

THE VILLAGE

Newtown Linford seems to have had its beginnings as a woodland clearing towards the end of the thirteenth century. It was colonised from Groby, which was itself a daughter village of Ratby. Until recently there was just one long street along the valley of the River Lyn, with a straggle of cottages along each side. The hillsides show evidence of ridge and furrow where the medieval pioneers farmed their strips of land. Waste land was being brought into cultivation as population expanded, but all this came to an end when the catastrophic Black Death reached Leicestershire in 1349. So only sixty years or so after settlement the situation

changed completely. Where there had been a shortage of land, now there was a shortage of labour. Further colonisation into Charnwood Forest was not needed.

The village, together with neighbouring Bradgate Park, belonged to the Manor of Groby which passed into the Grey family as a result of the marriage of the heiress Elizabeth Ferrers to Edward Grey. Edward assumed the titles Lord Ferrers and Baron Grey of Groby on the death of his wife's grandfather in 1445.

For nearly 500 years, until the Bradgate estate was broken up and sold in the 1920s, the Greys of Groby held sway over large swathes of countryside, including



Newtown Linford. Many of the houses we see today have over several centuries fluctuated between disrepair and renovation, according to the varying fortunes of the estate. Some cottages now in single occupancy have housed two or three (often large) families in their time.

That so many old houses have survived long enough to be ripe for post-Second-World-War gentrification is due to neglect. The Greys were not given to spending money pulling down their tenants' hovels and building new model villages, as occurred in some places. In living memory houses had rooms which were unusable due to damp, vermin, crumbling walls or poor thatch.

William Cobbett did not come to Newtown on his Rural Rides, but his description of Knighton (now part of Leicester) in 1830 shows the state of rural housing at that time. "Look at these hovels, made of mud and of straw; bits of glass, or of old off-cast windows, without frames or hinges frequently, but merely stuck in the mud wall. Enter then, and look at the bits of chairs or stools; the wretched boards tacked together to serve for a table; the floor of pebble, broken brick, or of the bare ground; look at the thing called a bed; and survey the rags on the backs of the wretched inhabitants." Newtown did score over Knighton however in the availability of timber and building-stone.

Some of Newtown's cottages are timber-framed; the rest are made of Charnwood hardstone. Timber-framed houses may have either thatched or slated roofs, and likewise with stone houses. Wood, hardstone, slate and straw were all available nearby, so these are the materials which provide the character and texture of the buildings.

TIMBER FRAMED COTTAGES

Wood was the normal house-building material in England until around 1600. Oak, earlier used mainly for churches and the houses of the rich, came into more common use from the latter part of the 16th century,

and would be fairly easy to come by in Charnwood Forest. It was felled with an axe and used immediately, being left to season in position – giving the warps and twists which are characteristic of old buildings. Sometimes, on rafters, the bark has been left on. Large trees were split into baulks by an axe and iron wedges, and cut into lengths by a two handled cross-cut saw, managed by two men. Any shaping was done by an axe and finally by an adze. Adze marks can be seen on many beams in Newtown Linford. To make the smaller timbers, the wood had to be cut along its length with a pit saw by two men – one in the pit and one on top. Joints were mortice and tenon. The tenons were cut with a hand saw and the mortices formed either with a mallet and chisel or by burning a series of holes with an auger and chopping away at the remaining wood with a twibill.

The framing took place in the carpenter's yard, then the timbers were dismantled and re-erected on site, often by the householder and his neighbours. Until the eighteenth century iron nails were rarely used; instead oak pegs were driven into holes and left slightly projecting. Square pegs in round holes were very secure. If buildings were demolished, sound timbers were re-used, and can sometimes be recognised by pieces which have been cut out to accommodate something in their previous position.

There are two main types of timber-construction, CRUCKS and BOX FRAME, and both types are to be found in Newtown.

CRUCK CONSTRUCTION was used from medieval times until the late seventeenth century. The main timbers, known as blades, were made from two trees with a similar natural curve or from one tree trunk split into two halves to make a symmetrical arch. Outer blades, visible at gable ends, are sometimes unmatching because of the difficulty of finding identical trees.

