

Topography and the Built Environment

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The Effects of the Dissolution

The manor of Cirencester passed from the abbey into the hands of the crown on 19 December 1539.¹ The dissolution led to the dispersal of the abbey's authority and its physical fabric amongst local notables. The buildings were divided into those considered superfluous, such as the church and chapels, and those preserved as potentially useful for a new tenant, including the abbot's residence and baking, brewing and malting houses.² Custodianship of the manor house and grounds of the abbey was granted to Richard Basing, a wine merchant, inadvertently leading to his imprisonment in Seville.³ The crown retained the use of the roof lead, steeple and other fixtures and fittings of the church which had been removed and melted down by 1541, as well as the abbot's former residence.⁴ The total amount of lead eventually gathered by the crown was estimated at 123 fothers (a cartload, equivalent to c. 1 tonne).⁵ The steeple and surplus houses of the abbey were sold to Sir Anthony Hungerford and Robert Strange, Hungerford's relation by marriage and bailiff to the late abbot. This separate sale caused some friction with Basing who was apparently interfering with their removal of building materials.⁶ Basing also later claimed that a servant of the Duke of Chandos had carried off some lead pipes.⁷ Strange, who had been appointed shortly before the dissolution,⁸ remained as bailiff for nearly fifty years, and led a small group of local men who took over the mantle of authority from the retired abbot.⁹

Several pensions were assigned after the abbey was surrendered, including £200 to Blake, and various pensions to a further 15 monks: £13 6s. 8d. to the prior Richard Woodall, £8 to the cellarer William Warbot and £6 13s. 4d to 12 canons.¹⁰ One monk, William Phelippes (Phelps) did not receive a pension as he was made vicar of the parish church, with all the associated tithes (excepting wheat and sheaves, which went to the crown) and profits, for an annual rent of 53s. 4d.¹¹ He had to supply wine and wax at his own expense and find three chaplains.¹² Lay annuities continued to be paid to Sir Anthony Kingston and Thomas Edgar.¹³

Some of the demesne lands of the abbey were granted in farm for 21 years to the auditor William

¹ Hockaday Abs. CLV.

² See Cirencester Abbey, Dissolution.

³ R. Reece, 'The Abbey of St Mary, Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 81 (1962), 201.

⁴ Hockaday Abs. CLV, 19 Dec 1539 and 13 July 1541; TNA E 117/14/28.

⁵ A.K.B. Evans, 'Cirencester Abbey: From Heyday to Dissolution', *TBGAS* 111 (1993), 135.

⁶ TNA E 321/17/48; R. Reece, 'The Abbey of St Mary, Cirencester', *TBGAS* 81 (1962), 201-2.

⁷ Hockaday Abs. XXXIX, 1557.

⁸ Rev. E.A. Fuller, 'Cirencester: the manor and the town', *Trans. BGAS* 9 (1884-5), 340.

⁹ D. Rollison, *Commune, Country and Commonwealth: the People of Cirencester, 1117-1643* (Woodbridge, 2011), 99.

¹⁰ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XIV, 255–62, 705; Hockaday Abs. CLV, 12 Feb. 1540.

¹¹ Hockaday Abs. CLV, 12 Feb. 1540; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XV, pp.29–55, 139.

¹² W. St. Clair Baddeley, *A History of Cirencester* (Cirencester, 1924), 224.

¹³ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVIII, 254–72; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XIX, 235–61; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XX, 262–78; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XXI, 305–34; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XXI, 388–453.

Berners on 1 May 1540, consisting of Oakley manor with pasture and woodland at £22 10s. a year and Barton Grange with arable land, pasture and meadow at £14 13s. 2d.¹⁴ Spital and Almery granges, along with the abbey's lands in Minety (Glos., later Wilts) and arable, meadow and pasture land were leased to Roger Basing on 12 May 1540, also for 21 years, for £32 10s. 10d. annually, with the crown retaining use of all big trees and woods.¹⁵ Although the abbey's lands in Cirencester no longer included the value of customary labour from tenants, the Minety lease explicitly transferred this service to Basing.¹⁶ The manors of Latton and Eisey (both Wilts) which the abbey owned were sold to Sir Anthony Hungerford.¹⁷ Thomas Weldon was granted the manor of Canon Courte and the rectory and advowson of the vicarage of Cookham (Berks.), also properties of the abbey, in 1541.¹⁸ Further lands were sold in Oxfordshire,¹⁹ Berkshire, Gloucestershire,²⁰ Dorset and Somerset.²¹

