

Economic Activity

Francis Boorman

Agriculture

In the 1530s Leland observed that the soil in the stony fields around Cirencester was more suited to barley than wheat and that around the town, as in the Cotswolds, there was 'smawl plenty of wood except in few places kept of necessite.'¹ After riding about a mile on the Foss Way and turning south, Leland came upon 'champayn ground', with plenty of corn and grass but still very little wood.²

Of the 355 men mustered in 1608 (including those with no occupation given), 14 were engaged in agriculture (4.3 per cent). These included six husbandmen, two yeomen, three gardeners and three shepherds. It is probable that many of the 43 labourers were also engaged in agriculture, at least for part of the year, and that some, if not all of the five gentlemen owned farmland.³ A Cirencester poll book of 1768 also listed 14 men engaged in agriculture from a total of 717. In that year there were nine gardeners, three yeomen, one husbandman and one farmer. Once again, some of the 77 labourers listed were probably working in agriculture.⁴

In 1712 Atkyns described the land around Cirencester as mostly arable, with a 'good Share' of meadow, pasture and woods..⁵ The major tract of woodland was Oakley Wood⁶. From 1716 this was incorporated by Allen Bathurst (1684–1775) into the parkland of his estate and was the site of Alfred's Hall, the first recorded Gothick garden building in England.⁷ In 1801 the acreage of crops in the parish was: 330.5 of wheat, 323.5 of barley, 116 of oats, 21 of potatoes, 15 of peas, 70 of beans, 175 of turnips and 7 of rye.⁸ In 1807 there was over 900 a. of arable and pasture land in the tithing of Chesterton, much of it owned by the Bathurst estate.⁹

The *Cirencester Agricultural Association* met from at least 1820 as a branch of the national Agriculture Association, chaired by George Webb Hall. The association protected the interest of agriculturists by petitioning Parliament and vehemently opposed the Corn Laws. The Cirencester Association, chaired by William Day of Tarlton and with Charles Lawrence as its secretary, was upbraided for its apathy by Hall in 1823.¹⁰

¹ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. Toulmin Smith), III, 102.

² Leland, *Itin.*, I, 130.

³ Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239-43.

⁴ D. Rollison, *Commune, Country and Commonwealth: the People of Cirencester, 1117-1643* (Woodbridge, 2011), 259–62.

⁵ Atkyns, *Glos.*, 347.

⁶ See *Manors and Estates*.

⁷ T. Mowl, *Historic Gardens of Gloucestershire* (Stroud, 2002), 67-9.

⁸ *Home Office: Acreage Returns (HO 67): List and Analysis Part I Bedfordshire to Isle of Wight, 1801* (List and Index Society 189, 1982), 170.

⁹ GA, D674b/E90.

¹⁰ GA, D10820/A12-1/a.

Mills

St Mary's/New Mill

Blake, the last abbot of Cirencester, built two fulling mills costing 700 marks (£466), which Leland regarded as essential to the town's clothing trade¹¹ Stone was used from a tower in the old town wall to build the fulling mills called Mary's Mill or New Mill.¹² In 1533-4 the abbot leased the newly built Mary's Mill, comprising a house, four stock mills and one gig mill, to Robert Fowler of Stonehouse. The mill was acquired from Thomas Parry by Cirencester clothier Roger Dune and his wife Margaret in 1571. They mortgaged the mill to Richard Master in 1575, who bought it outright in 1582.¹³ In 1585 the mill comprised three fulling mills and a grist mill, which had recently replaced the gig mill. The mills were then handed down through the Master family.¹⁴ The New Mills, including two stocking mills and two corn mills, were included in William Master's marriage settlement of 1622.¹⁵ In 1685 the New Mills remained in the Master family and contained two corn mills and two 'tucking' or fulling mills.¹⁶ The New Mills were rented by Caleb Self from Thomas Master for £59 a year in 1748.¹⁷ Master later let the mills to Joseph Cripps, Edward Cripps and John Wilkins.¹⁸ According to Rudder, in 1800 the only clothing house in Cirencester employed the same stock mill built by Abbot Blake and mentioned by Leland.¹⁹ Joseph Cripps (son of the previous) continued to lease the New Mills from Jane Master in 1829, when one of the clothing mills had recently been converted into a grist mill.²⁰

