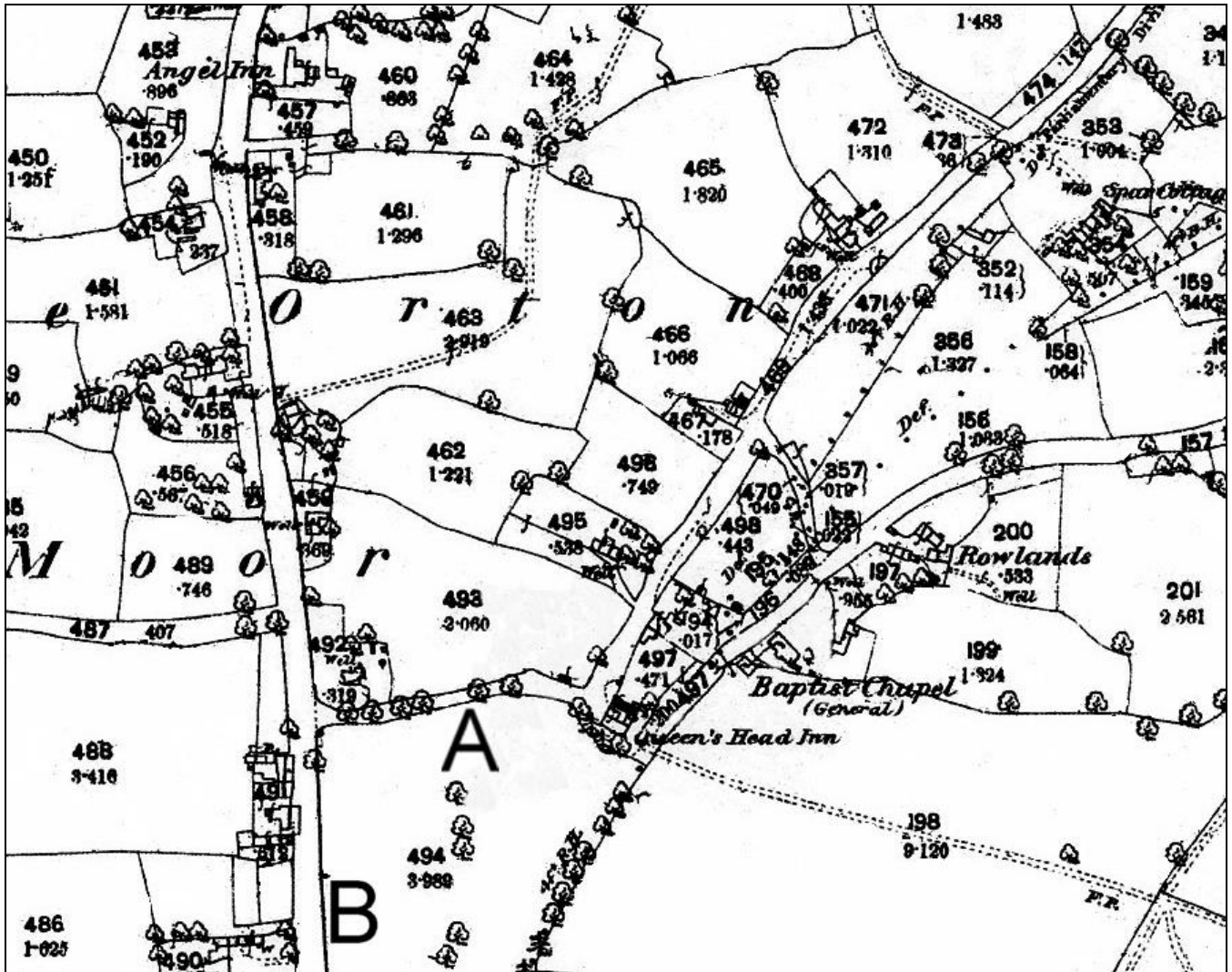


**THE QUEEN'S HEAD INN -
AN OLD COLEORTON ALE HOUSE
(Research period - 1753 to 1881)**



DRAFT ONLY - ONGOING PROJECT

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - MARCH 2023



The “Queen’s Head”, Coleorton after being converted into a modern residential property some years ago c.1980

PREFACE

The map on the front cover is an extract from the 1881 surveyed 25" O/S map and establishes the location of the Queen's Head Inn and the surrounding geographical area including the Rowlands and the Swannington Baptist Chapel. The letter **A** and **B** indicate Moor Lane and The Moor respectively.