Also previously owned by the abbey, 152 messuages in the town of Cirencester were granted to John Pollard and William Birt in 1545, along with three shops beneath 'le Bothelhall', ten unoccupied shops in Chepyng Street, the Ram Inn on Gosditch Street, and various other messuages, shops and pieces of void ground.²² In 1780 the 152 messuages were still held by custom of the manor of Cirencester, with chief rents of less than 5s. and proprietorship changing hands at the court halimote.²³ A farm in Cirencester previously held by Bradenstoke Priory (Wilts.) was granted to John Pope in 1545.²⁴ Mary's Mill and Barton Mill were granted to James Woodford and Thomas Woodford in 1559/60.²⁵

The chantries and services at Cirencester, worth £83 annually, were also dissolved and their assets were sold.²⁶ However, Nottingham's foundation, which distributed £6 18s. 8d. to four poor weavers was continued as a charge upon his lands and the £7 payable to the priest of the Lady Chapel was transferred to the master of the grammar school.²⁷ In 1548 Anthony Bouchier was granted the St Andrew and St Mary chantries.²⁸ In 1549 Thomas Horton and Richard Billet of Wiltshire bought the land of the Alice Avening service.²⁹ The St Mary chantry was granted to Daniel and Alexander Pert of Tewkesbury in 1553.³⁰ John Thynne and Thomas Throckmorton purchased the Holy Trinity

¹⁴ Hockaday Abs. CLV; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XIV, 255–62, 705.

¹⁵ Hockaday Abs. CLV; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVI, 696–730.

¹⁶ Rev. E.A. Fuller, 'Tenures of land, by the customary tenants, in Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 2 (1877-8), 318-9.

¹⁷ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XV, 445–81, 942.

¹⁸ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVI, 229–46, 503.

¹⁹ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVII, 153–68, 285.

²⁰ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVII, 618–43, 1154.; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVIII, 227–44, 449.

²¹ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVIII, 510–44, 981.

²² Hockaday Abs., CLV; *L&P Hen. VIII*, XX, 278–329.

²³ S. Rudder, *The History of the Town of Cirencester* (Cirencester, 1800), 111-2.

²⁴ Hockaday Abs., CLV, July 1545.

²⁵ K.J. Beecham, *History of Cirencester and the Roman City of Corinium* (Dursley, 1978), 82.

²⁶ For the chantries and services to 1548, see *Medieval Cirencester*, 64-71 and Rev. E.A. Fuller, *The Parish Church of St. John Baptist, Cirencester* (Cirencester, 1882), 10-16.

²⁷ E.A. Fuller, *The Parish Church of St. John Baptist, Cirencester* (Cirencester, 1882), 14.

²⁸ Hockaday Abs CLV, 21 Dec. 1548.

²⁹ Hockaday Abs CLV, 12 Feb. 1549.

³⁰ Hockaday Abs CLVI, 17 Apr. 1553.

chantry, and Sylvester Leigh and Leonard Bale, both of Yorkshire, purchased Robert Richard's (or Ricard's) chantry.³¹ As a single priest served Cirencester's 1,825 communicants following the dissolution of the chantries. the Gloucestershire commissioners recommended another be employed.³²

COMMUNICATIONS

Roads [by David Viner]

Cirencester was included among the 23 Gloucestershire towns on Jacob van Langeren's 1635 triangular distance table for travellers³³ and appeared on Ogilby's strip map of the route from Bristol to Banbury (Oxon.).³⁴ Abel Wantner's late 17th century description of the county's roads linked Cirencester with Gloucester, Winchcombe, Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, Chipping Camden, Northleach, Lechlade, Fairford, Tetbury, Minchinhampton and Stroud.³⁵

In 1800 Rudder described the town as a great thoroughfare, from which seven turnpike roads diverged.³⁶ Two roads to the east provided alternative routes to London via Burford or Lechlade; to the south, to Southampton via Cricklade; to the west, either Bath or Devizes; to the north-west, Minchinhampton and Stroud; to the north, Gloucester and Cheltenham; and to the north-east the Midlands, via Stow-on-the-Wold.