Barton/Clarke's Mill

Barton Mill or Clarke's Mill, along with meadow and pasture land, was held by Cirencester abbey and passed to the crown following the Dissolution. It was granted by Elizabeth I to James Woodford and Thomas Ludwell in 1560 who sold it to Sir Thomas Parry. He in turn sold it to Margaret and William Partridge in 1570. Partridge leased the two fulling mills and one water grist or corn mill to a clothier, Richard Seaman, in 1590. In 1606 the mills were purchased by Thomas and Robert Master.²¹ The mills then stayed in the Master family for over a century. The Barton Mills, consisting of a mill house and two water grist mills or corn mills, but no longer any fulling mills, were sold by Thomas Master to Lord Bathurst for £525 in 1730.²²

Langley's/Watemoor Mill

The third mill in Cirencester powered by the Churn, Langley's Mill, has also been known as Watermoor, Barton's, Driver's, Deighton's, Brambles' and Old Mills.²³ It was part of the Langley

¹¹ Leland, *Itin.*, I (1964), 129.

¹² Leland, *Itin.*, III (1964), 101.

¹³ GA, D674b/T8.

¹⁴ GA, D674b/E73.

¹⁵ GA, D674b/E73.

¹⁶ GA, D674b/T27.

¹⁷ GA, D674b/E73.

¹⁸ GA, D674b/T21.

¹⁹ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 171.

²⁰ GA, D674b/T21.

²¹ GA, D674b/T9.

²² GA, D2525/T113; D674b/T9.

²³ GA, D10989/1/28, R. Walls, 'Langley's Mill, Cirencester', *Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society Newsletter* 28 (May 1986), 4.

estate, but was at some point bought by John Coxwell. In 1579 Coxwell was the plaintiff against Richard Master, owner of Mary's Mill, which was upriver from Langley's in a dispute over water rights.²⁴ There had been complaints from the tenants of Langley's Mills since 1563 about water being prevented from flowing through 'Furnes Hole', which had provided an added water source, by the tenants of Mary's Mill.²⁵ Robert Stevens' will of 1647 states that he was a miller from Watermoor.²⁶ Richard Bridges died in 1672 and the Watermoor grist mill was part of his estate inherited by his son, also Richard. The mill had previously been occupied by William Pullen and was currently or recently occupied by Joseph Hamlin.²⁷ Another miller named William Pullen died in Cirencester in 1710 and it is possible that he followed family tradition and worked at Langley's.²⁸ The mill remained in the Bridges family until 1778, when it passed by the will of George Bridges of Rownham (Hants.) to his sister Delitia Barton, wife of Robert Barton, for life with reversion to his nephew, Thomas Lord Baron Pelham. Pelham and the Bartons sold the mill to the Thames and Severn Canal Company in 1787.²⁹

In 1797 arbitrators advised damming the Churn to provide a fair share of water between Watermoor and Mary's Mill, now owned by Joseph and Edward Cripps.³⁰ The Thames and Severn Canal Company leased the mill to William Brewer, a Cirencester innkeeper, for 21 years in 1801 and Brewer agreed to purchase the mill in 1802,³¹ although it was bought by Joseph Cripps later the same year.³² By 1808 the mill was being used as to grind edge tools instead of as a grist mill.³³ Joseph Cripps sold the mill property to Jane Master in 1840.³⁴

Nurseries and seedsmen [by Jan Broadway]

In 1775 there were two plant nurseries on adjoining sites behind the Ram Inn, run by the brothers Joseph and Thomas Carpenter.³⁵ Joseph Carpenter also grew plants on a close in Watermoor.³⁶ In 1782 Samuel Smith, formerly a servant at Cirencester Park, took over Joseph Carpenter's nursery³⁷ and in 1789 was growing trees on a site beside the newly opened canal extension.³⁸ The business was continued by his son Alexander Smith with retail premises in Dyer Street.³⁹ Joseph Carpenter's nursery was continued after his death by his wife and sons, but in 1796 the retail

²⁴ GA, D674b/L3.

