

Notes on the Village of Upper Slaughter Gloucestershire, United Kingdom

provided by

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The following observations about the history and points of interest regarding Upper Slaughter are based upon information gathered during a visit with my wife Suzanne to the village in August 2005. Besides getting to know the layout of this charming Cotswolds hamlet a little better, my chief interests during the visit were as follows:

- Learn more about the origins of Upper Slaughter and the Slaughter Family
- Determine why the Slaughter Family's presence in the village seemed to have disappeared altogether by the mid-18th Century
- Understand what may have motivated John Slaughter (the "emigrant") to leave the village and travel to far-away Virginia in 1617
- Get an appreciation for what life was like during the acme of the Slaughter Family's tenure as lords of the manor
- Become familiar with the special features of the village

Hopefully the following random notes will help shed some light on several of these issues – although I am afraid that the notion of providing completely satisfying answers, without the benefit of additional data, will remain problematic.

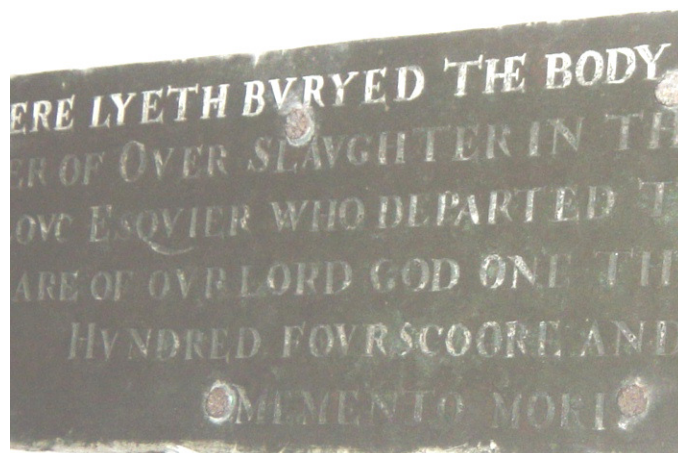
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my appreciation for the assistance provided by two long-standing residents of Upper Slaughter. Mr. Francis E.B. Witts, the current *Lord of the Manor*, graciously provided me with a copy of a the chapter on Upper Slaughter from *Victoria History of Gloucestershire* (shortened in these notes to simply *VHG*), which was published around 1965. Mr. Tony Collett, a semi-retired local builder whose family has resided continuously in the village since the late 16th Century, generously spent one pleasant evening after dinner explaining to me the layout of the village and his experiences growing up in Upper Slaughter during the Second World War.

I am also indebted to Mr. Thomas Slaughter of Shreveport, Louisiana, who went out of his way to get into my hands on the eve of our departure for the U.K. an updated copy of the Slaughter family history that he has labored over for many years, along with a very helpful genealogy (referred to in subsequent notes as *Genealogy*). Mr. Slaughter's documents provided critical leads.

Origins of the Village

The rather common phenomenon of inconsistencies in spelling conventions, particularly with respect to place names and surnames, has contributed to several conflicting theories concerning the origin of the name of the village and its relationship to family that became known as "Slaughter." Clearly, several variations in the spelling of the village were used in the centuries prior to the time that its current form, *Upper Slaughter*, became fairly well established by the early 1600s. Indeed, it appears to have taken several centuries for the name of the locality to evolve from its original "Ower Sclostre" to "Upper Slaughter." For instance, the village was still referred to as "Over Slaughter" as late as 1583 on a memorial plaque on the wall in Upper Slaughter's St. Peters Church commemorating the spot where the remains of John Slaughter were laid to rest. (*Over*, which is apparently the Anglo-Saxon term for "upper," is very similar to *ober* in modern German.)



Memorial Plaque for John Slaughter – See “Over” Slaughter in the Second Line

There seems to be continuing debate as to which village was settled first – Upper Slaughter or Lower Slaughter – and whether or not the former simply evolved as an extension from the latter. Topography seems to favor Lower Slaughter's claim to primacy, mainly because the village is near the spot where the ancient but well-traveled Roman road running north from Cirencester crosses the River Ey (now a small brook). According to a monograph entitled *Lower Slaughter: Life and History of a Cotswold Village*, Lower Slaughter was the administrative center for the more widespread Slaughter Hundred, which presumably encompassed Upper Slaughter as well. The Lower Slaughter history also postulates that these estates were held by the Crown before and immediately after the Conquest, then in succession by the Abby of Fecamp in France and the Abby of Syon. The narrative also suggests that the Abbess of Syon held both manors up until the time that the monasteries were dissolved by Henry VIII.



River Ey Passing Thru Lower Slaughter

However, the implication that Upper Slaughter was somehow an obscure lesser dependency of Lower Slaughter, and that the estate was held by an absentee overlord during a significant part of its history, seems to be called into question in the chapter on Upper Slaughter in *VHG*. Stipulating that Upper Slaughter might indeed have been "subinfeudated" from Lower Slaughter in the early Norman period, the discussion nevertheless demonstrates how the documentary evidence regarding "overlordship" is at times contradictory. In fact, the narrative in *VHG* seems to lend credence to alternative argument – e.g., that Upper Slaughter was held as an independent (if relatively modest) feudal estate, and that the "lord of the manor" during at least three consecutive centuries was a member of a relatively minor family of landed gentry that became known as *Slaughter*.

