

Lyddington, Caldecott and Uppingham Enclosures
The Account Book of John Abeam Palmer

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Introduction

John Abeam Palmer was a solicitor in Uppingham. His account book for the period 1785-1807 is deposited in the National Archives (Ref. C 107/95 88386). The Uppingham Local History Study Group have a copy.

Among the wide range of entries is a series concerning his work on the application by local landowners for a Parliamentary bill for the enclosure of fields in Lyddington, Caldecott and Uppingham, and on the subsequent execution of the Enclosure Act. These entries reveal the amount of travel and expenditure involved, and the number of meetings required. They also give the names of the principal landowners at that time.

This paper gives an account of Palmer's travels, the personalities involved and, in a separate section, examples of the payments and charges incurred. The month when the event occurred is given where possible, but some of the entries in the accounts are undated.

The Enclosure Bill. 1797-1799.

1797

John Palmer started his work on the enclosure bill early in 1797 when he visited Lord Exeter at Burghley and received instructions regarding the enclosure of Lyddington with Caldecott. He then drew up heads of a plan for Lyddington with Caldecott, Uppingham and the Brand, and for extinguishing all common rights on Beaumont Chase. He laid this plan before Lord Exeter, and he consulted Lord Gainsborough at Exton; Mr Brudenell at Ayston, as Lord of the Manors of Wardley and Ayston; Mr Adderley at Hams Hall, a principal proprietor, and the cottagers of Uppingham.

An enclosure was generally approved and so in August he drew up a notice of intended application to Parliament. Copies of this were produced and his clerks affixed them to the church doors at Lyddington, Caldecott, Uppingham, Stoke Dry, Wardley and Ayston. A copy of this notice and also of a notice of a meeting were sent to a Stamford printer 'for insertion', presumably in a local paper.

In September, Palmer travelled to Ketton and Castor to obtain statements of property in Uppingham and Lyddington from Mr Hare and Mr Baxter.

On his previous visit to Lord Gainsborough in June, his Lordship had requested time to consider the proposal, and so in October Palmer went again to Exton 'to explain the proposal and discuss the propriety of the measure'. At about the same time he met several proprietors and others in Lyddington, Uppingham, Caldecott, Wardley, Ayston, and Stoke Dry to gather information about the fields and their usage on the Brand and Beaumont Chase. He went again to Exton during the same month for information about Beaumont Chase, and he notes that Lord Gainsborough permitted

him 'to examine the grants and papers in his custody'. He visited Mr Caley of the Augmentation Office to ask him to make searches of the old records regarding the Brand and Beaumont Chase, and wrote to Mr Fardell of Lincoln on the same matter.

1798

Early in 1798 Palmer drew up a bill and made copies for the proprietors. He then drew up a petition for leave to bring in the bill, and during February travelled to various proprietors for their signatures and arranged for carriage of the draft bill and petition to London. He also sent copies of the bill to Mr Smith of Northampton, the agent of Sir Lucas Pepys, and to Mr Fisher, Lord Exeter's agent.

Palmer went once again to Exton during 1798 and saw Col. Noel, the representative of Lord Gainsborough, 'to know his sentiments respecting the inclosure'. No decisive answer was obtained, [the 6th Earl of Gainsborough died in April of that year], and as it was late in the [Parliamentary] session it was thought better to 'defer the prosecution of the measure until the next session'. A notice, presumably about the deferment, was affixed to the church doors of the affected parishes in September and another petition was prepared, signed and sent to London.

1799

Early in 1799 Palmer visited Tom Roberts and others to 'make out the state of property in Lyddington', and met Mr Chapman and Mr Stokes for the same purpose in Caldecott.

Having produced a fair copy of the bill he then made a number of journeys between February and May to obtain consents. These are recorded as follows:

To Caldecott.

To Burghley for Lord Exeter.

To Exton for Col. Noel.

To Thorpe, Gretton, Rockingham and Great Easton for Mrs Sumpter, Mrs Lenton, Mr Walker and Robert Fairchild.

To Lyddington and Gretton.

To Ayston.

To Lumley Lodge, Brooke, and Ridlington.

To Lyddington.

To Ayston for Mr Brudenell and Beaumont Chase for Mrs Bennett and Mr Hickman.

To Glaston for Cunnington, to Empingham for Mrs Larratt and Normanton for Sir G Heathcote.

To Stamford for Miss Treen, Rippingale for Mr Gascoyne, and Bytham for Mr Ormond.

To Stamford for Mr Torkington, Mr Sculthorpe, Mr Ormond, from thence to Peterborough for Mr Bowis, Thomas Pretty, the Bishop, and Parkinson.

