

CHAPTER THREE

THE PARISH OF UPTON-CUM-CHALVEY AFTER THE REFORMATION

The king confirmed the grant made by the Prior to Roger Erlewyne and his son Richard subject to their 'Finding sufficient food and drink for the seneschal and other officers of the lord king as often as they shall come to the said manor to hold court there, so well for their horses as for them'. (1)

By this agreement, Erlewyne also became Rector, and due provision was made for the Vicar, who was to receive '20 bushels of wheat and 20 bushels of oats four times a year', and his 'Mortuarium' or mortuary. (2) The advowson, however was in possession of the Crown until transferred to the Bishop of Oxford, the present holder, by an exchange in 1867. (3)

The 'great', or rectorial, tithes passed from Erlewyne to one layman after another, dwindling away until in 1851 they were worth only £15. 16s. a year. They were bought up by Frederick Charsley, who gave them back to the Vicarage on 22 February, 1882. As a result, the Vicar became his own Rector, and the Vicarage was transformed into a Rectory, for the first time since the day in 1156 when Payn de Beauchamp gave the Rectory of Upton to Merton Priory. (4)

After the Dissolution of the monasteries, the religious life of the parish passed through many vicissitudes common to the rest of the Kingdom, as Protestant and Catholic sovereigns succeeded one another, and the effect of these changes on Upton is reflected in various brief records which, although dry in themselves, give glimpses of human incidents, such as the confession of Geoffrey Meredith, Vicar of Upton from 1530 to 1546, that he had not taught the book of the Articles of Convocation and did not even know what was in it. He had, however, made some efforts to teach his parishioners the Creed and Commandments, so he was dismissed with a warning. (5)

The parish is particularly fortunate in having Parish Registers (6) which begin in 1539, only a year after parish registers were instituted, and continue unbroken to the present day, except that 'Weddings in Queen Maries daies are not entered in the booke'. (7) They show little other sign of the upheavals taking place in the first 30 years after Henry VIII threw off allegiance to the Pope, although a comparison of the Subsidy Roll of 1524 with the Survey of 1547 suggests that these may have had considerable effect, even in this small parish.

The spelling in the Parish Registers is erratic, but they are of the greatest possible interest to local historians, and include occasional notes of special incidents, such as a local tragedy when Richard Rayner was buried in 1570, 'being slaine with a crossebowe by the keper of Langley pke buried xv of November'. This was almost certainly an accident, or a poaching affray, as there is no record of any punishment being meted out to the keeper. The mention of the crossbow is curious, as its use had been forbidden by Acts of Parliament (8) because the longbow had been found of far greater benefit to the nation.

Under the young King, Edward VI, every parish became the scene of religious experiment. In the next year, 1548, it was ordered that all images were to be removed from churches, which probably accounts for the mutilation of the alabaster figure in Upton Church. Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer was introduced in 1549; in 1550 it was ordered that altars were to be removed, and in 1552, Cranmer's second Prayer Book appeared. It provided for plainer services, and had no 'Ornaments Rubric', allowing for the confiscation by the Crown of a vast quantity of ornaments given by pious donors in previous centuries.

The Commissioners came to Upton on 14 July, 1552, and catalogued its possessions:-

'UPPON'

The inventory made the 14th day of July in the sixthe year of the reigne of the sovereign lord king Edward VI by Commissioners, on the one part ... and Richard Urlin (e.g. Erlwyne) and John Pytte on the other, all which goodes, plates, Jewelles and other ornaments be committed to the custodie of the said Richard Urlin and John Pytte Untill such time the kinge maj't. pleasure be further known:-

In primis 4 belles
 on chalice of silver with a silver paten
 one crosse of silver
 2 latin (latten) candelstycke
 the pixt of latin
 3 Sootes of vestments
 on corpus clothe
 3 Autorclothes
 2 sirplices
 on stoell
 on cabodeim (9)
 on brasse potte or Spytte

2 silver cruettes
 on broken chalice
 a payer of shoes (?) of silver
 2 latin candestycks
 which is in the custodie of Mr. John Woodward

By me Verney (10)

Just over a year later, Edward VI died, and Mary Tudor came to the throne. She took immediate steps to restore the Roman Catholic forms of service. The altars were put back – but it does not appear that the confiscated ornaments were restored to churches, which had to find new ones, but five years later, Elizabeth I began her reign, and the Protestant form of services was restored.

A Survey of the Diocese of Lincoln in 1563 showed 26 families living in Upton. (11)

A list was made of the names of persons liable for the repair of the rail in the church fence which adjoined their property:-

‘THE names of such psones who are to make the Rayles aboute the Churchyard of the pishe of Upton in the Countie of Buck renewed from the names of such psones as before time did make them whereof manie are dead into the names of suche psons as are now livinge the 14th of April 1609 current by Owen Jones Vicare there George Newington and Anthonie Baven Churchwardens John Pytte Thomas Bisshopp the elder with others as followeth:-

<i>Upton</i>	<i>Railes</i>
ffirst from ye mudde wall that ptethe ye churchyard and Upton Courte	
yearde by ye great Elme from south to northe Thomas Reade	1 & 2
Edward Woodwarde Gent	3
Richard Newington	4
Thomas Bishoppe the Elder	5 & 6
John Pytte late John Urlyns	7
Olliver Cogerlin	8
Edward Woodward Gentn.	9,10 & 11
George Bartlett	12
George Newington	13
George Bartlett	14
George Newington	15
John Pytte late John Urlyns	16
Henrye Bartlett	17
Thomas Duck Gent for ye farme in Slow	18
The same Thomas Duck for ye house in Upton Streete sometime	
Richard Reade	19
Thomas Bisshopp, the Elder	20 & 21
John fforde	22,23
Edward Woodward Gent late Richard Stiles	24 from east to west