The argument supporting the notion that Upper Slaughter and its local gentry were distinct in their own right, and that their manor holdings developed and were used independently, is further buttressed by archaeological evidence indicating that a Romano-British villa was situated on the hills above Upper Slaughter and that both villages are listed separately in the *Doomsday Book* (William the Conqueror's great census and survey of 1086). Upper Slaughter also featured an active motte and bailey castle during the early Norman period. Lower Slaughter apparently had no castle, although it did have a prison. Both estates had mills.

Why the Slaughters Left

The argument as to the relative political relationship between the tiny backwater villages of Upper and Lower Slaughter before the reign of Henry VIII seems trivial today, except one must remember that histories of regions are naturally written from the perspective of more recent periods. At the very least, the formal records, personal letters, diaries, and oral histories from the late 18th Century onward are more readily available.

Clearly, there is no evidence to suggest that the Slaughter Family left its historical roots after about six to seven centuries living in the general area because of any major political upheaval – which was not entirely unusual for the age – or that they were forced out because of any untoward action on the part of local rivals. Indeed their departure can most likely be explained by the complex socio-economic transformations resulting from the early phases of the Industrial Revolution, which began in Great Britain and, no doubt, reverberated throughout the Cotswolds. In essence, members of the Slaughter Family probably drifted away gradually, and the last holders of the manor (the sisters of William Slaughter) simply sold out to the highest bidder before they moved on in the mid-1700s (see the discussion below).

Considering the emphasis given in local histories to more recent periods – with barely a passing reference to the Slaughters during what must have been a long and colorfully textured period of English history – one remains disappointed that so relatively little has been written about Upper Slaughter before the time the family left for good, circa 1750. The data provided in *VHG* does fill in several gaps. The lack of a more satisfying chronicle explaining what the Slaughters were up to during their stay in the village may be attributed to understandable shortcomings in record keeping and a general lack of literacy, even among the gentry, prior to the time of the Age of Enlightenment. Then again, one must remember that Upper Slaughter was a backwater estate; and the first real spike in local history worth jotting down by anyone in the area would not take place until the English Civil War, decades after John Slaughter departed for Virginia.

Why John Slaughter Left

Unfortunately, our visit to Upper Slaughter in August 2005 provided no clues as to what might have motivated John Slaughter to leave the manor estates and board the *George* for Virginia in 1617. According to the genealogy provided by Thomas Slaughter, John “the Emigrant” was the second son of Paris Slaughter, the squire of the estate. As such, the manor passed to Chambers Slaughter, John’s older brother, when their father died in 1597.

During John’s early life in Upper Slaughter, the law was such that manorial estates could not be sub-divided and distributed to multiple heirs when the principal died. As a *second son*, John was therefore probably one of the growing number of landless and profession-less gentry of the period, who found themselves with little means “to cut a figure in the world.” Such unemployed “gentlemen” became fodder for the costly entrepreneurial experiments in malarial settlements, such as Roanoke and Jamestown. The fact that John

not only survived his ordeal, but evidently thrived in the wild and hostile environment of the wilderness of Virginia, indicates that he was probably an “above average” sort of fellow in terms of both his physical stamina and problem-solving skills.

If the dates in *Genealogy* are correct, John was about five years old when his father died, and departed for America when he was 25. Clearly, more information needs to be unearthed before one can truly determine what was going on at the manor, the nature of John’s upbringing and education, and his frame of mind when he decided to leave England for the New World.

Origins of the Name “Slaughter”

We’re getting ahead of ourselves; so let’s go back briefly to the 11th Century. I think it’s safe to say that the debate about the origin of the name “Slaughter” – and, more precisely, whether the family took its surname from the locality or whether it was the other way around – remains unresolved. The balance of local history and folklore comes down on the side that “slaughter” was probably an Old English corruption of the Anglo-Saxon place-name “sclostre,” which means “slough” or “muddy place,” and that the family took its name from the locality, instead of assigning their allegedly French surname to a manor granted to them after 1066. Indeed, one could imagine, even today, how the old Roman road near Lower Slaughter could have become quite muddy at certain times of the year, forcing the Roman legions or Norman cavalry to slosh through the silt as the River Ey flooded over the ford.

Mr. Tony Collett offers an interesting alternative theory about the origins of the name – one based upon many years of observing the local flora. His view is that the two villages and early manor lords were probably called “Slaughter” because of the unusual concentration of “sloe trees.” Also known in the U.K. as a “blackthorn,” the berry or “sloe” from the tree is used for making gin.



Sloe Berries

The prickly bush-like sloe tree can be found all around Upper and Lower Slaughter. Mr. Collett’s theory tracks with the spelling of the surnames of three out of the first four generations listed in the family *Genealogy*: Gerard de *Sloghtre*, Robert de *Sloghtre*, and Gerard de *Sloghtre*.