To Whissendine and Stapleford for Lord Harborough and Mills, (but neither of them was to be found).

Three other journeys to Lyddington for Clement Marvin and Mary Marvin.

To York for the consent of Revd. Archdeacon Wharton, Prebendary of Lyddington.

To Great Easton and Brown's Lodge for Mr Barnes and Mr Brown.
To Stapleford again for Lord Harborough.

In May 1799 Palmer was in London for most of the month 'to solicit the bill and attend the progress of it through Parliament'.

On the 27th May he records: 'Col. Noel, Mr Adderley, Mr Bullcock, Mr Hotchkin, Mr Foulkes (for Lord Exeter), Mr Torkington (for Lord Harborough) and myself, having met together in London to reconcile some objections to the Bill it was agreed some fresh clauses should be drawn and the bill should be read a second time and committed for the 5th June; and that in the interim a meeting should be held at Uppingham to learn the sentiments of the small proprietors there to the proposed alterations.'

Palmer then drew up clauses for the appointment of an arbitrator and the regulation of his conduct in dealing with disputed claims, and also clauses requiring the Commissioners to set out the allotments to Uppingham cottagers.

A fair copy of the clauses was produced and consents were obtained from the Bishop at Peterborough, Mr Hunt at Oundle, and Mr Jackson and the Revd. Wagstaff at Newark.

On 1st June Palmer travelled again to London 'to attend the progress of the bill through its remaining stages and to give evidence before the Committee of both Houses'. He was there until the 22nd June. While in London he went to Fulham for the consent of the Bishop of London, and paid the Bishop's secretary for perusing the bill on his behalf. Similarly he attended the Bishop of Lincoln [who was presumably in London at that time] and paid his secretary for perusing the Bill on his behalf and on behalf of the Bishop of Peterborough. He made a journey to an undisclosed destination to obtain the consent of a Revd. G Caulton.

Included in the expenses at this point is a payment to Dougal for work done to 'prove the state of property' in Uppingham, and to Muggleton and to Roberts for like work regarding property in Caldecott and Lyddington respectively. Messrs Clements and Bramwell were paid for fees and other expenses incurred in passing the Act. The accounts include a number of charges for legal work by Palmer; for the preparation, amendment and copying of the paperwork; and certain committee fees. He also made payments to housekeepers, messengers, doorkeepers, and to the Deputy Black Rod in the House of Lords.

The Execution of the Act. 1799-1804.

The work on the bill was successful and the next entry in the accounts, later in 1799, is for the carriage of the Acts of Parliament from London, followed by a journey to Castor to inform Mr Hare of his being appointed a Commissioner and to fix a date for the first meeting of the Commissioners. Resulting from this a notice was drawn up for a meeting at the Falcon Inn in Uppingham on 14th August. This notice was then affixed to the church doors in the relevant parishes of Lyddington, Caldecott, Uppingham, Stoke Dry, Wardley and Ayston by Palmer himself or by his clerk, and also sent to the printer in Stamford. Palmer then wrote to Mr Renshaw and Mr Eagle

to inform them of the date. [According to the Enclosure Award documents, which can be seen in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, the names of the Commissioners appointed in the Act were 'Edward Hare of Easton, Northants; John Renshaw of Owthorpe, Notts, since deceased; and Thomas Eagle late of Baginton but now Allesley, Warwicks.'. The final enclosure documents are signed by Hare, Eagle, and Joseph Cooke of Edith Weston, who presumably replaced Renshaw. The death of Renshaw may explain the letter from Palmer on 14th December 1802 to a Mr Renshaw at Nottingham regarding 'his father's attendance on this inclosure'.]

Palmer attended the meeting of the 14th-15th August, and then drew up the notice for another meeting on 30th September. As before, the notice was affixed to church doors and sent to the Stamford printer. The same procedure for calling the meeting was followed at all the subsequent meetings. Although meetings were called for a specific date, the accounts indicate that generally each continued for 2-6 days and one of the later meetings, (December 7th-19th, 1801), continued for 2 weeks.

After the September meeting, at which claims were received, the next meeting was held on 25th November when the Commissioners received 'a large number of objections'. Palmer then issued notices of the objections and arranged to 'hear the parties' involved in the claims and objections. He then condensed his findings for the benefit of the Commissioners at their next meeting.

1800

At the beginning of January 1800 Palmer was 'extracting the names of claimants and examining objections to find out to whom the objections were to be served.' He records a payment to the printer for printing 250 objections and for printing 100 copies of additional claims. He then served the objections to claimants in Lyddington, Caldecott, Thorpe, Uppingham, Wardley, Ridlington, Preston, Seaton, and 'other claimants about the country' including Mr Torkington, Mr Stokes, Mr Gascoigne, Mr Ormond, Mr Pepper, Mr Godfrey, Hales of Ayston, and Tyers of Edith Weston.