²⁵ GA, D674b/L1 and D674b/L2.

²⁶ GDR Wills, 1647/133.

²⁷ GA, D1388/III/184.

²⁸ GDR Wills, 1710/195.

²⁹ GA, D674b/T72.

³⁰ GA, D674b/E11; TS/208/4–5.

³¹ GA TS/211/1; TS/194/88.

³² GA, D674b/T72.

³³ GA, D12732/1.

³⁴ GA, D674b/T72.

³⁵ *Glouc. Journal*, 23 Oct. 1775, 6 Nov. 1778 & 29 Oct. 1781; GDR Wills, 1783/100.

³⁶ GDR Wills, 1783/39.

³⁷ *Glouc. Journal*, 11 Nov. 1782.

³⁸ *Glouc. Journal*, 9 Nov. 1789.

³⁹ Gell and Bradshaw, *Gloucestershire Directory* (1820), Cirencester: nursery & seedsmen.

premises in the centre of Cirencester were abandoned⁴⁰ and in 1829 the family's five acre nursery in Watermoor was sold.⁴¹ Richard Gregory was subsequently reported to have started his nursery in 1795, so may have acquired the Carpenters' property in 1796.⁴² By 1820 he was operating from premises in Gosditch Street and Castle Street.⁴³

Trade

Trade in Cirencester during the 16th and 17th centuries was dominated by the production and sale of woollen cloth, much of it for export to London and further afield.⁴⁴ In 1608 there were 5 clothiers listed in the town.⁴⁵ John Cripps, clothier, left a fortune of £900 after debts were deducted in 1695, while John Cripps, woolstapler, left a large estate in 1771, including £3,800 to be invested to provide an income for his wife.⁴⁶ The collapse of the manufacturing of cloth in Cirencester led to its decline as a centre for trade in woollen products. The town's tertiary sector became increasingly important during the 18th century.⁴⁷ A directory of 1822 listed more attorneys than woolstaplers.⁴⁸

	Gentlemen & professionals	Merchants & manufacturers	retailers	craftsmen	Semi-skilled/unskilled labourers	Agriculturalists
1768	3.0	8.6	17.0	47.4	22.8	1.2
1790	5.4	5.2	21.7	39.0	26.7	2.0
1802	9.0	5.9	19.7	33.3	31.9	0.2
<i>Occupational structure of electorate (%)</i>						

Markets and Fairs

In the mid-16th century Cirencester's market, which was held on Mondays, dominated the local region.⁴⁹ The right to allocate stalls was held by the abbey, and along with two shops beneath the 'Bothehall' was worth 40s. annually.⁵⁰ All of the markets and fairs in Cirencester which had been held by the abbey were granted to Sir Thomas Seymour in 1547, then changed possession along with the manor, eventually passing to the Bathursts during the 1690s.⁵¹ In 1698 Benjamin Bathurst leased the tolls on sale of cattle, corn and grain at the markets and fairs of Cirencester to a yeoman, Samuel Habbage. Habbage paid £19 for the toll on cattle and £21 for the toll on corn

⁴⁰ *Glouc. Journal*, 31 Oct. 1796.

⁴¹ *Glouc. Journal*, 2 Sept. 1826; GA, RX 79.5(3) GS

⁴² GA, D6464/5/2.

⁴³ Gell and Bradshaw, *Gloucestershire Directory* (1820), Cirencester: nursery & seedsmen.

⁴⁴ Rollison, *Commune, Country and Commonwealth*, 121.

⁴⁵ Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239-43.

⁴⁶ GDR Wills, 1695/192; TNA, PROB 11/968/95.

⁴⁷ D. Rollison, 'The fellowship of the town': constituting the commonality of an English country town, Cirencester, c. 1200-1800' in J.P. Bowen and A.T. Brown (eds.), *Custom and Commercialisation in English Rural Society* (Hatfield, 2016), 244-6.

⁴⁸ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 52.

⁴⁹ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. Toulmin Smith), I, 129.