There has been some conjecture as to whether the Queen's Head Inn was originally located in the Township of Thringstone which in turn was part of the Ecclesiastical parish of Whitwick, prior to being transferred into Coleorton Parish in 1936 when various boundaries were realigned. The Coleorton 1842 Tithe map identifies it as being in Coleorton and perhaps more importantly, the Leicestershire licensing records identify it as being in Coleorton.

Thringstone had its own Queen's Head Inn, this formed the end of a row on the east side of the village green, and was built sometime after 1807 as it was not shown on the 1807 enclosure map.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a paucity of information recorded about the Queen's Head Inn, Coleorton, however, the Newspapers, Trade Directories, Licensing and Census records have proved invaluable in establishing certain facts about the history of this building in terms of age, and its licensees. It was occasionally referred to as the "Old Queen's Head Inn", presumably due to its considerable age, traced back to 1753 as an "Ale House", when John Potter was the victualler.

It is the view of the author that the original Queens Head building would have been an 18th century farm house where a room was provided for the sale of Ale. The licensing records from **1872 to 1876** recorded it as an Ale House still, which was only five years prior to its license being discontinued in 1881. Previous to that, there were no entries for the type of license held. From 1877 to 1880 it is recorded as "Old License" and in its final year as "Victuallers", which was a term often used to describe licensees of Ale House and Beer Houses.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, incorporating an *Ale House* and/or a shop within a farm house was quite common, as was the case for example with its near neighbour the *Angel Inn*. The wife usually looked after the *Ale house* whilst the husband worked on the farm or at another job like coal mining. Victuals (food) would have normally been on offer at *Ale Houses* for the weary travellers, who often came from the close by turnpike roads to purchase this, in addition to alcoholic beverages, and even a room for the night. The Queen's Head was within a stone's throw of the Coleorton extension of the Hinckley to Melbourne common turnpike.

Ale houses, were not required to have a named sign until an Act was passed in 1825 requiring this, although, the Queen's Head was named a few years prior to that. **The name of the *Queen's Head Inn* possibly derives from when the pub sign may have displayed a picture of Elizabeth 1.**

We know that Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont's owned the Queen's Head in 1842 as it is confirmed in the 1842 Coleorton Tithe record schedule, but no tenant was given at the time.

The Leicestershire Ale House Recognisance records do not list any owners of the Queen's Head until 1872 up to its closure in 1881 when Sir George Howland Beaumont, 9th Baronet, is given as the owner. He died in 1882.

EARLIEST RECORD FOUND WHICH ACTUALLY NAMES THE QUEEN'S HEAD

*On Saturday 27th December 1806, the famous Poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote in his diary that he went from Coleorton where he was staying with Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy at Hall Farm, to the Queen's Head. Here he believed (probably due to his copious consumption of opium and brandy at this time), that he had seen Wordsworth and Sara Hutchinson (his sister-in-law) who he had fallen in love with, in bed together. It was here also where he had a vision of Sara's naked breast apparently, a vision that he carried with him for many years, and subsequently wrote about it several times. He was haunted by nightmares and irrepressible feelings of primitive jealousy towards Wordsworth at the time. See **Coleridge's diaries for further detailed information.***

Coleorton Hall was in the final stages of being rebuilt from the old manor house for Sir George Howland Beaumont, 7th Baronet and his wife Lady Margaret. It was during this time that Wordsworth was working on the "Winter Garden" layout and he, his sister Dorothy and Samuel Coleridge with his son Hartley were staying at Hall Farm whilst the Beaumonts' were at their Winter residence in London.