I have been unable to come across any information to substantiate the notion that the surname is of either Norman or Norse origin. On the other hand, there seems to be circumstantial evidence to buttress the claim that at least the first male member during the period after the Conquest was either Norman, Breton, or Flemish descent. (The latter two groups served as allies of the Normans during the invasion of 1066.)

A local history of Lower Slaughter states that the manor was awarded to one of William's knights, known as Phillip de Sclostre. The fact that the "Christian" names of the earliest individuals listed in *Genealogy* are clearly French – and that they all use the preposition "de" before their surnames – provides further evidence to support the thesis that the first member of the Gloucestershire Slaughter Family was probably an invader in 1066 and not an indigenous Saxon. In general, the Normans continued to use the existing Saxon names for the localities they acquired. Therefore, it would be quite understandable for a minor Norman knight, who was landless before the Conquest, to adopt the local Saxon place-name of the manor awarded to him as his new surname, but to use it in the Norman-French linguistic style, such as *de Schostre* – *de Sloghtre* – *de Slaughter*, as the surname appears to have evolved.

Holders of the Manorial Estate

According to *VHG*, in 1066, the manorial lands around Upper Slaughter were held by two Saxon lords, Offa and Lewin; however, by the time of the Domesday survey, the land had been handed over to a Roger de Lacy (who held the manor for an unspecified initial period), probably as the sheriff for the Crown.

The Slaughter family *Genealogy* provided in Thomas Slaughter's history of the family begins in 1185 with the death of Gerard de Sloghtre (referred to in *Genealogy* as "First Generation"). One would assume that Gerard's forbearers had somehow been associated with the estate since the late 11th Century; however, *Genealogy* itself sheds no light on this. Moreover, Gerard de Sloghtre is not mentioned at all in *VHG*. The first Slaughter listed in *Genealogy* who can be cross-referenced in *VHG* is his great-grandson, *Gerard Slaughter* (Third Generation) – spelled *de Sloghtre* in *Genealogy* – who lived in the 13th Century. However, this Gerard Slaughter is only mentioned in *VHG* as the father of William Slaughter (Fifth Generation), who acquired the estate by marrying a local lady named "Maud." According to *VHG*, Maud inherited the manorial estate in 1282, presumably from her father.

By going through this somewhat confusing and frustrating exercise trying to find points of convergence in the data provided in *Genealogy* and *VHG*, one comes to the conclusion that the manorial lands, for the first several centuries after the Conquest, must have been exchanged between early members of the Slaughter Family and others quite frequently. This begs the question: did the estate change hands because of feudal infighting? These were indeed turbulent times in English history. Or was it simply a matter that the manor consisted of insignificant holdings – to be traded like pawns for marginal gains – until they began producing profits, as the demand for wool began to increase after the calamitous plagues and wars of the 14th Century started to burn themselves out?

Whatever the reasons, this “Dutch roll” (to use an aviation term) in the undulating record of manorial ownership seems to have dampened out by the early 1400s, and it appears fairly well substantiated now that members of the Slaughter Family continuously held the Upper Slaughter estate as "Lords of the Manor" from about 1403 to 1750.

It is interesting to note that the account in *VHG* concerning the Slaughter Family from 1403 up until John Slaughter emigrates to Virginia Colony in 1617 tracks quite well with the names in *Genealogy*. Clearly, for approximately three-and-a-half centuries, the manor was handed on from one Slaughter to the next, each living in residence as the local squire. Moreover, the inheritance was passed down, with few exceptions, in direct male succession. According to *VHG*, this unbroken line of Slaughters holding the manorial estate during this period consisted of the following individuals:

William Slaughter, 1403 (in *VHG*); Ninth Generation (per *Genealogy*)
 Thomas Slaughter, 1417; Tenth Generation
 John Slaughter, 1454; Eleventh Generation
 John Slaughter, 1486; Twelfth Generation
 Elizabeth Slaughter, 1494 (John's wife)
 Gilbert Slaughter, 1517; Thirteenth Generation (John's son)
 John Slaughter, 1548; Fourteenth Generation
 Paris Slaughter, 1583; Fifteenth Generation
 2nd son: John Slaughter *the Emigrant* (Sixteenth Generation)
 Chambers Slaughter, 1598 (John's older brother, who inherits the manor)
 Thomas Slaughter, 1646 (not mentioned in *Genealogy* because the family tree
 continues in the Virginia Colony)
 Chambers Slaughter, 1672
 Chambers Slaughter, 1718
 William Slaughter, 1740
 Sisters of William Slaughter (No first names recorded), 1741

For some unknown reason – possibly because they could no longer maintain the estate – William Slaughter’s sisters (the last entry on the above list) evidently sold the manor holdings to another family around 1750. After passing hands several more times, including some apparent detaching of portions of the land from the traditional estate, the manorial rights were eventually obtained by Francis Edward Witts, the Rector of Upper Slaughter, in 1852. Reverend Witts lived in the Rectory and evidently never resided in Upper Slaughter Manor; therefore, from that time forward, the *old Rectory* became known as the new manor house. Since then, the manorial rights to Upper Slaughter have been handed down to successive generations of the Witts Family.