The first turnpike trust was established under an act of 1727, which permitted tolls to be levied for repairing and widening the road from Cirencester to London through Fairford to St. John's Bridge at Lechlade³⁷ as the existing road had been damaged by heavy traffic. Lechlade, ten miles to the east of Cirencester, was the westernmost navigable point on the River Thames, and an important point of transshipment for trade in cloth and cheese to London.³⁸ The Cirencester to Tetbury and Bath road was turnpiked in 1743 as far as the monument to Sir Bevil Grenville on Lansdown Hill.³⁹ The road from Cirencester to Gloucester via Birdlip was turnpiked in 1747, on the line of Ermin Street, via Spirringate and Whiteway to Baunton.⁴⁰ Cirencester, via Sapperton, Minchinhampton and Rodborough to Stroud, with a branch to Bisley, was turnpiked in 1751-2.⁴¹ Cirencester to Oxford, through Bibury, was turnpiked in 1753.⁴² This was the route was taken by the stagecoach between Bath and Bristol to London, through Oxford and Abingdon.⁴³ Cirencester to Stow-on-the-Wold via Northleach (the Fosse Way,) was turnpiked in 1755.⁴⁴ Cirencester to Cricklade was turnpiked in

³¹ Hockaday Abs., CLV, 19 May 1549 ; Hockaday Abs., CLVI, 1 August 1550.

³² C. Lizenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire, 1540-1580* (Cambridge, 1997), 64.

³³ T. Chubb, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Printed Maps of Gloucestershire, 1577-1911* (1912), 20--23.

³⁴ J. Ogilby, *Britannia* (1675), pl. 55.

³⁵ Bodleian, MS Top.Glouc.2, f.94v, f.96r, f.97r, f.97v, f.98v, f.99r.

³⁶ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 142-8.

³⁷ 13 Geo.I, c.11.

³⁸ VCH *Glos* VII, 106.

³⁹ Cirencester Roads Act, 16 Geo.II, c.22. [GA JF9.33GS]; VCH *Glos* .XI, Cherington, 166-7; VCH *Glos* XI, Rodmarton, 234-5.

⁴⁰ 20 Geo. II, c.23.

⁴¹ 25 Geo.II, c.13.

⁴² 26 Geo.II, c.70.

⁴³ Rudder, *Glos.*, 344.

⁴⁴ 28 Geo.II, c.47.

1758 following the line of Ermin Street to the south of the town.⁴⁵

The Cirencester to Wootton Bassett road, through Siddington, Ashton Keynes and Minety, was turnpiked in 1810⁴⁶, and there was a significant amendment to the Cirencester to Stroud road via Cowcombe Hill (diverted from Minchinhampton) in 1814.⁴⁷

Links between Cirencester and Stroud depended upon a road which left the town at Cecily Hill before diverging to give alternative routes via either Bisley or Minchinhampton. This was a main route for carrying Gloucestershire cloth up to the London market, much of it by packhorse, until the middle of the 18th century.⁴⁸ The road was referred to in a turnpike Act of 1751-2, which set up milestones.⁴⁹ It entered Cirencester Park from Cecily Hill and diverged at the Ewe Pens turnpike gate,⁵⁰ with the path to Bisley following the parish boundary and medieval park pale while that to Stroud turned south-west.⁵¹ Both routes were abandoned by 1813-14.⁵²

Further amendments within Cirencester Park in 1824 diverted the former turnpike road further to the north to create the private farm accommodation road from Barton Farm to Ewe Pens.⁵³ The more southerly road to Stroud via Minchinhampton or Chalford was created at the sole expense of Earl Bathurst by upgrading farm tracks to create the present line of the Stroud road from its junction with the Tetbury Road at a newly configured toll house, The Octagon, and skirting the southern edge of the park as far as Hermitage Bottom at Quakers Gate.⁵⁴ In 2019 the tollhouse remained to the north of line of the modern road.