Thomas Duck Gent late made by Jo ffeduche	25
John Pytte for his house by Chalvey Gatie	26 & 27
The Church gate pte whereof is nowe turned into a pannell of railes and the same gate and railes contayneth altogether nine feet of assize and is to be made by all the pishioners of Upton	
Robert Bell	28, 29
Henrie Bell	30, 31
Agnes ffeduche	32
Anthonie Bavin	33
Henrie Bell	34, 35
Thomas Davie	36, 37
Robert Bell the Raille and ye Stile nexte to the dyche ptinge Upton Churchyearde & Upton Courte grounds where ye water course devideth the same grounds & churchyearde aforesaid.' (12)	

As only those responsible for the 'rayles' are mentioned in the above list, a full comparison with the Subsidy Roll of 1524 and the Survey of the Manor in 1547 is not possible, but it should be noted that the families of Pitt, Woodward, Bartlett and Bishop are common to all three lists, and of these, the Pitts and Woodwards remained among the leading families of the parish until the end of the 19th century.

By the time of Charles I, Upton Church had been allowed to fall into a shocking state of decay. The Archdeacon reported after his Visitation in 1637:-

Upton, 6th August, 1637 — 4 bells. A pulpitt cloth suitable to the carpet. A new Bible. A new Service book with the ordering of priests and Deacons bound in one volume. Strange preachers. 5. Nov. A register booke not seen. A Table etc. No hood. Font to be raised a foot. A church house 28s. 8d. Some of the seats in the Church want boarding. A staple for the south door. The dore on the north to be made new and a threshold. A Barrister (sic) in every space of the railes to be put in. The Chancel seates want boarding in the bottomes. A south window next the pulpit dambd up. The bellfry staires to be mended and a dore to be stopped up that looketh into the church going up the aforesd. staires. three high seates vidzt two of them Mr. Bulstrodes seat and the other Mr. Woodwards to be cut down to the marke and allso Mr. Styles his seat on the south side. All the East benches etc. The Clarkes seat to be taken downe and a seat to be set up for him not to prejudice the passage Isle. the little window at the west end of the church to be glazed. A new foot pace about the font to kneel on. Iron bars for the little north window. The church and Chancel in decay in the foundacco. and above. The east corner of the north side of the church in great decay in the foundacon. and the corner of the Chancel. also next to it Rubbish. All the laths to be taken out of the windows and Iron bars

All the weeds to be taken away from about the Church and Chan.' (13)

It was in this same year of 1637 that John Hampden refused to pay Ship Money. Although the parishioners of Upton-cum-Chalvey did not follow his heroic example, it is clear they disliked this unpopular tax, and delayed payment for as long as they dared. They were rated at 5d. an acre if 'rich men' and 3½d. if 'poor men'. 'Jo. Ford, Richard Newton, Anthony Banne and Thomas Bell, petty constables and assessors' failed to collect the money until 1638, when a total of £31. 0. 0d. for the parish was finally paid. (14)

Four years later, the Civil War broke out, but Abraham Man, who had been inducted on 22 August, 1618, presumably had Puritanical leanings, or compromised with his conscience by appearing to conform to the new regulations. At any rate, he remained Vicar until his death in 1648, and was buried at Upton. (15) He was succeeded by Francis Foxton, of whom it is recorded 'Mr ... ffoxton possesseth the land and receiveth the profitts thereof but it does not appear that he is legally settled or placed therein by the right of any patron or institution and induction thereunto'. (16). All the same, he appears to have remained here unmolested until his death in 1654. He, too, was buried at Upton. (17)

During the Civil War there were skirmishes between Cavaliers and Roundheads at Maidenhead Bridge and Colnbrook; Parliamentary troops were billeted at Burnham, and a party of Royalists made a foray on Cippenham, but there is no record of any military conflict in the parish, in spite of the fact that the growing hamlet of Slough was on the main road. The main impact on the parishioners was the change in religious practises.

An Act of Parliament passed in 1653 enjoined the appointment of a Register, and there is a note in the Parish Registers that Peter Hampton was appointed as Register of Upton-cum-Chalvey in September 1653. The first Civil Marriage under the Act was duly registered, although grammar and spelling were somewhat erratic:- 'Thomas Sitingham in the pish of ffarnham in the county of Bucks and Anney Davey of Chalvey in the pish of Upton in the County of Bucks was published according to the Act seaverall Lords days ending the 18th March, 1654 and was married the 19th March 1654.

After the resignation of Richard Cromwell, the Act was disregarded, and entries in the register assume their original form, although the spelling and grammar continue to be somewhat erratic, recording 'Henry Lawrance and Sisely Baldwin was marryed the 13th of January 1660'.

Another sign of the times is that entries between November 1653 and January 1661 are headed 'Beareth of Children' instead of 'Baptisms'. The first entry reads:- 'William sonn of William Woodford and Elizabeth his wife was borne ye 16th day of November 1653'. The entry of baptisms is resumed on 1 November 1663.

