

Little Sodbury

Little Sodbury is a small rural parish which lies 36 km. (22 miles) south of Gloucester and 19 km. (12 miles) north-east of Bristol. As with its larger neighbour to the south, the landscape is heavily defined by the Cotswold Edge, which runs from north to south through the centre of the parish. The eastern half of the parish, lying above the escarpment, comprises rich arable land, in contrast with the low-lying pastoral landscape of the western half of the parish. The prehistoric hill fort which gives the Sodburys their name lies across the parish boundary with Old Sodbury, overlooking the substantial medieval manor house further down the escarpment. The ancient route called the Port Way, which follows the line of the Cotswold Edge, has carried traffic across the parish since prehistoric times. Despite its proximity to Chipping Sodbury and Yate, which have greatly expanded in the late 20th century, Little Sodbury remains entirely rural in character.

Landscape, Settlement and Buildings

Boundaries

The ancient parish of Little Sodbury was estimated by Rudge to measure 900 a. in 1803,¹ but the tithe commissioners found that the parish comprised 1,074 a. in 1839.² In 1903 the parish was found to measure 1,093 a.³

The parish boundaries were depicted on the tithe award map of 1839,⁴ and by the Ordnance Survey in 1886.⁵ For much of their length the boundaries are defined by long established hedges that once separated the open fields and commons of the neighbouring parishes. Elsewhere the boundaries are not defined by any feature, particularly where they cross the unenclosed Sodbury Common. In the east of the parish the boundaries occasionally zigzag as they follow the edges of what were formerly strips in the open fields. The straightness of the boundary to the north of Lyegrove house suggests it follows the line of the former park wall. Continuing westward across the Bath road, the boundary turns briefly north before turning west again to divide Sodbury Camp in half. After descending the escarpment, the boundary briefly runs along Portway lane before crossing fields to follow the hedges bordering the Common Mead and Sodbury Common. Shortly after crossing a small water way the boundary runs in a straight line across the Common, following no defined features until it arrives at another watercourse, where it turns east and follows the course of an old road along the edge of the Common.

¹ Rudge, *Glos.* II, 290.

² TNA, IR 18/2873.

³ OS Map, 6", *Glos.* LXIX.NE (1903 edn).

⁴ GA, GDR/T1/164.

⁵ OS Map, 61", *Glos.* LXIX–LXX (1886 edn).

Landscape

The landscape and underlying geology of the parish is similar to its larger neighbour to the south. Like Old Sodbury, the landscape of Little Sodbury is dominated by the Cotswold Edge, which runs north-south through the centre of the parish. The low-lying land to the west of the escarpment lies on Charmouth, Saltford Shale and Blue Lias mudstones, and is crossed by a number of small tributaries of the river Frome. A small band of limestone outcrops in the south of the parish. The steep slopes of the Cotswold Edge, which comprise of Dyrham and Bridport sandstones, give way to a well-drained plateau c.180m above sea level, lying on Oolitic limestones c.90m higher than the land in the west of the parish.

The parish can be divided into three distinct landscapes. On the well-drained plateau east of the Cotswold Edge lay the majority of the arable land within the parish, divided between two open fields enclosed in the late 18th century. Ridge and furrow indicates that the shallower slopes of the escarpment to the north of Little Sodbury Manor were used for arable during the middle ages,⁶ although converted to pasture by the 16th century. To the west of the escarpment, the low-lying heavy soils are more suited to pasture than arable. The patchwork of irregularly-shaped ancient enclosures may be evidence that this farmland originated from woodland assarts. A triangular wedge of the unenclosed Sodbury Common, comprising c.100 a., intrudes into the north-west corner of the parish.

The land to the west of the Cotswold Ridgeway lay within the bounds of the ancient royal hunting ground of Horwood Forest, perhaps for several centuries before its disafforestation in 1228.⁷ Despite the association of the parish with the forest, it contained only a small amount of woodland in 1086.⁸ Some 20a. of woodland lying in the west of the parish was incorporated by John Walsh in his new park in the early 16th century. There were small coppices lying amongst the arable fields on the Cotswold plateau, and in the 18th century a coppice grew within Sodbury Camp.⁹

In the east of the parish, Lyegrove park extends into Little Sodbury. In the early 16th century, soon after taking possession of the manor, John Walsh laid out a landscape to compliment the augmented status of his newly enlarged manor house.¹⁰ Walsh was granted a license in 1511 to impark 500 a. and to have free warren in all

⁶ Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography, BWD1, Oblique photograph of earthworks near Little Sodbury Manor, 1975, <https://www.cambridgeairphotos.com/location/bwd1> [accessed 23 Sep. 2018].