Original Upper Slaughter Manor House
The Way It May Have Looked during the Late Tudor Period

The first Francis Witts seems to have been quite an energetic churchman, philanthropist, and leading citizen in this western part of England. He deeply loved the village, which is probably why he decided to settle his family there and acquire the estate. His life commuting between Upper Slaughter, the city of Gloucester, and other points in the region is well chronicled in a recently published edition of his memoirs entitled, *Diary of a Cotswolds Parson*. Successive generations of Witts have enjoyed distinguished careers as senior military officers (including two Major Generals), businessmen, and scholars. During World War II, the family converted the estate into what was essentially a military base for British and American troops preparing to liberate Hitler's Fortress Europe. As Lords of the Manor, the Witts continue to this day as outstanding stewards of the long and splendid heritage of the village of Upper Slaughter.

World War II

I was pleased to learn that Upper Slaughter is still held fondly in the memories of the members of the “the Greatest Generation,” who served in both the British and American armed forces during the Second World War. While staying several very pleasant evenings in the “Lords of the Manor” hotel, I ran into two U.S. veterans of WWII who told me they had spent several months recuperating in a hospital in the vicinity. They remarked that they had always dreamed of bringing their wives to see the lovely healing place where they were billeted during their recovery. (Unfortunately, I am afraid I did not follow up with them on the exact location of the hospital.)

Mr. Tony Collett informed me that the village of Upper Slaughter served as an encampment for three successive allied units during the war. The first was a British grenadier outfit. After the grenadiers were then shipped off, the village was “occupied” by two American units. The first group of American GIs was a tank outfit. After these first GIs departed for the front (presumably during the invasion of France), their quarters

were turned over to a unit of African-American soldiers, who were sent into Fortress Europe subsequently.

Mr. Collett related to me how much fun it was for a kid growing up in a rural part of England to see his quiet home village suddenly transformed into a bustling military encampment with soldiers all about, preparing to go to war. Later on he appreciated the terrible nature of the soldiers' subsequent ordeal; yet it was a time he says he will remember fondly.

According to Mr. Collett, the most exciting thing to happen during these war years occurred the morning of February 4, 1944, when a German aircraft bombed the village. He recalls how he was awakened at about 4 AM when he heard the explosions. He looked through his bedroom window in his home at the time (which was located near the carriage house adjacent to Upper Slaughter Manor) to see the fires from the incendiary bombs light up the center of the village.



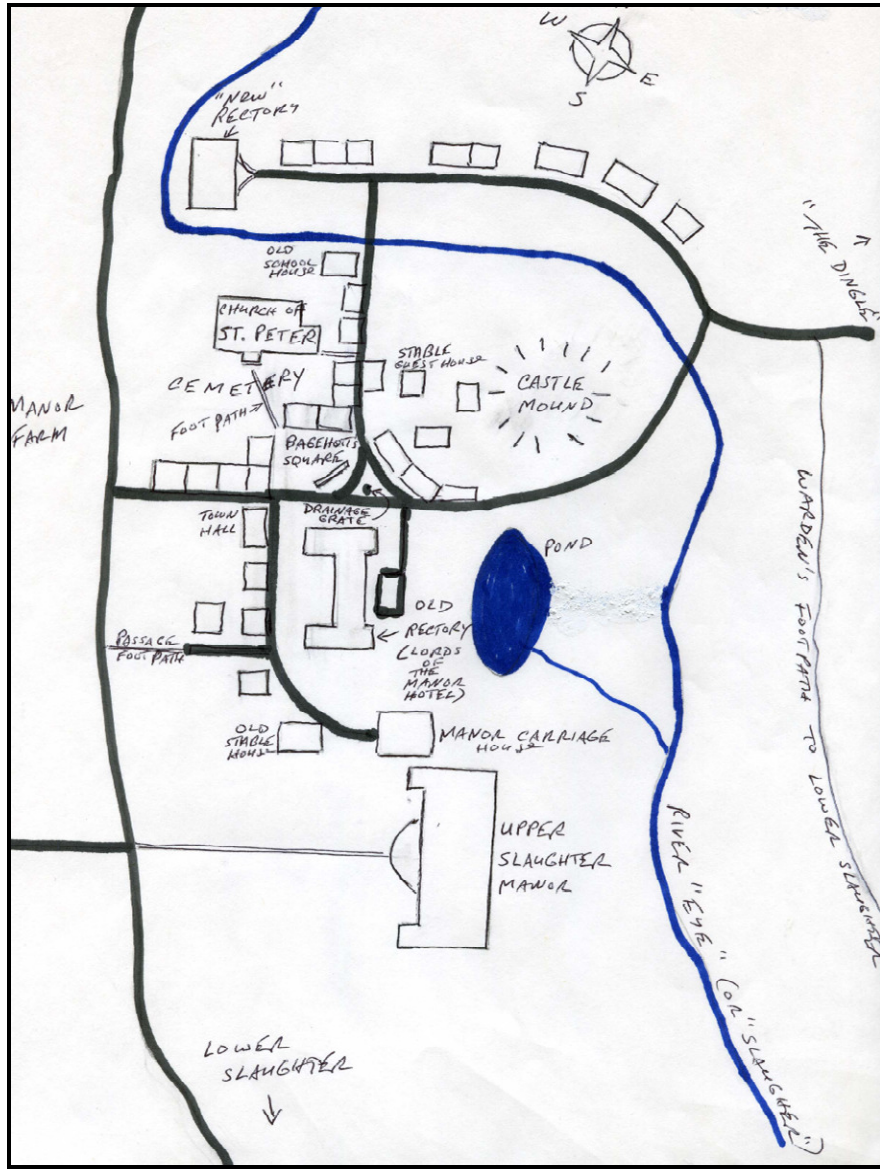
Bagehott's Square
"Ground-Zero" for the Bombing Raid of February 4, 1944