Samuel Taylor Coleridge with his son Hartley aged 10, at the time he would have been visiting Hall Farm with his father as described above.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER WHICH MAKE REFERENCE TO THE QUEEN'S HEAD INN

Leicester Journal – July 9th 1830

Superior oak Timber
To be sold by Auction,
By B. Cheatle,

On Monday, July 12th, 1830, at **Mr. Thomas Stinson's the Queen's Head Inn, Coleorton**, in the county of Leicester, at three o'clock in the afternoon,

600 capital oak trees in various sized lots for the convenience of purchasers.

Descriptive particulars may be had ten days previous to sale, of the auctioneers, Ashby de la Zouch, at the place of sale, and of Thomas Lord, the woodman, who will shew the lots and may be found daily by application at the **Newbold toll bar**.

N.B. Credit on approved joint security until the 6th day of April next.

Coleorton Hall, June 21st 1830

Thomas Stinson was installed as licensee in 1829 due to a problem with Francis Potter, but the record of this has been mislaid by the author. Francis Potter was reinstated the following year.

Leicester Chronicle – November 30th 1830

On Friday last, the constable of Coleorton, had in custody a man of notorious character, on a charge of felony; They were returning into a room at the "Queen's Head Inn", which they had just left, Mr. Constable marching first, when he suddenly heard the back door open – Saw his prisoner escape, and clamber over the garden wall. In his retreat, the prisoner fell in with the person whom he had robbed, but the latter only having one leg, the chances were two to one against him in the pursuit, and the rogue, for the present remains at large.

The journalist must have been a comedy script writer in his spare time!!

Continued over page

COLEORTON, LEICESTERSHIRE.
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
BY J. TOONE,
At the House of Mr. F. Potter, the Queen's Head
Inn, in the parish of Thringstone, on Monday,
the 10th day of October, 1831, at 4 o'clock in the
afternoon precisely,
ALL that HOUSE and BAKEHOUSE at-
tached; also, two Tenements, and a Chapel,
with convenient outbuildings, gardens, and about
1½ Acre, more or less, of excellent Pa-ture
Land; the whole now in the occupation of Mr.
Thomas Potter and his under-tenants.
To view the above, apply to Thomas Potter, on
the premises; and for further particulars, to the
Auctioneer, Baxter-gate, Loughborough.
One-half of the purchase-money may remain on
the property, if required.

This does not involve the sale of the Queen's Head

Leicester Chronicle – July 28th 1832 (advertisement)

Freehold Chapel at Swannington
In the county of Leicester
To be sold by auction
By B. Cheatle

At Mr. Potter's the Queen's Head Inn in Thringstone (**actually in Coleorton - see heading**), in the county of Leicester on Wednesday, the 1st day of August next at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, subject to conditions to be then produced.

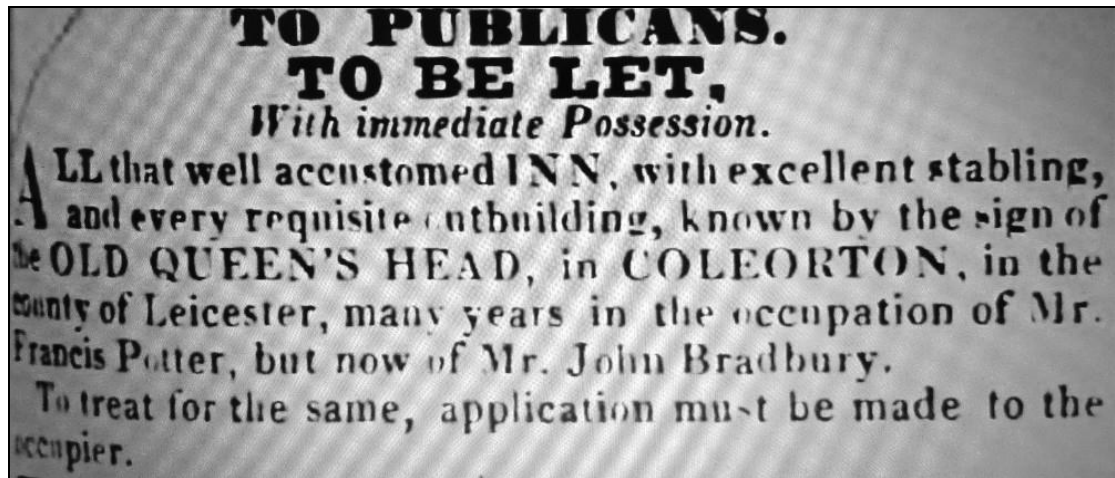
All that building recently erected for, and now, for sometime past, used as a chapel, or place of worship, by a society of the particular Baptists, situate near "The Rowlands", in Swannington aforesaid, with the appurtenances thereto belonging. The property is capable of being converted into dwelling houses at a trifling expense, and immediate possession may be had.