⁷ For Horwood Forest, see Old Sodbury, Landscape.

⁸ *Domesday*, p. 459.

⁹ See below, Economic History.

¹⁰ For the manor house, see Settlement, below.

of the demesne lands of the manor,¹¹ and he had enclosed 260 a. as Little Sodbury Park by 1517.¹² Bordering Sodbury Common, the circular boundary and park pale are still discernible for much of their length. Ditches still extant in 2018 running along the boundaries of fields called the Great and Little Park suggest the existence of an inner pale.¹³ The park was apparently still being kept as such in 1536,¹⁴ and Leland referred to it in the 1540s.¹⁵ Numerous large pillow mounds to the south-west and north of the manor house, in some places cutting through medieval ridge and furrow,¹⁶ suggest that the large warren was laid out at the same time. Forming a circuit around the house turning counter-clockwise from the northern edge of Sodbury Camp to the fields south of the manor, and extending over the parish boundary with Old Sodbury, the warren comprised 100 a.,¹⁷ and was enclosed with a wall.¹⁸ By the middle of the 17th century both the park and the warren been converted to pasture and divided into smaller fields.¹⁹ The Great House was built here in the late 17th century, presumably on the site of an earlier lodge.

Communications

A route running north-south near the crest of the Cotswold Edge, known as the Great Cotswold Ridgeway, was an important route between Bath and the west midlands from ancient times.²⁰ Its route may survive as footpaths running along the western edge of Sodbury Camp and the road leading north from the parish to Hawksbury Upton and Wootton-under-Edge. Running parallel to the Ridgeway a short distance to the east lies the Bath road, connecting that city with Cirencester. Near the northern boundary of the parish, a road runs west from the Bath road, descending the escarpment to the village of Little Sodbury. The road west from Little Sodbury to Chipping Sodbury has been called Portway lane since at least the 16th century,²¹ and was included by Ogilby as part of a route of national significance, connecting Bristol with Banbury and the south midlands.²² Another road leaves Little Sodbury village in a north-west direction, running parallel to the parish

¹¹ *L&P Hen. VIII*, I: 1509–14, 441.

¹² I.E. Gray, 'A Gloucestershire Postscript to the 'Domesday of Inclosures'', *Trans. BGAS*, 97 (1979), 76.

¹³ Fieldwork. For the field names, see the tithe award of 1839: GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁴ TNA, KB 9/534.

¹⁵ *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 Vols. (London, 1907–10), V, 94.

¹⁶ Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography, BWD1.

¹⁷ GA, D2066/1.

¹⁸ GA, GDR/V5/277T.

¹⁹ GA, D2066/1.

²⁰ G.B. Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Worcestershire and the Middle Severn Valley: Part I' *Archaeological Journal*, XCI (1934), 66–96.

²¹ GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²² Ogilby, *Britannia*, 109–10 and plate 55.

boundaries as far as Little Sodbury End, before turning south-west to cross Sodbury Common towards Chipping Sodbury. In the 16th century,²³ and still in 1839,²⁴ a road ran east from the Bath road to Great Badminton, but this was apparently little more than a footpath by the late 19th century.²⁵

Daily weekday bus services between Bristol, Chipping Sodbury, Tetbury and Cirencester had begun stopping at Little Sodbury End and Little Sodbury Turn by 1963.²⁶ Another service, between Chipping Sodbury and Wootton-under-Edge, ran on Sundays and bank holidays.²⁷ By 1976 the weekday buses to Bristol and Cirencester continued to operate, although the number of services had been reduced from seven to five, but the bus to Wootton-under-Edge was no longer in service.²⁸ In 2018 no bus services stopped in the parish.

Population

The parish is small and has never been populous. There were thought to be about 70 communicants in the parish in 1551.²⁹ There were just 12 households in 1563,³⁰ and the population was estimated at 80 in 1603.³¹ The population was recorded as 'but [a] few families' in 1650,³² although in 1676 the population was estimated to be 84.³³ In the early 18th century Atkyns found that the parish contained about 90 inhabitants, living in 24 houses.³⁴ By 1779 the population of Little Sodbury was said to have risen 115,³⁵ but this was probably an overestimate as the 1801 census found only 89 inhabitants in the parish.³⁶ This figure rose to 107 in 1821, and 126 in 1831.³⁷ It remained static for several decades, and had only risen to 143 by 1891.³⁸ The

²³ GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²⁴ Tithe map.

