly the White Hart public house) a cruck truss was recorded in 1969–70, but the building was then demolished and rebuilt (Figures 62–63). At 4 Uppingham Road a thatched house that was demolished around 1950 was referred to as ‘Cruck House’ by locals, but this was probably a misunderstanding.

Apart from these cruck buildings, four other houses dating before c. 1600 have been identified, all in Lyddington. The survival of such medieval houses is extremely rare in the Rutland and east Leicestershire area.¹ That so many examples survive at Lyddington is an indication of its importance through the medieval period, rivalling the town of Uppingham and of course as a country seat of the bishops of Lincoln. The most complete of these other early houses is at Market House, 24 Main Street (Figures 64–67). This is a highly unusual structure in that it had timber-framing to its external walls. Such timber-framing is extremely rare in the stone-built area of Rutland and east Leicestershire, except in the towns of Oakham and Uppingham. The building has been tree-ring dated to c. 1515–20. It had two separate high-quality chambers on the first floor, with a fine roof truss to the centre of the northern chamber. None of the timber has smoke-blackening from an open hearth, so it seems the chambers were heated by fireplaces in the central cross-wall. The timber-framing was in fact of rather limited extent, being confined to the first floor of the front and rear walls, with the ground floor and both gable ends built of stone. The impressive set of curved braces to the road front were sadly lost in the early twentieth century, when the front wall was rebuilt. The use of timber-framing and the unusual plan form mark the building out as of higher status than the usual vernacular buildings of the area. It was probably built as a pair of high-class lodgings, to receive members of the bishop’s retinue or other visitors to the Bishop’s Palace. It is located near the northern edge of the former palace precinct. Unfortunately, no documentary evidence has been found to shed light on the use of the building. The name ‘Market House’ seems to have been coined in the late nineteenth century, as the village green or market place lies imme-



Figure 64 The former timber-framed front wall at 24 Main Street, Lyddington, in a photograph of c. 1900. (RCM)

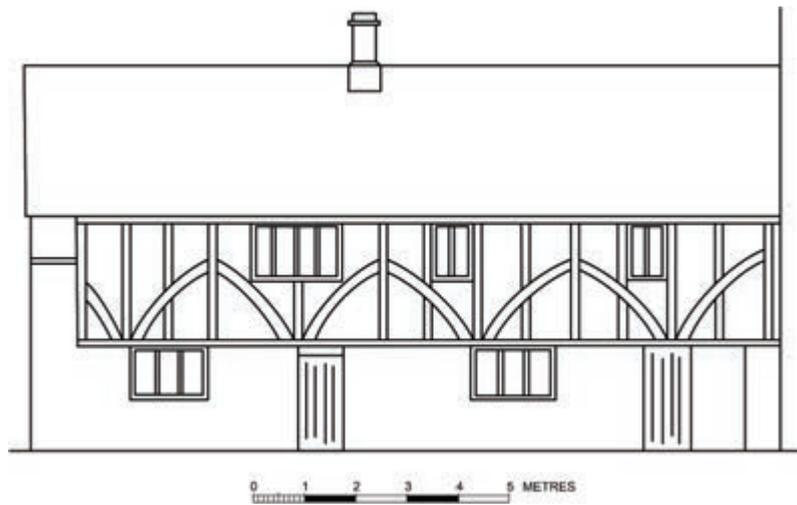


Figure 65 A reconstruction of the front of 24 Main Street, with arch braces.

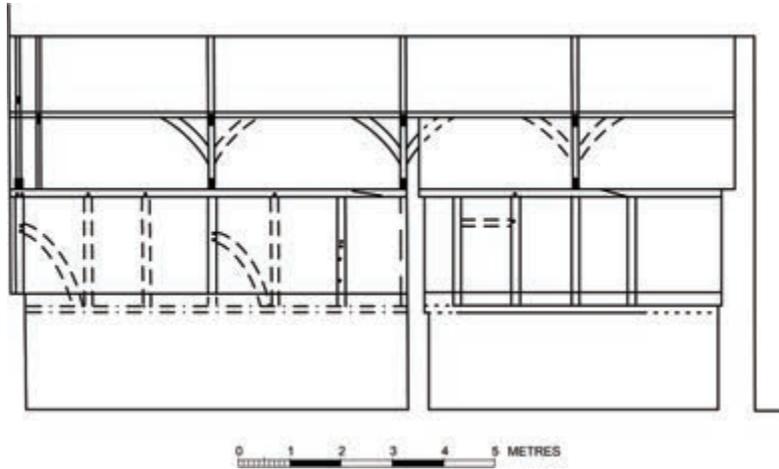


Figure 66 The timber-framed rear wall to the rear of 24 Main Street.

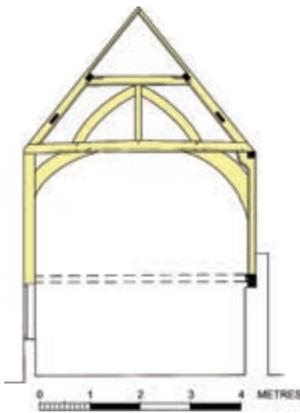


Figure 67 The fine open truss at the centre of the north room of 24 Main Street. The purlin is clasped between the principal rafter and the collar, a characteristic feature of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century.

diately to the north. The form of the building is not consistent with use in connection with a market.

Mullions, at 11 Stoke Road was a four-bay house of late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century date, with stone walls and an unusual smoke-blackened roof structure (Figures 68–70). The central two bays probably formed the open hall, with separate rooms at either end. Another building with early fabric is at Pageant House, 47 Main Street, where a single smoke-blackened roof truss and thick stone walls indicate a date of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (Figure 71).

Part of a larger medieval house survives at 3 The Green, a little to the north of the current garden of the Bede House. The west gable here preserves a pair of stone doorways with Tudor arched heads, a fragment of a high-quality house dating from around the second half of the fifteenth century (Figure 72). The two doors are of characteristic form and would have led off the cross-passage into two service rooms, a buttery and pantry. To the west of the current house, there must have been an impressive open hall. Some of the smoke-blackened roof timbers of the hall of late medieval ‘clapsed purlin’ type were probably re-used when the current house was built, in the seventeenth century. This

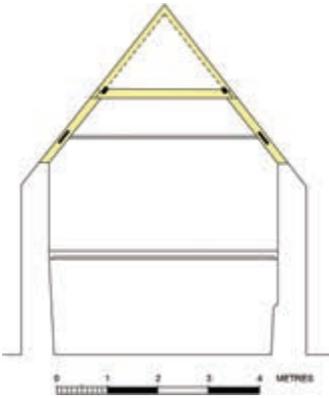


Figure 69 A-frame roof truss at Mullions with dovetail-lapped collar and clasped purlin.

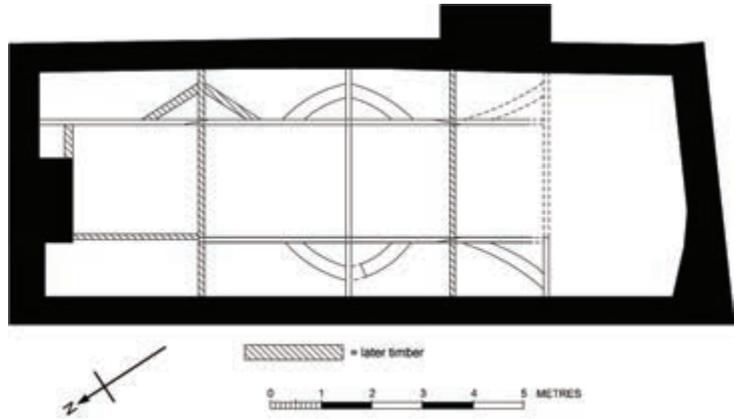


Figure 68 Roof plan of Mullions (11 Stoke Road, Lyddington), showing the roof trusses of c. 1500 with curved wind-braces over the open hall.

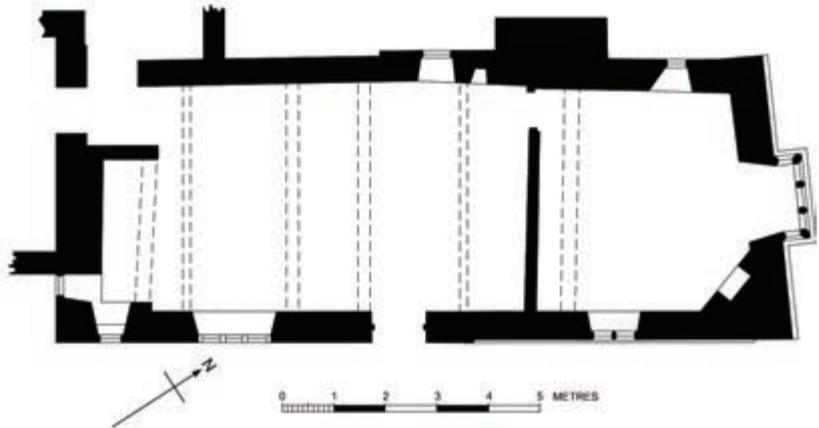


Figure 70 Ground floor plan of 11 Stoke Road. The hall house was re-worked in the seventeenth century, with a bay window and parlour to the right, and a hall with inglenook fireplace to the left. An inventory of 1728 survives for this house (see page 279).

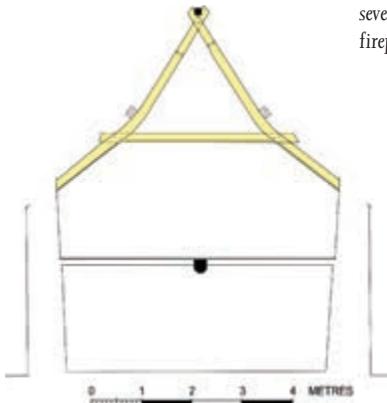


Figure 71 Late medieval roof truss at Pageant House (47 Main Street, Lyddington) of unusual A-frame form, with lapped collar and apex. Note the thick stone walls with internal batter.



Figure 72 The two blocked service doorways at 3 The Green, Lyddington, dating from the later fifteenth century.

might have been the house of Edward Watson, a leading resident of Lyddington in the early sixteenth century (see page 31). He must have had one of the finest houses of the period in Lyddington, as he paid tax in 1525 on £200 of goods, by far the highest value in Rutland. His will of 1530 includes many rich furnishings and refers to extensive landholdings, including a house in London. His son, also called Edward, took on a lease of Rockingham Castle in 1544. The rebuilt castle became the Watsons' family seat, in place of their Lyddington house. As re-formed in the seventeenth-century, 3 The Green seems to have incorporated at least one bake-oven, and a much larger purpose-made bake-house was added in the late eighteenth century. There is documentary evidence for the construction of a substantial bake-house in Lyddington in 1509, which may have been in this vicinity, with the use perpetuated in later centuries.² However, the surviving early fabric was built as a high-status dwelling, not a bake-house. Another prestige house in Lyddington must have been that of George and Anne Swillington. Anne's will of 1562 describes a richly furnished house which included a hall and a parlour, where Anne had her bed.³ The hall here had a chamber over it, with another chamber over the parlour. Such documentary evidence which makes reference to buildings is very rare before 1600, with no local inventories yet identified.

The major medieval buildings that survive in the area are of course the churches at Lyddington, Stoke Dry and Caldecott, together with the bishops' palace. These buildings have been studied previously, and were not the focus of the recent research project. The Manor house at Stoke Dry was a substantial building, the principal seat of the Digby family until the early seventeenth century (see page 22). The house no doubt contained considerable medieval fabric, but was demolished sometime after 1756. In the medieval period these fine buildings, constructed of ashlar and moulded stone with roofs of Collyweston slate or lead, would have contrasted starkly with the surrounding ordinary village houses, built of rubble stone or mud, with low eaves and thatched roofs.

One of the most important and unexpected discoveries made for this earlier period was at the barn which stands in the Little Park, around 50m north-east

of the Bede House (see page 188 and **Figures 73-76**). Tree-ring dating has shown that the current barn dates from c. 1726–51, but the tie-beams of the roof trusses and other timbers are re-used from a much earlier structure of c. 1347–72. The pattern of mortices indicates that the timbers came from a very large aisled barn, which must have been part of the farmstead accompanying the bishops’ palace. Such large, high-status barns of the medieval period are known from other parts of England, but no other examples have been identified in Rutland or East Leicestershire.

It is worth noting the additional evidence found during the project for the chapel at Thorpe by Water (see pages 90–1, 331). The extension added to Old Manor House, Thorpe in c. 1678 (tree-ring date) incorporated a considerable number of re-used blocks of stone, which had roll mouldings of twelfth- or early thirteenth-century type. It seems very likely that these came from the nearby chapel, which was perhaps finally dismantled in the later seventeenth century. Similarly, when the bishops’ palace became redundant after the Reformation, and was subsequently converted to the Bede House in 1600, with much demolition, a large quantity of building material must have become available for re-use in Lyddington. An intricately carved beam over the inglenook fireplace at 4 Church Lane probably came from this source, as did a finely moulded stone-mullioned window to the rear of 7 Main Street. The ‘Manor House’ at 22 Main Street, completely rebuilt in 1758–9 (see page 194–5) also contains a considerable amount of re-used timber, which dendrochronology has shown to date from at least three separate periods between the mid-fifteenth century and c. 1525. There was an early house on this site, as the south gable of the adjoining ‘Market House’ (c. 1515–20) was built against an existing structure. However, it seems unlikely that the re-used early timbers came from the original building on the site, as one would not expect to find three closely-spaced phases of construction within one such



Figures 73 and 74 Barn in the Little Park as existing. The roof structure of this eighteenth-century barn has reused timbers dated to 1347-72.



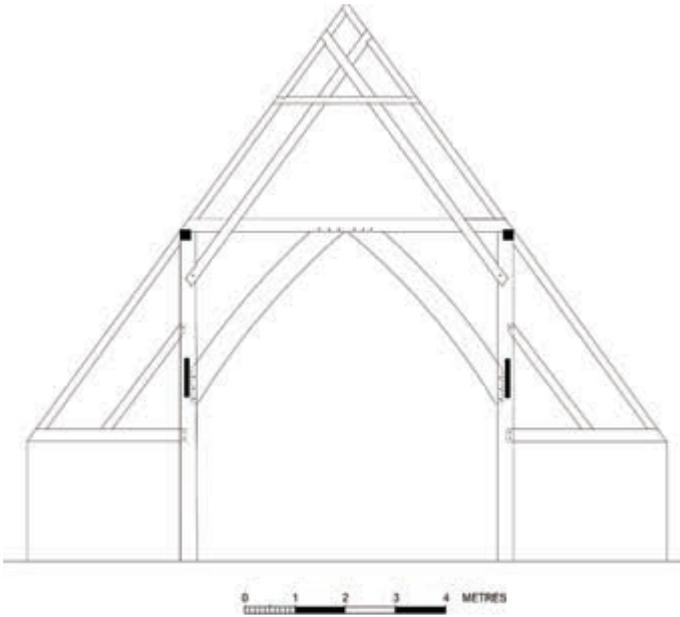
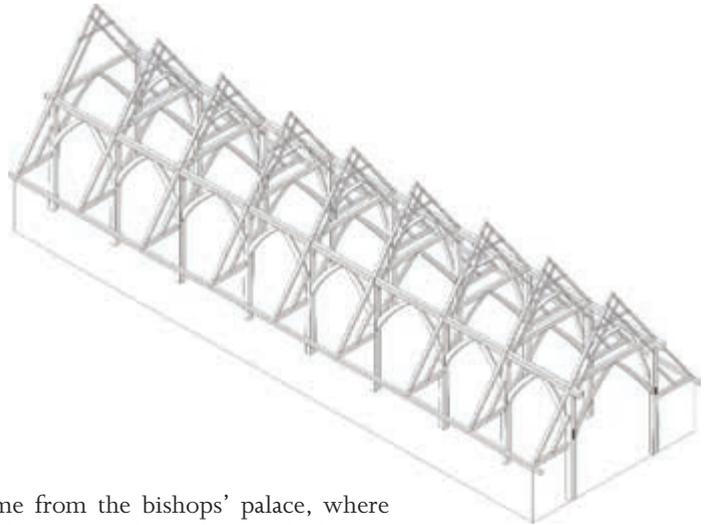


Figure 75 (above) and Figure 76 (right) Section as reconstructed and 3D view. The tie-beams of the current barn were originally the aisle posts of a much larger barn, which must have been built for the bishop of Lincoln. The surviving timbers have mortices for great braces, with evidence for a lapped 'passing brace' of a type found in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The evidence indicates that the barn had a width of at least 12m. A high-status barn of this type would be expected to have a length of at least six or eight bays.



house. Most of the timbers no doubt came from the bishops' palace, where recent tree-ring dating has found several phases of building fabric which span this period. The 'Manor House' was probably rebuilt in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, when the material from the demolished bishops' palace became available, and was once again fully rebuilt in 1758–9.

In conclusion, although the remaining evidence for medieval buildings in the four villages is sparse, our recent research does allow a general picture to emerge for Lyddington and Caldecott at least. Most of the village residents lived in small, cruck-built houses, though there were a number of higher class houses in Lyddington. It is interesting to note the location of these medieval houses. The early houses generally – like most of the later ones – faced directly onto the village streets. Where a house is set well back from the current street, like 4 Church Lane, it suggests that there was originally a wider public space, which has been encroached upon by later development. In Lyddington, the older houses cluster around the village centre, near the bishops' palace and the Green.

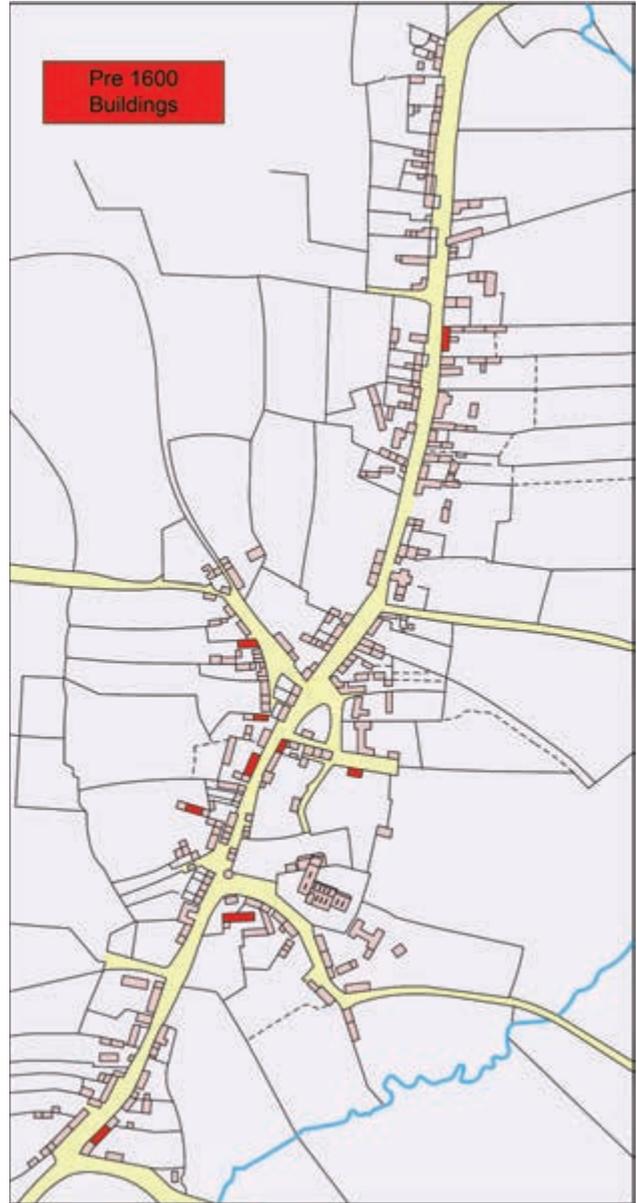


Figure 77 Lyddington houses of pre-1600 date (based on the 1804 Enclosure Map).

However, the long, linear shape of the village was already established by the early sixteenth century if not before (Figure 77). The cruck house at 2 Main Street still lies at the extreme south edge of the current village, and Avalon at 58 Main Street is a considerable distance north of the village centre. There are late medieval houses on both of the side streets at the village centre, on Stoke Road and the lane on the south side of The Green. In Caldecott, the two known cruck houses were on either side of Main Street near the north-east end, both with their gable ends set on the street frontage.

PART TWO

The Seventeenth Century

From the early decades of the seventeenth century onwards, the houses of the area underwent a great transformation. The earlier buildings were gradually swept away and rebuilt in good quality stonework. The old medieval style of living in a smoky open hall at last gave way to more convenient arrangements, with enclosed fireplaces, chimneystacks and first floors. This transformation affected the whole of England, as identified in the 1950s by the great local historian, W.G. Hoskins, who named it the 'Great Rebuilding'.¹ Hoskins proposed that the 'Great Rebuilding' occurred in the period 1570–1640 across the major part of England, but this theory has been modified in later studies, which suggest a rather later development in regions outside the south-east of England. In Rutland, by the early eighteenth century most of the old-style local cruck houses with walls of mud or rough stone rubble and low eaves seem to have been comprehensively rebuilt. This seventeenth-century period brought the development of a rich tradition of local vernacular architecture. The strong character and quality of craftsmanship (particularly of the stonemasonry) found in local houses of this period is outstanding, and remains a dominant feature of the built environment (**Figure 78**).

The overall architectural form of local seventeenth-century houses is characteristic and usually easy to recognise. Most houses had a single range,



Figure 78 Lyndon House at 59 Main Street, Lyddington, built of local ironstone.

two or three rooms in length, with gables at each end. Houses are only a single room in width; in the largest houses, extra space is provided in cross-wings, not by double-width ranges. Lean-tos or out-shuts are not generally found in the seventeenth century. Walls are generally built of the local brown ironstone and roofs were of thatch. The smaller houses are of one-and-a-half storeys (with the first floor partly in the roof space), while larger houses are of two storeys, or occasionally more. Storey heights are usually modest, with windows of horizontal, not vertical, proportion. An important point to note is that local houses of this period were always constructed as individual, separate units, never of semi-detached form or as terrace rows. Each house stood on its own plot, usually aligned parallel to the village street, though some were set gable-end on. Unlike later Georgian buildings, doors and windows are generally placed where required, with little regard given to creating a symmetrical front elevation. With minor variations, in particular with regard to the local stone type, this same style of architecture is found throughout the surrounding stone-built areas of Rutland, east Leicestershire and north Northamptonshire. The prevalence of date-stones incorporated into buildings across the area allows a chronology of dated features to be built up, backed up around Lyddington by the programme of tree-ring dating carried out as part of the recent project.

Materials and construction

A fundamental part of the character of vernacular buildings is that they were mainly constructed from materials that were immediately available in the local neighbourhood. Before the development of improved transport systems, the costs of fetching building materials from any distance were high, especially for heavy items such as stone.

Stone was of course the principal building material, with a variety of local sources (see Figure 21). In Caldecott, Lyddington and Stoke Dry the characteristic material is the local brown ironstone. Most of this material would have come from the nearby Northampton Sand beds on the ridge of hills between Lyddington and Stoke Dry, running north towards Uppingham. Buildings in Caldecott may also have made use of the same beds in the escarpment just south of the River Welland. In Thorpe by Water, only a little over a mile east of Lyddington, the main walling stone changes to the lighter-coloured limestone, indicating that the closest source was now the Lower Lincolnshire limestone beds around Gretton and Harringworth. During the seventeenth century, in areas where both ironstone and limestone were available, there was a fashion for building with alternating courses of both stones, giving a characteristic striped effect. Caldecott has quite a number of examples, such as Priest's House, Church Close and 3 The Green (Figure 79). There are also a few at Lyddington, such as 81 Main Street (The Homestead) and the rear wall of 4 Church Lane (The Firs). The technique seems to have been used simply for its decorative effect. It can be seen in local medieval buildings (such as Oakham Castle), but seems to have died out by around 1700.

Stone for building can be divided, broadly, into two different sorts. For general walling, roughly dressed blocks of stone were used, known as rubble



Figure 79 Striped masonry with alternating courses of ironstone and limestone at Priest's House, Church Close, Caldecott.

stone. In the medieval period, rubble stone used in the area was often very irregular, but by the seventeenth century it was always shaped into rectangular blocks, laid in courses. In later centuries, or in some high quality houses, the rubble stone could be very neatly cut, with quite fine joints. In contrast to coursed rubble, the corner blocks (quoins), window surrounds or sometimes the whole façade were built of carefully dressed stone with a fine, smooth finish and narrow joints. Plain stone blocks of this type are known as ashlar and the shaped stones are called dressings. For rubble walling, coarser, less easily-shaped stone was used, usually from the immediate locality. The Lyddington Enclosure Map of 1804 shows three small 'Public Stone Pits' on the slopes above the village to the west and north (see **Figure 315**). Through the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century there would have been many more small local pits in the area. Such operations were often short-lived and subsequently back-filled, leaving little trace – as seen in some mid-eighteenth-century documentary references (see page 58). Also shown on the Enclosure Map are two 'mortar pits', the local name for sand pits, as Judd noted in his classic study of Rutland geology.² Sand mixed with local clay was the mortar used on many stone buildings in the area up to around 1800, with lime only used sparingly.

For ashlar and dressings a 'freestone' was required, a stone available in good-sized blocks that could be cut 'freely' in any direction. This higher-quality stone was more expensive and might be imported from further away. In the Lyddington area, freestone from the local ironstone pits was often employed. Many of the quoins and dressings are of a distinctive brown stone, sometimes turning to purple, in contrast to the walling stone which is generally a lighter, ginger colour. This stone must have come from the quarries towards Uppingham, as it is used very widely in the seventeenth-century houses there.



Figure 80 Cavetto-moulded window at the White Hart, Lyddington, dating from the late sixteenth century. This window is now in an internal wall, due to a later extension of the building. The interior has a plain chamfer.

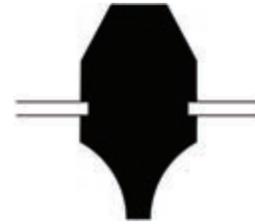


Figure 81 Cross section of the cavetto-moulded mullion at the White Hart

Use was also made of the high quality limestones from the well-known quarries at Weldon (seven miles away) or Ketton (ten miles). The distinctive pale white stone from Weldon, fine-grained but incorporating small shell fragments, was used for the dressings of the bishops' palace and was popular in the seventeenth century. The cream-coloured Ketton stone, with its very uniform, fine texture, was first used in the later seventeenth century, but became more popular during the eighteenth century.

As noted above, with the exception of 24 Main Street, Lyddington, there are no timber-framed external walls in the study area. The local houses continued to be built of stone until brick finally arrived in the mid-nineteenth century. The other material that may have been used for external walls in earlier times was mud. Such walls, built of clay mixed with gravel, are well-known in the south-west of England, where it is called cob. Mud walls of eighteenth century and perhaps earlier date survive in adjoining areas of east Leicestershire and north Northamptonshire, but only one example has been noted in the current study, in a former outbuilding of early nineteenth-century date to the rear of 10 Main Street, Caldecott. The lesser local houses of the medieval period may well have been built of mud (clay), rather than stone. Mud was also widely used in local buildings, until at least the later eighteenth century, for infill to timber partitions and sometimes for internal plasterwork. Lime for such purposes was of course available locally, but would have been more expensive.

Timber for construction was available from nearby woodlands (see page 50). Oak was the preferred material for roof structures, beams and floor joists. Elm was also used, but is more prone to decay. Lesser buildings often made use of ash poles (roughly-trimmed branches or saplings) for rafters or internal partitions (see **Figure 130**). Pine, which had to be imported from the Baltic, only came into use during the eighteenth century. Sawing of timber, carried out by hand over a sawpit was very laborious, so early timbers often had their outer faces roughly dressed with an axe, not sawn. Many early floors have wide

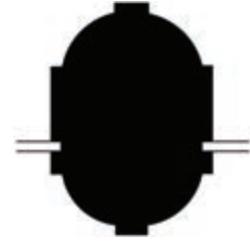


Figure 83 Cross section of a typical ovolo-moulded mullion.

Figure 82 An ovolo-moulded window mullion at Lyndon House, 59 Main Street, Lyddington, with cavetto hood mould.

hand-sawn oak or elm boards, but an alternative, found widely across the East Midlands from the sixteenth century onwards, was a floor of gypsum plaster, laid on a base of water reeds fixed to the joists. Gypsum was quarried in the Trent valley near Derby and transported considerable distances. The material can be seen on the first floor of the Bede House at Lyddington. It was used quite frequently in local houses up to the early nineteenth century, though is usually covered by carpets or patched with cement.

Most local houses would originally have had roofs of thatch, using the wheat straw available from the surrounding fields. Stone slates, mined around Collyweston, were used only on the best quality houses, and required a good quality roof structure of sawn timber. Roofs for both thatch and Collyweston slate generally had a steep pitch, of around 50°. Lead was always expensive so is found only on the low-pitched roofs of churches and other important buildings. Welsh slate and clay tiles only came into use during the nineteenth century.

External features

One of the most characteristic features of seventeenth-century houses in the area is the stone-mullioned window. Most of these windows are of two lights with a central mullion, or of three lights with two mullions. The earliest windows have cavetto-moulded (or hollow-moulded) mullions and surrounds, but these are very rare in Rutland houses. Only one in situ example has been found in the survey area, at the White Hart in Lyddington, probably of c. 1600 (**Figures 80–81**). Another example is a window to the rear of 7 Main Street, Lyddington, probably re-used from the bishops' palace. Ovolo mouldings (**Figures 82–83**) replaced cavetto mouldings around 1600 in local vernacular houses, and remained popular throughout the seventeenth century. The latest



Figure 84 Typical cavetto-moulded window cornice of c. 1610-60.



Figure 85 Cyma-moulded window cornice of c. 1650-1700.



Figure 86 Quadrant-moulded window cornice of c. 1678 (tree-ring date) at The Old Manor House, Thorpe.

dated example of an ovolo-moulded window which has been identified in Rutland is of 1706, at The Grange, Glaston. A simpler type is the plain-chamfered mullion, which tends to be used in the first half of the seventeenth century. It is often used in less important locations, or sometimes to the internal face only, in combination with an external ovolo. Plain chamfers are generally found on ironstone windows, not limestone. This may be because the softer ironstone was less suitable for the refined ovolo moulding, or that the masons who carved limestone (imported from further afield) preferred the more sophisticated shape. The normal two- or three-light mullioned window was a very standard product of regular dimensions, and could no doubt be bought as a ready-made item from the stonemason. Single-light windows with moulded stone surrounds are also found quite frequently, though windows with four or more lights are less common. In high quality houses, four-light windows can have a thicker central 'king' mullion, as seen at Manor House, Thorpe.

Because the ovolo moulding type was used over such a long period, it is of little use for dating purposes. Fortunately, many stone windows have a cornice over them, and the different types are very useful as an indication of date (Figures 84–86). The earlier type, usually dating from around the first half of the seventeenth century, has cavetto moulding, sometimes with turned down ends to form a hood-mould. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the more sophisticated cyma (or ogee) moulding is used, reflecting the introduction of classical, Renaissance design. A third, rarer, type is of quadrant form, also generally dating from the later seventeenth century. As with many building features, caution is needed before determining the date of a house from its window profile alone. Windows of a later type were often inserted into an earlier house. Another useful indicator of date is that mullioned windows were often rather taller in the later seventeenth century. Windows with horizontal transoms dividing the upper and lower sections are found only at the bishops' palace, not in the vernacular houses.

Stone bay windows are a notable feature of Rutland houses, usually of two storeys with gables. Only two examples remain in the survey area, both in Lyddington. At Bay House, 17 Main Street, the window has canted sides and is dated 1656 (Figure 87). At Mullions, 11 Stoke Road, there are square sides, with a gable over the bay set rather oddly against the main gable (Figure 88). In Caldecott, 3 The Green had two canted bay windows, lost in alterations

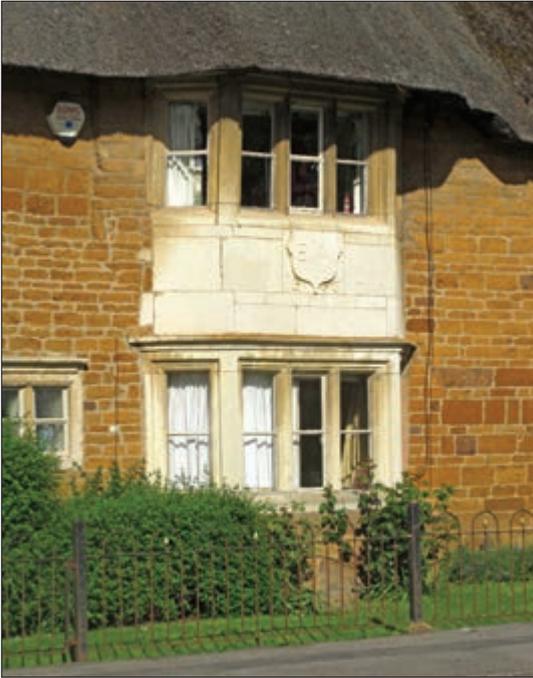


Figure 87 Bay House, 17 Main Street, Lyddington. This fine bay window is dated 1656, with the initials EA for Edward Allen. It would originally have had a gabled top.

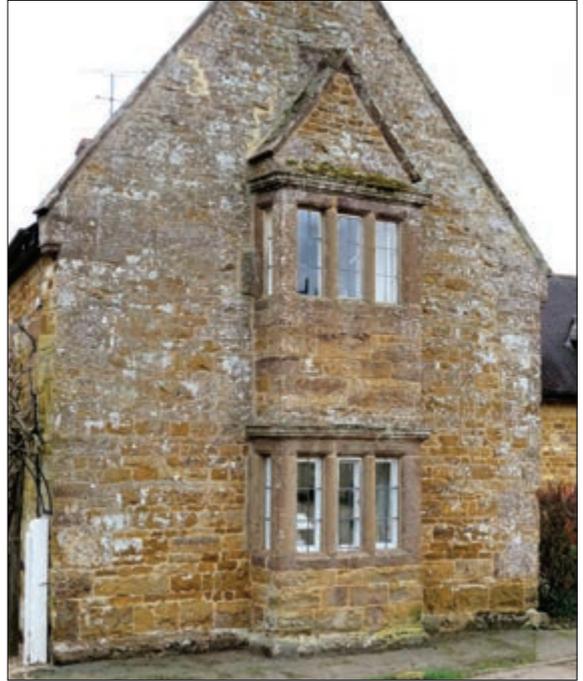


Figure 88 Square-sided bay window at Mullions, 11 Stoke Road, Lyddington.

carried out in 1951 (**Figure 89**). Gabled dormer windows are another characteristic feature in Rutland, with examples in Lyddington at The Homestead, 81 Main Street and Poplar's Farm, Stoke Road, and another at The Old Manor House, Thorpe. Much more common was the eyebrow dormer, with thatch simply swept over the window, though few of these now remain (**Figure 90**).

Single-light stone windows, with moulded or plain-chamfered surrounds, were also used, in a variety of locations. Small 'ingle windows' were often set in the wall beside an inglenook fireplace, to provide light for cooking (**Figure 91**). To light a stair, similar windows could be set between floor levels. Original openings of this type have often been blocked or enlarged at a later date. In finer houses, single-light windows could be placed in the gable ends to light a second-floor attic or closet (**Figure 92**).

Prior to the seventeenth century, glass was too expensive to be used widely in ordinary village houses. One of the major improvements of the seventeenth-century rebuilding would have been the use of glass in windows. The local stone-mullioned windows would originally have been glazed with leaded lights, probably in small, diamond-set panes, though no early glass survives. The leaded lights were supported on stout, vertical iron bars. The blocked sockets for these bars can often be seen in the head and cill of remaining stone windows, and there are also a few surviving examples of original iron bars. The finer houses may have had iron-framed opening casements, but no surviving examples have been found in the area.

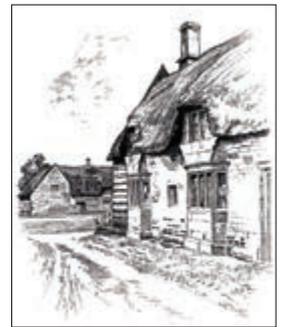


Figure 89 Two canted bay windows (now lost) at 3 The Green, Caldecott. (S.R. Jones, 1912)



Figure 90 Thatched eyebrow dormer at Pageant House, 47 Main Street, Lyddington in the early twentieth-century. (RCM)

Stone-mullioned windows must always have been a relatively expensive item. It is likely that a considerable number of the windows in seventeenth-century houses were of timber, but surviving examples are very rare due to later alterations. An important discovery of a timber window was made some years ago at 5 The Green, Lyddington, during alterations to form a new doorway. The building dates from the first half of the seventeenth century. Within the thickness of the wall, an original oak window was uncovered, of

Figure 91 Ingle window at Mullions, 11 Stoke Road, Lyddington.



Figure 92 Two blocked windows which originally lit the attic at Manor House, Mill Lane, Caldecott.



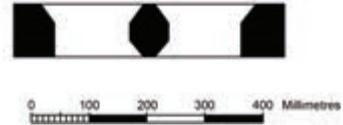
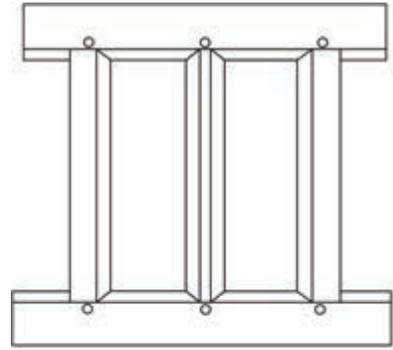


Figure 93 (above) and Figure 94 (right) An unglazed oak window of c. 1610–50 from 5 The Green, Lyddington

plain-chamfered lights (Figures 93–94). The window frame had no rebate for glazing, but retained the hinge-hooks for an internal timber shutter. It is particularly interesting to note that the front elevation of the house has two good quality four-light stone-mullioned windows, with the timber window placed in the gable wall to one side. Another unglazed timber window with closely-set mullions was found buried in the north party wall of 29A Main Street, Lyddington, blocked by the construction next door of Priest's House (with its date-stone of 1626). No doubt other houses also used timber windows in less important locations, and cheaper houses would have been built with all windows of timber, probably at first unglazed.

External doorways of moulded stonework are another conspicuous feature of some seventeenth-century houses, though they are less common than stone windows. The earlier type, from the first half of the seventeenth century, has a 'Tudor' or four-centred arch. The earliest dated example is at The Old Manor House, Thorpe (1597) and the latest at Ye Olde House, Uppingham Road, Caldecott (1647). Most have surrounds of cyma and ovolo profile, with a cavetto-moulded cornice, though a few are much plainer, like the chamfered surround at Lyddington's Marquess of Exeter. Quite a few examples at Lyddington have been re-set into later houses. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the old-fashioned 'Tudor' arch was replaced by a flat head. Some doorways retained the cyma/ovolo moulding, though if there was a cornice it was usually of cyma profile, not cavetto (as seen on later window cornices). However, the best houses now had a shallow projecting architrave, of sophisticated design. Two dated examples can be seen in Lyddington, at The Hermitage, Church Lane (1678) and Swan House, 36 Main Street (1674), and another at Manor House, Thorpe (1691). Stone-moulded doorways are,



Figure 95 Typical four-centred arched doorway with cavetto-moulded cornice at Ye Olde House, Caldecott.



Figure 96 Flat-headed doorway with cyma-moulded cornice at Fineshade, 9 Stoke Road, Lyddington



Figure 97 Stepped architrave with lugged projections to doorway of 1674 (as date-stone) at Swan House, Main Street, Lyddington.

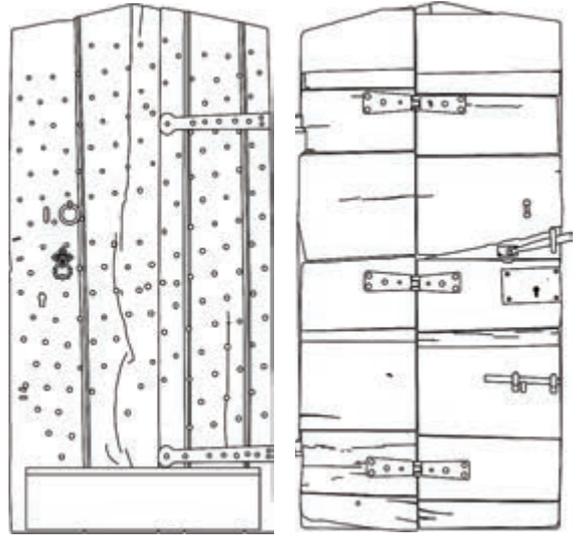
however, far from universal in seventeenth-century houses and many buildings must have had plain stone jambs with oak lintels (Figures 95–97).

Only one original seventeenth-century external door has been found in the survey area, at 6 The Green, Lyddington, dating from around 1620–60 (Figures 98–100). It has vertical oak boards externally, which are fixed to an inner set of horizontal boards with large-head nails. An exceptional feature of this door was that it could be folded into two halves, so that it did not block the small entry lobby. No other examples of this design have yet been found in England. The short external hinges and the internal flap hinges are all original.

The end walls of local seventeenth-century houses are nearly always of gabled form, a tradition which continued into later centuries. There is usually a gable parapet with a stone coping, supported at the eaves by a large block of stone called a ‘kneeler’. Beneath the kneeler there is often



Figure 98 Original seventeenth-century oak door at 6 The Green, Lyddington, with centre folding design.



Figures 99 and 100 (above) External and internal drawings of the door at 6 The Green, Lyddington.

a projecting corbel, which can have a variety of moulding profiles. High-quality houses might have a finial at the apex or on top of the kneeler, but these have often been lost to erosion (Figure 101). Houses with thatched roofs needed a taller upstand to the gable parapet than Collyweston-slatted roofs, to accommodate the thickness of the thatch. Only one house with an original hipped roof (rather than a gable) has been identified. Home Farm, 39 Main Street, Caldecott has a neatly-framed roof tree-ring dated to 1699, with a hip at one end and a stone gable at the other (see Figure 259).



Figure 101 Swan House, Main Street, Lyddington (date-stone 1674): gable detail with moulded corbel, kneeler and eroded finial.

Figure 102 Twin chimneystack with mouldings typical of the earlier seventeenth century at Manor House, Thorpe.



Figure 103 (Far right) Chimneystack with later seventeenth-century mouldings at Swan House, Lyddington (date-stone 1674).



Figure 104 Chamfered plinth and moulded string course at The Hermitage, Church Lane, Lyddington (date-stone 1668).



Figure 105 Extension of 1691 at Manor House, Thorpe, with limestone ashlar and projecting (rusticated) quoins.

Original chimneystacks in local seventeenth-century houses are always set on the gables or on a cross-wall, not rising from a lateral wall. Due to their exposed location, chimneystacks are subject to much rebuilding, with many replaced in brick. All surviving seventeenth-century chimneystacks are of limestone, with only the bases left from the less durable ironstone stacks. Where

	Address	Date	Initials	Probable Builder's Name
Caldecott	6 Main Street	1646	DH	Daniel Hill
	Ye Olde House, Uppingham Road	1647	-	
	Barn (re-set) at Weldon House, Uppingham Road	1649	NWA	Newbone
	Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green	1651	PW	Peter Woodcock
	1 The Green	1684	CRE	
Lyddington	Manor House, Mill Lane	1696	CJE	
	Orchard Cottage, 9 Main Street	1619	KW EW	
	Priest's House, 31 Main Street	1626	RR	Robert Rudd, vicar
	Bay House, 17 Main Street (bay window only)	1656	EA	Edward Allen
	The Hermitage, 6 Church Lane	1668	E(P?) S	Edmund Sismey (gent)
Thorpe by Water	Swan House, 36 Main Street	1674	PLS	Lawrence & Susanna Peach
	Old Manor House	1597	-	
	Rosebery Cottage, 2 Main Street	1654	IM	John Manton
	Manor House	1691	HEM	Harrison

Figure 106 Table of local seventeenth-century date-stones.

a stack has two flues, these are expressed separately, each flue formed of large ashlar slabs laid on edge. Once again, the stone mouldings used in the first half of the century differ from those of the second half (Figures 102–103).

At the base of the walls of many of the better-quality houses there is a chamfered plinth, though this is often only applied to the more visible elevations, not around the back. Two of the highest quality houses of the later seventeenth century, Swan House and The Hermitage in Lyddington, also have a moulded string course at first floor level (Figure 104). The most sophisticated piece of seventeenth-century architecture is the extension added to Manor House, Thorpe in 1691. The whole of the front and end gable walls are of finely-jointed ashlar, with a plinth, first-floor string course and eaves cornice (Figure 105).

Date-stones are a regular feature of Rutland houses in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Before 1600, date-stones are very rare, and usually re-set. They begin to occur more frequently from around 1620, with a particular surge in numbers in 1680–1700 (see Figure 175). Our investigations in the Lyddington area have noted six seventeenth-century examples in Caldecott, five in Lyddington and three in Thorpe (Figure 106). Research over several decades, both in the region and nationally, has shown that date-stones are nearly always associated with a programme of major building work, rather than being added to mark a marriage or change of ownership. However, close examination is needed to check whether a date-stone belongs with the masonry into which it is placed, or has been re-set at a later date. Caution is also needed as a date-stone does not necessarily provide the original construction date of a house. Quite a number of eighteenth-century date-stones relate to the re-fronting of an older house.

Date-stones were usually set in a prominent position on the main frontage or high on a gable end (Figures 107–112). All of the remaining local examples are of limestone, though date-stones of the less durable ironstone do survive from the eighteenth century. Examples from the best houses or from later in the seventeenth century are of more sophisticated design, with letter-cutting of higher quality. Date-stones would have been carved by especially skilled stonemasons, involving extra cost. They are often accompanied by the owner's



Figure 107 The Old Manor House, Thorpe: although it has clearly been re-set, tree-ring dating of roof timbers to 1586-1611 indicates this date-stone belongs to the house.



Figure 108 6 Main Street, Caldecott: DH 1646. This date-stone is set high in the gable end, facing the street. The lettering is cut fairly crudely, but on a recessed panel, with a moulded cornice above. The date-stone enables the owner to be identified: Daniel Hill was baptised in Caldecott in 1622, paid tax for two hearths on this house in 1665 and was buried in 1679/80 (see page 244).



Figure 109 Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green, Caldecott: PW 1651. This date-stone belonged to the house which Peter Woodcock built, where he paid tax on eight hearths in 1665 (see page 168). The date-stone was re-set in a gate pier when the house was rebuilt in the nineteenth century.



Figure 110 Swan House, 36 Main Street, Lyddington: PLS 1674. A finely cut date-stone with raised lettering on a diamond-shaped panel. This house was built for Lawrence and Susanna Peach (see page 155).



Figure 111 Manor House, Thorpe: HEM 1691. This date-stone is set high in the gable end of a major extension added by the Harrison family (see also Figure 105).



Figure 112 Priest's House, 31 Main Street, Lyddington. 1626 RR, with abbreviated Latin: Caelum patria Christus via, which translates as 'Heaven is our home, Christ is the way'. Although the date-stone has been re-set and the building much altered, this was probably the home of Robert Rudd, vicar of Lyddington. His will records that he served as vicar for 57 years until his death in 1647.¹

initials, which can be extremely useful in establishing the history of the house and its owners. Placing a date-stone on a newly-built house must have been a significant decision for an owner, particularly when it included their own initials. It was clearly a public demonstration of pride in the new building, intended to last for many generations. The earliest bona fide date-stone in the survey area is the 1597 example at The Old Manor House, Thorpe. An earlier date of 1575 appears on a date-stone at 41 Main Street, Caldecott, but this looks like a rather crude addition to a date-stone of 1838.



Figure 113 Inglenook fireplace at the Marquess of Exeter, Lyddington. This fine example has a rather wider stone cheek wall than normal. The ceiling has a typical 'spine' beam running parallel to the front wall.



Figure 114 Inglenook fireplace at Priest's House, Church Close, Caldecott. This has a thinner stone cheek wall and an angle window, lighting the fireplace area. The angle beam here is of unusually fine design, with a Tudor arch moulding, which returns down the sides. It has been tree-ring dated to 1575-1600 and is probably re-used, as it does not fit well to the masonry.

Internal features

One of the principal features inside local seventeenth-century houses is a large inglenook fireplace (Figures 113–114), though the type also continues throughout the eighteenth century. Inglenook fireplaces have a timber beam



Figure 115 A rare local example of a 'spice cupboard' door to the inglenook fireplace at 2 Main Street, Thorpe. The carved decoration and 'butterfly' hinges indicate the door is probably original to the house, which was built in 1654 (as date-stone).

Figure 116 Stone fireplace of 1600-1650 in a ground floor room at Manor House, Thorpe, with typical four-centred arch head, moulded jambs and high-set stops.



over a wide and deep fireplace opening, supported at one end by the main side wall and at the other by a stone cheek wall, with good quality stone quoins. These fireplaces usually served as the principal cooking hearth, with the ingle beam, sometimes slightly arched, set high enough to allow access to pots hanging over the fire. The beam is usually chamfered on the front edge, often with chamfer stops at either end. The rear of the beam is often deeply chamfered, to encourage smoke to go up the chimney. The fire itself would have taken up only the central part of the wide opening, though there seems to be no tradition in Rutland of seating within the inglenook, as seen in some parts of England and Wales. In the rear or side walls there are often cupboards or shelved recesses for storage. Small, square cupboards of this type are often known as 'spice cupboards' (**Figure 115**) though they were probably used for a variety of purposes. Bake-ovens were also sometimes incorporated in the rear or side walls, though most have now been blocked off.

Much less common than inglenooks are fireplaces with stone surrounds. These are found in the ground floor parlour, or in upstairs bedchambers. They were not used for cooking purposes, but for heating the room. The characteristic type from the first half of the seventeenth century has a 'Tudor' or four-centred arch, like external doorways of this period (**Figure 116**). Ten examples of these have been noted in the survey area, mostly in ground-floor parlours, though the high-quality Old Manor House, Thorpe, had four in its bedchambers. In the Rutland area, four-centred arches are generally replaced by flat-headed surrounds in the second half of the seventeenth century, but the only surviving local example is at Weldon House, Caldecott (**Figure 117**). Rather than being constructed of stone, some early chimney flues over inglenook fireplaces in Rutland were built of crude timber-framing, with mud infill. Examples



Figure 117 Flat-headed fireplace of mid-seventeenth century at Weldon House, Uppingham Road, Caldecott. This chamber fireplace has been re-set on the ground floor. It was originally set flush with the wall face but has been brought forward, forming a mantelshelf.



Figure 118 Former timber chimney at 4 Church Lane, Lyddington. The heavily sooted rear face of the chimney survives, built of timber studs and lath, infilled with mud daub. To the right is the later brick chimneystack, built inside the timber chimney.

of this type are now very rare, but one was discovered at 4 Church Lane, Lyddington (**Figure 118**).

Ground floors in better quality houses were probably paved with flagstones, though most early examples have been replaced or re-worked. In lesser houses, ground floors were probably often of beaten clay. Upper floors were supported on large beams, into which smaller joists were jointed. Ceiling beams in seventeenth-century houses were usually chamfered, with ogee-shaped chamfer stops at either end, though the same detail can also be seen in many eighteenth-century houses. More ornate chamfer stops or beam-mouldings, as seen in several local houses, seem to be restricted to the seventeenth century (**Figures 119–120**). Ceiling beams in earlier houses were often set as ‘spine’ beams, parallel to the lateral walls. The beam was supported on stone gable or cross-walls, and typically bears into an inglenook chimneystack (see **Figure 113**). The floor joists span across from the outer walls onto the central spine beam. Alternatively, as often seen in later houses, the main beams were set transversely, spanning between the front and rear wall, with the joists bearing into cross-walls.

Very few early staircases survive. In most houses, the stairs would have been of winder form, often steep and narrow. Evidence survives occasionally of a curved recess in a stone wall, showing the location of a winder stair (**Figure 121**). An early and much grander example of a winder stair can be seen at The Old Manor House, Thorpe (**Figure 122**). Later in the seventeenth century, when better access was needed to high-quality bedchambers on the first floor, the



Figure 119 Finely carved chamfer stop to ceiling beam at 8 Main Street, Caldecott. The normal S-shaped ogee stop has added decoration of fluting and a raised bar.



Figure 120 Decorative chamfer stop at 46 Main Street, Lyddington, with raised triangular section.



Figure 121 A winder stair, with the treads partly set into a curved recess at Rose Cottage, 7 Main Street, Lyddington.



Figure 122 The Old Manor House, Thorpe. This stair of 1597 runs from ground floor up to second floor attic level. It has treads formed of solid oak jointed to a central newel post.



Figure 123 Swan House, Main Street, Lyddington. Oak staircase of 1674, with half-landings, turned balusters and shaped newel post.



Figure 124 Manor House, Thorpe. Staircase of 1691, with barley-sugar twisted balusters and square newel posts.



Figure 125 Oak door of 1674 at Swan House, Main Street, Lyddington. Of plank and batten construction, with original iron hinges. The nails are placed in a decorative pattern, with incised lines.

Figure 126 An original door of 1691 at Manor House, Thorpe. The two-panel design came into favour towards the end of the seventeenth century, sometimes with a fashionable projecting 'bolection' moulding, as seen here. Unusually this door, with its wide panels, is constructed of pine not oak (though it would originally have been covered with paint).



best houses were provided with more spacious staircases, with straight flights and turned balusters. Two examples survive locally, which follow the national style for such staircases (Figures 123–124).

Few other interior fittings or decorative features are found in local houses. The local emphasis seems always to have been on the high-quality craftsmanship of the stonemason, rather than other materials. Interiors seem generally to have been finished quite plainly, and no examples of original seventeenth-century panelling, decorative plasterwork or schemes of painted decoration have been identified. The only other notable features are some good examples of original doors in two of the best quality houses (Figures 125–126).

Roof structures often provide important evidence for the development of a building, and have been the focus of much of the tree-ring dating work carried out on the recent project. The principal roof timbers are generally of oak, though elm was also sometimes used. The simplest and most common type of roof has A-frame trusses whose timbers are connected by lap joints, rather than being of mortice and tenon type. The purlins, running down the length of the roof, are supported on the back of the A-frames. These in turn carry the rafters, which were often of crudely-shaped ash poles, rather than square-sawn timber. Thatched roofs could be laid on irregular rafters of this type, unlike the more expensive Collyweston slates, which needed flat, sawn rafters. These simple roof structures continued to be built in similar fashion throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Figures 127–131).

More sophisticated roofs, on higher-status houses, were constructed of better-quality timber, with tenoned joints. The carpenters cut the joints and

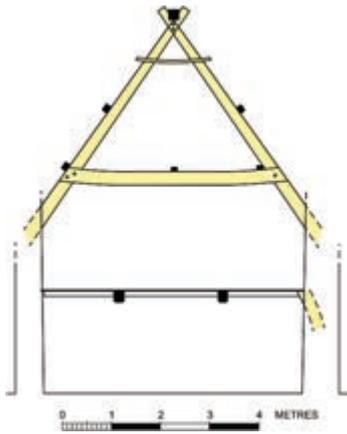


Figure 127 Home Farmhouse, 35–37 Main Street, Lyddington. Typical A-frame truss of the seventeenth century, with lap-jointed collar. To the right, a short section of cruck blade from an earlier house is buried in the thick stone wall, cut off at first floor level.



Figure 128 Scissors crossing at the apex of the roof truss, carrying the ridge beam, with ash pole rafters.

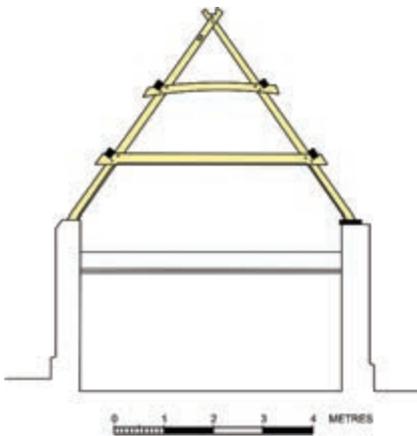


Figure 129 5 The Green, Lyddington: A-frame truss tree-ring dated to 1691–96. Both of the lapped collars project to carry the purlins, a common and very practical arrangement.



Figure 130 Upper part of the truss, which formed a closed partition. Oak laths were nailed to the opposite side of the ash pole studs and covered with mud daub. This was the common local type of construction for internal partitions.



Figure 131 Rosebery Cottage, 2 Main Street, Thorpe. The collar of this A-frame truss has a lap-joint of unusual, stepped form and is fixed with three big oak pegs. Most such lap joints are of straight-sided or dovetailed type. This example dates from 1654 (as date-stone, confirmed by a tree-ring date of 1643–68).



Figure 132 The Old Manor House, Thorpe. This roof of 1597 (as date-stone, tree-ring dated to 1586-1611) is the earliest local example with tenoned purlins and collar. Despite appearances, this truss is of A-frame type, with the second floor beam set some distance away from the feet of the principal rafters. The lower right purlin is set at high level to allow headroom for an original dormer window, long demolished.



Figure 133 Another truss, with a cranked wind-brace, running from the principal rafter of the truss to the purlin. The rafters here are original, of squared oak, supporting the Collyweston slate roof.

pre-assembled such structures at ground level, before erection. As each joint was a unique fit, chisel-cut carpenter's marks were often applied, to identify which timbers belonged together. These roofs did not usually have a ridge beam; instead, the rafter couples were jointed together at the apex (Figures 132–135).

Another rare roof type, which is found only on the two highest-quality houses in the area, has purlins which are clasped between the principal rafter and the collar. A few clasped purlin roofs have been identified in Rutland in the late medieval period, but they are then not found again until the late seventeenth century. This roof type was very common in the south and east of England (Figures 136–137).

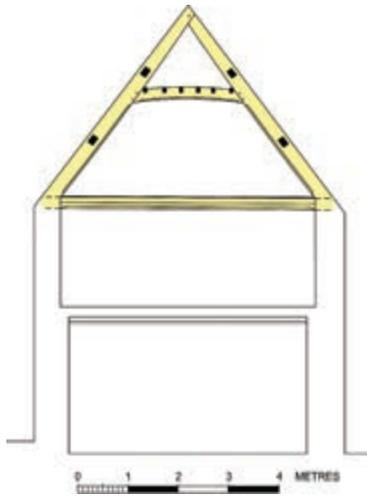


Figure 134 Manor House, Thorpe. Tenoned purlin roof of c. 1600-1640, with tie-beam and collar.

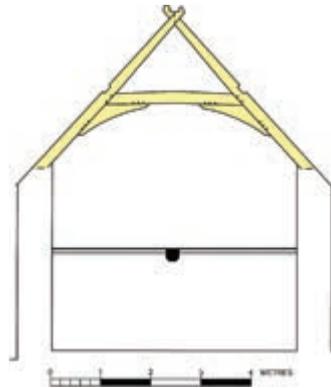


Figure 135 Marquess of Exeter, Lyddington. This is an unusual, very fine roof of c. 1610-50 with arch braces, giving a very lofty room. It is of hybrid type, with a tenoned collar, but back purlins and a scissors apex with ridge beam. Although the building suffered a fire in 1994, the main trusses survive. There is a rather similar roof at Stoneville Farm Barn (see Figure 163).

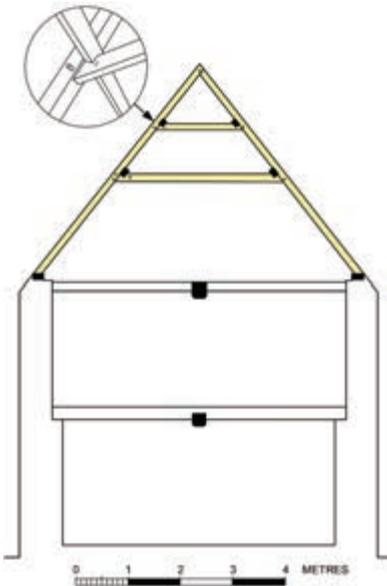


Figure 136 The Old Manor House, Thorpe. This part of the house was rebuilt with two clapsed purlin roof trusses, tree-ring dated to 1678. The foot of the truss is set into heavy wall-plates, with no tie-beam. The high-set collar allowed headroom for this attic floor. Carpenter's marks were used to distinguish the upper and lower collar joints.

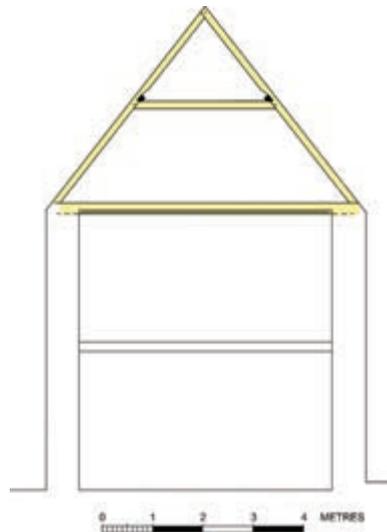


Figure 137 Manor House, Thorpe. This fine extension has a date-stone of 1691 and the oak for this clapsed purlin roof was felled in 1688 (tree-ring date). Here there appears to be a tie-beam at the bottom of the truss.

House types and plan forms

As noted above, most local houses were formed of a single range, two or three rooms in length, with gables at each end. Many earlier seventeenth-century houses had relatively low ceilings, with the first-floor rooms partly set within the roof space. Better-quality or later houses might have two full-height floors, or even an attic storey lit by dormer or gable windows. Two different types of plan form can be distinguished. The first is the cross-passage form, which had been established as the standard pattern for English houses in the medieval period, and was popular locally in the first half of the seventeenth century. Surviving local examples which can be identified as cross-passage houses all have three main ground-floor rooms. Various examples of cross-passage houses are shown in **Figures 138–144**.

Typically, the cross-passage divides the central room, the hall or main living room, from a service room or kitchen. As can be seen from the examples, the cross-passage usually runs across the back of the hall chimneystack, before a doorway is reached to enter the hall. This pattern has been recognised in many areas of England, and is often known as a ‘hearth-passage’ plan. This new development of the earlier cross-passage type seems to have been adopted in the local area quite swiftly in the early seventeenth century. The third room, the parlour, lies beyond the hall. In earlier or lower-status houses, there was often originally only one fireplace, the inglenook in the hall. This would have served as the cooking hearth, as well as heating the principal living room. In such houses, the service room was unheated, so was probably used only for storage, food preparation or other tasks. The parlour was also originally unheated in

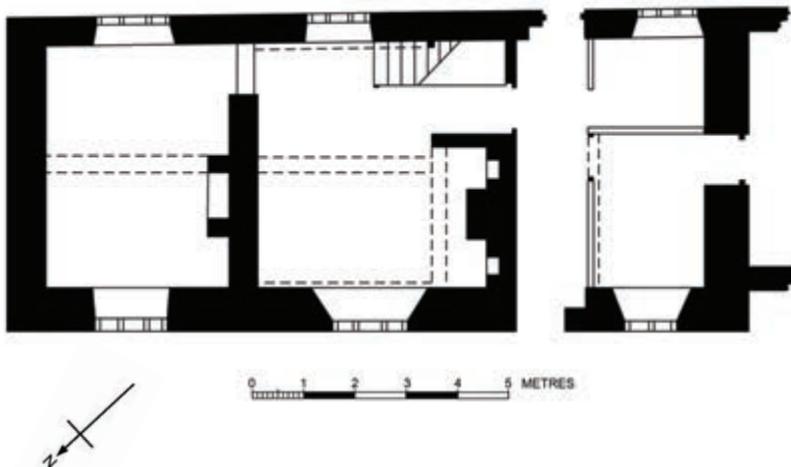


Figure 138 4 Church Lane, Lyddington. This cruck-framed house (see pages 112–13) was rebuilt in the first half of the seventeenth century. The cross-passage runs behind the hall fireplace, with a short, unheated service room to the right. Beyond the hall is the parlour, with a fireplace added around the late seventeenth century.

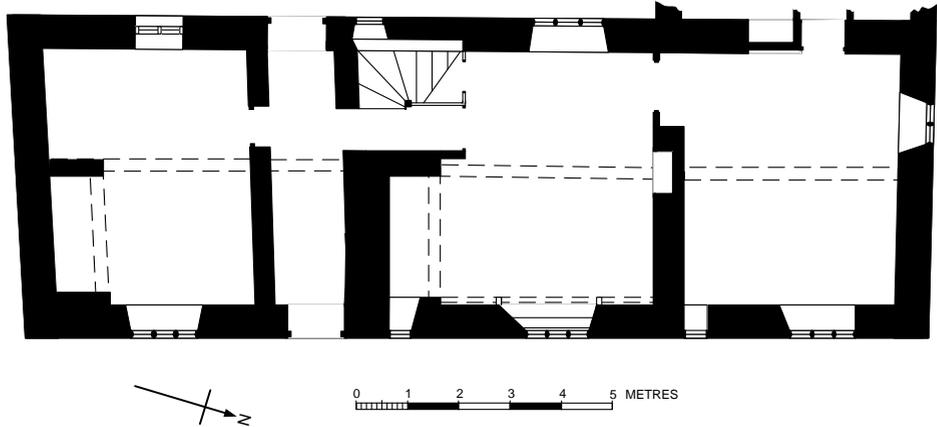


Figure 139 Pageant House, 47 Main Street, Lyddington. Another house with fifteenth- or sixteenth-century origins, rebuilt as a fine example of a cross-passage house in the first half of the seventeenth century. The winder stair is no doubt in the original location, against the rear wall. Despite having high quality features, including many stone-mullioned windows and a stone doorway (see Fig 90), the original house had a single fireplace, in the hall. The large service room became the kitchen when a fireplace was added in the eighteenth century. A fireplace was also added to the parlour, but removed more recently.