The space between two pairs of blades is called a bay, and is usually around 16 feet long. A house could have any number of bays, though two bays (three pairs of forks) was the most common. The width of the house was determined by the height of the trees which were



Remnants of cruck frames revealed during the re-building of the Dairy Farm, 28 Main Street, in 1975.

felled for the crucks. The earliest such cottages had crucks resting directly on the earth and no side walls, just a sloping roof like a tent, and only one storey. None such survive in Newtown, but because such houses could only have a door in the gable end, it was customary for the gable end to front the street, which would also allow for the addition of further bays behind if needed. A good example of a gable end with cruck facing the street can be seen in Old Post Office Row.

A later development was to rest the feet of the crucks on a stone foundation, as at Vine Cottage, which gave greater protection from rising damp. Later a

continuous timber sill-plate was provided along the length of the stone plinth, as in Old Post Office Row. When the crucks were on a stone foundation, a tie-beam was placed at a height of between six and nine feet from the ground, and secured to each blade with oak pegs, to create a stable triangle and prevent the feet of the crucks from moving out. The insertion of a tie-beam enabled an upper room to be provided, reached by ladder, and useful for storage or sleeping, but with little headroom. To overcome this problem, the tie beams were increased in length until they were directly above the foot of the blades. This made it possible to insert 'walls' which, not being load bearing, could be of any material, and could be changed – for instance from half-timber to brick – at some future date. As a result, it is easy for the crucks

to lie unsuspected inside the fabric of a house. Crucks were discovered, for instance, during the 1975 reconstruction of the Dairy Farm, 28 Main Street.

POST AND TRUSS, or Post and Panel, houses follow some of the same principles as crucks, in that the weight of the roof is transferred to the ground via transverse frames spaced at intervals.

The wall between the vertical posts has no structural importance and is usually of light construction.

BOX FRAME houses may look similar to cruck built cottages, but the principle is completely different, in that the roof loads are transmitted to the ground by means of framed external side walls. The roof is a

separate item and there are no divisions into bays. The vertical studs will usually extend along the full height of each storey, forming tall narrow panels, unlike Post and Truss, which makes greater use of horizontal members, forming square-shaped panels.

To make identification even more difficult, from the seventeenth century, shortage of timber caused the studs in box framed houses to be moved further apart, so that they look more like Post and Truss, and it is necessary to look at the gable ends of the building. In post and truss the purlins protrude beyond the face of the gable and are usually linked by a horizontal tie beam. Both Post and Truss and Box Frame stand on a plinth which, in Newtown, is of stone laid in a shallow trench directly on the subsoil. There are no foundations or damp-proof course. Above the plinth there is a sill beam into which the vertical studs and timbers are set. Vertical timber is sometimes used upside down (ie the top of the tree at the bottom), which was thought to help the sap dry out.

Unlike cruck cottages, post and truss and box frame houses usually seem to have been erected standing rather than framed and then reared, except, perhaps for the gable ends.

WATTLE AND DAUB

In the spaces between the studs stout vertical twigs, probably of hazel or ash, were laced horizontally with green withies to form a key for the daub. This was wet clay or mud mixed with chopped straw or cowhair, and sometimes dung and lime. The daub was thrown at both sides of the wattle at the same time, to fill the spaces and keep out the draughts. The first layer was then left to dry before further layers were added, ending with a coat of plaster made from lime, sand and



Workhouse Row (now demolished) shows well the box frame timbers in this picture.

horsehair. Finally a limewash or an earth ocre wash was applied. Everything used was local. Such walls are only a few inches thick, but if kept in proper repair are perfectly weatherproof.

When bricks became available – in Newtown’s case that probably meant when Bradgate House became ruinous in the eighteenth century and its bricks could be obtained either honestly or otherwise – they were often used to replace wattle and daub, although the bricks were more porous and encouraged dampness.