⁵⁰ *Valor Ecclesiasticus* temp. Hen. VIII, vol. 2 (1814), 464.

⁵¹ Cal. Pat. 1547-8, 26.

and grain. This did not include tolls from the fairs recently granted by King William.⁵²

By 1712 Cirencester had a market on Mondays for corn, cattle and provisions and on Fridays for wool, which Atkyns claimed to be the greatest wool market in England.⁵³ According to Rudder, until the second half of the 18th century this market clogged the streets of Cirencester with traffic bringing wool from numerous other counties. However, by 1800 wool dealers travelled directly to the farmhouses and none was sold in the town. The Monday market was still held for general provisions.⁵⁴ Rudder thought the Cirencester corn market was equal to or larger than Gloucester's,⁵⁵ although newspapers in Gloucester and Cheltenham rarely mentioned it in their market reports. By 1800 farmers only brought samples of their grain to market, depriving individual customers of wholesale prices,⁵⁶ although the limited evidence suggests prices were lower in Cirencester than Gloucester.⁵⁷

From old deeds, Rudder identified the existence of cheese, grass, meal and wool markets, which had all fallen into disuse by 1800.⁵⁸ Rudder did not know where the cheese and grass markets were and there are no other records of these two. The wool market was held in the Boothhall, which was mentioned in a grant of former abbey lands as le Bothelhall, along with le Salte Whiche (salt market) and le Canell.⁵⁹ Gabriel Cook rented the Booth Hall or common market house for weighing of wool and yarn for 20 years at a cost of £30 per year in 1706. Cook also leased the weights and seals for weighing wool and yarn for £48 a year from Allen Bathurst.⁶⁰ The meal market was situated to the east of Gosditch Street and north of the parish church. The building at that location was continually referred to as the meal market and storehouse when it was leased by the churchwardens to Joseph Harrison in 1739, in a lease of 1759 and another of 1799,⁶¹ although it had apparently not been used for that purpose long before 1800.⁶²

Widow Mary Jones bought a shop in the butter market near Butcher (Bocher) Row from Charles Livingston, Earl of Newburgh in 1687.⁶³ The vestry agreed in 1717 that the pitching of the butter market belonged to the lord of the manor, not the town.⁶⁴ In 1822 market days were still Mondays and Fridays. The market house, 'ornamented on the front with stone', was considered 'convenient'.⁶⁵

In 1535 the abbey owned the issues of two annual fairs at Cirencester worth 60s.⁶⁶ In 1695 William III granted letters patent for the holding of two annual fairs at Cirencester; one on the Tuesday,

⁵² GA, D2525/E43; See Fairs.

⁵³ Atkyns, *Glos.*, 347.

⁵⁴ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 149.

⁵⁵ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 150.

⁵⁶ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 151–4.

⁵⁷ *Glouc. Journal*, 1 Feb. 1802.

⁵⁸ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 149.

⁵⁹ L&P Hen. VIII, XX (1), p.300.

⁶⁰ GA, D2525/E282.

⁶¹ GA P86/1/CW/3/31.

⁶² Rudder, *Cirencester*, 149.

⁶³ GA, D2525/T91.

⁶⁴ GA P86/1/VE/2/1, f.98.

⁶⁵ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 51.

⁶⁶ *Valor Eccl.* II, 464.

Wednesday and Thursday before Palm Sunday and the other on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday before St Bartholomew's Day (24 August). They were for the sale of cloth, wool, woollen manufactures, horses, cattle 'and all other Merchandizes whatsoever.'⁶⁷ The letters patent were specifically granted to Benjamin Bathurst in 1697, who promised to give stalls for free to encourage attendance.⁶⁸ In 1712 Cirencester had three fairs: on Easter Monday, the feast of Thomas Becket (29 Dec.) and on the feast of St Simon and Jude (28 Oct.).⁶⁹ Atkyns also mentioned two Cloth fairs, although these were discontinued before 1800.⁷⁰