Palmer then concerned himself with the stocking of the Brand and the Chase, and to Lord Exeter's sheep walk. For this purpose he had a statement in writing from Mr Wadland, and examined him and others in Caldecott, Stoke, Uppingham, Ayston and Wardley.

The next meeting of the Commissioners took place on 20th-25th January. As with other meetings, Palmer entered items of stationery such as paper, pens and ink in his account book, but on this occasion he also included payment to the printer for 4 interleaved books of claims and objections, a minute book, and for binding and making an index to the Act.

At about this time he drew up an order respecting the course of husbandry which was sent to the printer and then to Mr Eagles for his signature. The notice was affixed to the church doors.

He paid 3 poor men for attending the previous meeting of the Commissioners.

Meetings of the Commissioners then followed on 17th-21st March, 22th-23rd April, 30th June-5th July, 25th-29th August, 22th-25th September, 20th-24th October, 24th-29th November, and 29th December-2nd January. During that time the only other recorded activity was the issue of another order as to the course of husbandry in late October.

1801

In January 1801, a notice respecting provisional determinations was drawn up to be published with the notice of the next meeting. This meeting was held on 16th-20th February at which the Commissioners confirmed their determinations and also designed the roads. On 21st February Palmer drew up an 'advertisement' of the roads and a notice of the next meeting. At the next meeting on 16th-20th March alterations were made to the roads and on the 24th a notice regarding the changes was prepared and published in the usual way.

A further meeting was held on 27th-30th April and one was scheduled for 18th May, but no Commissioners came. On July 10th Palmer spent some time reviewing the claims and objections and making a statement of those settled and those to be settled in advance of the meeting to be held on 29th-24th July.

During August, Palmer accompanied Mr Gibbons to the parishes involved to make a list of the cottages. He wrote a notice as a prefix to the book of settled claims, and paid the printer for 30 abstracts and for covering them. He also advertised the date of the next meeting and let it be known that abstracts of claims were available for inspection.

The Commissioners met again on 31st August-3rd September, 26th- 31st October and 7th-19th December 1801.

1802

On 21st-24th January 1802 there was a meeting 'to show allotments' and shortly after Palmer drew up a notice stating 'when common and tithes ceased' which was stuck up on the church doors as usual. He also prepared an advertisement for 'undertakers of public fencing'.

At this point, Palmer carried out work on the rate. He wrote a letter to be printed to accompany the rate and spent a day with his clerk 'drawing the rate from the surveyors sheets of calculations'. He 'filled up and directed a letter to each proprietor, 198 at 1s. each'. A fair copy of the rate was entered in the minute book.

The next meeting of the Commissioners was held on 4th-7th March.

On 2nd May 11 letters were written to persons 'liable to pay for plowing in Uppingham' and on 6th-8th May there was a further meeting of the Commissioners. Following this, on 8th May, orders for not stocking roads were issued and 15 letters sent to persons liable to pay rates in Lyddington. The Commissioners met again on 12th-13 July. On 1st November 13 letters were sent to persons who had omitted to pay rates.

A meeting was held on 2nd –5th November. On 22nd November Palmer was preparing a 2d rate, and he sent a letter to 198 proprietors for payment of this rate. He records journeys to deliver all the rate letters. On 4th December he wrote to Mr Bellamy of Wisbeach [sic] about Miss Gascoigne's rate and the fencing of her allotment. On 14th December he was writing to Mr Renshaw of Nottingham 'pursuant to the Commission's order for his father's attendance on this inclosure'.

The last meeting in 1802 was held on 17th-31st December (2 weeks).

1803

Early in January 1803, Palmer entered a fair copy of the 2d rate in the Minute Book. On 18-19 February he met Mr Gibbons to receive instructions for the Uppingham award and met him again on 23rd and 30th April to draw the award. On the 23rd of that month he sent 34 letters to persons for 'old hedges and deficiency of fencing'.

On 1st May a journey was made to John Eagle to receive instructions on the Caldecott award and on the 2nd May Palmer wrote to 11 persons to pay the 'plowing rate'. On 28th May he 'attended to receive money ordered to be paid for deficiency of fencing and for old hedges'.

The next meeting of the Commissioners took place on 26th-29th July. On the 30th letters were sent to 15 persons in Caldecott to pay money for ploughing. Further meetings with Mr Gibbons to receive instructions for an award took place on 8th, 9th, 29th and 30th August.