Exposed timbers, left untreated, weathered to a silvery colour. The characteristic ‘black and white timbered’ cottages only took on their present colouring in the nineteenth century when tar and pitch,

manufactured from coal, became available as a preservative.

STONE

Stone houses tended to be of higher status than timber, and were not common in vernacular building until the seventeenth century, when the rising cost of wood made stone competitive if it was available locally.

The stone houses of Newtown are made of hard stone, which is unusual in the midlands. Leicestershire is the only area between Devon and Cumbria where granite and slate have been quarried. Again, there are virtually no foundations, but the most massive stones are used at the base of the wall and the next largest as quoins and corner stones. The random rubble walls have no courses. They are raised up as two leaves of masonry, with flat sides both front and back. As the stones are not uniform in size great care is required to ensure that their weight is spread over the maximum area, and that no long vertical joints occur. The walls

have to be bonded across their width. In Newtown ‘throughs’, which cover the entire thickness of the wall, can be used because the local stone is impermeable enough to prevent moisture being conducted through the wall.

The walls of the stone houses are very thick, and do not need rendering or limewash to make them watertight. Where stone cottages have been painted, this has been for purely aesthetic reasons. Some present owners wish their predecessors had never started a practice they are now bound to continue.

Random rubble is the cheapest and roughest kind of rubble. The waller selects the stones from his heap and knocks off any inconvenient projections. Larger stones are laid flat and wedged into place with small pieces, which also fill the spaces. The corner stones are



roughly squared and bonded into the structure.

Stones were picked up from the fields as well as quarried. The very hard Mountsorrel granite was not much used for building until after 1812, when ways of working it were discovered. Local granite and the closely related syevite and porphyry are collectively known as ‘forest stone’.

It is extremely hard to date the stone houses as ornament is almost entirely absent. Bricks were often used around doors and windows and sometimes under the eaves. Bricks were always used for chimney stacks.

ROOFS:—

THATCH: This is the oldest method of covering a roof. It requires a steep pitch, but has the advantage that the bundles of straw or reeds used can be swept

round any angles. Modern thatch is sometimes made with Norfolk reed, but in the past local straw was used. Thatch made of long wheat straw needed renewing every fifteen years or so, while reed will last for sixty years. In the past labour costs were low; now they are substantial, so reed might be a better investment. On the other hand, to change from straw to reed means completely stripping down the roof, when it might be sufficient to replace only the top layer of straw. Owners have been heard to comment, "One more layer of straw will probably see me out!"

SLATE: Local slate is often referred to generically as Swithland slate, but there were other local quarries, such as at Groby and Woodhouse. Groby slate has a greenish tinge, and that from Woodhouse tends towards a reddish purple colour. Slates from the Swithland quarries are a neutral grey. Swithland slate was used by the Romans, but the main quarrying activity in the area took place between the mid thirteenth century and 1887, when the last slate pit closed. As a roofing material it was at first only used for larger farmhouses, but by the late eighteenth century it was being used for labourers' cottages. Because thatch was vulnerable to fire, a number of roofs which used to be thatched were replaced by slates. At 89 and 91 Main Street, (Lenthill and Hawthorn Cottages) it is



Above: Swithland Slate roofs at Beech Farm.

Left: Thatcher at work on the rebuilt Dairy Farm, 28 Main Street, in 1975.



known that the thatch was destroyed in a fire, and these houses are now slated. Other houses may have changed to slate either to avoid the very real risk of fire, or because of a preference for a more permanent roof.

The course grain of local slate means that it can only be split quite thickly. To help with load distribution, and to use up the different sized slates, they are laid with the larger pieces at the eaves graded to the smallest ones along the ridge. The slater begins at the bottom of the roof with the largest slates, and traditionally each slate had a hardwood peg which hooked behind the lath. Nowadays galvanised nails are used. Each tier of slates overlaps the row below by over

half its length, to ensure the rain cannot seep through.