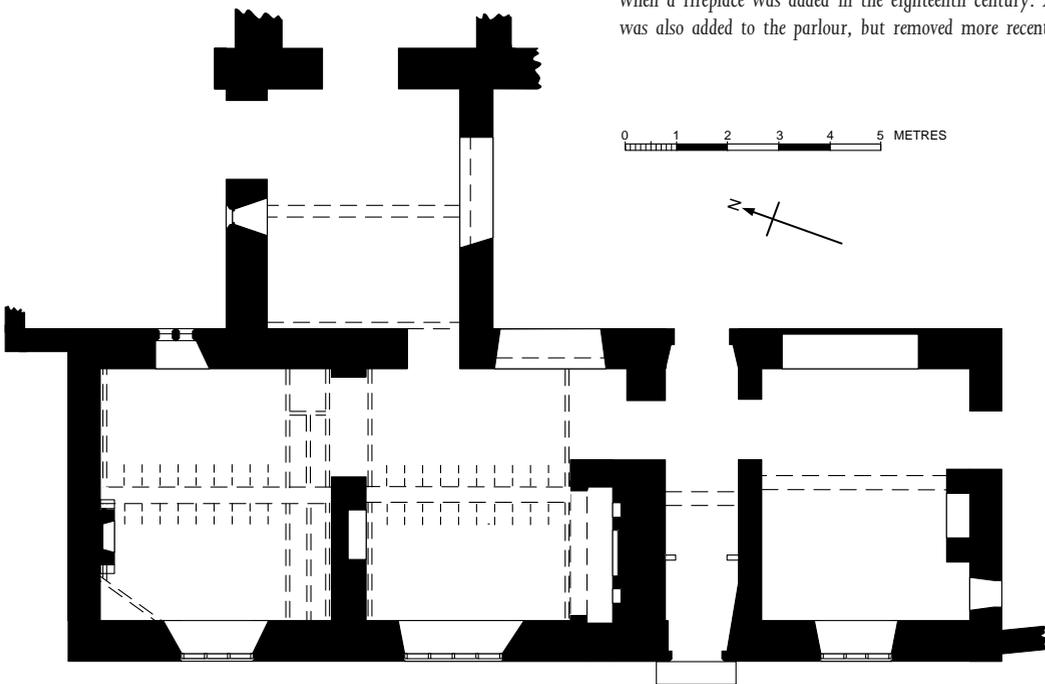


Figure 140 Marquess of Exeter, Lyddington. A high quality house, built in the first half of the seventeenth century. The main inglenook fireplace was in the hall, but there was a smaller fireplace in the right-hand room, which probably served as a back-kitchen. The parlour fireplace is a later addition, a clear and accessible example of this development. The unheated rear wing was added in the later seventeenth century, for service or storage use.

Figure 141 5 The Green, Lyddington. Another cross-passage house of typical form, built in the first half of the seventeenth century. Here the parlour had a fireplace from the start, and there was originally a service room attached to the left end. A rear wing, for service or agricultural use, was added in 1691–96 (as indicated by tree-ring dating of the roof).

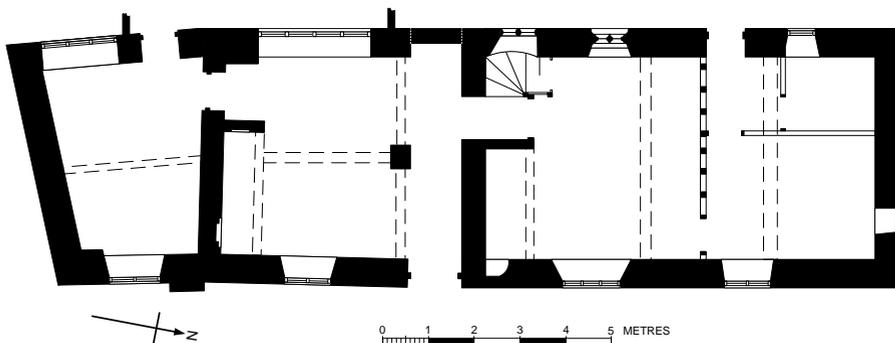
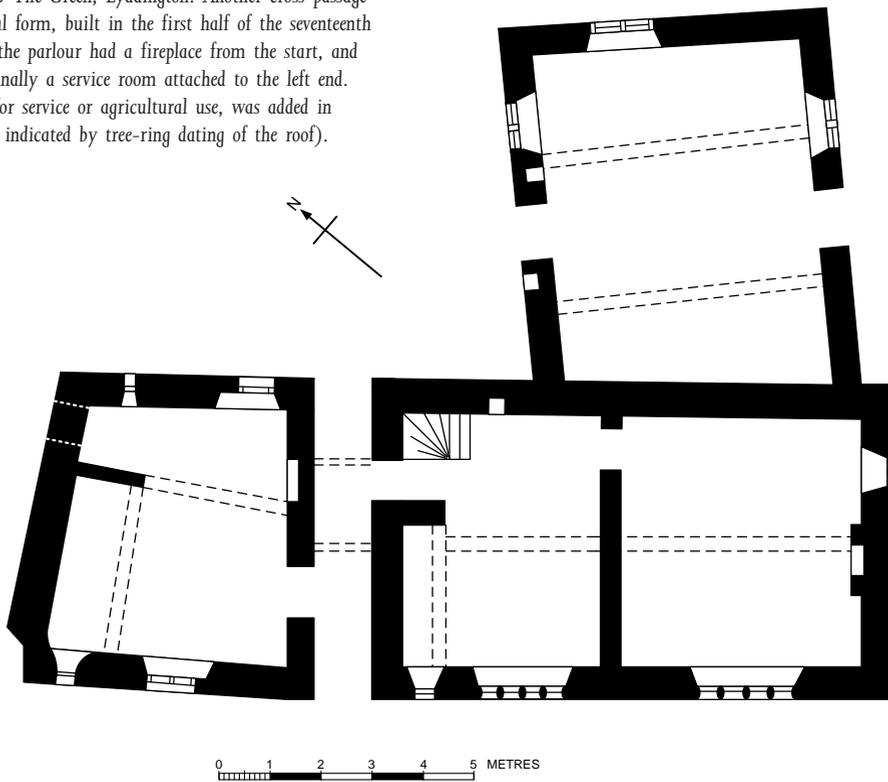


Figure 142 Rose Cottage, 7 Main Street, Lyddington, c. 1620–60. Part of the original winder stair survives here, set into a typical curved recess in the rear wall of the hall. An original oak stud partition divides the parlour from the hall. The large kitchen to the south had an original inglenook, with projecting bake-oven. An unheated service room was added to the left end in the eighteenth century.

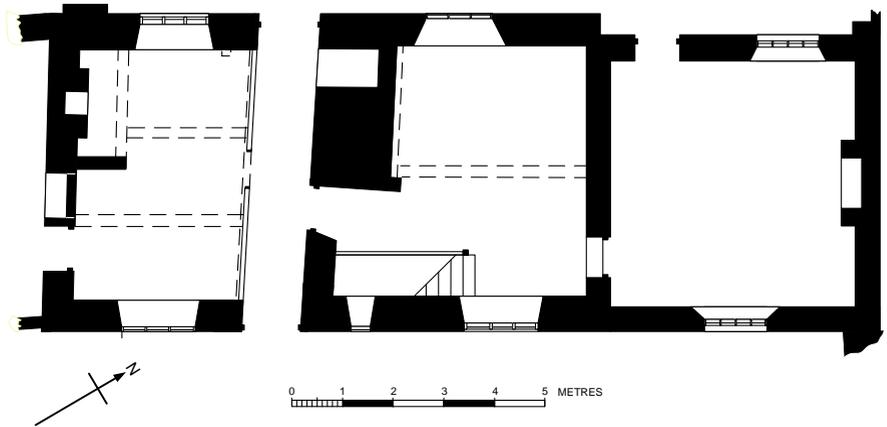


Figure 143 Home Farmhouse, 37 Main Street, Lyddington. A fragment of a cruck truss remains from an earlier late medieval house, rebuilt in the first half of the seventeenth century (see also Figure 127). In contrast to most examples, the doorway into the hall is located in front of the hall chimneystack, rather than beyond it. The kitchen contains an original inglenook, with projecting bake-oven. The original stud wall with mud infill survives here, dividing the passage from the kitchen. The parlour end was rebuilt in the early nineteenth century, with a high-class drawing room. This was the house of Robert Manton, who left an inventory in 1663 (see transcription on page 322). The inventory notes the hall, parlour and kitchen. Only one chamber was noted on the first floor, though the evidence indicates there would have been three chambers.

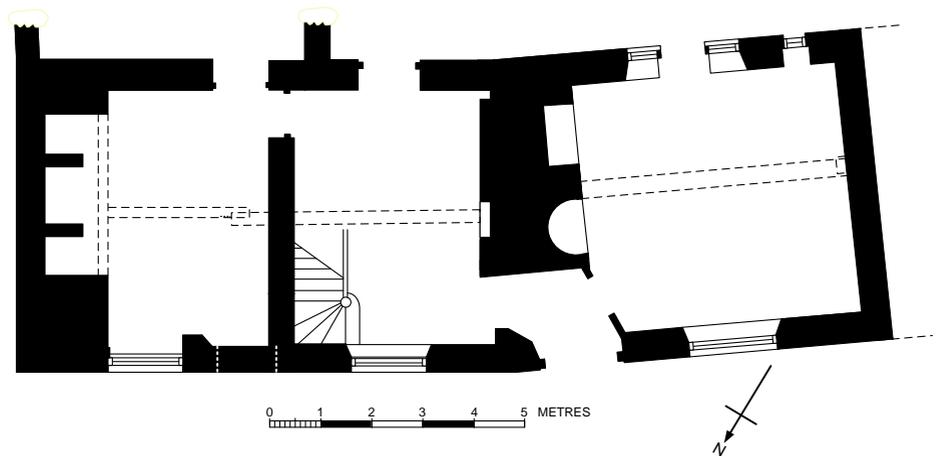
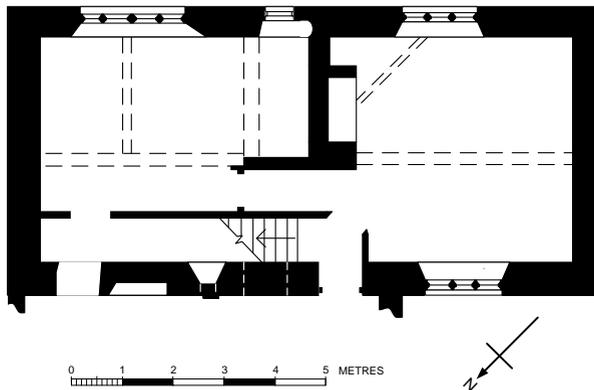


Figure 144 The Old House, 45 Main Street, Caldecott. The original house here has been tree-ring dated to 1626–51. At the left end was a short service room, originally unheated. The central room was the hall, with the parlour beyond it. Unusually, instead of the hall fireplace backing onto the cross-passage, it was set back-to-back with the parlour fireplace, whose seventeenth-century moulded stone surround survives. The kinked angle of the plan follows the road alignment, the original house being all of a single build. The front doorway was moved to its current position in the nineteenth century.

such houses. In much of the seventeenth century, it served as a bedchamber (see below), but it eventually came to be used as a sitting room, for which a fireplace was necessary. Where evidence for a staircase survives, it is usually in line with the hall chimneystack, against the rear wall. On the first floor, there were a series of bedchambers, but these were often used more for storage than sleeping. In the seventeenth century, first-floor fireplaces are only found in the best quality houses. The cross-passage plan, with a front door to the street and a back door into the farmyard, was usually used where houses fronted onto the road and had a rear yard.

In the second type of plan form, the front door opens against the side of the hall chimneystack, instead of into a cross-passage. This plan form was adopted quite widely from the late sixteenth century onwards in the south and east of England, though its use did not spread to all parts of the country. The earliest securely-dated local example is Brookside House on Brook Lane, Great Easton, which has been tree-ring dated to 1630–35.³ The type is more readily recognised than a cross-passage house, with a total of eight examples found in the survey area (Figures 145–152). The local examples date from both the



Figures 145 and 146 Priest's House, Church Close, Caldecott. Although of compact, two-room form, this is a very high quality house, built in the first half of the seventeenth century. The original doorway, now altered and with an added porch, led into a small lobby in front of the double chimneystack.

Figure 147 6 The Green, Lyddington. Another lobby-entry house of c. 1620–60. The door to the north end is a later insertion. The original oak door still survives (see Figures 98–100).

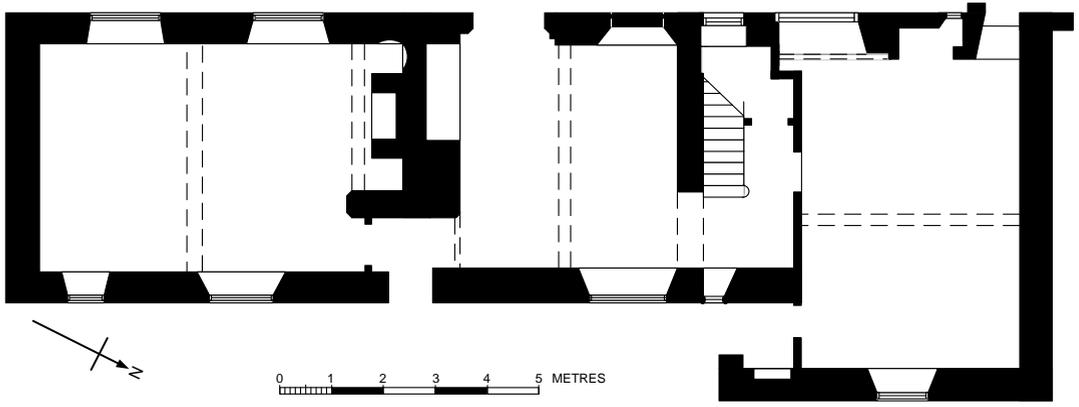
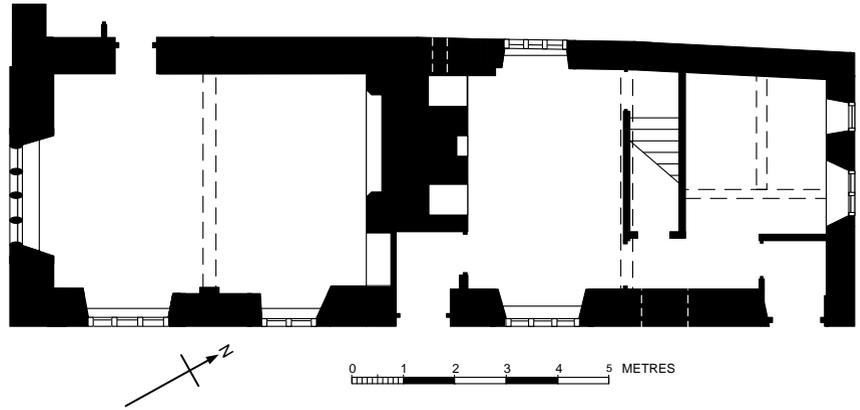


Figure 148 The Homestead, 81 Main Street, Lyddington. This was built as a three-room, lobby-entry house in c. 1620–60, but the parlour end was rebuilt as a grander cross-wing in the later seventeenth century.

earlier and later seventeenth century and occur in houses that were either two or three rooms in length. In two-room houses with a central chimneystack, the plan form would have enabled the creation of a symmetrical front elevation, but no attempt is made to achieve this, as can be seen in the examples. Unlike cross-passage houses, with their back door leading to the rear yard, these houses are often set with the gable end to the street, or well back from the road.

Apart from these houses of two or three main ground floor rooms, there are four larger seventeenth-century houses in the survey area. These have more complex plans, with extra space provided in cross-wings, often added as later extensions (Figures 153–156).

It should be admitted that, in many houses, later alterations have obscured the original plan form. In smaller two-room houses the original plan may have had a cross-passage, a gable entry or direct entry into the hall, but no clear examples of other plan forms have yet been identified in the survey area.



Figure 149 Ye Olde House, Uppingham Road, Caldecott. This view from a postcard of c. 1910 shows the surviving stone doorway, which opened onto a double chimneystack. A date-stone of 1647 in the gable provides the date of construction. The reduced part with a corrugated iron roof would have been the kitchen, with the hall in the centre and a parlour to the right end. The thatched house to the left (demolished around 1950) was referred to as the site of the 'Cruck House' in a Caldecott village scrapbook of the 1950s, but the exposed roof truss belongs to Ye Olde House, so this is probably a misunderstanding (see page 115). (RCM)

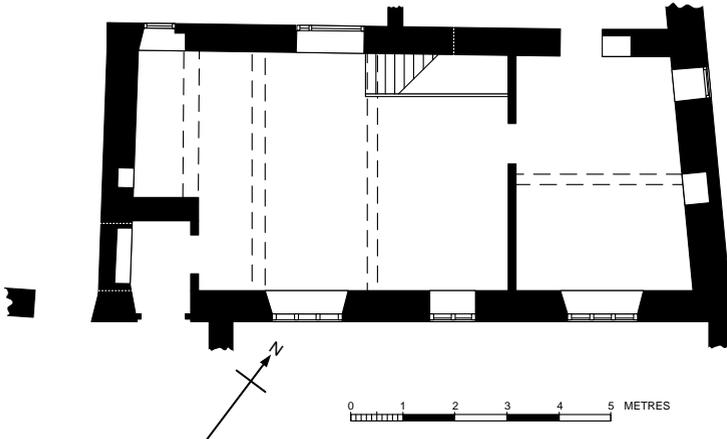
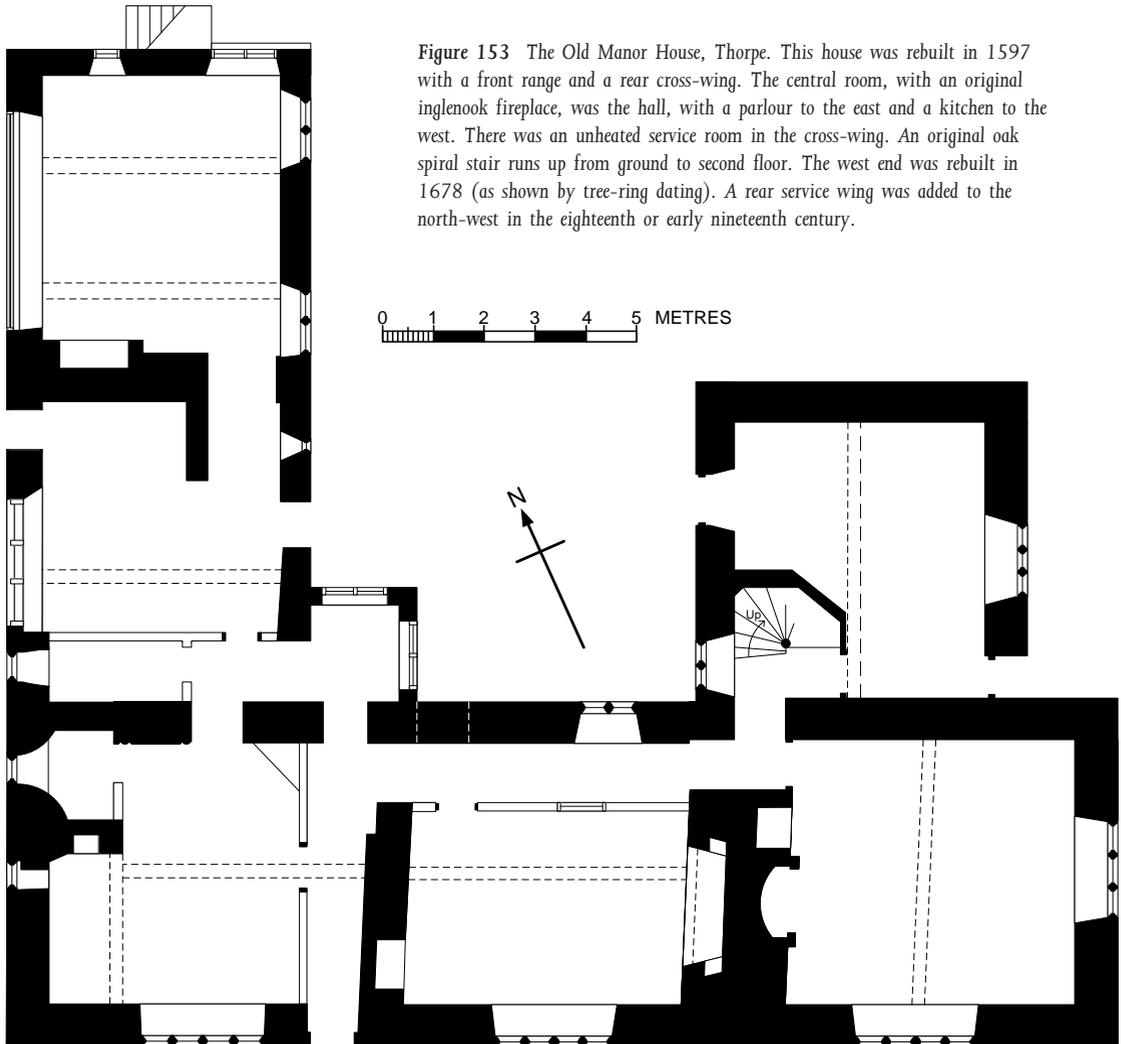


Figure 150 Ground floor plan of Monkey Tree Cottage, 4 The Green, Caldecott.

Figure 151 Monkey Tree Cottage, 4 The Green, Caldecott. Although re-fronted in 1774 (as date-stone), this was built as a two-room house in the seventeenth century. The front door opens against the chimneystack of the original gable end. This plan form is sometimes called a baffle-entry.



Figure 152 Weldon House, Uppingham Road, Caldecott. This photo of c. 1980 shows the original doorway at the far left end, opening against the inglenook fireplace of the hall. Photograph by kind permission of John Brown.



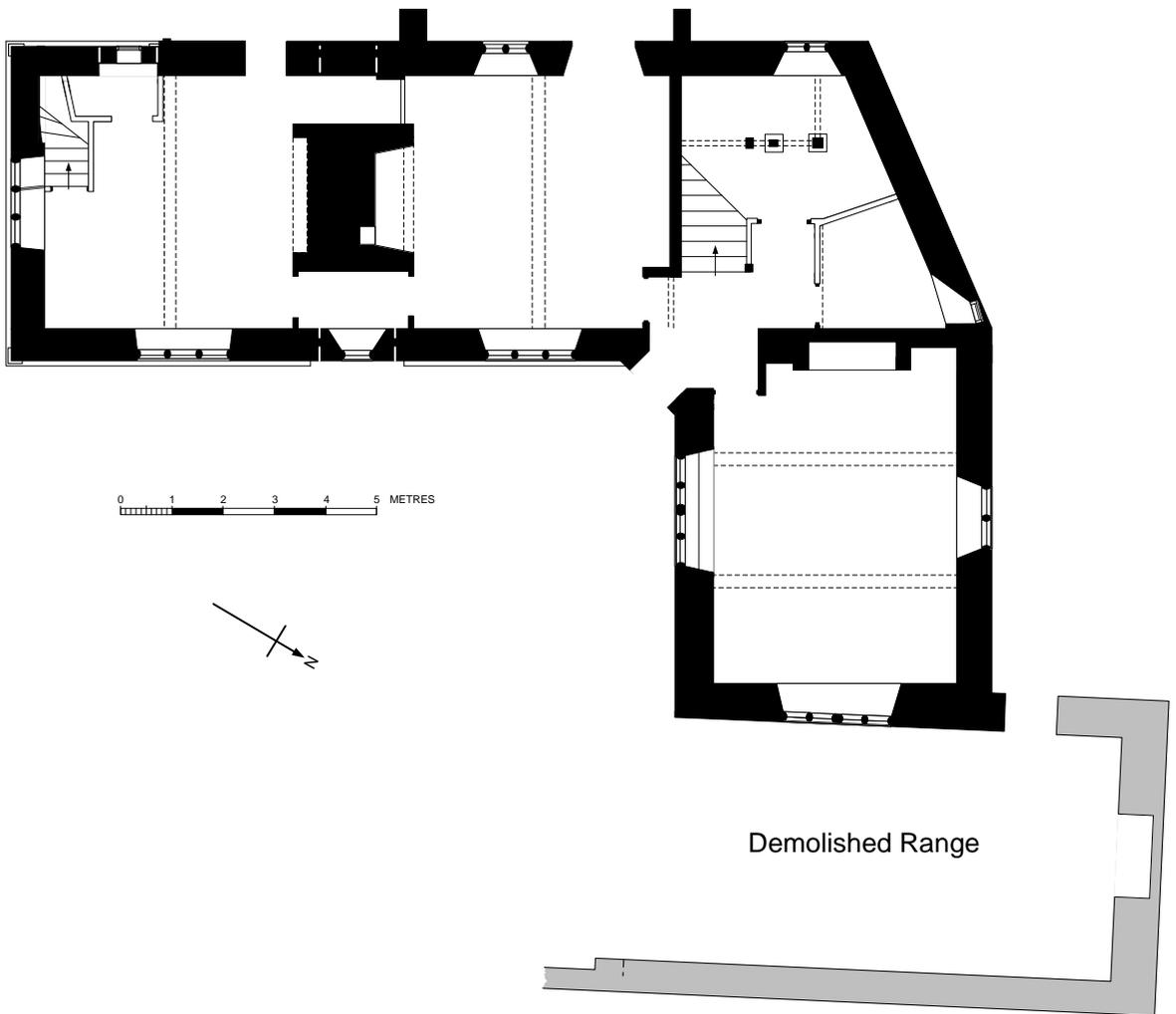


Figure 154 Manor House, Thorpe. This was originally a T-shaped house, with a front range and rear wing dating from c. 1600–40. The front range was demolished in the early twentieth century, when one of the old four-light mullion windows was inserted in the east wall. In 1691 an impressive further range was added for Edward Harrison, as indicated by a date-stone (see **Figure 111**) and tree-ring dating. The new part was of lobby-entrance plan form, with a central chimneystack which provided fireplaces for the kitchen to the south and a parlour to the north. An awkwardly shaped block, built against the property boundary, linked the extension to the original building, and housed a very fine staircase.

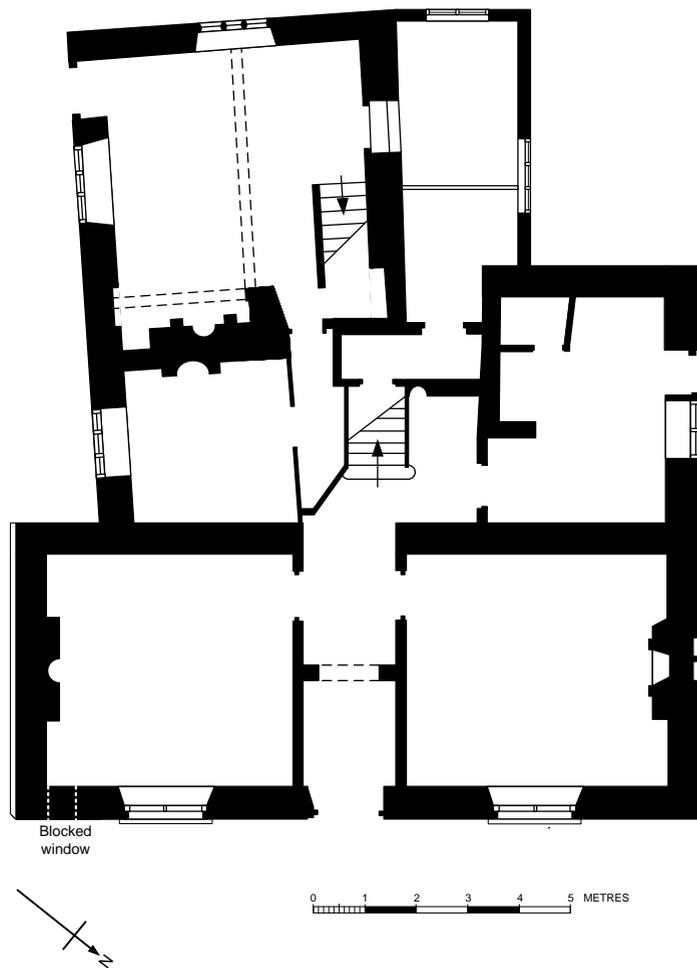


Figure 155 Manor House, Caldecott. This house is also of two main phases. The west range was built in the first half of the seventeenth century, probably of three-room plan with a kitchen to the west end. A fine cross-wing, on a slightly different alignment, was added in 1696 (as date-stone), though much altered in the mid-nineteenth century.

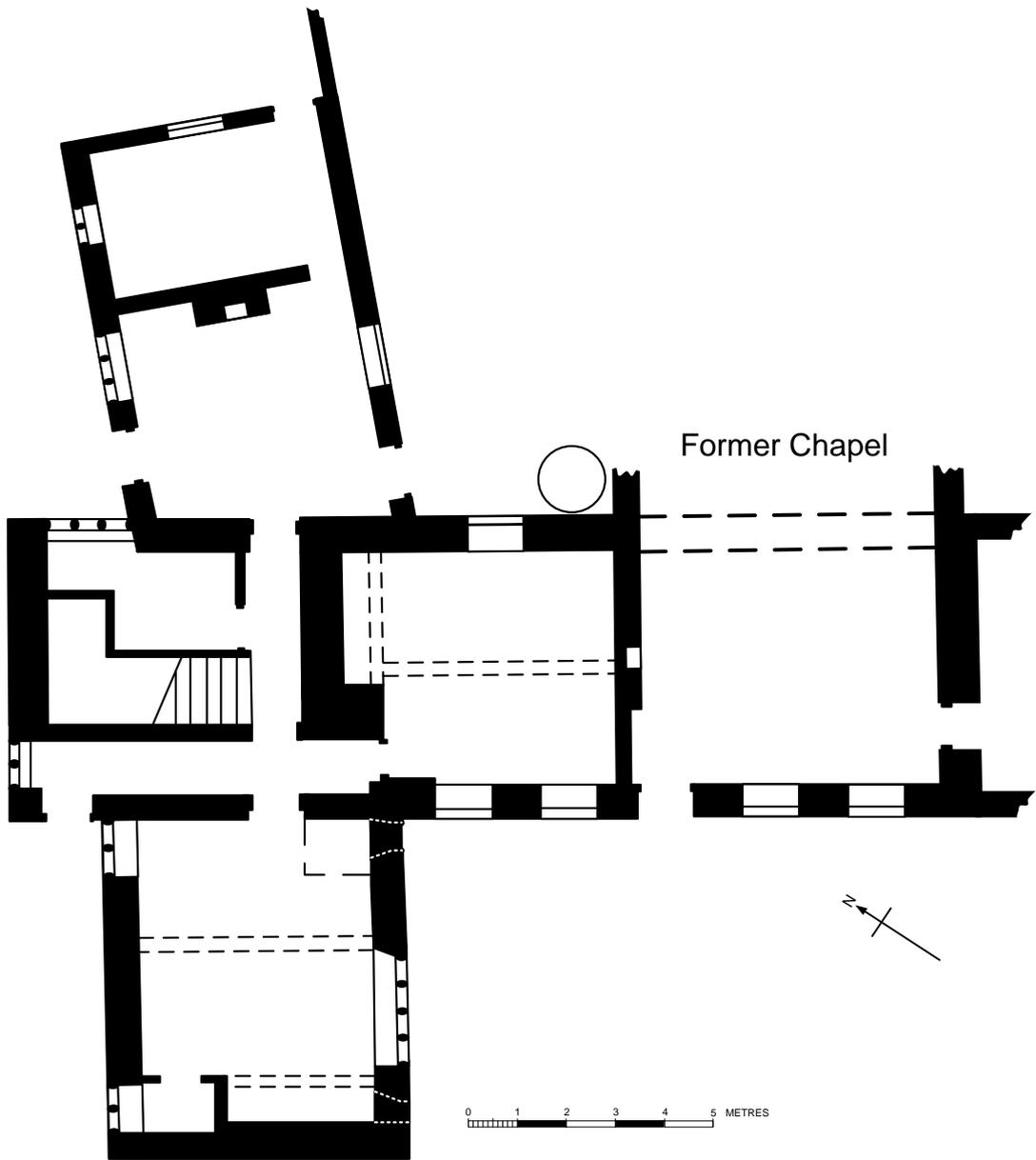


Figure 156 Swan House, Main Street, Lyddington. This fine house mainly dates from 1674 (as date-stone) but the north-east wing, on a different alignment, represents an earlier house. Known as 'The Swan' in documents from 1563 onwards, it was referred to in 1716 as 'The Swann Inn' (see page 295), which may be the reason for its unusual plan form. The front door opens into a passageway, with fine internal stone doorways. The kitchen was to the west, with the hall in the centre. The parlour end to the south was extended eastwards in the mid-nineteenth century to form a Wesleyan chapel. A fine staircase leads to the upper floors.

Domestic life

To understand how people lived in these early houses, and how the different parts of the buildings were used, it is necessary to turn to evidence from documentary sources. The clearest picture of the use of the various rooms in a house and of the household contents is provided by probate inventories. An example of a seventeenth-century inventory is shown in **Figure 157** and a second example can be seen on page 322. Unfortunately, only a fairly small number

INVENTORIES AND WILLS

Probate inventories were made shortly after death. Such documents were required by law from 1635 to accompany a will or administration and had to be produced before probate was granted. They illustrate the lives of ordinary people as well as those of local and national importance and survive in the records of the various probate courts throughout the country. For anyone interested in their local community they give a unique snapshot of a way of life from the time of the Tudors to around 1850, when the process of registering and recording wills changed.

Probate inventories had to be drawn up by 'honest and skilful' persons, usually local, and therefore able to value the furniture and equipment in the house and the livestock, crops and implements on the farm according to local opinion. There was no requirement to value the property as such, only the goods and chattels, but often the rooms in the house and the buildings in the yard are recorded as the site of objects to be valued. This was often done systematically by mentioning all the rooms in the house in the order used by the valuers and there is often a similar tour of the farmyard. The valuation tells us much about domestic arrangements as well as farming in invaluable detail.

Probate records of people in the Manor of Lyddington have survived, but rarely in the numbers expected. There is no shortage of surviving wills but there is a marked and very unfortunate shortage of probate inventories.

Lyddington people had a choice of probate courts

to which they could take their wills but the most convenient was held in Lyddington. This was the prebendal court held by the local prebend, one of the Canons of Lincoln Cathedral appointed by the Bishop and supported by a landed estate in Lyddington Manor, the proceeds of which were his main income. Part of the prebend's income also came from the proceeds of a probate court. Although the prebendal estate was sold in 1650 during the Commonwealth for £599, prebendal courts survived the political and religious upheavals of the time and continued to provide probate during the remainder of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Unfortunately, however, wills and inventories recorded there before 1660 have disappeared. The surviving records, mostly from the eighteenth century, were passed to the Local Registry Office in Leicester in 1858 and are now held by the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. There are only eleven probate inventories for the manor in this collection. Fifteen have been found with wills registered in Lincoln, and four in Northamptonshire Record Office with the wills registered in the Archdeacon's court of Peterborough. There are three rare survivals amongst the wills of Lyddington villagers in the National Archives in London, although there is a good collection of forty five wills of people from all parts of Lyddington manor in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury now kept in The National Archives.

VANESSA DOE

of inventories survive for the study area. From the seventeenth century, the total number of inventories traced and transcribed for the project was thirteen, all dating from 1649 or afterwards. Much larger numbers of seventeenth-century wills survive, with over sixty transcribed, though less than a third date from before 1650. Although these wills do not provide a full list of household contents, they do provide valuable insights into domestic life. The evidence from inventories and wills under-represents the poorer households, for which such documentation was not produced. A further very useful source of information is therefore the Hearth Tax records (see discussion below). This tax on hearths (fireplaces) was introduced in 1662 and the record for 1665 in Rutland survives in very complete condition with a full transcription and commentary available.⁴

A table showing key features of the thirteen transcribed inventories is shown in **Figure 158**. As seen in **Figure 159**, the most common number of rooms noted is three or four, with two examples of two rooms, and two larger houses with seven or eight rooms. The only one-room household noted is that

Figure 157 Inventory of Clement Sherwood, 1658. The only rooms noted with contents of value in Clement Sherwood's house are a hall and a parlour, with simple furnishings. Most of his wealth was in his farm stock, including his two cows, small flock of sheep and current crops.

A True and Parffit [perfect] Inventory of the goods and Chattel of Clement Sherwood of Liddington in the Countie of Rutland which Was Buryed Aughust the 22th 1658 Praised by John Sherwood of Stockeerson in the Countie of Leisster sheperd and Richard Sherwood of Stocke Dry in the Countie of Rutland sheperd and heare Pressed [appraised] as Followeth

		Li'	s'	d'
First of all his	Purse and aparrill	1	0	6
Allsoe	2 Cowes	5	0	0
Allsoe	17 sheep	5	0	0
Allsoe in the hall	2 Tabales and Coberd 2 Cheeres with other Od things	2	1	6
Allsoe	Brase and Putter [pewter] vallew of	1	15	0
Allsoe in the Parlour	2 bedes with bedding with on Coffe som other od thinges	3	3	0
Allsoe	2 tubes 2 barriles and a Chorme [churn]	0	10	0
Allsoe	a Cheese Prese a chees Racke som shelfes	0	5	0
Allsoe	All the linone [linen] is valued at	1	0	0
Allsoe	Wood in the yard	0	15	0
Allsoe	2 howffilles [hovels] with other Implements	1	10	0
Allsoe	Barley and Pese [peas]	4	10	0
Allsoe	Hay valued at	1	10	0
Praised by us	The Som is	28	0	0

JOHN SHARWOOD, RICHARD SHARWOOD

Name	Occupation	Date	Place	£ value total	£ value household	Rooms	Hall	Parlour	Kitchen	Buttery	Dairy	Chambers
William Bringhurst	Chandler	1658	Caldecott	9	5	2	1					
Dorothy Fowler		1659	Lyddington	9	7							
John Bunckly	Blacksmith	1660	Caldecott	13	4	2	1	1				
Clement Sherwood		1658	Lyddington	28	9	2	1	1				
James Kerby	Husbandman	1658	Caldecott	30	8	4	1	1			1	1
John Manton		1653	Lyddington	32	6	3	1	1				1
Thomas Redshaw		1657	Caldecott	35	15	4	1	1		1		1
Elizabeth Sly		1649	Caldecott	45	12	1		1				
John Sherwood	Shepherd	1693	Stoke Dry	59	7	3		1	1			1
Robert Skelhome		1658	Caldecott	81	14	3	1	1				1
Robert Manton	Yeoman	1663	Lyddington	92	4	4	1	1	1			1
Ann Ward	Widow	1660	Caldecott	115	40	8	1	1	1	1		3
Edward Allen	Gentleman	1681	Lyddington	236	28	7	1	1	1	1		3

Figure 158 Table of the thirteen Lyddington area inventories of the seventeenth century, arranged in order of value. The ‘Household value’ refers to the house contents alone, without farm stock or ‘purse and apparel’.²

of a widow, Elizabeth Sly, who lived in a well-furnished parlour, which must have been part of a subdivided house. A poorer widow, Dorothy Fowler, presumably also lived in one room, as no room names are mentioned in her inventory. Of course, given the small sample size, this evidence needs to be treated with caution. The inventories also do not necessarily mention each room individually, especially if it contained few items.

As is evident in Figure 158, most houses had a hall and a parlour. The only houses without a hall noted were those of the two widows mentioned above, and John Sherwood’s house of 1693, where a kitchen had replaced the hall. A parlour seems also to have been almost universal, being absent only from the house of one widow and another house of equally low value. In one inventory (Ann Ward), two parlours were provided, a ‘nether parlour’ and an ‘over parlour’. This also occurs in the 1658 will of Francis Jarman of Caldecott, a well-off yeoman.⁵ Most houses had one chamber, with three chambers provided in the two wealthiest houses – though chambers with few contents may not have been noted. A similar range of room types is mentioned occasionally in wills, with halls, parlours, kitchens and chambers. Separate service rooms such as a buttery or dairy are found only occasionally, in the better houses. A ‘shop’ (i.e. a workshop) is noted for the chandler, William Bringhurst. The Caldecott blacksmith John Bunckly also had a ‘shop’ mentioned in his will of 1660, though not in his inventory.⁶

The inventories provide very useful clues to how the different rooms were used and lived in. The hall was the principal living room, where meals were taken. Except in the better houses, it also served as the kitchen. It was usually equipped with fairly utilitarian furniture. Typically, there may have been a table, stools, a form (bench), a cupboard and ‘other implements’. Chairs are mentioned only occasionally. Only two inventories make specific note of equipment for the hall fireplace, though both of these include ‘hooks’, used to suspend cooking pots. Where there was a separate kitchen, it may often have acted as a back kitchen, used for food preparation, dairying, brewing or laundry, with the main cooking hearth still located in the hall. In his will of 1647, Lyddington’s vicar Robert Rudd reserved the right for his daughter to have ‘free libertie in the hall and in the kitchin to brew or wash’.⁷ Even

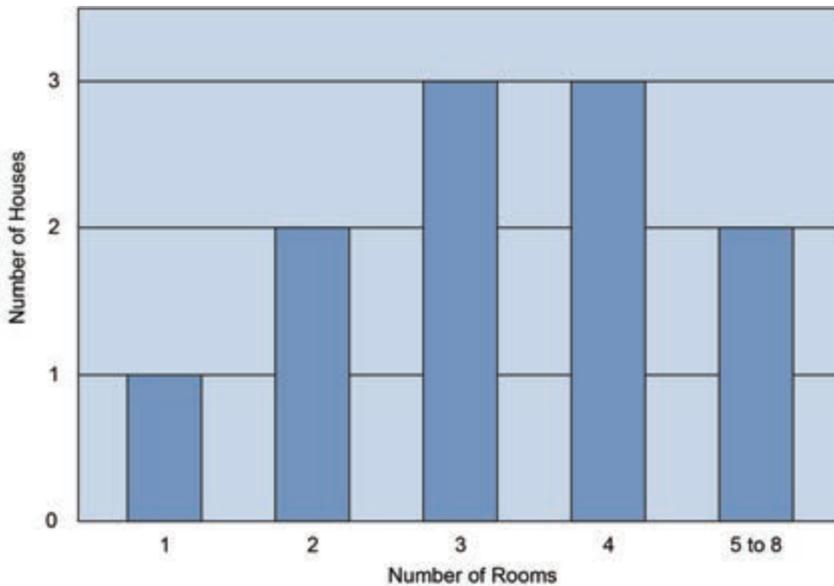


Figure 159.

in the well-furnished house of Ann Ward (see below), the hall has a 'bar and hookes' for cooking, while the kitchen contains a cheese press and various vessels. In his will of 1655, the Lyddington yeoman Anthony Winter did have 'one Rack of iron in the kitchen and Hookes used therewith', but there was also 'One rack of iron and Hooks in the Hall'.⁸ Other service rooms only get a specific mention occasionally. Butteries were commonly used for storage of drink, with barrels noted in all three examples. However, they could also serve for other purposes, as in Thomas Redshaw's case, where the presence of a churn and milk vessels indicate use as a dairy, like the 'Milkhouse' of James Kerby.

The parlour was generally used as the principal bedchamber, on the ground floor. It was usually the room with the most expensive furnishings, in particular the best-equipped bed. Anthony Winter's will of 1655 notes 'my bed in the Parlor which I usuallie lye in with all the furniture thereunto belonging'. Sheets and linen were often stored here, in coffers or chests. As luxury items, a 'looking glass' and a warming pan are found in only two inventories, on both occasions in the parlour. The general absence of chairs indicates that the parlour was not yet used as a sitting room. The only inventory where the parlour does not contain a bed is that of a gentleman, Edward Allen, in 1682. He seems to have used his parlour as a sitting room, anticipating the eighteenth-century development of this practice. The upstairs chambers, by contrast, seem often to be used only for storage of items such as grain, wool and cheese, though some chambers also contained beds of lower quality. The absence of upstairs fireplaces in the seventeenth century, except in the highest quality houses, is more readily understood in this context.

Most of the furniture noted in the inventories was no doubt made locally, of oak. An interesting reference occurs in the 1658 will of Francis Jarman, a yeoman of Caldecott.⁹ He gives to his son 'one presse in the upper parlour to

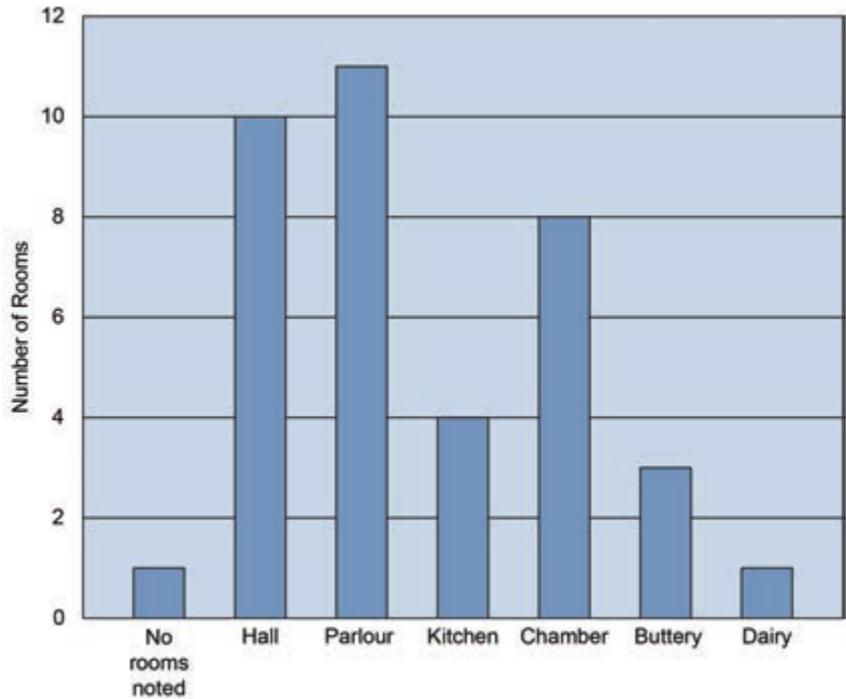


Figure 160.

bee as a standard to the house'. This was clearly an important piece of furniture, considered as an heirloom and to be passed on with the family house. This type of tradition is well known in parts of Wales and Cumbria, where a strongly developed regional style of country furniture can still be seen. Plates and dishes in the seventeenth-century inventories were usually of pewter, rather than the timber trenchers used earlier or pottery of later centuries. The only book mentioned is the 'great bible' which the Caldecott blacksmith John Bunckly gave to his son, valued in his inventory at 10s. As one of the few luxury items, silver spoons are mentioned individually, in both inventories and wills.

A few other insights can be gleaned from the documentary records. As one might expect, wood was used for fuel. This could be sourced locally, but might have to be purchased on the open market, as is clear in the 1652 will of Caldecott yeoman, Lawrence Russell.¹⁰ He states that his widow must be provided with 'sixe loades of wood yearly to be brought home being bought by her within three myles of Caldecott.' A stock of wood 'to burn in the house' is also mentioned in William Newbon's will of 1669.¹¹ However, coal was also already in widespread use. Anne Ward had 'colles' in her barn in 1660, and Edward Allen had both wood and coal stored in his yard in 1682. The 1601 ordinances for Lyddington Bede House specified that twenty wagon-loads of pit coal were to be provided each year for the use of the almshouse, as well as twenty loads of 'hard firewood' from the woods of Lyddington Park.¹² The coal probably came from the nearest pits in north-west Leicestershire or Warwickshire (at least 35 miles away), rather than being 'sea coal' from Newcastle. In a later will of 1736, Thomas Baines states that his son is to look after his widow,

including 'to fetch her a Load of Pit Coal Yearly to Liddington (She paying the Price sold for at the Pits)'.¹³ Brushwood or thorns for firing bake-ovens could probably be gathered from the neighbourhood.

Bake-ovens were probably found only in the better houses. Many lesser households probably had their bread baked by others. Similarly, although barley was grown widely in the seventeenth century, there are only rare references to malting or brewing. The only definite brewing reference is in Anthony Winter's will, where there is 'a Copper & Mash fatt [vat]' in the kitchen. Apart from the larger establishments noted below, the only specific reference to malting is in the will of Lyon Faulkner, who had the freehold of a 'malt mill house' in Uppingham.¹⁴ Cheese-making is more evident, with mention of a cheese press, a cheese rack or stored cheese in five of the thirteen inventories, and a 'Chees Chamber' in the will of Robert Rudd.¹⁵ Although there are a number of references to storage of wool, textile production seems to have been fairly limited. The only loom mentioned is that of the widow Dorothy Fowler, and the only spinning wheels are the three in Thomas Redshaw's chamber. Anne Ward had '2 pieces of cloth, and 20lbs of yarn with some hemp', while James Kerby had '7 yards of woollen cloth', valued at 20s.

Although many stone-lined wells survive, often conveniently located just outside the back door, sanitary arrangements are entirely absent from both the documentary and the built record. Privies or earth closets in the rear yard survive only from the nineteenth century, and such structures can also be seen on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886. Rudimentary facilities of a similar nature may have existed at an earlier date. Various vessels in the inventories may also have been used as chamber pots, though none are described as such. The earliest such reference is to a 'close stool and pan' which Christopher Nevinson had in the 'Chamber over the Hall' in 1722.¹⁶ This well-furnished house was one of the three largest in Thorpe (see page 340).

To a modern eye, the striking feature of most inventories is just how few possessions most people had, and how simply their houses were furnished. The overall median (i.e. mid-point) value for the thirteen inventories is £35, with the lowest values at around £9. As noted above, there were no doubt quite a number of poorer households which do not appear in the records, where the value is likely to have been even less. Eight inventories have a value for the goods within the house of less than £10. The owner's personal 'purse and apparel' were also usually of low value – less than £4 in nine cases. In most cases, much the largest part of household wealth was represented by the current year's farm crop and livestock. The focus of most households was firmly on agricultural production. Even the Caldecott chandler, William Bringham, kept a cow and other farm equipment. The only inventories without farm goods are that of the poor widow Dorothy Fowler and the Caldecott blacksmith John Bunckly.

At the other end of the scale was the mansion of the Digby family at Stoke Dry (see page 22), where Ann Digby's inventory of 1602 noted 28 rooms, with a total value of £410. Many of the rooms were richly furnished, with the household contents amounting to over £140. The prebendal house at Lyddington was another major house, with eight bays of building, including a hall, parlour, kitchen, pantry, larder, cellar and six lodging chambers on the

‘second storie’ (see page 62). Such large establishments included a number of rooms for live-in servants. Evidence of servants (or farm workers) can also be seen in the households of several other leading residents, who left bequests in their wills.¹⁷ Lesser households may also have had live-in farm workers, as the reference to ‘the mens Chambor’ in Margaret Sly’s will of 1669 indicates.¹⁸

Farm buildings

Very few farm buildings of seventeenth-century date survive in Rutland. The principal farm building on any farmstead would have been a barn, for the storage and processing of crops. Only one seventeenth-century example has been identified in the study area: the fine barn at Stoneville Farm, Lyddington, which was built in 1660–65 (Figures 161–163). It was probably four bays in length originally, though part was lost when it was converted to domestic use in the mid-twentieth century. The large pair of doors, framed by stone buttresses, would have allowed wagons to enter, as well as providing the important space for threshing corn. Sheaves of corn would have been stacked high in the barn, and threshing would have continued throughout the winter months, using the through-draft to separate corn from chaff. This finely-built barn must have belonged to one of the largest farm holdings in the village. The barn is set well back from the street, and had a farmyard in front, but there is no evidence for an accompanying farmhouse. After a barn, the next requirement of a well-provided farmstead was a stable. Again, only one likely seventeenth-century example has been identified, at Meadow Farmhouse, Caldecott (Figure 164).

An unusually high number of dovecotes survive in Rutland, from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.¹⁹ Young pigeons provided a source of tender

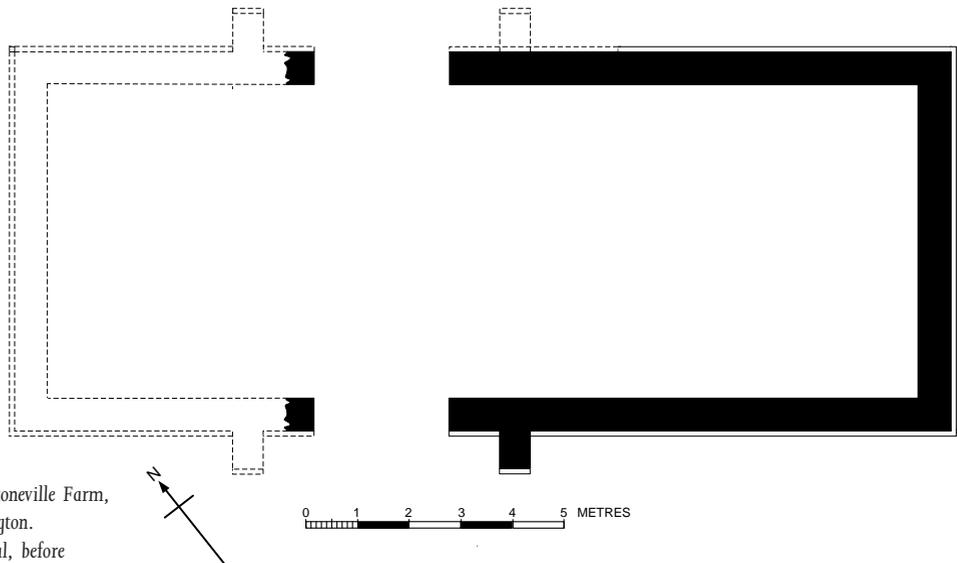


Figure 161 Barn at Stoneville Farm, 62 Main Street, Lyddington. Reconstruction as original, before conversion to a house.



Figure 162 Stoneville Farm. Stepped buttress beside the front doorway, which was originally taller.

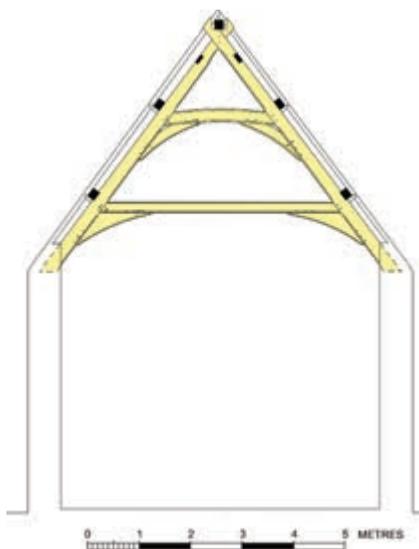


Figure 163 Stoneville Farm. This is an unusually high quality roof structure, an A-frame with two sets of tenoned collars, and curving arch-braces. It has been tree-ring dated to 1660–65.



Figure 164 Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green, Caldecott. This well-constructed small building was probably built as a stable. Inside, two beams (tree-ring dated to c. 1650–75) remain from the first floor structure, which would have formed a hay loft over the stalls. It was converted to service use in the nineteenth century and is now known as The Brew House.

meat for the wealthy. Parts of two walls of a dovecote survive amongst modern farm buildings to the east of Manor House, Mill Lane, Caldecott. Traylen noted in 1976 that ‘The dovecote of 600 nests bore the date 1645 on an oak lintel and was pulled down in 1966.’²⁰ A more complete example, though of uncertain date, survives at The Old Manor House, Thorpe (**Figure 165**). Dovecotes are often associated with a manorial site, but only The Old Manor House, Thorpe is known to have had the status of a manor in this period.



Figure 165 The dovecote of seventeenth to eighteenth-century date at The Old Manor House, Thorpe. The upper part has been much rebuilt.

No other surviving farm buildings likely to be of seventeenth-century date have been identified in the study area, though a few documentary references give hints of what has been lost. A substantial farmstead is described in 1597 at The Old Manor House, Thorpe (see page 338), with barns (including a hay barn), stables and a kiln house (presumably a malt kiln). The survey of 1649 for the prebendal house in Lyddington indicates a large farm establishment, with a malting house, a malt kiln and brew-house, a dovecote, two stables and barns, in twelve bays of buildings (see page 62). At Stoke Dry, a glebe terrier of 1627 notes six bays of outbuildings at the Parsonage, with a barn, stables etc. The Digby manor house at Stoke Dry also had many farm buildings. A substantial building here was demolished in the late nineteenth century, recorded by Henry Dryden in 1871 (**Figure 166**). The parsonage at Stoke Dry also probably had a farmstead of considerable size in the seventeenth century.

Apart from the documentary references for these larger establishments, farm buildings are mentioned rarely in wills or inventories for other village properties, as only moveable contents formed part of such valuations. A Lyddington yeoman, Everard Stanger, had hay stored in his barn in 1653.²¹ A Caldecott carpenter, John Brown, also had a barn used for hay in 1669, despite having only limited farm stock.²² Only three of the fourteen inventories from the seventeenth century mention barns.²³ In Anne Ward's barn at Caldecott in 1660 there were corn and peas, threshed and unthreshed, as well as hay and coal. The

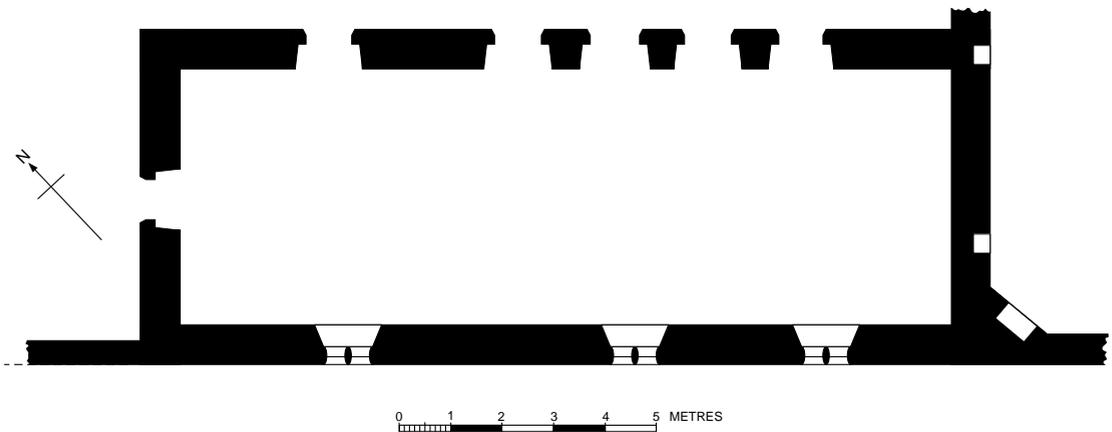


Figure 166 Plan of a farm building at Stoke Dry, as recorded by Henry Dryden in 1871 (Northampton Central Library ref. DR/29/043, re-drawn by Robert Ovens). This building formed part of a longer range, around the farmyard. It clearly had substantial stone walls, and may have been a stable block, dating from the late sixteenth or seventeenth century.

most frequently mentioned farm structure, in five of the fourteen inventories, is a 'hovel', which seems to have been a temporary shed used to shelter a variety of implements or crops, possibly with open sides. Hovels were clearly treated as moveable contents and accorded a modest inventory value. An entry in the will of Robert Slye (yeoman of Caldecott, 1686) suggests that hovels were built of timber; 'and all the Wood belonging to the Hovells'.²⁴ Two other wills mention hovels, including one where the 'hovells' are listed alongside the 'Horsersacks, Mangers and Cow Cribbs'.²⁵ Hovels continue to appear in documentary records throughout the eighteenth century. The wills and inventories of the seventeenth century note crops of all sorts being stored 'in the yard', probably as ricks, with no mention of barns. Grain was often stored in the first-floor chambers of the house.

The lack of surviving farm buildings from the seventeenth century suggests that the majority may have been rather small or poorly built. Unlike the domestic buildings of the period, farm buildings were very largely rebuilt in more enduring form in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Village development in the seventeenth century

By the end of the seventeenth century, the shape and overall character of village houses in Lyddington, Caldecott and Thorpe was well established, and still survives in remarkably complete form. Stoke Dry, under the direct control of a single owner, developed in a very different manner, with the village houses completely rebuilt in the following centuries. The settlement pattern throughout the area, as seen on the enclosure maps, was strongly nucleated with no houses outside the villages except for the lodge in the Great Park.

Lyddington

In Lyddington, the project study has allowed quite a detailed picture of the seventeenth-century village houses to be built up, using the 1804 Enclosure Map. The 1804 Map differentiates between domestic buildings (shown hatched) and outbuildings (shown dotted). Although the original Map is unclear in a

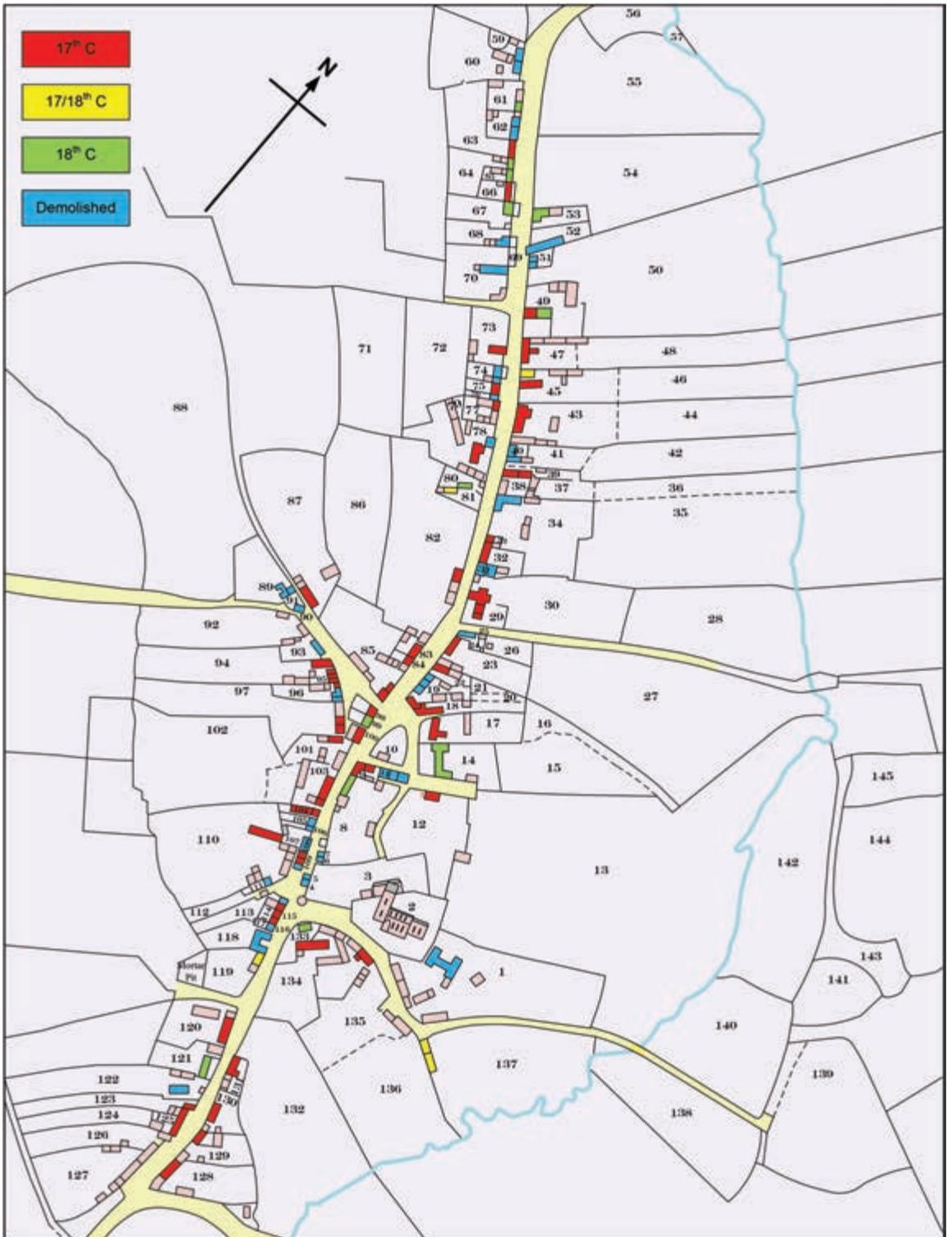
few places, the addition of other documentary evidence and building surveys means that around 103 houses can be identified and located (**Figure 167**). Of these, 37 have been demolished or rebuilt later, leaving 66 houses which pre-date 1804. Surveys have indicated that a very high proportion of the surviving houses, 48 of the 66, represent a substantial rebuild in the seventeenth century. Only thirteen houses were newly-built in the eighteenth century, while five houses are of unidentified date. This evidence can be compared with the Hearth Tax of 1665, which gives a complete listing of the households in Lyddington, including those exempt from the tax.²⁶ The total number of households in 1665 amounted to 111, not including the Bede House. Allowing for a small number of dual households within one building (see below), this equates quite closely to the figure of 103 houses in 1804, suggesting that the overall size and shape of the village in the seventeenth century was not very different to the 1804 map.

As noted in the section on the medieval period above, Lyddington had already taken on its elongated form by the early sixteenth century. By 1700, the north end of the village extended at least as far as 111, Main Street, though the development down the side streets of Church Lane and Stoke Road was probably little altered from the medieval period. Many of the houses lost since 1804 were very small cottages. These could well represent small houses of seventeenth-century date, though some were no doubt also constructed in the eighteenth century. Two large demolished houses, probably of seventeenth-century date, were the prebendal house (no. 1 on the map) and a house on the site of the later school, which in 1804 belonged to the vicar (no. 118). The comparatively empty plots fronting onto Main Street to the south-east (nos. 132 and 134) and opposite Swan House (no. 82) may have been the sites of other earlier houses, demolished before 1804. The triangular block of 55–57 Main Street (nos. 98–110) represents an intrusion into the former open market-place, a development which may have occurred in the seventeenth century.

The major change at the heart of the village was the loss of the bishops' palace, converted into the Bede House in 1601. This involved the demolition of substantial parts of the palace, and contraction of the gardens to form the surviving walled enclosure. The rest of the former palace precinct to the north of the Bede House, in the ownership of the Cecils, was not redeveloped and remained largely clear of new buildings. The four small cottages located nearby (nos. 4–7, demolished by 1886) were built 'on the waste' (as noted on the 1804 map), squeezed onto the verge of the road, rather than taking up space within the former precinct.

The 1665 Hearth Tax gives a clear view of the range and relative size of village houses in the period (**Figure 168**). Much the largest, with eleven hearths, was the prebendal house of Sir Euseby Pelsant (see page 62). Mr Edward Sismey had a six-hearth house (probably the predecessor to The Hermitage at 6 Church Lane, rebuilt in 1668), followed by four of the better-off villagers with five hearths, and another four with four hearths. However, by far the largest proportion (63% in total) had only one hearth, with nearly half of these exempted

Figure 167 Redrawn Lyddington map of 1804, with houses identified by period.



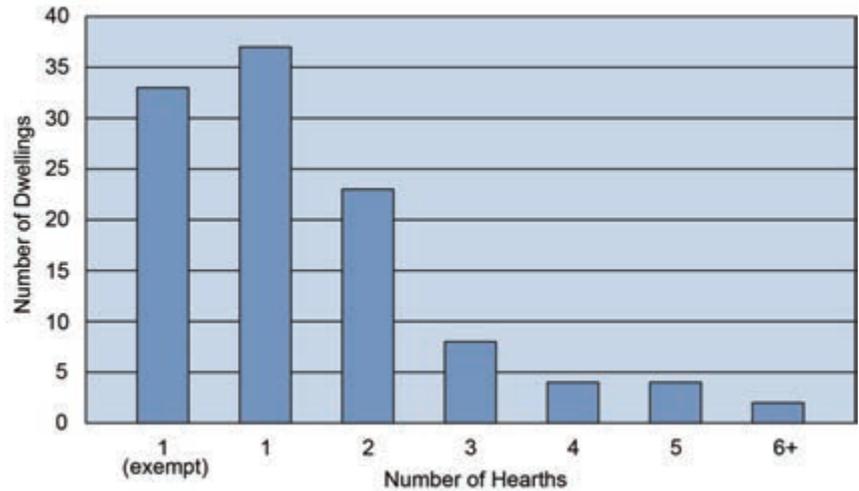


Figure 168 Lyddington Hearth Tax of 1665.

were from the requirement to pay tax. Of the 33 exempt householders, sixteen were widows, who were clearly one of the poorer categories of the local population. As can be seen in the inventories and wills, some of these widows would have lived in a separate part of the family home, with the main part of the building occupied by the son, after the death of the husband.