At first, everyone thought that a number of German planes must have dropped hundreds of bombs on the village; but the authorities later said that the bombing consisted of far fewer ordnance, probably from one plane. Mr. Collett reckoned that the bomber's intended target was the airfield up the road at RAF Little Risington, and that the plane probably just got off course during its bombing run.

Luckily no one was hurt during the attack, and the only damage was the destruction of several barns around Bagehott's Square. In fact, Mr. Collett underscored the fact that Upper Slaughter is known as one of England's "charmed villages," as remarkably no one from the area had been killed in either the First or Second World Wars.

Layout and Special Features of the Village

The following map of Upper Slaughter was sketched out several months after our visit; so I'm sure it contains several errors or omissions. Nevertheless, it should serve as an adequate aid in orienting the reader to the main points of interest.



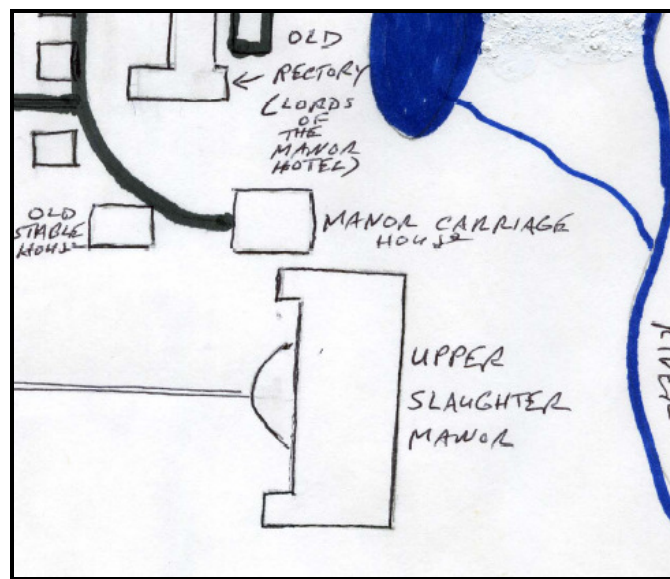
Overview of Upper Slaughter

Upper Slaughter is a very quiet village nestled along a creek known as the River Ey (or sometimes "Slaughter Brook"). Located at the bottom of a valley among low-lying hills, the village offers no real vantage points from which to take in any significant panorama of its main features. Vegetation and topography provide for extra privacy and tranquility; but they also obscure one from taking a single picture that provides the main points of interest from a single perspective.



Upper Slaughter Taken from *Manor Farm* at Sunset

It appears that the village of Upper Slaughter evolved from three basic man-made structures. The first was an ancient manor house, located at the south end of the village, upon which Upper Slaughter Manor, the sun-lit structure on the extreme right of the above photograph, was built. The second structure located to the north of the old manor house was originally a Saxon-built church. It can be seen in the shadows to the left center of the photo. The third structure was a fortification built on a hill next to the brook, just beyond and to the east of the church. The manor and the church, though they changed appearance quite significantly during Norman and subsequent periods, were occupied near continuously for the last thousand years; whereas the “castle” served its purpose only in the 11th and 12th Centuries, and is no longer discernable by a common passerby as having ever been a fortification.



Original Manor House

Upper Slaughter Manor

Although there are not enough buildings in the village to be confused about, some sorting out of the names assigned to the principal structures is required. This is necessitated by the fact that the “Lords of the Manor” and parish rectors did change residences over the centuries.

It appears as though the center of activity for the manorial estate from the time of the Saxons thru about the mid-18th Century was the area around the old manor house located to the south of the village, known today as Upper Slaughter Manor.



Upper Slaughter Manor



Upper Slaughter Manor

According to *VHG*, there were always a number of springs around the village. The old medieval manor house, called *the Well Place*, was built next to the principal source of fresh water. According to the *Doomsday Book*, the estate also had a working mill since at least the latter part of the 11th Century. Upper Slaughter Manor was probably built on the foundations of the *Well Place*.