The list of Vicars records 'John Hampton, got it in 1654, and took out the Crown's presentation, 6th October, 1661' (18) — a brief statement which hides the true facts. Cromwell, who had expelled what remained of Parliament, had assumed the title of Lord Protector, and his religious toleration did not extend to 'Papists and Prelatists'. Apparently the parishioners of Upton-cum-Chalvey shared his views — or thought it advisable to appear to do so — for although John Hampton came of a family living in the parish, a young Puritan, R. Carter, who was staying in Windsor 'for his health's sake,' was invited over, a month after the burial of Mr. Foxton. After hearing him preach, the parishioners invited him to stay, and this he did, after obtaining leave from the 'Supream Magistrate', Oliver Cromwell. He stayed six years, and at first had a very small following in the church, for his views did not prove acceptable to all. He refused the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion to all except those who would submit to 'Gospel discipline' and said he could not understand 'that the Lord Christ (our great Archbishop) had laid any injunctions upon his Ministers about the Burial of the Dead', and he therefore refused the observation of any ceremony at burials 'save only to accompany the Corps to the grave, and after a decent interment, to preach the Gospel to the Living when it was desired, or I thought my Labours would be accepted'.

Within two years, some of his parishioners asked him 'to enquire out some other place where its likely he may have more love and maintenance'. Others, however, gave him a quarterly free-will offering, which he told them 'though it did not much augment my maintenance, yet it was to me so high an expression of your love .. that I resolved thereupon to continue a longer time with you'. He remained another four years, but seven months after the Restoration, Mr. Carter was summoned before the Bench at Beaconsfield, and was confronted by four of his parishioners, who charged him with refusing to administer the Sacraments and with preaching against them. He admitted the first charge, but denied the second. He was ordered to give up 'the possession of the Vicaridge House at Upton at, or before the 25th of the said December'. This allowed him only one Sunday on which to preach his farewell sermon. On the whole, it was very moderate and restrained, giving a review of his years in the parish, and permitting himself only to say that those who 'thrust out Labourers and put in Loyterers' did the Devil good service.

He was then ordered to depart, and the church doors were shut against him by the Wardens, and he and his family left as speedily as they could, (19) leaving Mr. Hampton to be inducted at last, on 6 October, 1661. (20) He was succeeded by Luke Beaulieu, who was presented in 1670. A religious census made in 1676, (21) during his vicariate, shows there were 133 conformists, and 3 non-conformists, out of a total population of the parish estimated at about 200. Presumably the 64 unaccounted for were children. (22)

That the people of Upton-cum-Chalvey were very human in their failings is shown time and again in the records. An entry in October 1678 is typical, when Susan, wife of Daniel Kingham of Upton was charged with assaulting (name left blank) Wigginton, and Daniel entered into recognizances of £20 for Susan his wife to appear at the next Sessions. The affair could not have been very serious as at the Easter Sessions in 1679 they were both 'discharged'. More shocking was the entry for the Michaelmas Sessions in the same year, when 'Widdow Kinge' was fined for keeping 'a disorderly alehouse'.

There is ample evidence of the hardships of being poor. At the Michaelmas Sessions at Chesham in October 1678 an order was made allowing the appeal of Upton against a warrant removing Thomas Mills from Burnham; at Easter 1683, an order was made for the removal of William Chadwell with his wife and child, from Upton to Stoke Poges; at Midsummer an order was made adjourning the appeal of Stoke Poges against this; at Midsummer 1684 an order was made for their removal. These, and many similar orders were made under the rule that paupers should be returned to the parish from which they came. (23)

The first entry 'buried in wool' in the Parish Registers is in 1698, when John Baven had an affidavit to that effect, to conform with the Act of Parliament (24) requiring everyone to be 'buried in wool' to help stimulate the wool trade. Subsequent entries, all of which had to be accompanied by an affidavit, to prove that the law had been complied with, show that the Clerk was baffled by the spelling of affidavit. He has written it affidavie, afidave, afidaved, afidavit, affidavet and affdavit. The Act was not repealed until 1813.

Details of the parish in the 18th century are contained in a Terrier of the glebe lands and a Perambulation of the parish boundaries:-

A Terrier of the Glebe of Upton, as known by us now living (7 acres being registered at Bugden, but lost above 60 years and no traces of them being found), Oct. 23rd, 1724, by me, Michael White, Vicar, with notes by Rev. J. Hand, Vicar, 1785.

2. Acres. Imp. The garden and close adjoining to the Vicarage house, with the yard and ground on which the barn and house stand, computed at two acres, occupied by the Incumbent.
- 4 Acres. Item. Arbour Hill close of four acres, abutting upon Windsor road westward, and little Windmill Field eastward, occupied by John Baldwin.
- ½ A close of half-an-acre abutting upon Windsor road westward, and Robert Bingham's close, eastward, north and south, occupied by John Silver, of Slough.
- ½ Half-an-acre in Garsen's, Chalvey, abutting against Chalvey Grove, occupied by Mr. Jagger.
- ½ Half-an-acre in Chalvey Field, abutting upon Windsor road eastward, not far from the stile against Dutchman's gardens, occupied by Mr. Jagger.
- 1 Two half-acres in Upton field, abutting upon Mr. Paul Pitt's Headlands, eastward, and upon Mr. James Ladbrook's, now Mr. Hubbard's piece, westward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (There are 5 acres and a half between the London Road and these 2 half-acres. They are bounded by Mr. Randall on the north and south. They are in the road from the Pied Horse to Langley, through the corn field).
- ½ Half-an-acre in Upton Field, in Brook Shot, abutting against Strittons, eastward, and Mr. Paul Pitt's 4 acres westward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (There is a very large Alder tree in Williamson's close on the east or the north-east corner. It is bounded on the north by Mr. Bates, on the south by Mr. Hubbard.)
- ½ Half-an-acre in Upton Field at Can Lands Bridge, abutting against Stritton's close, eastward, and Mr. Paul Pitt's Headlands, westward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley, (about 3 lands and a piece from Can Lands Bridge).