²⁵ OS.

²⁶ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/7.

²⁷ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/7.

²⁸ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/7.

²⁹ J. Gairdner, 'Bishop Hooper's Visitation of Gloucester', *EHR*, XIX (1904), 116.

³⁰ *Diocesan Populations Returns of 1563 & 1603*, ed. Alan Dyer and D. M. Palliser (British Academy, Records of Social and Economic Hist., new sers., XXXI (London, 2005), 166.

³¹ *Diocesan Populations Returns of 1563 & 1603*, 335.

³² TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v; C.R. Elrington, 'A Survey of Church Livings in Gloucestershire, 1650', *Trans. BGAS*, 83 (1964), 97.

³³ *Compton Census*, ed. Whiteman, 536.

³⁴ Atkyns, *Glos.* 354.

³⁵ Rudder, *Glos.* 677.

³⁶ Census, 1801.

³⁷ Census, 1821; 1831.

³⁸ Census, 1841; 1851; 1861; 1871; 1881; 1891.

population peaked at 147 in 1911, fell to 112 in 1921, but rose again to 129 in 1931.³⁹ It remained at this level for the next three decades, recorded in 1961 as 132, but fell to 101 in 1971.⁴⁰ It has subsequently remained at a similar level, falling as low as 90 in 1991, and rising to 113 in 2011.⁴¹

Settlement

Prehistoric occupation within the parish appears to have been concentrated above the scarp of Sodbury Hill, although evidence of activity dating from before the Iron Age is limited to a neolithic flint tool and a Bronze Age flint arrowhead.⁴²

The manor house stands on a narrow platform set into the slopes of the escarpment beneath the ramps of Sodbury Camp. A slab of oolite stands on its edge on the parish boundary with Horton, on the highest ground in the vicinity. Called the Grickstone, it gave its name one of the open fields of Little Sodbury and to a farm in Horton, and was reputed to have been part of a barrow. As there is no evidence of a barrow, the stone may have been carried to its present location from a site near Seven Mile Plantation for use as a boundary marker.⁴³ The substantial Iron Age multivallate hill fort known as Sodbury Camp lies half within the parish of Little Sodbury.⁴⁴ Roman coins have been discovered in or near Sodbury Camp,⁴⁵ and a scatter of Roman pottery sherds and 'prehistoric' flints were discovered to the north of Lyegrove House.⁴⁶ Little Sodbury must once have formed part of the larger Anglo-Saxon estate of *Soppnanbyrg*, although no evidence survives of occupation during this period.

Most settlement within the parish lay on the escarpment of Sodbury Hill or to the west of it. The principal settlement is concentrated upon the large complex that comprises Little Sodbury Manor and along the lane leading north-west from it. Although the village is now small in extent, field names and map evidence suggest that the settlement of the village once stretched further to the north-west. A second focal point of settlement at Little Sodbury End evidently began as a squatter community encroaching upon the common. Isolated houses and farmsteads lie scattered elsewhere in the parish. The number of dwellings has never been high in the lightly-populated parish. There were 20 households with 63 hearths in 1672, of

³⁹ Census, 1901; 1911; 1921; 1931.

⁴⁰ Census, 1951; 1961; 1971.

⁴¹ Census, 1981; 1991; 2001; 2011.

⁴² PAS, GLO-1D2EF7; GLO-1D9643.

⁴³ South Glos. HER.

⁴⁴ For Sodbury Camp, see Old Sodbury, Settlement.

⁴⁵ South Glos. HER.

⁴⁶ South Glos. HER.

which 23 were in the manor house.⁴⁷ There were 24 houses in the early 18th century,⁴⁸ 25 in 1831, and 29 in 1901.⁴⁹ This rose to 39 in 1951, and 43 in 2001.⁵⁰ There were 51 dwelling in 2011,⁵¹ mostly comprising stone-built farm houses and large cottages.