Caldecott

The Caldecott Enclosure Map of 1800 is less useful than the Lyddington map, as it does not distinguish houses from farm buildings, and there is no accompanying schedule of owners (see Figure 287). However, making use also of other documentary sources, a similar exercise to produce a re-drawn map of 1800 has been attempted (Figure 169). The total number of house plots on the 1800 map appears to be around 41. This may under-represent the number of households, which was 51 in the Hearth Tax of 1665. Of the 41 house plots, 26 have evidence for pre-1800 buildings, with fifteen demolished or later rebuilt. Of the 26 pre-1800 buildings, eighteen represent a substantial rebuild in the seventeenth century. Only four houses were newly-built in the eighteenth century, while four houses are of unidentified date.

As in Lyddington, the pattern of building along the village streets was probably already well-established by the sixteenth century, and the seventeenth-century houses were no doubt rebuilt on much the same plots. In the 1665 Hearth Tax, there was one large house with eight hearths, while two others had four hearths (Figure 170). A higher proportion of Caldecott residents had two hearths (28%) or three hearths (16%) than in Lyddington, with a correspondingly lower number of exempt houses. The large eight-hearth house was held by Peter Woodcocke, set on an extensive plot at the centre of the village (Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green). A date-stone of 1651 with his initials was re-set in a gate pier when the house was rebuilt (see Figure 109), though the nineteenth-century house incorporates several fine beams from the original house, and a stone-built stable of 1650–75 also survives (the ‘Brew House’). The ‘Manor House’ on Mill Lane, although on a large plot, must have been considerably smaller in 1665 than the current large farmstead. It was extended

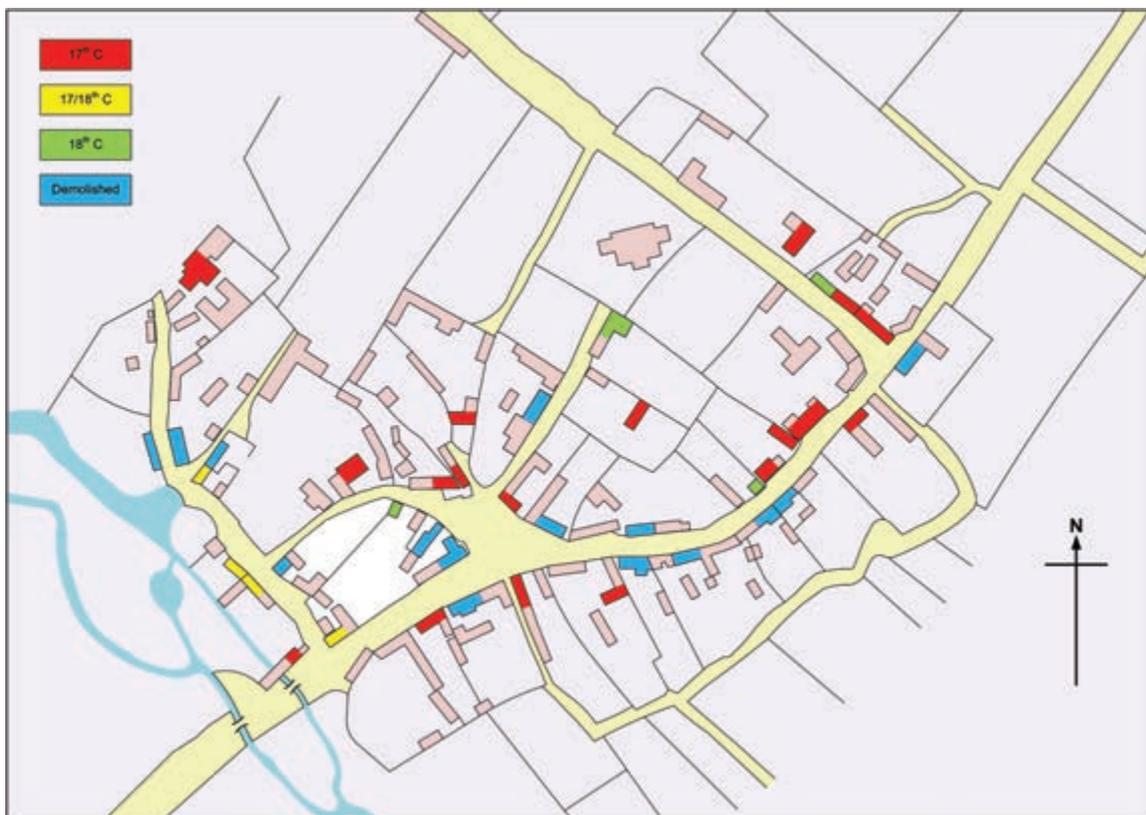


Figure 169 Redrawn Caldecott map of 1800, with houses identified by period.

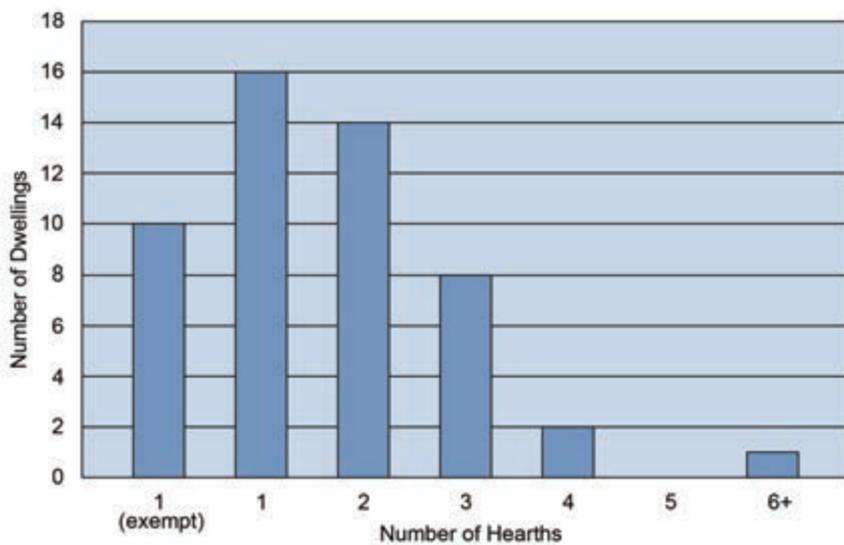


Figure 170 Caldecott Hearth Tax of 1665.

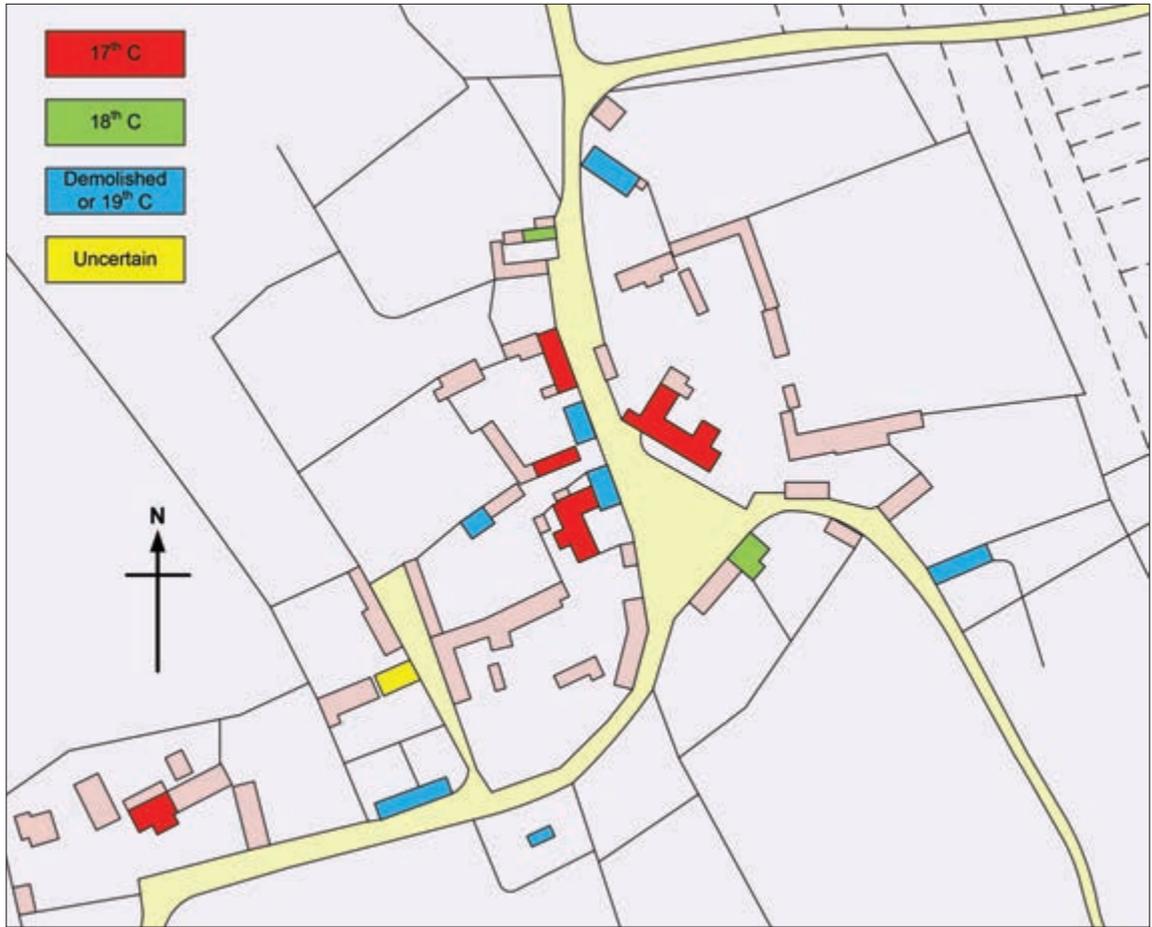


Figure 171 Redrawn Thorpe by Water tithe map of 1846, with houses identified by period.

in 1696 (as date-stone). Three of Caldecott’s two-hearth houses can be identified at 6 Main Street, 45 Main Street and the Priest’s House, Church Close.

Thorpe by Water

At Thorpe, the best early map is rather later than for the other villages. The tithe map, with a descriptive schedule, dates from 1846 (Figure 171). Fifteen dwellings are noted, comprising nine houses and six cottages. Of these houses, nine survive and six have been demolished. Once again, there is a high proportion of houses from the seventeenth century. Five of the nine surviving houses are of this period, with two from the eighteenth century, one from the early nineteenth century and one of uncertain date.

In the 1665 Hearth Tax, a total of 25 households are recorded, so the number of houses had shrunk considerably by 1846 (Figure 172). Thorpe was dominated by three large houses (see page 338). John Osborne Esquire at The Old Manor House had nine hearths, with six-hearth houses at Manor House, owned by the Harrison family, and another probably at The Old Farmhouse (at the south end of the village). Each of these houses had a large farmyard,

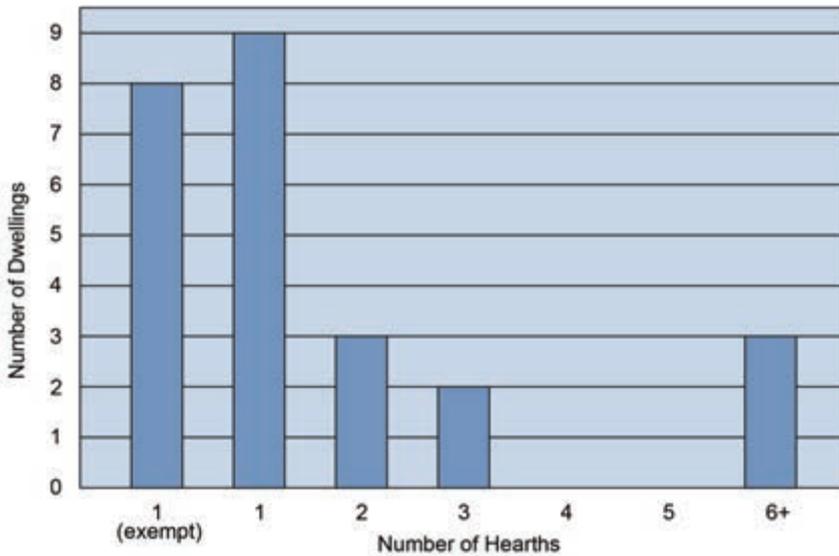


Figure 172 Thorpe by Water
Hearth Tax of 1665.

with extensive ranges of farm buildings on the 1846 map. Below these were two houses with three hearths and three with two hearths. Rosebery Cottage at 2 Main Street can be identified as the two-hearth house of John Manton, as it bears the date-stone 'TM 1654'. Another two-hearth house was occupied by Nicholas Jordan, whose will of 1669 informs us that he was a yeoman.²⁷ The remaining seventeen houses had only one hearth, a similar proportion as those in Lyddington, though none of these houses seems to survive. The two big houses with their farmyards occupied much of the space at the centre of the village, to either side of the green. The many lost houses probably lined the main village streets, though the village has seen much residential conversion of farm buildings and new development in the twentieth century.

Stoke Dry

The oldest standing houses in the village are Stoke Dry Manor and The Grange, but both of these appear to have been rebuilt completely in the later eighteenth century. The rest of the village houses date from the nineteenth or twentieth century, so there are no surviving examples of seventeenth-century houses. On the earliest map of 1756 (see **Figure 300**) the Digby mansion had already gone, though its large empty site can be seen, as well as the early farm building, which was demolished in the late nineteenth century (see page 165). All the older houses lined the main street, largely clustered near the church, with an outlying group (as now) to the north. Only twelve houses are shown on this map, though the 1665 Hearth Tax recorded twenty households (**Figure 173**). Perhaps a row of house plots connecting the central cluster to the northern outliers has disappeared.

The Digby mansion completely dominated Stoke Dry. With seventeen hearths in 1665, it was the eighth largest house in Rutland. The two houses with three hearths were probably the predecessors of the Rectory (shown as a

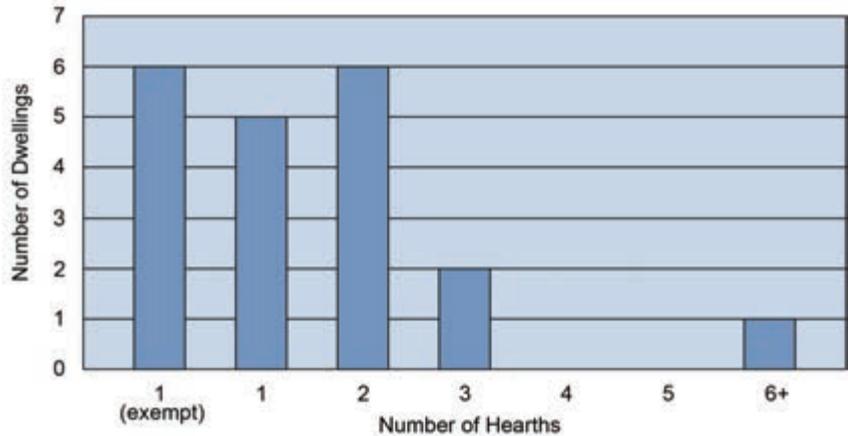


Figure 173 Stoke Dry Hearth Tax of 1665.

big H-plan house on the 1756 map) and either the Manor or the Grange. There were six houses with two hearths – an unexpectedly high proportion of medium-sized houses, especially in a village with such a dominant resident lord of the manor. The remaining eleven houses had only one hearth each.

The ‘Great Rebuilding’

One of the questions that prompted the initiation of the current project was about the ‘Great Rebuilding’. Could a detailed study provide clear evidence that the local houses were comprehensively rebuilt in a particular period, as Hoskins proposed? Or was the process more diffuse, one of evolution rather than transformation? If a ‘Great Rebuilding’ did occur, what could be the reasons which drove it forward? These are challenging questions, which others have tried to answer over many decades in a number of regional studies, with varying results.

Our research has produced a considerable body of new evidence indicating that a ‘Great Rebuilding’ did indeed take place, starting around 1600. Although a number of houses have been identified with material that pre-dates 1600, the overall picture is very clear. Very few houses have any surviving building fabric from before 1600, and even these rare survivals have all been comprehensively re-worked at a later date, with only fragments of the original house remaining. But over what period did the rebuilding take place?

In Lyddington, our research has produced convincing evidence of a housing transformation in the seventeenth century. Of 103 houses shown on the map of 1804, 66 still survive (Figure 174). Of these houses, 48 (73%) have a substantial building phase of the seventeenth century, indicating either a comprehensive rebuilding of an earlier house or a new-build. While the eighteenth century saw much alteration and extension of these houses, there are only thirteen cases (20%) of comprehensive rebuilding or new-build in this period. There are five remaining cases where it has not yet been possible to ascertain whether the house is of the seventeenth or eighteenth century. There is no good reason why, other things being equal, eighteenth-century houses should survive more poorly than seventeenth-century ones. In fact, the reverse

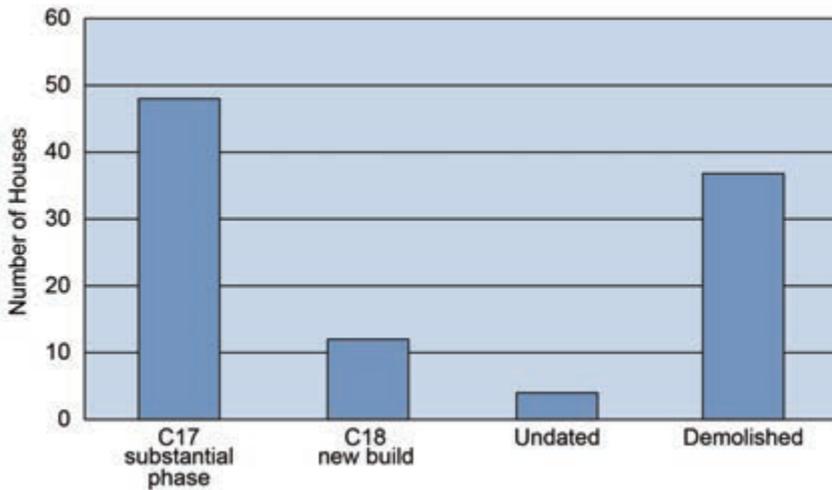


Figure 174 Chart of 103 houses on the 1804 Lyddington map.

is true, as the older houses are more likely to have suffered attrition by fire, decay or building improvement. No doubt a good proportion of the 37 houses lost since 1804 were also of seventeenth-century date. The data provides unexpectedly clear proof of the extent of a 'Great Rebuilding' in Lyddington in the seventeenth century.

How representative are the 48 surviving houses of the total seventeenth-century housing stock? The Hearth Tax indicates 111 households in 1665, and there were probably a similar number, or perhaps a few more, by 1700. So the 48 surviving houses represent over 40% of the 1665 total: a surprisingly high proportion. This suggests that the rebuilding involved not only the better-quality houses with two hearths (of which there were forty), but a significant proportion of the lesser, one-hearth houses.

For Caldecott, the evidence (as set out above) is less complete, but points in the same direction. Of the 25 surviving pre-1800 houses, sixteen (64%) represent a substantial rebuild in the seventeenth century, and only three (12%) were newly built in the eighteenth century. Thorpe has also lost a high proportion of its earlier houses, but of the surviving houses five date from the seventeenth century, and only two from the eighteenth. Stoke Dry was completely rebuilt from the late eighteenth century onwards, so the evidence for any seventeenth-century houses has gone.

Were there particular periods during the seventeenth century of greater house-building activity? It is useful to consider this question in a wider context. The results of a recent survey of date-stones across all the villages of Rutland are summarised at **Figure 175**.²⁸ These show a surprisingly strong peak in 1680–1700.

There is also some documentary evidence for new houses being erected in Lyddington in the second half of the seventeenth century (see page 88). Three new houses were built 'on the waste' in 1662. Given the overall development of the village as described above, the 'waste' land referred to may well have been within the village, along the road verges, rather than new expansion at the edges of the village. Four such cottages (later demolished) are noted 'on

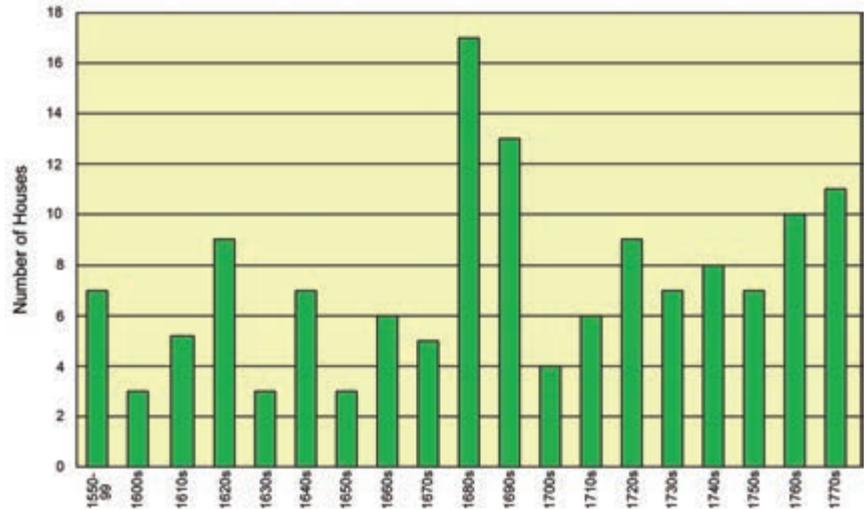


Figure 175 Date-stones in Rutland.

the waste' on the 1804 map, on the edge of the road against the wall of the former bishops' palace precinct. The rebuilding of two houses is specifically referred to in the will of Lyon Faulkner, gentleman of Lyddington, in 1681.²⁹ He gave his servant Margery 'all that old wood set out at the woodhouse and for the rebuilding of the house upon that piece of ground of hers next the street'. His niece Ann received £20 towards 'the Rebuilding of the house and Edifices thereto'. A string of references to newly-built houses also occurs in the presentments to the manor court in 1688-91. Mr Sismey was fined for two 'new erected cottages' in 1688, a third in 1689 and a fourth in 1691. Widow Robbardes was presented for building a new cottage and a new tenement in 1689, along with four others for four new tenements. In the case of Sismey, Robbardes and perhaps some of the others, these houses were clearly built for tenants, not their own occupation. All seem to have been new houses, not replacements. Presumably, they stood on new plots along the village streets, probably subdivided from larger holdings. Although a good series of manor court presentments survives for the later seventeenth century, no other instances of new buildings have been noted in Lyddington, with no examples in Caldecott.

This documentary evidence points to an increase in building activity in the later seventeenth century. However, the evidence of the building surveys is less clear. Most of the fourteen local date-stones do generally date from after 1640, and these are supplemented by several tree-ring dates from the later seventeenth century. However, the detailed study of these houses indicates that, in many cases, these late seventeenth-century dates represent a major addition to an original house of earlier seventeenth-century date. Of around forty surveyed houses, about half are estimated to date from c. 1620-60 and the other half from c. 1660-1700.

The rebuilding probably started with the higher-status houses, as can be seen with the earliest firmly dated house, The Old Manor House at Thorpe of 1597. It gathered momentum after around 1620, and gradually spread down

the social scale. One would expect that all of the better-off residents (with two hearths or more in 1665) would have replaced their earlier open hall houses by 1650, if not well before. By the late seventeenth century, such owners were often embarking on a second round of improvement. The documentary evidence also suggests that a number of smaller new houses were being built in the late seventeenth century. By 1700, it seems likely that at least half of the local village houses, and perhaps as much as two-thirds, had been rebuilt in the new style, as good quality stone houses. The poorer residents no doubt lived either in run-down or subdivided older houses, or in new, more compact and cheaply-built houses. These would have needed continual patching up, and were eventually either improved or replaced in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries.

So why did this remarkable transformation in the local houses take place during the course of the seventeenth century? An obvious reason for the construction of new houses could be a growth in population, with a need for more housing. Nationally, the population of England increased rapidly in the later sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries. In 1560, it is estimated that England had around three million people, growing to four million in 1600 and over five million in 1650, where it stabilised until the early eighteenth century.³⁰ Locally, the evidence for population numbers is sparse, as discussed on page 51. In terms of households, however, a very useful comparison can be made between the estate survey of 1564 and the Hearth Tax of 1665. In 1564, about 77 households can be identified in Lyddington and 32 in Caldecott. By 1665, Lyddington had 111 households and Caldecott had 51, representing substantial increases of 44% and 59% respectively. As noted, the Hearth Tax figures probably include some cases of dual households within one house (e.g. widows), which might reduce the number of houses slightly, but the evidence does indicate a very marked growth in the number of houses by 1665. After that point, the number of houses seems to have remained comparatively stable, right up to the end of the seventeenth century.

This growth in the number of houses and the local population sheds useful light on the question of the Great Rebuilding, but is far from a complete explanation. Much of the growth in house numbers must have taken place prior to c. 1620, but very few of the surviving buildings date from this period. The surveys also show that building continued after 1660, when the population had probably stabilised. If a large number of extra houses were created in the period prior to 1620, it seems they were not constructed in the durable high quality stonework that distinguishes the houses of the Great Rebuilding.

Construction of a high-quality house has always represented a considerable investment. Where did the wealth come from to enable such a transformation of the housing stock? This was one of the key questions which Hoskins tried to address when he first identified the Great Rebuilding, and others have continued to seek answers. In some cases, major changes brought new sources of wealth to the local economy, or at least to those ready and able to seize such opportunities. In the Lancashire Pennines, the growth of a very successful textile industry enabled many local yeomen to rebuild their houses with high-quality masonry in the course of the seventeenth century.³¹ In some areas, mining or extractive industries were able to make a strong contribution. In others, the

growing capitalist economy of England brought new trading opportunities, or incomers with access to new sources of wealth. However, in this rural part of England, agriculture remained the basis of the whole local economy. The surplus for local residents to invest in good-quality buildings must ultimately have come from the land itself.

As Hoskins argued, developments in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century created favourable conditions for some farmers. The increase in population encouraged a great increase in the price of grain. Farmers who owned their own land, or had the benefit of low, fixed rents could make substantial profits from the increase in sale prices. The effect on smaller local farmers, however, could be very variable. In areas dominated by pastoral farming, the effect of price rises might not take hold until the late seventeenth century.³² There was no fundamental change in local agricultural practice during the period, as the old open field farming system continued until enclosure around 1800. Most local farms, apart from a few larger operators, continued to have a mix of arable and pastoral production, rather than building up a more specialist expertise in one area. There seems to have been no particular innovation or development in agricultural techniques, though the practice of 'convertible husbandry' may have made some impact. This involved keeping a larger proportion of the open-field land under pasture, which besides increasing production from livestock could also improve arable yields, as the additional manure led to increased fertility. However, major improvements in farming yields probably only occurred after enclosure. If more money was to be made from agriculture, much probably came from access to a wider market, as the national economy grew considerably through this period. In terms of rental costs, local farmers certainly benefited from the local copyhold system, where long-established practice meant they incurred only moderate costs. Ultimately, although the sources of additional resources available to local residents are far from clear, the new houses themselves demonstrate that considerable surplus wealth must have been created.

The decision to invest in building a house would also depend greatly on security of tenure. Leaseholders or other short-term tenants were unlikely to make a major capital investment. Freeholders of course were in a strong position, but the evidence demonstrates that copyholders of Lyddington and Caldecott were also very secure on their family holdings, which could be passed on with only moderate levels of fine payable. Unlike many large landlords, the Exeter estate did not pursue a policy of buying out copyholds and converting these to more lucrative short-term leases. Local conditions in terms of tenure were therefore quite benign in encouraging investment in buildings.

So a local householder might assemble the means to rebuild, and have confidence in his security of tenure; but why spend money on a new house, rather than patch up the old one? Many farmers might prefer to increase their landholdings, and documentary evidence such as wills does indeed show some acquired various land packages. A considerable amount of family savings also went into the marriage portions for daughters and settlements for younger sons, to ensure their future was secure. Expenditure could also be directed into household goods or other consumables to provide a more affluent lifestyle, though the inventory evidence suggests that few spent their money in this way.

What then were the motives which drove forward the Great Rebuilding? With little direct evidence, only tentative answers are possible.

A rebuilt house would of course provide an increased level of comfort, and probably extra space. There could be additional rooms, whether for service uses or further bedchambers. A new house would have well-built fireplaces, glazed windows and better headroom. As a replacement for an old-style open hall house, the improvement would be quite dramatic. No doubt many older houses were replaced because they were in poor condition, and the costs of long-lasting repairs would have been substantial. One motive often cited is an increasing desire for privacy. This can be seen clearly in high-status houses, where the hall was abandoned as the main living and dining room, in favour of more private arrangements. However, in ordinary local houses, where the parlour still served as a bedchamber, and most rooms still led from one to another, it is difficult to see much increase in privacy, which probably only developed in later centuries.

Beyond these practical reasons, however, there was probably a much broader aspiration. Once a few of the leading members of village society had built houses in the new style, others would have felt the need to demonstrate (or establish) their position by following suit. The pressure to 'keep up with the Joneses' would have created a gathering momentum of improvement. The character of the houses, which generally have fairly similar and rather standard features, suggests that the pressure was to conform and build a house appropriate to one's status, rather than something above one's station in life: to keep up with the Joneses, rather than exceed them. Each new house was no doubt the product of individual decisions and particular family circumstances, which are hard to assess. However, one of the clearest and most personal demonstrations of the importance accorded to these new houses were the date-stones, always placed in a prominent location, to be seen by any passer-by. A date-stone carved with the husband's and wife's initials was surely a proud statement to the world of the creation of a new work, intended to last for generations to come.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the evidence indicates that a high proportion of the village houses had been rebuilt in the new style, in durable, good quality masonry. Once built, these houses continued to be serviceable in future centuries. Repairs and maintenance would be required periodically, but these buildings represented a valuable investment, which could be adapted and extended, rather than the demolition and rebuilding which had been the fate of so many pre-1600 houses. Unlike many parts of England, the rural areas of Rutland experienced little intensification of development or urbanisation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. All these factors help to explain why the local seventeenth-century houses have survived in such high numbers.

PART THREE

The Eighteenth Century

After the ‘Great Rebuilding’ of the seventeenth century, relatively few new-build houses were constructed in the course of the next hundred years. However, building work certainly continued, in other forms. Instead of demolition and re-building, the eighteenth century saw considerable work in adapting the existing well-built houses of the previous century. Various alterations and improvements were made and many houses were re-fronted, though it seems that relatively few extensions were built. The large number of surviving stone-built eighteenth-century farm buildings also shows that considerable new investment was now made in the farmstead, rather than just the dwelling house.

Although the eighteenth century saw the adoption of the Georgian style of architecture across England, local building practices were often slow to change. Houses with fully developed symmetrical front elevations, well-proportioned sash windows and a central front door are rarely found in the study area until the early nineteenth century. Most houses were still constructed in traditional ways, a single room in width, with steeply pitched, gabled roofs. Local stone, thatch and Collyweston slate continued as the principal building materials, though brick started to be used internally, for chimneys and partitions. Local masons did however respond to national developments in style, especially in creating elegant new façades, of finely-jointed stonework (Figure 176).



Figure 176 Fine re-fronting of 1789 at The Old House, 45 Main Street, Caldecott. The original house has been tree-ring dated to 1626–51 (see plan at Figure 144)



Figure 177 Plain stone surround with flat lintel of 1741 at Jasmine Cottage, 105 Main Street, Lyddington.

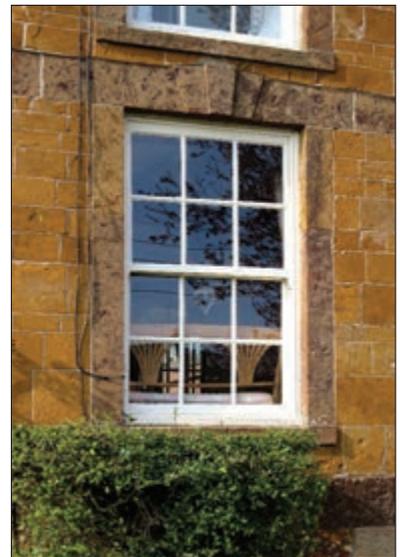


Figure 178 Arched lintel with triple keystone at 42–44 Main Street, Lyddington. With its date-stone of 1765, this is the earliest firmly-dated example of an arched window lintel in the study area. It was built by Hugh Clarke, a Lyddington stonemason who took over the property in that year.

Figure 179 Original oak window frame of 1758 at Manor House, Lyddington. This newly-built house has taller rooms than seveneenth-century houses, so the windows are divided by a horizontal transom, an unusual feature locally. The iron casements and leaded lights, lost in the twentieth century, have been restored.



Figure 180 Late eighteenth-century stone surround with Victorian sash window at The Knoll, 103 Main Street, Lyddington. The projecting 'horns' to the bottom rail of the upper sash indicate a date after c. 1840.



External features

An abrupt change of style that occurred around 1700 was the abandonment of the moulded stone-mullioned window, which had been such a characteristic feature of seventeenth-century houses. Window frames were now of timber, set into stone surrounds of various forms. The earlier window openings had flat stone lintels, often with a central keystone (Figure 177). In the second half



Figure 181 Finely-jointed ashlar masonry at 2 Church Lane, Lyddington, with contrasting band courses of brown stone and limestone. The ginger-coloured stone was also widely used in Uppingham, and must have come from excellent local stone beds, which have all been quarried out.



Figure 182 Moulded corbel of 1729 at Glebe House, 1 Church Close, Caldecott.

of the eighteenth century, window surrounds often had a shallow arch with a decorative keystone (**Figure 178**). Most window frames had stout oak uprights, probably with iron casements and leaded lights originally, though surviving early window frames are rare (**Figure 179**). Glass in early windows, whether of timber or leaded lights, usually had small panes, as larger pieces of glass were expensive until production methods improved in the early nineteenth century. By the late eighteenth century, a few houses had tall, well-proportioned window openings for sliding sash windows, but the sashes have generally been replaced at a later date (**Figure 180**). Away from the main front, less important window openings often had simple timber lintels. Where there is a cellar, windows are likely to have rectangular stone mullions, as found at The Knoll and the Manor House in Lyddington. Eighteenth-century doorways follow the same style as window surrounds, though the lintel and keystone often have additional decoration. Doors were no doubt often of Georgian panelled type, but have generally been replaced.

The principal façades of eighteenth-century houses became a focus for the display of very refined stonemasonry skills. Many houses have stone fronts built entirely of ashlar, with extremely fine joints. Much of the ashlar of this period is built with a very characteristic close-grained, ginger-coloured stone, which could be cut to a very smooth finish. Band courses or dressings were often added, of the deeper coloured brown stone, or the contrasting white limestone (**Figure 181**; see also **Figure 176**). Gable ends continued to have stone copings, sometimes with elegantly-cut moulded corbels (**Figure 182**). The design of chimneystacks also developed, often becoming plainer, but occasionally with



Figure 183 Elegantly moulded chimneystack of 1729 at Glebe House, 1 Church Close, Caldecott.



	Address	Date	Initials	Probable Builder's Name
Caldecott	39 Main Street – Farm Building	1712	-	
	Glebe House, 1 Church Close	1729	-	
	Monkey Tree Cottage, 4 The Green	1774	WW	William Woodcock
Lyddington	45 Main Street	1789	EIB	Elizabeth & John Brown
	Jasmine Cottage, 105 Main Street	1741	DTP	
	115 Main Street	1744	-	
	Barn at The Homestead, 81 Main Street	1758	JP	Pretty
	Slievenanee, 63 Main Street	1763	DRA	Robert & Ann Dexter
	42 Main Street	1765	CHE	Hugh & Elizabeth Clarke
	77 Main Street	1765	(?)HI	
Hillcrest, 111 Main Street	beside 41 Main Street (demolished)	1767	CWI	William Clarke
	4 The Green	1772		
		1774	-	

Figure 187 Table of date-stones.

sophisticated mouldings (Figure 183). Date-stones remained a very common feature, with letter-cutting of increasing refinement (Figures 184-186).

Internal features

Very few houses in the survey area have been found to have good surviving interior features of eighteenth-century date, even in the new-build houses of this period. Large inglenook fireplaces continued to be provided in the kitchens of new eighteenth-century houses, but no in situ examples of Georgian parlour or chamber fireplaces have been recorded. However, additional fireplaces and chimneystacks were added in the period, particularly in formerly unheated parlours, back kitchens or bedchambers. Upper floor structures, with main beams and joists, continued to be constructed in the traditional manner, though usually with plainer details and thinner joists. Winder staircases also continued in use, but surviving better-quality staircases are very rare. Most interior fittings

Figures 184–186 Date-stones of increasingly sophisticated design at: Jasmine Cottage, 105 Main Street, Lyddington; Monkey Tree Cottage, 4 The Green, Caldecott; and 45 Main Street, Caldecott.



Figures 188 and 189 Staircase of 1758 at Manor House, Lyddington. The main flight has turned balusters and an open string with decorative brackets. On the first floor, the balustrade changes to Chinese Chippendale style, the height of fashion in the 1750s.

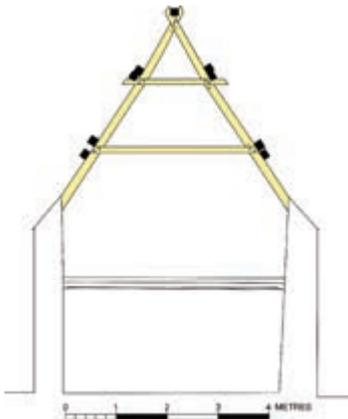


Figure 190 This roof of 1758 at Manor House, Lyddington has main trusses with tenoned collars and tie-beams, supporting upper and lower purlins. Most of the timber was reused from the previous house on the site, with tree-ring dates of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

of Georgian appearance, including doors, window shutters and other joinery turn out, on examination, to be of early nineteenth-century date. A rare example of a fine eighteenth-century fitting is a corner cupboard at The Old Manor House, Thorpe by Water, with a plainer example also at Lyndon House, 59 Main Street, Lyddington. Only Manor House, Lyddington, a new-build house of 1758, preserves a series of internal features, of exceptional quality (**Figures 188–189**). Two examples of purpose-built bake-houses, with large ovens for commercial baking, survive from around the end of the century, at 3 The Green and 40 Main Street, Lyddington.

Quite a high number of eighteenth-century roof structures survive, sometimes as replacements of earlier roofs. In high-quality houses, the roofs have well-framed trusses (**Figure 190**), but many roofs of the period are still of simple A-frame type, often with re-used timbers (**Figures 191–195**). Oak

Figures 191 and 192 A-frame roof truss at 6 The Green, Lyddington, tree-ring dated to 1755. The original house was built around 1620–60, with the roof replaced in the eighteenth century. This roof is simply constructed, with slender principal rafters, two plain-lapped collars and a scissor crossing at the apex. Some of the ash pole rafters from the original thatched roof can be seen.



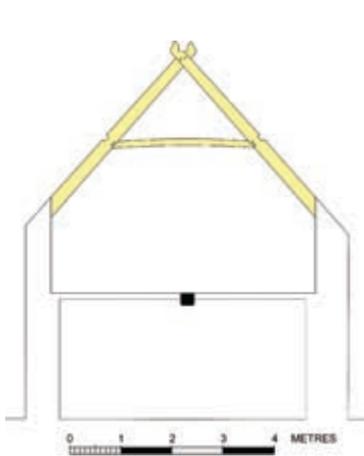


Figure 193 Plain A-frame roof truss with tenoned collar at 2 Main Street, Lyddington. This is another replacement roof (tree-ring dated to 1745–50) on an earlier house, providing increased headroom for the first floor.

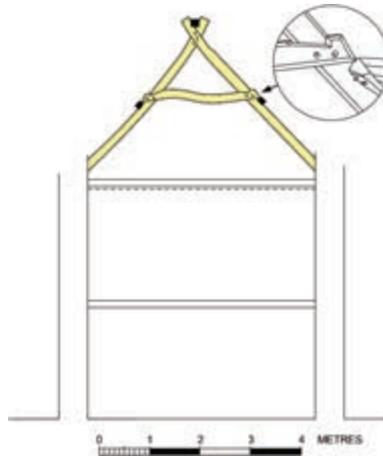


Figure 194 A-frame roof truss of 1729 at Glebe House, Church Close, Caldecott. Although the stonemasonry of this house is of high quality, the roof structure is surprisingly crude. It incorporates re-used timbers, though the unusual cogged upstand to the dovetail joint seems to be a detail of 1729.

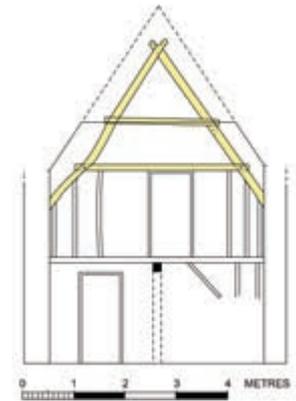


Figure 195 10 Main Street, Caldecott. This small eighteenth-century cottage has a single crudely built A-frame truss, with two lapped collars.

continued to be the main timber used for roofs, with pine only appearing in the nineteenth century. Unlike earlier roofs, timbers were now often square-edged, not chamfered.

New-build houses, alterations and extensions

The small number of houses that were newly built in the eighteenth century often continued in traditional form. All of the local houses were built as single-room depth, with no ‘double-pile’ houses until the nineteenth century. Although there was a gradual move towards creating a symmetrical front elevation as the century progressed, this took some time to emerge (**Figures 196–197**). With the door located centrally, an entrance hall with central staircase became the common type, giving the convenient pattern of circulation as used in modern-day houses. An early example, with the entrance hall separated from the stair can be seen at Manor House, Lyddington (**Figure 198**). A compact two-room plan of this type can be seen at 2 Church Lane, Lyddington, with a central door leading directly to the stair. Larger houses, such as the double-fronted 4 The Green, Lyddington, were often of L-shape, with a rear service wing. A rare local example of a fully developed Georgian front, with tall sash windows, can be seen at The Knoll, 103 Main Street, Lyddington, from the late eighteenth century (**Figures 199–200**).

A new development in the eighteenth century is the survival of a few examples of smaller houses or cottages, providing accommodation for the lesser village residents. Rose Cottage, 6 The Green, Caldecott, is quite a well-built



Figures 196 and 197 Glebe House, Church Close, Caldecott. Although this house now has a standard symmetrical front with central door, the original building of 1729 did not take this form. The original doorway was set to one side, opening into a cross-passage rather than the central stairway hall. The kinked rear kitchen wing is part of the 1729 build, following the line of the adjacent churchyard. There was a traditional hall to the left, with large inglenook, and a parlour to the right, with splayed corner fireplace.

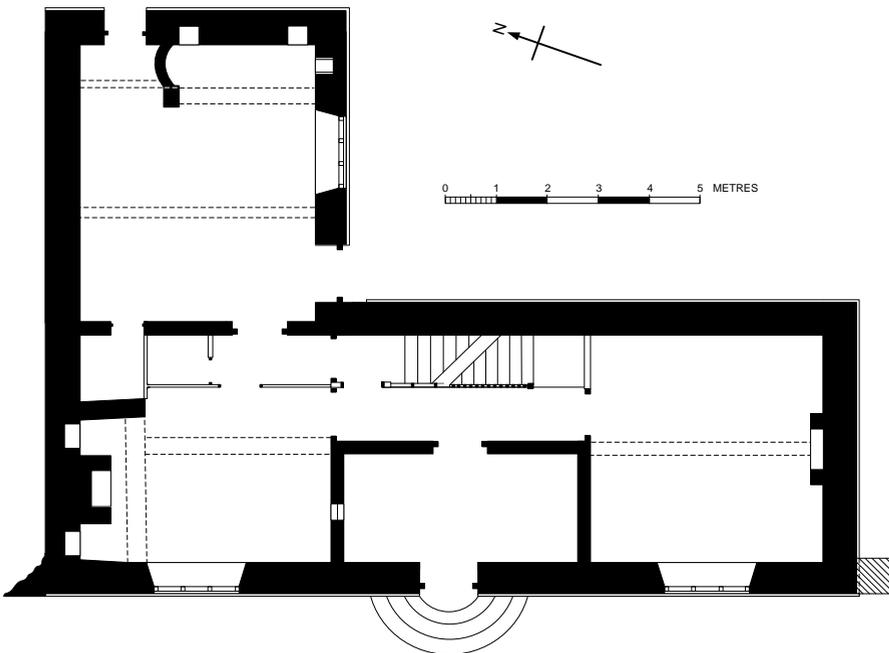
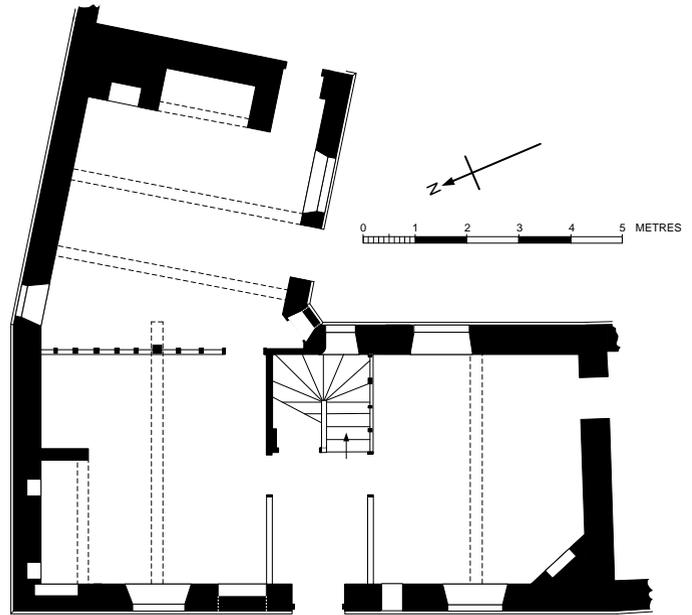
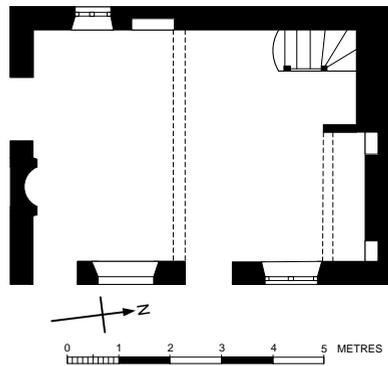
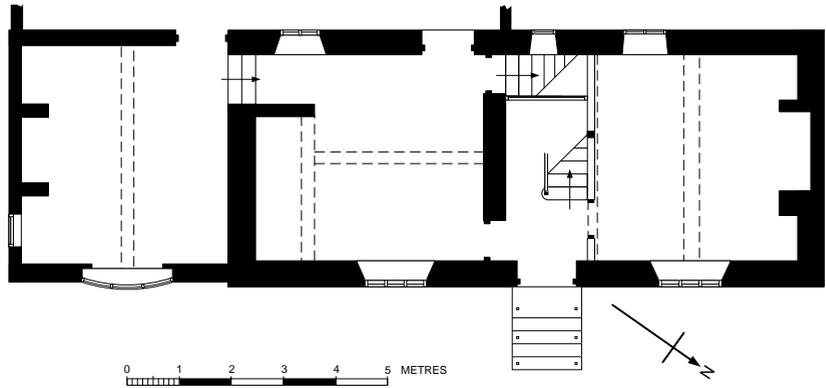


Figure 198 Plan of Manor House, Lyddington, built in 1758–9. The front door leads into a central entrance hall, though the staircase is located beyond this. The hall is to the left with an inglenook fireplace, the parlour to the right, and the kitchen in the rear wing. The thinner internal cross-walls are built of brick, an early use of the material.



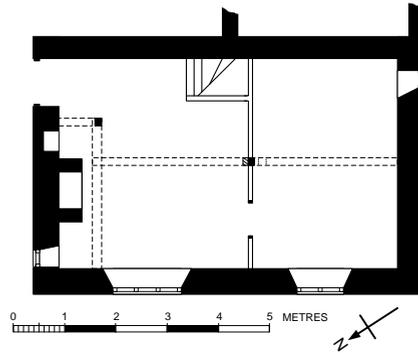
Figures 199 and 200 The Knoll, 103 Main Street, Lyddington. This late eighteenth-century house has a fully developed Georgian façade, with a central front door leading into a staircase hall, and tall window openings to both floors. A cellar with a fireplace for service use is set under the parlour, to the right. To the left, the hall/kitchen has a large inglenook fireplace. An extension for a back kitchen was added to the left around 1830-50, with external walls of brick (now rendered), one of the earlier buildings of such construction in the area.



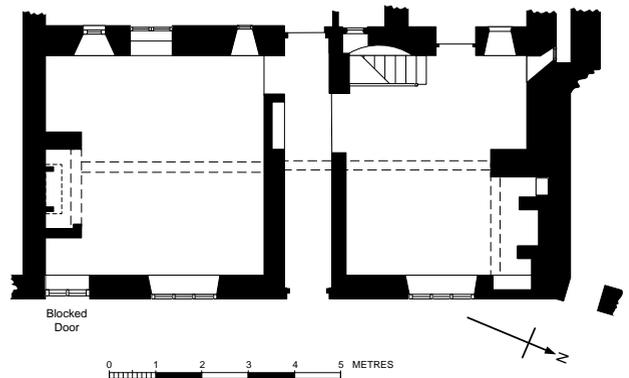
Figures 201 and 202 Rose Cottage, 6 The Green, Caldecott. This is an unusual, intact example of a small cottage of the mid-to-late eighteenth century. Although of compact form, it has good quality stonework, including coped gables. The front door led into the main living room/kitchen, with a large inglenook fireplace. A partition (now removed) separated this from an inner parlour, also heated, perhaps by an iron stove. The winder stair led up to two unheated bedrooms on the first floor.

example, though 10 Main Street, Caldecott is of more humble construction (Figures 201–204). An unusually early instance of two small cottages, purpose-built as a pair, can be seen at 107–109 Main Street, Lyddington (Figs 205–206).

Alteration and improvement work to older houses was much more common in the eighteenth century than new-build. One of the most conspicuous alterations was the re-fronting of many houses, with elegant stone facades, new windows and doorways. Examples are widespread, such as Monkey Tree



Figures 203 and 204 10 Main Street, Caldecott. Another survival of a small two-room cottage of mid-to-late eighteenth-century date. It is of humble construction, with rubble stone walls and eyebrow dormers for the original thatched roof. The main room has an unusual timber post to the inglenook, and the inner room has no fireplace. See also section at Figure 195.

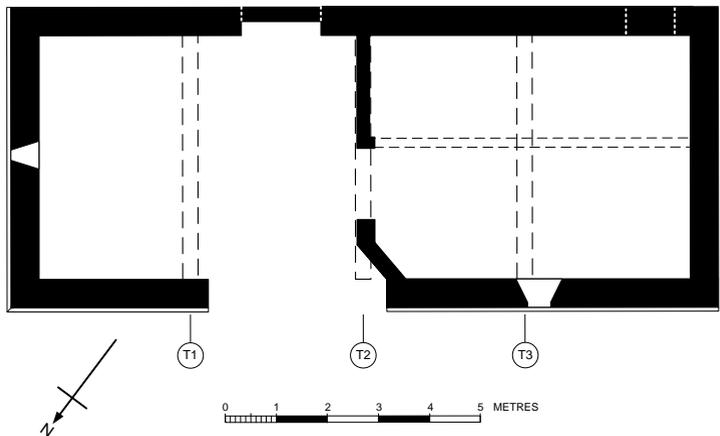
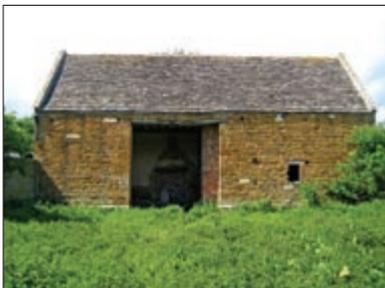


Figures 205 and 206 107–109 Main Street, Lyddington. The two original front doors show that this was built as an unusually early cottage pair, in around 1750–70. Most village houses continued to be built as individual properties throughout the eighteenth century. Each cottage here had a single ground floor room, with large fireplace. Despite its small size, the building has a high-quality stone front, especially the moulded door surrounds. It was probably constructed to house tenants rather than owner-occupiers, but was nevertheless built to impress.

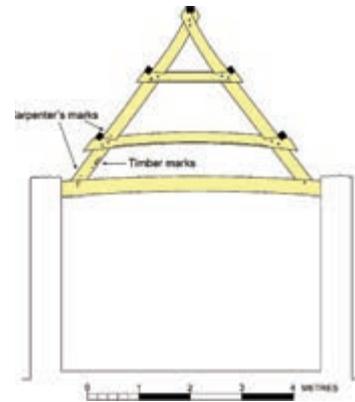
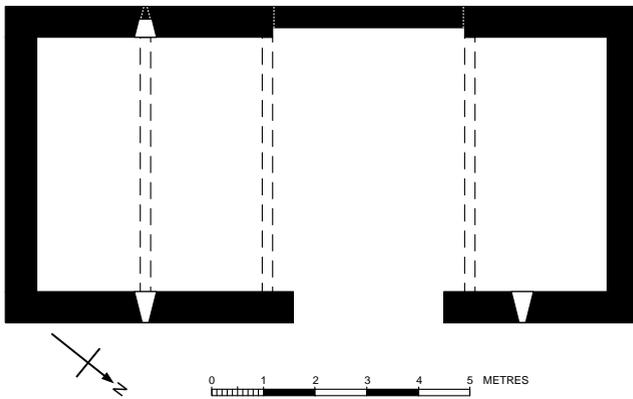
Cottage, 8 Main Street and The Old House, 45 Main Street in Caldecott (see **Figures 151 and 176**), or Jasmine Cottage and 63 Main Street in Lyddington (see **Figure 327**). The opportunity was often taken at the same time to raise the roof level, providing better upstairs headroom (as at 45 Main Street, Caldecott). New windows of course were also introduced elsewhere, no doubt sometimes replacing earlier stone-mullioned windows, to provide more light. With the growing desire for additional fireplaces, especially on the first floor, many chimneystacks were added. Earlier roughly-coursed rubble walling was also replaced with more regularly dressed masonry. Extensions generally took the form of an additional service room at the end of the standard three-room plan or occasionally a rear lean-to. However, domestic extensions of eighteenth-century date are relatively uncommon. Most people seemed content to manage within the footprint of the houses from the previous century, though often with improved first floors.

Farm buildings

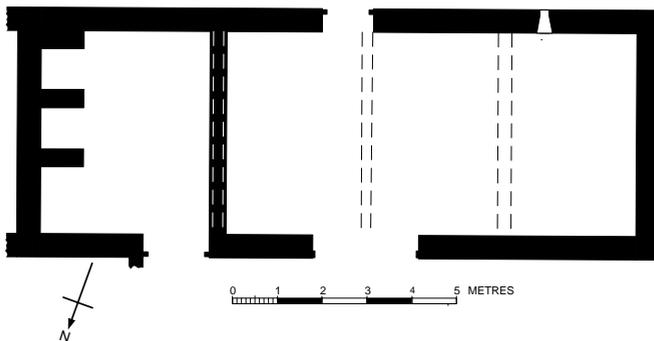
Rather than the dwelling house, the focus for new-build construction in the eighteenth century moved to the farm buildings. As discussed, very few farm buildings of seventeenth-century date survive, but a high number remain from the eighteenth century. The Lyddington Enclosure Map of 1804, which distinguishes farm buildings from houses, shows that a great many more farm buildings were standing at that date (see **Figure 167**), with many replaced in the nineteenth or lost in the twentieth century. Except for the smallest houses, nearly all the plots on the 1804 map had outbuildings. Most surviving farm buildings are set on the rear or side of the plot as a separate range, though some abut the dwelling house. Only a few of the largest farms, such as Manor House, Caldecott, the prebendal house in Lyddington or the big houses in Thorpe, had extensive ranges. Even these large establishments did not have fully developed courtyards until the nineteenth century.



Figures 207 and 208 Little Park Barn, built in 1726–51. A brick cross-wall was added in the later nineteenth century, when a first floor was inserted at the east end.



Figures 209 and 210 Barn to the rear of The Old House 45 Main Street, Caldecott, tree-ring dated to 1789. A four-bay barn which had large opposed doors. The oak roof has two trusses with double collars. As well as some carpenter's chisel-cut assembly marks, there are some very rare scribed marks, probably connected to the timber supplier.



Figures 211, 212 and 213 Farm building range at The Homestead, 81 Main Street, Lyddington. This three-bay barn has a further section of the same build attached to one end, perhaps used as a stable. The high quality stonework has a date-stone over the stable door, showing it was built in 1758 for the Pretty family.



The principal surviving farm building type is the barn, used mainly for the storage and threshing of corn. Most barns are three or four bays in length, with large doors opening onto the threshing floor. The earliest eighteenth-century example is one at Home Farm, 39 Main Street, Caldecott, which has a date-stone of 1712 in both gable ends. An unusually well-built example is the barn in the Little Park (Figures 207–208), rebuilt in 1726–51 using timbers from an earlier aisled structure (see pages 119–121). A good four-bay barn is located to the rear of The Old House, 45 Main Street, Caldecott (Figures 209–210). At The Old Manor House, Thorpe, the barn's central doorway has a projecting

porch to provide additional cover, the only example of this feature in the area. Although it has only small opposing doors, the building to the rear of 117 Main Street, Lyddington was also probably a barn. Smaller barns are sometimes found, like the two-bay barn at 4 Church Lane, Lyddington. One of the largest local barns was the building at 1 The Green, Caldecott, which is nearly 20m long, though much of the upper part has been lost. However, by far the most impressive barn was the six-bay building erected at the prebendal house farmstead in 1738 (see page 193).

Longer ranges of farm buildings also occur, combining a main barn with buildings for a range of purposes, such as a stable (Figures 211–216). At the large farmstead of Meadow Farm, Caldecott, a more spacious stable range was added to the stable block of the seventeenth century. Few other farm building types or functions can now be distinguished, though the external steps to a range at the rear of The Homestead, 81 Main Street, Lyddington, suggest it was a granary or maltings (Figure 217).

The building process

Some rare insights are provided into local building practices by the discovery of documents that give details for the construction of two buildings in Lyddington in the mid-eighteenth century. The first is the fine barn at the Prebendal Farm built in 1738, and the second is the Manor House, of 1758.

A transcript of the building account for the barn at Prebendal Farm is set out below and can be compared closely to the existing building (Figures 218–221). This fine six-bay barn has high quality masonry, with the unusual feature of buttresses to either side of the threshing doors (like Stoneville Farm

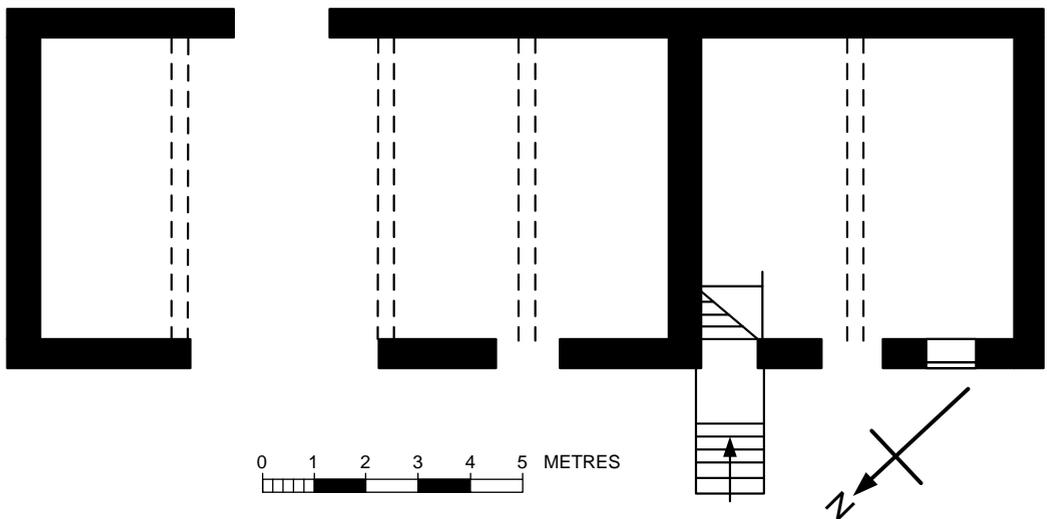


Figure 214 Farm building range at Manor House, Caldecott, as in 1988 before alterations.

Figures 215 and 216 A fine range of eighteenth-century farm buildings at Home Farmhouse, 35–37 Main Street, Lyddington. The north end has a heavy first-floor structure, suggesting granary use. The extension added at the south end may have served to house both animals and crops.

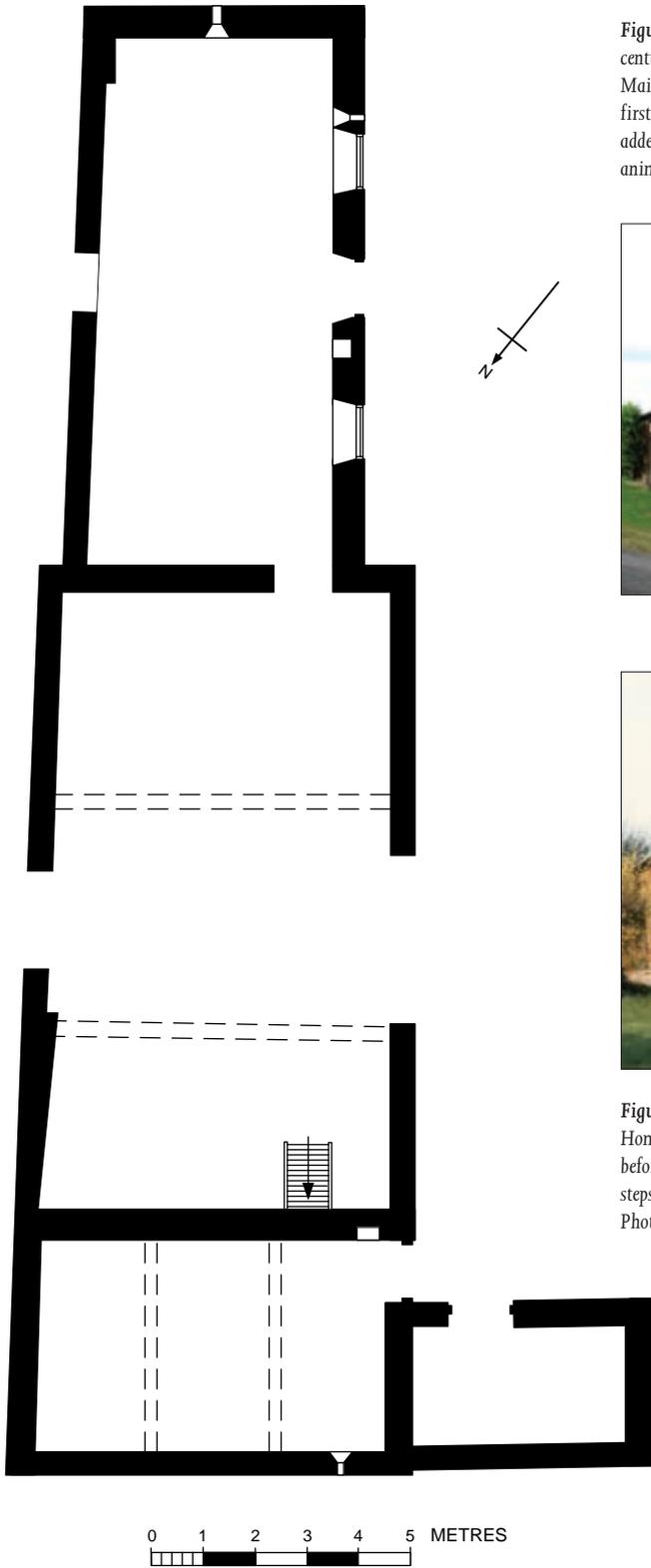


Figure 217 Farm building range at The Homestead, 81 Main Street, Lyddington in 1987, before conversion to domestic use. External stone steps led up to a maltings or granary floor. Photograph by kind permission of John Mawby.

The barn 85 foot long 24 foot broad from outside to outside wall 14 foot high above the floor

Oak Tymber 5/ by 7/	200 foot of wall plate	£4	10s	0d
Long 46 7 by 8	24 side Razors	£12	00	00
24 8 by 13	5 beams	£7	10	0
18 12 at bottam 7 at top 6 inches thick	5 pairs of blades	£6	10s	
13 10 by 6	5 King pieces	£2	8s	9
	20 punchings	£1	15s	
	120 spars to be cloven	£12	00s	0d
Square Wood for 2 pair of barn doors		£1	10s	
400 of boards		£5	00	0
Carpentry work		£15	00	0
Carriage included		£68	03	9
Carriage of stone mortar and sand		£15	00	0
Straw Reed thatching		£16	12	6
Getting the stone Mortar Sand Masons work, Wall 2 foot thickness at botham 18 inches upwards , the wall to be 14 foot above the floor, 4 Buttrices to the sides of the barn doors, Wall table on both and at the Gable ends, and as good work as Allens barn in Liddington				
		£45	00	0
Nailles Scaffolding and all other necessaries		£5	3	9
[total]		£150	0	0

4 Nov 1738 Christopher Horton Esq doth agree to pay unto John Clark of the City of Lichfield Carpenter the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds and allow him all the old materials that may be properly used again, to pull down the Tythe barn at Liddington in the County of Rutland and to allow materials and to rebuilding the same at his own charge according to the above dimensions. And the same John Clark doth hereby promise to accept the said sum of one hundred and fifty pounds and the old materials as above, for which he doth hereby likewise promise and agree to pull down the said barn and to rebuild and finish the same in a very substantial manner and as good as Allens new Barn in Liddington aforesaid. And he use as much (new) oak Tymber therein as is above mentioned, of the same dimensions as above specified at his the said John Clark's charges in all respects on or before Corn harvest next so as John Larratt the occupyer thereof may Inbarn his corn therein, and the said Christopher Horton shall be at no further expense than the said sum of one hundred and fifty pounds which is to be paid as soon as the work shall be finished in manner as before mentioned

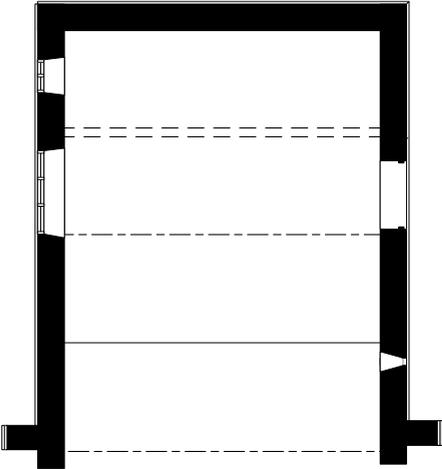
As witness our hands

Signed in presence of Blest ? Coleclough

Christopher Horton
John Clarke

Figure 218 Building account for a new barn at Prebendal Farm, Lyddington in 1738.¹

barn of 1660–65 (see page 163). As the building account states, it was built for Christopher Horton, whose main estate was to the north of Lichfield, for the use of a local farmer, John Larratt. The prebendal estate was formerly held by the Buswell family, and Christopher Horton acquired it after 1728.