The realignment of the Whiteway in 1822 from its junction with Grove Lane at the Norman Arch to a point one mile to the north-east allowed the Master family of The Abbey to extend the woodland setting of Hare Bushes and create a private drive to the Stow road.⁵⁵

Coaching and Carriers

A stagecoach to London was established in 1696⁵⁶ and one was running in 1726.⁵⁷ The town's strategic position to serve the cloth-making towns of Tetbury, Stroud, Minchinhampton and Wootton-under-Edge gave it an advantage and by the mid-18th century regular coaching services had been established. Edward Biggs, successor to Richard Scruton at the King's Head, advertised his services as proprietor of the Cirencester and Hampton Stage-Coach destined for the Bell Savage Inn, Ludgate Hill.⁵⁸ By 1791 a daily mail coach, replacing mounted mail-carriers, was in operation on the route from Bristol and Bath through Tetbury and Cirencester to Oxford. The London stagecoach from the Swan inn ran three return journeys a week and there were weekly wagons to

⁴⁵ 31 Geo.II, c.61.

⁴⁶ 50 Geo.III, c.174.

⁴⁷ 54 Geo.III, c.80.

⁴⁸ N. Herbert *Road Travel and Transport in Georgian Gloucestershire* (2009), 13.

⁴⁹ 25 Geo.II, c.13.

⁵⁰ GA, D2525/P121.; GA, D2525/P29; GA, D2525/P32.

⁵¹ Rudder, *Glos.*, map.

⁵² 54 Geo.III, c.80; 58 Geo.III, c.23.

⁵³ GA, Q/SRh/1821/A/1

⁵⁴ GA, Q/RUm/51, 1813.

⁵⁵ GA, Q/SRh/1822/D/4, 1822.

⁵⁶ *London Gazette*, 11-14 May 1696.

⁵⁷ *Glouc. J.*, 29 Mar. 1726.

London, Bristol, and Gloucester.⁵⁹ From Cirencester the stage coach travelled on to either Tetbury or Stroud.⁶⁰ The Swan inn service was run by the Masters family⁶¹, and by 1801 was operating as Willan, Masters and Co.⁶² In 1807 Stroudwater Union Coaches set up in competition on the same route⁶³, but failed in 1809⁶⁴. By 1822 coaches ran to London and Gloucester from the Crown or the Ram three times a week, with an additional service from the Ram on three mornings which arrived in the capital on the same day. Services to Bath and Oxford three days a week were also available from the King's Head.⁶⁵ An alternative daily service from London through Abingdon, Faringdon, and Lechlade to Cirencester, and on alternate weekdays through to Tetbury and Stroud proved less successful.⁶⁶ In 1809 the Masters family and partners established a London mail through to Stroud, with a branch coach from Cirencester to Hunter's Hall at Kingscote.⁶⁷ In August 1827 the first Royal Mail Coach from London to Chepstow via Stroud was greeted by about 200 people in Cirencester during its 106 mile, 12 hour journey.⁶⁸

Packhorses and carriers' wagons were used to transport goods and in 1608 two carriers are recorded in the town: Thomas Mayor, St Lawrence St., and William Pyrry, Instrope St., both ideally sited to the north and west of the town in Gloucester Street and Cecily Hill respectively.⁶⁹ In the 18th century, a separate branch of the Masters family was dominant in the London carrier's trade, operating from stables at the Beeches on the London Road.⁷⁰ They provided links to Tetbury, Minchinhampton and Wotton-under Edge in 1763⁷¹; and Tetbury, Malmesbury and Chipping Sodbury in 1808.⁷² The Beeches, and the Masters' business, was owned from 1818 by A.K. Baylis, of the firm of Tanner & Baylis.⁷³ The improvement in the roads enabled 'flying wagons' to be introduced into service, reducing the journey to London to two days.⁷⁴

By 1822 there were 5 companies in Cirencester offering long distance and local carrying and haulage.⁷⁵

Thames & Severn Canal [by David Viner]

The ambitious scheme to link the rivers Thames and Severn by building an artificial navigation was first mooted as early as the beginning of the 17th century with a number of potential routes

⁵⁸ *Glouc. J.*, 20 June 1765.