CHIMNEYS

Early cruck houses had an open hearth in the centre of one of the rooms. With a thatched roof, this was extremely hazardous, and as brick became available most houses began to have brick chimneys inserted. There were earlier chimneys made of timber infilled with wattle and daub. Most of these eventually burnt down and were replaced by brick, but a timber chimney was discovered during the reconstruction of the Dairy Farm, 28 Main Street, in 1975. It is a sad fact that often it is only when a building is demolished or drastically altered that its history is revealed.

FIREPLACES

Early fireplaces were intended for logs and brushwood, so flues were very large. Chimney sweeps discover unsuspected corners and cavities when sweeping above quite ordinary modern grates. Often there is a stout oak lintel, maybe cambered, spanning the width of the fireplace, for it has to support the weight of the stack above. Sometimes there is space for an inglenook on one or both sides, with room for chairs beside the fire. The large fireplaces were often bricked up in Victorian times and replaced by a smaller one or by a cast-iron range. Nowadays nearly all the houses have central heating. Because of insurance implications, most owners of thatched cottages now eschew open fires altogether.

Some houses, such as Beech Farm, have domed bread ovens at the side of the fireplace. These became popular in the seventeenth century, and the principle is that the brick lining of the oven is heated to a point where the ashes of the fire can be raked out, and dough, or whatever is to be cooked, is baked in the residual heat.

There was a hearth tax (one of the most unpopular taxes ever devised) for 25 years from 1662, at the rate of 2 shillings per year for every hearth, fire or stove. In Newtown 23 houses had one hearth, 12 had two

hearths, 2 had three hearths, 4 householders (two of them widows) had four hearths, and one householder, 'John Freake, gent', had five hearths.

FLOORS

Until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most humble dwellings had plain earth underfoot. Then stone flags or bricks began to be used. Many local houses have tiles or flagstones in some of their rooms. By the nineteenth century it became fashionable to replace solid floors with wooden boards. This meant gouging out enough earth to lay joists to carry the floorboards.

Upstairs many local cottages have what are often, and confusingly, known as concrete floors. These are made from a lime plaster. There are the usual beams and joists to create the downstairs ceiling, across which may be laid a layer of reed or straw, secured by battens, and then a two to three inch layer of plaster. This has to dry slowly to prevent cracking. The underside of the ceiling is either left with the cross beams exposed or, from the 18th century even in cottages, sometimes it was underdrawn with plaster leaving only the main beam exposed.

STAIRS

At first there would have been just a ladder or a straight flight of steep stairs leading through a framed opening in the ceiling – with or without a trapdoor. Sometimes the position of this opening can be traced by the variation in ceiling timbers.

When fireplaces became common, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, it became a common practice to place the stairs against the chimney stack, often in a spiral turning 180 degrees round a newel post. Early steps were made of solid blocks of wood.

DOORS

Old doors in Newtown tend to be made of butt-jointed vertical boards, not necessarily all the same width, secured at the back to four (sometimes three)



Left: A door to Old Post Office Row, aound 1931, made of butt-jointed vertical boards. Note also the unplastered wattle and daub infill between the half timbers. Lizzie Johnson is sitting on the step, with the young Gwen Jackson (now Wakefield). Right: This typical Newtown window is at Jasmine Cottage, 15 Main Street.

horizontal braces. Front doors are often more modern.

Inside, doorways were probably just hung with course fabric until about the sixteenth century, but were then replaced with battened doors. At first there were no frames, the door being hung directly onto the timber or stone of the doorway.

WINDOWS

The word means wind-holes, and glass was a luxury for a labourer's family until the seventeenth century. Instead, oiled paper, thin layers of cattle horn, or oiled cloth (preferably linen) was used to keep out some of the wind and let in some light. Internal shutters

can be found in several Newtown houses, sometimes folded into the thickness of the stone wall, and obviously continued to be fitted well after the arrival of glazed windows.

A number of houses in the village have bars at some of their windows, even, on occasion, upstairs. Often, it seems, these houses were used as shops, or slaughter houses, at some time. In 1696, not long after the repeal of the hated hearth tax, the government came up with the idea of a window tax, and this was levied from time to time until 1851.