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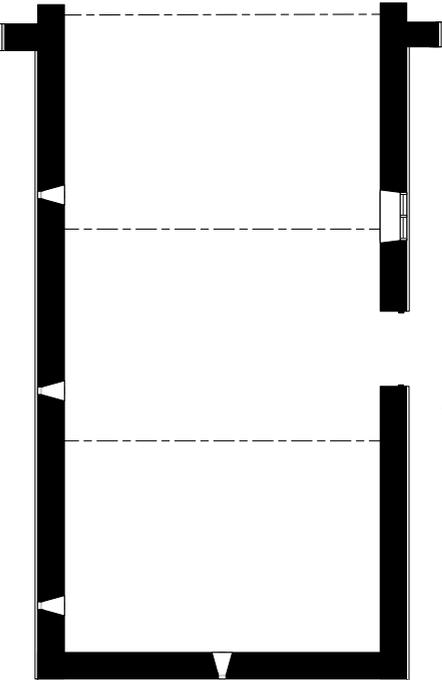


Figure 219 View of the barn from the south-east in the 1980s, before conversion to a house. The far end of the barn had been reduced in height by this time, together with insertion of various windows.

Figure 220 Plan of the barn in c. 1980, prior to conversion. The window openings were inserted in the nineteenth century. Apart from the large opposed doors, the only openings in the original barn were a small door to the north-west and ventilation slits.

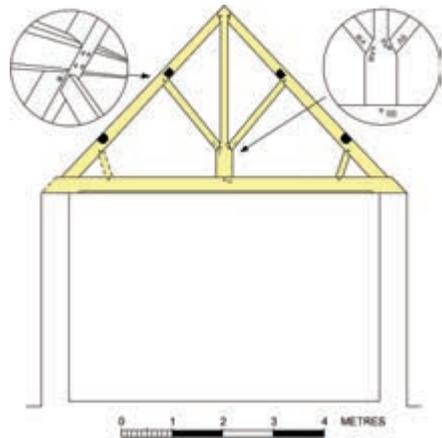


Figure 221 The fine king-post roof, built by the Lichfield carpenter John Clark in 1738. Roofs of this type are not generally found locally until the nineteenth century.

This is an unusual case, in that the building agreement was made with John Clark, a carpenter of Lichfield, acting as a main contractor. The whole building was to be constructed for the fixed total sum of £150. No doubt Christopher Horton knew John Clark as a local Staffordshire man, and entrusted the whole work to him. Clark probably undertook the roof carpentry directly himself, or at least oversaw a team of local carpenters, which would explain why a very unusual king-post structure was used. However, the mason's and thatcher's work must have been undertaken by local craftsmen, working as subcontractors or paid labour. Like the stone and sand, the oak would have been bought locally, as carriage from Lichfield would have been prohibitively expensive. Although the barn is built of local ironstone and sand, with quarries only a mile away, the cost of carriage for these heavy materials was £15, against the material and labour cost of £45. The contract mentions the possible re-use of the building materials from the previous barn, but the external wall facing and the whole roof are all built of high quality new material.

The detailed dimensions and quantities given in the building contract are a close match to the surviving building. The descriptions and terms used are interesting. The 'side Razors', from the dimensions given, are clearly the purlins, and the '5 beams' are the tie-beams of the five trusses. The '5 pairs of blades' are the truss principal rafters and the 'King pieces' are the king-posts. The '20 Punchings' represent the struts, with four per truss. The '120 spars' are the rafters, which were in fact carefully sawn, not 'cloven'. The 'Square Wood for 2 pair of barn doors' indicates that the barn doors had frames of squared and morticed oak, to which the '400 of boards' (four hundred square feet) were applied. Despite the high quality of the main structure, the roof was only of thatch, rather than Collyweston slate. In the mason's work, the four buttresses and the plinth ('wall table') are noted. The work was to be 'as good as Allens barn', a typical way of specifying the quality of work in earlier periods. The Allen family held one of larger farms in Lyddington, but the location of their barn has not been identified. The whole of the building work, from agreement of contract to completion, was to be finished quite quickly, within nine months, so that the new barn was ready to receive John Larratt's next harvest. The oak for the roof must have been felled in the winter of 1738–9 and used while still 'green' – as was common practice. No doubt 'Getting the stone' (i.e. the quarrying and initial dressing) was also done in the winter period, with construction getting underway in spring. It is interesting to note that the cost of the supply of the oak was over £53, with only £15 for labour. The cost of this special king-post roof, at over £68, was quite high in relation to the stone walling, at £60. The contract includes no provision for stage payments, with the £150 payable to John Clark only when all the work was finished. He would have incurred considerable costs by that stage, so there was considerable pressure to complete on time.

Like the Prebendal Barn, the Manor House was a new building of unusually high quality, as described above (see **Figure 198**). The documents that give details of the building construction in this case are a lease agreement of 1757–8 (see pages 316–317) and a note of costs in the Burghley Estate accounts of 1759.¹ The property was owned by the Earl of Exeter, with the village miller, Edward Sharman, as tenant. (The building acquired the name of 'Manor House'

later, in the nineteenth century.) The lease agreement of 29th June 1757 stated that:

... the house in which the said Edward Sharman lives be taken down and a new one built in the yard four rooms upon a floor at his lordship's expense but the carriage of all the materials mortar lime etc that shall be used there are to be done at the charge of the said Edward Sharman ...

Sharman's annual rent for the term of the 21 year lease was £25, which besides the house included the windmill, the water mill, 'the Homestead and orchard', and eleven acres of land. Prior to the rebuilding, Sharman had leased the property from 1743-58, and a considerable programme of repair and improvement was carried out, for which payments were made in 1747 (see page 314). Sharman's rent up to 1758 was £20 pa, so it seems that the rent increased by £5 as a result of the rebuilding. In a variation to the agreement, of 23rd August 1758, Sharman agreed to pay an extra £1 in annual rent 'in consideration that his lordship makes garretts to my house and sinks me a cellar'.

Costs for the building are included in the Burghley Estate accounts for 1759 as follows:

15th June	
To Thomas Drake & Frances Gibbons the Masons at Sharmans Liddington	£75 10s
To Mr Birch the carpenter there	£44 8s
To Ambrose Mould the Slater there	£25 8s
Frances Dickens the Slater there	£23 19s 6d
To John Hand the Glazier there	£11 13s
To Edward Hall for bricks there	£6 15s 11d

The earlier house was taken down as specified, and rebuilt with an L-shaped plan, with four main rooms on the ground and first floors. The cellar and attic rooms are an integral part of the house as built, so it seems construction probably got underway in 1758. As the Estate had agents on hand to coordinate the construction process, the various building tradesmen were paid directly, rather than via a main contractor like the Prebendal Barn. The building evidence shows that considerable use was made of the materials from the demolished building, especially for the main timbers. Carriage (principally for stone and sand) was undertaken by Edward Sharman himself. The principal named tradesmen were the masons, the carpenter, the slaters and the glazier. Thomas Drake and Frances Gibbons both came from local Lyddington families, though the carpenter, accorded the title of 'Mr' Birch, probably came from further afield. The slaters were probably from Collyweston or Easton on the Hill, where the principal slate pits were located. The supply and fitting of glass, in leaded lights, was a specialist item and still quite expensive, though the glazier John Hand was a local man. The use of brick for internal walls was unusual at this date. The brick-maker Edward Hall does not appear in local parish records, and may well have supplied bricks for other buildings on the Exeter Estate.

The total costs given in the accounts amount to around £188. However, all the items listed seem to relate only to the construction of the main shell, with no costs specifically noted for internal fitting out such as joinery, plastering

or fireplaces. Further expenditure on such items is not identifiable in the Estate accounts. As the quality of the interior fit-out was very high (with items like the staircase and partition as noted above) the total cost of the house was no doubt considerably greater. Some broad comparisons can be made with the costs for the Prebendal Barn. The quantity of stonemasonry for the external walls was roughly comparable for both buildings, but the Manor House masonry cost £75 10s as against £60 for the Prebendal Barn, no doubt because of the additional work in the cellar, cross-walls and chimneystacks. The special Prebendal Barn roof structure was considerably more expensive than that at the Manor House, where the use of re-used timber must have made large savings. A closer comparison is possible for the cost of roof coverings. The thatched roof at the Prebendal Barn, around 3,000 square feet in area, cost around 11 shillings per ‘square’ (ten feet square). The Collyweston slate roof at the Manor House, roughly 2,200 square feet in area (though with hipped dormers and valley junctions), cost about £2 5s per ‘square’ (around four times as much).

These two documented cases are of course far from typical for either the houses or barns of the area. Both are buildings of high quality, built by a wealthy owner for his tenant. The production and survival of such documents is of course itself a rarity. Most local buildings would have been more modest structures, paid for by the building occupier, whether a copyholder or (more rarely) a freeholder. Nevertheless, these cases give important insights into the building practices which would have been commonly adopted.

Domestic life

The prime source for how buildings were used during the eighteenth century is once again the probate inventories. As for the earlier period, relatively few inventories survive, but fourteen have been traced and transcribed for the project, together with one valuation for sale of moveable goods (John Pretty, 1743) which gives similar information. Once again, a larger number of wills, around thirty in all, have been identified and transcribed, giving additional information.

Figure 222 Table of the eighteenth-century inventories, arranged in order of value.²

Name	Occupation	Date	Place	£ value total	£ value household	Rooms	Hall	Parlour	Kitchen	Buttery	Dairy	Chambers	Brewhouse	Cellar	Other
James Hill	Yeoman	1723	Lyddington	13	3	0									
John Jordan	Labourer	1731	Lyddington	13	3	4		1	1		1	1			
Keneilm Wright	Shepherd	1725	Lyddington	19	8	4	1	1				2			
John Massey	Gentleman	1722	Lyddington	20	18	8	1	1	1			3	1	1	
Anthony Waterfield	Carpenter	1724	Lyddington	20	13	5	1		1			2		1	
William Scott	Gentleman	1726	Lyddington	29	16	5		1	1	1		2			
Zachary Rue	Clerk	1723	Lyddington	33	22	6	1	1	1			2			1
John Pretty	Tanner	1743	Lyddington	80		9	1	1	1	1	1	3	1		
John Townsend		1737	Lyddington	87	36	7	1	1	1		1	3			1
Clement Pretty	Tanner	1720	Lyddington	103	12	7	1	1	1	1		3			
John Ridgley	Weaver	1728	Lyddington	129	48	6	1	1				3	1		1
Samuel Rowlat		1738	Lyddington	169	12	8	1	1	1	1		3			1
Christopher Nevinson	Gentleman	1722	Thorpe	423	148	13	1	1	1		1	5		1	3
Mr Joseph Pretty	Farmer, Mr	1785	Lyddington	446	35	10	1	1	1		1	4	1	1	1
John Larratt Snr	Yeoman	1724	Lyddington	494	29	13	1	1	1			7		1	2

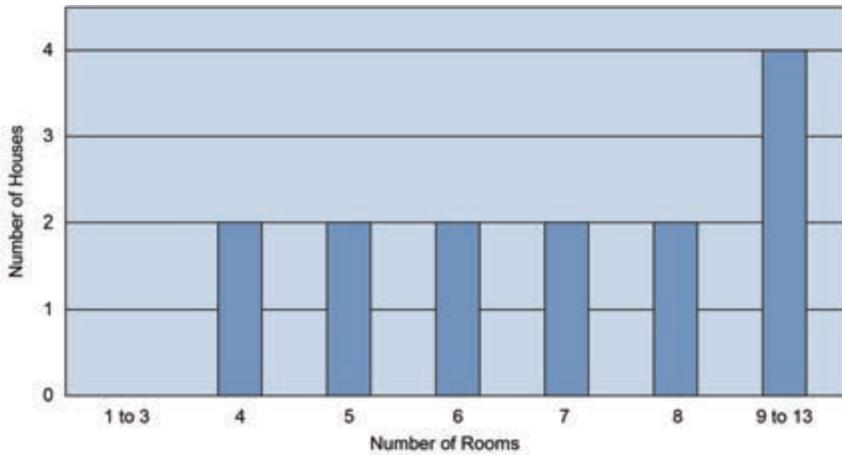


Figure 223.

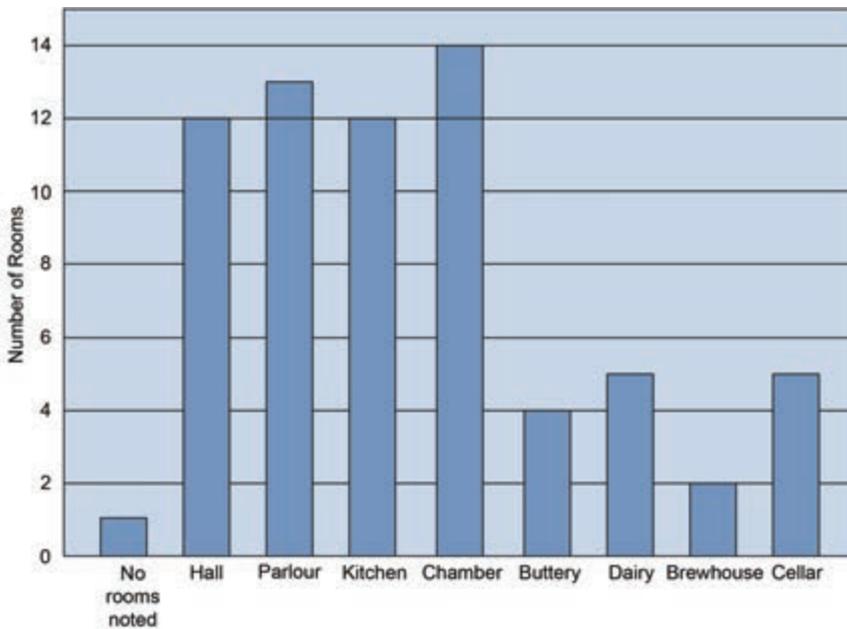
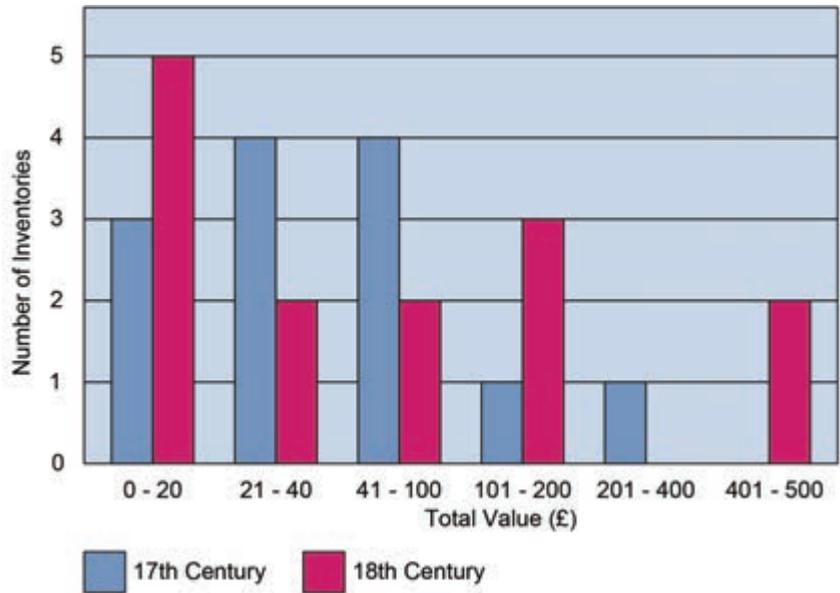


Figure 224.

A table showing the key features of the fifteen inventories is given in **Figure 222**. As can be seen in **Figure 223**, the number of rooms has now risen markedly from the seventeenth-century levels (compare with **Figure 159**). Except for one case with no rooms mentioned, all houses have at least four rooms, and ten of the fourteen houses have six rooms or more. The increase in number of rooms is largely due to a rise in the number of chambers, together with a higher number of kitchens, and a few other service rooms like dairies, brew-houses and cellars. Nearly all houses now have at least two chambers (in contrast to the single chambers of the seventeenth century), with three chambers the most common type. **Figure 224** shows the range of room types which now occur, which can be compared to the seventeenth-century houses at **Figure 160**. It should be noted that all except one of the inventories date

Figure 225 Comparison of inventory values from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



from 1720 to 1743, while the seventeenth-century data is from 1649–93. Although the number of available inventories is rather low and the level of detail sometimes sparse, the differences within this fairly short timescale are quite marked, suggesting a period of rapid change.

The hall remains a central and important room, still called the ‘house’ in four instances. It continued in most cases to serve as the main living room where meals were taken, but was now nearly always furnished with chairs, rather than stools or forms. The pewter plates and dishes were often stored here. Specific mention of cooking equipment in the hall is now only found in Samuel Rowlat’s house, where there were ‘running Hooks and Two Spitts’. The ‘Grate fireshovell Tongs and poker’ in John Pretty’s hall indicate a non-cooking fireplace, probably burning coal. Nearly all houses now had a kitchen, often with brewing equipment or a copper for water-heating. Brew-houses were usually an adjunct to a kitchen, as were the other service rooms. Butteries for storage of drink are still found, but cellars now also occur, serving the same purpose (probably not below ground in most instances). Separate dairies were also now more common, as an adjunct to the kitchen. An overall trend towards allocation of service functions to separate rooms can be discerned, though no doubt many overlaps continued.

In contrast to the seventeenth-century inventories, the parlour was usually no longer used as a bedchamber. Of the eleven inventories that list furniture in the parlour, only four mention beds. The principal furniture of most parlours now consisted of tables and chairs, suggesting use as a sitting room, or perhaps in some cases for dining. To create accommodation for a widow, a parlour might be adopted as a bed-sitting room, as in the will of Thomas Pretty in 1759, who left his house to his son, with the proviso that ‘my Wife shall have the Parlour to live in during her life’.² Chambers now nearly always contained beds, with grain storage only found in one case, Clement Pretty’s house. A

large establishment like that of John Larratt, might of course include storage rooms like a 'Malt Chamber' and a 'Pease Chamber', as well as the main bedchambers. The better houses now often had a best bedchamber over the parlour, furnished quite expensively. The contents of the 'Best Chamber' in John Ridgeley's house were valued at £15, while the 'Chamber over the Parlour' in Christopher Nevinson's house was richly furnished, with scarlet curtains and a calico quilt on the bed, cane chairs and 'Delfe ware on the Mantelpiece'. Luxury items could now be found in a larger number of houses, though are still not widespread. Looking glasses occur in the inventories for five houses and clocks in four, with another case of each in wills.³

Two examples of inventories, for Zachary Rue (1723) and John Ridgley (1728), can be seen on pages 234 and 279. Zachary Rue lived at 41 Main Street, Caldecott but unfortunately the building has been much altered and cannot be closely related to the inventory. John Ridgley's house was Mullions, on Stoke Road, Lyddington, where the hall, parlour and chambers of the inventory can be identified (see **Figures 68–70**).

A comparison of inventory values for the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries is shown at **Figure 225**. Although there is a noticeable increase of inventories with a value over £100, the overall values are not markedly higher, as the number of inventories below £20 has also gone up. The data set is too small to allow much confidence, but the figures might point to an increase of wealth at the upper levels, at the expense of the less well-off. The seventeenth-century inventories include three women, but there are none in the eighteenth-century examples.

PART FOUR

The Nineteenth Century

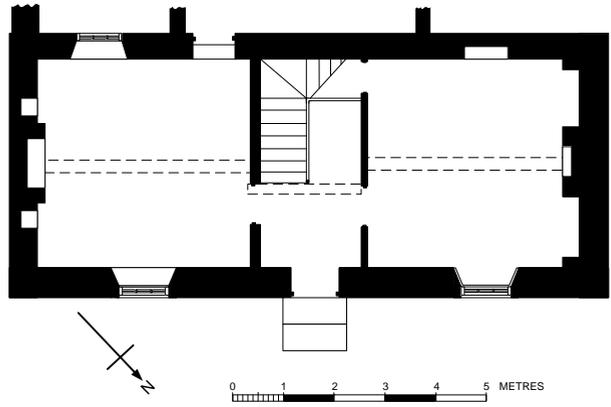
Unlike many parts of England, the villages of Rutland saw little development or industrialisation during the nineteenth century. As can be seen by comparing the maps of c. 1800 with the Ordnance Survey Second Edition maps of 1904, the settlements of Lyddington, Caldecott, Stoke Dry and Thorpe by Water grew very little in the period. Despite the enclosure of the open fields and the consolidation of farm landholdings, farmsteads remained within the villages, with hardly any development in the open countryside.

Stone had formed the backbone of the local vernacular building style for centuries, but brick finally made its appearance around the middle of the nineteenth century. However, brick was mainly used for alterations, additions or features such as chimneystacks, with stone still very much the dominant choice for main façades. Although common in much of Victorian England, a brick terrace like that at 11–17 Main Street, Caldecott, remained very much the exception in the local area. Much more commonly adopted was Welsh slate (Figure 226), brought by the expanding railway network. ‘Rockingham’ Station, on the southern edge of Caldecott, opened in 1851. Imported softwood also displaced local oak as the main structural timber from the mid-nineteenth century.

Local houses continued to be constructed with traditional features for much of the nineteenth century, so some buildings are in fact rather later in date



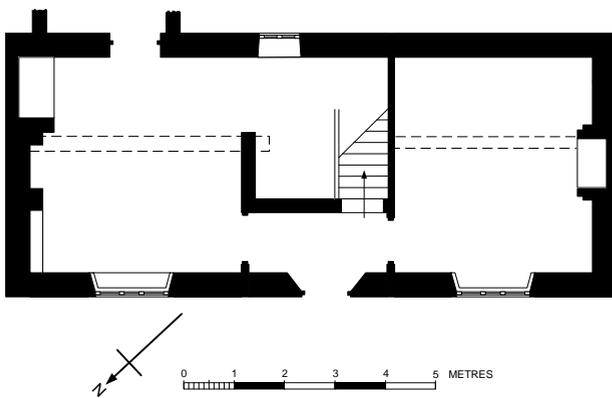
Figure 226 Raised brickwork eaves and Welsh slate roof of the later nineteenth century at 46–48 Main Street, Lyddington. Welsh slate could be laid at a lower pitch than Collyweston slate or thatch, so alterations of this type to provide extra headroom are very common.



Figures 227 and 228 The Lilacs, 101 Main Street, Lyddington. This house is listed as 'mid-late C18', but documentary evidence and tree-ring dating show that it was built by the Lyddington stonemason Robert Clarke in 1814 or soon after. It has a fully-developed symmetrical front and plan form with a central stair hall.

than previously thought (Figures 227–228). Most houses do now have a regular, symmetrical front, though construction was often still of vernacular type (Figures 229–231). Up to around 1840, windows continued to have fairly small panes, but pane size increased in the later nineteenth century as glass technology improved (Figure 232). As in previous centuries, builders continued to re-use earlier fabric, which can sometimes be misleading in terms of dating. By the mid-nineteenth century, the first examples of 'double-pile' houses begin to appear, in place of single-room width ranges (Figures 233–234).

Stoke Dry, dominated by a single owner, had always developed along a different path to the villages of Lyddington, Caldecott and Thorpe. Ownership of the Manor passed to the Cecil family in the 1770s and the village was redeveloped by the Exeter estate in the nineteenth century, with features typical of an estate village. A row of four cottages was built in 1858, with another pair nearby (Figures 235–236). A large model farmstead was built around the same



Figures 229 and 230 Threeways, 1 Main Street, Caldecott. Another double-fronted house, probably built in 1814 as indicated by the date-stone.

period, the only fully-developed courtyard farm of this type in the four villages. The patronage of the rectory was of course also under the control of the Marquess of Exeter.

During the nineteenth century professional architects' practices grew in number, taking over the design role from local builders. The first local house by a named architect is the Rectory at Stoke Dry, designed in 1840 by Bryan Browning of Stamford (Figures 237–238) for Revd Charles Swann.¹ The old rectory (shown as a large H-shaped house on the 1756 map, Figure 300) was said to be in a 'bad and ruinous state' so was completely demolished, though the re-used materials were valued at £105. The new building was of ornate Gothic design, with a cost estimate of £1,600. The house was altered and enlarged in 1855 to designs by Bryan Browning's son, Edward, for the incoming rector, Revd William Hamilton Thompson. Although the building was only 15 years old, the architect certified that it was 'inconveniently arranged



Figure 231 Threeways, Caldecott. The roof structure has a crude A-frame truss with bolted joints and ash pole rafters, to support the former thatched roof.



Figures 233 and 234 Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green, Caldecott. This 'double-pile' house has a plan form that is two rooms deep. Although it re-uses some beams from the seventeenth-century house, it is a complete rebuild of the mid-nineteenth century. The wide-spanning Collyweston slate roof is supported by king-post trusses of imported softwood.

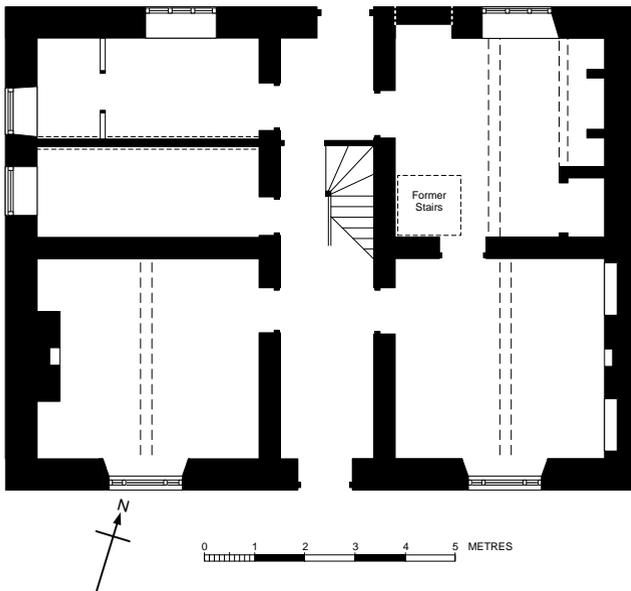


Figure 232 Original sash window of c 1814 in stone surround at The Lilacs. The six-pane upper sash has no projecting 'horns' to the lower rail, a feature found in windows earlier than c. 1840 (compare with Figure 180).

Figures 235 and 236 This row of four estate cottages (Nos 6–10) was built at Stoke Dry in 1858, displaying the linked ‘E’s monogram and coronet of the Marquess of Exeter. Despite the Exeters’ position as lord of the manor for Lyddington, Caldecott and part of Thorpe, this is the only estate cottage row in the four villages.



Figure 237 The Rectory, Stoke Dry. The front elevation as designed by Bryan Browning in 1840, with single storey service wing. (NRO x4355)

Figure 238 The Rectory with enlarged east wing. An alteration not shown on the architect’s drawings of 1855 is the relocation of the principal staircase from the centre of the house to the entrance front (with the large mid-floor window). This also meant that a large new chimneystack had to be constructed, disturbing the symmetry of the original design.

and too small for the residence of a clergyman’. The east wing was greatly enlarged including additional stabling, with a cost estimate of £520. A fine new vicarage was also built for Caldecott in 1863, set in open country to the north of the village. Its unusual design is attributed in the listing description to the Northampton architect E.F. Law. A final component added in the Victorian period were the village schools, built at Lyddington in 1870 and Caldecott in 1878. Although fostered by national legislation to promote universal education, the two schools still owed much of their character to local building traditions. Both buildings are constructed largely of local ironstone, with limestone dressings, and Caldecott originally had a roof of Collyweston slate. Caldecott School was another design by Edward Browning, and it was built by the Clarkes, the long-established family of Lyddington stonemasons.

PART FOUR

Tree-ring Dating

Robert Howard

Tree-ring dating relies on a few simple, but quite fundamental, principles. Firstly, as is commonly known, trees (particularly oak trees, the timber most commonly used in building construction until the introduction of pine from the late eighteenth century onwards) grow by adding one, and only one, growth-ring to their circumference each and every year. Each new annual growth-ring is added to the outside of the previous year's growth just below the bark. The width of this annual growth-ring is largely, though not exclusively, determined by the weather conditions during the growth period (roughly March-September). In general, good conditions produce wider rings and poor conditions produce narrower rings. Thus, over the lifetime of a tree, the annual growth-rings display a climatically-influenced pattern. Furthermore, and importantly, all trees growing in the same area at the same time will be influenced by the same growing conditions, and the annual growth-rings of all of them will respond in a similar, though not identical, way (see **Figure 239**).

Secondly, because the weather over a certain number of consecutive years is unique, so too is the growth-ring pattern of the tree (the statistically reliable minimum calculated as being 54 years). The pattern of a shorter period of growth (twenty, thirty or even forty consecutive years) might conceivably be repeated two or even three times in the last one thousand years, and is considered less reliable. A short pattern might also be repeated at different time periods in different parts of the country, because of differences in regional micro-climates. It is less likely, however, that such problems would occur with the pattern of a longer period of growth; that is, anything in excess of 54 years or so. In essence, a short period of growth (anything less than 54 rings) is less reliable, and the longer the period of time under comparison, the better.

In addition to the number of rings on a particular sample, the reliability of tree-ring dating is enhanced when samples are obtained from a number of different timbers within a building or within each phase of a multi-phase structure. This multi-sample approach again increases the amount of data under consideration, and helps to reduce the bias caused by the sampled timber, unbeknown to the dendrochronologists, being an old piece reused, or a newer piece inserted as a repair (such possibilities being reduced by careful survey and examination of the timbers, though in any case, such samples often provide valuable information on the historic development of a building).

The samples are usually obtained as pencil-sized cores, using a hollow borer attached to an ordinary power drill, the core being drilled from the outermost rings on the timber towards the centre rings (**Figure 240**). Once obtained, the



Figure 239 Tree-ring dating samples from Stoneville Farm Barn, Lyddington.



Figure 240 Robert Howard sampling timber at Little Park Barn, Lyddington.

core sample is given a unique identifier code, and varied information about the source timber is recorded. The samples are then sanded and polished to clearly reveal the annual growth-rings, the width of each consecutive ring then being measured to a tolerance of 1/100 of a millimetre to obtain the growth pattern.

Having obtained the growth pattern of the tree from each individual sample, it is then usual to compare all the samples from a single building, or from the same phases of a building, with one another, and attempt to cross-match each one with all the others from the same phase or building.

When samples from the same phase do cross-match, they are combined at their matching positions to form what is known as a 'site chronology'. As with any set of data, this has the effect of reducing the anomalies of any one individual (brought about in the case of tree-rings by some non-climatic influence) and enhances the overall climatic signal. As stated above, it is the climate that gives the growth pattern its distinctive pattern.

Furthermore, combining samples in this way to make a site chronology usually has the effect of increasing the time-span that is under comparison. As also mentioned above, the longer the period of growth under consideration, the greater the certainty of the cross-match. The growth pattern of the samples combined in the site chronology is then compared with a series of 'Reference Chronologies', the date spans of which are known and fixed to form a 'template' or 'Master Chronology'. When the growth-ring pattern of the site chronology 'cross-matches' repeatedly at the same date span against a series of different Reference Chronologies, the site chronology can be said to be dated.

Having obtained a date for the site chronology as a whole, the date spans of the constituent individual samples can then be found, and from this the

felling date of the trees represented may be calculated. Where a sample retains complete sapwood, that is, it has the last or outermost ring produced by the tree before it was cut, the last measured ring date is the felling date of the tree.

Where the sapwood is not complete, it is necessary to estimate the likely felling date of the tree. Such an estimate can be made with a high degree of reliability because oak trees generally have between fifteen and forty sapwood rings. For example, if a sample with, say, twelve sapwood rings has a last sapwood ring date of 1400 (and therefore a heartwood/sapwood boundary ring date of 1388), it is 95% certain that the tree represented was felled sometime between 1403 (1400+3 sapwood rings (12+3=15)) and 1428 (1400+28 sapwood rings (12+28=40)).

It should be noted, of course, that not all the samples obtained from any particular building combine with each other as part of the site chronology. In such circumstances, these ungrouped samples are compared individually with the full corpus of reference data. On occasion, these 'singletons' can also be dated, though quite often they cannot.

The above guidelines were thus applied to the sampling and analysis of the buildings in Lyddington Manor Project. Each building included for research was initially assessed by the survey team as to whether or not it contained any timbers that might be pertinent to its historic development. Subsequently, such potentially historic timbers were assessed by the dendrochronologists as to whether or not they might be suitable for tree-ring analysis. Such suitability depended on whether the timbers were of oak (other timber not being particularly suitable for tree-ring dating), and as to whether or not such timbers might contain the minimum number of rings required for reliable analysis (54, as mentioned above). An approximation of the likely ring numbers in a particular timber can easily be discerned by the experienced eye, either by examining the cut or exposed parts of a beam (at the ends, where a cross-section of the tree might be exposed, or in mortices or peg-holes) or as the surface grain of the timber. Three buildings were rejected for sampling, as the timbers were found unsuitable (Threeways, Caldecott; Marquess of Exeter; and Mullions, Lyddington).

By this process a total of 22 buildings were selected for sampling and their timbers were cored. In respect of this sampling, while it was sometimes possible to obtain more than the usual 8–12 cores from any one building (thus enhancing the local tree-ring reference data), in other cases, this optimum number could not always be achieved, the building sometimes having fewer timbers than required, or having many timbers with too few rings. However, given that, overall, a large number of samples were to be collected from within a small geographic area, and that these were likely to combine to form a very localised reference chronology against which the smaller number of samples might cross-match, this was seen as less of a problem than might otherwise be the case. Thus it was that, gradually, a local tree-ring data-set was created and that timbers within buildings could be dated, each sampled site being written up as a full Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory report.

The results are summarised in the following table which, for each site, show how many samples were obtained, and how many of these were measured/unmeasured (some core samples having insufficient rings despite

initial surface indications that they were satisfactory), and how many samples were grouped/ungrouped and dated/undated.

Radiocarbon dating

Radiocarbon 'wobble-match' dating is another technique which has, unusually, been applied to a timber from a building in Lyddington (4 Church Lane). This method of dating is based on the theory that, while alive and part of what is known as the 'biosphere', all living organisms (grass, leaves, skin, hair, bone, sea shells, wood etc.) contain the same proportion of the radiocarbon element carbon 14 (usually abbreviated to C14), and this can be measured; gram for gram, an ant has the same amount of C14 as an elephant. This consistency is based on the fact that C14 is distributed equally through all parts of the atmosphere. The theory, furthermore, also states that the C14 content of organisms is the same now as it has been for all times past; it has never varied.

Once an organism dies and ceases to participate in the biosphere, the C14 contents starts to reduce, little by little, at a known rate year by year; this gradual decline in C14 is often portrayed as a line sloping smoothly downwards over time. Since the original quantity of C14 is known, and the rate at which it reduces is also known, it is possible, by measuring how much C14 remains, to calculate how long it is since the organism died. However, due to the constraints of measuring levels of C14 (even with the most up-to-date methods), this calculation is somewhat approximate, and while a likely timeframe of +/- 200 years might be very useful for an item that is, say, 30,000 years old, it is less useful when greater precision is needed. Also, given the nature of radiocarbon, there is a danger that any C14 measurement could be random or spurious, and thus completely inaccurate.

Since its conception in the late 1940s, the basic theory of C14 dating has undergone a few adjustments. Crucially, it has been shown that the amount of atmospheric C14 has varied over time, and therefore so too has the amount in living organisms. Thus, rather than sloping downwards smoothly, the declining curve contains minor 'wiggles' corresponding to the annual variations in the overall levels of C14 in the atmosphere. Given that this year by year variation is detected in tree-rings that have been dated by dendrochronology, there is thus a curve, giving levels of C14 for known dates.

Because of this it becomes possible, with a tree-ring sample that cannot be dated by conventional dendrochronology, to measure the radiocarbon content of individual rings of known intervals, say, for example, ring 5, ring 30, ring 42, and ring 48. Maintaining the known interval between the C14 measurements, it then becomes possible to match the C14 levels of the measured years to the wiggles in the C14 curve: hence 'wobble-matching'. Given that a number of C14 measurements have been taken, and that they have been compared at known intervals to the radiocarbon curve, this method gives a much more accurate and reliable date determination than one obtained through conventional radiocarbon dating alone.

In the case of the timbers from 4 Church Lane, the samples all had low numbers of rings and as such could not be dated by dendrochronology. A core

sample from the west cruck blade of the arch-braced truss, containing 42 rings, was selected and sent to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC). Three rings sections were selected from this core, their radiocarbon content was measured, and these then ‘wiggled-matched’. This process indicated that there was a 91% probability that the tree used for this beam was felled at some point in the period 1405–1440, with a 68% probability that it was felled in the period 1415–35. As such, these dates are very much in keeping with

Tree-ring Dating Results

LYDDINGTON		<i>Samples taken</i>	<i>Samples measured</i>	<i>Samples grouped</i>	<i>Individually dated</i>	<i>Total dated</i>	<i>Chronology span</i>	<i>(actual or estimated)</i>	<i>Felling date</i>	
Site code	Site name									
LYD-A	5 The Green	9	9	9	0	9	1566–1678	1691–96	Roof (rear)	
LYD-B	24 Main Street	10	10	7	0	7	1301–1357 1419–1512	1372–1397 1515–20	Roof Roof/ceiling	
LYD-C	Avalon, 58 Main Street	4	4	2	1	3	1599–1671	1388–1413 1685–1710	Roof Rafters	
LYD-D Carbon14	4 Church Lane	9	4	0	0	0	—	Undated 1405-40	— Cruck blade	
LYD-E	2 Main Street	4	4	3	0	3	1681–1738	1745–50	Roof	
LYD-F	White Hart	4	2	0	0	0		1547–72 1618–43	Fireplace Ceiling beam	
LYD-G	Pageant House, 47 Main Street	5	5	0	0	0	—	undated	—	
LYD-H	Home Farmhouse, 37 Main Street	5	5	0	1	1	—	undated	—	
LYD-I	Manor House, 22 Main Street	30	28	20	2	22	1285–1487	Mid C15 Later C 15 Early C16 1758	Roof Roof Ceilings Ceiling	
LYD-J	Lilacs, 101 Main Street	12	10	10	0	10	1651–1701 1608–1726 1744–1795	1727–39 1809–34	Roof Roof	
LYD-K	6 The Green	6	6	2	0	2	1686–1755	1755	Roof	
LYD-L	Barn in Little Park	15	15	2	1	3	1261-1336 1651-1713	1347-1372 1726-51	Re-used Roof	
LYD-M	Stoneville Farm, 62 Main Street	9	9	9	0	9	1556–1658	1660–65	Roof	
Total		122	111	64	5	69				

Tree-ring Dating Results

CALDECOTT		<i>Samples taken</i>	<i>Samples measured</i>	<i>Samples grouped</i>	<i>Individually dated</i>	<i>Total dated</i>	<i>Chronology span</i>	<i>(actual or estimated)</i>	<i>Felling date</i>	
Site code	Site name									
CCT-A	Glebe House, 1 Church Close	16	12	4	0	0	—	undated		
CCT-B	The Old House, 45 Main Street	16	16	14	0	14	1555–1612 1657–1789	1626–51 1789	House Barn	
CCT-C	1 The Green	8	8	8	0	8	1596–1674 1724–1810	1680–84 1810	Original roof Later roof	
CCT-D	Home Farm, 39 Main Street	6	6	5	0	5	1572–1699	1699	Roof	
CCT-E	Meadow Farm, Brewhouse	2	2	2	0	2	1561–1645	1650–75	Ceiling	
CCT-F	Priest's House, Church Close	5	1	0	1	1	1492–1560	1575–1600	Fireplace	
Total		53	45	33	1	30				

Tree-ring Dating Results

THORPE BY WATER		<i>Samples taken</i>	<i>Samples measured</i>	<i>Samples grouped</i>	<i>Individually dated</i>	<i>Total dated</i>	<i>Chronology span</i>	<i>(actual or estimated)</i>	<i>Felling date</i>	
Site code	Site name									
TBW-A	The Old Manor House	19	17	16	0	16	1487–1576 1588–1678	1586–1611 1678	East end West end	
TBW-B	Manor House	9	8	4	0	4	1622–1688	1688	North range	
TBW-C	Rosebery Cottage, 2 Main Street	6	5	3	0	3	1550–1634	1643–68	Roof	
Total		34	30	23	0	23				

that determined on the basis of the stylistic evidence of the truss and the form of the building.

Commentary on Dating

NICK HILL

The earliest dated house found in the study was the cruck-framed building at Avalon, 58 Main Street, Lyddington, probably built in 1388–1413 (see page 113). The date relates only to one timber, a re-set collar, and is therefore somewhat tentative, but it is nevertheless an important discovery. At 4 Church Lane, Lyddington, the fine cruck truss (see page 112) could not be tree-ring dated, so it was decided to try C14 dating. This proved successful, with a reliable date assigned of 1405–40. A third medieval building which was successfully dated was 24 Main Street, Lyddington, a highly unusual timber-framed building of 1515–20, thought to be a high-class suite of lodgings associated with the bishops' palace (page 115). Two collars dated to 1372–97 were also found here, but these were later insertions of re-used timber, propping the purlins at mid-span. Three separate phases of re-used late medieval timbers, probably taken from demolished parts of the bishops' palace, were also found at the Manor House, Lyddington, which was rebuilt in 1758 (page 185). This small group of scientifically dated medieval buildings represents a valuable addition to our knowledge of early houses in Rutland, where such information is very thin on the ground.

An important discovery, with wider implications for the history of the bishops' palace, was the early timbers re-used at the barn in the Little Park at Lyddington. This indicated that a very large aisled barn was constructed for the bishop in 1347–72 (pages 119–127). Some of the aisle posts were re-used as tie-beams when the barn was rebuilt in 1726–51 (page 188).

Two unexpected dates, slightly earlier than the main rebuilding of the seventeenth century, were the fireplace beams at Priest's House, Caldecott (1575–1600, see page 137) and the White Hart, Lyddington (1547–72). Both timbers were re-set in houses of seventeenth-century date, but provide a glimpse of building activity in the later sixteenth century that has otherwise largely disappeared. At The Old Manor House, Thorpe, the tree-ring dating confirmed the date-stone of 1597 (**Figure 153**), and marks the start of the 'Great Rebuilding'. Buildings of the first half of the seventeenth century are represented by the roof timbers at 45 Main Street, Caldecott (1626–51) and the ceiling beam of 1618–43 at the White Hart (pages 148, 307). More numerous examples were found for the later seventeenth century, including the unusual hipped roof at Home Farm, Caldecott (page 236) and farm buildings at Meadow Farm, Caldecott (page 163) and Stoneville Farm (page 132). Extensions of the later seventeenth century were dated at Avalon and 5 The Green, Lyddington (page 142), as well as The Old Manor House, Thorpe. Date-stones were confirmed as a reliable guide to the construction date in three further cases: 1 The Green, Caldecott (1684); Manor House, Thorpe (1691, page 153); and Rosebery Cottage, Thorpe (1654, page 143).

In the eighteenth century, earlier roof structures were replaced at 6 The

Green, Lyddington (page 183) and 2 Main Street, Lyddington (page 184). At 45 Main Street, Caldecott, the barn (page 189) is a well-preserved example, constructed at the same time as the house was re-fronted, with its date-stone of 1789. Traditional building practices continued into the early nineteenth century, as can be seen at The Lilacs, Lyddington (page 202) and the re-roofing of 1 The Green, Caldecott.



SECTION FOUR

House Histories

Rosemary Canadine

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PART ONE

Introduction

This section of the book is devoted to discovering who used to live in the houses in the Manor and what roles they played in their local community. We are not attempting here to find out when a house was built; instead we are focusing on their owners and occupiers. These were the people who furnished the houses, adapted them, made a home in which to bring up their families and sometimes also worked in them. Each house has its own story and its own collection of documents, and the detective work that has been undertaken to unearth these stories is a story in itself.

To include all the references used to unravel these stories every time they were encountered would be extremely cumbersome and take up far too much space. To overcome this problem and assist the reader, an outline of the way in which the documents have been interpreted and used is instead presented here and the references summarised. The owners of each house that has been studied will, however, receive a folder containing a fully-referenced descent of title of their property, together with copies of all the documents used and any other relevant information that has been collected. Interested readers may request a disk from Lyddington Manor History Society containing descents of title for all the houses whose history has been recorded.

Maps

The first place in which we always began an investigation of any building was maps and plans. Of those, the latest, produced from the 1910 Valuation Office survey, also known as Lloyd George Domesday, proved particularly useful. Working copies of the maps and Valuation Books, often referred to as 'little Domesday books', are held at the Record Office in Leicester.¹ The full official set of maps and copies of the Field Books are held at the National Archives.² The latter recorded the owners and occupiers of every piece of land and property, together with details of materials of which each house was constructed, the number of rooms it contained and its state of repair. Outhouses were similarly detailed and the value of each house and land estimated. Houses were identified on the maps with an assessment number and the boundary of each property was marked in a different colour. Most (though not all) of the houses could be correlated with houses that still stand today by cross-checking with twentieth-century Ordnance Survey maps. Caldecott posed its own unique

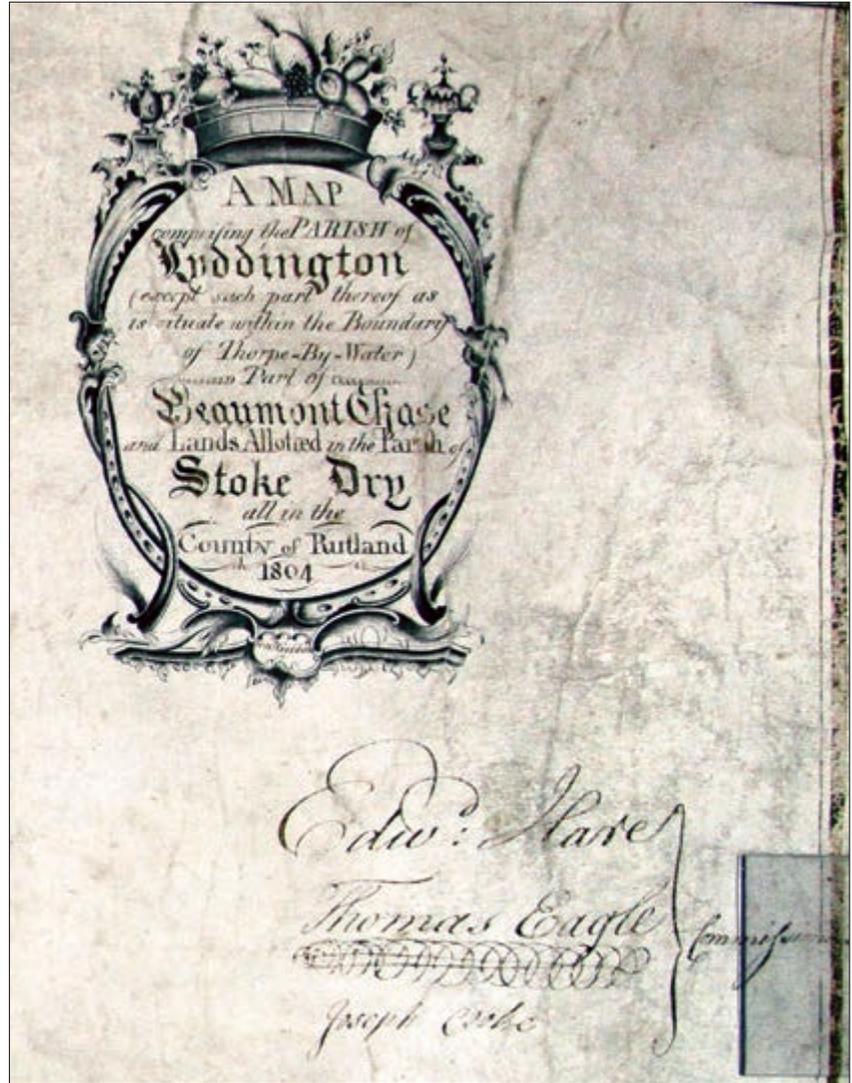


Figure 241 Cartouche from Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)

problems in this regard because no houses in Caldecott were given house numbers until 1966.

The next oldest set of maps that might have enabled us to identify owners of properties included those drawn up for the Burghley Estate Office in 1877. The map for Stoke Dry shows numbered plots whose owners may be identified in the corresponding survey, but the maps and surveys for Lyddington and Caldecott proved to be of little use, because the only properties listed were those owned by the Estate and all apart from one field in Caldecott had been sold ten years earlier.³ Lyddington and part of Thorpe by Water were mapped, however, in 1848–9 and a full survey produced in 1850.⁴ All the houses and plots of land on the map were numbered and the survey listed these

by number, giving a brief description of each property, the names of both owners and occupiers, its area and cultivation.

The third type of key map we have found that identifies the owners of numbered plots of houses in the Manor is Lyddington Enclosure Map.⁵ The Enclosure Act of 1799 resulted in an 1804 Enclosure Award for Lyddington with Caldecott. The Lyddington map carries the full cartouche, stating that it is 'A Map of the Parish of Lyddington (except such part thereof as is situated within the boundary of Thorpe-by-Water) Part of Beaumont Chase and Lands Allotted in the Parish of Stoke Dry all in the County of Rutland 1804'. It is signed by three Commissioners (see **Figure 241**). The map is created but reasonably legible and any faded numbers assigned to each of the old enclosures may be confirmed on the clearer Lyddington Tithe map of 1848.⁶ Owners of larger plots were written on the map and owners of smaller plots listed in a legend. All the old enclosures were also summarised in a booklet at Burghley House.⁷ A map of Caldecott, dated 1800 and called Caldecott Enclosure Map, is held at the record office in Leicester.⁸ This is simply entitled 'Caldecott in Rutland, surveyed by J Eagle'. It is signed by the same Commissioners as the Lyddington map but none of the houses are numbered, only the fields. It is very faded and the field numbers are difficult to read but a copy exists at Burghley House on which they are much clearer.⁹ Fortunately, the text of the Enclosure award describes all the public and private roads in the village and in several cases gives the names of the owners of the homesteads or home closes adjacent to their houses.

The earliest maps we have found for the Manor and Lordship of Stoke Dry are a map drawn for Thomas Powys Esq. by Vincent Wing in 1756 and a map of Lyddington Park belonging to the Rt. Hon. Brownlowe, Earl of Exeter, dated 1726.¹⁰ Both contain numbered plots and the names of their owners.

To summarise, from maps we can ascertain all the owners of houses in the Manor in 1910. In addition, in Lyddington, the owners of each house are known in 1848/50 and 1804, but in Caldecott we have only been able to glean a few in 1804. In Stoke Dry, maps give the owners in 1756 and 1877 and in Thorpe by Water, a few are known in 1850.

Title deeds

Armed with the information from the maps, it was then possible to search for the names of the house owners in court rolls and rentals. Where the search began for any given house depended very much on whether it was a copyhold, freehold or leasehold estate. In order to decide where to start, some knowledge of old title deeds was essential. A brief summary of the legal terminology encountered in property transactions is given here for reference.

Three types of estate will be found in the pages that follow. A freehold estate is of indefinite duration; a leasehold one of limited duration and a customary or copyhold estate is one held by tenure of a manor. All land in England originally belonged to the Sovereign. Much of it was granted to the monarch's subjects, who held it as Crown tenants and who, in turn, could grant or convey it to others, who could then grant it to their own tenants, and

so on. The last tenant in the chain became, in effect, the owner of the land, as we would understand it. This process was stopped in 1290, after which a purchaser of a property had to hold his property from the same person as the vendor.

A **freehold** estate was usually held 'for ever'. In 'fee simple', the property passed, subject to certain rules, at the owner's death to his heir or heirs, or he could dispose of it as he wished. In *fee tail*, the property could only pass to a certain group of people, such as male heirs, female heirs or direct descendants of a person and his or her spouse. Such property was *entailed*, the tenant was 'in tail', and it could not be sold to anyone else other than to the heir or heirs as specified. If there was no such person, or the owner wished to grant it to someone else, he had to stage or 'suffer' a Recovery.

A Recovery was a fictitious action, a ruse devised by the legal profession. It involved three people and one other, D, often in Lyddington called Hugh Hunt or John Doe, who didn't even exist. The three people were A, who owned the land 'in tail'; B, usually a court official, who in Lyddington courts was referred to as a 'perfect tenant for the Recovery'; and person C who wanted to get the land and was called the demandant. The process worked like this: A came to court and surrendered the entailed property to B. C then brought an action against (i.e. sued) B, claiming, quite falsely, that it was really his and that he had been illegally ejected from it. B defended his right to the property which he said, quite correctly, was given to him by A. A was then asked to vouch for the land and said he got it from D. C then asked permission to confer privately with D, but, although C returned to the court, D was alleged to have disappeared in contempt of court. B, being unable therefore to support his case, lost his action, and C was awarded the property in 'fee simple'. This procedure was abolished in 1833.

A **lease** or demise occurs when the owner of a property grants it to someone for a limited time, usually for a sum of money called a fee or fine plus an annual rent. Leases of freehold properties were usually given for a number of lives, normally three, being those of the leaseholder and two of his relatives. Such leases could be transferred and, when one of the named lessees died, the lease was often granted to another. In effect the owner of the lease was the freeholder of the property. In contrast, when a lease was granted for a fixed number of years, the freehold was retained by the owner. In such cases, as well as paying the rent, a service was often demanded. Services in leases were usually written as covenants that might include obligations to attend manorial courts, keep properties in good repair, plant certain trees, have ones grain ground at the lord's mill, look after hunting dogs, help with the harvest, and pay the rent on time.

The third type of estate is customary or **copyhold**. Such properties were originally granted by the lord of the manor to his cottars or serfs, tenants who often paid very little or no rent but were obliged to perform certain services for him. Though they paid little rent, their cottages often had common rights or land belonging to them. After the Black Death in the fourteenth century,

labour became so short that many of the services were commuted into money payments or fixed rents, which were collected twice a year on Lady Day (25th March) and Michaelmas (29th September) by the local reeve, who, in the Manor of Lyddington with Caldecott, changed each year to avoid any possibility of corruption. The lord of the manor took a payment, or fine, from each new copyholder whenever a property changed hands and the title was then written into the manor court rolls. The new tenant was provided with a copy, hence the name of the tenure. Copyhold property could be bought, sold, mortgaged, left by will or entailed in just the same way as freehold property. The local custom of Borough English, however, prevailed in the Manor, by which property descended to the youngest, not the eldest son, of the family and it was rigidly enforced. An owner, when he acquired his land at the manor court was said to be 'admitted' to it. An owner who was parting with his land was said to 'surrender' it to the court. Court rolls and copies of court rolls were written in Latin until 1733, except during the Commonwealth.

Both freehold and copyhold property could be mortgaged, though the latter was said to have been 'conditionally surrendered'. A mortgage occurred when an owner borrowed money from another person and pledged his property as security. The property was conveyed to the mortgagee for the price of the mortgage but with the proviso that it would be conveyed back if the mortgagor repaid the sum on a specified date. In fact, the mortgagor retained his property as long as he paid the agreed interest, even if his debt was not repaid on the stated day, so the date for repayment was not really significant. When the mortgage was repaid the mortgagee gave the mortgagor a warrant of satisfaction. If the mortgagor failed to repay the loan and pay the agreed interest, his property became forfeit and passed to the mortgagee.

Copyhold tenure was abolished in 1922 and the whole manorial system ended in 1925. By then, many of the copyhold properties in the Manor had then been converted to freehold by the Lord of the Manor. To do this, he conveyed the property to the copyholder by an agreement that said the property had been enfranchised, and for which the copyholder paid a sum to compensate the Lord of the Manor for rents he would no longer receive. Many other copyholders missed the deadline for such conveyances and later came to a compensation agreement with the Burghley House estate steward; yet others never came forward and their manorial rights were simply extinguished.

Descents of Title

Luckily, most of the buildings in the Manor are copyhold and can therefore be traced through court rolls and copyhold rentals. Once an owner of a copyhold property at a certain date was established from one of the maps, a search of the manor court rolls could begin. All thirteen bound copies of Lyddington with Caldecott manor court rolls are indexed (see **Figure 242**). They start in 1708 and run, almost continuously to 1925.¹¹ The only gap occurs between 1729 and 1733. By 1729, it must have become obvious that the requirement to write the rolls in Latin was soon going to disappear. It is hardly surprising that the scribes had become reluctant to engage in the chore of writing up the



Figure 242 Bound copies of Lyddington with Caldecott manor court rolls in the archive store at Burghley House.



Figure 243 Early court rolls in the Burghley House archive.

last few before the change took place. All the volumes have been scanned by members of the Society and the indices transcribed into Excel spreadsheets. Many of the court papers for the missing years and the preceding years have been found, scattered throughout the archive at Burghley House, over the last twelve years. They cover the date range 1465 to 1707, though the sequence is not quite complete and the papers for some years are missing. All are now catalogued, scanned and indexed, which speeds up the search process immensely.

Indices in the court rolls give the names of the parties involved, the year of each transaction and the number of the page in the volume on which it



Figure 244 Liddington and Caldecott Rental, 1715–6. (BH, Exeter Archive)

starts. What they do not do is give any of the details of the parcels of property being transferred or their rents. When searching for a transaction concerning a particular property, all these details need to be ascertained, including who was occupying the property, to ensure that they match all the other information held on that property. The value of a rent is particularly significant, as it stays constant over many years. A table of transactions, very similar to that given in many abstracts of title found in the title deeds of many houses prior to the advent of the Land Registry, is then gradually built up and cross-checked with data available from maps, surveys, rentals and any old house deeds we have been lent to copy.

Surveys, Leases, Terriers and Rentals

Two surveys in the Exeter archive have proved particularly useful in corroborating data in house histories. The earlier, dated 1564, lists all the land and possessions of William Cecil in the County of Rutland.¹² The later one, as already mentioned, is the Lyddington survey of 1850. There are many leases in the archive but most concern land, not houses. References to those that do concern particular houses are provided in context later in this section of the book. Terriers, being surveys of land belonging to one or more person, by their very nature, say little about houses but do indicate the extent of land held and therefore the wealth of individual owners.

Data in house histories also needs to be cross-checked against rentals, though there are some pitfalls for the unwary. Sometimes, the reeve will enter rents paid by an occupier who does not actually own the house and rents in court rolls and rentals are subject to errors. The only early rental that lists copyhold tenants as well as leasehold and freehold tenants within the Manor is dated 1654.¹³ Next, in chronological order, is a series of copyhold rentals for the Manor, started in 1715 and running through to 1816.¹⁴ (see Figure 244)

General Observations.

Unsatisfactory state of affairs generally
 In list of file of conditional surrenders - no entries of the
 Copyholders.

"Oven money" Q: what is this
 "Garden Rents" - what are these
 "Freeholds" There are numerous Rents under this heading
 being it is presumed in the nature of Chief Rents -
 - looking to show how & where so they are derived

Figure 245 A reeve's observations on Lyddington and Caldecott rentals, 1887. (BH, Exeter archive)

At the time of the Enclosure, many copyholders were allotted newly enclosed pieces of land in lieu of all their customary rights and land holdings. The rents they were paying, however, stayed the same. Keeping a track of all the changes must have been extremely difficult for the Reeves, especially as a new one was appointed each year; it would seem that by 1816 it had all become just too confusing and they gave up! A second series was started in 1850, by which time things were a bit more settled, and this went through to 1925.¹⁵ In order to set this up, in 1843, every copyhold property in the Burghley estate was listed in a huge volume.¹⁶ The ink used has unfortunately faded badly and it is difficult to decipher but it has, with care, proved very useful. The later series, though, was also not without its problems, as the reeve complained in 1887.¹⁷ (Figure 245). Among items he queried were oven money, which was a small amount, usually 2d, paid together with whatever rent was due on a property. It gave the owner use of the communal oven or the privilege of owning their own. Chief rents were customary rents paid by freeholders of the Manor; quit rents were paid in lieu of services; and garden rents were paid for plots used to grow vegetables or herbs.

A whole series of estate rentals for leasehold properties started in 1654 and continued to 1697.¹⁸ John, Earl of Exeter had been travelling in Europe in the late 1600s, buying huge quantities of artefacts, which remain at Burghley House today. They form part of a most wonderful collection but they almost bankrupted the estate and it took some years for it to recover. As a result, estate officials could not be paid and proper records were not kept. Estate rentals were reinstated in 1720 and those in the archive continue until 1960.¹⁹ There are so many that it would have been nigh on impossible to scan even the Lyddington Manor sections of all of them but they have been sampled and consulted for information relating to the few leasehold houses in the Manor.

The chapters that follow contain histories of many of the houses that have been studied. It would be impossible to discuss them all in detail and some feature more heavily than others. The focus has been on those that have an interesting story or reveal some aspect of the Manor that may be significant. Most importantly, they are there to be enjoyed.

PART TWO

Caldecott

Approach from the south

To appreciate the setting of Caldecott, the most southerly village in Rutland, it is best to approach it from the south via Rockingham hill. Leaving the modern buildings and commerce of Corby at the top of the escarpment, the road rapidly descends past the twin drum towers of Rockingham Castle, which can be briefly glimpsed high on the left. Suddenly, in a startling transition, on either side of the road appear the stone and thatched cottages of Rockingham. The road then levels out and the broad valley of the Welland stretches ahead. The scene immediately suggests a much older settlement (the bridge across the river dates from the thirteenth century) but on the far bank at the end of a long causeway, the first building we encounter is a relatively modern public house, The Castle Inn, which served passengers arriving at the nearby Rockingham Station, a few yards further on. The railway opened in 1851.

A small bridge over the Little Eye or Eye Brook, so named from the French *eau* for water, leads to the village. This stream, a tributary of the Welland, rises in Tilton and, in large part, forms the Rutland-Leicestershire boundary. Annual floods of the Welland caused havoc, especially before the bridge was built and there was only a ford over the Little Eye. The building of Eye Brook reservoir in the 1930s alleviated much, but not all, of the problem. The first building on the left on entering Caldecott was the mill, built in 1877 near the site of an earlier mill. It last worked as a flour mill in 1910, becoming the village hall in 1927 and opening as a garage in 1946.



Figure 246 Bridge over the Eye Brook with Caldecott mill on the left. (Canon John R.H. Prophet)

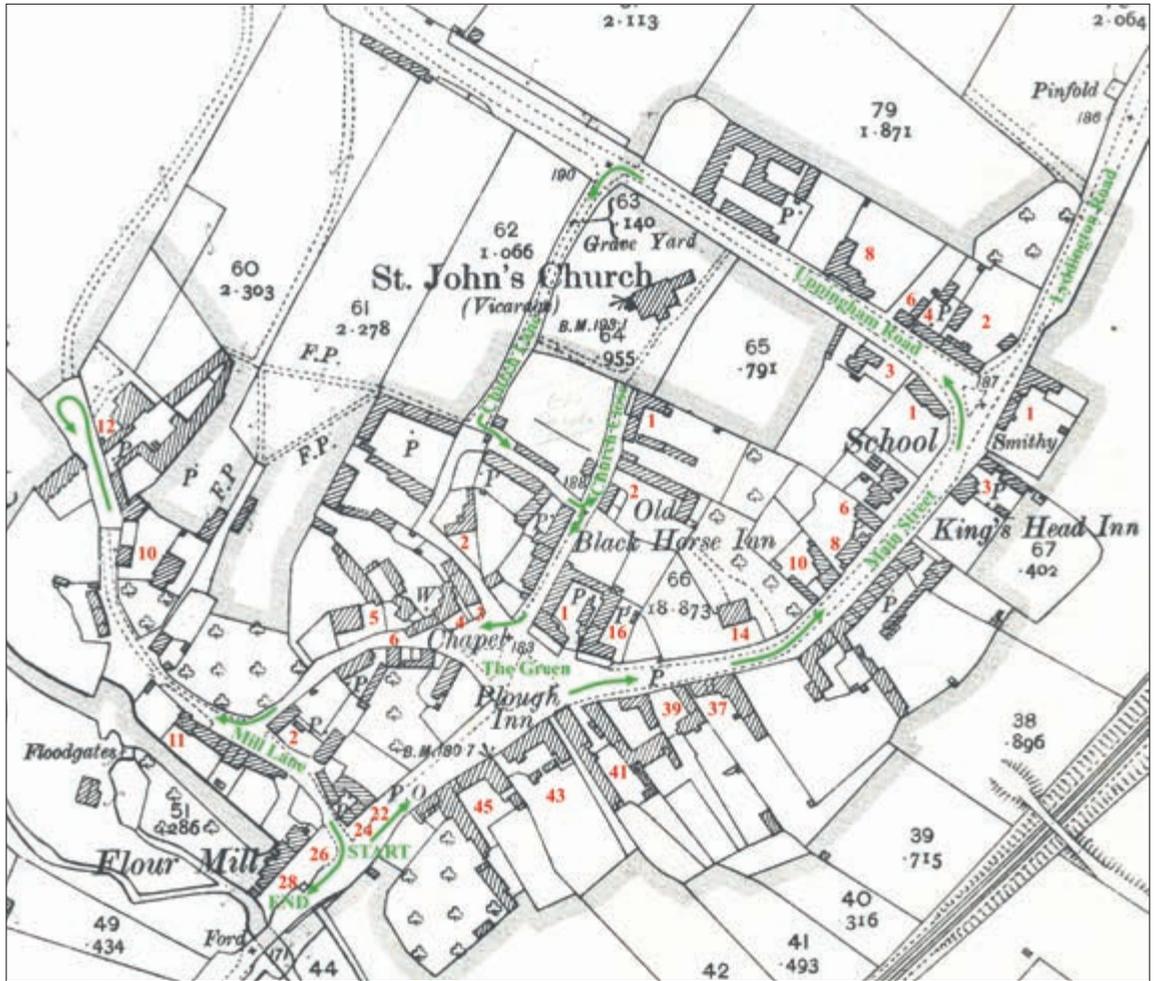


Figure 247 Caldecott from the Ordnance Survey Series II map of 1904, showing intended route through the village. (RCM)

We start our study of Caldecott houses in the village with the group of properties along the south-east side of Main Street, backing onto the rich pasture that extends across the railway to the banks of the river Welland. These houses are identified in Figure 247 by house numbers of their current addresses.

The Old House, 45 Main Street

This thatched house, standing on the south side of the road just beyond the bridge, has a fine frontage with a date-stone of 1789, but survey and dating have shown that it was originally built around 1626–51 (see page 144). The stone façade of finely-cut stone was added in 1789. The roof eaves were raised at this time and a stone barn, with roof timbers dated to 1789, added to the rear.