The principal settlement within the parish lies along the Chipping Sodbury–Cirencester road, from the point where it turns towards the north as it crosses the parish boundary to the point where it returns to an easterly course, at its junction with the road to Little Sodbury End. At the southern end of the village this road forms the western boundary of the ancient manorial complex, at the heart of which stands Little Sodbury Manor, the only building of antiquity still extant within the parish. Having its origins in the 14th century,⁵² it has been rebuilt and extended on several occasions, resulting in a substantial and impressive mansion described as ‘a fayr place’ by Leland,⁵³ and which is now listed Grade I.⁵⁴ The manor house is sited on a narrow platform part-way up the escarpment of Sodbury Hill beneath the walls of Sodbury Camp. Adjacent to the house are a sequence of formal gardens, some of which date from at least the 16th century.⁵⁵ Surrounding the house and gardens on all sides are orchards and plantations lining the steep slopes of the escarpment, and a series of fishponds which may be medieval in origin run down the hill to the road below.⁵⁶ The manorial complex was once completed by the parish church, the ruins of which stand 20 yards to the east of the manor house.⁵⁷ A deep hollow way running north-south passing close to the house and ruined church marks the route of the Chipping Sodbury to Cirencester road, closed in 1657.⁵⁸ Around that time the main approach to the house was moved from the south to the north and the northern section of this hollow way became the main drive serving the house.⁵⁹ A lodge standing at the point where this meets the Cirencester road is now a private home. Above the hollow way, north of Sodbury Camp and overlooking the Manor House, the site of an 18th-century barn has evolved into the substantial Cross Hands farm.

⁴⁷ TNA, E179/247/14, f. 51v.

⁴⁸ Atkyns, *Glos.* 354.

⁴⁹ Census, 1831; 1901.

⁵⁰ Census, 1951; 2001.

⁵¹ Census, 2011.

⁵² Anthony Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300–1500, Volume III: Southern England* (Cambridge, 2012), 115–7.

⁵³ *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 Vols. (London, 1907–10), V, 94.

⁵⁴ NHLE, No. 1115005. For a description of the house, see below, Landownership.

⁵⁵ NHLE, No. 1321170.

⁵⁶ South Glos. HER.

⁵⁷ NHLE, No. 1115006. See below, Religious History.

⁵⁸ TNA, C 202/41/4.

⁵⁹ NHLE, No. 1136879.

The modern village is concentrated along a short stretch of the road running north-west from Little Sodbury. Although Beresford suggested that the medieval village of Little Sodbury might have migrated from a location closer to Little Sodbury Manor, he did not include it in his list of deserted medieval villages.⁶⁰ The road probably traces the course of the wall that enclosed the large rabbit warren laid out to the east of it in the early 16th century, and may mark the boundary of the medieval open field which lay there previously. All of the buildings lying within this perimeter date from the 19th or 20th centuries. In 1839 they comprised a group of farm buildings and a pair of small cottages to the north.⁶¹ During the early 20th century a modern farm yard was laid out adjoining the existing farm buildings, and a large house called the Gables was erected to the south of it. A large barn was added to the north of the farm yard during the middle of the 20th century. The cottages to the north of the farm yard had been replaced by 1889 by a large house which was also the site of a Sunday school.⁶² In 1859 the parish church was relocated to the north of this, in the angle created by the junction of the Cirencester and Little Sodbury End roads.

The bulk of the settlement in the village, at least since the 17th century, appears to have lined the western side of the village street, continuing along its length as far as Little Sodbury End. A number of irregular fields depicted in 1839 had been enclosed from the larger pasture fields and meadows of the parish. Several of these accommodated cottages and farm houses, and field names indicate that others of these fields were once the grounds attached to the homesteads of the village. Many of these small plots are now part of larger fields, but their ancient boundaries can still be discerned with Lidar.⁶³ Little Sodbury House, formerly the rectory, stands at the southern end of this sequence. The house dates from the late 17th century, although the site was occupied by a previous rectory house in the 16th century.⁶⁴ North of the house, Little Sodbury Cottage was depicted on the map of 1839.⁶⁵ The site of Church farm, the farmhouse associated with the large farm yard opposite, was also occupied in 1839, but the farmhouse was rebuilt in the late 20th or early 21st century. The cottage called the Cottage, on the west side of the junction with the road to Little Sodbury End, and a pair of cottages on the east side of the junction, to the north of the parish church, are all 20th-century.

⁶⁰ Maurice Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England* (London, 1954), 351; idem. and John G. Hurst, *Deserted Medieval Villages* (Gloucester, 1989).

⁶¹ GA, GDR/T1/164.