VHG states that the Upper Slaughter Manor house incorporates a 15th Century basement with a “stone-groined roof,” but that most of the structure was built in the late 16th Century. If this was the case, then the legend that the Slaughter Family’s fortunes rose with the Tudor Dynasty was probably true. Equally important, this rather striking but magnificent structure was probably the birthplace of John Slaughter (the Emigrant).



Upper Slaughter Manor

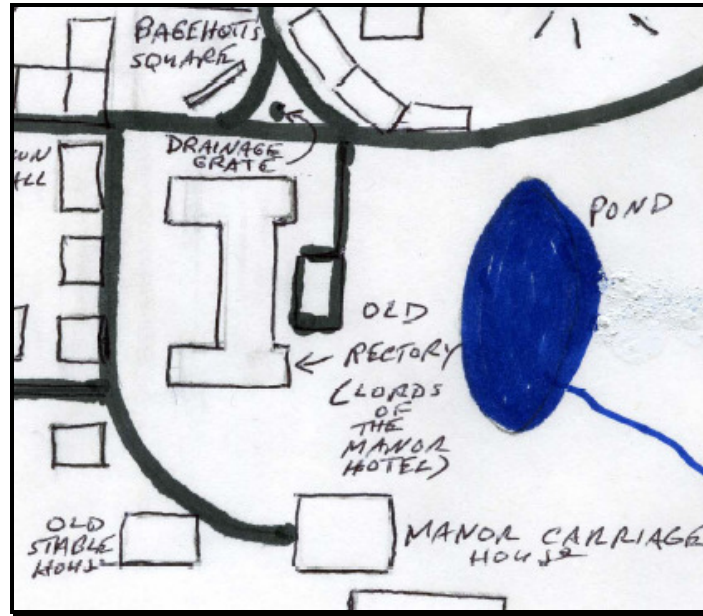
The manor house is constructed of rubble (perhaps from the earlier *Well Place* or even the stone defenses from *Castle Mound*) and features three stories on the west and four stories on the east, plus a Cotswold stone roof. According to *VHG*, the building fell out of repair during the 18th Century and was used only as a farm house by the time the sisters of William Slaughter decided to separate the estate lands from the manor house and eventually sell out. In more recent years, Upper Slaughter Manor has been owned by a steel magnate by the name of Fletcher, and most recently by a highly successful butcher from nearby Oxford – a Mr. Fellar. According to one Upper Slaughter resident who was able to recently see the interior of the house, the Feller Family has spared no effort in restoring this old manor house and grounds to its original state of elegance.



Carriage House for Upper Slaughter Manor

Old Rectory (“The Manor”)

To the north of the Carriage House for Upper Slaughter Manor is the “Lords of the Manor Hotel”; named as such because it served as the manor house after 1852.



Old Rectory or "the Manor"

The first portion of this elegant complex was built in 1649 as the parsonage for St. Peters Church. The initial building was expanded and functioned as the Rectory for nearly two centuries until the serving parson in 1852, the Reverend Francis Witts, became Lord of the Manor. Thus, the Old Rectory is known today as *the Manor*. It served as the seat for the estate until the Witts family converted the complex into a luxury hotel in 1972.



**Old Rectory or “the Manor”
*Lords of the Manor Hotel***

The Lords of the Manor Hotel has been under private ownership since 1985. Technically speaking, the current “manor house” is *the Dingle*, located to the east of the village, since it serves as the residence of Mr. Witts, the current Lord of the Manor.