The earliest record we have found of a building on the site is for February

1654, when Thomas George and Mary his wife surrendered the property to the manor court. Mary was 'solely and secretly' examined by the steward of the court to ensure that she agreed to this. In April, Mary was admitted tenant to the property for life. It was stipulated that it would return to Thomas when she died, provided he did not remarry, and that when he died it was to go to their son, Thomas. The property was described as 'a messuage and several parcels of land, meadow and pasture, being accounted a third of a yardland belonging'. The rent was 2s 8d. The elder Thomas George had been living in Caldecott for some time. In 1625, he was fined 6d at the Easter court for allowing his horses in the grain field and another 6d for breaking the assize of ale. The quality and strength of ale brewed in each village was carefully monitored by 'ale tasters', appointed by the manor court. Anyone brewing ale that failed to meet the appropriate standard was said to have broken the 'Assize of ale'.

Thomas George junior, a 'common brewer and seller of ale' like his father, was also fined 6d for breaking the assize of ale in 1654. Later that year, the Michaelmas rental showed that he was paying 3s 4d for his copyholds, i.e. 2s 8d for his messuage and the land belonging to it and 8d for two acres of arable land. He also leased land from the Earl of Exeter, for which he paid 1s 2d plus six chickens or 1s 6d in rent. In 1665, according to the Hearth Tax, the house contained two hearths and by 1668, the house and all the land was held by Thomas George junior, by then living in Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire. He surrendered it that year to his wife Joane for life, after which it was to go to his two daughters, Sarah and Martha. By 1679, both sisters were married, Sarah to Thomas Franklin and Martha to Thomas Martin. They surrendered the house and all the land belonging to it to William King in 1696.

William King married a Joane in 1720. It is possible that she was the widow of Thomas George; her first name is identical though her surname is not recorded in the Parish Register. William King died in 1744. He was a wealthy man but had no direct descendants; in his will he left his new freehold house and its extensive contents plus a quarter of a copyhold yardland to his daughter-in-law, Mary Russell. His copyhold messuage and homestead, with its third of a yardland (i.e. The Old House) went to his nephew Thomas King, together with some arable land and a half-cottage. Thomas sold the half-cottage in 1745, though it re-appeared in his will dated 1755, which may have been drafted before he sold it. His wife Mary was pregnant when Thomas King died, and his daughters, Mary, Anne and Elizabeth were all under the age of twenty-one. Thomas's son, also called Thomas, was only six years old when he inherited the copyhold from his father. Described as 'a third of a yardland containing thirteen acres and one messuage and homestead thereto belonging', it was held as before under the rent of 3s 4d. Young Thomas also inherited his father's freehold house and half-cottage in Caldecott and two undivided moieties



Figure 248 The Old House, 45 Main Street, 2013.
(Robert Ovens)



Figure 249 Barn of
45 Main Street, 2010.
(Robert Ovens)

(i.e. half parts) of arable land, each held under the rents of 8d as well as a quarter of a yardland.

The elder Thomas King had been an influential man in Caldecott. In the 1740s, he was elected juror in the local manor court. Young Thomas followed in his father's footsteps, becoming juror himself in 1770, but dying, aged 26, in 1774, leaving no offspring. His sisters, Ann, Elizabeth and Sarah, each inherited a quarter of his copyhold property held under the rent of 10d, i.e. a quarter of 3s 4d, also a quarter of the two moieties of arable land, each of which they held under the rent of 2d, a quarter of the erstwhile 8d. His eldest sister Mary, who had married Edward Inchley, had died, and her share went to her son John, then only three years old. A memorandum in the court roll of October 1774 stated that the messuage and homestead had been sold and now belonged to John Brown and was held under the rent of 1s. In fact, he was probably at that stage only a sub-tenant.

In due course, the three surviving sisters married: Ann to Samuel Stokes, Elizabeth to Brian Ward and Sarah to Robert Fairchild, a butcher of Great Easton. In 1788, Ann and Sarah sold their shares of the messuage and homestead or home close with its buildings and appurtenances to John Brown. The rent of their shares of house with its buildings and home close, minus the third of a yardland which had belonged to it, was apportioned at 1s. This too is confusing, for only half the messuage was being sold. Nevertheless, the rentals show that John Brown, as occupant, paid the full rent of 1s from 1789. John Brown and his wife Elizabeth had a daughter, Ann, in 1786, followed in 1788 by a son, also called John. The initials in the date stone, JEB and the date 1789, indicate that John and Elizabeth were responsible for re-fronting the house in elegant ironstone ashlar with brown Uppingham stone quoins and lintels, plus bands and other dressings in pale limestone so typical of Caldecott.

In 1795, John Inchley, by then of age and living in Drayton, surrendered his quarter share of the messuage and home close to John Brown, but gave his share of both the third of a yardland and also of the two moieties of arable land to Brian Ward who, with his wife Elizabeth, still retained her quarter share of the messuage and land. Because of this, when John Brown died in 1807, he could only hand over the three undivided fourth parts of the messuage and home close to his son, John. From then on the rent of the house remained at 9d in the court rolls, whereas in the rentals it was 1s. John junior in turn left the property to his son, yet another John, in 1818. Because John, who was bequeathed the property in 1818, and his younger brother Pridmore, were both then under the age of 21, the property was held in trust until 1842.

In 1804, on Enclosure of the open and common fields in Caldecott, the first John Brown received two allotments in lieu of all his lands and rights of common. Seen on part of a copy of the Enclosure Award map at Burghley House, John's allotments are numbered 94 and 95 (see **Figure 250**). Bounded on the north by the turnpike road from Rockingham to Uppingham, on the south by the Rugby and Stamford Railway, on the east by the property of Thomas Brown and on the west by the River Eye, the only access to nearby land and the fields was through the messuage and home close. Consequently, when his grandson sold his three quarter share of the house and homestead to Hutchinson Dalby Hunt in 1861, held under the rent of 9d, it was subject to:

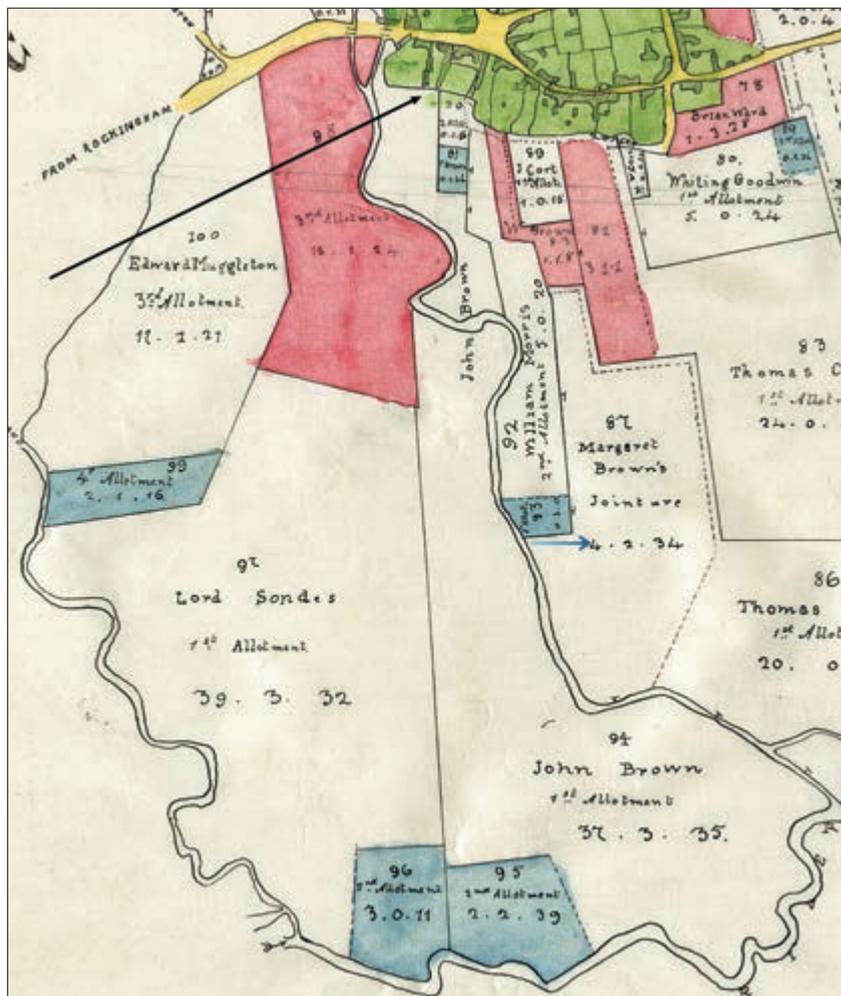


Figure 250 Part of a copy of Caldecott Enclosure Award map. The arrow points to the large plot of 45 Main Street. (BH, Exeter Archive)

the right of road or way for the Right Honorable George John Lord Sondes, William de Capel Brookes, The Right Honorable John Charles Earl Spencer and the Honorable Frederick Spencer their heirs and assigns and their Agents or Servants and the Tenants and Occupiers of the adjoining closes pieces or parcel of land called the Bridge Close, the Middle Close and the Bottom Close (which were surrendered by John Brown to them on 22 May 1844) from time to time and at all times thereafter by night and day and for all purposes to go return and pass and repass with Horses Carts Waggons and other Carriages laden or unladen and also to drive Cattle and other Beasts in and through over and along the said homestead from the Turnpike Road which road was to be of breadth fourteen feet the Gate and Gateway from the said Turnpike Road to be made and maintained and the road or roadway for ever thereafter maintained and kept in repair by and at the joint expense of the said George John Lord Sondes, William de Capel Brookes, John Charles Earl Spencer and Frederick Spencer their heirs and assigns and the said Hutchinson Dalby Hunt his heirs and assigns.



Figure 251 Roadway to the fields behind 45 Main Street, 2010. (Robert Ovens)

Hutchinson Dalby had been living in Caldecott since at least 1838, probably in The Old House. He only added Hunt to his name when he inherited Horselunges Farm, Hellingly in Sussex, from James Edward Hunt of Brighton and Ditchling that year.¹ He seems to have been known locally as Henry Hunt, the name recorded in the Inland Revenue survey of Caldecott in 1910. Later Rentals indicate that he continued to pay the rent of 9d for the three-fourth parts of the property until his death in 1913. His widow Alice and son George held the copyhold until, in 1935, a compensation agreement with the Marquess of Exeter for £30 5s 8d extinguished all the Marquess's manorial rights to the property.

When the other quarter part of the original property passed from Thomas Ward to Bryan Ward in 1819, it was still held under the rent of 10d. It was then described as a plot or parcel of land of three acres more or less, in the Middle field of Caldecott 'allotted on Inclosure in lieu of the third of a yardland and a messuage and homestead thereto belonging', held by copy under the rent of 3s 4d (note, not a quarter of it) and the fourth share of the two moieties of arable land which had been held under two rents of 2d each. This parcel of land passed from Bryan Ward to his son Bryan Edward Ward, then to John Thomas Ward in 1865. The rent was still 10d when Bellars Butler inherited it in 1869. James Sanders of Rockingham acquired the plot of land in 1872 but when he defaulted on a conditional surrender, it was seized by the Leicester Bank and sold to William Thomas Hayr, junior. Mrs S.A. Hayr held it from 1924 until the manorial rights were extinguished in 1932. None of them seemed aware that their rent included 3d for a quarter of The Old House!

The history of this house is complicated, firstly by the fact that the copyhold was been split four ways, and secondly because land that belonged to the messuage was parted from it. It is hardly surprising that the reeves and the stewards of the Manor court became confused; what is surprising is that their records quite often disagreed. Did they never talk to each other?

The house became a substantial property where two Grand National winners, Playfair in 1888 and Forbra in 1932, were born and bred. Playfair, owned by Ned Baird, was trained by Tom Cannon and ridden by George Mawson. Forbra was owned by William Parsonage, trained by Tom Rimmel near Worcester and ridden by Tim Harney. The convenience of the nearby railway was probably a factor that led to the setting up of the stables. A local resident remembers Forbra being walked back to his stable from the station after his big race.

The appearance of the house has changed considerably since this early photograph was taken in 1910 (see **Figure 252**). In the Inland Revenue Survey of 1910, the property was described as 'stone thatch and slate built'. It had four bedrooms and three downstairs rooms, an outside closet and a tool-shed. A stone and thatch entrance led to the yard which contained two barns, harness room and stabling for four horses, plus several more barns in an orchard. All



Figure 252 Caldecott Main Street, 1910. The cottage on the right was later modified and used as a barn.
(Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

were in fair or good condition. Also on the premises was a very old and worthless stone and thatch cottage. The market value of the whole was £1600.

Stone House, 43 Main Street

The main part of this house, with its large sash windows, appears to have been rebuilt in the late nineteenth century. However, the older masonry of the attached buildings to the left show evidence of an earlier building on the site.

The history of this property has been traced back to 1590, but it may have been one of the three messuages that John Hill held in Caldecott in 1563.³ Two of those houses held half a virgate of land, as did this house. John and Richard Hill were both mentioned in Military Survey of 1522 and in the Lay Subsidy of 1524. In 1590, Robert Hill surrendered the property to William Hill, who was to receive it after the death of Laurence Hill, from whom Robert had bought it. The property consisted of a messuage and half a virgate of land, held under the rent of 5s. At the next manor court, William surrendered it to himself and Katherine Kerke, his intended wife. William Hill and Katherine held the property until 1625, when they handed it over to their son William and Francesca Jenkinson, whom their son was to marry. Immediately they received it, William and Francesca gave back to his parents a chamber called a 'Parlour', two bays of a barn and five acres two roods of land in Caldecott for the duration of their lives. William and Francesca lived in the house until 1649, when they passed the property on Francis Jarman, their son. Francis Jarman's name and the copyhold rent of 5s appear in the Michaelmas Rental of 1654. He died in 1658 and in his will he left to his son, Francis, a chest in the upper parlour and a bedstead with bed 'cloathes' and a chair in the nether parlour. Bequests were also made to his eldest daughter Jane and to



Figure 253 Stone House, 43 Main Street, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)

Chose and to verify whom it may con-
 taine that I doe appoint my servant
 Richard Coles to take up my Estate in
 the house formerly Francis Jarman's in
 Pauldorott for the use of me my Exors
 Administrators & assigns with my
 hand this 30th Day of October 1682.

Mary Downhall

admitted by Richd Hoorney Rtn & Coles

Figure 254 Mary
 Downhall's appointment
 of Richard Coles, 1682.
 (BH Exeter Archive)

his youngest daughter Fernces (Frances). In his will no mention is made of his wife Elizabeth, and all his children were then under the age of twenty-one.

The Hearth Tax tells us that in 1665, this house, containing three hearths, belonged to 'widdow Jerman', presumably because Francis was still too young to inherit. On 16 May 1682, Francis Jarman surrendered the messuage house and the little close adjoining it, to Mary Downhall of nearby Cottingham in the county of Northampton. Mary Downhall was a very wealthy and well-connected lady, related to the Bedingfelds and the Knivetts of Norfolk. She clearly had no need of this residence and in October that year appointed her attorney Richard Coles to take up her estate in the house until it was sold. Mary was literate; her elegant signature is appended to the document (see Figure 254).⁴ Mary surrendered the house to Thomas Brown in 1683. Described as a little close with a messuage, without the land the rent was now 6d. Thomas Brown held the property until 1716, when it was surrendered to Matthew Baxter, a blacksmith, and his wife Amey. Amey predeceased her husband, who died in 1746. Matthew had prospered and in his will he was described as a yeoman.⁵ The very fact that his will had been proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and not in one of the local courts is an indication of his wealth. He gave bequests to Martha, the wife of Peter Brown, miller of nearby Deene in the county of Northampton, and to her son James and daughter Amey, to whom he also gave all his household goods. Bequests were given to members of the Muggleton, Woodcock, Brown and Wilford families. The house he bequeathed to William Baxter, their son-in-law, of Thorpe by Water, who was admitted to the property the following year.

In 1780, William Baxter, yeoman of Thorpe by Water, left an estate spread over East Farndon, Little Bowden and Clipston in the county of Northampton, in addition to his holdings in Caldecott. His will revealed, however, that his premises in Caldecott had been mortgaged for £180. He bequeathed his copyhold messuage and homestead to his nephew Thomas Brown, who was charged with paying £80 when he took possession and William Brown, to whom he left the land, was charged the remaining £100. The premises were charged, in addition, with a payment of £80 to William Baxter's servant, Daniel Freeman. Probate returned an inventory amounting to £300. Thomas Brown retained the property until his death in 1823. The house and bake-house in which he was living, the home close adjoining his dwelling house, his other messuage and bake-house in Caldecott occupied by Thomas Meadows, and several pieces of copyhold and freehold land, were all left to his sons, John and Charles, in trust for the maintenance of his wife Ann and the bringing up of his grandchildren until his grandson Thomas Brown should attain the age of twenty-one years. Since his grandson was only four at the time, he was not admitted to any of the properties bequeathed to him until 1839.

By 1876 the first Post Office had been established in the village and was operated from the barn by Miss Anna Raines, whose sister ran a 'dame' school on the premises. Before the arrival of the railway, letters had been collected by the postman and taken on foot to and from Uppingham.

Thomas Brown, who followed in his grandfather's footsteps as a baker, lived to the ripe old age of 87. In his will, dated 1902, he left the whole of his real estate to George Brown, a grazier (subject to the payment of an annuity to Thomas's wife, though she subsequently died in his lifetime). Known as the bake-house, it was also the parish oven where, in addition to bread, large batches were baked for distribution to those described as being 'on the Parish'.⁶ Many a Sunday lunch was cooked here too and housewives could be seen rushing home with steaming joints after being summoned to collect them by the bell at noon. The oven was also used for baking clay pipes.

In the Inland Revenue Survey of 1910, the land that went with the house was assessed as 13½ acres on the Lyddington Road and 1¾ acres on the Uppingham Road. The house contained four bedrooms, four living rooms, two kitchens and a pantry. Built of stone with a slate roof, it was in good repair. Outside there was a bake-house and an adjacent barn, stable, cowshed, coal house, store, cart shed and coal house, all described as old. Its market value was assessed at £1,431.

By the end of the 1914–18 war, the bake-house was no longer in use. Young George Brown, who should have taken over from his father, was killed on Armistice Day. Shown here in 1914 on Church Lane between the Black Horse Inn, which was later demolished, and the back wall of The Yews, 1, the Green, is 'Baker' Chapman, who walked with his hand cart from Gretton to keep the residents of Caldecott supplied with bread. (see **Figure 255**)

In 1917, George Brown built a new house on a piece of land adjacent to The Green, opposite to Stone House on the other side of Main Street. Although the copyhold stayed in George Brown's name until the 1930s, John Brown farmed there in the 1920s. He was followed by Walter Brown and then John,



Figure 255 'Baker' Chapman, who walked with his hand cart from Gretton to keep the residents of Caldecott supplied with bread, 1914. (Dennis Wright)

who moved later to Weldon House on the Uppingham Road. As we have seen, the inhabitants of the property on this site played an important role in the life of the village.



Figure 256 The Old Plough, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

The Old Plough, 41, Main Street

With its gable end to the street, this house appears to date back to the late seventeenth century and indeed, court rolls tell us that a member of the Kirby family was living in this house in 1641.

Although we have found no earlier documents directly connected to the property, we do know that members of the family had been in Caldecott for some time. Richard Kyrbye appears in the Military Survey of 1522, and Roger Kyrbye in the Lay Subsidy of 1525. Neither was recorded as holding any land at that time and no-one of that name (or Cately, Kately or Keightley, as it is sometimes spelled) appears in the manorial survey of 1563. However, the family must have soon acquired some, because a John Kirby served as juror at the manor court in 1588. He had to have been a copyholder or a freeholder of Caldecott to hold such a position. His initials appear on a plaque over the door which reads 'AoD 1575 IK' (I and J were not

distinguished from one another at that time). Later in 1625, he acquired 3½ acres of arable land in Caldecott, part of a holding which also included a toft in Snelston.

Bridgett Kirbie, a spinster, had also been living in Caldecott; in her will, written in 1628, she gave to all her brothers and sisters £5 (about £500 in today's money) apiece, to the church of Caldecott 10s, to all her godchildren a lamb and to every one of the poor people inhabiting the town 4d.⁷ All the rest of her estate went to Zachary Kirbie, her father. In 1641, another Bridgett Kirby surrendered a messuage and half a virgate of land to the manor court, half of which she was to retain and half was to go to her son John and his wife Prudence. The rent for the whole property was 5s. This was to become The Old Plough.

Between 1641 and 1655, John and Prudence had seven children: Bridgett, John, Prudence, Elizabeth, Zephany, Zachary and Walter. Prudence, born on 1st December 1644, married Thomas Brown, an apothecary of Uppingham who, according to Marian Neenan,⁸ was a descendant, possibly the grandson, of Robert Brown, a major figure in the separatist movement and known as the father of Congregationalism.⁹ Robert Brown was born in Tolethorpe, Rutland, around 1553. He studied at Cambridge, preached there, started to question established views of Puritanism, took up a teaching post at Stamford School, and then became a self-styled preacher and was gaoled for preaching without a license.¹⁰ He was soon released. His family was well-connected politically and had family relations with William Lord Burghley. After a turbulent career, Brown recanted and was offered the benefice of Achurch, Northamptonshire, in 1591. In 1633, he was charged for striking a local policeman and eventually died in Northampton gaol. Nevertheless, Brown and his writings were a major influence in the spread of religious dissent. Interestingly, many people in Caldecott have the surname Brown and the chapel that had stood on The Green in Caldecott for many years was a Congregational one.

As his family grew, John Kirby steadily acquired more land. In 1648, having gained the status of yeoman, he leased 4¼ acres of land from the Earl of Exeter for a term of 21 years at an annual rent of £1 13s 4d (about £125 per annum at today's value). His mother Bridgett died in 1657 and was buried in Caldecott, and he and Prudence then became owners of the whole copyhold. In 1662, John took out a mortgage of £21 4s. It is possible that this was to pay for building work on his house, which was recorded as having three hearths in 1665 and was therefore one of the larger houses in the village. John died in 1668 and Prudence in 1670. Both were buried in Caldecott and their son, also called John, inherited the property. In 1696, John surrendered it to the manor court to be given after his death to Zachary Rue Clerk, the vicar of Lyddington, and his wife Bridgett, John's elder sister. It was stipulated that it was to go from them 'to the heirs of Zachary from the body of Bridgett procreated'. If Zachary and Bridgett had no children, the property was to return to John's heirs. It is noteworthy that although Zachary Rue was the Vicar of Lyddington, he held no property there; his house and lands were all in Caldecott.

Lyddington parish register indicates that Zachary and Bridgett had two sons, Zachary and John, both baptised in Lyddington. However, by the time of his death in 1724, Zachary Rue appeared to have had only one surviving

descendant, a daughter called Elizabeth, who had married Edward Halford (an apothecary) in Lyddington, in 1709. No record of her baptism has been found and it is possible that Bridget was not her mother; maybe Bridget had died and Zachary had married again. Whatever the reason, Zachary went to the manor court in 1717 and asked for (and was granted) a Recovery, so that he could leave his property to his heirs and assigns, instead of his and Bridget's direct descendants. When his daughter Elizabeth inherited the property in October 1724, it was then described as 'One Messuage house in Caldecott with a Kitchen Stables Barns Orchards and Garden Places thereto belonging'. This is the only instance in which specific mention of a kitchen has been found in the description of a property in the manorial court rolls and it implies that it was a separate building. We have been unable to find Zachary's will and only a transcript of his inventory.¹¹ This is dated 1723, but it should be remembered that the calendar was changed in 1751 by an Act that decreed that 1 January should be the first day of 1752, whereas it had previously been 25th March. Dates written before the change took place were termed 'Old Style'. This inventory, in the 'New Style' calendar adopted by most historians and used in this book, was therefore written in 1724.

A kitchen appears in both court roll and inventory. A former resident remembers there being a room across the yard called 'a scullery' which may have been the old kitchen. Above it was another room reached by a set of wooden steps at the back of the building. If correct, this would be one of only

Figure 257 Inventory of Zachary Rue, 1724

A True and Perfect Inventory of all the Goods, Chattells and Personall Estate of Zachary Rue late of Lyddington in the County of Rutland Clerk Deceased taken, valued and appraised the thirteenth day of January Anno Domini 1723

		£:	s	d
Imprimis	Purse and Apparrel	10:	1:	0
Item In the Hall	Two Tables Six Chairs with other Lumber	1:	10:	0
In the Parlour	One Feather bedd with Bedstead Blankets Curtains and One Chest of Drawers	3:	5:	0
In the Chamber over the Hall	One Bed Blankets Curtains vallance and Bedstead One Table and Seven Chairs at	3:	15:	0
In the Chamber over the Parlour	One Bed one Table Three Chairs and one Trunk	2:	7:	6
Item In the Study	A Parcell of Bookes of severall sortes in Divinity	8:	10:	0
In the Kitchen	Severall Pewter dishes Plates Brass Kettles & Pan's One Copper with Brewing vessall and other Lumber	2:	12:	6
In the woodhouse	A Parcell of Coales and Wood	1:	1:	6
	Taken and valued the Day and	33:	1:	6
	Year above written by us			
	Edmund Sismey Moses Allen			

two external kitchens we have found. Early kitchens were often built away from the main house to minimise the risk of fire spreading, particularly if the house was thatched. Another separate external kitchen existed at the rear of Foresters Cottages

Immediately after being admitted to the house, Edward Halford and his wife Elizabeth sold it to Robert Cave, a farmer in Caldecott. Without the land, the rent was reduced to 10d. Robert Cave sold it nine years later to Benjamin Timson, who surrendered it to Robert Colwell (or Colling), another Caldecott farmer, in 1760. Robert Colwell died in 1762. His property was extensive and included two houses in Caldecott, now known as The Old Plough and the Manor House on Mill Lane. The Old Plough had been purchased after Mary, one of Robert's daughters, had died. It was therefore given jointly to the other four, whilst the Manor House was split five ways, the fifth share going to Robert's grandson, Robert Smith. The four who inherited The Old Plough were: Elizabeth, wife of Benjamin Timson; Ann, wife of William Morris; Esther, wife of Daniel Colman; and Alice, wife of John Newby; each of whom paid 2½d in rent. Two years later, Esther and Elizabeth gave their share of the house to their sister Ann. In 1768, following the death of her husband, Ann gave the three shares she owned to her son, William, a farmer and victualler. In 1771, Alice gave her quarter-share to Elizabeth Morris, the young daughter of Robert Morris. William Morris the younger occupied The Old Plough and, since he is described as a farmer and victualler, it may be assumed the building was then trading as an inn. In 1785, William received the last quarter-share from Elizabeth Morris. He now owned the whole building and, in 1792, surrendered it to himself and Ann his wife. William and Ann prospered. They eventually owned the houses we know today as Glebe House, 1 Church Close and Threeways, 1 Main Street, as well as The Old Plough. William Morris was a careful man. He wrote his first will in 1796 and another in 1807, yet he did not die until 1825. He left The Plough Inn to his nephew, Robert Morris another victualler, the first time The Plough had been named as such in the court rolls.

Robert occupied the inn in 1825 and it is his initials RM and the date 1838 that can be seen over the door. In 1841, Robert, aged sixty, was living in The Plough Inn with his children, Robert, Jane, James and William.¹² William was only one year old and Robert Morris was a widower; his wife may have died in childbirth. The other children were considerably older. Robert Morris employed Thomas Loveday and Mary Shilton as servants, suggesting that the Old Plough Inn was enjoying good trade. When in 1853 it passed to Robert, his son, it was occupied by Robert Richards senior. Robert Morris moved into a nearby property in the 1870s, leaving George and Jane Stapleton to manage the inn. By 1881, Joseph and Sarah Berridge had taken over as proprietors. When Elizabeth, Robert's niece and the wife of Robert Lenton Ward of Drayton, inherited the Old Plough in 1902, Robert Barber Berridge was proprietor.

The Inland Revenue Valuation Books of 1910 are held in the Record Office at Leicester. They give no description of this property, other than that it was a Licensed Premises, owned by Mrs Elizabeth Ward and occupied by Robert Richards. It is somewhat surprising therefore to find in the Field Books for the same survey held at The National Archives that it was occupied by Henry



Figure 258 Caldecott Green c. 1905. Note the absence of the War Memorial on The Green. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

Johnson; perhaps one set of records was created slightly later than the other. The Old Plough can be seen on the right in **Figure 258**. Mrs Ward retained the property until it was enfranchised in 1920. The Plough Inn ceased trading in 1948, when the licence crossed the road to its present position on The Green. The transfer of license raised objections on the basis that Caldecott needed more houses, not a bigger pub!



Figure 259 Home Farmhouse, 39 Main Street, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

Home Farm, 39 Main Street

The earlier part of this building is set well back from the village street, and has an unusual roof with a hipped end, tree-ring dated to 1699 (see page 133). Along the street frontage, a large barn (now converted to domestic use) was built in 1712, as indicated by date-stones in both its gable ends. The long extension to the left was added around the late eighteenth century.

John Brown, the miller of Barrowden, as we shall see later, bought the mills in Caldecott from Edward Haberfield in 1693. In 1699, Peter Brown inherited 'One Cottage or Tenement and one water grist mill with all and singular appurtenances to them belonging in the tenure of Solomon Pepper'. When Peter died in 1711, his youngest brother Thomas was deemed heir to the cottage, held under the rent of 1s. Peter's possessions other than the mills were, however, inherited under a Recovery by Peter Browne's nephew, the son of John Brown, also called Peter Brown. From Peter Brown the property went first to John and then to William Brown, who held it at the time of the Enclosure of the Open Fields in 1804.

37 Main Street

This house, with its elegant front of ashlar limestone, seems to have been largely rebuilt in the early nineteenth century. However, the attached buildings (with a former cart entrance) to the right, show that there was an earlier building on this plot. In 1804, the homestead belonged to John Cort, who had inherited the house from his father in 1795. Benjamin Cort's son, another Benjamin, became a prosperous iron-founder in Leicester.



Figure 260 37 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 261 Old photograph of cottages on south side of Main Street. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

31 to 35 Main Street

An early photograph shows that these three houses were formerly a part of a row of single-storied thatched cottages. They were much altered in the twentieth century and the house on the site of 35 Main Street demolished. In 1804, all three cottages were owned by Thomas Chapman, who also owned a considerable amount of land. When he died, he left his estate to his widow Alice for life. Her will indicates just how affluent they had become; silver table spoons and salt cellars, gold rings, an eight-day clock and a tea table are amongst her bequests.¹³ She enumerates items in her best bed chamber, parlour, middle chamber, small bedroom, sitting room, kitchen, dairy and cellar. Her house must have been a sizeable building.



Figure 262 31 and 33 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 263 11-27 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

19 to 27 Main Street and Foresters Cottages, 11-17 Main Street

This long row of cottages was built during the late nineteenth century. The first pair, 27 and 23 Main Street, having a frontage of stone, were originally four cottages. Beyond them is a row of five brick-built cottages.

The cottages were built on the sites of three old properties. When John Carter of Middleton and Thomas Eagle, a coal merchant of Caldecott, purchased the first two of them from John Langley in 1871, four new houses had already been built by John Thomas Deacon on the site of one of the barns and yard. They bought the third site in 1873 from John Harwood Moore. The plaque on the front of 27 Main Street reads, 'INDEPENDANT FORESTERS COTTAGES 1877', but it was not until 1887 that a note was made in the rental to send the request for payment of the rents to Jesse Ingram of the Foresters Society.

The Ancient Order of Foresters, now the Foresters Friendly Society, was established in 1834, although its origins lie in a much older society called the Royal Foresters, formed around 1745. The first members felt they had a duty to assist their fellow men who fell into need 'as they walked through the forests of life'. This 'need' arose principally when a breadwinner fell ill, could not work and received no wages. Members paid a few pence a week into a common fund, to enable them to offer sick pay and funeral grants to anyone in need. The Society attained legal status under the new Friendly Societies Act in 1850 and in 1864 members set up the UK's first voluntary Lifeboat Fund.



Figure 264 Caldecott High Street, c. 1910. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

The White Hart, 3 Main Street

This was once the White Hart Inn and contained a medieval cruck truss (see page 114), but the building was largely demolished and reconstructed in the 1970s. The sign for the inn can be seen on the left of this photo, taken in about 1910.

The history of this property has been traced back to 1714, when John Nebon Esq passed it on to Elizabeth Hill his daughter but it probably had earlier antecedents. Immediately Elizabeth received it from the manor court held under a rent of 8d, she handed it on to her son William, who was at that stage a chandler. In 1764, by then a yeoman, William left the property to his wife Mary.¹⁴ When Mary died in 1772, Edward, their youngest son, was no longer alive, so the property descended to Edward's youngest son and William and Mary's grandson, John Hill, who was just four years old. John Hill became a breeches-maker and in 1794 surrendered the messuage and orchard or homestead to himself and his wife Elizabeth. They did not live in the house; it was occupied by Robert Pitts. In 1799 John Hill, now a glover, and Elizabeth, sold the property to Whiting Goodwin, a gardener from Ayston.

At some stage the name of the inn may have changed; it appears as The King's Head on the Ordnance Survey map of 1904, though not on any other documents.

Threeways, 1, Main Street

A date-stone in the gable end of this house indicates that it was rebuilt in 1819, though it seems there was some further work in 1859 (see page 202).

The history of the premises has been traced back to 1767, when William Hill (weaver) left his messuage in Caldecott and his close in Snelston to his wife Ann for life. After her death, they were to go to his cousin Thomas Cunnington, carpenter of Seaton, to whom he also bequeathed his quarter of a yardland and his close or toft in Snelston. Ann subsequently married Henry Bryan, who was occupying the house in 1782 when Thomas Cunnington died and left the reversion expectant on Ann's death to Edward Cunnington, a wheelwright of Kettering, Northamptonshire. As Edward too had died, it went to Daniel Cunnington of Bourn in Lincolnshire, who was now Thomas's youngest surviving son.

In 1785, Daniel Cunnington surrendered the messuage, the quarter of a yardland and the toft in Snelston to Robert Morris, victualler of Caldecott, and his wife Ann, who already owned the building known today as Old Plough. Robert and Ann sold the messuage with its home close and homestead to Bryan Ward in 1801. Bryan Ward died in 1827, leaving the house with the home close and homestead to his wife Rebecca for life, after which it was to go to his son Bryan Edward Ward.

In 1847, Bryan Edward Ward took out a mortgage of £1000 (equivalent to about £50,000 today) on the house and the land he had inherited. Two years later, he took out a second mortgage for £250, a third for the same sum two years after that, and a fourth, again for £250, in 1860. All the loans were paid off after his death in 1862, but his son-in-law Bellars Butler and his daughter Mary Eleanor Butler, who inherited the house and a couple of acres adjoining it, were charged in his will with the payment of £200 to his son-in-law Joseph Barnett, and £60 to the children of his deceased daughter, Sarah Ann.

Bellars Butler (farmer) died in 1889 and left the house and the two acres adjoining it to John Charles Guy of the Uppingham Bank and John Bellars Butler of Wisbeach in Cambridgeshire in trust to sell. Thomas Bryan Butler, an artist, took a loan for £200 from Thomas King Parker, a saddler of Stamford, and bought the house without its two acres under the rent of 5d that April. He surrendered it the following year to James Sanders, a farmer, but James Sanders never came into the manor court to take ownership. Instead, because the loan from Thomas King Parker had never been repaid, the messuage became forfeit. Having already arranged to sell it to William Thomas Hayr of Rockingham, Thomas King Parker came into court in 1898 and claimed it. It was described in a condition of sale as 'All that well built dwelling house Together with



Figure 265 Threeways, 1 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 266 Threeways, before the thatch was removed in 1914. (Dennis Wright)

Butcher's Shop, Stable, Cow Hovel, Cart Shed, Yard and Paddock in Caldecott. The house contains 2 Sitting Rooms, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, 4 Bedrooms and Pantry'.

The Inland Revenue Survey of 1910 confirmed the owner of the property as William Thomas Hayr of Rockingham and the occupier as Edward Peach (known locally as Teddy). The house, built of stone and thatch, had five rooms and a pantry. Alongside was a timber and cladding shop, a kitchen with floor over, a store with a granary above, and a stone barn in good condition, plus a timber cart-shed, cowshed and a brick closet. The land that went with the property totalled twelve acres one rood and ten perches. With all the land, the property was valued at £160. Teddy Peach did not live in the house but in the semi-derelict building next door. It was he who ran the shop, which he had moved from its previous site on the Uppingham Road. This photograph (**Figure 266**), with Nurse Peak standing in front, was taken before the thatch was removed in 1914.

In 1924, when William Thomas Hayr died, the house went to his daughter Sarah Ann Hayr and Alfred Hayr of Church Langton, together with the cottages that are now 33 and 35 Main Street (see above). Joseph Dennis Wright bought the property in 1955. A memorandum attached to the conveyance said the Post Office stores were the most northern part of the property.

Before we leave Main Street, we cross the road and back track a little to look at the houses on the opposite side.

The Plough Inn, 16 Main Street

An earlier house on this plot was replaced by the current building in the later nineteenth century. The history of this building has been traced back to 1762, when Sarah Brown and her sister Elizabeth inherited a cottage on the site, a homestead in Caldecott, and a quarter of a yardland, from John Brown. Sarah was admitted as tenant, but because Elizabeth was under the age of 21, her mother, as her guardian, was admitted to her share of the property. In due course Elizabeth married William Hotchkin and Sarah married William Hill. In 1767 Elizabeth and William Hotchkin handed their share of the properties over to Sarah and William Hill, who surrendered the cottage to John Allin, a woolcomber, in 1786.

John Allin's youngest son John was only fourteen years old when he inherited the cottage in 1803, and his elder brother Henry was admitted as guardian. The property passed from Henry to his sister Mary in 1850, and to her son Samuel William Allin in 1859. Samuel William Allin, who had been a grocer in Caldecott, was by then living in Leicester, and he sold off first the Home Close and then the cottage to Thomas Eagle, coal merchant, and his wife Eliza in 1871 for £150. Charles Johnson (farmer) and Mary Jane Johnson (spinster) of Granby Lodge in nearby Bisbrooke inherited the property in 1891. From her it went to Emily Bostock Clarke, and then to John Ougden Ward in 1918. The licence was transferred from the Old Plough across the road in 1948.



Figure 267 Caldecott village Green. The Old Plough is on the right across The Green and The Plough on the left, 2015. (Robert Owens)

Figure 268 Caldecott Green with The Plough on the right, 1960s. (Dennis Wright)





Figure 269 Fernleigh House, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Fernleigh House, 14 Main Street

The earlier house on this plot was replaced by the current building in the later nineteenth century. The history of Fernleigh House is complicated by the facts that it stands on a plot that was formerly three separate properties, and that the plot was later divided.

Two of the properties had been owned by Richard Ward in the eighteenth century, who left them in 1805 to his son, John Ward. The datestone reads 'WHW 1855', so it seems that William Hugh Wright must have had control of the property by this date and been responsible for the wholesale rebuilding, although John Ward did not transfer the property

to his nephew William Hugh Wright until 1864. William Hugh Wright left them to Richard Ward Wright in 1885. One of the properties had by then been pulled down; the other was described as 'All that Messuage Tenement or Dwelling house lately erected and built upon the site of a Cottage or Tenement formerly in two Moieties or half parts with the Homestead and appurtenances thereto adjoining'.

Everything went into the melting pot in 1902 because William Hugh Wright's will was challenged and by order in Chancery all the property that had belonged to him at the time of his death was seized and sold. In 1903, Charles Thomas Stiles, a butcher from Leicester, paid £575 for 'All that copyhold messuage or tenement called Fernleigh House now in the occupation of George Brown with the yard stables coachhouse barn cowsheds and other outbuildings old cottage garden and orchard'. Charles Thomas Stiles, who had moved to Caldecott to live in Fernleigh House, sold the property in 1924 to John Robert Singlehurst of Weldon.



Figure 270 10 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)

10 Main Street

Like so many houses in Caldecott, in the eighteenth century this property was owned by members of the Morris family and because there were so many of them it has not been easy to sort out who owned what in the seventeenth century. This account of the history of this house therefore starts in 1767, at which point the court rolls record that William Morris the elder surrendered it to Richard Jeffs (carpenter) and part of the site was to be divided 'by a fence from the other part of the messuage from the corner of the stable nearest to the dwelling house to the opposite side of the yard'. See page 187 for a plan of the house.

When Richard Jeffs died in 1809, he left the cottage he was living in to his daughter Rebecca, the wife of John Brookes, for life. After her death it was to go to her sons Henry and Richard, but they were only infants at the time and didn't come into their inheritance on the house until 1838 and 1839

respectively. Richard then promptly handed his share in the property to his brother Henry. In March 1857, Henry took out a private mortgage from his nephew Henry Burgess of Middleton in Northamptonshire for £300, which he agreed to repay by September that year. The property offered as security was now described as ‘all that Cottage Tenement or Dwelling house with the appurtenances thereto belonging in Caldecott adjoining the first described Cottage Tenement or dwelling house lately erected and built by the said Henry Jeffs’. Henry Jeffs was innkeeper of the Black Horse Inn that had stood on The Green. When he died in 1867, he left the cottage he had built to his wife Sarah Ann Jeffs for life. The mortgage was never paid off and the property became Henry Burgess’s; when Henry Burgess died, Sarah Ann and her son Pridmore Jeffs were appointed his trustees. She and Pridmore agreed to sell it in 1883, to Richard Ward Wright, for which he paid Pridmore £160 and Sarah Ann 10s in 1884.

We have already learned that Richard Ward Wright was one of those mentioned in the contested will of William Hugh Wright. When the matter went to Chancery, all those who had benefitted under the will were told to release their properties to the court for resale. When Richard Ward Wright was asked to do so, he refused to sell this property: after all, he had bought it, not inherited it! Clearly, he had no choice. In 1897, Frederick Oakley, gentleman of Uppingham, was appointed in the High Court to force him to surrender it. Frederick Oakley then sold it to William Wignall Ward, coal dealer, of Caldecott. By 1918, William Wignell Ward had moved to Braybrooke; in 1920, he sold the cottage to John William Ward for £140. It was then occupied by John Henry Spriggs and was now better known as ‘All that dwelling house (formerly two cottages tenements or dwelling houses) with the yard garden outbuildings and appurtenances’.

Wentworth Cottage, 8 Main Street and 6 Main Street

Both these cottages stand on what was once one plot. At the start of the eighteenth century, the site was held by William Morris. On his death in 1718 he left it to his wife Sarah for the duration of her life. Then it was to go to his son, also called William, an infant at the time. The property was described as ‘messuage & land thereof adjacent called the Homestead’ held under the rent of 3d. William the younger held it until 1779, when it passed to James Morris, his youngest son and heir. At this stage only one house was mentioned.

James Morris was a baker in Market Harborough. He clearly did not want to move to Caldecott, as he sold the property to Lewis Woodcock the following year. Lewis Woodcock retained it until 1795, when it went to John Ougden, a horse-dealer. Two years later it was back in the hands of the Morris family. Thomas Morris (farmer) held it



Figure 271 Wentworth Cottage, 8 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)

from 1797 to 1834 when it was bought by William Turner (blacksmith) for £130. He made a tidy profit when he sold it in 1843 to the Hon. Richard Watson of Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire, for £190. Richard Watson died in 1852 and it passed, together with several other properties in the village, to his eldest son George Lewis Watson of Rockingham Castle, an infant. This was the point at which the description changed to 'All that messuage or tenement now two Cottages, land and garden in Caldecott' in the occupation of Pridmore Chambers and George Smith.

When George Lewis Watson died in 1899, executors and trustees to were appointed dispose of his estate. Two of the trustees, namely Wentworth Watson, clerk in holy orders, and Arthur Richmond Farrer of 66 Lincoln Inn Fields, Middlesex, solicitor, were admitted to the copyhold the following year. They were still holding the property and Pridmore Chambers and George Smith were still occupying it in 1922.



Figure 272 6 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)

6 Main Street

The other building, now 6 Main Street was, as the records suggest, a tied cottage, belonging to Meadow Farm. There are two plaques on the end wall of the house. One reads 'Rebuilt 1949 Sir Michael Seymour, Rockingham Castle'; the other 'DH 1646' (see page 136).

A Daniel Hill did purchase a messuage in Caldecott in 1645, but the history of the house does not indicate that it ever belonged to any of the Watsons of Rockingham Castle. It maybe did once belong to Peter Woodcock, but because his affairs were so complicated and were handled by lawyers from London, there was much confusion. The history of this tied cottage cannot therefore be determined with any

certainty. Ball's Cottage was sold twice and was thought to be owned by the Watsons; maybe it was confused with this cottage.

The site of Caldecott School, 2 and 4 Main Street

The site on which the school was built had belonged to the Ward family in the seventeenth century. Robert Ward inherited it from his father Zachary in 1710. Described as a messuage with a homestead and one yardland held under the rent of 10s, Zachary Ward clerk inherited it with a considerable amount of land from his brother Robert in 1734. From him, it descended through six generations of his family, to end up in 1878 in the hands of William Henry Brown, a solicitor and scrivener of Caldecott, who was only saved from bankruptcy by promising to sell part of his land to for the erection of the new school in Caldecott. The full story of Caldecott School, which was built in the 1880s is beyond the scope of this book.

Ye Olde House, 2 Uppingham Road

The property that one stood on this site was one of the two messuages that had been owned by the Woodcocke family from the fifteenth century. The other, which we will reach later, is Glebe House, 1, Church Close and it is not easy to separate them in the early records.

The first Woodcocke property transfer we have found in the court rolls occurs in October 1497, when Richard 'Wodecoke' and Elizabeth his wife were admitted to one messuage and half a virgate of land in 'Caldecote' under the rent of 5s. The next reference to the Woodcocks is found in the Military Survey of 1522, when Thomas Woodcock, husbandman in Caldecott, was a bill man with land to the value of 20s and goods amounting to £24. He also had 'a Jak and a pair of splynts'.¹⁵ His name appears again a couple of years later in the Lay Subsidy of 1524-5, when he was said to have 20s in wages and £15 in goods.¹⁶

In 1563, William Woodcock held two messuages and two half yardlands under a total rent of 11s. One had been in the tenure of his father Thomas, who still occupied the other. William also held 'one Tofte with a yard loonde in Snelson sometyme Henry Wybarnes' under the rent of 10s and 'one parcell of grounde in Caldecote where a dovecote was sometyme builded', for which the rent was 6d.

One of the two messuages appears to have been split into two halves in the seventeenth century. Half a messuage with a quarter of a yardland, held by George Woodcocke in 1625, passed to Alan Woodcocke in 1631 and on to Robert in 1640. Robert apparently already held the other half of the messuage because he immediately surrendered both halves of the property into the joint ownership of himself and his wife Anne. The rent of each half was 2s 6d. Robert's other messuage and half yardland was rented out to Zachary Woodcocke, but returned to Robert in 1641 and it might have been he who placed the date stone of 1647 below the chimney on the gable end of Ye Olde House.

In a Rental of 1654, Robert Woodcock was listed as holding a copyhold property, rent 4s 11d; a messuage & a 'Quartern' land, rent 3s 6d; a dove house, rent 6d; and land which he leased at a rent of 1s 8d. Robert Woodcocke the elder died in 1659 and his young son, born in 1643 and also called Robert, was under the age of 21. He succeeded to the messuage and a half yardland that went with it at a rent 4s 11d, and another messuage and one quarter of a yardland, rent 2s 6d, both in Caldecott, plus an acre and a half of land in Lyddington. Both houses were still in the name of Ann, widow of Robert the elder, in 1665 when she was recorded as holding two houses, each with two hearths.

In 1669, Ann Woodcocke gave her son Robert and his intended wife Dorothy Ward a quarter of a yardland in Caldecott but, in 1672, Robert surrendered a messuage and a quarter of a yardland, rent 2s 6d, to himself and his wife Bridget – not Dorothy! Close examination of Ann's 1669 surrender shows it has been annotated 'Dorothy is Dead To remaine upon the fyle untill an Admittance bee required' and 'Is admitted tenant and has made fealty'. Dorothy,



Figure 273 Ye Olde House, 2 Uppingham Road, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

7th Die Octobris 1669

Upon this day and yeare a boue writton Ann Woodcocke
 of Caldecote in G. County aforss widow Surrendered
 into the hands of the said of the lands of Robert
 Sley one of the saids there one quarter land
 with thappurtenances there unto belonging to the use &
 behoofe of Robert Woodcocke her son and
 Dorothy Ward the intended wife of the said Robert
 for ye forme of thore naturall lient and after
 to one messag. to Robert Woodcocke her heire and
 to be asseignd according to the Custome of the Messag
 for ever

The messag of Caldecote Caldecote the mark of
 and Lidington — + X — Ann: Woodcocke
 Dorothy is Dead So remain upon the fr. vntill an
 + Homage be required.
 Jo. Woodcocke son of her made stody

Figure 274 Surrender by 'Ann Woodcocke of Caldecote widow' of 'one quarter land with thappurtenances in Caldecote there unto belonging to the use & behoofe of Robert Woodcocke her son and Dorothy Ward the intended wife of the said Robert'. (BH, Exeter Archive)

his first wife had died in 1670, possibly in childbirth (Figure 274).

When Robert died in 1688, he left to Bridget for life the 'message next the church stile', which has been identified as Glebe House, 1 Church Close. His other house, in the occupation of his mother, and a quarter of a yardland he left to his son, yet another Robert,

under this condition that if Robert the son his heirs or assigns do not pay or cause to be paid to John Woodcocke his brother or his assigns the full and just sum of £20 when he shall reach the age of 24 years then the above grant to the said Robert the son shall be void and thereof lawfully given to John Woodcocke and his assigns to enter and take the said message.

It seems that Robert the son did pay his brother John the amount due and kept his house, but over the next half century he sold just about everything he had inherited. Finally, at the Michaelmas Court held in October 1742, he surrendered 'All that his Messuage House and homestead with Appurtenances', under the rent of 7½d, to Richard Ward for a loan of £45 3s which was to be repaid on 13th October 1743. The loan was not repaid, the house was forfeit, and Richard Ward came into court on 27th October and claimed it.

By 1759, William Cave was occupying the property and paying the rent,

although he was never actually admitted to the copyhold. Instead, in 1760, Richard Ward gave the property to Samuel Cave, William's son and his wife Ann. It appears that Samuel had died and that his father William had taken over the property. In William's will, dated 1781, he left the property to his daughter-in-law Ann, the widow of his late son Samuel for life. Since she too had died since the will was written, it went to John Cave, Samuel's only son, subject to and charged with and liable to the payment of several sums of money to William's granddaughters, Ann, Mary, Elizabeth and Sarah.¹⁷ In 1820, John Cave sold it to William Laxton (grazier) of Caldecott for £165.

In 1839, William Laxton left all his real estate to his brother Thomas Laxton for life and after his decease to John Brown of Geddington, son of his sister Ann. John Brown was admitted in 1842 to 'All that Messuage Cottage or Tenement, held under the rent of 7½d late in the occupation of John Cave and then untenanted'. In 1876, Robert Sykes of Geddington Northamptonshire (butcher) and Robert Lenton Ward of Caldecott (farmer) Trustees under the will of John Brown late of Geddington, (farmer and grazier, deceased) sold the property and the one on the opposite corner of Uppingham Road, to William Henry Brown for £495.

William Henry Brown's affairs were handled under the Bankruptcy Act of 1869 by William Henry Morris, an accountant from Leicester. In 1878, he sold both properties, apart from the plot put aside for the school, to Richard Langley, gentleman of Duddington, Northamptonshire, for £250. The property on 2 Uppingham Road was described as,

All that Messuage or Farmhouse at Caldecott with the Yard Garden Orchard outbuildings and appurtenances belonging containing in the whole two roods and one perch late in the occupation of George Claypole and now of James Martin bounded on the North by property now or late of the Trustees of the late Samuel Stokes on the South by the road from Liddington to Caldecott on the East by property belonging to the Parish of Caldecott and on the West by the Turnpike Road from Uppingham to Kettering.

There can be no doubt about the plot on which it stood.

Richard Langley then took out two mortgages for £100 each, both of which referred to 'All that messuage or tenement erected by Richard Langley.' Unfortunately, though, the plots on either side of the road had been incorrectly identified in the court rolls and switched in the mortgages! Maybe the confusion is not all that surprising; none of the parties to the agreement to sell these properties were local.

In 1904, Richard Langley sold both plots of land and the house he had built to Batty Langley of Sheffield for £49, subject to his paying off the mortgages. Batty Langley (**Figure 275**) was Member of Parliament for the Attercliffe Constituency in Sheffield from 1894 to 1909. Born in Uppingham, he became a wealthy timber merchant in Sheffield, and one of the city's most prominent non-conformists. In 1892, he became Mayor of Sheffield, the year in which it became a city. The mistake over the plots of land either side of Uppingham Road persisted: Ye Olde House was from then on recorded as having been built on the ground across the road and the rents paid were, of course, wrong too. The amounts of these fixed or assize rents paid to the manor



Figure 275 Batty Langley.
(Wikipedia)



Figure 276 May Day on the Little Green, 1932. Left to right: Margaret Wright (Stewart & Lloyds Office (SL)), Hilda Ward (SL stove-worker), Florrie Bradley (White Hart), Dorothy Sharman (Black Horse), Arthur Ward, Evelyn Ward, Ethel Keightley (SL), Geoffrey Sharman, Eric Ward, Geo Elliott, Peggy Hendry (SL), Margaret Elliott, Barbara Smallman, Nancy Sharman, unidentified, Evelyn Jeffs (SL), Lily Keightley, Ivy Stanger (SL), Frank Pawsey, Olive Pawsey, Smallman, Reg Prentice (village shopkeeper), John Hendry (SL), Dennis Wright, Fred Johnson (gatehouse keeper for the crossing on Gretton Road). (Dennis Wright)

court had been fixed centuries ago, when they did represent the real value of the land but, by the nineteenth century, they had become relatively small. Maybe this was why they were never questioned.

In 1909, the house stood on plot of three-quarters of an acre. Described in the Inland Revenue Survey as a stone and thatched cottage, it had a coal shed, a scullery & shop combined with an iron roof, also a big kitchen, a pantry and a sitting room, with three bedrooms above. Outside were a stone and thatch stable, an open cart shed, a garden and an orchard plot. The gross value was estimated to be £175.

In 1911, Batty Langley, now living in Queens Park, Bournemouth surrendered both properties on either side of the road to his daughter Maude Langley. Maude agreed to sell 'All that messuage or tenement erected by Richard Langley and known as "Ye Olde House", formerly in the occupation of William Keighley afterwards of Richard Langley his under-tenants or assigns and now of John Spriggs' to James William Burditt of Caldecott (sub-postmaster) for the sum of £150. The rents were set at 10d and 1s 7d. If no error had occurred it would have been a single rent of 7½d! William Burditt had the contract with the Royal Mail to collect the mailbags each evening with his horse and van from Great Easton, Rockingham, Lyddington and Uppingham and take them to the railway station at Seaton Junction.

In 1916, James William Burditt, having moved to Hinckley in Leicestershire, sold the land (still incorrectly identified) and Ye Olde House to John Thomas Norris, a farmer of Holyoaks, Stockerston, Leicestershire (Figure 276).

4 Uppingham Road

This photograph says it all: the thatched cottage that once stood next to Ye Olde House has gone. This plot was marked as 'Site of Cruck House' on Caldecott school scrapbook map, though the evidence as to whether there was ever a cruck house here has been lost. The thatched cottage had stood on the site of a messuage held with a third of a yardland by Richard Colvile in 1563. Robert Scalehorn and Agnes his wife claimed the property in the manor court held in 1591; it had been sublet to a certain Robert Russell junior until Michaelmas 1608.

The cottage remained in the hands of the Scalhorne family until 1736, when Mary Scalehorne, a young widow, married Thomas Samson of 'Edy Weston' (Edith Weston). In 1736, she and her son Robert gave 'All that Tenement or Barn with a Chimney late erected therein being part and parcel of the Messuage Dwelling or Farm house of and belonging to Mary Skelhorn' to Thomas Samson and Mary. By 1771, Mary was very infirm and unable to travel to the manor court in Liddington. In her absence, a Recovery was passed that allowed her to surrender to Thomas Samson the part of the messuage she had received in 1736. Thomas Samson (weaver) sold his 'messuage house and homestead' in 1781 to Thomas Chapman (grazier) of Caldecott, who left it in 1793 to John Deacon (millwright). Parts of the mill John Deacon built in Caldecott can be seen in the museum at Oakham.

From John Deacon, the messuage went to his brother Peter and Peter's wife Ann in 1804, then to their son Peter in 1844. He too was a millwright and left the messuage four years later to John Thomas Deacon, who carried on the family tradition as a millwright, but was also a builder. In 1854, John Thomas Deacon borrowed £44 from John Islip, a wheelwright from Morcott. He was due to repay the loan the following year, but this did not happen and the property was forfeit. This was probably an instance of a sale by way of a mortgage, many of which have been found in the court rolls. In 1859, John Islip sold at auction the 'messuage lately erected and built by one John Thomas Deacon upon the site of an ancient messuage house with the homestead thereto belonging' to Samuel Stokes, the best bidder, for £75.

Samuel Stokes died in 1879. The property had been held by trustees from 1876 and in 1889 it went to Richard Greaves from Carlton Park, Northamptonshire and Arthur Samuel Stokes of Weldon, both surgeons, who promptly gave it to Samuel's sisters, Fanny Sophia & Agnes Elizabeth Stokes, spinsters of Caldecott.

The Inland Revenue Survey tells us that the house was still owned by Fanny Sophia & Agnes Elizabeth Stokes in 1910 and occupied by Samuel Wignell. It had five rooms and a pantry. Outside stood a hovel, two closets, a tool house,



Figure 277 Uppingham Road, east side, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

three cowsheds and a calf place, and an open shed with a floor above. Good grassland adjacent to the cottage amounting to 10½ acres was valued at £735. The cottage and buildings added £150, making the gross estimated value £885.



Figure 278 Stone Cottage, 6 Uppingham Road, before demolition. (Dennis Wright)

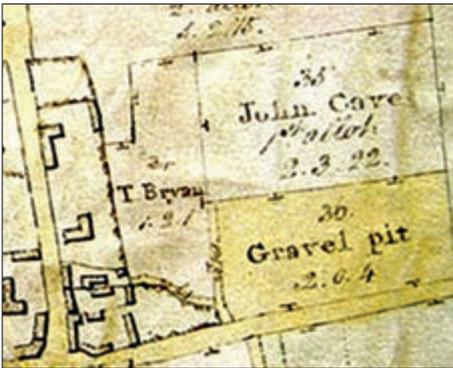


Figure 279 Part of Caldecott Enclosure Map, 1800. (ROLLR)

6 Uppingham Road

This house too has been demolished and replaced by a modern house. The site was always freehold and no records therefore appear in the court rolls or rentals but the Enclosure Map of 1800 showed that it was owned by a Thomas Bryan at that time. He had inherited it, with many other properties in Lyddington and elsewhere, from his uncle, Thomas Bryan of Stoke Dry, in 1784.¹⁸ In the Enclosure award of 1804, Thomas Bryan, the nephew, received one freehold allotment in Caldecott containing one acre two roods one perch. Access to this plot of land was provided by a road called Thomas Bryan's Road, described as a private horse cart carriage and drift road of the width of 20 feet branching out of the said last described road [John Cave's Road] at the North-East corner of the said John Cave's homestead and extending in a Westwardly direction over the allotment to the said Thomas Bryan to the homesteads of the said Thomas Bryan and John Deacon respectively which said last described road is set out for the use and convenience of the owners and occupiers for the time being of the homesteads of the said Thomas Bryan and John Deacon respectively and of the said allotment to the said Thomas Bryan. (see Figure 279)

This freehold house was owned and occupied by Richard Wignell in 1909. In the Inland Revenue Survey it was said to have two bedrooms and two downstairs rooms, plus a brick lean-to and store, two wash-houses and a timber shed. The gross value was estimated to be £130. It became Caldecott's fifth Post Office, run by Mr Dennis Wright until he moved and took the business to Threeways.

Weldon House, 8 Uppingham Road

The first record for this freehold house is given in a court roll of April 1654, when Walter Newbone (gentleman) left his only son and heir, also named Walter, 'all his diverse freehold lands & tenements in free & common soccage'. Freehold properties were not entered into the court rolls, but a rental of September 1654 includes some relevant entries (see Figure 281).

In the Hearth Tax of 1665, Walter Newbone had a one-hearth house, whereas William's house had three hearths, as did that of Henry Newbone.

John and Laurence Newbone had one-hearth houses. Walter Nubon (Newbon, Newbone, Nubon are all variants of the same name), carpenter of Caldecott, left all his goods and chattels to his wife Alice in 1669 and various amounts of money to his brothers, William and Richard.¹⁹ William's wife 'Issabel' appears in the first of a series of copyhold rentals at Burghley House. Dated 1715, this recorded her copyhold and freehold properties were held under the rent of 7s 10d. She continued to hold them until, in 1765, they were transferred to Christopher Bewley (gentleman) and William Foster the elder (butcher), both of Tring, Hertfordshire.

By 1786, the properties were held by a Mr Marling, also of Tring in Hertfordshire, possibly an agent for Christopher Bewley and William Foster the elder. The 1787 Court Rolls record their deaths and the fact that William Forster was succeeded by his son William Foster, a weaver of Tring. In 1788, the younger William Foster surrendered a half yardland to Thomas Stokes of Caldecott. By 1789, Thomas Stokes held 'Six Quarterns Freehold Land & freehold house & Homestead formerly Triggs late Marlings'. From Thomas the property then passed down from one generation of the Stokes family to the next.

In 1818, Thomas Stokes (gentleman) of Caldecott left the site of 8 Uppingham Road to his nephew, Samuel Stokes, who was already occupying it. Samuel died in 1852 and left it to his wife Elizabeth for life, after which it was to go to his son, also called Samuel. When Samuel died in 1870, he left all his freehold properties to,

Richard Greaves of Great Easton Leics surgeon and William Henry Brown of Uppingham Gent upon Trust to sell with power to buy in the same and to rescind or vary any contract for sale and to resell being answerable for any loss and also to sell all other real estate and to retain in Trust the funds and also all his Stocks etc until the youngest child of his sister Elizabeth wife of Thomas Stokes reaches the age of 21.



Figure 280 Weldon House, 8 Uppingham Road, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Walter Newbone	freehold	9s 6d
	copyhold	9s 6d
	for Russells land	2d
	for Symon Tealby	6d
	Lease rent	3s 4d
W Newbone	copyhold	5s -d
Henry Newbone	copyhold	9s 10d
	Lease rent	6s 8d
George Newbone	out of Richard Morris's land	1d
William Newbone	copyhold	10s 5d
	for a quartern land	2s 6d
	Lease rent	6s 8d
An Newbone widow	lease rent	15s 8d

Figure 281 Entries in a Rental of Michaelmas, 1654. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 282 Weldon House in the 1930s.
(Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

Elizabeth died in February 1879 intestate. Arthur Samuel Stokes (medical student), youngest son of Thomas Stokes (farmer) of Caldecott was deemed customary heir of his mother the following June after his father, Thomas Stokes, had made a 'Declaration of Heirship'. The younger Thomas died in 1889, at which point all the property was officially handed on to his children, Arthur Samuel Stokes, by then a surgeon of Weldon, Northamptonshire, and Fanny Sophia Stokes and Agnes Elizabeth Stokes of Caldecott.

Although their inheritance was large, Arthur took out a series of mortgages, which he was able to pay off the following year when he sold the Manor House, which we will visit later, and the land that went with it to William Mould of Great Easton, Leicestershire for £10,000. In 1910, according to the Inland Revenue Survey, the house garden and premises were occupied by Mrs R.L. Ward. The owners were Miss Fanny Stokes and Mrs Drakeley, but the property was managed on their behalf by Arthur S. Stokes Esq., of Weldon, Kettering. The property was said to be copyhold, though it was actually freehold. It was described as an old stone and Collyweston stone farmhouse with a good garden. The house contained five bedrooms, two attics and two reception rooms. It had a kitchen, a back kitchen with store room over, a pantry and a dairy. In the garden was a lean-to wood house and a brick and slate closet. The gross estimated value was £425. Fanny Sophia died in 1931. (see **Figure 282**)

In 2013, Dennis Wright, a long-time resident of Caldecott, told us that Dr Stokes from Weldon named it Weldon House and retired there. He can remember Dr Stokes doing his rounds with his pony and trap. He had a wife and two daughters. When the daughters were widowed, he retired to the family



Figure 283 Burgess Row, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)

home. His daughters became Mrs Wignall, who lived in 4 Uppingham Road and Mrs Singlehurst, who lived in Fernleigh House. It was here that the little book *Just Rutland* was written in 1953 by Jeanette and Amy Elizabeth Stokes.²⁰

North of Weldon House was a set of buildings which had been part of Thomas Stokes's holdings in 1800. They were also owned by Fanny Sophia & Agnes Elizabeth Stokes in 1910, but used by Ellis & Everard, coal merchants. They included two stone and thatched barns, a brick and slate cart hovel, a crew-shed, two stables a coach house with two more stables and a stone barn whose roof had fallen in.

No houses north of this are shown on the 1904 map, apart from a small group of cottages north of the church, known as "Smokey Row". Later they were amalgamated into one house but, in 1910, the two northerly ones were freehold and owned by Mrs A.G. Marchant and occupied by George Chambers and Thomas William Stanger. The two southerly cottages were copyhold, owned by Mrs R.L. Ward and occupied by George Brooks and Albert Keightley. Before going that far, however, we turn left along Church Lane, passing several new houses built in 2013-4 on the site of a demolished house known as Rounfields and six other houses built by the Council in 1921, until we come to an enclosed yard in which are five houses erected by Henry Burgess in the nineteenth century, known as Burgess Row (see Figure 283).

The Old Black Horse and Caldecott Village Hall

The next building we come to is the Village Hall, built in 1955 on the site of the old Black Horse Inn, which ceased trading in 1927. This old country inn is mentioned in Caldecott School scrapbook, where it says that it was once the only building in the village. It had a 'stout inner structure' with little oak-doored cupboards going thirty inches back into the walls. The idea that this

was the only building in the village may seem far-fetched, but there may be the germ of a truth in it, because it sits on a freehold plot right in the centre of the village. In 1563, William Caldecote Esquire and Giles Woodcocke were the only two people to hold freehold houses in the village. William and Giles each held a cottage, but William held two houses, one on the west and one on the east of the church. These could have been the sites of a very early settlement, when a lord of the manor may have had his house on the west and the vicar lived on the east of the church.

A number of deeds held by the Village Hall Committee has enabled the history of the premises to be traced back to the 1790s, when a Lease and Release of 24th and 25th June referred to an inn run by George Stow which, with other property, was sold by Robert Smith Wignall (victualler) and Thomas Stokes to Samuel Stokes of Thorpe by Water. It subsequently passed through several hands until, in 1936, the building was considered unsafe and was no longer in use.

In the making of iron and steel, an adequate and constant supply of water is obviously necessary for cooling and other purposes. An Act of Parliament allowed Corby Steel Works to impound water from the Eye Brook; the construction of a dam across the Eye Brook began in 1937 and was finished in 1940. The Village Hall Committee accepted the offer of the material from the semi-detached bungalows erected for their workers by Stewarts and Lloyds, the firm that had built the dam. They were dismantled and used to construct the new Village Hall in 1955.