To view the premises, applications to be made to Mr. Boulton, of Coleorton, of whom, or of Messrs Dewes and Fisher, solicitors, Ashby de la Zouch further particulars may be obtained.

Ashby de la Zouch July 23rd 1832.

Supplementary information – At this time, the particular Chapel used by the Baptists and referred to above was situated near to "The Queens Head", and was in the chapelry of Swannington, even though "The Queen's Head" was in Coleorton. Sir George Beaumont would not allow nonconformist places of worship to be built in Coleorton at this time, but he later became the owner of the chapel.

Leicester Journal – March 21st 1834



**TO PUBLICANS.
TO BE LET,
With immediate Possession.**

ALL that well accustomed INN, with excellent stabling,
and every requisite outbuilding, known by the sign of
the OLD QUEEN'S HEAD, in COLEORTON, in the
county of Leicester, many years in the occupation of Mr.
Francis Potter, but now of Mr. John Bradbury.
To treat for the same, application must be made to the
occupier.

Note the reference to the "Old Queen's Head", in Coleorton

Leicester Journal - Friday 11th March 1836

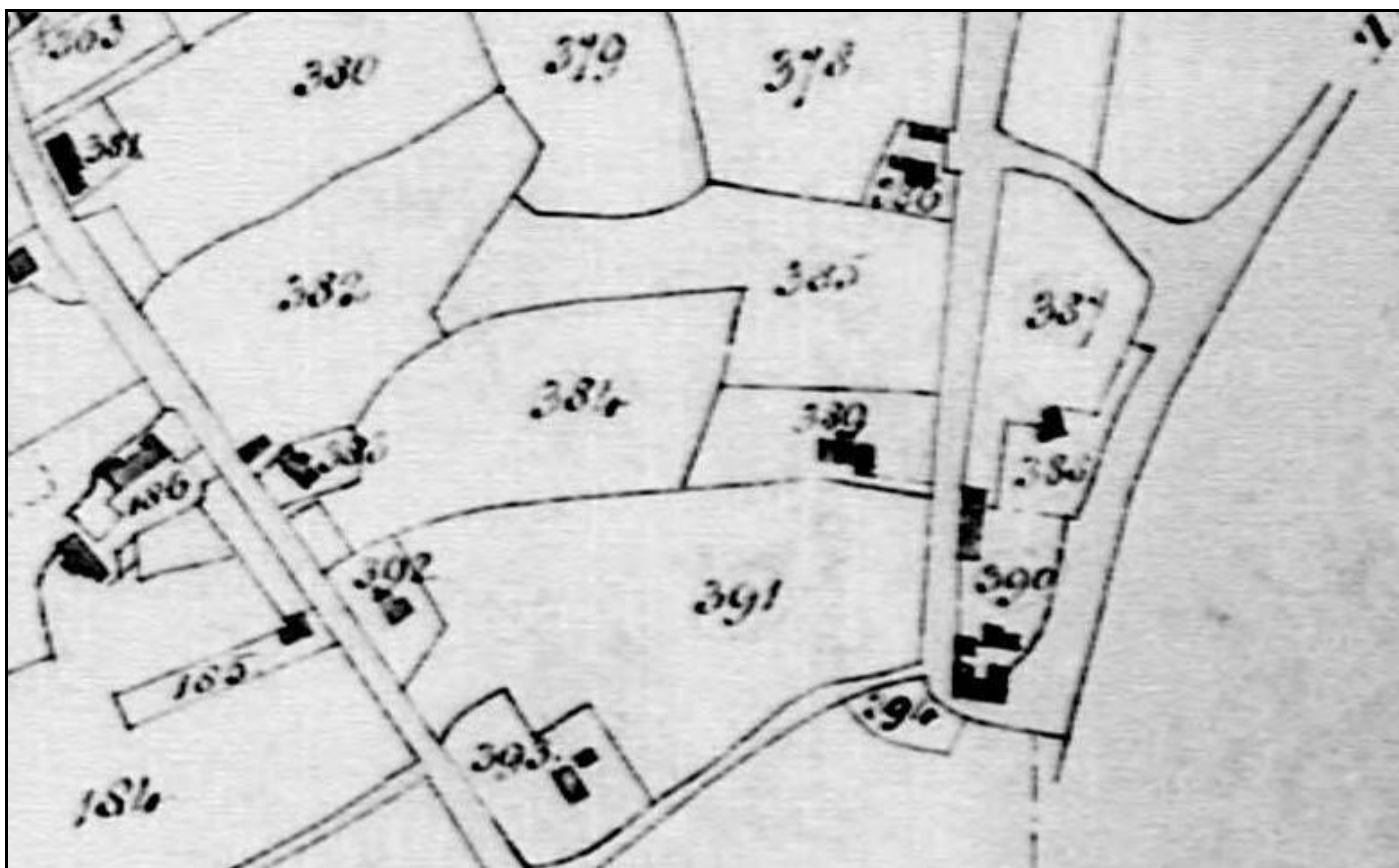
TO BE LET

All that newly erected (**thought to mean rebuilt**) capital messuage, garden, and land adjoining, containing 3 roods or thereabouts, together with an excellent brew house, gig house, and commodious stabling for 15 horses, and other convenient outbuildings, at present known as "The Old Queen's Head Inn", now in the occupation of Mr. Robert Bostock, who is quitting the same on Lady Day next, and situate in the Township of Thringstone (**incorrect, as it was in the parish of Coleorton**), in the County of Leicester and adjoining the Ashby, Loughborough, Hinckley and Melbourne turnpike roads.

The above is adapted for a shop of general business, having a great extent of warehouse room, and a very populous neighbourhood, or it is also well calculated for a genteel residence. The tenant may be accommodated with a small quantity of excellent grass land adjoining if required.