There is a type of window which is almost ubiquitous in Newtown, and that is an outward opening casement, of two or three lights, usually of six panes. The lintil is often bowed, under a self-supporting brick



arch.

There are still a few side-ways sliding 'Yorkshire sash' windows to be seen, for instance at the Post Office and at Beech Farm. These were quite common until the mid-20th century. They would have been easily made by a local carpenter, having no metal parts, and were secured by a wooden peg through the frame.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY VILLAGE

In 1700 Newtown was a straggling street of cottages whose occupants relied largely for employment on their proximity to the mansion in Bradgate Park. Thomas Grey, 2nd Earl of Stamford, had inherited the estate from his grandfather in 1673, and proved himself as hare-brained as his recent ancestors. After becoming entangled with the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, he was arrested at Bradgate and sent to the Tower of London for a time, on a charge of treason. By the early 18th century he had learnt enough discretion to spend most of his time in the country. When he visited Newtown Church he had a comfortable corner position, complete with fireplace, where he could keep his eye on both the parson and the villagers.

He was described as a suspicious man, something above middle stature, who 'doth not want sense; but, by reason of a defect in his speech, wants elocution'. His first marriage ended in divorce, and although both his wives bore children, none of them survived him.

It would be interesting to know the story behind the entry in the church records for October 13 1700, which states "Thomas, a man negro, of Broadgate, bapt." This event took place in All Saints, but on occasion the chapel in the big house was used, as, for instance, on November 14th 1706, when William Gee of Lutterworth married Anne Shaw of Newtown Linford at Broadgate. The Shaws were a prolific local family; we can only conjecture that William – and maybe Anne – held some position at the mansion.

At the other end of the social scale, the early years of the 18th century saw the Overseers of the Poor paying out small regular amounts to a number of widows and men too ill to work. Sometimes help was given in kind: coal, wool, ale, rent, and sometimes leaches, nursing, doctors' bills and coffins. In 1720 Beththya (sic) Bunney was given 'flaxon for a shift, cloth for a goane and pette coat'. Martha Shaw was employed to look after the sick and lay out the dead. It appears that bread was distributed to the poor at Christmas, and on December

25 1708 this cost 4/6d (22p).

Parish officials such as Overseers and Constables had onerous jobs, but there were compensations. In 1709 Overseers Henry Hind and John Tacey charged 2/1d (10p) for 'vitals and drink when we went with guddy pallit to the justis'. Unfortunately, as is usual with historical research, it is easier to find out the cost of the drink than the reason Mrs Pallit was taken to the JP.

In 1715 churchwardens Sam Abell and John Kempe spent 3/- (15p) on ale 'when we went for a perambleation (sic)'. They spent another 3/- for their dinners and ale at the Court of the Peculiar, paid for by the parish.

An event took place in 1720 which must have sent shivers of apprehension around the village. The 2nd earl died. As there was no direct succession, the Bradgate estate passed to a cousin, Henry Grey, who lived at Enville Hall, near Stourbridge in Staffordshire. Henry never came to live at Bradgate; it is not known whether he ever visited the place. Bradgate Park was maintained as a sporting estate, and there was probably a caretaker in the house, but without a family in residence employment prospects diminished.

A further blow hit lease-holding tenants in 1735. The 3rd earl's heir, Harry, was engaged to his cousin Mary Booth of Dunham Massey in Cheshire. Presumably as part of an assessment of his son's financial prospects to pass on to Mary's father, the Earl of Warrington, Lord Stamford ordered an account to be made of estate rentals, leading to massive upgrades in some cases. As is common for farms today, leases were often given for three generations, and the increases were heavily weighted on tenants with two or three generations to run. So of the three Sam Abells on the rental, one had no increase in his £4 rent; his father's 11/3 (56p) leapt to £8.10.0 (there being 2 lives in the lease), and the other Sam Abell, with one life to run, had his £1.1.2d increased to £10. William Johnson, whose

lease still had three lives, had his rent increased from 15/3d (76p) to £15. The total rental from the 37 Newtown leases rose from £139.16.3d to £498.3.6d.