- 1 Two half-acres in Upton field, abutting against Lawrence's Headlands, westward, and Brook Shot eastward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (The first half-acre is bounded by Mr. Baldwin's whole acre on the east — an open gap or deficiency in the hedge, at the east end of Mr. Baldwin's acre. The second half-acre has $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres and a yard of Mr. Baldwin's, between it and the south east corner of Mr. Randal's close near his house).
- 1 An acre in Slough field in the 2nd Shot, abutting upon Paul Pitt's half-acre, and an half-acre of Glebe northward, and against another half-acre of Glebe, and one of William Pitt's, southward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (There are two lands between the north-east corner of this acre and Mrs. Bisley's close of 5 acres).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Half-an-acre in Slough field, in Pied Horse Shot, abutting against the London road southward, and the aforesaid acre of Glebe northward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (If you place yourself at the north-end of this half-acre, and look straight along the eastern side to the south, you will see Upton Church before you in a straight line).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Half-an-acre in Slough field in the third shot, abutting upon the aforesaid acre southward, and a yard of Mr. Ladbroke's northward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (This $\frac{1}{2}$ acre in 3rd Shot is the 2nd land on the west from Mrs. Bisley's 5 acres).
- 1 An acre in Slough field, a thorough shooter, in Long Furlong, abutting upon Mr. Paul Pitt's Headland yard, northward, and upon James ladbroke's half-acre, southward, and occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (There are 5 lands and a piece between the thorough shooter and some bushes growing on the west, in the middle of the field. It is also opposite an ash, in the north corner of the hedge in Mrs. Lawrence's orchard).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Half-an-acre in Slough Shot, abutting upon Slough close, westward, and Mrs. Bisley's Headland yard eastward, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (The half-acre in Slough Shot, is the fifth land from the south end of the gate of Mr. Pitt's Slough close.).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Half-an-acre in Upton Mead, between a yard of Mrs. Ladbroke's on the west, and 2 acres of Mr. Nash's on the east, occupied by Mrs. Bisley. (The half-acre in Upton Mead is rising ground to the east end of Mr. Hubbard Stones).

	<i>Per Year</i>		
Arbour Hill close, rented by Mr. J. Baldwin, at	£4.	0.	0.
Two $\frac{1}{2}$ acres in Chalvey, rented by Mr. Jagger at		12.	0.
Seven acres rented by Mrs. Bisley at	£6.	0.	0.
The Churchyard rented by Mrs. Bisley at		10.	6.
Half-an-acre rented by Mr. Silver, at	£1.	0.	0.
	£12.	2.	6.

(The above lands with the Vicarage House are let to Mr. William Bonsey, at the yearly rent of twenty-six pounds to wit £17 a year for the glebe, and £9 for the Vicarage House, J. Hand, Vicar, 1785). (25)

The Circuit of ye. Bounds of the Parish of Upton-cum-Chalvey in ye County of Bucks taken at the Perambulation of the Parishioners June ye 2nd, 1739.

Beginning in Slough near ye Great Elme, making a cross in ye ground against ye corner house to Stoak Lane.. and going northwards taking in half ye Lane and by the Old Lee house, (which is now almost down) parting Upton and stoke poges to a cross in the ground in ye corner of ye lane, called porter's cross by estimation six furlongs. Thence eastwards into a ground of Lady Frances Stapleton's (supposed formerly to be called sennetts), and by ye hedge of ye said ground into ye Little Green Lane to a cross ye N.W. corner which is cald Fosters and Cousen's by estimation 1 furlong 30 poles. Thence eastwards along the said Green Lane to the N. end of Monday's Green to a cross in the Ground near the corner of the Field now called Cousen's by estimation 1 furlong 4 poles. Thence southward along the East side the ditch in Monday's taking in to Upton most part of the Green and parting Upton and Wexham to a cross against ye Thrift by estimation 1 furlong 1 pole. Thence keeping southward to a cross in ye corner of ye Lane formerly called pokes Lane and near to ye Lee House, by

estimation 1 furlong 4 poles. Then eastward parting Upton and Wexham along ye ditch and Ground to ye north of a little piddle of ground call'd ye hundred acres lying to ye side of ye road to Uxbridge or Langley Green to a cross in the said N.E. corner next to (blank) Danesmoor by estimation 3 furlongs 10 poles.

Thence southwards and round ye south hedge taking all ye Pidle (or 100 acres) into Upton, parting Upton and Langley to a cross in ye south-west corner near ye brook or ditch parting Upton and Langley 21 poles.

Thence still southwards down ye said brook or watercourse to ye water splash call'd Candellands where ye Uxbridge Road crosses it, and by ye said brook to Tittsworth water where ye Bristoll Road from London crosses it; and keeping ye old water course and all ye common into Upton following ye said watercourse still south eastwards to ye corner of Northmead in Datchett to what is now call'd ye Quaver or pudenpidolls to a cross in a Willow tree by estimation 1 mile, 6 furlongs, 18 poles.

Thence westward from ye corner of ye aforesd meadow and ditch parting Upton and Datchett to ye straight ditch as comes down to mark bridge near Upton Court meads.

And thence southwards, to mark bridge in ye lane from Upton to datchet to a cross in ye arch of ye bridge by estimation 1 mile.