For further particulars apply (if by letter post paid) to Mr. E. B. Knight (**Edward Butt**), land surveyor, Coleorton, Nr Ashby de la Zouch - **Edward Butt Knight was Sir George Beaumont's land agent at this time.**

The wording of the preceding 1834 article, which refers to "excellent stabling and every requisite outbuilding" infers that it had been re-built by that time



An extract from the 1842 Coleorton Tithe map showing the Queen's Head on plot 390. This presumably reflects the rebuild and also confirms the Queen's Head was in Coleorton. It was in the ownership of Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont, 8th baronet at this time.

The building to the north of the plot could well be the stables referred to.

Leicester Chronicle – June 2nd 1877

Lodge Anniversary – An impressive and successful lodge demonstration came off on Whit Tuesday. The brothers of “The Royal Beaumont Lodge, No. 1920, M.U.”, celebrated their anniversary at host Charville’s Beaumont Arms, and had in use the beautiful regalia of the order. Assembling at the Lodge House, the brethren proceeded to the parish church, where a suitable sermon was given by the Rev. W. B. Beaumont, and the advice there cannot readily be forgotten. After service, the brothers visited Sir George H. Beaumont at Coleorton Hall, the rectory, Mr. Faux of Farm Town, The Kings Arms and **The Queen’s Head Inn**, and on arriving at their spacious room at the Beaumont Arms, a sumptuous dinner was awaiting them, which was doubly enjoyed. The rector presided, faced by Bro. Thomas Lord. The board of “Directors of the Order” was given and responded to by G. P. M. Mills. Sir George and Lady Beaumont were received with musical honours, also, “The Rector” and “Mrs. Beaumont”, with many friendly expressions from the brotherhood. The “Officers of the Lodge” was then given, and responded to by P. P. G. M. Peters – songs and speeches and resitations followed.