There was a silver lining to this rent increase shock, though. Harry Grey brought his bride to live at Bradgate. It must have lifted the spirits of the villagers to see the house being opened up, staff taken on, bustle and excitement on their doorstep again – especially when a son and heir was born in 1737. The baby was named George Harry, and baptised in All Saints Church. He was destined to be the 5th Earl of Stamford. In 1739 a daughter, named Mary after her mother, was also baptised in the church. In that year, though, the 3rd earl died and Harry and Mary Grey moved their young family to Enville. The following year the house in the park was boarded up, and by the end of the century it was in ruins.

In the days of the Old Poor Law, before the Act of 1834 brought about such dreaded institutions as Union Workhouses (at Mountsorrel for Newtown folk), each

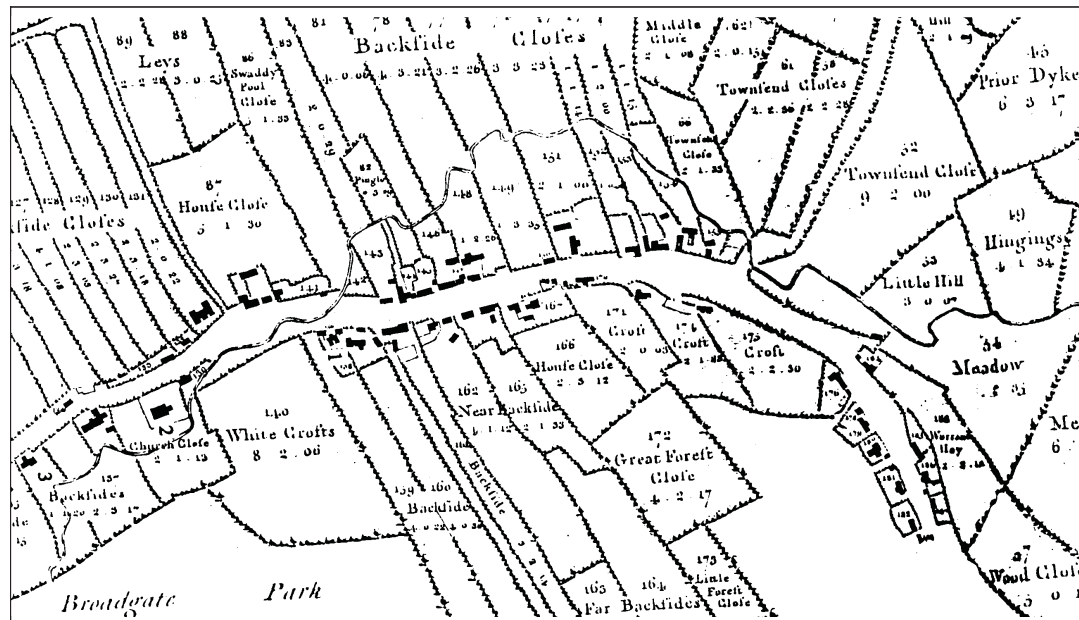
village operated as a mini-Welfare State, so a great deal of responsibility for the wellbeing of the poor lay with the elected officers. If the Overseers were too mean, there was real hardship; if they were too generous, rate-payers who were only just above the breadline could fall into debt themselves.

In 1760 the Overseers' accounts tell of work on the Poor Houses. (Was this Workhouse Row?) Henry Hunt was paid 5/10 (29p) for 7 days work, and John Elliot 12/3 (64p) for 7 days thatching.

One troublesome and expensive parishioner could make a high demand on local resources. In 1764 there had to be no fewer than 6 rate levies – 4 of 4d in the £1, one of 8d, and one of 6d. The total collected was £79.9.3½d, of which £13.9.9½ was spent on getting Sarah Goodman admitted to Bedlam in London and Abraham Glover escorting her there. At least he would have had a good tale to tell when he got back home.