⁵⁹ *Universal British Directory*, II (1791), 563.

⁶⁰ Rudder, *Cirencester*, 146.

⁶¹ *Glouc. J.*, 4 Apr. 1774, 14 Nov. 1796.

⁶² *Glouc. J.*, 25 May 1801.

⁶³ *Glouc. J.*, 8 Jun. 1807.

⁶⁴ *Chelt. Chronicle*, 15 Jun. 1809.

⁶⁵ *Pigot's Directory* (1822-3), Cirencester.

⁶⁶ Herbert, *Road Travel and Transport in Georgian Gloucestershire*, 120, plate 36, *Glouc. J.*, 14 Nov. 1785.

⁶⁷ Herbert, *Road Travel and Transport in Georgian Gloucestershire*, 121.

⁶⁸ *Chelt. Journal*, 3 Sep. 1827.

⁶⁹ John Smyth, *Men and Armour* (1608), 239-43.

⁷⁰ *Glouc. J.*, 7 May 1745; 16, 30 Sept. 1799; 7 Oct. 1816.

⁷¹ *Glouc. J.*, 14 Mar. 1763.

⁷² *Glouc. J.*, 4 July 1808.

⁷³ Herbert *Road Travel and Transport in Georgian Gloucestershire*, plate 42, 138, 150; GA D846/III/7.

⁷⁴ *Glouc. J.*, 20 Aug. 1821.

⁷⁵ *Pigot's Directory* (1822-23), Cirencester.

proposed and surveyed.⁷⁶ In 1641 John Taylor, the water poet, attempted to cross by boat from the River Thames at Lechlade to the River Severn, but lack of water at Cirencester forced him to transport his boat overland to the Frome valley. He argued that making the passage navigable would promote inland trade.⁷⁷ In 1722 the poet Alexander Pope described Earl Bathurst's dream of bringing the Thames and Severn together.⁷⁸

The first stage of a navigable waterway to unite the two rivers through the Stroud Valley, the Stroudwater canal from the Severn as far as Stroud, opened in 1779.⁷⁹ Following a meeting at the King's Head in 1781, Robert Whitworth was commissioned to survey the line from Lechlade to Stroud.⁸⁰ Following the passing of the necessary act,⁸¹ a plan detailing land ownership and engineering requirements was prepared by John Doyley.⁸² A collateral cut linking Cirencester to the canal at Siddington provided much-needed access to water drawn from the Daglingworth Brook and the River Churn to augment the long summit level. Lengthy negotiations with Earl Bathurst concluded with the construction of a canal feeder from Barton Mill to the canal wharf at the bottom of Quern's Hill in 1786, and the canal company agreeing to pay compensation to mill owners when water was drawn off.⁸³ John Pickston was the principal contractor, cutting and wheeling clay to line the canal on the Cirencester feeder and branch from October 1787 to May 1788.⁸⁴ James Jackson, as mason, was responsible for digging stone from the lower end of the basin field, and for stone lining the basin and building walls around the basin and along the towpath to Siddington.⁸⁵ A wharhouse with living accommodation, crane, and moorings for narrow boats or Thames barges completed the terminus.⁸⁶

The canal feeder from Barton Mill to Siddington enabled Cirencester to benefit from the canal trade. The arrival of four coal barges in April 1788 was greeted by a large crowd of spectators.⁸⁷ By 1820 four coal merchants gave business addresses at the Wharf and the Gas Works were sited with direct access to the canal bank in Watermoor.⁸⁸

Urban Development [by Antonia Catchpole]

The Dissolution had little impact on the development of Cirencester as the large estates to the west and east remained intact, constraining any outward expansion of the town to areas north and south of the medieval core. Land to the north along Gloucester Street had already been colonised, while land to the south of Querns Lane and Lewis Lane, which was common land until 1825, was

⁷⁶ H. Household, *The Thames & Severn Canal* (1969), 11-22.