Lords of the Manor Hotel
East Entrance



Lords of the Manor Hotel
West Garden

Bagehott's Square

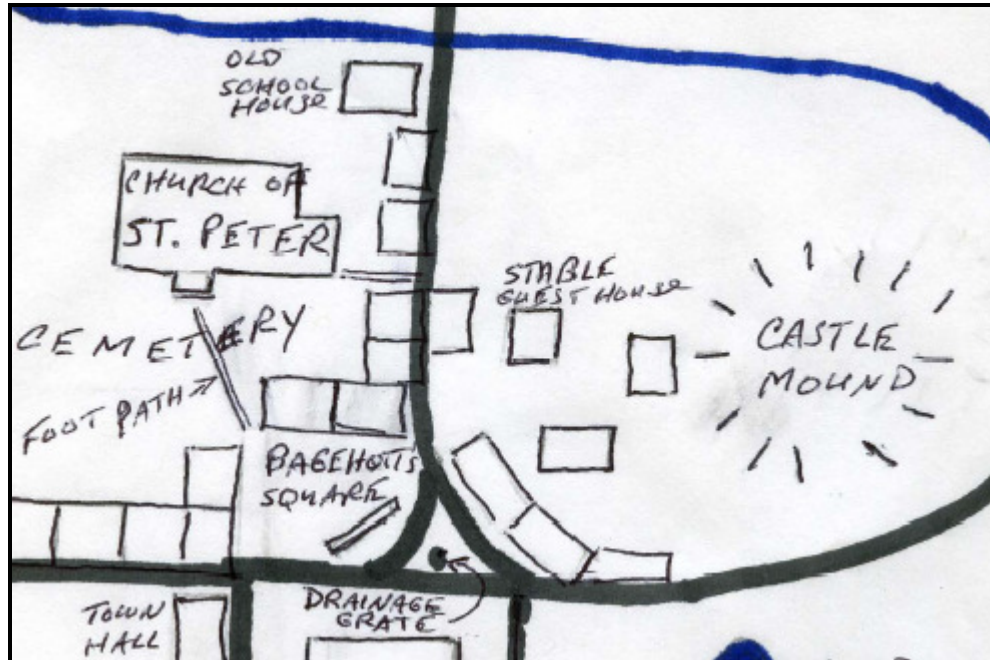


Figure 1 Bagehott's Square, St. Peter's Church, and Castle Mound

Located just a few steps to the north of the Lords of the Manor Hotel is the village square, which features, among other things, the only public parking spots available other than the country roads leading to Upper Slaughter (which isn't recommended because of all of the blind spots). The northwest corner of the square adjoins the church yard.



Entrance to Bagehott's Square from the East
See the Earlier Section on WWII for a Close-Up

In 1591, the *Bagehott Charity* (which, according to *VHG*, was named for the grantor) was established in 1591 to care for the poor. It appears that the main donation, given to the church for administration, was land and cottages intended as housing for local paupers. Since then, this village landmark has been known as Bagehott's Square.

The evidence is circumstantial, but it appears that an early member of the Slaughter Family may have been the driving force behind the establishment of this first housing project for the poor in Upper Slaughter. The only person living in the village in 1591 with a connection to the name of the square – and the means to make a substantial donation towards this charity – was Elianor Slaughter, the grandmother of John Slaughter the Emigrant. Her burial memorial located in the church (dated 1597) indicates proudly that she was the eldest daughter of William *Baghott* of Presbury, Gloucestershire – “Esquire.” Most likely, she came into the marriage with some means of her own. If so, it would not have been out of the question for this senior matriarch of the Slaughter Family to have seen to the establishment of a charity for the poor in honor of her father, during the latter years of her relatively long life.

According to *VHG*, Bagehott's Square was modified several times since the late 16th Century. The latest remodeling by Sir Edward Lutyens, a well-known architect in 1906, resulted in the reduction of the cottages from 11 to 8.

One more interesting note about the square: When visiting Upper Slaughter in August 2005, I was told that, several decades ago, when civil engineers were trying to put in a new drainage system, they uncovered a long-forgotten underground passageway leading from the old manor house to St. Peter's Church. Given the condition of the tunnel, the workmen immediately sealed up the exposed openings, as they went about their tasks. If the story is true, then the intersection of this secret passageway is located somewhere underneath the large drainage grate adjacent to Bagehott's Square. This begs the question: Is there another underground tunnel leading to Castle Mound? A brochure entitled “St. Peter's Church and the Village of Upper Slaughter” states that there are unauthenticated stories that such a passageway indeed may have been used as part of the defenses of the village during the 12th Century.



Town Hall Located Just to the Southwest of the Square

St. Peter's Church



Church of St. Peter, South Side
Approaching Via the Footpath Leading from Bagehott's Square

Perhaps the most evocative and publicly accessible structure in the village of Upper Slaughter is St. Peter's Church. Clearly, this is no large, ornate cathedral. If you want to see one of these magnificent houses of worship, please go to Salisbury, Bristol, or Gloucester. However, my wife and I absolutely fell in love with this lovely parish church. We found it splendidous in its quiet, spiritual atmosphere, its rich texture of heritage and continuity, and its sense of artistic proportion. We must have visited the place a half dozen times during our two-day stay in the village, and always felt at home.

According to *VHG*, the masonry in the west wall of the tower is of Saxon origin. This indicates that a church or chapel of some sort had been built prior to the Norman invasion. However, most of the structure, in its current form, was built by the Normans. Additions were made throughout the existence of the church, most notably after the church was damaged during an attack against Upper Slaughter in 1145 (possibly in a battle associated with the dynastic struggle between Stephen and Maud). The church was renovated extensively during the latter half of the 19th Century; and this included the addition of a small chapel on the north side of the church interior in memory of the members of the Witts Family.



12th Century Norman-Built Pillars
Photo Taken From the Arcade



Chancel
Photo Taken from the Nave

Castle Mound

Located to the east of St. Peter's and Bagehott's Square, and down toward the bend in the brook, is a fairly nondescript mound on privately owned land. Today, there is little that can be done with the site – mainly because of bureaucratic impediments. I'm not certain about all of the particulars; but according to one archeologist with whom I spoke, British laws governing antiquities are very strict. Digging always causes some destruction of the historical record; and the current regime is meant to discourage further damage to archaeological sites until new technology can be developed, such as synthetic imaging of objects under the surface. The only way new archaeological digs can be authorized with current techniques is if there is some eminent domain imperative, such as a highway project, which could result in damage to the site. In short, it may be decades before anyone is given the opportunity to examine Castle Mound again with more modern tools of science.