Rudder placed the three annual fairs on Easter Tuesday, 8 July and 8 November.⁷¹ Cirencester also held two statute markets, also known as mops or hiring fairs, on the Mondays before and after 10 October, with a third held if the 10th was itself a Monday.⁷² In 1807 there were fairs on Easter Tuesday, 18 July and 8 November, selling horses and cattle of all kinds.⁷³ In 1822 fairs were held on Easter Tuesday and 8 November for cattle, sheep and horses. A statute fair was held on the Mondays before and after Old Michaelmas (11 Oct.).⁷⁴ In 1823 a new, annual, toll free sheep fair was announced by Earl Bathurst's steward with considerable local support.⁷⁵ At the first fair on 8 September 1823 6,000 sheep were penned and most were sold at advanced prices.⁷⁶

Innkeeping

Several inns were listed by the Court of Augmentations in 1540, including the Angel, the Bell, the Crown, the Hart's Head, the Katherine Wheel, the King's Head and the Lion.⁷⁷ These had probably been formerly owned by the abbey. The court rolls of 1559 indicate the existence of 2 inns that sold provender for horses, 10 common inns with signs and 20 alehouse keepers, as well as 12 inns without signs and 21 sellers of beer to be consumed off the premises, suggesting a town bustling with trade from passing travellers.⁷⁸ In 1686 there were 109 guest beds and stabling for 317 horses in Cirencester's inns.⁷⁹ In 1696 the inn holders and alehouse keepers of Cirencester petitioned the House of Commons complaining that debased coinage and a great reduction of trade in the town had left them 'reduced to so low a Condition, that they are hardly able to maintain themselves and Families'. To make matters worse, a foot regiment had been quartered in their inns for six months without paying for their board and the soldiers demanding payments themselves.⁸⁰

The King's Head, on the north side of the market place, was an important meeting point in the social and commercial life of the town, hosting events such as balls and meals to coincide with the

⁶⁷ *London Gazette*, 27 Jan. 1695 and 10 Feb. 1695.

⁶⁸ *London Gazette*, 21 Mar. 1697.

⁶⁹ Atkyns, *Glos.*, 347.

⁷⁰ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 172.

⁷¹ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 160.

⁷² Rudder, *Cirencester*, 161.

⁷³ T. Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester* (London, 1807), 339.

⁷⁴ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 51.

⁷⁵ *Oxford Journal*, 23 Aug. 1823.

⁷⁶ *Bristol Mercury*, 15 Sept. 1823.

⁷⁷ A.H. Smith, *Place Names of Gloucestershire II* (1964), 63–4.

⁷⁸ GA, D1375/496; K.J. Beecham, *History of Cirencester and the Roman City of Corinium* (Dursley, 1978), 170.

⁷⁹ TNA, WO 30/48, f.67v.

⁸⁰ *CJ* 11, 601.

Cirencester races and innumerable business meetings, such as one for the local subscribers to the Bristol and Cirencester canal in 1794.⁸¹ In 1822 coaches to Bath and Oxford set off from the King's Head.⁸² An inn called the Ram on Gosditch Street was in the tenure of William Style in 1545 as part of a grant of former abbey lands.⁸³ The Ram continued to be an important inn throughout the period and at its most successful stretched from an entrance looking out at the market place along the north side of Castle Street to Silver Street. Lord Chandos called for a Commission of Array to meet at the Ram in 1642 where his coach was attacked by the Parliamentary townspeople.⁸⁴ One long-term proprietor was John Portlock, a barber of Cirencester who leased the Ram for 99 years in 1629.⁸⁵ The lease was bequeathed to his son Rowland Portlock in his will, proved in 1658.⁸⁶ Coaches left from the Ram to London six times a week and to Gloucester three times a week in 1822.⁸⁷

In the 1790s the Universal British Directory of the 1790s identified the King's Head, Ram and Swan as the principal inns in the town.⁸⁸ A list of c.1800 identified 73 inns or taverns in the town organised by ward, of which 41 had been suppressed.⁸⁹ In 1822 the principal inns of the town and their proprietors were the Swan (Mary Brown), the Ram (Robert Tyler) and the Crown (James Hodges) all in Gosditch Street; and the Booth-hall (William Miflin), the Fleece (John Hayward), the King's Head (William Date) and the White Hart (John Fox), all in Dyer Street. A further 28 taverns and public houses were recorded⁹⁰

