

THE COBB MANSION, ADDERBURY and some of its occupants

Nicholas Allen

Most English villages traditionally have a manor house where the lord of the manor/squire resided and presided over manorial/parish life. Adderbury, by the eighteenth century, had nine large houses any one of which could have been the 'Manor House'. The Domesday survey recorded Adderbury as being divided into three manors and, quite soon after, these three manors became five manors – hence the parish was never overseen by one manorial lord. Adderbury, pre-Domesday, was split into East and West Adderbury. In the late eighteenth century when parish vestries were replaced by parish councils Adderbury was still divided into two civil parishes. Each by then had its own parish council (though it had only one parish church!); eventually East and West Adderbury were conjoined in 1971.

East Adderbury had the two largest houses, both sited close to The Green. Adderbury House was about a hundred yards to the east (across the main road, behind the Red Lion inn).¹ The Cobb Mansion, the subject of this paper, was sited on the southern side of The Green. The present Sir George's Lane separated it from the Jacobean house (now known as The Rookery), a smaller but still substantial house.

The section reproduced opposite from a 1735 plan of Adderbury has a sketch of the Cobb Mansion at its correct location (marked by an arrow). Alongside it is an extract from the 1881 OS Map showing where the site of the Cobb Mansion used to be (plot 162). The house faced north/south – the front elevation facing directly onto the village green. The rear of the house looked south over the valley to the ridge that carries the road from Deddington to Hempton. Argyll's cartographer was no doubt being tactful when he drew the Cobb Mansion somewhat smaller than Adderbury House.

¹ For the house and its occupants, see the *Oxfordshire VCH*, IX, *Bloxham Hundred*, pp.7-10; N. Allen, *Adderbury: A thousand years of history*, pp.95-105; and for an archaeological investigation of the site, the report by S.D.G. Weaver, with an introduction by N. Allen, *Oxoniensia* LXXI (2007 for 2006), pp.413-21. Fuller details are given under 'Further Reading', page 205.