⁶² OS Map, 25", Glos. LXIX.7 (1882 edn.).

⁶³ Environment Agency, 2014 Lidar survey, ST78se, DSM, 1m.

⁶⁴ GA, GDR/V5/177T; NHLE, No. 1321169. See below, Religious History.

⁶⁵ GA, GDR/T1/164.

Little Sodbury End, the second concentration of settlement in the parish, is focused on the north-eastern corner of Sodbury Common, where the road from the Common to Little Sodbury village meets a road north to Horton, and in places the modern settlement spreads north over the boundary into Horton. The settlement grew up as encroachments upon the waste by squatters and was well established by the early 19th century. Many of the older cottages within the settlement have been replaced with modern buildings, supplemented by infilling of established plots since the middle of the 20th century. Elsewhere, house plots visible on ground now conserved as part of the common indicate the extent of squatting in previous centuries. The Tyndale Baptist Chapel was established at Little Sodbury End in the late 19th century.⁶⁶

The remaining settlement within the parish consists of isolated, often substantial, farmhouses. Lying between the village and Little Sodbury End are two 17th-century farmhouses, Winchcombe farm and Ivy farmhouse.⁶⁷ In the north-west of the parish, Starvale farm and Greystone Court (formerly known as Newhouse farm) both encroach upon the edge of Sodbury Common. Lying some distance from the Horton road, the 17th-century Starvale adjoins three fields anciently enclosed from the common.⁶⁸ Directly to the south, Greystone Court is a late 19th-century farmhouse which replaced an earlier building on the site.⁶⁹ East of Greystone Court stands the substantial 17th-century Great House,⁷⁰ lying near the inner pale of the park laid out by John Walsh in the 16th century.⁷¹ To the rear of the house, the adjoining farmyard includes a large 18th-century barn.⁷² During the early 20th century two small lodges were erected alongside the long drive leading north from Portway Lane to the Great House. A pair of cottages had been built near the northernmost of the lodges by the middle of the 20th century,⁷³ and Birch Grove farm was erected between the two lodges in the late 20th or early 21st century.⁷⁴

Landownership

The manor of Little Sodbury had been detached from the manor of Old Sodbury before 1066, and with it formed part of the Lordship of Sodbury.⁷⁵ It was the only

⁶⁶ See below, Religious History.

⁶⁷ NHLE, No. 1115007; No. 1115003.

⁶⁸ NHLE, No. 1136824.

⁶⁹ GA, GDR/T1/164; OS Map, 25", Glos. LXIX.7 (1882 edn.).

⁷⁰ NHLE, No. 1136895.

⁷¹ See above, Landscape.

⁷² NHLE, 1115008.

⁷³ OS Map, 1:2,500, ST7483 (1951 edn.).

⁷⁴ The farm was not marked on the 1989 edition of the Ordnance Survey maps: OS Map, 1:10,000, ST78SW (1989 edn.).

⁷⁵ See Old Sodbury, Landownership.

manor within the small parish. In 1839 there were only six other landowners, not including the lord of the manor and the rector, none of whom owned more than 95 a. of land.⁷⁶ Following the partition of the estate by heiresses in 1906, the manor and much of the land was purchased by the Duke of Beaufort, who already owned land in the parish. He later sold the manor house but retained the manorial rights.

Little Sodbury Manor

In 1066 the manor was held by Alweard, and in 1086 by Hugh Maminot of his brother, Gilbert, bishop of Lisieux.⁷⁷ By the 13th century the manor was in the hands of the Bishop family. In 1243 Matilda, the widow of John Bishop, fined for custody of two-thirds of the land formerly held by John until the lawful age of his heirs.⁷⁸ During the wardship of Jordan's heirs in 1278 custody of the manor was held by Robert de Kaynes.⁷⁹ John, son of Jordan Bishop, and others, presumably his guardians, were sued for novel disseisin in c.1279.⁸⁰ In 1283 the manor was held of the heirs of Jordan Bishop.⁸¹ In 1316 the lords of Little Sodbury were said to be John Bishop and Robert Lyvett.⁸² In 1325 the manor was settled on to Jordan Bishop and his heirs in tail.⁸³ As lord of the manor Jordan Bishop presented to the advowson of Little Sodbury in 1328 and 1341.⁸⁴ In 1346 Jordan Bishop was said to hold one-eighth of a knight's fee in Little Sodbury.⁸⁵