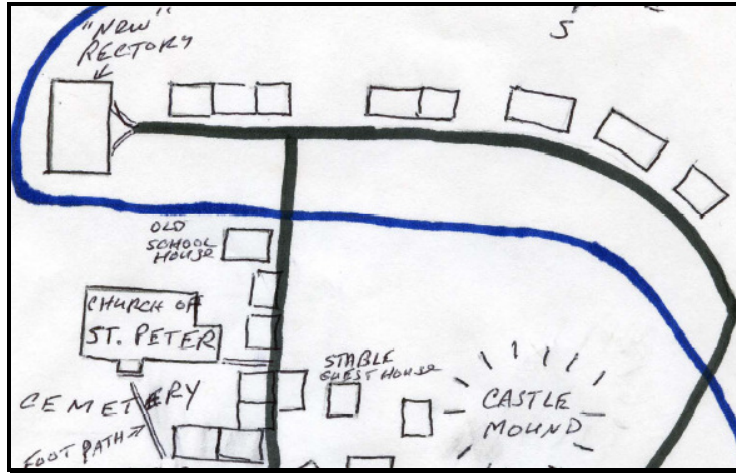
However, the site has been surveyed several times: first in the 19th Century, and again several decades ago. According to the latter investigation, the site contained pottery remnants from the 11th and 12th Centuries, evidence of wooden buildings and stone walls, plus a *La Tene* brooch (typically a bronze Celtic pendant from the Romano-British period). Discounting the brooch, this has led archaeologists to conclude that the mound was once the site for a small motte and bailey castle, used mainly during the 11th and 12th Centuries. The castle's outer defenses consisted of the River Ey on north and east sides, and a moat of about eight meters wide and four meters deep, circling around the west and possibly south sides. Above the motte, which featured a stone wall as a defensive bulwark, was a flat surface for the bailey, measuring approximately 2.7 meters high and 22 meters across. The bailey was also enclosed by a stone wall; however, the main buildings, including possibly an interior keep or tower, were constructed of wood. The archaeological investigation also revealed that the castle contained an independent water supply in the form of a stone-lined well.



Castle Mound

“New” Rectory

Just across the scenic brook, located to the north of St. Peter’s, Bagehott’s Square, and Castle Mound, are a series of beautiful Cotswold cottages, which make up the last section of Upper Slaughter covered by these notes.



North of the Brook

The most scenic way to approach this portion of the village is to walk down the hill from St. Peter’s, passing the old school house on the left, and crossing over the ford. As you turn left and head down the road, you will see the last building at the end of the village. This structure (noted on the above sketch as the *new Rectory*), was built in 1875 to house the Rector of Upper Slaughter, as the Witts Family had converted the *old* Rectory into the *new* Manor, when they acquired the manorial rights to the village. This second Rectory, in turn, became known as the *Old Rectory*, when church commissioners sold the property in 1955 (VHG).



Second Rectory (at the Far End of the Road)

APPENDIX

Selected Photos of Upper Slaughter and Nearby Villages



St Peter's Cemetery



East-West Footpath to St Peter's

HERE LYETH BVRYED THE BODY OF IOHN SLAUGHTER
OF OVER SLAUGHTER IN THE COVNTY OF
GLOVC ESQVIER WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE IN THE
YEARE OF OVR LORD GOD ONE THOWSAND FIVE
HYNDRED FOVRSCORE AND THREE
MEMENTO MORI

HERE LYETH BVRIED THE BODY OF ELIANOR
SLAUGHTER THE WIFE OF IOHN SLAUGHTER
AFORESAID AND THE ELDEST DAUGHTER VNTO
WILLIAM BAGHOTT OF PRESBYRY IN THE COVNTY
OF GLOVC ESQVIRE WHICH SAYDE ELIANOR
DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE NINTH OF IANVARIE
IN THE YERE OF OVR LORD GOD ONE THOWSAND
FYVE HYNDRED FOVRSCORE AND SEAVENTENE
HODIE MIHI CRAS TIBI.

HERE LYETH BVRYED THE BODY OF
PARIS SLAUGHTER SONNE AND HEIRE
VNTO IOHN SLAUGHTER ESQVIRE
WHO DIED THE XVIIIth OF FEBRVARY
IN THE YERE OF OVR LORD 1597 AND
IN THE 55. YERE OF HIS AGE.

Memorials in St Peter's Church to John Slaughter "the Emigrant's" Grandfather (John Slaughter), Grandmother (Elianor Baghott Slaughter), and Father (Paris Slaughter)



**Slaughter Family Arms
on Church Wall**



Passage Way from Road to Old Rectory



Cottage in Upper Slaughter



Converted Stable House in Upper Slaughter



Village of Naunton



Mill at Naunton



Bourton-on-the-Water



Bruce and Suzanne Slawter