Thence still southwards by ye ditch call'd Mill ditch takeing In to Upton all the land of Vigereus Edwards Esq. held by Mr. Thomas Taylor, and at the brick arch in ye lane from Eton to Datchett keeping ye said Mill ditch to a cross in a Willow tree in Edward Carter's mead call'd (blank) and by ye said ditch to ye River Thames. (26)

Thence westward taking in part of a Back River (calle)d a Ayot and whare close, to a cross in a Elm (ne)are ware close gate, ye W. ende ye close by estimation 4 furlongs.

And still Westward from ye River Thames by a ditch parting Eaton Colledge lands and Upton to a cross in ye middle of ye stone bridge 2 furlongs.

(Memorandum. there is now Ditches, and the Old Ditch is ye watercourse from ye water running from Stone bridge But there being another ditch and bank to ye Lane, Eton College claims ye ditch, Bank and Trees).

Then westward from the Stone Bridge along ye ditch parting Upton and Eton and into Chalvey Grove and to ye S.W. corner by Scipenham park by estimation 1 mile 2 furlongs.

Thence northward parting Burnham and Upton, by ye Ditch, Chalvey Grove and Sippenham Coppeice or park to a cross in ye grounds in the N.W. corner of Chalvey Grove three furlongs.

Thence eastwards taking in all Chalvey Grove and Common and by ye Ditch parting Upton and Farnham Royall and to a cross in ye wide corner of ye lane near ye stile in the said Lane leading from Chalvey to Cippenham Court call'd Farnham Lane by estimation 3 furlongs.

Thence northward taking in all ye house and orchards next Chalvey Common running Westward behind the house from the Mill Brook from Farnham Mill and then northward up the said brook, and to a cross (the N. end) in an Elm of podels Field and ye road from London to Bristoll near Montem gravell pits by estimation 3 furlongs.

Thence eastward parting Stoke and Upton taking half the London Road to the elm and the cross in ye ground in Slough where we began by estimation 4 furlongs 30 poles.

Computing ye Boundaries of that part of the Parish to be about nine Mile. (27)

Something of the social life of the 18th century is reflected in the Churchwardens' accounts, which cover the years 1725-1825. The Churchwardens had an income of about £10, which rose towards the end of the century to about £15, and was derived from the rent of the Church House (£2. 2s. 0d., rising to £3. 10s. 0d.); Rent of Church lands (18s.); and a Church Rate, the total of which fluctuated between £6. 10. 0d. and £10. 10s. 0d.

The chief item of expenditure was the upkeep of the Church and the Church House. The latter, which had a thatched roof, was let to a tenant throughout the 18th century, but no record remains to show where it was situated. The Church Ale was brewed there, and at Whitsuntide the whole parish used to meet to purchase and consume the brew, which provided a recognized source of income to the parochial funds. The practise continued until 1825.

Another regular item of expenditure was the cost of the journey to the Archdeacon's Visitation, which was attended by the Vicar and Churchwardens, and was held at a different place each year. It was held at Upton in 1736, but other years a horse and 'Poast Shae' was hired, and sometimes the cost of meals was defrayed. In 1773 there is an entry 'To Cyder, Brandy and Beer the last Visitation, 2s. 9d.' In 1777 'The expense at a Visittasion at Wycomb for a shease and the man and Turnpike' amounted to 18s.

Various repairs to the church were carried out. In 1727, John Tatbut was paid 9s. for 'mending the Church'. It was whitewashed in 1769 at a cost of £4. 19s. 4½d., and on 1 June, 1771, William Pitt was paid 18s. for a 'Cubard in the Chancill to hang surplis'. Six years later, Calib Chitte, a carpenter, was paid 4d. for 'repairing a hook and hinge for the Church House and 2d. for 'takin it of an putin it on gain'.

The ringers received 5s. for beer three times a year – on 20 January, the birthday of Queen Charlotte; 4 June, the birthday of George III; and on Guy Fawkes Day. In 1811 they were paid £4. 10. 0d. for ringing 18 times between September, 1808 and 18 January, 1812, so it is evident payment was much overdue.

There are also references to the choir, who were paid 10s. 6d. on 24 January, 1768 to 'pay for a pipe and to by Books', and on 13 April, 1794 were given a 'ffeast' which cost £1. 19. 4½d. – but this is the only entry of its kind in the book. Only two 'victory celebrations' are mentioned – in 1782, during the war with the American Colonies and France, when Upton bought a 'form praise of thanksgiving' for 4s. after Rodney's victory over the French; and in 1798, which presumably commemorated Nelson's victory at the Battle of the Nile.

Some typical entries in 1727 are:-

	£.	s.	d.
For cost at Wickham for swaring		2.	8.
For the Winde (Communion Wine) for two years	18.	6.	
To the Visitation at Beckensfield		5.	0.
A Book of Thanksgiving		2.	0.
The Arch Deckon for Rining (Ringing) and expences		9.	0.
For Haning of the Bells	6.	0.	0.

The amounts paid out to 'pore peopol' in relief varied considerably. In 1723 4 men received 1s. between them, but a 'pore dom' man received 6d. In 1727 3 men received 6d. between them, but later in the year 7 men had to share the same amount. In 1746 '6 salers' had 1s., but later 4 sailors received 1s. between them.

The most numerous items in the accounts reflect the unrelenting destruction of sparrows, 'Hegg Hoggs' and polecats, payment being made at the rate of 3d. a dozen for sparrows and 4d. each for hedgehogs and polecats. The polecats seem to have had their chief haunt at the point where Upton Road formerly joined the London Road, which was then known as 'Polecat Corner'. (See p. 26, Note 28; p. 27 Note 29.)

Even at 3d. a dozen, payment for the destruction of sparrows often amounted to more being paid in a year for their death than to relieve paupers; in 1825 no less than 67 dozen were destroyed at a cost of 16s. 9d.