The Cirencester Brewery Company, as it would later be known, began by purchasing the Bell Inn in 1792 and expanded its portfolio of inns during the early 19th century. The brewery and many of its inns and public houses were taken over by a new partnership during the 1820s. A list of the property conveyed included the brewery and dwelling house at the Bell Inn on Cricklade Street, the King's Head, the General Wolfe, the Black Horse, the little Three Cocks, the Nag's head and the Wheatsheaf, as well as properties further afield in Lechlade, Minchinhampton and Northleach.⁹¹

Manufacturing

Textiles and Leather Trades

The evidence of 16th century wills shows that weaver, tailor and shoemaker were common occupations in Cirencester⁹² The oldest charter of the Cirencester Weavers' Company dates from 1558.⁹³ At a view of frankpledge in 1550 several people were presented by the inspectors of hides

⁸¹ *Oxford Journal*, 9 July 1785; *Glouc. Journal*, 30 Dec. 1793.

⁸² *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 53.

⁸³ L&P Hen. VIII, XX (1), p.300.

⁸⁴ GA, D2510/18.

⁸⁵ Lincolnshire Archives, NEL VI/35/12.

⁸⁶ TNA, PROB 11/276/329.

⁸⁷ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 53.

⁸⁸ *Universal British Directory*, II, 563.

⁸⁹ GA, P86/1/MI/2.

⁹⁰ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 52.

⁹¹ GA, D1443/box1/9.

⁹² GDR Wills, 1550/061, 1551/146 and 1557/296.

⁹³ GA, D4590/1/1.

for being common carriers and selling hides in the market, while the water conservators presented others for putting skins in the watercourse and making it insalubrious.⁹⁴ In 1608 there were 42 weavers, 20 shoemakers, 13 tailors, 9 glovers, 5 saddlers, 4 drapers and 4 cardmakers in the town.⁹⁵

A petition to Parliament in 1698 by the inhabitants of Cirencester complained that several hundred poor people in the area, previously employed in yarn-making and woolcombing, had recently become unemployed and impoverished.⁹⁶ The petitioners called for legislation against engrossers of wool or 'wool-broggers', although the committee responsible for the petition decided that growers should be able to sell their wool to whichever chapman they pleased.⁹⁷ In 1699 Cirencester's dealers in woollen manufactures petitioned Parliament, complaining that too much worsted and yarn was being imported from Ireland into Bristol, which was also hurting the poor of the town. At the same time the clothiers of Cirencester complained that the new charter for the East India Company did not stipulate that any English manufactures be exported by the Company.⁹⁸

Analysis of the occupations given in a poll book of 1768 shows that woolcombers and woolstaplers remained important sources of employment, although textile manufacturing and dealing was to decline sharply by the end of the century.⁹⁹ According to Rudge at the beginning of the 19th century, Cirencester's textile trade was composed predominantly of the manufacture of thin, worsted cloth known as 'chinas', carpet weaving 'in a small way' and the manufacture of woollen cloth for the army and India Company, sent undyed to London. Although substantial numbers were employed in separating wool from the fleece and in spinning, the introduction of machinery was reducing this trade.¹⁰⁰ In 1822 there were 13 boot and shoe makers, 2 breeches and glove makers, 3 hosiers, 4 hat manufacturers, 9 milliners, 4 straw hat manufacturers and 10 tailors, indicating the continuing strength of the retail trade. There were still several linen and woollen drapers and wool staplers, but only a single clothier, Joseph Cripps and Co of New Mills and Stratton.¹⁰¹

Brewing

Much of the beer brewed in early Cirencester would have been made in small brewhouses attached to an alehouse or inn and supplying only a few or even one establishment. A single brewer, Robert Hibbard of Instrope Street, was listed in 1608.¹⁰² The Three Tuns in Dyer Street included 'a good brew house' when it was advertised for let in 1759.¹⁰³ When it was auctioned in 1813, the Anchor Inn was sold along with brewing equipment.¹⁰⁴ The Three Horseshoes also brewed beer in 1821.¹⁰⁵ A brewhouse at the corner of Lewis Lane and Cricklade Street had been

⁹⁴ GA, D1375/495.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239-43.