⁷⁷ J. Chandler ed., *Travels through Tudor Britain* (Stroud, 1999), 192-3.

⁷⁸ Household, *Thames & Severn Canal*, 19.

⁷⁹ VCH Glos. VII, 17.

⁸⁰ *Glouc. J.*, 17 Sept. 1781; GA, TS/175/1; GA TS/182/2.

⁸¹ 23 Geo.III c.38 (1783), GA, TS/176/1.

⁸² GA, TS/182/5.

⁸³ GA, TS/193/5; TS/175/16/45; GA D2525/P5; D. Viner, 'The Thames and Severn Canal in Cirencester', in McWhirr *Cirencester*, 131, 135, fig. 9.2.

⁸⁴ GA, TS/129, f.30, f.136.

⁸⁵ GA, TS/101; Viner, 'The Thames and Severn Canal in Cirencester', 129-130.

⁸⁶ Household (1969), chapter 5; Viner (1976), 135-6, fig. 9.3.

⁸⁷ *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, 11 May 1789.

⁸⁸ *Gell & Bradshaw Directory* (1820), 172.

not developed until the 1850s, leaving the inhabitants cramped within the medieval town bounds.⁸⁹

In 1608 Dyer Street was emerging as one of the better parts of town, home to several gentlemen, a large wine merchants', and with two barber surgeons and an apothecary occupying properties at the Market Place end of the street.⁹⁰ Castle Street was home to artisans and craftsmen, while Instrope Street was occupied by labourers, manual workmen and a pedlar.⁹¹ A similar social division appears in the late 17th century: the poorer areas lay along the north-south axis of Ermin Street in the St Lawrence and Cricklade Wards, with Instrope Ward also housing poorer people. Dollar Ward had more large houses, while Dyer Street and Gosditch Street appear to have been the most affluent areas of Cirencester, with over 70% of the inhabitants paying taxes.⁹²

There appears to have been much rebuilding of the town after the Civil War, including the replacement of buildings in stone. But even in 1800 the town was confined to the boundaries of the medieval borough, with a small extension north beyond the Roman walled area. The land outside the built up area was almost entirely devoted to the great parks and mansions of the leading families. The Chesterton tithing map of 1807 shows few buildings along Watermoor Road, while the Stepstairs Lane area is empty apart from a few barns.⁹³ Any expansion before the 19th century was thus confined to the building of courts and cottages in the backs of existing plots, increasing building density without extending the occupied area. Such courts and alleys were generally overcrowded and insanitary, and home to the working and poorer classes.⁹⁴ Almost all additional housing in the first half of the 19th century had to be absorbed within the built up area by means of front access, courtyard development of burgage plots.⁹⁵ A few new buildings did appear in the late 18th and early 19th century, including the Tontine Buildings (Nos. 4-30 Cecily Hill) built by Lord Bathurst in 1802, although once again these were within the already inhabited area.⁹⁶ Even the creation of back lanes and tail end derivative plots was prevented by the nature of the town plan.⁹⁷ The only exception was The Waterloo, a small back lane laid out on the north side of Dyer Street in the early 19th century.⁹⁸

For men of substance, however, there was the option of the suburban villa, a number of which were built on open ground around Cirencester between 1800 and 1830. These were concentrated to the south-west of the town, where land was available outside the ownership of the great estates, and were often enlarged by piecemeal addition. Chesterton House was built for Devereaux Bowley in 1813 on land he assembled from six separate landowners.⁹⁹ In 1824 Joseph Randolph

⁸⁹ B. Hawkins, *Taming the Phoenix: Cirencester and the Quakers 1642–1686* (York, 1998), 2; GA, D674b/P48; J. Wood, *Plan of Cirencester* (1835); D2525/P7, *Map of the Borough of Cirencester* (1837).

⁹⁰ Smith, *Men and Armour*, 239.

⁹¹ Smith, *Men and Armour*, 240.

⁹² TNA, E179/247/14, 2v -3v.