The Parish Registers also have some interesting entries relating to the 18th century. A note on the cover records that 'On 26th November, 1703, the great wind was'. This storm is reputed to have been the most terrible ever known in England. The loss in London alone was estimated at two millions sterling, and that it was equally violent in other parts of the country is proved by the fact that about 8,000 people were drowned in the floods of the Severn and Thames, and in ships blown from their anchorage and never heard of again. The Bishop of Bath and Wells and his wife

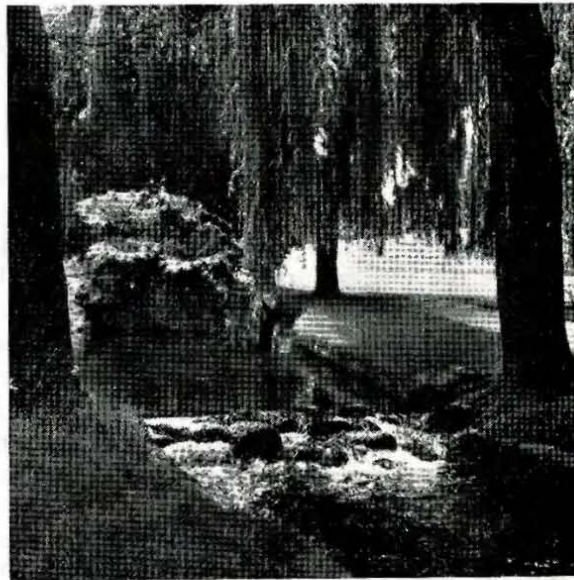
were killed in their bed by falling chimneys, and the Eddystone lighthouse was destroyed, with all the people in it, including the inventor, but it does not appear that Upton suffered unduly.

The number of burials entered in 1710 was three times greater than the average for any previous year, and the subsequent years also show a high average, which suggests that a number of people from other parts of the country had settled here owing to the increasing prosperity brought by the coaching traffic. Twins are mentioned for the first time in 1717, and were christened Esau and Jacob Hibbett. Thomas Appleby and his wife, Mary, were the parents of twins in 1720 and 1723, but all four children died in infancy. In 1729 'Mrs. Mary Stiles of Ditton was buried in Linnen and paid ye penalty' — the only case on record of any person buried at Upton incurring the then heavy penalty of £5 for not being buried in wool.

In 1733, six years after George II came to the throne, there were apparently ardent Jacobites in the parish, for a child was christened 'James Stuart', although the best-known Jacobite sympathiser in the district was Sarah Bramstone of Eton, who was buried in Upton churchyard in 1765, five years after the death of George II. Her epitaph 'a person who dared to be just in the reign of George II' can be seen still on a flat slab near the north door of Upton Church. It is notable that the then Vicar, John Hand, who allowed the epitaph to be placed in his churchyard, was so far from being a Jacobite himself that he was a Royal Chaplain to George III.

In 1785 John, son of John and Sarah McCowen of the 38th Regiment of Foot was christened, and a note is added that the father had no money to pay either the minister or the stamps — which means he must have been very hard up indeed, as the stamp fee was only 3d.

The Easter Offering to the Vicar at this period was 4d. for 'every adult in the Parish or adult sojourner', and the Register also gives a copy of an option taken in 1743, with reference to 'Real Composition' for the Vicarial tithes, and 'Marks by which ye particular glebe lands may be more easily found out'.



8. *The Chalvey Brook*

THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Great changes took place in the parish in the nineteenth century, the first of which was the enclosing of the remaining open fields. The Registers record the enclosing of the church lands:

	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 26th, 1810. 'Paid the rate for enclosing Church land	3.	10.	4½
March 31st, 1810. Paid Williams for banking and quicking Church land	3.	14.	3.
Nov. 15th, 1811. Paid Mr. Pitt as per Bill for fence to Church land	14.	14.	4.

The Churchwardens' Accounts show that the scandal of thefts from churches is not without precedent. On 9 November, 1807, 4s. was paid to 'Temple 2 days the time the church was Broke into'.

Upton in the 1830s

Miss Mason included a description of Upton in her *Walk Round Slough* (See p. 48).

UPTON LANE (28)

West Side, North End

As entered from the Main or Bath Road, (29) was a narrow shady lane, with trees and hedges on either side; the west side was afterwards widened by the late Mr. Nixey; a ditch went down this side, which, about midway, became a running stream. The first thing on this side was the malt-house, then three cottages in gardens next Upton House, which was a ladies' school kept by Mrs. Penley. She removed to Clarence Crescent, Windsor, taking her school with her, but a few years afterwards it became a school again. The house was enlarged while she was there, and also since. On its site stood the Earl of Leicester's house, pulled down when Upton House (30) was built, which must be many years ago; next two cottages, and then the pond opposite the church. After that the very old Upton Farm House (31) and premises. A cottage has been built on part of the site of the house; then the house now called Upton Dairy (32): it was once the Red Cow, but removed to the opposite house. A little beyond where Alpha Street now is was the stile from the church path, all fields then to the end of the lane belonging to Upton Farm. No union; the old workhouse was at Chalvey.