In 1388 the manor was recognised as the right of Thomas Crump by Richard de Mawarden and Edith his wife in return for a fine of 200 marks.⁸⁶ In 1397 the manor was similarly recognised by Edith and her husband to be the right of Thomas Manning.⁸⁷ In 1419 Edith, now a widow, recognised the manor to be the right of John Bridge of Staunton on Wye (Herefs.), with the exception of 60s. rent which was held by various men of Edith.⁸⁸ John Bridge arranged that after his decease the manor should be settled on his wife, Jonet, for life, and after her decease sold by his feoffee Harry Clifford to Ralph Baskerville for an agreed fee of 300 marks. According to a

⁷⁶ GA, GDR/T1/164.

⁷⁷ *Domesday Book*, p. 459.

⁷⁸ *Cal. Fine*, 27/163.

⁷⁹ *Cal. Close*, 1272–79, 468.

⁸⁰ HMC, *Appendix to the 48th Report*, 'Calendar of Patent Rolls: 7 Edw. I', 170.

⁸¹ *Cal. Close*, 1279–88, 225, 240.

⁸² *Feudal Aids*, II, 269.

⁸³ *Glos. Feet of Fines 1300–59*, no. 465.

⁸⁴ WRO, Register of Adam Orleton, f. 18; WRO, Register of Wulstan de Bransford, f. 37v.

⁸⁵ *Feudal Aids*, II, 232.

⁸⁶ *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 249; TNA, CP 25/1/289/55/175. For Mawarden, *Hist. Parl.*, 1386–1421.

⁸⁷ *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 334; TNA, CP 25/1/290/58/309.

⁸⁸ *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 453.

complaint brought by Ralph Baskerville, Harry Clifford had not been content with 300 marks and had sold the manor to another.⁸⁹ In 1472 the manor was demised and quitclaimed to Richard Foster esquire.⁹⁰ In 1482 Richard Foster 'of Little Sodbury' was acting as an escheator.⁹¹

Following the death of Richard Foster in 1486,⁹² the manor of Little Sodbury passed to his son, also Richard, who settled it in that year upon his brother-in-law, John Walsh (d. 1502).⁹³ Walsh settled the manor back upon Foster in 1491,⁹⁴ who retained it until his death in 1504.⁹⁵ After his death the manor passed to Walsh's son Sir John (d. 1547),⁹⁶ who also acquired the farm of the lordship of Sodbury in 1541.⁹⁷ He was succeeded by his son Maurice (d. 1556),⁹⁸ who was killed by 'a fiery, sulphurous globe' which blazed at the manor house, also killing several of his children.⁹⁹ Maurice's heir was his younger son, Nicholas (d. 1568),¹⁰⁰ whose heir Henry was only three when he succeeded to the estates.¹⁰¹ Henry was killed in a duel by Edward Wynter c.1589, and was succeeded by his uncle, also Henry.¹⁰²

The latter was succeeded by his son Walter, who sold his estate in 1605 to the lawyer Thomas Stephens, although Walsh and his wife Jane retained life interests in the manor and mansion house of Little Sodbury.¹⁰³ Following the death of Stephens in 1613,¹⁰⁴ the estate descended successively to his son Edward, grandson Sir Thomas (d. 1700), and great-grandson Thomas (d. 1715).¹⁰⁵ Following the death of Edward Stephens in 1728,¹⁰⁶ the estate passed to Robert Packer, whose mother was a daughter of Richard Stephens of Eastington.¹⁰⁷ On Packer's death the estate passed to

⁸⁹ TNA, C 1/15/205.

⁹⁰ *Cal. Close, 1468–76*, 963.

⁹¹ *Cal. Fine, 1471–85*, no. 666.

⁹² *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. VII, I*, no. 123.

⁹³ TNA, CP 25/1/294/79, no. 25; *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 748.

⁹⁴ TNA, CP 25/1/294/79, no. 25; *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 762.

⁹⁵ TNA, PROB 11/14/212.

⁹⁶ TNA, PROB 11/31/481.

⁹⁷ See Old Sodbury, Landownership.

⁹⁸ TNA, PROB 11/38/131.

⁹⁹ TNA, C 142/109/71; *Hist. Parl.* 1558–1603.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, PROB 11/50/141; *Hist. Parl.* 1558–1603.

¹⁰¹ TNA, WARD 7/11/39.