Leicester Chronicle – September 15th 1877

Lodge Anniversary – The “Templar of Friendship” Lodge (ancient order of Druids) held their annual meeting on wake Tuesday, at the “**Queen's Head Inn**”. After an appropriate sermon by the Rev. W. Beaumont, a procession was formed, which wound its way to the hall, the residence of Sir G. H. Beaumont, 9th Bart. On returning to the **Queen's Head**, the members sat down to an excellent repast provided by the worthy host. Dr. Hatchett was called to the chair, and had for his vis-à-vis Mr. Horne, M.N.A. Druid. The usual Royal and patriotic toasts were given from the chair. The health of Sir George Beaumont, and also that of the Rector and Mrs. Beaumont were enthusiastically drunk. Votes of thanks were given to the chairman, surgeons and others.

Leicester Chronicle – September 4th 1880

The Wake – The wake this year was ushered in by one of the heaviest thunderstorms remembered by the oldest inhabitants. Happily we have not yet heard of any damage with the one exception of a valuable game fowl, the property of Mr. Thomas Peters, which was killed in the pen by lightning.

On Monday, at Mr. James Peters, the “Queens Head Inn”, there was a well conducted party. The attraction was a fine selection of music. Miss Peters presided at the pianoforte, and her efforts to please were greatly appreciated.

On Tuesday, Mr. Porter, distributed soup, &c., to those whose means precluded them from participating in the good things of the festive season, at Mr. Charville’s “Beaumont Arms Inn”.

There was a display of shows &c., on The Green. There was also a shooting gallery and photographic establishment.

The “George Inn” – a hostelry famed from the grand old coaching days – fully maintained its ancient character. This old road side Inn is one of the prettiest in Leicestershire. The garden adjoining is aglow with sweet and beautiful roses, and the stately and venerable elm tree in front, is the admiration of all who gaze upon its fine and lofty proportions.

Continued over page

LICENSEE DETAILS FOR THE QUEEN'S HEAD ALE HOUSE -

COMPILED FROM THE LEICESTERSHIRE ALE HOUSE RECOGNISANCE BOOKS AND THE LEICESTERSHIRE LICENSING RECORDS FOR COLEORTON, AND CONFIRMED IN CERTAIN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, AND TRADE DIRECTORIES

Having made an educated **study** of the Leicestershire Ale House Recognisance books which are available back to 1753, the author is of the view that the Potter family were licensees of the Queen's Head Ale House from 1753 to c.1832, as shown below, apart from one year in 1829 when Thomas Stinson was installed due to some issue which the author cannot locate details of in his records now.

It cannot be a coincidence that a John Potter who was born in 1717 and the husband of Elizabeth, died aged 57 on May 26th 1774 is buried in St. Mary's Churchyard, Coleorton. **This is the year before Richard Potter (possibly his son) took over as licensee of the Queen's Head**

John Potter - Licensee 1753 to 1773

Richard Potter - Licensee 1774 to 1815

Francis Potter - 1816 to c.1832 (Thomas Stinson installed as licensee in 1829 due to an issue with Francis Potter)

John Bradbury - Licensee in March 1833 (took over from Francis Potter)

No information in licensing records available between 1833 to 1846

James Gough - Aug 26th 1846 to Aug 24th 1860 and then transferred to James Beckwith / Beckwith

James Beckwith - Held license till November 1860 and then transferred to Thomas Birkin.

Thomas Birkin - Held license till Aug 31st 1872 then transferred to son-in-law James Peters

James Peters - Aug 31st 1872 to Aug 27th 1881 - Licensee and Spar / bauble manufacturer at the Queen's head

License discontinued in 1881

The following newspaper article which appeared in the Leicester Journal on Saturday 14th June 1777, adds further confirmation to the Potters' being at the Queens Head in those early years as given in the preceding table. Richard Potter was the licensee at this time.