The Commissioners met again on 24th-27th October. On 9th November Palmer received the Caldecott ploughing rate, and on 15th, 16th and 17th November and 26th December he met Mr Gibbons to receive instructions on the Lyddington award.

The last meeting in 1803 took place on 26th-28th December.

1804

More meetings with Mr Gibbons over the instructions for an award were held on 20th and 23rd-25th February 1804 and the Commissioners met again on 27th February-4th March. Later that month Palmer drew the general award, the Lyddington particular award, the Caldecott particular award, and 'the award upon disputed claims'.

On 3rd July he prepared the general accounts of payments and receipts between the Commission and the proprietors, and the particular accounts between the contractors of public fencing and the surveyors of the new roads. The Commissioners met on 9th-12 July.

Palmer carried out work on a 3d rate in early August. He prepared the rate, wrote an accompanying letter, had it printed and sent out 179 copies. Notices of the rate were distributed at Lyddington, Preston, Belton, Ridlington, Thorpe, Caldecott, Great Easton, Wardley, Stockerston, Stoke Dry, Whissendine, and Uppingham.

On 20th August, Palmer drew the schedules to the awards, engrossed the general award, the Lyddington award and the Caldecott award. He purchased tin boxes and a wooden box. On August 27th to September 1st there was a meeting for the examination of the engrossments of the awards. He then drew up and copied a notice that the award was signed and on 9th September travelled to Lyddington, Caldecott, Uppingham, Wardley, Stoke Dry, and Ayston to put it up.

Palmer attended a meeting for unspecified purposes on 9th October, and then met Mr Hare on 25th November to fix a meeting to close the accounts. This meeting was held on 7th-8th January 1805.

Expenses.

For his time spent on the enclosure work Palmer charged £2 2s 0d (2 guineas) per day, for parts of a day £1 1s 0d or £1 11s 6d.

His local journeys were made on horseback and while preparing the bill he records charges of 5s 0d for horse hire and expenses for the visits to the churches to put up notices. Later, however, during the execution of the Act, this drops to 3s 6d. For his visits to Burghley the figure is 7s 6d and to Newark £1 11s 6d. When he went to York he hired a horse to go to Grantham, where the horse remained until his return, and from there he took a coach to York. He enters his outlay as £6 6s 0d for his time (3 days) and £9 14s 6d for the horse and coach hire and his expenses. The coach hire and expenses from Uppingham to London cost £3 3s 0d. While in London to progress the bill the expenses for Palmer and his clerk were 15s 0d per day.

Various fees were paid in connection with the passage of the bill in Parliament. For the 2nd reading of the bill £84 0s 0d, Committee fees £41 4s 4d, engrossing and expediting £57 10s 6d, 2nd reading in the Lords £162 0s 0d. He also paid £42 15s 0d for the printing of 70 copies of the bill and 370 copies of the Act.

Palmer entered a regular series of charges in connection with the meetings of the Commission, in addition to his time at £2 2s 0d per day. These included 6s 8d for drawing up the notice of the meeting, £1 3s 4d for 7 copies of the notice and £1 1s 0d plus 3s 6d horse hire for putting up notices. For a 2 day meeting his expenses might be 13s 0d, his charge for paper, pens and ink 2s 6d, and payment to servants 12s 6d. However for a 6 day meeting these figures rose to £1 12s 9d for expenses, 9s 2d for pens etc., and £1 6s 0d for servants. There is also in many cases an item for paying the Stamford printer for advertising the meeting, and this varies from 12s 0d to £1 8s 6d.

The Stamford printer was also paid for other work including 7s 6d for binding the Act, 13s 4d for making an index to the Act, £6 12s 6d for 250 objections, and £3 10s 6d for 100 additional clauses.

For drawing the General Award of 1385 folios Palmer charged £69 5s 0d, and £23 6s 8d for a copy. For the Lyddington Award of 618 folios, £30 18s 0d and £10 6s 0d for a copy; and for the Caldecott Award of 521 folios, £26 1s 0d and £8 13s 8d for a copy. [1s 0d per folio for the award, 4d per folio for the copy.] For drawing the schedules to the awards, '7 skins', he charged £7 0s 0d.

For engrossing the awards his charges were as follows: General Award, (100 skins), £55 0s 0d. There were also the costs of parchment £22 10s 0d and duty £100 10s 0d. For the Lyddington Award, (44 skins), £24 4s 4d; parchment £9 18s 0d and duty £44 10s 0d. For the Caldecott Award, (37 skins), £20 7s 0d; parchment £8 6s 6d, duty £37 10s 0d.

The totals of the entries in Palmer's account book are £1003 13s 4d for the work on the bill and £1398 7s 6d for the execution of the Act, a total of £2402 0s 10d for all his work on the enclosures.

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