¹⁰² TNA, C 142/225/58; *Cal. Pat.*, 1589–90 (List & Index Soc., 309), 14.

¹⁰³ GA, D2066/1. Walshe was still in possession of Little Sodbury in 1623: TNA, C 3/383/43.

¹⁰⁴ TNA, PROB 11/122/540.

¹⁰⁵ *Visitation of Glos. 1623*, 151–3.

¹⁰⁶ GA, Wills 1728/40.

¹⁰⁷ Rudder, *Glos.*, 677.

his sons, first Winchcombe Howard Packer (d. 1746) and then Henry John Packer (d. 1746–7), both of whom died without issue.¹⁰⁸ Their heir was Winchcombe Henry Hartley, the son of their sister Elizabeth and Dr David Hartley MD. Hartley died in 1794 and was succeeded by his son, Revd Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley (d. 1832).¹⁰⁹ When the latter's son, also Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley, died in 1881 his heirs were the four daughters of his sister Elizabeth, wife of Count Demetrius de Palatiano of Corfu. A partition of the estate was carried out in 1906, leaving the manor in the hands Frances Oxenham Henrietta Sanata Russell, and her son Henry Hartley Russell.¹¹⁰ The manor was purchased by Henry Somerset, 9th duke of Beaufort (d. 1924) in 1910, and has subsequently descended with Great Badminton.¹¹¹

Construction probably began on the present manor house in the late 15th century, replacing an earlier, probably 14th-century, timber-framed house some material from which was incorporated into the great hall of the new house.¹¹² In the early 16th century Sir John Walsh greatly enlarged the house, extending the north wing and adding a south wing. To the west of the house he laid out a terrace garden and a sunken bowling green.¹¹³ It is unclear what damage was done to the house by the electrical storm of 1556.¹¹⁴ Further alterations were made to the house in the 1630s by Edward Stephens, who also moved the principal approach to the house from the south to the north.¹¹⁵ A great storm in 1703 badly damaged the house, following which extensive remodelling was undertaken, providing the family with more comfortable accommodation and a ball room.¹¹⁶ The family's removal to Lyegrove in the 17th century, the subsequent descent of the manor to absentee landlords, and the occupation of the house by tenant farmers led to its neglect, and by the late 19th century it was badly dilapidated.¹¹⁷

The house passed with the manor to the Duke of Beaufort in 1910, who sold the house in 1911 to Lord Hugh Grosvenor, younger son of the Duke of Westminster. Grosvenor died in 1915, after which the house was reacquired by the Duke of Beaufort, from whom it was purchased in 1919 by his stepson Francis Charles Owen

¹⁰⁸VCH Berks. III, 291–6; Rudder, *Glos.*, 677.

¹⁰⁹VCH Berks. III, 291–6; Rudder, *Glos.*, 677.

¹¹⁰1910 Domesday; *The Times*, 6 Jun. 1908, p. 21.

¹¹¹GA, D2299/1137.

¹¹²The next two paragraphs are largely based upon the following: NHLE, No. 1115005; Emery, *Great Medieval Houses*, III, 115–7.

¹¹³NHLE, No. 1321170.

¹¹⁴*Hist. Parl.*, 1558–1603, 'Nicholas Walshe'.

¹¹⁵NHLE, No. 1136879.

¹¹⁶Elizabeth Hodges, *Some Ancient English Homes*, (London, 1895), 195.

¹¹⁷Elizabeth Hodges, *Some Ancient English Homes*, (London, 1895), 195.

Baron de Tuyll.¹¹⁸ Grosvenor and then Tuyll employed Sir Harold Brakspear to sympathetically restore the premises in the early 20th century, reusing early material found on the site.¹¹⁹ After his death in 1952,¹²⁰ the house purchased by Tuyll's cousin Mark Harford (d. 1969),¹²¹ from whom it passed to his son Gerald. The house was acquired by the Killearn family c.1990,¹²² who sold it in 2016.¹²³

Economic History

Agriculture

In 1086 there were two ploughlands in demesne, and two ploughlands worked by bordars. There were also 20 a. of meadow and a small amount of woodland.¹²⁴ The western half of the parish lay within Horwood forest until its disafforestation in 1228, and the pastoral landscape there is probably the result of assarting.¹²⁵ Little evidence remains of medieval agriculture in the manor. Evidence of ridge and furrow to the north and west of Little Sodbury Manor, in fields known as the North and South fields, indicate that these areas were once employed for arable farming.¹²⁶ The pillow mounds lying over these areas of ridge and furrow indicate that this area had been abandoned for arable farming by the early 16th century.¹²⁷