NORTH END OF UPTON LANE

East Side

The three cottages in gardens, then two cottages; the old Vicarage was situated where the late Mr. Nixey's stables now are; near where Springfield (33) now stands was a beautiful spring, and where the kitchen-garden is was a dirty holding with some poor old cottages facing south, piggeries, etc.; then an enclosed garden and small house occupied by Mr. Osborne, who for many years was the parish clerk; next two cottages, all of which were purchased by the late Mr. Nixey, pulled down, and the land thrown into his grounds. Next came the pound, then a roadway leading to Upton Court Farm, Merton Lodge, (34) and an entrance to Upton Court. A tall elm-tree stood unenclosed where the wellingtonia now is, then the church; the house and premises where Mr. Fisher's school is was occupied by Mr. Howse, who supplied Windsor Castle with firewood; then the Red Cow, previously cottages, and originally a farm-house, in which Amy Robsart resided. At that time Upton, or part of it, must have been in the Forest, and the houses secluded, or she dared not have been so near; then some old cottages, ends to the road, at where Gordon Place (35) now begins; some more old cottages standing back, pulled down, and cottages built forward close to the road; then fields to the end of lane. No Upton Park.

The statements that the Earl of Leicester's house was in Upton Road, and that Amy Robsart lived in the house which is now the Red Cow, rest solely on unsupported evidence. Miss Mason says in her foreword: 'No one in Slough that I have spoken to upon the subject knows anything of it. I have written to ask the friend who told me if it be a historical fact or tradition, and she tells me she cannot at present remember the old book in which she read about it; but when she was staying in Slough she went to the old library at Langley, and in a book there she read that in Queen Elizabeth's time the Forest extended to Langley.'

It is possible the Earl of Leicester owned the house, although no record of this has yet been found, but that he ever lived there is almost certainly untrue. The idea that Amy Robsart lived at Upton is even more wildly improbable. Upton was not then and as far as I can trace, had never been 'in Windsor Forest'.

Work is being done on the dates and history of old houses in Upton, and it is to be hoped these researches will settle the matter.

By 1835 Upton had become so unimportant that for many years it was served only in connection with Fulmer, (36) and services were held only once a week, in the morning or afternoon on alternate Sundays. The church had become ruinous, and the battlements of the tower began to fall after being struck by lightning. The church became so neglected that the door on the south side was left open, and cattle strayed into the church. It is possible this neglect was deliberate, with a view to abandoning the old church and building a new one nearer the centre of the expanding village of Slough.

It was decided to pull down the old church and sell the stone for lime, and utilize the fittings in the new church, but fortunately John Pocock, (37) owner of the farms of Upton and Willowbrook, (38) offered to pay £50 on condition the old church was left standing. All the bells, and the wooden fittings were removed, and the old church considered so completely derelict that the new church, when consecrated in 1837, was dedicated to the same patron Saint, St. Laurence (39).

THE RESTORATION OF UPTON CHURCH

Ten years later, Edward Jesse, then living in the newly-built Upton Park, wrote a description of the church's condition in *Favourite Haunts and Rural Studies*, (40) in which he says of the interior ' . . . and what a sight presents itself ! The piles of rubbish — the fallen plaster, the stones half removed from resting places, all show the ruin of the place. The windows are broken, the old stained glass from one of them has been stolen, one ancient brass still remains on the venerable tomb to which it was affixed, showing the antiquity of the family of which it is a record, whilst others have been removed, as may be seen by the outlines of their hollowed recesses on the damp and decaying stones'. He further mentions that the only moveable relic remaining was a small and crumbling reading desk on which was a mouldy, worm-eaten prayer-book open at the service for the burial of the dead, which he was told was still used when a funeral took place of anyone who had expressed a wish to be buried with his ancestors in the neglected churchyard.

Mr. Jesse concludes with a plea that any readers will assist in preserving the church from further decay, and restoring it to a place of worship, urging its special claims to interest as a place of antiquity; as the burial place of Sir William Herschel, and as the place which most probably inspired Gray to write his *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*.

Although it is now generally accepted that Stoke Poges church is the one which Gray had in mind in writing of the 'Ivy-mantled tow'r', it is a curious and interesting fact that people who lived nearer his time usually associated Upton church with the *Elegy*. Mr. and Mrs. Carter Hall, in their *Book of the Thames*, (41) say the ivy-mantled tower of Upton is believed by many to have been the one the poet Gray had in mind when writing, and Mrs. S.C. Hall in her *Pilgrimages to English Shrines* (42) says 'Upton tower certainly accords better than that at Stoke Poges with Gray's description.'

In support of the belief that Upton Church was referred to by Gray, it may be pointed out that the tower was undoubtedly mantled with ivy during the poet's life-time, and the tower at Stoke Poges had a spire erected in 1703; the yew-tree at Upton is as old — if not older — than the one at Stoke Poges; and the view of Windsor and Eton was more easily discernible in Gray's time from Upton than from Stoke Poges. The pamphlet *Thomas Gray, Stoke Poges and 'Elegy written in a Country Churchyard' an Enquiry*, by Stephen Springall (published 1923) which purports to prove that the *Elegy* was written in Stoke Poges churchyard, really begs the question. It dismisses Upton without explanation, and rhapsodises over Stoke Poges and its neighbourhood, without attempting to adduce any really convincing evidence (43).

In view of the fact that Gray himself said it took him seven years to write the *Elegy*, and that his letters show he was fond of walking all over the surrounding countryside, and most certainly knew Slough, at least, it seems most probable that both Stoke Poges and Upton contributed towards his inspiration — although it is unlikely anyone at Stoke Poges will admit even this modest claim.