It additionally confirms the completion of the Hinckley to Melbourne common turnpike by this date.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, That the Tolls arising at the Toll-Gates on Hinkley-Melbourn Road, called or known by the names of Hoo-Ash, Brandy-Lane, Swannington and Old Lane Gates, together with the Side-Bars to them belonging,—likewise Engine and Cart-Bridge Gates together,—Newbold and Staunton-Harrold Gates together,—and Redwood Gate separate,—will be Lett by Auction to the best Bidders, at the House of Mr. POTTER on Coleorton-Moor, known by the name of the Queen's-Head, on the 8th day of July next, between the Hours of 11 o'clock in the Forenoon and 6 in the Afternoon on the same day.—And likewise the Tolls arising at the Hinkley-Gate, Osbatton-Gate, including the side Bars adjoining,—and Swepton Gate will be Lett separately by Auction to the best Bidders, at the House of Mr. SAMPSON's, in Heather, on the 29th day of July next, between the Hours of 11 o'clock in the Forenoon and 6 o'clock in the Afternoon on the same day, in manner directed, by the Act passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of his Majesty King George the Third, which Tolls produced the last year ending September 29, 1776, the following mentioned Sums above the expence of collecting them.

		£.	s.	d.
Hoo-Ash				
Brandy-Lane	}			
Swannington				
and Old-Lane Gates				
Side bars belonging to the same				
				the Sum of 671 0 5

Engine. and Cartbridge-Gates	}	102 6 5
Newhold, and Stanton-Harrold Gates	}	78 17 7
And Redwood-Gate,		the sum of 30 17 5
Hinkley-Gate,		the sum of 95 17 2
Osbatton Gate, and side Bars adjoining	}	169 2 3
Swepton-Gate,		208 4 5

And will be put up at those Sums.—Whoever happens to be the best Bidder, must at the same time give Security, with sufficient Sureties, to the satisfaction of the Trustees of the said Turnpike-Road, for the payment of the Rents agreed for at such times as they shall direct.

HENRY EAMES,
Clerk to the Trustees of the said
Turnpike-Road.

Dated June 5, 1777.

Probably the most well known and recorded person to hold the license at the Queen's Head was James Peters. Trade Directories dated 1876, 1877, and 1881, confirm James Peters senior's, Spar and Bauble manufacturing business as operating from the Queens Head Inn, Workhouse Lane (now Moor Lane), which he had been doing since he became the licensee there on August 31st 1872.

We know that James Peters senior came back to Coleorton from North St, Whitwick before 1861, as the 1861 census for Coleorton Moor, lists James Peters senior, then aged 48, with his wife Sarah (45) and his son's James junior (19) and Thomas (15), George E (14), William (12), Alfred (4) and daughters Sarah (8) and Clara (1). James senior, James junior and Thomas are all given as Spar Manufacturers. This was before he became licensee at the Queen's Head, and at this time he was thought to be working in the bauble shop next to Heather Cottage on Workhouse Lane.

In the 1871 census for Coleorton Moor, James (58) was listed as an "Ornamental Spar Manufacturer", his wife Sarah (55) as a "Spar Painter", and son Thomas (25) as a "Spar Turner". Daughter Clara (11) is still living with them. The business by this time was known as "James Peters & Son". This presumably referred to his son Thomas, on the basis that James Peters junior by 1881 (39) had started his own Spar ornament / bauble manufacturing company in what became known as "Bauble Yard", Thringstone.

In "Wright's Directory of Leicestershire 1892", and "Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland 1895", James Peters junior is listed as a Spar Ornament Manufacturer and Sub-Postmaster / Post Office, Thringstone. Apparently, by the turn of the century the business had declined and was closed down prior to his death in 1909 aged about 67.

The Coleorton 1881 census (4 months prior to its closure as a licensed house) records James Peters as "Licensed Victualler Queen's Head Inn" with his wife Sarah and daughter Clara as a barmaid. There is no mention of Spar or Bauble manufacturing which had been carried out there by the Peter's family during their tenure.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

LAND AGENTS TO THE BEAUMONTS'

Edward Butt Knight (**see page 7**) was land agent to Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont, 8th baronet, for many years. He died in 1844 and William Sherwin junior (b.1809) of Coleorton (Solicitor / Attorney) became land agent, steward and solicitor to Sir George Howland Beaumont, 9th baronet, when he attained his majority in 1849 - Publications on both the 8th and 9th baronets are free to download and read on the authors website along with other Beaumonts' biographies.



Placed adjacent to the west wall of St. Mary's church graveyard