Isabel Pollard was left a widow with a family of young boys who became a charge on the parish for

several years. As the boys reached what was considered a suitable age (in one case only 8) they were bound apprentice – the parish preferring to pay a master to take them away than to continue to pay their mother for their upkeep. One boy was sent off in 1771, and the parish spent 4/- (20p) on



Part of a map of Newtown Linford from 1773, the earliest known to exist.

LRO: DG 20/Ma/230/1

clothes and shoes for him to go away in. In 1775 John Pollard, described as a poor child aged upwards of 11 years, was put to framework knitter Charles Ward of 'Sheepshed' until he was 24. Two years later his brother William was sent to the same master. Isabel was given 1/- (5p) for his clothes, while the overseers paid 6/- for the expense of two meetings, and the cost of binding him was 13/11 (70p). Another brother, John, aged 8, was sent to the same master, until he was 21, in 1779, so at least the three brothers were kept together.

Most apprenticeships were to framework knitters in other villages or Leicester, though Edward Pollard, for instance, was apprenticed locally to Newtown husbandman Thomas Walker.

It was the task of the Constable to collect land and window taxes, as well as to serve warrants and escort miscreants to Leicester Quarter Sessions.

In 1766 the Constable paid 2/- (10p) to the blacksmith for welding stocks and for work on a pound. That year there was also an inquest to attend to. The constable charged 18/6d (92p) for giving evidence and removing the body of Robert Green.

Another aspect of the 'parish as welfare state' was the financial arrangements which had to be made when a child was born out of wedlock and in danger of being a charge on the rates. In 1789 Martha Wildman was taken to the Quarter Sessions at Leicester Castle and had to declare that John Smith of Newtown Linford was the father of her male bastard child, lately born and now chargeable to the parish. John Smith was ordered to pay the Overseers of the Poor 1/3 (6p) a week for the child's maintenance, while Martha had to pay the Overseers 6d (2p) a week.

It would be interesting to know whether, in the cases where a child's baptism follows rather rapidly after the parents' marriage, there had been pressure from the parish officers to regularise the relationship and let them off the hook. There were only four baptisms recorded in 1751. One was of 'William, base child of Elizabeth Dilks', and another, in December, of Thomas Colver, whose parents had been married in

May.

Nichols, writing in 1811* records for the Newtown Linford section of his County History, 'A brook which runs through the street is said to be well stored with trout; and I was credibly informed, that a trout was caught in the street, in the year 1782, which weighed 9½lb. and measured three feet and one inch long; and being November, it was thought the same fish might have been 14lb. if taken in the summer. Here is a medicinal spring; but of late not much accounted of.'

When Thomas Cornthwaite was parson, from 1791-95, he engaged in the commendable practice of noting occupations when he wrote the church records. In 1793, for instance, of the fathers of children baptised, three were stocking weavers, two nail makers, two labourers, plus a wood collier, and a wool comber. The burials in 1784 included two framework knitters, two labourers, a woodkeeper, an innkeeper and a woolcomber.

John Nichols noted that several inhabitants made a comfortable living by dealing in timber from Lord Stamford's sales, and many others were employed in the woods. In addition to using the timber, faggots of brushwood were carted into Leicester and sold to bakers for heating their ovens.

In the 1790s, the highest land taxes were paid by Edward Astill. In 1797 he paid £3.18.8d, while people like Widow Mee, Fran Cook, Widow Pollard and Peter Mee only paid 3/4d (62p).

Of the children baptised in the 1790s the most common girl's name was Sarah, with 14 entries, followed by Elizabeth (12), Mary (10), Hannah (5), Ann (3), Rebecca (3), plus one each of Alice, Dolly, Amelia, Frances, Catherine, Phoebe and Jane. The favourite boy's name was William (12 entries), followed by John (7), Thomas (7), Joseph (6), James (5), George (5), Edward (3), Robert (2), Henry (2), Samuel (2), and one each of David, Charles, Daniel, Francis and Elner.

At the end of the eighteenth century there were about 60 houses in the village, most of which can still be seen today. What is more, from that time, hardly any

*John Nichols: The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester, Vol IV, Part II, p.891, 1811