The fresh interest aroused in Upton Church by Mr. Jesse's appeal resulted in a movement being set on foot in 1850-51 under the influence of the Rev. T.H. Tooke, then Curate in Charge of the Parish (44). An appeal was circulated throughout the country for subscriptions on the grounds mentioned by Mr. Jesse in his book. The arguments given in favour of identifying the church with

Gray's Elegy were: 1. That Gray lived only two miles away, at Stoke Poges, and when he wrote, the country was open, and the old church at Upton would be seen by him in his daily walks. 2. That the great size of the ivy, which mantled the tower at Upton, was always a conspicuous feature, being alluded to in early histories of the county, whilst that at Stoke Poges was not 100 years old; and 3. That 'those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade' still existed at Upton, the single yew tree being as old as the church. The tall elms grew there in Gray's time, but had to be cut down in the early 19th century, as they were beginning to fall.

The appeal for funds was successful. Queen Victoria gave £50 towards it, and among those who headed the list were H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent, £10; H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloucester, £5; the Duke of Buccleuch, £20; the Earl of Harewood, £50; Lord Godolphin, £25; Miss Okes, £100; Sir John Herschel, £10 and H.F. Nash, £105 for the organ. The church was accordingly restored and enlarged at a total cost of £2,152, and was re-consecrated on 2 December, 1851, by the Right Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, (45) Lord Bishop of Oxford. (46)

NOTES

1. Burne, p. 51.
2. A mortuary in ecclesiastical law was a fee customarily paid out of the estate of a deceased person to the incumbent of the parish in which he had resided. A statute of 21 Henry c. 6 fixed the amount of mortuaries, the maximum sum payable being 10s. on estates exceeding £40 in value.
3. Burne, p. 39.
4. Phipps, p. 44.
5. V.C.H., Vol. I, p. 305.
6. The Upton-cum-Chalvey Parish Registers, with the exception of those in current use, were removed to the County Record Office, Aylesbury, which the Bishop of Oxford appointed the Diocesan Record Office, on 1 January, 1972.
A transcript of some of the more interesting items was made by E. Lionel Reynolds, R.B., Vol. 9, pp. 179-193.
Baptisms up to 1917; Marriages to 1916; Burials to 1925.
7. Note after entries in 1552.
8. 19 Henry VII, c. 4; and 6 Henry VIII c. 13.
9. Probably 'ciborium', a kind of chalice with a lid, for holding the Reserved Sacrament.
10. Exch. Q.R., Inventories of Church Goods, 6 Ed. VI. No. 1-36. P.R.O.
11. R.B., Vol. XVI, Part 4, 1959, p. 27.
12. Parish Registers.
13. P.R.O. S.P. Dom. Chas I., Vol. 366, No. 79.
14. S.M.P., pp. 71, 78, 95, 102.
15. Phipps, List of Vicars, p. 60.
16. P.R.O. Survey of Church Livings, 1649, Vol. I, p.18.
17. Phipps, List of Vicars, p. 61.
18. *ibid.*
19. For further details of Mr. Carter and his ministry, see Phipps, pp. 62-64, and Burne, pp. 67-70.
20. Phipps, List of Vicars, p. 61.
21. Ordered by Henry Compton (1632-1713), Bishop of London 1675-1713.
22. Parish Registers.
23. Sessions, under appropriate dates.
24. 18 and 19 Charles II c.4., Charles II, c.3., 32 Charles II, c.1.
25. Phipps, pp. 48-51.
26. It should be noted that the boundary still followed the ancient custom of a 'river-frontage' on the Thames, which persisted until the 19th century.
27. Burne, Appendix IX, p. 97-98. Mr. Burne notes that another MS. gives the boundaries of detached portions of the parish, viz., Upton Wood and Bulstrode Park. Both MSS. were in the Parish Chest when seen by Mr. Burne.
28. The 'Upton Lane' Miss Mason refers to later became Upton Road, but in 1972, the widening of Uxbridge Road, and of the north end of Upton Road, with the building of a new road south, to by-pass the bend in Upton Road, has altered the character of Upton Road considerably. The north end of the former Upton Road, and its continuation to the roundabout has been named Yew Tree Road. The four houses facing the church, between

- the south end of the present Upton Road and the roundabout are now 'Church View, Upton Court Road, and Upton Road itself now has a 'dead-end' by Harewood Place.
29. 'Polecat Corner' was at the north-west corner of Upton Road, now occupied by 2A, Yew Tree Road.
 30. This site is now occupied by Dudley Court, 70, Upton Road.
 31. This should not be confused with Upton Court Farm. Upton farmhouse was demolished in the 19th century.
 32. Now 53, Albert Street.
 33. Now Upton Towers. The stables have been demolished.
 34. Now 'Parkside', 1, Upton Court Road.
 35. Mr. Norman Berry informs me he cannot trace where Gordon Place was.
 36. The Rev. Thomas Weldon Champnes, Vicar of Upton-cum-Chalvey from 1806 to 1841, resided at Fulmer, where he was the Rector. (Phipps, List of Vicars, p. 61).
 37. V.C.H., Vol. III, p. 316, says 'Mr. Peach, a farmer', but this is incorrect.
 38. Mr. John Pocock is more usually described as the owner of Upton Farm and Dutchman's Farm.
 39. Phipps, p. 17.
 40. 'A Morning's Drive from Upton Park: Upton Church', pp. 42-48.
 41. Published 1859. See p. 93, and footnote, p. 94.
 42. Published 1850. This reference is similar to that in the footnote to The Book of the Thames. It is illustrated by an engraving of the tower of Upton Church.
 43. In December 1931, Punch published a satirical poem ridiculing the claim that Upton was the tower referred to by Gray. It was reprinted in the Slough Observer on 11 December, 1931.
 44. Phipps, p. 18.
 45. 1805-1873. Bishop of Oxford 1845-69.
 46. Phipps, p. 18.