⁹⁶ *CJ* 12, 91.

⁹⁷ *CJ* 12, 277.

⁹⁸ *CJ* 12, 423.

⁹⁹ Rollison, *Commune, Country and Commonwealth*, 259-65.

¹⁰⁰ Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester*, 341.

¹⁰¹ *Pigot's Directory* (1822), 52-3.

¹⁰² Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239-43.

¹⁰³ *Glouc. Journal*, 3 Apr. 1759.

¹⁰⁴ GA, D177/III/5.

¹⁰⁵ GA, D846/III/10; P86/1/CW/3/20.

converted into cottages when the site was sold along with the adjoining malthouse in 1824.¹⁰⁶ The site would later become home to the Cotswold Brewery.

Three brewers were listed in a directory of 1820: Croome, Cripps and Co in Cricklade Street; John Masters in Thomas Street; and Francis Smith of Cricklade Street.¹⁰⁷ Smith had acquired his brewery from William Hewer.¹⁰⁸ Only two brewers were listed in a directory of 1822: John Masters of Thomas Street and Joseph Cripps and Co of Cricklade Street.¹⁰⁹ By 1823 the Masters Brewhouse was occupied by John Small, having also been in the possession of Daniel Masters.¹¹⁰ The Cirencester Brewery Company, as it would later be known, was started in 1792 after acquiring the brewhouse attached to the Bell Inn. The company was initially owned one-eighth each by Robert Croome and William Croome and one-quarter each by Joseph Cripps, Joseph Pitt and William Lawrence. The brewery and many of its inns and public houses were taken over by a new company during the 1820s. Half was owned by Joseph Cripps, one-sixth each by Edward Cripps, Thomas Byrch and John Byrch.¹¹¹

Edge-tool making

In 1608 there were two cutlers in Cirencester.¹¹² During the 18th century Cirencester became established as a centre for the manufacture of heavy edge-tools. The will of edge-tool maker Robert Wilkins was proved in 1705.¹¹³ The edge tool makers Charles Sloper¹¹⁴, Thomas Rodway¹¹⁵, Robert Lane¹¹⁶, Nathaniel and John Deighton¹¹⁷ and William Wilkins¹¹⁸ were all active in the 1760s. Rudder drew particular attention to the production of knives which carriers used to shave leather; these were sold across Europe and America and were apparently unmatched in quality by anything made in Birmingham or Sheffield.¹¹⁹ There is also evidence that the Cirencester edge-tool makers were innovators. Radway of Cirencester invented two ploughs. The skim-plough, widely used in the Cotswolds, turned the turf completely over and could cover two acres in a day pulled by two horses. The skim-and-go-deep plough pared off the top of the turf and covered it with four or more inches of mould, working particularly effectively in areas with knot grass.¹²⁰ Radway also invented a chaff cutter, operated by three women.¹²¹

¹⁰⁶ GA, D9161/1.

¹⁰⁷ I.P. Peaty, 'The Cirencester Brewery Ltd', *Brewery History* 77 (1994), 25.

¹⁰⁸ GA, D1443/box1/9.

¹⁰⁹ *Pigot's Directory (1822)*, 52.

¹¹⁰ GA, D2957/79/13A.

¹¹¹ GA, D1443/box1/9.

¹¹² Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239-43.

¹¹³ GDR Wills, 1705/171.

¹¹⁴ GA, GDR/Q1/1762/entry 440.

¹¹⁵ GA, GDR/Q1/1766/entry 166.

¹¹⁶ GA, GDR/Q1/1767/entry 30.

¹¹⁷ GA, GDR/Q1/1763/entry 175; GDR/Q1/1771/entry 132.

¹¹⁸ GA, GDR/Q1/1769/entry 26.

¹¹⁹ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 177.

¹²⁰ Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester*, 63.

¹²¹ Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester*, 86-7.