Figure 284 Glebe House, 1 Church Close, 2013. (Robert Owens)

Glebe House, 1 Church Close

This is one of the two houses owned by the Woodcock family in the fifteenth century. The other was the farmhouse that stood on the site of what is now Ye Olde House on Uppingham Road. Before 1688 the histories of the properties could not be distinguished from each other and the early history of both has already been discussed; however, in 1688, Robert Woodcocke left his wife Bridgett the 'messuage next the church stile' for life. From that point on, it was clear that this was Glebe House.

The scribe appeared to have some difficulty finding a suitable Latin word for stile; the word he used was *climax*, *climacis* meaning ladder, and he carefully translated the phrase into English. After Bridgett's death, Robert stipulated that the house was to go to Thomas 'Woodcoke', his youngest son, on condition that he paid his brother Zachary £10 when he reached the age of 24 years; otherwise 'Zachary will enter the premises and keep them until the sum of £10 be paid.' Thomas did pay the £10 and was formally admitted to the house and half a virgate of land that went with it held under a total rent of 6s at a court held on 19th October 1704. His mother Bridgett, who had been entitled to the house for life, married William Green and although she and William retained the house until 1709, they did not live there; the house was occupied by Thomas Bull. By then, a quarter virgate of land had been sold

off and the rent dropped accordingly to 3s 6d. Thomas Woodcock immediately surrendered the house and the remaining quarter of a virgate to himself and his wife Mary.

Thomas sold the house that he had occupied under the rent of 1s to John Brown in 1726, and also the quarter virgate of land held separately under the rent of 2s 6d. As indicated by a date-stone, the house on this plot was rebuilt in 1729, with an L-shaped plan (see page 185). It seems that the old house was demolished by John Brown the elder, who built the new house and gave it and land to John Brown the younger and his wife Elizabeth in 1733. John and Elizabeth had two daughters, Sarah who married William Hill, and Elizabeth who married William Hotchkin. When John Brown died, his widow Elizabeth and his two daughters gave the property in 1767 to William and Sarah Hill. In 1795, William Hill, now a yeoman, left the house, then in the occupation of William Essam, and the quarter of a yardland, to his only daughter Elizabeth. When Elizabeth Hotchkin died, her niece Elizabeth Hill came into court in 1801 to surrender the property, which had been in tail to Elizabeth and her sister Sarah, the daughters and co-heirs of John Brown, to William Hotchkin. He was not a direct descendent of John Brown and, in order to receive the property, had to suffer a Recovery.

The property that William received was described as 'a Messuage or House situate against the Church Stile in Caldecott with barns stables dovehouses and gardens formerly Woodcocks.' He was also awarded the quarter of a yardland. William Hotchkin, who lived in Leicester, promptly sold the house and land to John Ougden (horsedealer) of Caldecott. In 1804, John Ougden sold the house to Robert Morris (victualler and innkeeper of The Plough Inn). From William it passed to his nephew Robert in 1826, then to his son, also called Robert, in



Figure 285 Drawing of St John's Church, Caldecott, 1839, with Glebe House on the right. (Uppingham School Archives)

1853. Since 1804 it had been occupied by Simon Floar, then James Morris. In 1853, it was occupied by John Peach. He was followed by Thomas Deacon, and Elizabeth Singleton occupied it when the wife of Robert Lenton Ward of Drayton (Elizabeth) inherited it from her uncle Robert Morris in 1902.

In 1910, this copyhold house had a cowshed and one and a half acres of land. It was owned by Elizabeth Ward, whose address was given as North View, Caldecott. It was a seven-roomed house with a separate pantry. Built of stone and slate, it was in good condition. The barn had a Collyweston roof. Other buildings on site included a lean-to brick wash-house, a brick closet, an old stone and thatch stable, a cowshed, a lean-to wooden shed and a brick-and-zinc henhouse. An allowance was made for the floors, which were bad and the gross value was reduced by £20 to £250.

Shown here in a drawing of 1839, it remained in the hands of the Ward family until 1944, when it was still described as ‘the Messuage against the Church stile’ (see Figure 285).



Figure 286 Priest's House, Church Close, 2012. (Nick Hill)

Priest's House, Church Close

The earliest record we have found for this house is dated 8th October 1641, when William Bringhurst senior surrendered it, plus a toft called the Lesser Toft and half a virgate of land belonging to it in Snelston, to himself for the term of his natural life (see map on page 18). After his decease it was to go to his son, William Bringhurst junior. The Bringhurst family had been in the village since at least 1625, when William ‘Bringest’ had served as juror in the manor court.

William Bringhurst junior surrendered both properties to himself and his wife Katherine in 1644. The cottage was held under a rent of 1s 5d. The toft and land in Snelston was held under the rent of 4s 8d. Four years later, in order to separate the cottage in Caldecott from his holding in Snelston, William and Katherine surrendered everything to Peter Woodcock junior, who then surrendered the cottage back to them. William died on 4th March 1659. In his will, he was described as a chandler, and he left his home to his son Samuel.²¹ Samuel had, however, to pay all his father's debts and bonds and pay £20 to his brother Isack when he reached the age of 26 years, £15 to another brother Josiah when he became 25, plus 1s to each of his other brothers and sisters, William, John, James, Mary Woodcock and Sarah Spendlove, within one month of their father's death, if they demanded it. An inventory of William's goods, valued by Peter Woodcock, amounted to £8 16s, worth about £700 in today's money²². It listed the items in the shop and the materials of his trade valued at £2 10s and a cow valued at £2. The other items were two inward doors, a table and a coffer 3s, a bench and a powdering trunk 3s 6d, some upper bedding in the house 5s, hampers and pack saddles 5s, a hovel and moveable belonging to it £1, a rack and a manger in the stable 3s, a hedges trough and a horse trough 4s, and his purse and apparel worth £1. It seems little enough on which to support a family of seven children.

In October 1659, Samuel came to court and surrendered the house to himself and his wife Mary. From him it descended to another Samuel in 1684 and then to John. When John Bringhurst died in 1710, the property went to his two daughters, Mary and Martha, each therefore paying 8½d in rent. Neither of the sisters lived in the house which was occupied by Laurence Drake. In 1717, Martha sold her half-share of the property to herself and Henry Lenton, who was intending to marry her. The following year Martha and Henry sold it to William King. When Mary died in 1735, her half went to her sister Martha, who sold it to Richard Ward the following April. At that stage, the cottage was occupied by Richard Ward, Simon Rimmington and Dorothy Skelhorne.

In 1744, William King died and his half-share of the cottage was inherited by his nephew, Thomas King²³. The next year, when he sold it to Richard Ward, it was occupied by Simon Rimmington and Thomas Belton. Richard Ward held both shares of the house until his death in 1805. By the time he handed it on to his nephew, William Hugh Wright, it had become 'the site of a Cottage or Tenement formerly in two moieties or half parts' on which Fernleigh House had just been built. From that date forward the history of the Priest's House was incorporated into that of Fernleigh House.

In 1910, it was a stone and thatched cottage, used as a wash house, standing in the garden of Fernleigh House, which was owned by Charles Thomas Stile. A more elaborate description was given in the Caldecott School Scrapbook,

The height, alternate layers of Northampton stone with a superior white one, inside a lovely white marble fireplace, were built for no ordinary cottage dweller. The thick thatch and well built barns speak of former affluence. The kitchen has an enormous oak fireplace into which seats could be put in the chimney. There are enormous hooks and bars for fitches and pots. Upstairs is a priest or chimney hole, big enough to hide a man – or haunches of venison – the walls on the land of the second floor are Tudor whitened plaster striped with oak. One of the bedroom doors has the kind of fastening one associates with the Bonnie Prince Charlie heroine. The old people say the house was last lived in by a refugee family from the French Revolution. After that it became a butcher's shop, then the War-time Jam Centre 1939-1945. Now, alas it is a poultry house.²⁴

From here we move back, past the Village Hall and along what used to be known as Black Horse Lane to The Green.

The Yews, 1 The Green

The old village green used to be known as Cross Bank. The houses on The Green were numbered anticlockwise in 1966, starting with Number 1, next to the Plough Inn. Until then, houses in Caldecott had no numbers, just names; that, we were told, had been quite sufficient for the people of Caldecott, where everyone knew where everyone lived!

The position of The Yews is particularly interesting. Like the Old Black Horse, it was an ancient freehold property to the west of the churchyard. We have already noted that William Caldecote was the holder of a messuage called



Figure 287 Part of Caldecott Enclosure Map, 1800. (ROLLR)

a hall place to the west of the church in 1563. Maybe this was the site of the hall of an early lord of the manor or even the Hospitallers who owned desmesne lands in Caldecott in 1246.²⁵

The earliest map we have of Caldecott is the Enclosure Map of 1800. The main road from Rockingham to Uppingham originally carried on eastwards and continued through Lyddington and on to Uppingham. In the eighteenth century, the turnpike bypassed Lyddington and was driven through the Caldecott to the east of the churchyard. Any previous roads to the east of the church were probably small service tracks to the windmill, Snelston and Stoke Dry. (see Figure 287)

A date-stone in the gable end of this house tells us that it was built in 1684, a date also confirmed by tree-ring dating (see page 210). Unfortunately, the earliest documentary record found for The Yews is dated 1715, when a rental for Caldecott tells us that Samuel Stokes held a freehold property in the village under the rent of 4s 8d. The Stokes family was clearly prestigious. Walter Stokes first appears in the manor court rolls, serving as juror in the court held on 6 October 1692. Samuel and Walter both served as jurors in 1693. The court rolls revealed that Samuel Stokes purchased copyhold land in Caldecott in 1710, when he bought one quarter of a virgate, about eleven acres in area. In 1713, he bought another three quarters of a virgate and, in 1715, an acre of ley land adjacent to the church yard from Robert Woodcock, who lived in the house next to the church stile.



Samuel Stokes senior died in 1719 and all his property was held by his son, until his four-year old grandson, also called Samuel, reached the age of 21. From Samuel junior, the property went to John Stokes and, by 1782, the ownership of it had been split three ways, Robert Smith Wignall, Thomas Stokes and Samuel Stokes each holding a third. By 1789, Thomas had acquired the third that Robert Wignall had held. Samuel eventually passed his third on to the unusually-named King Henry Stokes, known locally simply as Henry. (Figures 288 and 289)

By his will proved in 1856, apart from a small annuity to be paid out annually to his house keeper, King Henry Stokes of Caldecott left his entire estate, including The Yews and an adjacent piece of land, to his three nieces: Mary Elizabeth, wife of Henry Burgess; Mary Ann, wife of John Holland; and Catherine Cross, wife of Thomas Cross; as tenants in common.²⁶ There must have been some query about King Henry Stokes's right to the title of The Yews, because amongst the deeds of the house is a Declaration made by Mr William Wignall (shepherd) of Caldecott a couple of months after King Henry Stokes's will was proved. In it he said,

He was of the age of 67 years or thereabouts and had worked on the estate of Samuel Stokes and King Henry Stokes for more than 30 years. He had known Samuel Stokes grazier who was the owner of a Messuage or Tenement with Barn Stables Garden and appurtenances thereto belonging which he had been informed were of Freehold tenure. Samuel Stokes resided upon the property for ten years before his decease in 1815. He devised the property to his son King Henry Stokes who resided there until his decease.

In 1857, the property was sold to John Stokes for £530. A memorandum on the conveyance said no receipt was endorsed because no money ever changed hands. John Stokes then promptly took out a mortgage for £300, which he never repaid. Instead, he borrowed an additional £180. When that too was not repaid, the house was sold at auction in the Falcon Inn at Uppingham to Robert Morris (innkeeper) for £600. From Robert Morris, the house passed to his brother James. James's widow Mary held it until her death in 1904, when it passed to her grandson Robert James Ward. The house was occupied by Kelham Wright in 1910 and by his under-tenant, Mr A.D. Lord in 1919, when the house was sold to Mr Frank Wright for £400.

Figures 288 and 289 Amongst a group of ten chest tombs in Caldecott (dated from 1820 to 1860) are eight commemorating members of the Stokes family. The tombs are of limestone ashlar and make an impressive group. All have moulded bases and cornice lids, and recessed corners with rectangular balusters. On the sides are oval inscription panels, most with carved fan motifs in spandrels. (Robert Owens)

Figure 290 Rose Gable, 3 The Green, with South View, 2 The Green, towards the rear of Post Office Lane. Rose Gable was rebuilt in 1951 following a fire. (Henton Collection No 945, dated 27 May 1913, ROLLR).



South View, 2 The Green and Rose Gable, 3 The Green

All the houses on this side of the Green were held by Peter Woodcock before his bankruptcy in 1680, which is discussed in the account of Meadow Farm, 5 The Green.

We have been able to discover little about South View, 2 The Green, other than that it was a freehold property, owned and occupied by Frederick Jeffs in 1910. The description said it was an old stone and thatched cottage, containing six rooms in bad repair. Outside was a wood shed used for horses and pigs.

The records suggest it had been confused with another property, for it was said to have been formerly known as Balls Cottage and Balls Orchard, which makes it the second property in Caldecott to have been called Balls Cottage!

In 1708, Rose Gable, 3 The Green, adjacent to Monkey Puzzle House, had been owned by Walter Freeman. From him it went to John Morris, then William Morris who left all his property to his wife Mary in 1741. Mary passed it on to her son Stephen two years later, but stipulated that he was only to receive it if he paid his sister Mary £20 within one month of his mother's death. From Stephen it went to his brother John Morris. William Woodcock held the property until 1774 when his wife Grace, inherited it for life from John Morris. Then it went to her son, also William, who owned Monkey Puzzle House next door. The house, which had been occupied since 1857 by John Stanger, had four rooms and a pantry and was still thatched in 1910. This and Monkey Puzzle House shared a timber hovel, three closets and a pigsty. Together they were valued at £90..

Figure 291 Rose Gable, 3 The Green. (RCM)



Monkey Tree, 4 The Green

The house was for a long time called Monkey Puzzle House because of the tree growing in the front garden. By 1966, when all the houses in Caldecott were given numbers, the tree had gone and the house become known as Monkey Tree.

Henry Newbone held a house on this site in 1654. The rent was 9s 10d. Henry was charged for a three-hearth house in the Hearth Tax of 1665. From Henry Newborne the elder (the spelling of this name changes often: Nebon, Newbone, Newborne, Nubon are amongst the many variations) it went to his son Henry in 1737. The house was at that stage described as 'All that Messuage House or tenement in Caldecott with the Barns Stables Yards Orchards Gardens Backsides Ways Paths Passages and all other premises with their appurtenances, the Messuage of Walter Freeman lying on the one side thereof and the Messuage of Watson Bradshaw Gent on the other side.' We shall meet Watson Bradshaw again when we discuss the history of Meadow Farm, 5 The Green.

From Henry Newborne the younger the property, described as 'All his Messuage house homestead and Bakehouse', passed to Stephen Morris in 1744. A loan taken out on it from Anthony Getiere (clerk) of Peterborough by Henry Newbourne in 1742 was nevertheless outstanding. William Stukely of Stamford, Getiere's attorney and executor of his will, came into court, seized the property and sold it to William Woodcock (blacksmith). William left it to his wife Grace for life, after which it was to go to his son (another William) in 1774. It was undoubtedly he who was responsible for the fine stone front. His initials WW and the date 1774 may be seen over the door. However, when William senior remarried, he had to come into court again in 1790 so that he and his new wife Jane could leave the messuage to his son. From young William, it went to his son Peter Woodcock (tailor) of Northampton in 1803.



Figures 292 and 293 Monkey Tree, 4 The Green, 2014. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 294 Monkey Tree, 4 The Green. The right-hand ground floor window was previously a shop door with a notice above reading, 'H Burchnall Dealer in Tea Tobacco and Snuff'. The chapel can be seen on the left. (Caldecott School Scrapbook)

From the date of admission of John Peter Woodcock in 1857 onwards, the property was described as 'All that Messuage cottage or Tenement with the Carpenter's Shop Garden Outbuildings and Appurtenances and Also all that Building adjoining now used as a Methodist Chapel formerly a Blacksmith's Shop to the above premises belonging'.

Despite the entry in the court rolls, the chapel was Congregational, not Methodist. The dissenting tradition was strong in the village; meetings were held in several private houses. The names of the householders in whose houses they met were: Thomas Langdale in 1672; Francis Smith, William Smith, Jane Viccars, John Allin in 1789; and Matthew Brown in 1800. In 1829, the return read, 'From Caldecott, one independent Decenters' Chapill, attendance 40-50'.

The building that became the chapel had also belonged to John Morris and was formerly part of Henry Newborne's estate. In 1763, John Morris sold it to Thomas Ougden (wool-comber) and it was used as a wool-comber's shed. Later it became a 'stays' or corset factory. The chapel closed in 1920, but was used in World War II as the A.R.P. Headquarters and became local meeting-place for the Red Cross.



Figures 295 and 296 Meadow Farmhouse, 5 The Green, 2010. The initials of Peter Woodcock and the year 1651 are inscribed on the right-hand gate post. (Robert Ovens)

Meadow Farm House, 5 The Green

An earlier house on this plot probably dated from 1651, as indicated by a date-stone now re-set beside the front gate. The earlier house was demolished and rebuilt in the mid-nineteenth century (see page 203).

In the survey of 1563 it was recorded that Thomas Nebone held one yardland and a half occupied by his brother John Newbon, for which he paid 15s rent. He was not the only Nebone in Caldecott; Laurence held a messuage and half a yardland as well as the Mill Bank. Walter held a messuage and half a yardland and George three half-acres of land in Caldecott, given by a Thomas Cooke for the Sepulchre light and for which the rent was 1½d.' They were a large and prosperous family.

In 1625, Peter Woodcock acquired a messuage and half a virgate of land from a Gregory Nebon, which Gregory had acquired after the deaths of Thomas and Joan Nebone, also half a rood of land in Caldecott, being part of a cottage, but lying at the eastern end of it.

In 1641, Peter Woodcock bought the watermill in Caldecott from Michael and Theodosia Catesby and a quarter of a virgate from Margaret Woodcocke. Over the next few years he built up a considerable estate, including 'a house called a Kilne and a yard called a Kilne Yard & a parcel of pasture containing by estimation one rood', which he obtained from Peter Woodcock senior and Zachary Nebone. In 1648, Peter surrendered the majority of his estate into the joint ownership of himself and his wife Dorothy. By 1653, the estate, now even larger, was handed over to Peter Woodcock junior, and then in 1659 to

Peter junior and Jane. The younger Peter Woodcock's fortunes then seemed to wane. He sold some of his property to the Newbones in the 1660s and, on 25th April 1683, obtained a loan of £1,104 from Elizabeth Barbor, a widow of London, and Edward Haberfield of the Middle Temple, which he agreed to repay one month later at the 'Common dyneing Hall of the Middle Temple.' The loan was secured against the messuage in Caldecott in which he was living with the outhouses orchards and gardens that went with it, the two cottages within the grounds plus the half yardland belonging to the messuage, a toft in Snelston and two half yardlands belonging to it, and all the watermills in Caldecott.

On 25th May, Elizabeth Barbor's attorneys came into the manor court to request the lord of the manor to admit Elizabeth Barbor and Edward Haberfield to all Peter and Jane's properties. A Royal Commission held at Westminster 23 May 1683 by statute of Bankruptcy had declared that Peter Woodcock owed £3,000 (equivalent to about £250,000 today) and that all his property would be sold on behalf of his creditors. The properties were all first transferred to William Hyde junior, then split up and sold. Elizabeth Barber sold to Edward Haberfield the capital messuage in Caldecott in which Peter Woodcock had been living, together with all its outhouses, stables, barns, orchards and gardens, also a cottage, toft and yard near the capital messuage and a house called the Kiln and a yard called the Kiln Yard, a rood of pasture, a cottage within the homestead, half a yardland, a Toft at Snelston and a quarter of a yardland that belonged to it, and all the other properties used as security by Peter and his wife. The capital messuage, being the largest messuage Peter had owned was, of course, Meadow Farmhouse, and he had lost everything!

William Hill and William Browne of Caldecott were appointed by Edward Haberfield as his attorneys to arrange for his admission to all the properties he had bought from Elizabeth Barbor. In 1694, he then sold to John Brown,

All that water Grist Mill with appurtenances commonly called Caldecott Mills in Caldecott and all that cottage called Balls Cottage in Caldecott together with the yard Barne Stable and outhouse belonging and the Wall whereupon the said barn and outhouse are built dividing the said yard from Ball's Orchard and all that Nook of ground lying at the end of the said Barne and Cottage part of Ball's Orchard containing about three yards and half a yard in width and five yards in length

Much of the rest Edward Haberfield kept until he died in 1708. Thomas Haberfield was his youngest son, but never came to court. The Lord of the Manor seized the premises, but then granted them to the trustees: Samuel Woodcock, his brother, his wife Elizabeth Haberfield and his sister Mary Woodcock.

In 1713, Samuel Woodcock gave the capital messuage and all its appurtenances, plus all the rest of the property he and the other trustees had received, to Elizabeth Haberfield and Mary Woodcock. He also mistakenly gave them Balls Cottage, which had been sold to John Brown in 1694! A month later, they transferred everything to Watson Bradshaw of Rockingham for life, after which it was to go to Ann, Watson's wife.

Watson Tookey bought the Meadow Farmhouse from Watson Bradshaw and in 1731, surrendered into the joint ownership of himself and his wife Judith. In 1749, when Watson Bradshaw died, he and his sister Eleanor, a

widow, sold all their right and title to the reversion expectant on the death of Ann Bradshaw to Rev. Watson Tookey of Cottingham, Watson Bradshaw's nephew. From him it went to the Hon Lewis Watson in 1756, then Henry and George Watson, Richard Watson, George Lewis Watson and finally Rev. Wentworth Watson, who inherited the messuage and several plots of land in 1900 and held it until it was enfranchised in 1922. He is also recorded in the rolls as owning Ball's Cottage, which had been sold long ago to John Brown and was actually owned in 1909, as we shall see, by Mrs Louise Ann Wardle.

Ball's Cottage appears twice in every copyhold rental, the first series of which starts in 1709. The Reeves who collected the rents changed each year and must have noticed this; questioned it, even. The fact that it continued to be recorded incorrectly for over two hundred years speaks of collusion. Maybe none of the Reeves had the courage to knock at the door of Rockingham Castle and tell them. They may well have asked themselves what difference it would have made; after all, they had been collecting a rent of 1s 4½d, not much different from the correct one (1s 6d).

From here we carry on to look at Manor House at the top of Mill Lane.



Figure 297 Manor House, Mill Lane, 2010. (Robert Ovens)

Manor House, Mill Lane

We have already met Robert Colling, otherwise Colwell, who became the owner of The Old Plough in 1760. Because he had bought the Old Plough after the death of his daughter Mary, he bequeathed it in 1762 to his four other descendants. His other house, which was later to be called Manor House, he split five ways. The fifth heir was his grandson, Robert Smith, the son of Mary and her husband Joseph Smith. In October that year, Benjamin Timson and his wife Elizabeth, William Morris and his wife Ann, Daniel Colman and his wife Esther, and John Newby and his wife Alice

gave their parts of Manor House to Ann Stokes, the wife of Samuel Stokes, for life, after which it was to go to Samuel, her son. The property then descended through the Stokes family until half of it came into the hands of Arthur Samuel Stokes in 1879. The other half was retained by his uncle, Thomas. Arthur Samuel was a medical student and immediately took a mortgage of £5,000 from Samuel Stephen Bankart and John Howcutt, both of Leicester. In 1790 Arthur Samuel Stokes, by then a surgeon of Weldon, Fanny Sophia Stokes and Agnes Elizabeth Stokes of Caldecott agreed to sell it all to William Mould of Great Easton, Leicestershire, his heirs and assigns for ever. The price was £5,450, of which £900 was for freehold properties. The property, held under a rent of 11s, was described as a messuage with yard barn orchard, the Upper Field just over sixty acres in area, and fields called Windmill Close, Hobby John, Hobby John Meadow and Ploughed Close. Everything passed to Charles Brown Mould in 1903, who sold it to Robert Percy Christian in 1923.

Ball's Cottage, 22 and 24 Main Street

Back at the bottom of the Lane, we should stop a minute to look at the old cottages on the left-hand corner. These were Ball's Cottage, a very old property, acquired by Peter Woodcock in 1670, when it was described as 'one cottage with the orchard adjoining and formerly belonging to the same with appurtenances in the possession of Thomas Baise'. The rent was 1s 8d. Samuel Fowler, a bone merchant from Market Overton bought it in 1828 from William Cave and sold it to Samuel Stokes in 1835. From the Stokes it passed to James Saunders in 1869. He defaulted on the mortgage in 1892 and it was eventually bought by Mrs Louise Ann Wardle. Together with Merrie Cottage, 2 Mill Lane, it went to Henry Johnson in 1922 and to Charles Thomas Stiles in 1924.



Figure 298 Ball's Cottage 2015. (Robert Ovens)

The Mill

We have already seen the early history of the mill in Caldecott. Like so much else it was owned by Peter Woodcock of Meadow Farm. In the process of sorting out his affairs the mills were sold to John Brown. When Peter Brown inherited them in 1699, they were occupied by Solomon Pepper, the miller in Lyddington. The mills remained in the Brown family until 1831, when William Brown left them to his friend John Stokes and his son-in-law John Burton. The Mill, Mill House, and the cottage next door known as Sundial Cottage (Figure 299), which had been The Engine and Tender public house, were all purchased by Joseph James Vice, a printer from Nottingham, for £126 in 1873 from Mary Bell, who had inherited them from her father, John Burton, in 1852. They passed to Leonard Vice in 1906. The mill ceased working in 1910.

Now we must retrace our steps and follow the Uppingham Road north out of the village.



Figure 299 Sundial Cottage and shop. (C. Race)

PART THREE

Stoke Dry

We now follow the route of the turnpike north from Caldecott towards Uppingham, passing the mound on which Caldecott windmill once stood and the deserted village of Snelston (or Snelson as it often appears in early documents). At the top of the hill, known locally as Gallows Hill, we reach a cross-road and turn left towards Stoke Dry. In Camden's day it was known as Drystoke. In 1577, Camden began his great work, *Britannia*, a topographical and historical survey of all of Great Britain and Ireland. Camden made no comment at all on Caldecott or Lyddington, but he did say that Drystoke was,

in no wise is to be passed over with silence, considering it hath beene the habitation from old time of a right ancient race of the Digbeys: which (I grieve to utter it, but all men know it) hath now caught a deepe steine by Sir Everard Digby, drawn into that cursed crew who most horribly complotted with one devilish flash of hellish gunpowder to blow up both Prince and Country.¹

We have no time to dwell here on the huge subject of on the Gunpowder Plot, but refer the reader to a paper on it and its local connections in a copy of the *Rutland Record* published in 2007.²

Although William Cecil, Lord Burghley did not receive the Manor of Stoke Dry until many years later, two fifteenth-century and one sixteenth-century manorial court records of Stoke Dry were included in rolls of 'Liddington cum Caldecott' courts. They contain little on any of the houses in the village; the court for 1466, for example, being concerned only with fines meted out to those who had not attend the court and warning that anyone who had not scoured their ditches would be fined 6s 8d. The courts held in 1496 for William Smith, Bishop of Lincoln, and in 1506, simply list jurors and deciners.

Everard Digby was executed in 1606 and the Manor descended to his son Kenelm, and from him to John, who died at Gayhurst in 1673, leaving his two daughters as heiresses. The Manor was entailed to descendants of the family, but in 1704 their husbands succeeded in getting an Act of Parliament passed, which removed the tail and meant it could be sold. In 1751, it was bought by Thomas Powys, MP for Northampton, later Lord Lilford). Lilford Hall, where he lived, is just north of Achurch and best known for being the main family home of Robert Browne (1550–1633), whose descendants we have already encountered in Caldecott. Browne has been frequently referred to as 'The Father of the Pilgrims' and 'The Grandfather of the Nation' in America for his role in leading the Pilgrim Fathers.



Figure 300 Part of a Map of Stoke Dry by Vincent Wing, 1756. (BH, Exeter Archive)

In 1756, Thomas Powys asked Vincent Wing to draw up a map of Stoke Dry, listing all the properties there, together with their acreages).³ Valuations of Thorpe Achurch, Aldwinkle, Stoke Dry and Holyoak were prepared in 1762 and a clear annual value of the Stoke Dry estate was declared in 1771. In that year and in 1772, a series of letters passed between Thomas Powys and



Figure 301 The Eyebrook Reservoir dam under construction in 1938. (C. Race)



Figure 302 Panoramic view of Eye Brook reservoir in 2007. (John Nowell)

Lord Exeter concerning a possible exchange of Stoke Dry for the Manors of Aldwinckle and Achurch. Rentals, valuations and proposals for enclosures were presented, agreement was reached and a deed of exchange signed in 1773.⁴

The village that the Earl of Exeter thus acquired was not large; it stands on a hill from which very extensive views of the adjoining counties of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire can be seen, across the Eye Brook Reservoir and the Welland Valley. A bend in the road turns left where a footpath, leading off to the right, runs along the southern boundary of Lyddington Great Park,

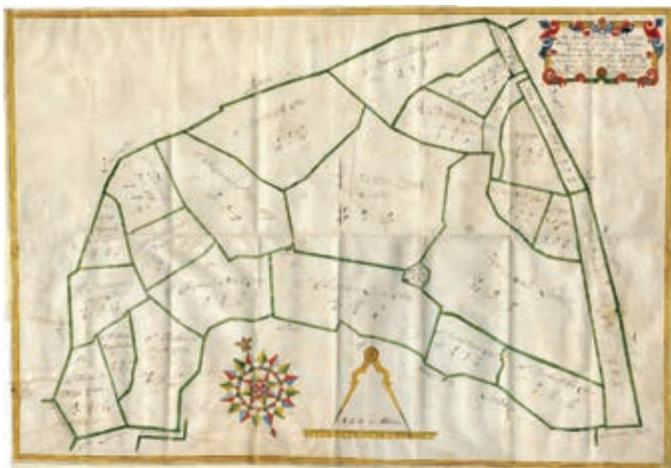


Figure 303 Map of Lyddington Great Park surveyed by Tycho Wing, 1726. (BH, Exeter Archive)

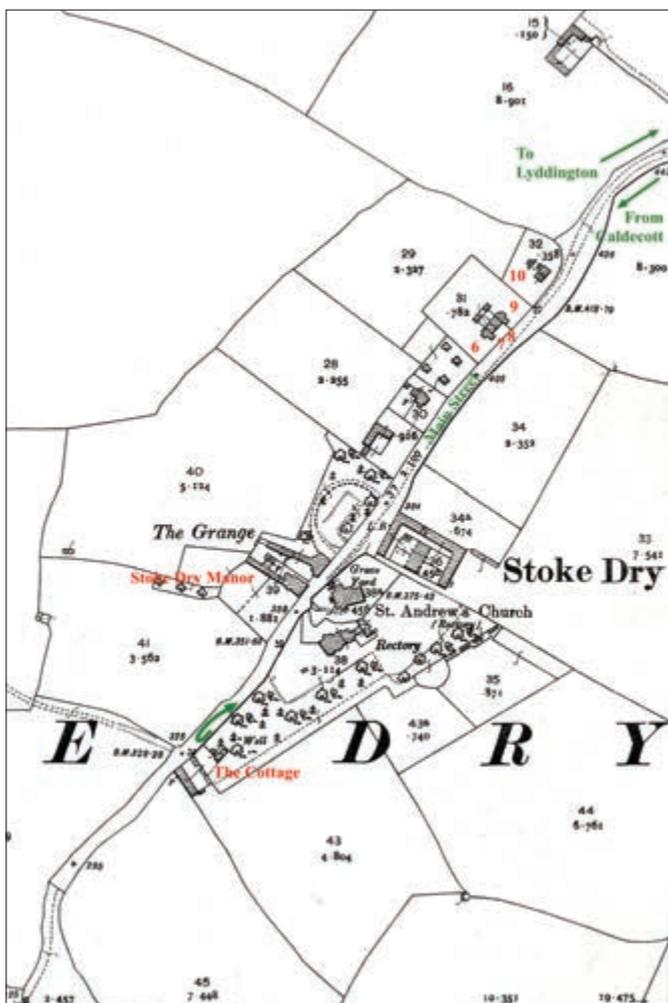


Figure 304 Ordnance Survey Series II map of 1904, showing houses in Stoke Dry. (RCM)

surveyed by Tycho Wing in 1726 (Figure 303). From here we drop down into the village (Figure 304). None of the houses in Stoke Dry were copyhold and their history cannot be traced through court rolls; only through maps, leases, sales documents and information supplied by local residents. The following data on owners and occupiers has been compiled from data contained in maps and surveys of 1756, 1877 and 1910.

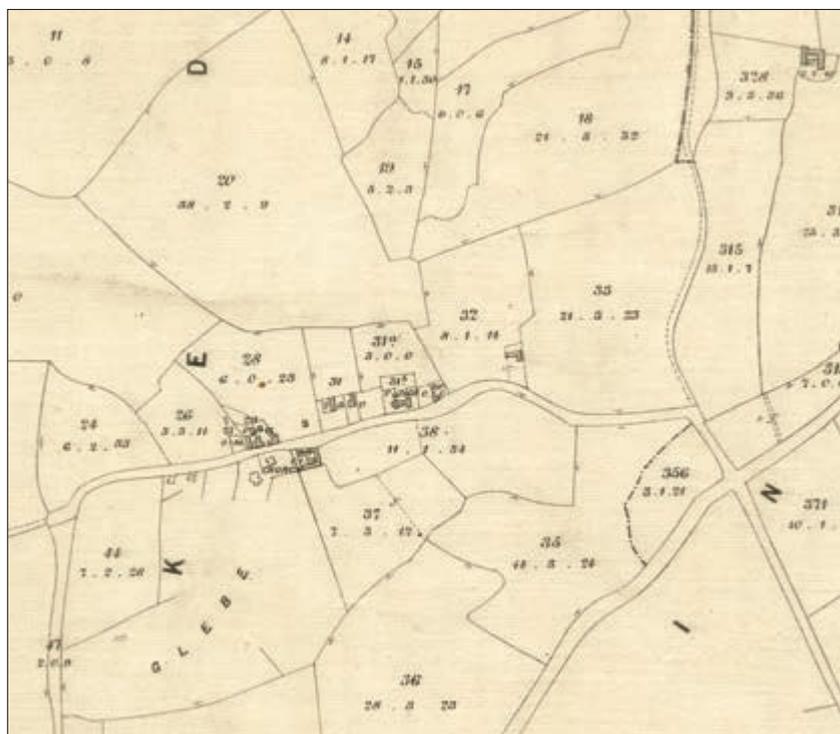


Figure 305 Part of a map of Stoke Dry, 1877. (BH, Exeter Archive)

Fernie House, 10 Main Street

The first house we come to in Stoke Dry was initially a pair of cottages. The plan of the cottages (see Figure 307) dates from 1872. They were built on land that had been owned by Mrs Peach in 1756 and were erected by the Lands Improvement Company. A sum of £600 had been allowed for their construction, but the final bill, presented on 6th September 1871, came to £440 for their construction and £11 for plans and specification, making a total of £451.⁵ They were occupied by John Cox, Thomas Inch, John Inch, and Ann Wadd in 1877, when the map showed each cottage had a plot of a quarter of an acre. By 1910, they were held by Messrs J. & R. Blood and occupied by David and Charles Wright.



Figure 306 Fernie House, 10 Main Street in 2015, built as two cottages in 1871. (Robert Ovens)

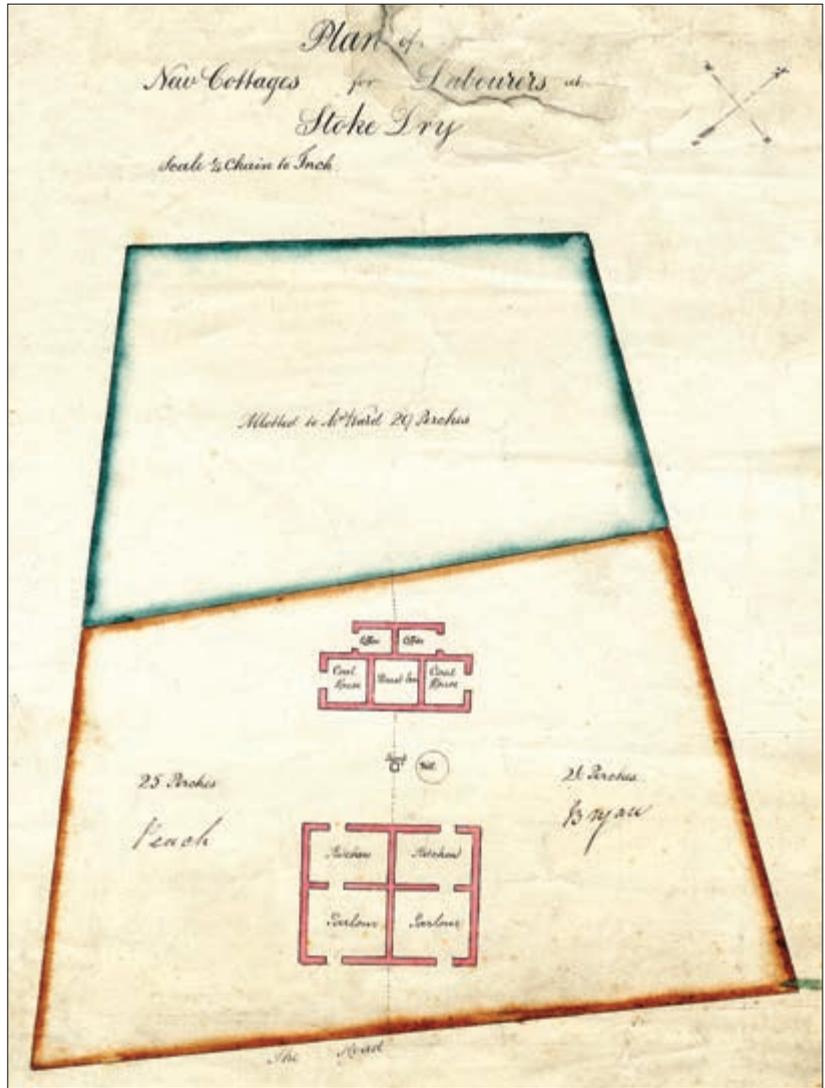


Figure 307 Plan of two cottages, 1872, now Fernie House. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 308 Row of four estate cottages, 6, 7, 8 and 9 Main Street in 2015, dated 1858. (Robert Ovens)

6, 7, 8 and 9 Main Street

These cottages were also built on the same plot of land as 10 above, owned by Mrs Peach in 1756. They are dated 1858 on a tablet between the two middle cottages. By 1877, they were held by John Henry Bryan. In 1910, they were owned by George Taylor, whose gamekeeper, R. Smith, was occupying one of them.

The Grange

The Grange appeared to be two separate buildings in 1756, one owned by Mrs Newborne, widow and the other by Thomas Bryon. Williams Connor Magee (1821–81) had The Grange as a summer house when he was Bishop of Peterborough.⁶ A path at the Grange called the Bishop's walk was used by Dr. Magee when he left the house each morning to look at his horses. He was an Irishman born in Cork, the son of a clergyman and the grandson of a Bishop. He was only thirteen when he entered Trinity College, Dublin and he won a classical scholarship there at the age of seventeen. Bishop Magee was known to be a great orator, a powerful preacher and a brilliantly witty conversationalist with a withering power of sarcasm. He ruled the Peterborough diocese wisely and vigorously and presided over the Church Congress in Leicester in 1883. He was enthroned Archbishop of York in 1891, but died in the same year. In 1877, the Grange was held by Wilson Barnes and, in 1910, by George Taylor.



Figure 309 The Grange, Stoke Dry, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

The Manor

This house, owned by Robert Wells, was on Vincent Wing's map of 1756, though it may have been modified later. By 1877, a number of buildings to the south of the house had disappeared, as had the front wing. The house was then owned by Wilson Barnes. In 1910, it was owned by William Smith (Figure 311).



Figure 310 The Manor, Stoke Dry, 2015. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 311 The Manor, Stoke Dry, 2015. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 312 The Old Rectory, Stoke Dry, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

The Rectory

The Rectory was held by Rev Mr Lawrence in 1756. Below the house down the hill were two other dwellings, owned by Thomas Goodwin, and Charles Peach. At the bottom was The Cottage, a house yard and homestead held by Thomas Olever.

The new Rectory was built in 1841 by Brian Browning for the Reverend Charles Henry Swann (see page 204). On the 1877 map, the area of the Rectory and the cottages to the south are simply labelled Glebe. The explanation for this is contained in a letter addressed to the Marquess of Exeter in 1855, in which William Higgs, the estate steward, put

forward a proposal that land that the Marquess owned below and to the east of the Rectory be exchanged with two plots of Glebe land near the Eye Brook. The plans he drew showed none of the cottages that had existed in 1756.

On 24th August 1893, W. Hamilton Thompson wrote to Lord Exeter with details of particulars of Commutation, a cottage for a curate and other accommodation. By November that year it was clear that W. Hamilton Thompson had resigned. Particulars of the income and charges upon the living relative to his pension at the time of his resignation were collected. Wilson Barnes wrote to Charles Thorpe, the estate steward, on 17 November 1893, saying the rector's age was about 70 or 72 and giving the gross value of the Rectory, the Tithe rent charge and other details. The Bishop of Peterborough wrote to the clerk to the archdeaconry of Oakham, the Rector of Cottingham, and others, for information on the expediency of the proposed resignation of W. Hamilton Thompson. They consulted the Benefices Resignation Acts of 1871 and 1887; the resignation of a rector was clearly unusual.

By 1910, the Rectory was held by Rev George Thurston and the house, stables and garden were valued at £2,000. The garden of the Rectory then ran right down to and included The Cottage at the bottom of the plot, occupied by Philip Greatorex.

Schedule Shewing Rent Roll for Lay Day 1878	
Caldecot	£ 21. 0. 0
Lyddington	893. 19. 0
Stoke Dry	1820. 14. 6
Stoke oaks	991. 13. 10
	<u>£ 3727. 7. 11</u> Total Rent Roll

Figure 313 Totals of Rent Rolls, 1878 (BH, Exeter Archive)

Our history of the standing buildings in Stoke Dry suggests that very few date from before 1800. All the evidence suggests that, having taken over the village, the Earls of Exeter and their descendants invested in the farms, building, renovating and improving the land. The reason was clear: of all the villages in the Manor, this small hamlet brought in the largest income (see Figure 313).⁷

PART FOUR

Lyddington

Leaving Stoke Dry, we cross the Caldecott to Uppingham turnpike and descend into the long, straggling village of Lyddington, our next destination. The introduction to the 1850 Survey of the Estate of the Earl of Exeter describes the village as ‘prettily situate’ and adds ‘The houses are principally built of stone and thatched and many of them are very ancient in appearance.’



As we descend, we pass (on the right) the site of one of the old pits that provided the richly-coloured ironstone of which many local houses are constructed (see **Figure 315**). A local builder told us he had extracted the last bit of the very dark, hard stone referred to locally as ‘Lyddington Purple’ from here in the 1920s. In the Enclosure Award of 1804, Stoke Dry Road was described as ‘a carriage road of the breadth of forty feet beginning at the end of a lane called Pigs Lane’. Pigs were penned at the bottom of the hill because of complaints of the smell in the market, held on The Green. On 21 January 1215, a charter of King John had granted to the Church of Lincoln and Bishop Hugh II permission to hold their fairs for three or four days every year, and their markets one day a week, in all their manors.¹ Pigs Lane is an ancient name, cited in many court rolls in the early 1600s.

The route we shall take is indicated on the 1904 Ordnance Survey map to which current house numbers have been added (see **Figure 316**).

Figure 314 Lyddington from Stoke Road. (Author)



Figure 315 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)

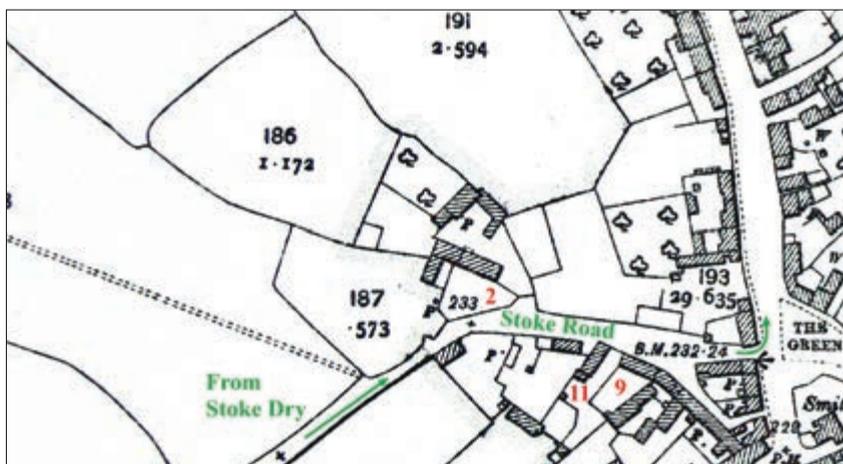


Figure 316 Part of Lyddington Ordnance Survey Series II Map of 1904, showing houses on Stoke Road. (RCM)

Poplars Farm House, 2 Stoke Road

Set back on the left of the road, **Poplars Farm House** is the first ancient house we see on entering the village. Its history goes back to the sixteenth century, when it was owned by a member of the Hill family. A Richard Hill was listed in both the Military Survey of 1522 and the Lay Subsidy of 1524 and a John Hill was baptised in Lyddington in 1562.

In 1563, John Hill held a messuage and half a yardland, for which he paid 5s rent. James Hill was only eighteen when his father died. He and his wife Bridget became joint owners in April 1654. James Hill's house had two hearths according to the Hearth Tax return of 1665. James wanted the messuage to go to his eldest son John Hill after the death of Bridget, but a memorandum on the surrender stated, 'Wee find James Hill heir to James & brother to John'. The system of inheritance, called Borough English, that prevailed in the Manor meant that the youngest son was the lawful heir, not the eldest, and the court would not allow John to be admitted tenant to the property. The following year, James, his younger brother, was found heir and admitted tenant. John Hill did not live on the farm; it had previously been occupied by Elizabeth Nevison widow and later by Elizabeth Kemm.

The messuage was surrendered to Thomas Goodliffe & Anne in 1767 at an agreed rent of one shilling. The house sat against a carriage way leading from Pigs Lane to Thomas's allotment, across which there was (and still is) an ancient footway. The carriageway passed between Thomas Goodliffe's house and a group of buildings since demolished, the site of which is now the garden of Poplars Farm (See **Figure 318**).



Figure 317 Poplars Farm House, 2 Stoke Road, 2014. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 318 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. Thomas Goodliffe's house, now part of Poplars Farm House, and its Home Close, 1 acre 2 roods 10 perches in area, were on plot 87. On the opposite side of the carriageway lay plot 89, 1 rood 37 perches in area, held by Robert Peach. The two buildings on the corner of the carriageway were on plots numbered 90 and 91. (ROLLR)

The property remained in the hands of the Goodliffes until 1824, when it was sold to Thomas Wright for £1,225. In 1844, it was sold to John Monckton Esq of Finseshade Abbey, who a couple of years later also bought all the small buildings across the carriageway.

By 1910, Poplars Farm was owned by Edward Philip Monckton and occupied by Thomas Middleton. The six-roomed house, which was thatched, had a pantry and a cellar. Old, but in very fair repair, it was valued at £3,782. We now cross the road to look at other properties that also became part of the Moncktons' estate in the nineteenth century.



Figure 319 Mullions, 11 Stoke Road, 2010. (Robert Ovens)

Mullions, 11 Stoke Road

The history of **Mullions** dates back to the sixteenth century (see page 118). In 1563, Anthony Walles held it in the right of his wife and paid 2s 5d in rent. In 1593, he surrendered it to himself for life, after which he decreed it would go to Kenelm. The property was described as, 'a cottage in a certain place called Pigges Lane with a close pertaining, two acres of meadow and two acres and a half of arable land'. The rent was 12d.

By 1644, the cottage and its two acres of land was in the tenure of George Browne. In May 1650, George and Katherine surrendered the cottage and land belonging to it to James Winter and his wife Mary for the term of their lives. The messuage was occupied by John Freeman who was allowed to retain it for the term of his and his wife Elizabeth's lives, after which it was to be returned to James and Mary Winter. In 1652, James and Mary surrendered the cottage land and two acres of meadow to Charles Benner, who immediately returned the two acres to them, but kept the cottage and the land, for which he paid 5s 2d rent.

In 1653, Charles Benner surrendered the cottage, occupied by Charles and John Freeman, to John Cant. By 1713, held by Abraham Cant, it was in the several occupations of Thomas Collin, John Hill and widow Stretton. This multiple occupancy continued until Abraham sold the cottage to John Ridgley weaver in 1718. John Ridgley died in 1727; his will survives and an inventory of all his goods². He left his eldest son John his quarter of copyhold land in Lyddington, provided he paid £20 each to Katherine his sister and to James and Anthony his younger brothers when he reached the age of 21 years. To his wife Bridgett he bequeathed:

All That Cottage of Copyhold wherein I now dwell with the Barns Stables Yard Orchard Gardens and close of pasture adjoining thereunto with all and Singular the Appurtenances to the said Cottage belonging To be to her during the Term of her Natural life and after her decease.

He also left his cottage with appurtenances to his son John Ridgley provided John then made another payment of £20 to each of his brothers and sisters. The inventory of John's goods totalled an amount equivalent to about £11,000 today (see **Figure 320**).

An Inventory of the Goods and Chattells of John Ridgley of Liddington who departed this life the 17th day of November 1728 taken and appraised the 22th of November 1728 by Edmund Sismey & Moses Allen Gent:

			Li'	s'	d'
Item	primis	Purse and Apperil	10	0	0
Item	In the House	Tow Tabels won Dosene of Chears Ten Peuter Deises tow Dosen of Plates and other od things	4	10	0
Item	In the parler	Tow Tabels won Dosen of Chears	1	10	0
Item	In the Best Chamber	Won bed and Beding won Chest of Drayers tow Trunks foure Chestis with Linen and other od things	15	0	0
Item	In the next Chamber	Tow Beds and Beding won Chest and other od things	5	0	0
Item	In the Chamber over the house	Won bed with Beding and a prsel of wheate and sume other things	4	10	0
Item	In the Brewhous	Six pans three pots foure tubs with other things	4	10	0
Item	In the Shop	Three Loums Coms and Compots warping bars Foure peeses of sallounes with tow Dosen of Top and other od things	12	10	0
Item	In the Barne	A parcel of barly	9	0	0
Item	In the other Barne	Sum hay with a stacke in the Close and a litel on A Hofell	6	10	0
Item		Two hofuel of pease	6	0	0
Item	In the yard	Foure Beeast won Mare won Hoge a wagen and other things	16	0	0
		Won akear of wheat on the Grounde	2	0	0
Item	In the Parke Close	Foure Heffers foure Calves	13	0	0
		Tow stackes of hay	10	0	0
			120	0	

Edmund Sismey, Moses Allen

A group of outbuildings, shown dotted, can be seen on plot 94 of the Lyddington Enclosure Map (see **Figure 321**). These could have been John Ridgley's brew-house and barns. When John's wife Bridgett died in 1746, their son John, to whom it had been bequeathed, was no longer living, so the property went instead to Anthony, his youngest surviving brother. From Anthony, it went to James Ridgley in 1753.

James was living in Cottingham when he inherited the cottage. He married Hannah Wright of Lyddington in 1770 and their daughter Catherine was born

Figure 320 Inventory of John Ridgley of Lyddington, 1728. (ROLLR)

the following year, but James died two years later. Hannah and Catherine were admitted to the cottage and the quarter of a yardland that went with it in April 1772. Hannah later remarried John Seaton; she appeared as Hannah, the wife of John Seaton, in the Enclosure Award of 1804.

In 1807, Catherine's bastard son, Thomas Pretty, was baptised in Lyddington. Later, in 1822, she married William Drake of Thorpe. Catherine was a widow by 1844, when she sold the cottage with its home close to John Monckton Esq. of Fineshade Abbey, Northamptonshire.

Figure 321 Plot 94 on Lyddington enclosure map, 1804, enlarged to show detail of the buildings. (ROLLR)

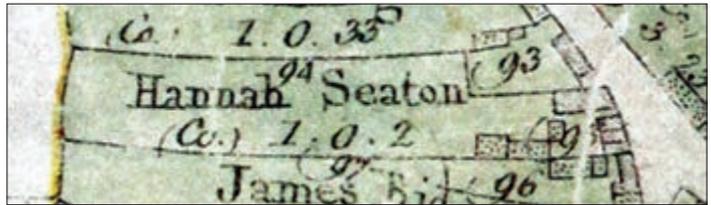


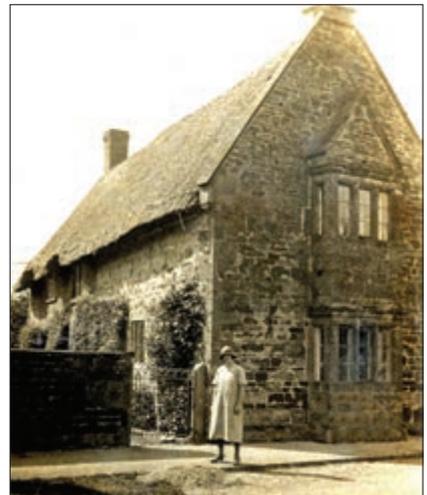
Figure 322 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804, showing allotment to Hannah Seaton. (ROLLR)



Figure 323 An early photograph of Mullions, 11 Stoke Road. (RCM)



Figure 324 Mullions, 11 Stoke Road, with Ethel Gray. (Mr & Mrs D. Clarke)



In 1910, Mullions was described as a seven-roomed stone thatch and slated house in good repair, occupied by H.S.T. Manton . The outhouses included an open shed and a pigsty, plus cart-shed, stable, cowshed and barn. The gross value was estimated to be £845.

Fineshade, 9 Stoke Road

Fineshade was two tenements throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They too were bought by the Moncktons of Fineshade in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Before we reach the corner of Main Street, in the wall on the left we should note the remains of a thatched barn that caught fire. The thatch was torn off and people stood with buckets of water and passed them along the lines. After this a fire-engine was bought and kept in the barn at the back of one of the nearby houses that front onto Main Street. We turn left at the end of Pig Lane onto the northern part of Main Street.



Figure 325 Fineshade 2015. (Robert Ovens)

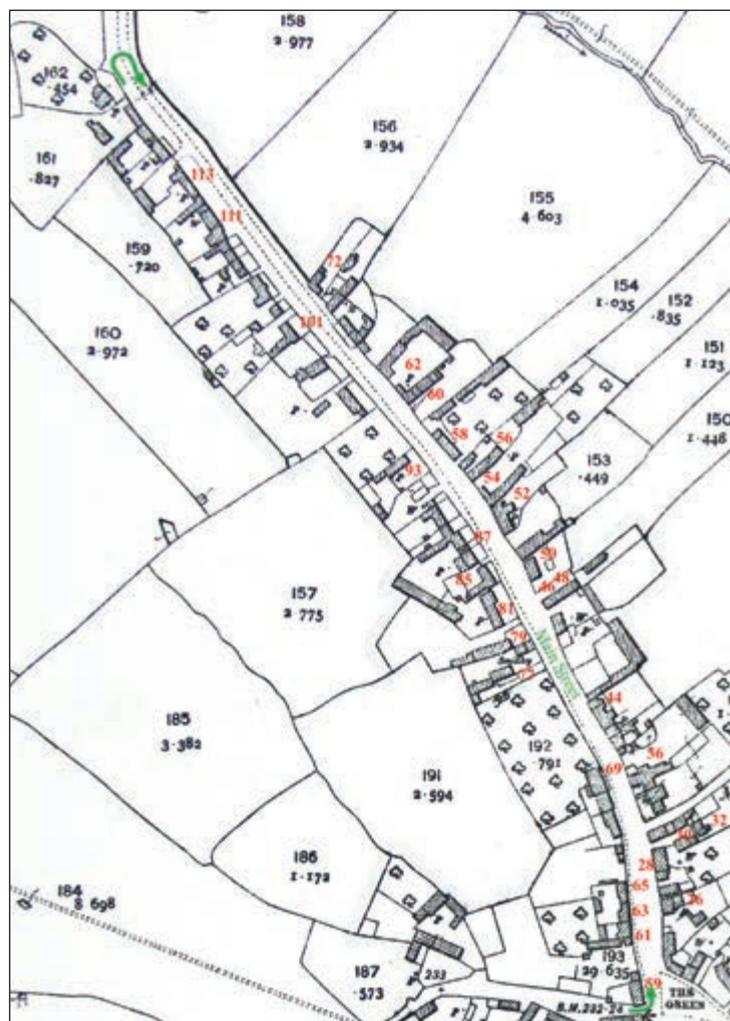


Figure 326 Part of Lyddington Ordnance Survey Map, 1904, showing houses on Main Street north. (RCM)

Inglewood, 61 Main Street

Rounding the corner, we pass **Lyndon House, 59 Main Street**, an old farmhouse, owned by the Allen family in the eighteenth century. The next house, **Inglewood**, was a half cottage, i.e. it had half the normal customary services and rights of a normal cottage and the rent was only 2d. As we shall shortly see, it was held in the eighteenth century by Robert Dexter together with the house next door, 63 Main Street. From Robert Dexter it passed to John Allen's son Henry in 1806, then a series of owners and occupants including Mrs Cheatele, who ran a bed-and-breakfast establishment there in the nineteenth century.



Figure 327 63, Main Street, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

Slievenanee, 63 Main Street

In 1712, George Dolton gave a cottage on the site of **63 Main Street** to his son George. The rent was 10d. In 1716, George junior used it as security for a loan of £21 10s he obtained from Nicholas Jordan, an Excise Officer of Uffington, Lincolnshire. The loan should have been repaid the following year, but Nicholas Jordan, who had meanwhile moved to March in the Isle of Ely, Cambridge, did not come to Court until 1728 to claim the cottage. Instead he used it as security for a loan from Thomas Hurst, estate steward of

the Earl of Exeter. The loan was repaid when the cottage was sold to Robert Dexter (cooper) of Langham in April 1730.

In 1731, Robert Dexter surrendered the cottage into joint ownership with his wife Mabel, but entailed it to his heirs. Robert and Mabel had several children, all baptised in Lyddington Church: Mabel in 1731, William in 1733, Anne in 1736 (died the same year), Robert in 1737 and Anne in 1740 (died two years later). On 16th March 1761, Robert and Mabel surrendered the cottage to their younger son Robert, who had set up his own business as a cooper in Whissendine. A note at the bottom of the surrender said that Mabel Dexter had been admitted on a Reversion after the decease of her husband Robert. In January that year, three months before he was admitted to the house, Robert and his wife Ann had buried their son, another Robert, in Lyddington. A date-stone over the front door (**Figure 328**) reads RDA MDCCLXIII. The initials match those of Robert and Ann Dexter and the heart-shaped scrolls and plant growing up through the centre suggests a celebration of their marriage, with hopes for a healthy life. Their son John was born in 1764, followed by James in 1767.

In April 1772 Robert Dexter sold part of the 'Cottage house', now held under a reduced rent of 8d, to Daniel Larratt (yeoman) of Lyddington, but retained for himself a tenement 'with a Way and Passage through the Gates and Yard of the said Cottage for the said Robert Dexter his heirs and assigns And also a Way to and from the Well in the Yard of the said Cottage at all seasonable times whatsoever to carry away water.' The part he retained, held under a rent of 2d, became Inglewood, 61 Main Street.



Figure 328 Tablet over the front door of 63 Main Street. (Nick Hill)



Figure 329 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1604. 63 Main Street is on plot 63. (ROLLR)



Figure 330 Members of the Woods family outside 63 Main Street. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

Daniel Larratt sold the 'Cottage house' in 1773 to William Crain, a blacksmith, who was still holding it in 1804, when Lyddington Enclosure Map was published. The plot of 63 Main Street is numbered 83 on the map. The division between the two properties is clearly shown, as is the way or passage from the street to the back of the property.

William Crane split the house and the parcel of land that went with it between his two sons in 1822 (Figure 329). Thomas Crane, his eldest son, received the 'Messuage tenement or dwelling house with the Blacksmith shop yard barn and other appurtenances' held under a rent of 4d. William Crane, his younger son, inherited land in the Nether field, also held under a rent of 4d. Land being regarded as more valuable than a cottage, the requirements of the court that the younger son should inherit was thereby satisfied. In 1848, Thomas Crane's property was listed as 'House, blacksmiths shop barn stable yard and garden, eighteen perches in area.'

Thomas passed the property on to his brother in 1849. William died intestate in 1856 and it went to his sister Elizabeth, wife of George Smith. Elizabeth predeceased George, so it then went to his nephew John Colwell, who sold it for £100 to Mrs Emma Manton (widow) in 1890. Mrs Manton sold it to Thomas Joseph Woods (journeyman baker) of Lyddington in 1920 (see Figure 330).

The way or passage through to the back yard survived for many years. Shown on a photograph of 1968 (Figure 331), it also provided a route for the drain installed in a process of Burghley estate improvements carried out in 1870. Many of the fields that drained poorly were reported to have a clay subsoil. The drain in the passageway was covered by planks, but some still remember the time the planks gave way under the weight of a tractor that became stuck in the mud. The route of the drain is shown on the 1904 Ordnance Survey Map, crossing the road to go through the garden of 28 Main Street and under a bridge to the stream beyond. 63 Main Street was one of the



Figure 331 61 to 65 Main Street, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)

village laundries with a wash house and copper. The drying and ironing rooms became 65 Main Street. On washdays, before a culvert was placed under the road, the suds piled up in the drain running across the road, to the delight of children jumping over them.

69 to 79 Main Street

To the north of 65 Main Street was a builders' yard attached to Orchard House, 69 Main Street and an orchard. All had belonged to the Clarke family, a



Figure 332 69 Main St & builders' workshops, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)



Figure 333 75 Main St, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)



Figure 334 77 to 81 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

long-established line of stone masons and builders. They were sold and a number of new houses erected on the site in 2010 (Figure 332). By the 1960s, 75 and 77 Main Street were uninhabited and badly in need of repair, and barns belonging to 81 Main Street had been converted into 79 Main Street (Figures 333 and 334).

The Homestead, 81 Main Street

The Homestead and the house at 81 Main Street had been owned by the Pelsant family in the seventeenth century (see page 150). Sir Eusebius Pelsant had obtained a house from Richard Wildbore in 1660. As he also held the lease of the prebendal house, the entry of eleven hearths against his name in the Hearth Tax returns of 1665 can hardly apply to this house and we can only presume that the tax was paid by an unknown occupier. In 1695, Eusebius Buswell (alias Pelsant), knight, died, and the house, together with the enclosed fields called Priestley (sic) Close and Chantry Close, went to his heir of exactly the same name. In 1726, Eusebius Buswell junior of Cadeby, Leicestershire, sold two houses in Lyddington to Joseph Pretty of Stepney in Middlesex, a cheesemonger. From Joseph the properties descended to his son John in 1728 and Elizabeth Walker, his intended wife, in 1734. Joseph was their only son and inherited both houses plus Priestley Close, Chantry Close and three-and-a-half acres of land in 1773. From Joseph both houses went on a Recovery to his nephew Joseph, a maltster. William Pretty, Joseph's nephew, inherited the two houses in 1810 and sold the house at 87 Main Street to John Clarke for £290 in 1813. In 1831, he sold 81 Main Street to Joseph Clarke (grocer) of Leicester for £850. The



Figure 335 The Homestead, 81 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 336 Renovation of The Homestead in the 1980s. (Owner's collection)



Figure 337 Plot 79 on Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)



Figure 338 87 Main Street before alterations, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)

house was described as ‘All that copyhold or Customary Messuage or tenement with the barns Malting Offices Orchards Gardens Homestead or Home Close’.

Joseph Clarke died in 1845, leaving his entire estate, including the homestead and a considerable amount of other property to his brother John Pretty Clarke (hosier) of Leicester.³ Joseph Clarke had written his will in 1842 as he was ‘about to embark for the United States of North America and knowing that in the course of long voyages casualties may happen and that life at all times is uncertain’. In fact, Joseph did die in America: he had an accident as he was about to return to England and was buried in Green Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn on 28th December 1843. In 1910, 81 and 83 Main Street were both held by the representatives of Thomas Pretty.

85 and 87 Main Street

Carrying on up the hill, we pass **85 Main Street**, once a butcher’s shop, then **87 Main Street**, once another laundry, run by the Brewster family for many years. These laundries washed for Uppingham School; the washing was fetched and returned by Henry Muggleton on his horse and cart. 87 Main Street was extensively rebuilt in the 1960s. It originally had a central archway (see **Figure 338**). The laundry was on the left and the living room on the right. Behind, in the yard, was a well and tanning pits; sheep skins were cured, and laundry dried.

The Lilacs, 101 Main Street

Moving up the hill on the far corner of the modern development in Colley Rise, we pass the village pinfold where stray animals were held, to reach **The Lilacs** (see page 202). This was a significant messuage with barns, stables, houses and orchards held by members of the Ireland family in the early 1700s. Edward Ireland’s will of 1569 was proved in 1571⁴. He was clearly a wealthy man, but also a remarkable philanthropist. Amongst his charitable bequests were: 20s a year to the poorest men or women in Uppingham over the age of fifty to buy them winter clothes; a cottage in Bisbrooke to ‘have three poore wydowes dwelling in the same’; and the rent of his farm cottage in Bisbrooke was to be paid to the almshouse in Stockerston, Leicestershire. He also added to his will instructions that the lands he had bequeathed to ‘M^r Kenelme Digbye, M^r Anthony Collie thelder, M^r John Hunte of Linden thelder, and M^r John Flower thelder esquiers’ should be used ‘towards the erection of A free Scoole



Figure 339 The Lilacs, 101 Main Street near left. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

in Uppingham for the vertuus educacion and bringing upp of youthe there in learning to continue for ever'. This was some fifteen years before Uppingham School was founded in 1584 by Robert Johnson, Archdeacon of Leicester.

113 Main Street

The houses that stretch from here up the hill have all been traced back to the eighteenth century. 113 Main Street had been the home of William Curtis, collar and harness maker. It was one of a line of three cottages destroyed by fire in 1907. William lived here from about 1860 with his wife Ann and their daughter Mary, who was born in 1863. Ann died in 1900. Mary worked from home as a dressmaker. When the cottage was burnt down in 1907, William and Mary moved to a house in Church Lane, but William used one of the cottages which once stood on the garden of Fern Cottage, 43 Main Street as his workshop. William died in 1912, aged 75.