⁹³ GA, PC/960 (N).

⁹⁴ T. Slater 'The Cirencester Improved Dwellings Company 1880–1914' McWhirr, *Cirencester*, 171.

⁹⁵ GA, PC/594; PC/948 (N).

⁹⁶ Verey and Brooks, *Glos I*, 273.

⁹⁷ T. Slater, 'Estate Ownership and Nineteenth Century Urban Development' in A. McWhirr (ed.), 'Archaeology and history of Cirencester', *BAR 30* (1976), 152.

⁹⁸ GA, PC/948 (N).

⁹⁹ T. Slater, 'Family, society and the ornamental villa on the fringes of English country towns', 4:2 (1978), 137; GA, D2050/17.

Mullings began work on Watermoor House on land later known as Carrot Close donated by his father-in-law, the nurseryman William Gregory, between the nursery and the Cricklade turnpike.¹⁰⁰ Also in 1824, Charles Lawrence persuaded Lord Bathurst to allow him to use part of the Querns to build a cottage, which by August 1825 had developed into a substantial villa complete with a park, lodge and walled kitchen garden.¹⁰¹ These, and other villas built in the same period, formed an early 19th century fringe belt marking the extent of the town.

Rural Settlement

The rural settlements surrounding Cirencester from the mid-16th century consisted of scattered farm and mill houses, formerly owned by the abbey. These were Barton, Almerly and Spyringate (or Sperringate) Granges, and New, Barton and Langley's Mills.¹⁰² At the time of the Dissolution those to the east were mostly acquired by the Masters (Abbey estate), while from the early 18th century the Bathursts (Cirencester Park) acquired those to the west. The manors of Chesterton and Wiggold also had associated farmhouses.¹⁰³ Another farm, initially called New Farm, was established in the 16th century in the abbey estate to the east of the Churn. This became Golden Hill farm, part of the Master estate.¹⁰⁴ The farmhouse still stands in 2017 as the Golden Farm Inn.¹⁰⁵

Very little development took place around Cirencester in the 17th and 18th centuries surrounded as it was by the two private estates, neither of which were inclined to allow their land to be developed. There were only three buildings located in the west of Chesterton tithing on a map of 1777, with no other buildings shown.¹⁰⁶ An 1807 map of Chesterton tithing shows how sparsely populated it remained. Several buildings can be seen close to the town, particularly along the south side of Lewis Lane, with another small cluster west of the turnpike road, which led south to Watermoor House. A building called the Mount lay on a road running north-west from Watermoor Common and the only other cluster of buildings appears to have been the farm in the midst of fields in the west of the tithing.¹⁰⁷ In 1837 the hamlet of Wiggold consisted of two clusters of around five buildings, separated by Wiggold Mead.¹⁰⁸

The Beeches

A house called Greyes was at the Beeches on the Abbey estate from at least 1659.¹⁰⁹ A cottage called the Beeches existed from at least 1680 although it is not clear whether this was the same as the earlier building.¹¹⁰ The building that formed the nucleus of the modern Beeches was built sometime in the late 18th century.¹¹¹ In 1801 Henry Tipper leased the two messuages or tenements called the Beeches adjoining the new bridge from Thomas Master. They were

¹⁰⁰ Slater 'Estate Ownership', 149.

¹⁰¹ GA, D2525/C10; D2525/E156; GA D181/III/T27.

¹⁰² See effects of the dissolution, agriculture and manufacturing.

¹⁰³ See other manors and estates.

¹⁰⁴ GA, D674b/T26; D674b/T15; D674b/E44; D674b/E14.

¹⁰⁵ Verey and Brooks, *Glos I*, 265.

¹⁰⁶ GA, D2525/P25.

¹⁰⁷ GA, D2525/P26.

¹⁰⁸ GA, D674b/P25.

¹⁰⁹ GA, D674b/T39, f.12.

¹¹⁰ GA, D674b/T27.

¹¹¹ Verey and Brooks, *Glos I*, 265.

previously occupied by Edmund Beare, then Thomas Pearce, then Tipper and William Paish.¹¹²

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¹¹² GA D674b/T34.