Figure 340 The home of William Curtis, collar- and harness-maker, 1895. It was one of a line of three cottages destroyed by fire in 1907. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Figure 341 The front of William Curtis' cottage survives as a garden wall to Colley Hill House, 2013. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 342 North Hall, 72 Main Street, 2015.
(Jeremy Rider)



Figure 343 Stoneville Farm, 62 Main Street, 2014.
(Robert Ovens)



Figure 344 Aerial photograph looking south-west
c. 1960. Stoneville Farm arrowed. (Mrs Jo Rowling)

Figure 345 Red Roofs,
60 Main Street, 1968.
(L.C. Emmerson)

North Hall, 72 Main Street

We now move across the road to look at the houses on the east side of Main Street. The last old house on this side of the road is **North Hall**. It was one of the few freehold houses in the village and was leased to Clement Mervin in 1724 for twenty years at a rent of 13s 4d.⁵ It was owned by John Nutt in 1804 and by William Wilson (tailor) in 1910.

64 to 70 Main Street are modern houses built on the site of several old cottages.

Stoneville Farm, 62 Main Street

Stoneville Farm was built on the site of a messuage that was probably owned by Richard Munn, vicar of Lyddington, in the seventeenth century. By 1685 it had become two dwellings owned by John Sismey (gentleman) and occupied by John Sewell and Richard Crading. The Sismey family sold the two messuages and the close of pasture to Robert Walker in 1787. In 1793, one of the messuages was sold to William Murdock, though Robert Walker carefully arranged that he retained access across its land to his barn (see **Figure 344** and see page 162). The other messuage, with the barn, he sold to William Gamble six years later. William Gamble's messuage was sold to Joseph Clarke grocer of Leicester in 1829 and inherited by John Pretty Clarke in 1845 when Joseph died in America. By 1853, it was a poor house in multiple occupation, and eventually became the site of **60 Main Street**, next door, but the barn and all the outbuildings together with the close of just over five acres on the site of 62 Main Street were acquired by J.E. Marvin. The barn and



outbuildings were later converted into Stoneville Farm, the large house we see on the site today (see **Figure 344**). The cottages on the site of 60 Main Street were known as ‘The Hole in the Wall’. They were very dilapidated and were eventually pulled down. A new house, Red Roofs, was built on the site using much material from the old houses (see **Figure 345**).

Avalon, 58 Main Street

We have been able to trace the owners of **Avalon** back into the sixteenth century. In 1563, it was listed in a survey conducted for Lord Burghley thirteen years after he had been granted the ‘Manor of Liddington cum Caldecott’ by Edward VI. It was described as a copyhold messuage and a half yardland with appurtenances, held by Kenelm Boyhowe under a rent of 5s. In 1600, Kenelme and his wife Anne passed the property on to a Robert Boyhawe, possibly their son. Kenelm or Kellam Boyer was buried in Lyddington in 1604. In 1625, Robert junior, only fifteen years old, inherited the house and land, though his mother Millicent retained the right to live there for the term of her life. The spelling of the name Boyhawe appeared under many permutations: Boyhawe, Behawe, Boyer, Beho and Behoe. It was even entered in the court rolls as Behawe alias Boyer on one occasion. The descent of the title to the house in the first half of the seventeenth century is further complicated by the intermarriage of the Boyhawe female line and members of the Lacie or Lacey family.

Robert Boyer was a husbandman or farmer. In 1634, he leased, ‘5 acres and 1 butt of land arable and lea, 1 rood meadow and in the demesnes meadow 2 roods’ from William Earl of Exeter and David Cecill of Stamford Esq, for a rent 6s 10d and ‘1 strike of beans, sweet clean well dressed and merchantable as good as Stamford market can afford’. The term of the lease was 99 years or three lives. According to an estate rental, Robert Boyer was still holding his copyhold property in 1654 for 5s a year rent, as well as two farms at 7s each, plus John Lacie’s copyhold messuage at 1s 11d. John Lacie was the son of Mary, Robert Boyer’s wife. He was a wealthy man.

By 1662, Robert was starting to borrow money. He obtained two loans that year, both for £50, one secured against his land the other against his house, a one hearth property according to the Hearth Tax of 1665. Both loans were renewed in 1664. Robert Boyer’s half yardland was sold to Edward Allen in 1671. In 1680, he borrowed £40 from Magdalena Clipsham of Uppingham secured against ‘all that messuage or tenement yard barn stables outhouses & other edifices & close of pasture with appurtenances thereunto belonging’. He borrowed £50 from her each and every following year until 1683, when he borrowed £60 from Alice Larratt as well. In 1684, Robert Boyer was buried in Lyddington and his wife Elizabeth inherited his property.

There is no mention in the court rolls of Robert passing his property on to any offspring, but the fifteen-year-old Robert we met in 1625 had been born in 1610, and his wife had been Mary. Maybe he did live until the age of



Figure 346 Avalon, 58 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)

74 and took Elizabeth as his second wife, though it seems unlikely. Elizabeth Boyer secured a loan of £60 from Alice Larrat a month or so after the death of her husband, Robert. She finally surrendered the messuage to John Walter in 1697, when it was occupied by John Fisher.

When John Walter died in 1710, he left the property to his two daughters, Anna who had married Robert Smith, and Bridget, the wife of Robert Tealby, who promptly gave her share to Anna. In 1713, Robert and Anna Smith sold the messuage to Peter Pretty and his wife Phillipa for the duration of their lives, after which it was entailed to 'the heirs of the body of Phillipa and for default of such issue to the heirs of Peter'. John Pretty, Peter's son, inherited the property in 1739.

From John Pretty and his wife Elizabeth it went to Conyers Peach and his wife Mary in 1749. The description of the property revealed that the close at the back of the messuage was now called Tan Vatts Close. Conyers Peach was a tanner. He would have found the stream at the far side of the close very convenient for his business. In 1775, Conyers and Mary Peach released the property to Robert Peach and his wife Mary. Robert was buried in Lyddington in 1781, but his wife remarried William Brown and it wasn't until after her death in 1811 that Jane Humphries and Mary Colwell, Robert's daughters, were able to come into the manor court and claim the messuage and the close in the Backside Pasture that had been awarded to Robert on Enclosure. Mary Colwell passed her share of the property on to her son Henry in 1830 and Jane Humphrey and Henry sold it to Joseph Clarke (grocer) of Leicester for £360. Joseph, as we know, died in America and bequeathed this house as well as others to his brother John Pretty Clarke, who had by then become a cotton-spinner in Leicester. It was sold to Mary Ann Dawson (a carrier) in 1886.

Mrs Dawson had a cart, a horse and covered van, and went to Stamford twice a week, delivering and fetching parcels; she also delivered eggs to Uppingham. On her death in 1909 the house was bought by George Taylor gentleman of Stoke Dry and enfranchised that year.



Figure 347 Drawing by Sydney R. Jones, 1911.



Figure 348 Avalon is centre right, behind the boy standing in the road. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

In 1910, the property was described as grass land, house, stable etc. The house contained six rooms, back kitchen and dairy. Built of stone slate with a Collyweston roof, it was in fair repair. The outbuildings included a closet, wash house, hen-house, sheds and a trap house. The gross estimated value was given as £492.

56 and 54 Main Street

56 and 54 Main Street were originally one house, owned by Clement Pretty in 1639. That year he came to the manor court 'in extremis' to surrender the house to his son, Clement. From him it passed to four further generations of Clement Prettys. It is fortunate that the will and inventory of Clement who died in 1720 both survive.⁶ He was a tanner, and so was his son, who had moved to Bulwick, Northamptonshire, and his will was quite revealing, for amongst the bequests was the following,

I give and bequeath to my Son Clement Pretty of Bullick in the County of Northampton Tanner the Sume of Ten Pounds of lawfull money of great Brittain upon this Condition that he shall not in any manner molest or interrupt my Executor hereafter nominated in the Execution of this my last Will and Testament in the disposing of my personal Estate for the payment of the Legacyes in this my last Will and Testament bequeathed And if my aforesaid Son Clement Pretty shall give any disturbance or cause or procure any disturbance to be made or done by any meanes or manner whatsoever then my Will is that my said Son Clement Pretty shall not have the Ten pounds before bequeathed but shall have the Sume of one Shilling and no more.

Because of the orders of the manor court which decreed that the youngest son inherited his parents' copyhold property, Clement nevertheless inherited his father's house, despite his father's opinion of him. The Inventory of his father's estate reads is shown in **Figure 351**.

The rent for the messuage and the Tan Yard together with half a yardland was 5s, but when a quarter of the yardland was sold in 1756, the rent dropped to 2s 6d. John Pretty, who also became a tanner, was only thirteen when he inherited the property in 1764; he left it to his son, another Clement, in 1836 and it remained in the hands of the Pretty family until it was sold to Henry Clarke (stone mason) for £45 in 1879.

The Marquess of Exeter, 52 Main Street

In the seventeenth century, the property on the site of **The Marquess of Exeter**, 52 Main Street was two messuages owned by Lawrence Peach of Uppingham. One of the messuages was held with half a virgate of land under the rent of 4s 4d; the other was held with a virgate under the rent of 10s. John Sismey and his mother Isabell Ireland had surren-



Figure 349 54 and 56 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Figure 350 The Marquess of Exeter public House, 52 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)



A True and perfect Inventory of all and Singular the Goods Chattels and Creditts of Clement Pretty late of Liddington in the county of Rutland Tanner deceased taken valued and appraised the sixth day of October by James Hill Richard Munton and John Townsend as Follows, viz

			£	s	d
	Inprimis	Purse and Apparel	6	10	0
In the Hall	Item	One oval table on Chair table, six chairs some fire Irons seven pewterdishes six pewter plartes and some other lumber	1	07	6
In the Parlour	Item	One bedsted with a feather bed and blankitts some linnen a Chest of Drawers one Coffe four Chairs some other Lumber	3	10	0
In the Kitchins		One Copper three brass panns one bell mettle pott three tables one Kindel and one Cheese press a pair of Malt Curns and some other lumber	2	12	6
In the Buttery	Item	Four barrells		12	6
In the Chamber over the parlour	Item	One bedsted feather bed and blankitts three Chairs one small table	1	17	6
In the Chamber over the Hall	Item	Six strike of wheat a bushell of Barley and some other lumber	1	3	4
in the Chamber over the Kitchen	Item	Five strike of Malt and some Lumber		19	4
In the Barn	Item	Some Barley and wheat	19	5	0
In the Yard and Orchard	Item	three hovils of peas a Cob of hay some wood three Cows, one Hogtwo Waggons one Cart one Plow three Harrows and some other lumber	35	3	4
In the Stable	Item	Five old horses five pair of Geares	13	15	0
In the Field and upon the Brand	Item	Twenty four sheep	9	13	0
In the Park Close	Item	A Cobb of Hay and three calors	4	0	0

Figure 351 Inventory of Clement Pretty, 1720. (TNA)

dered the messuage held under the rent of 4s 4d to Laurence Peach in 1661. They seem to have continued to occupy the house, however, as John Sismey was recorded holding a two-hearth house in the Hearth Tax records of 1665.

In 1689, Laurence Peach left all his copyhold properties to himself for life and after his decease to his brother, Richard Peach (merchant) of Uppingham and entailed to Lawrence Peach, Richard's eldest son. As result, in 1698 Lawrence Peach junior inherited two messuages, two tofts, a hundred acres of land, twelve acres of meadow and twenty acres of pasture. From him it all passed to his brother Richard Peach (merchant) of London, who sold the entire

estate plus the cottage called the Swan that he had purchased, to John Sismey of Thorpe by Water in 1728. John Sismey left the Swan to his wife Jane in 1732 together with another cottage, but everything else went to his son James.

The estate had been mortgaged by the Sismeys for £1,000 for many years and should have become forfeit, but James got help from his prospective in-laws. Lancelot Dawes Esq. and James Sismey (grocer) agreed to give the estate to James until he married Elizabeth Dawes, after which he would hold it for life. When he died anything then not forfeit would be held by Lancelot Dawes and Samuel Barker for life, but would finally go to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth duly inherited both messuages and two other yardlands in 1770 and when she surrendered them to Thomas Sismey in 1780, they were still subject to James Sismey's debts. Thomas sold everything he had inherited to Thomas Bryan (grazier) of Stoke Dry six years later. By then it was all sub-let to James Ridgley.

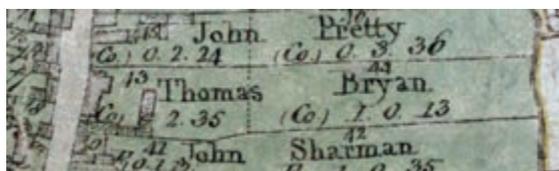


Figure 352 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map of 1804. Plot 43, which contains the house and barns, is a copyhold property, 0a 2r 35p in area. Behind the house, going down to the stream, is a close, Plot 44, 1a 0r 13p in area. The proprietor of both is Thomas Bryan. (ROLLR)



Figure 353 Part of Ex Map 109, Lyddington Copyhold and Freehold Estate, 1848. Plot 21 was owned by Hugh Pridmore Bryan and occupied by Thomas Hill. (BH, Exeter Archive)

Thomas Bryan also purchased Robert Walker's considerable estate in Lyddington and held land and houses in Caldecott and elsewhere. By the time of his death in 1823, he was living in Lyddington, in a house he purchased from John Marvin (see Figure 352). Hugh Pridmore Bryan of Brighton Sussex Esq. (his son) was admitted to his father's estate in 1825, by which time 52 Main Street was one messuage, not two, occupied by William Hill (see Figure 353).

An 1850 survey of the Marquess of Exeter's estate in Lyddington contains the first description of the building as an inn. Thomas Hill, aged 45, was the only innkeeper listed in Lyddington in the Census of 1841. With him in the inn were Lucy Hill aged eighty, William Hill aged sixty and Ann Hill aged fifty-five.

In 1853, when Hugh Pridmore Bryan sold the property to Thomas Hill for £400, it was described as,

All that messuage or tenement (formerly two messuages or tenements in the occupation of James Ridgley) called or known by the sign of the Exeter Arms Inn with the orchard yard gardens barns stables and other outbuildings to the same adjoining in Lyddington, held under the rent of 1s 2d And also all that Homestead or home close adjoining, held under 8d rent, late in the occupation of William Hill and now of Thomas Hill.

Figure 354 An old photograph of Main Street, looking north. The Exeter Arms, as it was then called, is on the right and Avalon beyond. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Thomas Hill surrendered the Inn and the adjoining close in 1864, to Thomas Colwell (wool-stapler) for an annuity of £34 covered by a bond of £200. Thomas Colwell died intestate in 1870 and William Thomas Rice Colwell, his young son, inherited the inn. He moved to Weekly, became a farmer and, in 1896 and 1899, used the property as security for a loan of £1000 from Mrs Abigail Parker widow, who also lived in Weekly, and was later to become the owner of Swan House.

In 1910, the house with its premises and land was valued at £740. The inn was managed by Mrs Jane Colwell, mother of the owner, but it was occupied by John Challender. In 1912, Mr Colwell sold the property to members of the Shotliffe family.

46, 48 and 50 Main Street

50 Main Street was rebuilt by Rev J. Beynard for himself when he retired. **48 Main Street** was owned by Mrs Selina Bullock in the 1880s. She sold it to Fred Smith, from whom it passed to William Smith and then to John Henry Muggleton. It was owned by members of the Muggleton family until well into the twentieth century. **46 Main Street** was also once held by the Muggleton family.

42 and 44 Main Street

These properties were held as one house by Richard Lacie in the early seventeenth century. They were handed to Charles Benner in 1645, but went to John Beebie on a Recovery in 1647. John Beebie's five-hearth house was inherited by Elizabeth Beebie, who married John Chapman in 1687. Before it was

purchased by Hugh Clarke (mason) in 1765, it had been split into two tenements and a barn had been erected. When James Clarke, Hugh's son, inherited it, one of the two messuages was described as a bake house. Both houses were bought in 1857 by Thomas Beadle (grocer) whose family retained them until 1900, when they were sold to George Taylor of Stoke Dry for £100. John William Burbidge (baker) bought them in 1912 and continued to cook dinners for the village for many years.

Swan House, 36 Main Street

Field Books of the Inland Revenue Survey tell us that, in 1910, **Swan House** occupied an area of one acre and thirty-three perches. It was owned and occupied by Mrs Abigail Parker. With two attics, four bedrooms, two staircases, two living rooms, pantry, kitchen, scullery and cellars, it was one of the larger houses in the village, and that was only the northern part of the current house with the gable end-on to the road (see page 155). Built of stone with a Collyweston slate roof, the house was said to be old but in good condition and it was noted that it contained a very fine oak staircase. Outside were closet, coal house, stable and barn, all built of stone. A good garden and orchard extended to the rear of the house. The gross value was given as £321.

Attached to the house was another property used as chapel. The chapel windows can be seen in **Figure 357**. It too was stone with a Collyweston roof and attached to it was an old and very small cottage, valued with the chapel at £60 and inhabited by Mrs Elizabeth Walker. The owner of the Chapel was Bertram Cooper, Cold Overton Road, Oakham, but the rent and Land Tax were paid by Trustees (see **Figure 362**).

The earliest record we have found for the cottage that preceded Swan House is dated 1563. It says, 'James Edmondess The same holdeth also by copie a cotage with thappurtenances called the Swan & payeth etc 8d'. The next entry is dated April 1653, when Richard Louth (gentleman) surrendered The Swan to Robert Cant. Later that same year, in October, Robert Cant surrendered it back to the court in a complicated transaction. Robert gave the cottage 'called the Swann' to his sister Margaret Wrothwell for the term of her natural life. After her decease it was to go to her daughter Susanna and any other children Margaret might have. If none of them survived, the cottage was to go to Thomas Pole, the son of Robert Pole. However, if Margaret or any of her children outlived Susannah Pole, then Margaret was to pay Thomas Pole £5 within a year of Susannah's decease.



Figure 355 Swan House from the south, 2013. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 356 Swan House from the north, 2010. (Jeremy Rider)



Figure 357 Swan House, 1958. (Private collection)



Figure 358 Part of a map of the counties of Northampton, Bedford, Huntingdon and Rutland by C. Saxton, 1576, corrected and amended with many additions by P Lea. It was reprinted in 1645, when the coat of arms was changed from that of Elizabeth to Charles I.

Thomas Pole was holding a one-hearth house in 1665. In 1673, 'Thomas Rothwell & Margaret his wife & Susanna Rothwell spinster their daughter & Thomas Pole', sold the cottage to Lawrence Peach (gentleman). The date-stone on the gable carries the letters LPS and the year 1674. Lawrence and his wife Susanna were undoubtedly the people who built the north wing of building we see today and established it as a coaching inn. The inn would have been much needed, because the road through Lyddington, shown on Saxton's map of Northants Hunts and Rutland as modified by P. Lea in 1579, then ran from Richmond in Yorkshire through Nottingham, Oakham, Uppingham, Lyddington, Kettering, Bedford, and Luton to London (see **Figure 358**).

Lawrence's wife Susanna was buried in Lyddington in December 1679, but The Swan remained in the Peach family for many years. From Laurence it passed to Richard (merchant), of Uppingham, then to his son Richard Peach Esq. In 1698, Richard's son Laurence had to come to court to suffer a Recovery so that he could hand it on to Richard, his brother. That complicated transaction of 1653 had entailed the property so that it could only be passed to a direct descendant.

Laurence did not just bring The Swan to his Recovery. By then, as we have seen, he had become a very wealthy man. It was therefore surprising to find him taking a loan of £87 10s against the Swan in 1712 from the Rev William Dean of Offord-Tracey in Huntingdonshire and which he was due to repay at William Dean's house one year later. Richard Peach succeeded to his brother's estate in 1718 and paid off the loan in 1720, but he mortgaged the entire estate in 1722 for £1,020 and took out yet another loan in 1726 for £440. By then, Richard was a merchant in London. An absentee landlord, maybe he found his property in Lyddington a nice little source of income, which lasted until 1728 when he sold the entire estate to John Sismey of Thorpe by Water.

The earliest booklet of Lyddington and Caldecott copyhold and quit rents in the archive at Burghley House starts at Michaelmas 1716. In it John Sismey appears, holding 'The Swann Inn', rent 8d. Richard Peach must have sub-let The Swan to John Sismey long before selling it to him in 1728, but John Sismey, too, was an absentee landlord; The Swan was occupied by Jane Massey widow when John Sismey left it to his wife Jane in 1732.

In 1767, James and Elizabeth Sismey and their eldest son James went to the manor court to secure a recovery in order to be able to sell 'The Swan Inn' to Boughey Skey Esq of Aldenham, Herfordshire. The sale went through in 1771. In 1774, the inn and a close belonging to it were bought by John Wadland junior (butcher). He immediately sold the close to Francis Gibbons a stone mason, a fact whose significance will become apparent when we investigate the history of the chapel. The Swan is shown on Plot 30 on the 1804 Enclosure Map of Lyddington. It is copyhold, one acre thirty-three perches in area and held by John Wadland Senior (see **Figure 359**).

Alice Wadland inherited 'All that Cottage or Tenement called the Swan' from her father later the same year. From her it passed to Mary Almond widow of Lyddington in 1844. In 1843, after all the upheavals over Enclosure had died down, the estate stewards drew up a new Copyhold and Chief Rentroll for every property owned by the recently promoted Marquis of Exeter. In this, Alice Wadland is recorded as holding 'a messuage called the Swan.' That

Figure 359 Plot 30 on Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLER)

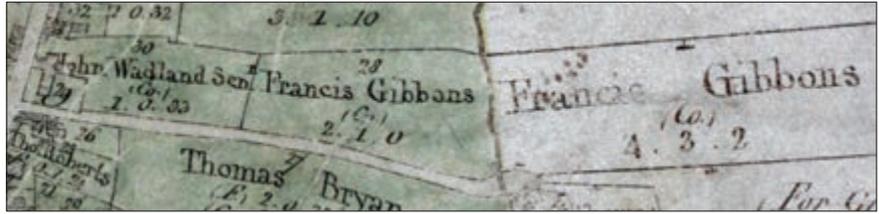


Figure 360 Part of Ex Map 109, Lyddington Copyhold and Freehold Estate, 1848. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 361 Outbuilding to the north of 36 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

description of the property is telling; the message is no longer referred to as an inn. It is easy to see why an inn was no longer required. In 1757, in order to avoid the steep Lockard Hill to the north of Lyddington, a turnpike had been built from Caldecott to Uppingham: Lyddington had been by-passed.

Confirmation of the closure of the inn also appears in a survey of the estate of the Marquis of Exeter produced in 1850. The numbered plots are shown on Map 109 in the Exeter Archive (see Figure 360). The Swan stood on Plot 16 and was described as a 'Farm house barn stable sheds yard garden and orchard' owned and occupied by Mary Ormond. Mary's name has been misspelt but it is clear that the building is no longer being used as an inn.

In 1857, Mary Almond left The Swan to her daughters, Mary and Susannah, spinsters, and her sons, Clarke, a carpenter and joiner and John, a grazier, all living in Lyddington. Another son Robert, a carpenter, lived in Norwood, Surrey. Her instructions were that the family were to keep the message whilst Mary was alive, after which they were to sell it. By this means several outstanding loans secured against the property could be cleared. In January 1861, Robert Clarke (mason) of Lyddington bought the The Swan with the close or orchard garden and appurtenances belonging to it for £200, and then resold it for £250 one month later back to Clarke, Robert and Susannah Almond, thus separating the property from the land that had belonged to it. When Susannah died in 1868, Robert inherited her share of the message and



Figure 362 Miss S. Middleton standing by the rear wing of Swan House. (Private collection)

the butcher's shop adjoining it and bought the share of Clarke, his brother, for £80, thus becoming the sole owner of The Swan.

The small outbuilding on the north side of the driveway (see Figure 361) may have been John Wadland's butcher's shop. It had a blocked door and window to front, a blocked window in gable end and an entry to rear, just as one might expect for a butcher's shop.

Robert Almond left The Swan to his wife in 1885. From her it went to Frances Goodman Simpson (grocer) of Leicester. When Mrs Abigail Parker (widow) of Lyddington bought it for £200 in 1900, it was occupied by Rebecca Waterfield (laundress). It had become one of the many laundries in the village that did the washing for Uppingham School. Abigail Parker left the house to Miss Sylvia Ann Middleton spinster of Lyddington in 1921.

On the 1804 Enclosure Map of Lyddington, Plots 28 and 29 were both held by Francis Gibbins (see Figure 359). Plot 28, two acres one rood, was copyhold, but the site of the **Methodist Chapel**, Plot 29, 25 perches in area, was freehold. Francis Gibbins Senior (as his name appears in later documents) was a stone mason in Lyddington. He held not only this freehold cottage, but the close of land behind the cottage and two parts of another copyhold cottage, which is now **The Reading Room, 57 Main Street**. In 1792, he left to his wife Eleanor Gibbins, 'a Building I am erecting adjoining my house in the occupation of Thomas Barton'. Eleanor was to hold this for life; then it was to go to his son Francis Gibbins, who inherited the remainder of his father's estate. Francis Gibbins junior subsequently moved to Wellingborough.⁷ When he died in 1824, he left instructions that all his Lyddington properties were to be sold.⁸ Being freehold, the sale of the house and building that his grandfather had erected was not recorded in the court rolls, but the sale of the close was, twelve years later. In 1838, the Trustees appointed under Francis Gibbins's will were

Figure 363 Painting of Main Street, Lyddington by C. Herbert, c. 1960. It shows not only the chapel but the little cottage attached to the south of it. (Malcolm Mair)



admitted to the close, subject to the powers in an Indenture of Release dated 31 May 1837.

In 1843, by another Indenture of Release, two cottages in Lyddington, held by Ogden Goward, his wife Ann Penelope and Thomas Woodford, were conveyed to the Methodist Chapel Trustees for the sum of £170.⁹ They were described as,

all those two cottages or tenements with the gardens outbuildings and appurtenances thereto adjoining and belonging situate standing and being in Liddington aforesaid abutting on the east upon a certain Lane there called Leisure Lane sometime in the tenure or occupation of John Baker and Philip Tyrell since of Richard Holmes and Mary Bennett and now of Robert Manton and Mary Bennett.

In a conveyance of the chapel to new Trustees in 1864, the cottages that had been purchased in 1843 were described as having been converted into a chapel and the chapel cottage which had been occupied by Mary Bennett was now occupied by Samuel Frisby. The chapel served the Wesleyans for over a hundred years until, in 1970, the president of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church declared that ‘the piece or parcel of land together with the Methodist Chapel and room erected thereon was no longer required’. It was sold later the same year.

30 Main Street

In 1910, **30 Main Street** on a plot of only four perches, was occupied by Ezra Baker and owned by Mary Clarke of Orchard House on the other side of Main Street. The four-roomed stone and thatched cottage and its stone barn were positioned on the south side of Chapel Yard. Residents had the use of a closet

in common with other properties. It was valued at £46. The building has several curious features. The ceilings to the upstairs rooms are curved as are the little windows to the rear and on the staircase wall. It looks as though it might have once been a chapel (see **Figure 365**).

On 14th February 1821, the Seal of office was affixed to a document certifying a 'Wesleyan Chapel recently erected in Lyddington as a place of Religious Worship for Protestant Dissenters'.¹⁰ Buildings on the site of 30 Main Street in 1804, 1848 and 1904 can be seen in **Figures 366**, **360** and **367**. The position of 30 Main Street is indicated by an arrow on **Figure 367**. These maps would suggest that a new building, now 30 Main Street, had been erected between 1804 and 1848.

In 1804, Plots 24, 25 and 26, were owned by Joseph Clarke, Hugh Clarke and James Clarke respectively (see **Figure 366**). The new building was very small for a chapel. As the congregation expanded, it would appear that it outgrew this original chapel and a new chapel was built in the eighteen forties on the other side of Leisure Lane. In 1895, 30 Main Street was owned by Robert Clarke, whose will instructed his trustees to sell his real estate after the death of his wife Mary and to divide the proceeds amongst his nieces and nephews. In 1917, John Edward Marvin, one of his trustees, as instructed, sold it together with another cottage in Chapel Yard to William Baines for £32.



Figure 364 30 Main Street from the north, 2012. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 365 Rear (south) view of 30 Main Street, 2012. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 366 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)

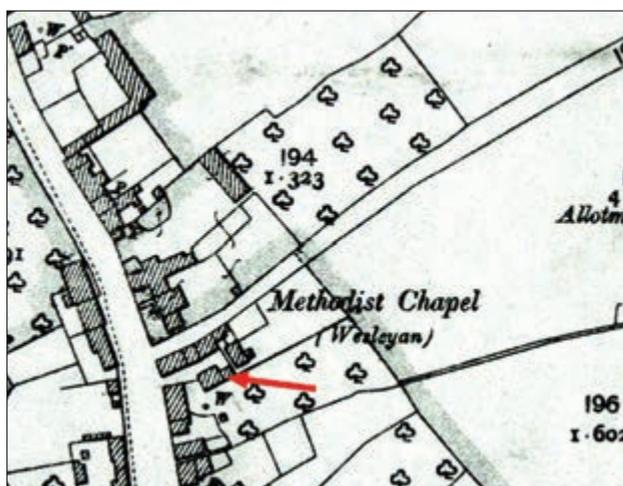


Figure 367 From the Ordnance Survey Series II map of 1904. The arrow points to 30 Main Street. (RCM)

1804. The house became one of the village laundries, kept by Mrs Eaton in the early twentieth century.

We now make our way along the southern part of Main Street, starting at **The Green** (see **Figure 368**).

6 and 7 The Green

7 The Green was owned by Thomas Pretty, cordwainer (shoemaker) in 1804. **6 The Green**, held by John Marvien in 1804, became **The William IV** public house where a number of workmen who had been repairing the turnpike from Caldecott to Uppingham had gathered in 1837. In a drunken spree they knocked down the village cross on **The Green**. Nearly a hundred years later, the remnants of the cross were found in Hugh Clarke's builder's yard and re-erected

Figure 369 Re-erecting the village cross, 1930. Dr Astley Clarke in the foreground. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Lincoln House, 5 The Green

We first investigated **5 The Green** in 2010 as a pilot project to see how well our ideas would work on bringing together a multidisciplinary approaches to a study of the buildings in the Manor (see page 147). At that stage we stalled in our attempts to trace the history of this house back beyond 1688. Now we have access to many more records and have been able to index them, we believe it dates back at least to the sixteenth century. Members of the Ridgley family first appear in Lyddington rentals in 1563, but the first entry we have found in court rolls is dated 1590 when Thomas Ridgley

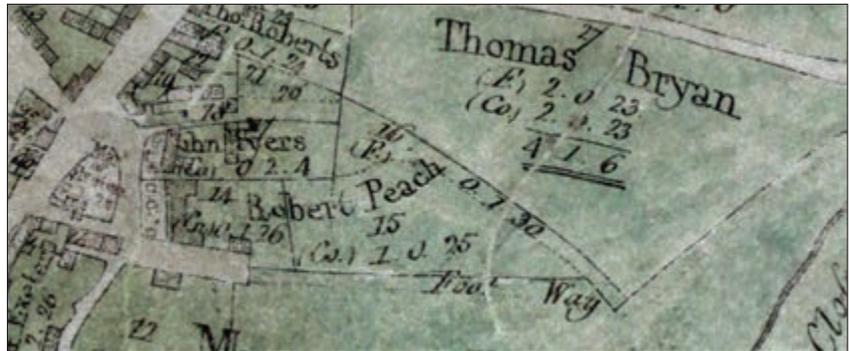


Figure 370 **5 The Green**, 2010. (Jeremy Rider)

gave 'a messuage and two virgates of land, and a close in Prestleys called the Thorny close that James Ridgley held for life' to John Ridgley for life after which it was to return to James. By 1654 it appears to have belonged to Simon Ridgley, who owned several other properties and a considerable amount of land in the village. In 1655, Simon surrendered 'a messuage and a little close and garden place belonging to it, and a cottage called Drakes Close and certain lands, and a half virgate' to James Tiptaft. His house was a three-hearth house in 1665. From James Tiptaft it passed to his son James and then to his grandson Peter in 1713. The description of the property given in Peter's father's will said it was 'the house wherein he now dwells with all and singular appurtenances with a little close, garden, orchard, courtyard and barns belonging to it'. The rent was 4s. Peter Ridgley sold the messuage to Rev William Fancourt of South Luffenham in 1737.

When William Fancourt sold the house to William Peake in 1764, the rent was corrected to 3s 9d in the court rolls. William Peake died in 1765 and the messuage passed to his wife Elizabeth. Just over twenty years later, in 1777, she bequeathed it to her five grandchildren, James, George, William, Ann and Mary. George sold his fifth of the messuage and the land that went with it to Benjamin Letts in 1790. Between 1795 and 1798, James (a weaver in Hambleton), William (a tailor in Edith Weston), and Ann and her husband John Clarke (a shepherd in Barrow) all gave their shares to Mary and her husband John Tyers (a farmer in Edith Weston). John Tyers moved to Ryhall and received the final fifth share of the messuage from Benjamin Letts in 1800 (see **Figure 371**).

Figure 371 John Tyers's house is on plot 17 on Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. Note the garden at the front of the house and access to the stream behind the house, provided by Plot 16, a freehold plot held by Robert Peach. The Ordnance Survey Plan of 1904 shows this access to the footway beyond was controlled by a gate. (ROLLR)



In 1802, part of the rent of the land that went with the messuage was paid by Thomas Pretty and John Clarke paid the rent of the messuage. He was admitted to the property in 1803 and sold it to Robert Peach (gentleman) in 1813. In the early 1800s it was occupied by William Murdock, who, in turn, let it to his sub-tenant, John Manton. On Robert's death in 1829, 4 The Green that he had occupied and the dwelling house on the site of 5, The Green occupied by Mrs Mary Wadland went to Robert's wife Catherine for life. Included in the bequest were several allotments of land including two in front of the houses, both now 'occupied as pleasure gardens' that Robert had been awarded by the Enclosure Commissioners. The garden in front of 5 The Green measured eight perches and the one in front of 4 The Green ten perches.

Robert Peach decreed that after Catherine's decease everything was to go to his two sons, Conyers and Robert Peach. Conyers farmed in Stoke Dry, and Robert in Lyddington. They inherited both houses and all the allotments of land in 1840 and sold the messuage on the site of 5 The Green, including the eight perches of land in front of it and an allotment in the Upper field belonging to it, to John Monckton on 13 May 1841 for £1,889.

In 1850, 5 The Green was described as 'House butcher's shop barn stables yard garden and orchard', area 32 roods and four perches, plus a garden of eight perches, owned by John Monckton but occupied by Thomas Wadland, whom we have already met, keeping his butcher's shop in the grounds of Swan House.



Figure 372 Old photograph of 5 The Green. (Private collection)

In 1910, according to the Inland Revenue Survey, Thomas Middleton was the occupier and the property consisted of two small houses, not one, which were old but in very fair repair. On the site were three cowsheds, a coalhouse and stable plus an open shed for cows and a cart-shed. The house, built of stone and thatched, had six rooms, pantry and cellar. Together with the land, it was valued at £3,782. Members of the Monckton family continued to own the property until it was enfranchised in 1917.

Bell House, 4 The Green

Bell House is a prominent house on the Green, owned by John Hill in 1735. It remained in the hands of the Hill family until 1790 when James Hill of Uppingham sold it to Robert Peach. It descended to Robert Peach of Liverpool in the county of Lancaster (merchant seaman) in 1846, when it had 'Barn hovels yard & stackyard, dairy, garden and yard' and a



Figure 373 4 The Green, 2015. (Jeremy Rider)

home close of almost an acre. It was sold to William Green in 1855 who resold it to Samuel Bullock two years later. Henry Samuel Tertius Bullock of Clevedon inherited the property in 1907 and it was enfranchised the next year.



Figure 374 3 The Green, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)

Stoneleigh, 3 The Green

Stoneleigh was a freehold property, always described as a bake-house. The earliest record for a bake house occurs in an account rolls for Buckden, in Huntingdonshire, where it was recorded that a bake-house had been built in Lyddington in 1510. Two bills of £5 6s 8d and £6 were paid for its construction to the farmers of the demesne land in Buckden with a further £2 10s paid to John Sandon, the miller there. In 1563, it was recorded that 'The Townshipp of Lyddington also Holdeth a Malt Milne where sometyne was the

Common Furnes & are answearable yearely for the same 16s 8d'. 'Common furnes' may be interpreted as a communal oven. Held in the eighteenth century by William Sharman (miller) and later by members of his family, it was described in 1804 as bake-house and homestead of an acre, held from 1802 by Alice Sharman. It was put up for sale in Stamford in 1876.¹¹

Two small cottages used to stand on the Green between number 3 and number 1, **The Green**, which was held in 1804 by John Aylcough. The two properties 1 **The Green** and 24 **Main Street** were at one time called **Market House** from the nearby weekly market held on The Green. It was in poor condition in the 1920s; the front, which was stone to the first floor and half-timbered above fell out into the road, leaving bed-clothes flapping in the breeze. It was rebuilt in red brick (see page 115).

Figure 375 Manor House and Market House, before the front wall fell out. It was rebuilt in brick. (Kenneth Neil Thompson)



The Old White Hart, 51 Main Street

In 1563, a messuage on the site of **The White Hart** was held by Richard Pierson, together with a yardland for the annual rent of 10s. In 1590, Richard and Joan Peerson surrendered 'a messuage, house building and structure with orchard and garden now in Richard's possession, rent 5s' to themselves for life, after which it was to go to William Ward and Mary Peerson, their daughter. They also surrendered another property, 'The house building and structure in the possession of Robert Turlington and the other half part of the virgate of land, rent 5s' to William and Mary.

In 1643, an Elizabeth Ward surrendered a messuage and two half virgates of land, held under the rent of 9s, plus a close in Prestleys, held under the rent of 1s, to herself for life after which it was entailed to her son Thomas. In 1645, Thomas surrendered this messuage plus a close called the Great Close with its own hedgerow, another half-virgate of land and a garden in Lyddington to his only daughter Elizabeth. At the same court, Thomas, 'lying in extremis', gave his mother Elizabeth for life two closes, a toft in Snelson and his house with half a virgate belonging to it. After her death it was to go to his wife Alice and then to Thomas's heirs. He also gave half a virgate to Alice and the garden place to his mother, provided she did not remarry.

In 1664, William Boyall married Elizabeth Ward to whom all Thomas and Alice's property descended. It is clear from rentals of the early 1700s that Thomas Manton was occupying William Boyall's house and paying the rent for the house, Great Close and the garden. Furthermore, he or his ancestors appears to have been doing so for many years, because it is Thomas Manton's name as occupier of a two-hearth house that appears in the Hearth Tax list of 1665 rather than that of William Boyall. A rental of 1716 records the payment of 1s 8d by Thomas Manton for Mr Boyall's messuage and two closes. The rent of the messuage was 4d, the Great Close also 4d, and the garden 1s.

By 1722, the property was in the hands of John Boyall Esq who, in 1735, bequeathed the messuage, Great Close and garden to his youngest son Thomas. A marriage had been arranged between Thomas Boyall and Sarah Parker, widow of Thomas Parker, and the properties were to be surrendered to them after the wedding. It was noted that they had once been in the possession of Elizabeth Manton, but were in 1735 in the possession or occupation of Thomas Manton. From Thomas the occupancy passed to John Manton in 1746. Thomas Boyall died in 1770 and the property descended to his son, Thomas Boyall (farmer) of Carlby, Lincolnshire. From him it went to William Boyall in 1789, who immediately sold it to John Manton (victualler) of Lyddington. Though John Manton was clearly a supplier of ale, it is impossible to say for how long he had been doing so. The property was simply referred to as a messuage; there was no mention of it as an inn or public house at that stage. John Manton passed all the properties, together with an acre of land in Goat Furlong, to his youngest son Joseph, in 1796. The building line of the messuage was at this stage set well back from the road; a large barn lay along the roadside at the front of plot 101, on which the White Hart stood (see **Figure 377**).



Figure 376 The Old White Hart, 2014. (Robert Owens)



Figure 377 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. Joseph Manton held plots 101 and 102. (ROLLR)

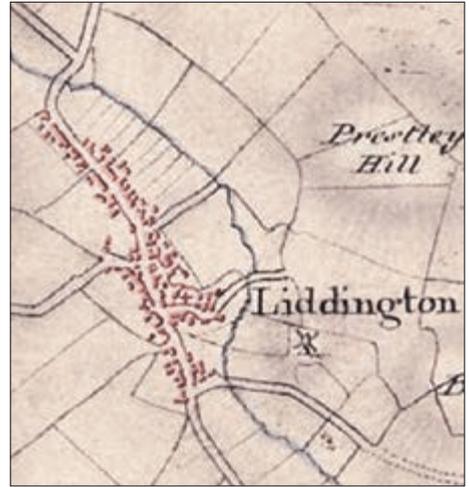


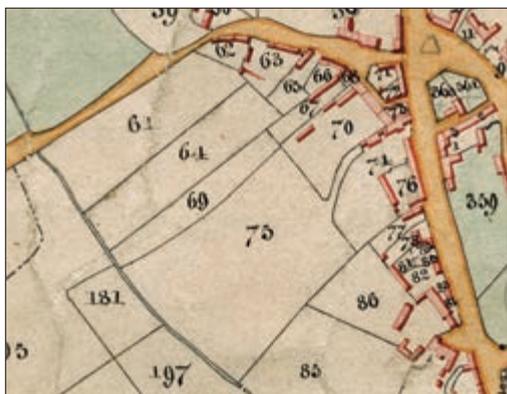
Figure 378 Ordnance Survey drawing of Lyddington, 1814. (British Library)

Joseph Manton, a victualler like his father, obtained a loan of £300 from William Broughton of Wing secured against the property in 1809, but sold it for £472 10s to Rev Henry Barfoot of Uppingham in 1815, at which stage it was described as, 'All that messuage cottage or tenement in Liddington used as a Public House and called or known by the name or sign of the White Hart with the appurtenances Also all that one Close piece or parcel of land adjoining and belonging.' The loan was probably used to extend the building forwards towards the road, as it remains today. On a set of Ordnance Survey drawings of 1814 available from the British Library, the building line appears to have been extended to the roadside (see **Figure 378**).

In 1836, Rev. Barfoot sold the messuage and lands to Clarke Morris (grazier) of Oakham Grange. The purchase money was £450, £300 of which went to pay off the loan secured against the property in 1809. In 1848, Clarke Morris held plots 74, The White Hart public house, barns, stables, sheds, yard and garden, plus plot 75, Home Close, and plot 181 in the Middle field. Note that the building had by then been extended to the roadside (see **Figure 379**).

Clarke Morris died in 1857 and three times a proclamation was made in the manor court for his heirs to come forward. The stewards were about to seize his estate when finally in 1861, Charles Knowlton Morris (gentleman) of Stamford came into court to claim his inheritance. Clarke Morris had nominated no devisee in his will; instead he directed some competent person to act as trustee to offer to sell his estates to one of his sons, who might be a brewer, as soon as he reached 21 years. In 1882, William Clarke Morris of Olrig Station, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand and Charles Knowlton Morris secured a loan of £1,500 against the premises from David Needham Royce (gentleman) of Oakham.

In 1886, a valuation of fixtures and hay at the Old White Hart Inn was drawn up. A number of small items were listed in the four bedrooms, the club room and the parlour which contained a chimney board and a tap room in which were an iron rack, a blower to the grate and a towel roller. Two pipes



of ale were in the cellar and pot hooks etc. in the kitchen.¹² An agreement to let the premises to Arthur Edward Manton was duly signed later the same year.¹³ The premises were eventually sold to Warwicks and Richardsons Ltd, Newark on Trent, and all the loans repaid in 1906. Despite this, in the Inland Revenue of 1910, the owners were still cited as Morris, Rutland Brewery Co Ltd. The gross value was estimated to be £1,000.

Mrs Manton was again asked for a valuation in preparation for a sale of the premises in 1922.¹⁴

Figure 379 Part of the estate map at Burghley House, 1848 (BH, Exeter Archive)

Figure 380 The Old White Hart, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)

Pageant House, 47 Main Street

Pageant House was held by members of the Colwell family in the seventeenth century, but they may well have been occupying it before then. In 1555, William Colwell had been one of the first to lease part of the demesne land and stint-grass from Sir John Poulett and Lady Elizabeth, the former wife of the late Gregory Cromwell. She held the Manor until her death in 1568. A Robert Colwell occupied a cottage held by John Peck in 1563, and Gabriel Colwell signed his first lease of arable land and meadow from Thomas Earl of Exeter in 1613. The lease was renewed by William Earl of Exeter, Sir Richard Cecill of Wakerley knight and David Cecill of Ketton Esq. in 1631 for a term of 99 years, but the rent of 9s 6½d also required that he supply them with half a strike of wheat each year (a strike is two bushels and eight bushels make a quarter).

In 1654 Gabriell Colwell was holding the cottage under a rent of 15d and also a farm he had leased from Lady William Cecill for a rent of 3s 4½d. He surrendered the cottage to his son Thomas in 1670. In 1682, Thomas surrendered the cottage into joint ownership with his wife Bridgett. When he died in 1709, he left the cottage to Bridgett for life, after which it was to go to his son John. However, John was never admitted to the cottage. He died in 1733 and it passed straight to his youngest son, also called John, who was under the age of 21 years and could only be admitted via his mother Mary acting as his guardian.



Figure 381 Pageant House, 47 Main Street, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

In 1751, John Colwell sold the cottage, occupied by William Goodliffe, to Richard Sculthorpe (wool-comber). Because the cottage had been entailed to the heirs of Thomas Colwell in 1682, John had to suffer a Recovery to enable him to surrender it to someone other than Thomas's direct descendant. Richard Sculthorpe must have been either very cautious or so ill that he expected to die at any time, for he wrote and enrolled no less than five wills in 1761, 1770, 1781, 1786 and 1793. His last will was proved in 1800. In it, he left a messuage occupied by William Farmer to his son-in-law, Robert Colwell, who had married his daughter Sarah, after which he entailed it to his grandson Thomas Cunnington and his wife Dorothy. He left the cottage in which he was living to his son in law, Thomas Cunnington, after which it was to go to his grandson Richard.¹⁵

Pageant House stands on Plot 103 of Lyddington Enclosure Map and may be seen in **Figure 382**. Richard Cunnington inherited the cottage in 1817. He lived there for some time but, by 1845, when he sold off the allotment of land that went with the cottage to John Monckton of Fineshade Abbey, he had moved to Stamford. In 1846, when he sold the cottage to Thomas Wadland (butcher), he had retired and moved again, to Hampstead. Without the land, the rent, which had remained at 1s 3d since 1654, dropped to 3d. In the intervening years, John Cunnington followed Richard as occupier of the cottage; he was followed by John Manton, then Thomas Wadland.

Thomas Wadland raised a small loan of £85 from George Isaac Stevenson (grocer) of Uppingham in 1862. He sold the cottage in 1868 to Joseph Wadland for £54 plus payment of the outstanding loan. The description given in the court roll reads, 'All that copyhold or customary cottage or tenement with the yard garden Butchers shop (formerly a Barn) Stables outbuildings'. Joseph Wadland recouped his losses the following year by selling the cottage with its butchers shop to Walter William Fisher, milliner and draper, for £115. Three years later it was sold again to Ruth Muggleton (spinster).

In 1881, George Cheatle and wife Mary moved into Pageant House. George was one of ten children; his father, John Smith Cheatle, came from Birmingham and his mother Jane Muggleton was the daughter of Thomas Muggleton of Stoke Dry. He and his wife set up a grocers and drapers shop in the room at the north end of the house. Ruth Muggleton died in 1895 and the cottage 'with the yard garden and Drapers (formerly Butchers) shop', was inherited by her niece Ruth Cheatle (spinster). By 1904, as the Ordnance survey map shows, the barn along the roadside had been demolished, though its outline can still be seen in the garden wall (see **Figure 382**).

In 1910 the old stone and thatch house, owned and occupied by Miss R. Cheatle, was said to contain two downstairs rooms, three upstairs rooms and a shop. At the back of the plot was a timber-clad shop and a timber Assembly Room with a tin roof, plus a very old stone and thatch stable. The gross value was estimated at £80. The timber shed or Assembly Room, known locally as 'the dipping shed' was where members of the Church of Christ held their services, two on Sundays, Communion in the morning and a gospel meeting in the evening. Services were conducted by George Cheatle or preachers from Nottingham and Leicester.

Annie, George's daughter, kept her pony and trap in the stables at the top

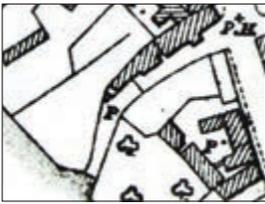


Figure 382 From the Ordnance Survey Series II map of 1904. Pageant House is parallel to the street, just above 45 Main Street in the lower right hand corner. (RCM)



Figure 383 Pageant House, 47 Main Street, showing the shop and post office at the north end of the building. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Figure 384 Ruth and Annie Cheatle in front of Pageant House. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)

of the driveway and used to take bread from the bake-house in Lyddington to Thorpe by Water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. George also kept his horse there and a brake and brougham and drove people to the station at Rockingham or Seaton, for which he charged 3s 6d in the 1930s; a ride to Gretton was 2s 6d. Annie and her sister, both spinsters lived in the house and Annie became the postmistress when the Post Office moved to Pageant House in 1929. The Post Office remained at Pageant House until 1955. Ruth Cheatle was still the owner of Pageant House when all manorial incidents were extinguished in 1934.

45 Main Street

During the nineteenth century, 45 Main Street was owned by members of the Clarke family: Robert, son of William Clark, who lived next door at 43 in 1804, and another Robert in 1848 Mrs. Eliza Goodwin was recorded as both owner and occupier in 1910, when the four-roomed house was still thatched.



Figure 385 45 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Fern Cottage, 43 Main Street

The site on which Fern Cottage stands once held five dwellings, two at the back and three at the front. The most northerly one at the front is now Fern Cottage. In 1696, the site was owned by William Palmer. From him it went to his youngest son Valentine, then Thomas, Valentine's eldest brother. On 31st



Figure 386 Fern Cottage, 43 Main Street, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)



Figure 387 An old photograph of Main Street, showing the houses which formerly stood on the plot of 43 Main Street. Note the thatched roof of 43 Main Street, sloping down towards the road.
(Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Figure 388 41 Main Street, 2015. (Jeremy Rider)

March 1760, it was bought by William Clarke, who married Isabel Broughton of Market Harborough on 26th May that year. William and Isabel's initials and the year 1767 can be seen at the top of a pillar of stone that is all that now remains of the houses they built at the front of the plot, alongside the road, between the current 43 and 41 Main Street (see **Figure 387**). In 1793, they gave the two tenements they had built to their eldest son Joseph Clarke, who later went to America. Joseph sold them to Alice Tansley in 1842. William Curtis and Daniel Webster occupied the two cottages at the front in 1908 and the fire policy wisely taken out by George Taylor who bought them in 1908 allowed a little jobbing harness-making. William Curtis's house at the top of the village had burned down the year before! The middle tenement at the front burned down during the Second World War and the one next to 41 Main Street was demolished in the 1960s.

Fern Cottage had been called 'the west part of one cottage'. It had been owned in the early part of the eighteenth century by Walter Smith, who sold it to Thomas Drake in 1715. From him it passed to Thomas Holly, then William Robertson, John Freeman and William Brown, whose widow Hannah gave it to her son William Clarke in 1770. William gave Fern Cottage to Thomas Clarke, who handed it on to his youngest son, Seaton, in 1841. Seaton was a stone mason and funds he obtained from a series of conditional surrenders were probably used to finance various building projects. Young George Henry Clarke inherited the cottage in 1865 and carried on the business until his death in 1934. The room at the front of the Fern Cottage, now the lounge, was then a single-storey workroom for the cleaning and carving of stone.

41 Main Street

41 Main Street was held by the Adcock family in the early 1700s under the rent of 11d. On Mary Adcock's death in 1734, it passed to her cousin Richard Wright. Though its ownership changed many times, it was occupied for many years by Moses Allen. John Sharman bought the cottage in 1787 and it went in 1797 to William, his second son, aged nine, who later followed in his father's footsteps and became miller of Lyddington. The two-and-a-half acres of land that had belonged to the cottage were sold to Clement Pretty in 1808 and the cottage was bought by Joseph Clarke (stone mason) of Lyddington in 1814. It then remained in the hands of the Clarke family until it was sold to Alfred Joseph Manton in 1893. Mrs Manton kept the post office there.

Bede Cottage, 39 Main Street

In the eighteenth century the southern part of **Bede Cottage** belonged to Mary Barfoot, who sold it to John Clarke of Uppingham in 1814. John Clarke died intestate in 1878 and John Thomas Clarke was declared heir. He was succeeded by Robert Clarke, then Mary Clarke in 1904. The northern part of the house was built for his sister Mary by Joseph Clarke, who lived next door. He gave the newly-erected building to her in 1819, together with a piece of ground at the back of it. Mary had access to her house and land and the well at the back of Joseph's property through the gateway, but she had to pay for the new smaller gate from the town street. When Mary married Robert Peach (draper) of Uppingham Joseph got the building back. It stayed as part of 41 Main Street until it was sold to the owners of Bede Cottage in 1955.



Figure 389 Bede Cottage, 39 Main Street, 2014. (Robert Ovens)

The Manor House, 22 Main Street

The Manor House is unusual in that it was one of the few leasehold houses in the village and seems always to have been held by the miller, together with the mills. The records for the house do not therefore appear in court rolls, but may instead be found in account rolls and estate rentals. The earliest of such account rolls held at Burghley House is dated 1487, when William Rowell was the miller.¹⁶ By 1527, the lease of the mills in Lyddington and Thorpe had passed to John Kyte and the lease of the mill in Caldecott to a member of the Slye family.¹⁷ By 1563, Laurence Meadwell had taken over as miller.¹⁸ George Sheffield followed in 1636.

By 1674, although Mr Sheffield still paid £10 in rent for various other holdings, Mr Johnson was paying £18 2s 4d in rent for thirty acres that went with the mills and five acres of meadow in Lyddington.¹⁹ In 1683, William Ward and Ezekiel Johnson each paid £5 0s 9¼d for part of Sheffield's lease.²⁰ Over the next ten years, Johnson's name disappeared in the rentals and was replaced, first by that of Thomas Snouch, and second by that of Richard Pepper. Snouch's house remained untenanted for many years until in 1696 it was described as decayed. By then Richard Pepper was paying half a year's rent of £1 at Lady Day for a property that had been Ward's and £8 7s 6d for the mills in Lyddington.¹²¹

On Lady Day 1709, Solomon Pepper was listed amongst Lyddington farmers, owing £13 5s rent in arrears and due to pay £10 5s.²² A note alongside his name says the rent for the mills was £8 7s 6d and part of the rental was formerly Ward's at 1s & Manton's 12s 6d. In January 1713, an indenture was drawn up, by which John Earl of Exeter leased to Solomon Pepper all the water corn and grist mills in Thorpe by Water and the windmill in Lyddington for a



Figure 390 The Manor House, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

term of 21 years at a yearly rent of £17.²³ By a further indenture dated April 1713, Solomon obtained the lease of the messuage he was living together with the barns stables outhouses edifices buildings yards and appurtenances belonging to it.²⁴ The term was 21 years and the rent £3 15s. Solomon was covenanted to maintain and keep the house with all necessary repairs, 'scouring and cleansing the messuage and all the outhouses and also all the gates pales walls and fences belonging to the parcel of ground.' However, that was not all: Solomon had to sign a bond for £50, agreeing to build and substantially repair the messuage in Lyddington at his own cost at any time within the next ten years.²⁵ By 1727, Solomon Pepper's rent was in arrears again and the mills, which had already been taken over by Dunmore, were in the hands of John Tallington.²⁶ Their rent was £8 10s with another lease of £1 17s 6d, to be paid twice, at Michaelmas and Lady Day, making a total of £20 15s per annum.

In June 1735, a new lease was drawn up transferring to Daniel Luff (miller) the messuage in Lyddington and the corn grist mills in Lyddington and Thorpe by Water, called Lyddington Mills and Thorpe Mills, and also the windmill in Lyddington and several parcels of arable land ley meadow and pasture belonging to the messuage; also a cottage in Lyddington in the possession of John Dartar.²⁷ The term of the lease was 21 years and the rent £19 10s. It carried all the usual provisos and covenants about keeping everything in good repair.

A collection of further agreements then followed.²⁸ In 1741, Daniel Luff the miller agreed to put everything in repair. On 7th December, Daniel Luff paid Edward Sharman 45s 5½d for 'repairs about Lyddington mills the house and outhouses there'. In 1745, a memorandum of agreement was drawn up between Thomas Hurst (on behalf of the Earl of Exeter), Daniel Luff and Edward Sharman.²⁹ It said,

that they will refer the repairs of Lyddington and Thorpe mills with the buildings and outhouses at Lyddington & how much & what each party shall pay perform and do in order to put the same and every part thereof into good and tenantable Repair unto the determination of Kenelm Smith of Barrowdon whose Award and Determination the said Thomas Hurst, Daniel Luff and Edward Sharman do agree to abide & stand to pay and perform under the Penalty of £20 each.

The repairs to the mills house and outhouses were duly completed and Kenelm Smith presented his determination on 4th September 1747 for the repairs to Thorpe and Lyddington mills and the mill house belonging to the mills. The bills to be paid for the repairs at Thorpe mill and the Mill House are shown in **Figures 391 and 392.**

The Earl of Exeter was to pay a revised bill of £73 5s 8d, and Edward Sharman and Daniel Luff were each to pay the Earl £15 5s 1d and £30 10s 2d respectively within one month. However, if Daniel Luff were to assign over his lease for the mill house lands etc. to Edward Sharman, then it was agreed Edward would pay the £30 10s 2d.

Edward Sharman had been paying the rent of £20 from 1743, so it was hardly surprising that he wanted the lease to be assigned to him. In 1757, he reached an agreement with the Earl of Exeter's steward, James Hurst, that 'the house in which the said Edward Sharman lives be taken down and a new one

	Li'	s'	d'
The Ashler Stone	12	13	6½
Lime and Carriage for Ditto	12	13	0
Carriage of the Stone	6	5	0
Mason's and Laborour's bill	12	5	2
Ale and Damages of Grass &c	2	11	0
½ the Blacksmith's bill	0	16	7
K Smith trouble	2	2	0
Mill house			
for 2 new Chambers making The Parlor repaired and a Chimney puting up &c	19	2	10
Glazir's Bill for the new windows	1	1	9½
Edward Sharmans bill for the floor and nails	3	15	
	73	6	1½

Figure 391 Bill to be paid by the Earl of Exeter for repairs at Thorpe mill and the Mill House. (BH, Exeter Archive)

	Li'	s'	d'
Millwrights bill	13	10	0
Carriages	11	7	0
Masons	4	15	0
Slaters	9	6	0
Carpenters	6	0	8
½ the Blacksmiths	0	16	7
	45	15	3
	119	1	4½

Figure 392 Bill to be paid by Luff and Sharman. (BH, Exeter Archive)

built in the yard four rooms upon a floor at his lordship's expense'.³⁰ Those four rooms are still in use today (see **Figures 393** and **394**).

The next year, a further agreement was made to provide garrets to the house and to sink a cellar inside it. All still exist inside the house (see **Figure 395**). Mr Hurst's 1759 accounts reveal the cost of the payments for repairs:³¹ (see **Figure 396**)

Thomas Drake and Francis Gibbons were local stone masons, living in Lyddington. Although no mention was made of the plasterer, his name (J. Holmes) has been found in the splay of the main bedroom, with the date

Figure 393 Edward Sharman's agreement with the Earl of Exeter, 1757, p. 1. (BH Exeter Archive)

29th June 1757 It is this Day agreed between James Hurst
 on behalf of the Earl of Exeter and Edward Sharman of
 Liddington in the County of Rutland Miller Sir of the
 said James Hurst agrees that the House in w^{ch} the said
 Sharman liveth shall be taken down and a new one
 built in the yard Four Rooms upon a Floor at his
 Lordship's Expence, but the Carriages of all the Materials
 under Sir w^{ch} that shall be used there are to be done
 at the Charge of the said Edward Sharman and the said
 James Hurst agrees that his Lordship shall provide
 Stone & Timber in the Rough for repairing the Wind
 Mill & Water Mill in the said Edward Sharman's tenure the
 said Edward Sharman being the Workmanship and carrying
 the Materials at his own Expence, and the said James
 Hurst agrees to lett the said House when it is built
 the said Wind Mills & Water Mills and also the Armeschard
 and Orchard and also five acres of Meadows & six acres
 of arable Land in the Meadows & Fields of Liddington
 aforesaid be they more or less unto the said Edward Sharman
 upon a Leafe from his Lordship for Twenty one years
 at the yearly Rent of Twenty five Pounds clear of
 all Deductions except the Land Tax and to provide during
 that Term Stone & Timber in the Rough for the Repair
 that shall be from time to time necessary and the said

Edward Sharman hereby agrees to take the said House
 Mills and Lands from Lady Day next 1758 and upon
 Leafe for Twenty one years and to pay the yearly
 Rent of Twenty five Pounds for the same clear of
 all Deductions except the Land Tax as aforesaid
 and the said Edward Sharman likewise agrees
 to do all the Carriages that shall be necessary
 for the Building his House and likewise the said
 Edward Sharman also agrees immediately at his own
 Expence to put the Wind Mills & Water Mills into
 good Repair he being provided with Timber &
 Stone in the Rough and also during the said Term
 to keep the same & the House in good Repair
 he being allowed Stone & Timber in the Rough
 as aforesaid and the said Edward Sharman agrees to
 execute a Leafe when tendered to him which is
 to contain such further Covenants as are usual
 in Leases granted by the said Earl. Witness our hands
 Witness
 Edward Sharman

Figure 394 Edward Sharman's agreement with the Earl of Exeter, 1757, p. 2. (BH Exeter Archive)

23rd Aug^r 1758 I do hereby agree to pay the Earl of Exeter one Pound a year more in Consideration that his Lordship makes Garretts to my house and makes me a cellar, & that my Rent will be Twenty six Pounds a year and that I do agree to pay his Lordship

Edward Sherman

Figure 395 Edward Sharman's agreement with the Earl of Exeter, 1758, p. 3. (BH Exeter Archive)

		£	s'	d'
5th Jan	To William Slater for materials used in repairing Liddington Windmill	6	10	0
15th June	To Thomas Drake & Frances Gibbons the Masons at Sharmans Liddington	75	10	0
	To Mr Birch the carpenter there	44	8	0
	To Ambrose Mould the Slater there	25	8	0
	Frances Dickens the Slater there	23	19	6
	To John Hand the Glazier there	11	13	0
	To Edward Hall for bricks there	6	15	11
	To Robert Waterfall the Miller	2	10	11

Figure 396 Mr Hurst's accounts of repairs to Sharman's house, 1759. (BH Exeter Archive)

1759. From 1759 to 1876, the house remained in the tenure of the Sharmans. When Edward Sharman held it in 1759, the rent was £26 per annum. Alice Sharman held the house in 1804 and also the bake-house, now **3 The Green** (see **Figure 397**).

It also seems that The Manor House was once referred to as the mill house. Several millstones of various sizes have been found in the garden and have been used in building thralls in the cellar and as a mantel over a fireplace in one of



Figure 397 Part of Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. 3 The Green is on plot 12 as indicated by the green arrow. (ROLLR)

the bedrooms. By 1848, the Manor House was held by William Sharman. It was on plot 359 on the estate map at Burghley House (see Figure 398), William also held the ‘house, bake-house, hovel and paddock’ etc. on plot 362, where 3 The Green stands, across the lane at the back of his house, as well as the water mill in Thorpe by Water on plot 306 and the stables and land on plot 307 (see Figure 399).



Figure 398 Part of the estate map at Burghley House, 1848. Manor House, 22 Main Street is shown on plot 359, together with the barn against Blue Coat Lane, which was sold to the owner of the adjacent house, 24 Main Street in the twentieth century. The house and bake-house at 3 The Green are on plot 362 and Lyddington Bede House and garden on plot 358. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 399 Another part of the estate map of 1848, showing the route of the proposed railway through Thorpe by Water. The water mill is on plot 306 and the stables on plot 307, both leased by William Sharman. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 400 Page 17 of the booklet entitled 'First Stamford Sale'. (BH, Exeter Archive)



Figure 401 Manor House. (Kenneth Neil Thompson, a descendant of Richard Jeffs)

In 1876, when Caroline Sharman held the lease of the house the rent had risen to £130 and this was the year in which Manor House was put up for sale in Stamford with many other properties, including the bake house and garden of 3 The Green.³² (Figure 400)

Lot 27, Manor House, was bought by a Mr Brown, probably an estate agent, for £520 and Lot 28, the bake house, by Charles Stanger for £335. The following year, Richard Jeffs bought the Manor House from the Trustees of the Marquess of Exeter for £630 and members of the Jeffs family lived there until well into the twentieth century (Figure 401).

Home Farmhouse, 37 Main Street

The earliest records we have found for **Home Farmhouse** indicate that it was held by members of the Manton family from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Robert Manton was paying a levy to the churchwardens in 1625, which meant that he already held property in the village. By October 1640 he had been elected a juror in the manor court. His holdings, recorded in an Estate Rental of 1654, were considerable and included, in addition to his main copyhold property, two half yardlands, another messuage and a quarter land.

In 1656, Robert Manton surrendered his messuage, yard, orchard, close and appurtenances, held under a rent of 8d, to the manor court. Half he retained for his own use for life, after which it was to go to Thomas Manton and his wife Elizabeth. The other half was to go straight to Thomas and Elizabeth and the heirs of their bodies; for want of such issue it was to go to the heirs of Thomas for ever. Thomas was the younger son of Robert and Susan, born in 1630 and therefore their heir. He had an older brother (Steven) and two sisters: Ann, three years older, and Amy, two years younger.

When Robert Manton died, his goods were appraised by James Hill & Thomas Smith in an inventory drawn up in August 1663 which tells us that the house contained hall, parlour, kitchen and bedchamber.³³ (see Figure 403).

In October, Thomas, now the owner of the whole house held under the rent of 18d, surrendered it to himself and his wife Elizabeth. It was recorded as containing two hearths in the Hearth Tax return two years later. Thomas and Elizabeth occupied the farmhouse for the next twelve years but towards the end of the time, in 1673 they took a loan of £68 18s from Nicholas Bull, which they were due to repay a year later. Instead of repaying the loan, Thomas and Elizabeth Manton and Nicholas Bull sold the farmhouse to George Brown in 1675 on a Recovery, necessitated by the conditions imposed by Robert Manton in 1656.

In 1680, George Brown surrendered the messuage, orchard, close of pasture and all its other appurtenances to Ann Clarke, wife of Henry Clarke. He stipulated that it was to go from her to Henry and his heirs and assigns, but only on condition that Henry paid Sarah Freeman, a relative of George Brown, £8 within a year of George Brown's death. This Henry must have done because



Figure 402 Home Farmhouse, 2010. (Jeremy Rider)

This is a true Inveny tory of the Goods of Robert Manton		Li'	s'	d'
Item	for his perse and aParrill	2	10	0
Item	for the Table and form and other Movables in the hall	0	12	0
Item	for the Bed with the fornyture and the Rest of the Movables in the Parlore	2	0	0
Item	for an Iron pote in the chiching with other Movables	0	10	0
Item	for and ould bed in the chamber with other Movables	0	18	0
Item	for Cart plow and harrowes with all other things belonging To husbandry	10	0	0
Item	for his horses	16	0	0
Item	for the keine	7	0	0
Item	for all his sheepe	20	0	0
Item	for his whole Crop	32	10	0
	The some is	92	0	0

Figure 403 Inventory of Robert Manton, 1663. (ROLLR)

he was able to take out a loan secured against the property in 1695. The loan from Henry Pepper (cooper) of Uppingham was for £42 and was due to be repaid one year later. Other loans followed until Henry eventually sold the messuage and the adjacent close to George Dolton senior in 1702.

This appeared to have been just too much for Elizabeth Manton! No presentments had been recorded in the manor court rolls for several years, so nobody had been brought to court, but it was clear from a Memorandum of the Overseers of the Poor that a serious argument had broken out. On July 1st 1702,

it was agreed by the parties hereafter named being persons concerned either in Breach of good behaviour or Scandalous words that they would agree to perform their promises herein testified Viz Elizabeth Manton widdow of Liddington in the County of Rutland and Susannah Manton (daughter) and Mary Manton (daughter) and Robert Manton (son) Each of Liddington aforesaid doe for their and every of their parts promise that they will not at any time hereafter offer any abuse by Breach of the Peace or by Scandalous words abuse or reflect upon the actions of Georg Dolton of Liddington yeoman Georg Dolton his son or Richard Munton (son) or Ann Tempest servant to the said Georg Dolton in Liddington but that they will on their parts perform the promise herein made and all others by them spoke before the witness hereof and the said Georg Dolton sen' the said Georg Dolton jun' Richard Munton Anne Tempest doe for their parts promise that they will each of them Live lovingly with the said Elizabeth Manton Susanna Manton Mary Manton and Robert Manton and that no misdemenour shall be caused by them and this is generally and singularly agreed on by us the parties within mentioned

Signatures of the witnesses and the parties concerned followed.³⁴

George Dolton senior left the messuage and its adjacent close of pasture to his son George and his wife Anne in 1705. Because he also decreed that the property was to go from George and Ann to the heirs of the bodies, they had to come to back to the court and suffer a Recovery in 1711 to enable them to sell it to Thomas Pretty (farmer) in 1712.

From Thomas Pretty the house descended to his son Joseph in 1754. In his will, Thomas left instructions that his wife was to have the use of the parlour to live in during her life.³⁵ In 1786, when Joseph Pretty left the property to his seventeen-year-old son, another Joseph, an inventory of his goods and chattels showed he had built up a sizeable estate of £445 14s 6d.³⁶ A parlour is mentioned and kitchen as in 1663, to which brew-house, cellar, dairy, second bed chamber and cheese chamber as well several barns and a hovel had been added.



Figure 404 Plot 110, Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)

The layout of the buildings on plot 110 is shown on Lyddington Enclosure map of 1804 (see Figure 404). The messuage (shaded) and the barns (dotted) to the southwest are clearly marked. The area of Plot 110, the homestead or home close, is two acres and six perches. Also shown is the adjoining piece or parcel of land awarded to Joseph Pretty on Enclosure. The rent for the messuage homestead and the extra piece of land was set at 1s 4d. Under careful scrutiny another small shaded building can also be seen near the entrance to the plot. It can be seen a bit more clearly on Lyddington Tithe Award map (Figure 405).

By 1828, Joseph Pretty had moved to Great Easton and when he sold the farm to Thomas Pretty for £320, £220 went to John Stokes of Caldecott to repay a loan taken out in 1822. Thomas Pretty sold the farm in 1835 to Thomas Middleton and again the larger part of the purchase money of £300 went to repay a loan.

The later development of the buildings on the site can be seen on an 1848 estate map in the Exeter archive at Burghley House (Figure 406).³⁷ The



Figure 405 Plots 110, 111 and 112, Lyddington Tithe Award Map, 1848. (RCM)

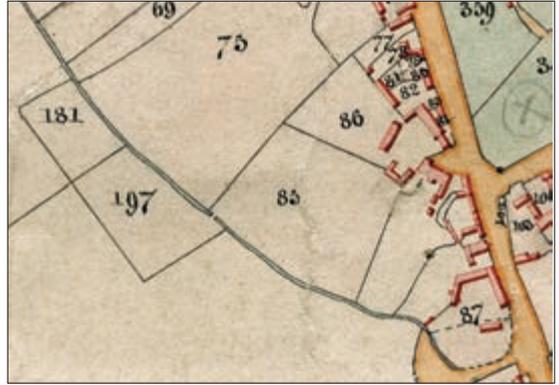


Figure 406 Plots 85 and 86 on the Lyddington Estate Map, 1848. (BH, Exeter Archive)

homestead or home close has now been divided into two plots, 85 and 86. In an estate survey of 1850, Plot 85 is described as the home close, one acre, one rood and sixteen perches in area, laid down to grass. Plot 86, two roods thirty perches in area is the farmhouse, barn, stable, sheds, yard, garden and orchard.³⁸

Thomas Middleton left the property to his wife Ann in 1862. After her decease it was to go to his son William, provided William paid £100 to Thomas's daughter Jane, wife of John Burnett. A copyhold rental at Burghley House shows that William had started to pay the rent by 1882. He was still the proprietor when the property was surveyed for the Inland Revenue in 1910, at which point Thomas was recorded as owning a freehold house which has been pulled down, the site of which was in Main Street next to the school, as well as Home Farmhouse. The site of the farmhouse was found to be two acres two roods and 21 perches in area. On inspection the house (situated behind other property in Main Street) was found by the Commissioners to be partly brick

Figure 407 Members of the Jeffs family in front of Home Farm. (Kenneth Neil Thompson)



and slate and partly stone and thatch. It was described as an old-fashioned small farmhouse with four rooms on the first floor and two rooms, kitchen, back kitchen, coal store and closet on the ground floor. In the grounds were two barns, one of which was thatched, three stables, two loose boxes and two sheds, all in a poor state of repair. The two properties were valued together at £259.³⁹

In 1912, Home Farmhouse and the land belonging to it passed from William Middleton to his widow, Mrs Mary Ann Middleton and, in 1924, to their daughter Kate, who had by then married Frederick Jeffs of Lyddington (see **Figure 407**). Kate Jeffs sold it to James Sydney Thorpe (dairyman) of Uppingham in 1924 and all manorial rights were extinguished in 1929.

The house was divided in two in the twentieth century, hence the numbering 35 and 37 Main Street. At the gate of the farm stood an old cottage where Mrs Emily Middleton lived. The foundations are still visible.

From here we cross the road to Church Lane.

The Firs, 4 Church Lane

The history of **The Firs** has been traced back to 1649 when it was held by Thomas Smith senior, though it is considerably older than this would suggest (see page 112). We know from entries in Lyddington Parish Register that people by the name of Smith had been in the village since the later sixteenth century. Thomas Smith senior appears to have been an affluent and upright citizen. He was paying a levy of 8s to the churchwardens in Lyddington in 1625 and had served as juror in the manor court in 1639. He held more than one house in the village, because he surrendered another messuage or tenement in Lyddington and a close of pasture belonging to it to Leo Falkner in 1643.

In 1649, Thomas Smith senior and Anne his wife surrendered the house in which they were living to the Michaelmas court. They stipulated that the part of it in which they were living was to stay in their joint ownership whilst they were still alive, after which it was to go to their son, also called Thomas, and his wife Elizabeth and their heirs of their bodies 'lawfully begotten'. The other part of the cottage was to go directly to Thomas and Elizabeth and was similarly entailed. Thomas senior also split the virgate of land that went with the cottage, giving one half to his son and the other half to his son and Elizabeth.

In April 1654 Thomas Smythe the younger (spelling was not standardised and names often varied) obtained a loan from Zachary Cliffe secured against his half yardland. Later that year, the Michaelmas copyhold rental revealed that Thomas Smythe senior was paying the rent of 9s for himself and his son. Maybe Thomas was getting into financial difficulties. In 1655 he set up a trust secured against his part of the cottage and his half yardland, which was to pay out sums of money varying from £11 to almost £40 to each of his six children when they came of age and, in 1659, Thomas and his father sold several parcels of land meadow and pasture held under the rent of 9s, which suggests that they



Figure 408 The Firs, 4 Church Lane, 2013. (Nick Hill)

amounted to about a yardland. With the money from the sale, young Thomas was able to repay Zachary Cliffe and get his half yardland back. In the meantime his father was earning 1s 6d from the churchwardens, 'writting of our Rec' and our disbursements and our Breefes', i.e., keeping their accounts. By 1665 both Thomas and his father had died and Elizabeth, now a widow, held both parts of the messuage and possibly another house as well, which probably explains why she was paying the Hearth Tax for five hearths. Thomas and Elizabeth had several children, including Katherine, baptised in 1660, who married John Crading, and Elizabeth who married Ambrose Hill. Although John Crading and Katherine surrendered their part of the messuage to Ambrose and Elizabeth Hill in 1684, it wasn't until the death of their father in 1711 that the two sisters were admitted to the property. By then Elizabeth Hill was a widow and she seems to have had a bit of a problem, a son by the name of William Allin.

First, in 1712, Elizabeth Hill gave William a small cottage or tenement in Lyddington held under the rent of 7d with yard and other appurtenances and a moiety of a close called the Home Close. By 1717, however, William had inherited both parts of the cottage and two half yardlands called Smith's half yardlands. The next April, he surrendered the lot plus two other half yardlands to Mary Wootton of Ketton for a loan of £330. She must have been very tolerant; the loan should have been repaid by October but William was in trouble. Lyddington overseers' book reveals that,

Elizabeth Wallis widow was some time Delivered of young Bastard child Named Susannah in the parish of Lyddington to which the above named William Alin by Law stands obliged to be the reputed Father...William Alin [farmer of Lyddington] and Edward Alin [farmer of Morcott] charged £40 bond each by reason of the birth, education, nourishment and upbringing of the said Child, 17 Jan 1735.

In other words, the paternity of the baby was unclear. In 1743, Mary Wootton came to court and claimed all of William's properties.

William, though, had another daughter, Anna (or perhaps Susanna?), who should, according to William's will, have inherited his estate that year. John Falkner, whom Anna had by then married, must have been quite affluent because he repaid the loan and reclaimed the properties on a Recovery. John Falkner and Anna were then able to pass them on to their son John in 1767, who promptly sold the messuage and two of the half yardlands to Thomas Bryan (grazier) of Stoke Dry. His nephew, another Thomas Bryan, split the property up in 1786, selling both messuages to William Murdock (yeoman), but keeping the close that went with it to himself. Later, in 1791, William Murdock sold a messuage, now 4 Church Lane, to Thomas Pretty from whom it descended in 1822 to his brother Joseph Pretty (farmer) of Great Easton. Three months later, Joseph sold it to John Manton (sheep-jobber) of Lyddington. The property was then mortgaged and re-mortgaged several times until in 1862 it became forfeit to Thomas Wheeler Gillham, clerk in holy order and vicar of Lyddington. The next year Rev Gillham sold the house to Thomas Middleton, from whom it passed to his widow Martha in 1918.

The Inland Revenue Field Books at The National Archives confirm the owner and occupier as Mr Thomas Middleton in 1910. The seven-roomed

house with pantry was part stone and thatch and part brick and slate. On the site were a brick and slate closet, a timber-clad coal house, a brick and stone barn and a stone and timber cart shed adjacent to the roadway. In the paddock were a wooden hovel, a cowshed and calf place and in the yard two stone and thatch barns and three stone and timber crew-sheds. The gross value of buildings yard and paddock was estimated to be £221.

The Bede House

Much has been written about **The Bede House** and this is not the place to reiterate the development of the building, but its impact on the inhabitants of the villages in the Manor cannot be ignored. Thomas Cecill founded his hospital in Lyddington in 1602, intending it to be 'an abyding place for the finding sustentation reliefe and setting to work of Certayn poore or ympotent people'.⁴⁰ Having demolished the great hall and service wing of the palace of the Bishops of Lincoln, the bishops' chambers and store rooms underneath were converted into rooms for twelve impotent men, two women to look after them and a Warden. Ordinances were set out and residents chosen.

Of the first residents chosen for a place in the Bede House only two came from Lyddington, John Bowyer and Thomas Robins. The two nurses were John's wife Amie and the wife of a James Ashley from another parish. Typically, entrants were sick or infirm but not diseased or mad; however, they could be of unsound mind, a bit confused and frail. They could suffer from rheumatism, sciatica, heart trouble, bad kidneys, or could be military men discharged without a pension, parishioners who had large families and never claimed poor relief, those with poor eye-sight or disabled, lost limbs, ex-servants or labourers on Burghley estates. A place in the Bede House was a great privilege and only given to these considered deserving. The rules of conduct required that residents had an honest profession or trade of some kind and vowed not to be idle. Dice or unlawful gaming was not allowed, nor was swearing or blaspheming of God. They had to attend prayer at church twice a day or be fined. In other words, they were to be models of morality. The rewards were, for the time, very generous. They received a room each, a pension, 'a blue gown of 3 yards at 8 shillings a yard, black Capes on top', pit-coal and firewood. A Common Poor Man's Box was kept in the Hospital and paid for funeral charges from donations. In the seventeenth century the Warden received 3s a week and the men 2s 4d. By 1774, their wages had risen to 4s a week for the warden and 3s for the men.⁴¹

Many applications for places in the hospital were received and as occasion arose for the position of nurse and warder, but only a few examples can be given here. Amongst the nurses were Elizabeth Kirby of Wing, appointed February 22nd 1793, Elizabeth Pretty of Lyddington May 3rd 1793 and Arabella and Sarah Colwell (spinster), appointed in 1806.

In 1806, John Hill, a poor man of Caldecott, 49 years of age, applied for



Figure 409 Lyddington Bede House, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

a place. He had been a field labourer but was afflicted with rheumatism and lameness and capable of doing very little work. His case was supported by Robert Graham Curate, Thomas Chapman churchwarden, and his neighbours John Brown, Peter Brown, Edward Muggleton, John Ogden, John Cave, Robert Laxton, Hugh Moore, Matthew Brown, Samuel Stokes, Thomas Stokes and Brian Ward. Reputation and having a good name mattered.

William Pretty was appointed warden in 1878. He tried to get his wife appointed to the nurse's position, but the rector said this was not a good idea – she suffered in the winter from bronchitis, was not financially needy, too young and very bossy! He thought she took advantage of Pretty's 'weak mind' and offended the Bedesman by 'taking possession' of the garden. In 1894, William Muggleton wrote that,

William Pretty warden of this place is taking a lot of stone and wood onto his own ground to mend his road and his fences, there is some very bad goings on here, as a member of this place it is my duty to let you know – if I could see you, I can tell you more than I can rite.

Later, he wrote again,

Sir, I rec'd your letter and I have told you before that he has been taking stone and wood off the ground and has to the rules, Thomas Hill catch him Piglins his Potatoes also getting apples and bringing them away in his pocket I myself have seen him do the same several times and I had a few beans laid to dry and he stole some of them and he a bad living fellow he maliced me ever since I have been here because I would not pay 5 shillings to make them a tea.

Edward Sharman, by then living at the newly rebuilt Prebendal House, wrote to Charles Thorpe at Burghley House,

I believe the complaints made about the rules of the Hospital being neglected are too true The new Warden has not taken up his residence there but I did not mean to say anything about until the spring was a little further advanced as he was told at the time he was admitted he must abide there and keep the place in proper order.

William Pretty died in the Bede House 11th April 1897 after a long illness!

Figure 410 Last residents of the Bede House.
(Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



The Hermitage, 6 Church Lane

The history of **The Hermitage** indicates that it was one of the many houses owned by John Lacie in the seventeenth century. Mary Boyer, John Lacie's mother, lived there from 1649 until it was sold to Edmund Sismey in 1657. Edmund passed the six-hearth house, with its date-stone RES 1668, on to his son John in 1673. John's son was another Edmund, and so was his son. In 1749, Edmund Sismey owned no fewer than four houses in Lyddington. In 1787, he sold three of the houses he owned in Lyddington, including 6 Church Lane, to Robert Walker, Esq. The property was subsequently sold to James Clarke in 1813, whose son, Robert sold it to John Monckton on 1843 at which point it became the vicarage, occupied by Rev Thomas Wheeler Gillham. Rev J. Baynard lived there for many years, followed by Miss Tristram, Mr T. Dalton and later his daughter, Mrs Davidson.



Figure 411 The Hermitage, 6 Church Lane, 2013. (Robert Ovens)

8 to 10 Church Lane

Three small cottages at **8 to 10 Church Lane** were for farm workers, and were owned by Joseph Pretty (maltster) in 1800. By 1850, when William Pretty owned the cottages, they were occupied by Thomas Waterfield, William Sumpter and Townsend Pretty. In the 1900s, Mr H. Branston occupied the first, Miss Pretty the middle one and Mr Cox the end one. Later, the Hinch family took over two of the cottages but when they left the property fell into ruin. Miss Branston continued to live at number 10 for many years. Until the cottages were renovated in 1966, they had bare earth floors and no water or electricity.



Figure 412 8–10 Church Lane, 2015. (Robert Ovens)

Prebendal House, 9 Church Lane

Prebendal House was built about 1870 on older foundations. The old prebendal house had been nearer the church. It had been described in the parliamentary survey of prebend, dated 8th December 1649 as,

All that Mansion or Prebendarie Dwelling house Consisting of a hall a parlour a Kitchin Pantrie Larder Sellare, Also in the second storie sixe Lodgeinge Chambers All Cont' 8 Bayes of Buildinges The walls of Stone and the Coveringe of Slate with a Maultinge house Kiln house and Brewhouse, Alsoe a Dovehouse Stored with Pidgeins Likewise two Stables with Barns Cont' 12 bayes of Buildinge with Orchard Garden yardes and Court contayninge by estimacion two Acres Abutting on the Church yard West and on the Street south.⁴²



Figure 413 Prebendal House,
9 Church Lane, 2013.
(Robert Owens)

According to the Church of England Record Centre, the estate was transferred on the 18th of June 1852 by Order in Council.⁴³ It was one of many estates belonging to bishoprics and cathedrals that was transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the last century so that the income from them might be diverted from its former use and applied to augment poor livings. The report made for the Commissioners by Messrs Pickering and Smith dated 16th April 1855 referred to the Prebendal House, occupied by Anne Marvin, as follows,

No. 6. The house has on the ground floor kitchen sitting room, parlour, dairy pantry and 2 cellars – On first floor 5 rooms and 2 Attics over – stone built and slated in good repair – The outbuildings consist of Coal house and fowl house – Stables for 11 horses part lofted – Chaff and Steam house and three hay barns, stone built and thatched and slated – some repairs required.

Remembering that in 1757 Edward Sharman reached an agreement with the Earl of Exeter that the house he was living in, namely The Manor House, 22 Main Street, should be rebuilt, it is interesting to note that, just over a hundred years later, his descendant, another Edward Sharman, was occupying Prebendal House in 1869 and arranging for it to be rebuilt too. A report entitled Rebuilding of Farm House stated,

The dwelling house upon the Farm at Liddington occupied by Mr Edward Sharman has turned out to be in so dilapidated and ruinous a condition in the roof and foundations, that we are advised that the better course would be to entirely rebuild it on a smaller scale, the farm contains 139 acres let at the annual rent of £300. We propose to expend the sum of Eight hundred pounds, in rebuilding the farm house, without interest, but of which sum the tenant is to contribute £50 and do all haulage required. We therefore request authority for and expenditure of £750.0.0.⁴⁴

The current Prebendal House is the result of this rebuilding. Its position is clearly indicated in **Figure 368**. Some of the outbuildings of the Old Prebendal House may still be seen, however, at the end of Church Lane (**Figure 398**) (see pages 192–3). They have been converted into houses but an entrance archway is clearly visible.

Figure 414 The Priest's House,
31 Main Street, 2010.
(Jeremy Rider)



The Priest's House, 31 Main Street

Returning to Main Street we pass **The Arches**, 33 Main Street, built by John Thomas Clarke in 1890 on the foundations of an old cottage and come to **The Priest's House**. It carries an inscribed stone with the motto 'Cælum Patria Christus Via' (Heaven is my home, Christ the way) and the initials of Robert Rudd (vicar), 1626 (**Figure 416**). Robert Rudd had been presented to the Church of Lyddington by the prebend, William Pelsant, but his time in Lyddington was tainted by accusations brought against him in the court



Figure 415 Stone on the front of the Priest's House, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)



Figure 416 The Priest's House, 31 Main Street, 1968. (L.C. Emmerson)

of High Commissioners by Peter Woodcock of Caldecott in 1639. The case, discussed elsewhere, resulted in his suspension by the Commissary of the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln and a £100 fine.⁴⁵ The Priest's House was a freehold property, owned in 1804 by John Roberts. By 1910, it had been bought by Wm. Blount of Great Easton, Leicestershire and was occupied by Mr J. S. Muggleton (Figure 416). It was extensively renovated in 1966.

29 Main Street

The next houses down the street were all freehold, but a series of deeds has enabled us to establish that 29 Main Street had been a pair of 'poor houses' owned by the Guardians of the Poor of Uppingham Union. They were sold to Thomas Roberts in 1839, passed on to George and Thomas Ward of Stoke Dry in 1841. They changed hands several times before being purchased in 1879 by John Thomas Goodwin. Mr Goodwin ran the post office and was a baker. He made cakes, bread and mince pies at Christmas. As late as 1936, Sunday dinners were taken to him to be cooked for 2d.

Continuing past 25 Main Street, which became the school, built in 1870, and 23 Main Street, a farm owned by John Marvein in 1804, we come to an un-surfaced lane called Scales Dyke. On the site on the left at the top of the hill was a Land Army Hostel for girls, which was later used as a prisoner of war camp.



Figure 417 29 Main Street, 2015. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 418 Bay House,
17 Main Street, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)

Bay House, 17 Main Street

Bay House was sold by Robert Peach in 1661 to John Sismey who took out a conditional surrender with Edward Allen of Lynden in 1664. No previous history of the house has yet been established; this is curious because it carries a date-stone, EA 1656. It remained in the hands of the Allen family until sold in 1756 to Daniel Thorpe a horse dealer. It was purchased by John Bryan of Gretton in 1790 and was held by the Bryan family until 1856 when Hugh Clarke

bought for it £100 at an auction in the Exeter Arms. On his death in 1878, it went to Mary Ann Colwell, née Marvin.

Pied Calf Cottage, 13 Main Street

Pied Calf Cottage was held by Thomas Sherwood in the early seventeenth century and was purchased by Edward Allin gentleman in 1678. It was purchased by John Falkner in 1773 and was owned by members of the Falkner family until 1857, when it was inherited, as the public house called the Pied Calf, by Mary Green.

9 Main Street

9 Main Street was held by Thomas Mitchell in 1804, but by 1848 it had been split into two, both held by John Levis. The tenement with the stable yard was occupied by John Manton. The house stayed in the hands of the Levis or Leavis family until 1901.

Rose Cottage, 7 Main Street

Rose Cottage was transferred from John and Margaret Hill to Robert and Prudence Tansley in 1652 (see page 147). From the Hill family it passed to Thomas Sherwood in 1677. With no male heirs, it descended in 1704 to Mary and Ann Sherwood. Mary married Thomas Marriott of Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Warwickshire, yeoman in 1708 and the two sisters sold the house to Laurence Manton. Laurence left it to his two sons, Edward and Thomas, in 1715. It was sold to Edmund Sismey in 1759 and sold again to John Palmer of Seaton in 1761. When John Palmer became a bankrupt, all his property was handled by bankers in London. The house was sold to Thomas Clarke in 1794, who sold the home close (now the garden) to James Bell in 1795 and the house to Edward Caistor in 1799. James Bell was a surgeon in Uppingham and his son John, an apothecary in Uppingham, sold the close to the Rt. Hon. Charles Lord Barham of Exton Park. Henry Clarke bought the house in 1868 from the Caisters and sold it to John Marsh Northen in 1890. The garden was still held by the Noel family when all manorial incidents were extinguished in 1934.

Lyddington House, 1, 3 and 5 Main Street

These three were all part of the one property in 1848, built by Thomas John Bryan. In 1910, it was owned by Rev Henry Bryan and occupied by Dr Thomas Pink. It was sold to the church commissioners and became the vicarage in 1931.

8, 10 and 12 Main Street

Of these three cottages the two oldest, 10 and 12, were both owned by Elizabeth Goodliffe in 1804. By 1848 she owned all three, when they were occupied by John Hill, Thomas Freeman and John Henry Neilson.

4 Main Street

In 1804 Henry Baines held the site on which stood **4 Main Street**. From Henry it went to Samuel Pretty in 1822 and then to his sister Mary. Mary held a house hovel and yard and a garden of half an acre, occupied by Lewis Berridge. When Mary died in 1855, it went to his nephew (another Samuel Pretty, farmer and grazier of Lyddington). Although it was in the hands of The Northamptonshire Brewery by 1910, no mention as yet has been found of the Lord Roberts in court rolls or rentals.

The Elms, 2 Main Street

The Elms was held by Thomas Pretty (butcher) in 1804 (see plot 128 on **Figure 422**). In the estate survey conducted for the Marquis of Exeter in 1848, the property was held by Samuel Pretty, described as 'Farm house barn stables crew yard sheds stackyard and garden' and the plot on which the cottage stood had two roods and ten perches, or just over half an acre (see plot 97 on **Figure 423**). Samuel secured a mortgage of £500 on the property from William Hardy, a farmer in Thistleton, in 1859. Maybe it was Samuel who installed the sash windows and the ashlar porch on the front of the house.

Samuel's nephew, John Pretty (farmer) of Braunston inherited the cottage in 1870 and initially occupied it. Two years later though, when John Pretty used it as part of the security given for a loan of £2,200 from Benjamin Adam of Oakham, the Rev Thomas Wheeler Gilham, rector of Lyddington was living there. This was only the first of John Pretty's loans. He took out another in 1877 for £1,500, paid off Benjamin



Figure 419 8, 10 and 12 Main Street, 2015.
(Robert Ovens)



Figure 420 Cranford, 4 Main Street, 2010.
(Robert Ovens)



Figure 421 The Elms, 2 Main Street, 2010.
(Jeremy Rider)



Figure 422 Plot 128, Lyddington Enclosure Map, 1804. (ROLLR)

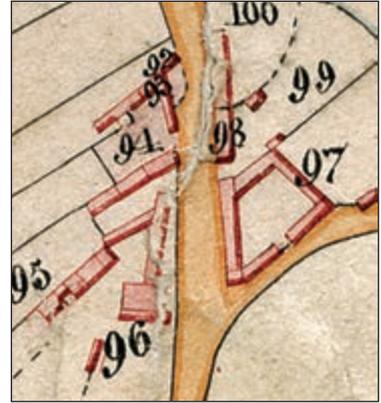


Figure 423 Plot 97 on the Lyddington Estate Map, 1848. The site of the Lord Roberts is Plot 98. (BH, Exeter Archive)

Adam and a preceding loan in 1878, then secured a whole series of additional loans: £1,400 in 1878, £1,000 in 1879 and £400 in 1880.

By 1880 the Rev Thomas Wheeler Gilham had moved out and the property, now designated a messuage rather than a cottage, was occupied by William Green. That was the year in which William Faulkner Green (farmer) bought the messuage from John Pretty for £400 before he too took out a loan. Six years later he was able to pay the £500 he had borrowed by taking out another loan for the same amount from manager of the Stamford Spalding & Boston Banking Co. When he did so, the description of the property had become 'All that messuage or tenement with the outbuildings yard garden and appurtenances belonging bounded on the West by the Road to Gretton and on the North by the "Lord Roberts" Inn' and when William Falkner Green died in 1897, he had become a publican as well as a farmer, and Jane Colwell was now living in the house.

The Inland Revenue survey of 1910 incorrectly described the house as a freehold property whereas it was actually copyhold. Mrs Elizabeth Green was then both owner and occupier. It was a good stone and thatched house, with three good living rooms, three bedrooms, a stone brick and slate pigsty, closet, coalhouse and back kitchen, A stone entrance stable led to another stable, cowshed, barn with granary above and henhouse, all in good condition. The gross value was estimated to be £450.

William Faulkner Green's widow Elizabeth occupied the property until 1916 when she surrendered it for £450 to Alice Elizabeth Broadway, the wife of Charles Peter Broadway, bookseller of Queen Street, Uppingham. It was sold again for £400 in 1917 to Lillian Annie Priestman, the wife of Thomas Priestman, metal refiner of the City of Birmingham. Compensation was finally paid to the Exeter estate and all manorial incidents extinguished in 1949 .

From here we move to Thorpe by Water.



Figure 424 The sign for The Lord Roberts Inn, centre right, is just visible in the middle of this early photograph. The Elms is far right. (Jack Hart Collection, RCM)



Figure 425 Another early photograph showing farm buildings belonging to The Elms on the right. Lyddington House is shown on the left. (Boulton)



Figure 426 The farm buildings have been demolished. (Boulton)

PART FIVE

Thorpe by Water

Vanessa Doe

Thorpe by Water is a small, well-sheltered village lying on the north bank of the river Welland between the larger settlements of Seaton to the east and Lyddington and Caldecott to the west. The land slopes gently upwards towards the north where it is protected by hills, Prestley Hill and Bee Hill to the north-west between Thorpe and Lyddington and The Barrows to the north-east. The village is built on slightly rising ground above the floodplain of the river Welland, which forms its south and south-eastern boundary. The land is productive with a good depth of soil, the meadows and grassland on the banks of the Welland being particularly so, since the lower parts of the area are flooded in winter by the rising waters of the river, creating natural water meadows along the river bank.

This was a small self-contained community, probably largely free from manorial control. It never achieved full parochial status, although in 1726 John Harrison, gent., and Clement Smith, described as churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor in Thorpe, provided a Certificate of Settlement for Thomas Riddell and his wife Ann. There are no separate registers for Thorpe. The village was subject to the parish system of administration from both Seaton and Lyddington. Births and deaths of villagers were recorded in the registers of both, making the calculation of population difficult before the nineteenth-century census. In 1801 the population was one hundred, rising to 113 in mid-century and declining during subsequent census years to as few as 68 in 1871. The Hearth Tax returns of 1665 show there were 25 households in the village, eight of which were exempt from the tax. Although agreement on household size is a matter of debate in this period, the usual multiplier of 4.5 would give a population in the mid-seventeenth century of around 112.

Thorpe village was formed on the boundary between the parishes of Lyddington and Seaton, with the boundary lying to the west of the village centre. Thorpe, though, once had its own chapel dedicated to St. Thomas (see page 90). It has completely disappeared, as so many small extra-parochial chapels did after the Reformation, but some medieval stonework, probably from the ruins, is incorporated in The Old Manor House (see pages 91, 120). According to Archdeacon Irons's notes, the chapel in Thorpe was last referred to in 1604 when Anthony Rowlett of Thorpe was fined for not attending his parish church. He claimed he had been worshipping at the village chapel.¹ The font, which was in use in the farmyard as a water trough in the 1820s, was removed to Seaton church.

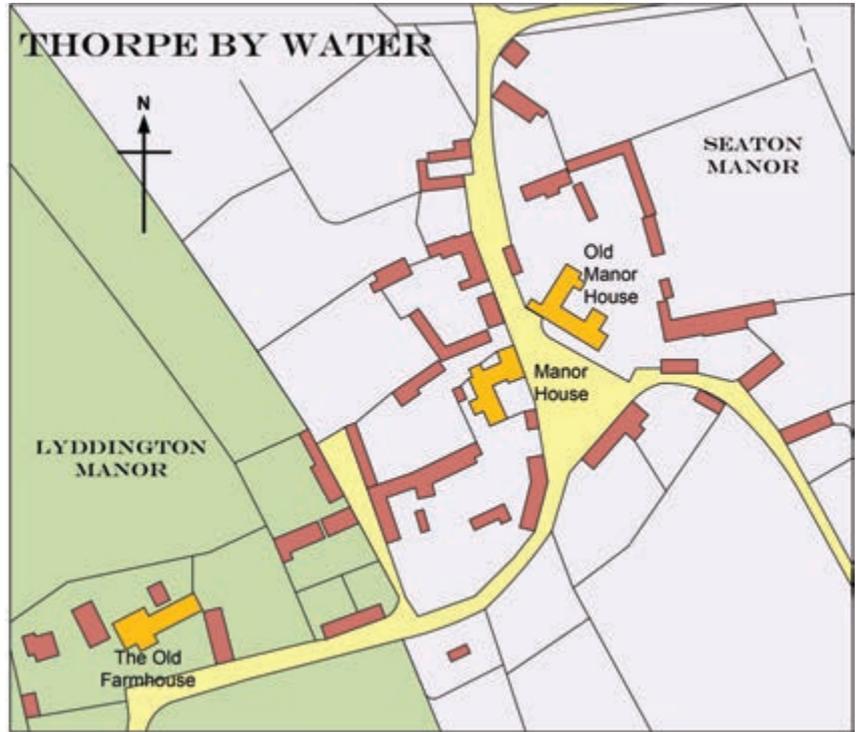


Figure 427 The location of the three houses in Thorpe by Water discussed in this section. (Robert Ovens)



Figure 428 The Old Manor House in 2013. (Robert Ovens)

The Old Manor House

In spite of its well-established and apparently unchanging medieval system of communal farming, agricultural land in Thorpe seems to have provided sufficiently good returns to finance at least three sizeable prestige houses. It also attracted investors to purchase property there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. John Osborne, originally from Grantham, gentleman, later became, as a religious Dissenter, a committed supporter of the Commonwealth during the Interregnum. He had purchased a freehold estate in the village, probably part of the Seaton Manor of Down Hall,

from Edmund Clipsham of Seaton and his wife Dorothey in 1615.² His house in Thorpe, known until recently as Tudor House, is now called The Old Manor House. Its descent has been traced in The National Archives in a series of Fines or Final Agreements in the Court of Common Pleas.³ The house there in 1615 had a front range and a rear wing, built in 1597. John Osborne was farming in the open fields of Thorpe in the early seventeenth century, but during the Civil War his military duties in support of the Commonwealth must often have kept him from home. He was appointed to the Parliamentary Committee for Rutland as part of the Midland Association in 1642 and was present with the

garrison at Burley on the Hill when the house was burned down to prevent it falling to the Royalist army in 1645. His will, dated 1663 and proved in 1678, leaves his property, 'all that my manor of Thorpe in the Parish of Seaton' to his wife Anne.⁴ He left 20s to the poor of both Thorpe and Seaton and five pounds 'to the poor of the Congregated Church of Christ meeting at my house in Thorpe'. Anne's will, dated 1669 but proved with her husband's in 1678, also left money to the poor of the congregation 'usually meeting at my house in Thorpe'.⁵ The house later became a place of pilgrimage for Quakers. There were many Protestant sects who set up their own congregations with their own forms of worship after the Civil War. Osborne's congregation were actually Baptists. A memorial inscription found in the orchard wall of the house is reproduced in the *Rutland Magazine*⁶. It shows that John Osborne died in Oakham gaol in 1668 aged 84, having refused on principal to pay tithes (see page 92). The inscription implies he was buried in the grounds of his house. There is no record of his burial in either Seaton or Lyddington parish registers. Anne Osborne inherited the house and its obligations to the congregation of Baptists. She died in 1678. Her heir and executor was her niece Elizabeth Middlemore, 'now living with me in Thorpe', but no trace of her or her descendants appear in Thorpe, Lyddington or Seaton records. The Old Manor House was sold in the 1690s to Richard Peach by Osborne's sister.⁷ It was eventually bought by the Roberts family who, in 1735, leased it for nine years to Thomas Baines of Seaton, retaining the right to replant the orchard and to insist that the dovecote remained well-stocked with pigeons at the end of the term.⁸ All the Roberts' properties in Thorpe were eventually purchased by the Monkton family and became part of their Fineshade Manor estate.

The Manor House

John Harrison, yeoman, already a leaseholder and farmer in Thorpe, purchased a freehold estate in Thorpe from Erasmus Catesby (gent.) of Seaton in 1597. The present 'Manor House' and its land was leased from Michael Catesbye of Seaton for 21 years in 1574 by John Harrison the elder of Thorpe (yeoman) and purchased outright in 1597 by John Harrison jointly with Richard Clipsham of Edmondthorpe, from Erasmus Catesbie of Seaton (gent.) and Kenelme Catesbie (gent.), also of Seaton. Harrison and Clipsham paid £400 for 'all that messuage or farm ... being in Thorpe aforesaid ... then or late in the tenure or occupation of the said John Harrison'. In addition to the house there were barns, stables, cottages, orchards, gardens and yards. There were also nearby closes, Hall Close with Michael Catesby's cottage and the 'grene' on its south side and another close called the Hall Close with the chapel yard to the north. In the yard were a 'haie barn' and a kiln house. The land included the leys and hedgerows in Barkers Croft and 91 acres in the Fields of Thorpe, 32 acres in East Field, 32 acres in North Field and 27 acres in West Field and 13½ acres of Meadow together with rights of common. In 1597 the farm was divided



Figure 429 The Manor House in 2015. (Robert Ovens)

between Harrison and Richard Clipsham and a terrier or survey was drawn up to record the extent of each partner's holding. Harrison's survey attached to the indenture or conveyance shows him in possession of 'the two over rooms in the dwelling house towards the north', the hay barn and kiln house in the yard and his half share of the 91 acres of arable, leys and meadow distributed among all the open Fields and meadows.⁹ When this arrangement with Richard Clipsham (possibly made to provide finance for the purchase) came to an end is not known, but by the end of the seventeenth century when the house was extended, the whole estate belonged to the Harrisons. The date-stone in the south gable end provides evidence that this was indeed the Harrison house (see Figure 111). Their wealth and prosperity at this time are amply demonstrated in the beautiful quality of their new house with its finely-worked ashlar façade and spacious new staircase. A succession of Harrison family wills show their Thorpe land passing down the family until 1751, when the whole farm was willed to Astrea and Dorothy Roberts, nieces of John Harrison (gentleman), who died childless in that year. The Roberts, already large and prosperous landowners in south Rutland, thus established the beginning of their estate in Thorpe.



Figure 430 The Old Farmhouse in 2011. (Robert Ovens)

The Old Farmhouse

New families came in the eighteenth century. Christopher Nevison of Rockingham (gent.) purchased an estate in Thorpe in 1709, which he settled on his eldest son, also Christopher, sometime before his death in 1716. The probate inventory of his son Christopher Nevison provides a snapshot of a prosperous early eighteenth-century farm. He inherited his father's farm in Thorpe in 1716, but died in 1722. It lists his farm stock and equipment as well as the contents of his house. It shows a farm among the open fields of Thorpe

growing peas, beans, oats, wheat, rye and barley, some of the barley at the kiln waiting to be malted, and a valuable crop of hay to feed his livestock. His livestock included ten cows, five calves, five heifers, fifty sheep, a sow, thirty-two store pigs and the yard poultry. His horses, probably all kept for his own use, were a gelding, seven mares, two colts, two fillies and two foals. His equipment included five harrows and three ploughs, with harness for seven horses, three wagons and three carts. In his store were cheeses and 'pit coals' the latter perhaps for domestic use or possibly for malting.

His inventory made in 1723 shows he was worth £422, of which his household goods and furnishings were worth £162, his stock, crops and farm equipment about £260.¹⁰ His house was substantial, consisting of hall, parlour, kitchen and a 'cellar' on the ground floor, all with chambers over and with a heated 'men's garret' and a 'maids chamber' on the second floor. The dairy and the 'tub house' were possibly separate from the main body of the house and the cheese chamber with a loft over was in the yard. The furnishings included some fashionable new items including a 'raised chapán' (japanned)

table, china delf (delft) ware, a clock and clock case, looking glasses and window curtains as well as bed hangings in the best bedroom over the parlour.

This house, although possibly somewhat similar to The Old Manor House in terms of size and layout, was at the west end of the village and has now been substantially altered and rebuilt. It had been purchased from John Sismey who in 1709 was paying 6s to the churchwardens of Lyddington for 'Mr Nevison's farm'. The Sismeys had been a prosperous Thorpe family since the sixteenth century and their properties in Thorpe were included in the valuation of the bishop of Lincoln's Manor of Lyddington made by the Cecils when they became the new owners of the estate in the 1550s. Not only was their property one of the few in Thorpe to become a part of the Burghley estate, probably because of its position within the parish boundary of Lyddington, but it is also clear from the rate assessments made by the churchwardens of Lyddington that the Sismey property, later acquired by the Nevisons, fell within Lyddington parish. The churchwardens' accounts for June 1721 show repairs being made to 'Mr Nevison's pew' in the church, and a memorial stone to Christopher Nevison who died in 1745 aged 27 was once in the church. It has now disappeared but was recorded in an account of Lyddington church in the *Rutland Magazine* in 1911.¹¹ The 1848 map and terrier of Lyddington and Thorpe in the estate archive at Burghley show clearly where the parish boundary was. None of the properties in the main part of the village around the green were included in Lyddington parish; only the buildings at the extreme west end of the village street off the lane then known as Thorpe Lower Road. The few properties in this part of Thorpe lay on the north side of the lane before it makes a sharp right-angled turn south to the river and the watermill. The property probably occupied by the Nevisons is shown as a yard with a substantial building at its centre and a number of outbuildings (**Figures 427, 430**). It is referred to in the Tithe Award as Redshaws and consisted of 'stackyard garden and orchard', suggesting that if there had been a house on the site, it was no longer occupied. The area has been completely redeveloped.

The Roberts family acquired both the Osborne estate and the Harrison estate partly by inheritance and partly by purchase by 1751. The family came from Wardley with a branch in Glaston and also had properties in Lyddington and Caldecott in the eighteenth century. The deeds of the Thorpe properties show that all the land thus purchased was not in compact holdings but set out as strips among the open fields of the village in areas of arable land, leys, and meadow in the Fields of Thorpe.¹² The Roberts estate was purchased by the Monckton family of Fineshade Manor, along with Redshaws Farm at the west end of Thorpe. More information on Rutland property is held in NRO in the Monckton Archives.

Conclusions

Looking back at the previous pages, the first thing that one notices is the great age of many of the properties and how they are contained in the village envelope, including around the margins. The older houses lie within the nucleated villages with an anciently defined spread; few older houses sit in the wider landscape. This can be seen on enclosure maps dated around 1800. These are very settled communities; the sizes of the villages have been constant for centuries.

The fact that the Manor of Lyddington and all of its satellite villages was under the same manorial lord for over 450 years may have been one of the factors contributing to that stability, but it cannot have been the only one. Wars, periods of poor weather and poor harvests, and an industrial revolution within these years undoubtedly caused economic hardships, but many of the families prospered and the management of the Manor by the Burghley Estates only ever faltered briefly. Every time a manor court was due to be held, a notice went out to the steward telling him the date and ordering him to summon the jury. Unlike many other estates, this system was maintained to the end of the manorial system in the twentieth century. All the rents, fixed in the medieval times, but later bringing in paltry sums, were collected right up to 1925.

During that period the Burghley finances did experience one particular difficulty. John, 5th Earl of Exeter, was a great traveller and he, with Culpepper Tanner, went to France and Italy in the seventeenth century, bringing back treasures for the house, but completely denuding the coffers, a situation that was only rectified by an advantageous marriage in the early 1700s. This caused a hiatus in the Lyddington court rolls, which were never written up properly between 1677 and 1707. All that has been found at Burghley house for these years are bundles of court papers, including draft rolls, which conscientious local officials strung together. No copyhold rentals have been found either for the period 1655 to 1715, only sum totals of rents collected. Lists of title deeds were, however, carefully maintained and copies of original surrenders kept. Legal matters always received proper attention.

Detailed management of title deeds and contracts at a local level required local knowledge. Most properties could be identified by four characteristics: their general description, the lands that belonged to them, their rent, and the person from whom they had been obtained. Mistakes in the rolls seem to have occurred most frequently when outsiders were involved. Spectacularly large bankruptcies such as that of Peter Woodcock in Caldecott in the 1680s, handled by London lawyers at a time when records were sparse, produced considerable

confusion. Interestingly, once mistakes had been enrolled, they were rarely corrected and errors in title deeds persisted for hundreds of years.

Local reeves, as we have already noted, also found the changes in land rents at the time of the Enclosure very difficult to cope with. Anticipating Enclosure, in 1758, estate stewards attempted to gather as much data as possible from tenants in Caldecott and many terriers were collected. Land was an important asset and brought in a significant income much greater than that from the housing stock, which appears only to have been recorded in Rentals. Records of the old enclosures in Lyddington were, in contrast, better kept. The result of this may be seen in Lyddington Enclosure Map, where all the town plots are numbered and a list of proprietors appended. The Enclosure Award for the Manor is dated 1804 and contains details not only of all the allotments, but also in many instances their abuttals. The Enclosure Commissioners were exceedingly careful when they laid out the first allotments, ensuring that all residents had direct access to their own homesteads and incidentally providing information on who owned them.

The Manor was organised on very feudal lines when William Cecil acquired it in 1551. All freeholders and copyholders were obliged to attend the manor court and many had to supply him with wheat, beans and chickens as part of their rent. Deciners or tithing men each represented ten families, looking after their welfare but also bringing to court anyone who had broken the rules of conduct, or 'paines' as they were called. Even when a person was in prison, someone had to attend the court to represent him. It was a society with very little privacy. Benefits in kind were available – if a person belonged to the parish and was deemed deserving – but little money. Money was in short supply and payments often made on credit; it was a makeshift economy in which many lived hand-to-mouth and depended on charity and poor relief. They had food on the table when the harvest was good, but life on the farm was hard and the men, as we have seen, often died young. People needed one another to survive. Places in Lyddington Bede House were only given to the fortunate few. Those who did not follow the rules, broke the peace, sired illegitimate children or took foreigners into their homes were regarded very much as outsiders who merited little charity, whereas those who obeyed the rules, helped one another, prospered through their own efforts and became officers of the courts were the insiders and regarded as the deserving poor if they suffered misfortune.

The huge number of conditional surrenders appearing in court rolls and the size of them were often a clear indication of the financial difficulties people were experiencing. They were first recorded in the rolls in the 1670s. What has proved particularly interesting has been the identification of the borrowers and lenders in these transactions. One of the earliest lenders was Magdalena Clipsham, a widow of Uppingham, who lent £20 12s to William Boyle in 1678, secured against his house and lands in Lyddington. She provided loans for several people in Lyddington and was typical of many widows who had inherited their husband's estates but did not farm the land themselves. Often it was young inexperienced sons who were in need of funds to tide them over until they became established, but they tended to seek loans from older relatives. Older farmers also needed funds when they became incapable, but many also

used loans to buy or renovate houses. Richard Mann, for example, borrowed £318 in 1682 from Jonathan Holled for a messuage in Lyddington he had let to George Sewell and Edward Manton. The number of conditional surrenders or mortgages steadily increased in the 1690s; descriptions of the properties against which they were secured indicated in many cases that this was to pay for alterations to house so that they could be sublet to more people. James Sly, for example, ensured that he had access for all carriages and freedom to draw water from his well when he borrowed fourteen guineas from Henry and Grace Matthews in 1698, secured against the messuage in Lyddington he had sublet to John Sharp, Joseph Cawthorne and Elizabeth Davies.

As the number of mortgages increased in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, so did the spread of places in which lenders were sought. They came from far and wide: London, Birmingham, Leicester, Uppingham and other places in Rutland. Several were doctors or apothecaries in Leicester, an indication that Lyddington could have been thought to be a good place to invest in. The rate of interest changed little; it was usually between 4 and 4½% and the term one year, though this was rarely enforced. No problem normally occurred as long as the interest was paid, except in certain cases. We found so many instances, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth century, in which properties became forfeit exactly one year after the money had changed hands, that we realised it might have been adopted as a means of selling and buying properties. This was indeed confirmed when we found a transaction described as a 'sale by way of a mortgage'. Presumably it offered the same financial advantages as the Lease and Release process used for freehold estates. Investigating it is beyond the scope of this project, but it would be an interesting topic for future research.

Women did not just provide mortgages; many owned property in their own right. When they did so, they had to attend the court, and if they failed to do so they were fined. Frequently, when a couple married, the husband surrendered his house to the court so that he and his wife could become tenants in common. When they decided to sell, the wife was 'secretly and separately' examined by the steward of the court to ensure she agreed to the transaction.

Many properties never came onto the market, but were handed down to a member of the family or friend. In such instances, wills provided us with an indication of wealth and also information on beneficiaries and properties. The places in which many beneficiaries of Caldecott residents lived proved large, and widely-spread geographically. Family relationships did not only extend to neighbouring counties. Caldecott was on the main road, near the river Welland and the bridge across it, and the railway arrived in the nineteenth century. Better access to road and rail affected not only families, but also brought trade to the village. We have on our tour round Caldecott noticed the number of houses rebuilt in the nineteenth century on the sites of old dwellings and adapted for commercial purposes, becoming just stack-yards, coal-yards and workshops. With this level of trade, houses for workers had to be provided too, hence the erection of Burgess Row and Foresters Cottages.

Lyddington, on the other hand, lost its main road when it was bypassed by the turnpike in the eighteenth century, built because the hills out of Lyddington were notoriously difficult under adverse weather conditions. As a

result, trade in Lyddington decreased and changes were far fewer; Lyddington remained rural and poorer than Caldecott. It lost its coaching inn and public houses proliferated instead. Houses were not knocked down, but many, like those on Pigs Lane, were adapted for multiple occupancy. With little money to build new houses, many of the old properties remained standing or simply fell down. As one local builder commented, 'If Lyddington hadn't been so poor none of the buildings would have survived. The locals may complain about the incomers and the rise in the price of the houses, but if they had not come and renovated them, they would not have lasted much longer'.

Afterword

The project that resulted in this book used a multi-disciplinary approach to investigate changes in the Manor of Lyddington and Caldecott. This brought together a group of people with varied perspectives and different strengths. Rather than attempt to integrate their work, we have let the individual elements speak for themselves.

One conclusion is clear: Lyddington and its satellite villages of Caldecott, Stoke Dry and Thorpe by Water survived in their present form largely because they were poor and, with no resident tenant-in-chief or manorial Lord, self-governing. The result is, as Wise describes in his book on the Watsons of Rockingham Castle, ‘nestling among some small hills, lies the fossilised Tudor village of Long Lyddington - a sort of miniature Herculaneum of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a perfect treasure for the archaeologist and the antiquary.’¹

No significant industry ever reached this corner of the Midlands and, once the bishops were no longer in charge, investment in mills and other buildings ceased. When Lord Burghley received the Manor, his officials appointed bailiffs and stewards but the role of the parker, or keeper of the bishop’s animals in the Great Park, disappeared and all the land that had been cultivated by the bishops for their own use was leased to local farmers. Many will have been thankful for the short-term employment opportunities offered by the demolition of the major parts of the bishop’s palace and its subsequent renovation as the Jesus Hospital, later to become the Bede House.

Dependency on agriculture and its spin-off trades such as tanning and shoe- and harness-making, continued throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The only other significant source of wealth was local stone and timber, available in Lyddington Great Park until the middle of the seventeenth century. Masons and builders were amongst those seeking frequent mortgages from the late seventeenth century onwards. As each building was completed and sold the loan was repaid and another taken out. Some prospered whilst others moved away to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Histories of the buildings have unearthed many personal stories, of wealth accumulated and lost within a few generations, of marriages, arguments and tragedies. They contain information on adaptation, multiple-occupancy, outhouses and rebuilding but few details of the houses themselves other than the occasional mention of a hall, a parlour or a kitchen. This we have now remedied by a detailed study of the buildings themselves which has shown that the houses were transformed in a remarkably comprehensive ‘Great Rebuilding’ through the course of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, considerable

evidence has come to light of buildings which still retain traces of their medieval origins. In the eighteenth century, alongside ongoing alterations and domestic improvements, the focus moved to new investment in the construction of farm buildings.

The slow and steady increase in population in the nineteenth century can probably be put down to improvements in road transport and in agricultural techniques consequent on Enclosure. The pattern was not entirely universal. Whilst Stoke Dry and Thorpe by Water, both tiny villages, remained largely agricultural, Caldecott, with its access to the bridge over the Welland became an early centre for the distribution of materials such as coal; it also had its own mill, conveniently situated in the village, and benefitted from rich pasture lands in the Welland valley. The inhabitants were therefore able to redevelop sites in the village and rebuild and adapt their houses to a greater extent than in Lyddington. The railway that came to the village in the 1830s brought even more changes and opportunities for employment.

The picture that has emerged is of resourceful communities with strong affiliations. Schools and chapels were set up, local events organised and wills tell of philanthropy. There was and still is a sense of pride and solidarity and also a wonderful sense of humour in many of the stories we have been told.

Abbreviations

Arch. Jnl	<i>Archaeological Journal</i>
BH	Burghley House
Cal. Close R.	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls (HMSO)</i>
Cal. Fine R.	<i>Calendar of Fine Rolls (HMSO)</i>
Cal. Pat. R.	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls (HMSO)</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EH	English Heritage
EPNS	English Place-Name Society
HMSO	His/Her Majesty's Stationery Office
JEPNS	<i>The Journal of the English Place-Name Society</i>
L&P Hen. VIII	<i>Letters and Papers of Henry VIII (HMSO)</i>
LAO	Lincolnshire Archives
LRS	Lincoln Record Society
NMR	National Monuments Record
NRO	Northamptonshire Record Office
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England
RCM	Rutland County Museum
RLHS, RLHRS	Rutland Local History Society, Rutland Local History and Record Society
ROLLR	Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland
RR	<i>Rutland Record</i>
Rutland Magazine	<i>The Rutland Magazine and County Historical Record</i>
TNA	The National Archives
Trans LAHS	<i>Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society</i>
Univ.	University
Valor Eccles	<i>Valor Ecclesiasticus Temp. Henr. VIII Auctoritate Regia Institutus</i>
VCH	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England</i>

Notes

SECTION ONE

The Manor in the Middle Ages

- 1 Unless otherwise stated this chapter is based upon the following reports: Woodfield and Woodfield, 'The Palace of the Bishops of Lincoln at Lyddington'; Woodfield and Woodfield, *Lyddington Bede House*; Pikes, 'Lyddington – part 8: the medieval Episcopal palace and township of Lyddington'; Canadine, 'The Bishop of Lincoln's Residential Manors in the east Midlands during the Later Medieval and Early Tudor Period'; Thornton, 'Lyddington Bede House, Rutland'; Alexander, 'Lyddington Bede House. Archaeological Field Investigation'.
- 2 Round, 'Northamptonshire Domesday', pp. 287, 312; Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, pp. 204–11, 251.
- 3 Bourne, 'Some Anglo-Saxon Multiple Estates', pp. 13–16 (map on p. 16); Cox, *The Place-Names of Rutland*, pp. xxx, xxxix; Tallon, 'What was a Caldecote?', pp. 31–8, 46; Tallon, 'What was a Caldecote? (Addenda)', p. 44.
- 4 Round, 'Northamptonshire Domesday', p. 312; Massingberd, 'Social and Economic History', pp. 293–4; Simkins, 'Caldecott', p. 180.
- 5 Queen's College (Oxford), MS366; Cornwall (ed.), *Tudor Rutland, The County Community under Henry VIII*, pp. 48, 53, 55; Hollings, 'Seaton', p. 217.
- 6 Phillips, 'Stoke Dry', pp. 162–6, 226–30; Simkins, 'Stoke Dry', pp. 222–3; Waites (ed.), 'Who Was Who in Rutland', p. 271.
- 7 Foster (ed.), *Registrum Antiquissimum*, Vol I, p. 207; Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Leicestershire and Rutland*, pp. 461, 481–2, 507–8.
- 8 Foster (ed.), *Registrum Antiquissimum*, Vol I, pp. xvii–xix; Lloyd, 'Rutland Records at Lincoln', pp. 91–2.
- 9 *Valor Eccles*, iv, p. 343; Davies (ed.), *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend*, pp. xx–xxi, xxxviii; Sister Elspeth, 'Ecclesiastical History', p. 144; Simkins, 'Liddington', p. 194.
- 10 Smith (ed.), *The Acta of Hugh of Wells*, pp. 47, 116, 146, 153.
- 11 *Cal. Fine R.*, 1272–1307, pp. 53, 66–7, 116; *Cal. Pat. R.*, 1272–1281, p. 136; Simkins, 'Liddington', p. 192; Elliot, 'A Medieval Bishop in Rutland', pp. 14–17.
- 12 'The wall reflects a licence to crenellate granted in 1336: *Cal. Pat. R.* 1334–8, p. 330.
- 13 Hamilton-Thompson, 'The Monasteries of Leicestershire', pp. 90, 113; Hamilton-Thompson, 'William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln', pp. 104–05; Simkins, 'Liddington', p. 189.
- 14 Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory (forthcoming).
- 15 Bowker (ed.), *An Episcopal Court Book 1514–1520*, pp. xxiv–xxxii.
- 16 *L&P Hen. VIII*, vol. 16, nos. 1048, 1053, 1057, 1338; Cole (ed.), *Chapter Acts of the Cathedral Church ... A.D. 1536–1547*, p. xxii.
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Eighteenth Century

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- 2 ROLLR, DE 73/58
- 3 'two of the best Lookeing glases' in the 1745 will of Thomas King, yeoman of Caldecott, ROLLR, DE 73/147; 'my Clock' in the 1764 will of John Roberts, tailor of Lyddington, ROLLR, DE 73/70.

Captions to Eighteenth Century

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Nineteenth Century

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- 4 BH, Ex Map 109; Ex Vol 1411, Survey of Lyddington (1850).
- 5 ROLLR, DE 3950.
- 6 ROLLR, Tithes map 28, district 21.
- 7 BH, Ex B 65/43.
- 8 ROLLR, EN/A/R11/1; DE 1702/16.
- 9 BH, Ex Map 72.
- 10 BH, Ex Maps 87 and 464.
- 11 BH, Ex Vols 1395–1407.
- 12 BH, Ex D 30/42e.
- 13 BH, Ex B 66/1.
- 14 BH, Ex H 1/18/1–100.
- 15 BH, Ex Lydd 3/1–79.
- 16 BH, Ex Vol 1466.
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Caldecott

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- 22 LAO, D&C/Dj/37/2/133.
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- 24 Caldecott School Scrapbook (1959) p. 8.
- 25 Page, VCH, Rutland, Vol 2, pp. 179–182
- 26 TNA, PROB 11/2238.

Stoke Dry

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- 3 BH, Ex Map 87.
- 4 BH, Ex F 40/16–28, 44–90.
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Lyddington

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- 2 ROLLR DE 73/67/1–2.
- 3 TNA, PROB/11/1999.
- 4 TNA, PROB 11/53.
- 5 BH, Ex W 7/1 p. 96.
- 6 TNA, PROB 11/576, PROB 3/19/181.
- 7 ROLLR, DE 73/31.
- 8 TNA, PROB 11/1728.
- 9 This and the following deeds were kindly loaned to the Society by the owner of Swan House in 2014.
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- 11 BH, Ex Vol 1413.
- 12 ROLLR, DE 3663/175/17/5a (30 Sept 1886).
- 13 ROLLR, DE 3663/175/17/4 (10 Oct 1886).
- 14 ROLLR, DE 3663/175/17/3 (23 May 1922).
- 15 ROLLR, DE 73/90.
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- 17 BH, Ex E 8/7 (1527–8).
- 18 BH, Ex D 30/42e.
- 19 BH, Ex B 66/9.
- 20 BH, Ex B 66/11.
- 21 BH, Ex B 66/27.
- 22 BH, Ex D 78/3.
- 23 BH, Ex D 30/90.
- 24 BH, Ex D 30/89a.
- 25 BH, Ex D 30/89b.
- 26 BH, Ex D 29/58.
- 27 BH, Ex D 30/83, Ex W 7/1 p. 130 (abstract) [Note: the

- mills in Lyddington are called Lydd mills in D 30/83 but Lyddington mills in W 7/1].
- 28 BH, Ex D 30/30.
- 29 BH, Ex D 29/31.
- 30 BH, Ex H 1/13.
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- 33 LAO, D&C/Dj/39/1/81.
- 34 ROLLR, DE 1881/44 p. 10.
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- 11 Phillips, *Rutland Magazine*, vol v, pp. 1–8, 33–40.
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Glossary

- Acre** Originally land of no particular size. In open field farming it was a strip of land that could be ploughed by a team of oxen. It was standardized by Edward I at 40 by 4 rods. 1 rod or pole = 5.5 yards.
- Advowson** The right to present a clergyman to a benefice. The appointment was subject to approval by a bishop.
- Aletaster** A manorial official who tested the quality and strength of ale and beer sold in the manor.
- Ashlar** Square-cut stone used to face a wall.
- Bedesman** A pensioner or almsman whose duty it was to pray for his benefactor.
- Boon** Service a tenant is obliged to give his lord as part of his of his rent. Boonwork was a day's work, such as ploughing or reaping.
- Borough English** A custom in which the youngest son was deemed heir.
- Brownists** Early Puritans and followers of Robert Brown, later Congregationalists.
- Capital Messuage** A large house.
- Close** An enclosed piece of land, often pasture.
- Common Rights** Rights of a tenant to, for example, take material from the common, pasture animals, feed pigs in the woods, etc.
- Copyhold** A form of tenure, originally based on custom, in which the title was written into a manorial court roll and a copy given to the tenant.
- Cordwainer** Shoemaker.
- Court Rolls** The record of the manor courts.
- Croft** Enclosed meadow or arable land, usually adjacent to a house.
- Cruck truss** A pair of curved timbers which rise from near ground level and are joined at the apex of the roof.
- Curtilage** An area containing the outbuildings and yard of a house.
- Court Baron** A court held by the lord of the manor for his tenants that stated the customs of the manor and enforced payment of dues and performance of services. The main business of the court was escheats, or property transfers, accepting surrenders and granting admissions to land and buildings. It appointed the bailiff and the reeve and resolved disputes between tenants.
- Court Leet or View of frankpledge** This court inspected the working of the frankpledge, a system of mutual responsibility. It could deal with affray, the breaking of the assize of bread and ale and could fine and imprison offenders. It also appointed the constable.
- Dame School** A school run by women.
- Demesne** Land held by the lord of the manor for his own use.
- Dendrochronology** A method of analysing the pattern of tree rings in timber to establish the age of the tree and the date it was felled.
- Dissenters** Persons who separate themselves from the Established Church of England.
- Dovecote** A house for doves or pigeons, originally only allowed to the aristocracy.
- Dower** That part, usually a third, of an estate a widow could claim for life or until she remarried.
- Earl** A member of the peerage, ranking below a marquess and above a viscount.
- Enclosure** The legal process in England during the eighteenth century of enclosing a number of small landholdings in the open fields to create one larger farm.
- Farm** A rent or service of a land holding.
- Fealty** An oath of allegiance to the crown, sworn by an incoming tenant.
- Frankpledge** A system under which all men over 12 years of age were joined in groups of approximately ten households, under the leadership of a tithingman. They were collectively responsible for producing at the manorial court any man of that tithing suspected of a crime.
- Freehold** A tenure not subject to the customs of the manor and which could be disposed of without restriction.
- Furlong** Originally the length of a furrow in an open field. 220 yards.
- Garth** An enclosure or yard.
- Grist** Corn or malt which is to be ground.
- Hearth Tax** A tax levied on each hearth in a house.
- Home Close** A field adjacent to a house or an enclosed field in which a house is built.
- Homestead** A house with its dependent buildings and offices.
- Hovel** An open shed, used for cattle, grain or tools.
- Intestate** Someone who died without making a will.
- Inventory** A list of articles, such as goods chattels and land, found to have been in the possession of a person at the time of his death. Often with a valuation of each.
- Jurors** One of group of 12 men, leaseholders or freeholders, appointed by the court for each village and sworn to deliver a verdict on any question presented to them.
- Lea (or lay, lee, ley, leisure)** *Leasehold* Grass ground. A form of tenure held for a fixed term.
- Leat (or leet)** An open water-course constructed to conduct water for household purposes, mills, mining, etc.
- Manor** An estate held by a person who is a tenant of the Crown.

- Message** A house with the ground around it.
- Methodists** Followers of a church, first established by John and Charles Wesley in 1738, that promoted piety and morality.
- Moiety** Half an estate or part of an estate.
- Noble** A gold coin worth a third of a pound.
- Nuncupative will** A will delivered orally before three witnesses.
- Open Field Farming** An agricultural system in which a village was divided into two or more large fields which were divided into strips. Each farmer held a number of strips scattered throughout the fields. Often, there were three open fields, two of which were cultivated each year, the third being left fallow.
- Park** An enclosed area piece of land awarded by royal grant and used for hunting or for ornamental or recreational purposes.
- Parlour** Originally a room set aside for conversation. Private living accommodation for the family, separate from the open hall.
- Perch** 1 square rod or pole.
- Pinder** An official in charge of the village pinfold, where stray animals were kept.
- Prebend** A member of a cathedral chapter receiving an income for life from land or property within a parish. The holder of the prebend was usually required to live in the parish as he was responsible for the spiritual needs of the parishioners. If he was unwilling or unable to do so, a vicar was appointed to undertake the necessary ecclesiastical duties. Lyddington was a prebendal parish and a stall in Lincoln Cathedral carries the name of the village.
- Quartern** A quarter of a yardland.
- Quit Rent** A fixed rent paid instead of giving service to a lord.
- Rector** Originally the incumbent of a parish who received all the tithes and customary dues and was responsible for the upkeep of the chancel and rectory.
- Reeve** Someone elected each year by the tenants of the Manor to collect copyhold and quit rents.
- Rood** 1 rood = 40 perches (or square poles); 4 roods = 1 acre.
- Sike or seeke** A stream that usually runs dry in summer.
- Tenement** Rented land or building.
- Testator** A person who has written a will.
- Tithe** A tenth part of the annual produce of agriculture, being a due or payment for the support of the priesthood.
- Tithingman** A court official, [*decennarius/franciplegius*] responsible for a group of *decennary* about ten households that presented any offenders to the manorial court.
- Toft** A homestead, the site of a house and its outbuildings.
- Turnpike road** A road on which a turnpike (spiked barrier) was constructed for the collection of tolls for cattle and wheeled vehicles.
- Vagrant** A person with no settled home or regular work.
- Vestry** An assembly or meeting of parishioners meeting in the vestry of the parish church and constituting a board of management.
- Vicar** A person acting as a priest in a parish.
- Victualler** An alehouse keeper.
- Virgate** An early land measure, dependent on the quality of the soil, usually about 30 acres.
- Yard** A comparatively small uncultivated area attached to a house or other building.
- Yardland** An alternative term for a virgate.
- Yeoman** A man holding a small landed estate; a countryman, under the rank of gentleman, who cultivates his own land.

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ISBN 978-0-9934821-0-6