As with Old Sodbury, the principal focus of arable farming from the early modern period, and probably back into the medieval period, was the plateau above the Cotswold Edge. The zig-zagging boundary with Old Sodbury suggests that the common fields of each parish were once all laid out as a single system, the later division of the fields between the two parishes twisting and turning around the headlands of individual strips in the fields. In the 16th century, John Leland found that the land above Little Sodbury Manor, including Sodbury Camp itself, was used for arable.¹²⁸ By the early 17th century, the land to the west of the Bath road was

¹¹⁸GA, D3806/12.

¹¹⁹Emery, *Great Medieval Houses*, III, 115; WSA, 2512/160/12.

¹²⁰*The Times*, 30 Jun. 1952, p. 1.

¹²¹GA, D3806/12; *The Annals of the Harford Family* ed. Alice Harford (London 1909), 159; *London Gaz.* 7 Mar. 1969, p. 2624.

¹²²*The Times*, 23 Sep. 1991, p. 6; *The Spectator*, 25 July 1992, p. 13.

¹²³*Country Life Digital Edition*, 4 May 2016, <<https://www.countrylife.co.uk/property/country-houses-for-sale-and-property-news/splendid-country-houses-for-sale-in-the-cotswolds-2-72957>> [accessed 27 Sep. 2018].

¹²⁴*Domesday*, 459.

¹²⁵See above, Landscape.

¹²⁶South Glos. HER, 16113; Environment Agency, 2014 Lidar survey, ST78se, DSM, 1m.

¹²⁷Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography, BWD1. See above, Landscape.

¹²⁸*Leland*, III, 102.

enclosed within the New Tynning, and set aside as a sheep sleight.¹²⁹ Lands were taken from Little Sodbury's common fields and enclosed as part of Lyegrove farm, including another sheep sleight which also lay across the boundary with Old Sodbury.¹³⁰ The lord of the manor held 70 a. of arable in the common fields and in the Wind Mill Down in 1693.¹³¹

Although only the lords of the manor referred in their wills to flocks of sheep within the parish, the extensive commons enabled many parishioners to maintain cattle, horses and sheep. Of 15 Little Sodbury testators whose wills were proved between 1547 and 1648, eight bequeathed at least one cow, while only four referred to arable cultivation.¹³² Wheat and barley were the preferred crops. In 1618 one Little Sodbury man held 3 a. of arable land and 3 a. of pasture, and kept 12 cows and 20 sheep, another held 11 a. of pasture on which he kept 20 cows and one colt.¹³³ The low-lying western half of the parish was employed for pasture. Little Sodbury park was let for pasture by the middle of the 16th century.¹³⁴ A rectangular enclosure taken out of Sodbury common and divided into three fields, comprising a total of 16 a. in 1687 and now known as Starvall farm, may date from the 16th century or earlier.¹³⁵ A Chancery bill of 1670 named five freeholders and seven copyholders within Little Sodbury, besides the lord of the manor.¹³⁶

By the early 18th century the land in Sodbury Camp had been converted to pasture.¹³⁷ An oxhouse and barns had been built to the north of the Camp, perhaps on the site of a 17th-century windmill.¹³⁸ Arable cultivation was still practised in a close called the Little Tynning, perhaps the trapezoid close to the north of Sodbury Camp which was called the New Tynning in 1794. A map of 1709 shows that strip farming was still practised in the open fields above the escarpment,¹³⁹ named in 1730 the Great and Little fields.¹⁴⁰ Below the hill the land was employed entirely for pasture.¹⁴¹ By the 18th century the majority of land in the parish had been taken in

¹²⁹GA, D2066/1.

¹³⁰GA, D2066/1.

¹³¹GA, D1637/F12.

¹³²GA, GDR, Wills, 1560/4; 1561/103; 1564/53; 1572/11; 1580/202; 1588/110; 1605/174; 1605/175; 1625/170; 1640/45; TNA, PROB 11/31/481; 11/38/131; 11/128/550; 11/164/542; 11/204/553.

¹³³GA, GDR/B4/3.

¹³⁴TNA, PROB 11/38/131; GA, GDR, Wills, 1560/4.

¹³⁵GA, D892/T74.

¹³⁶TNA, C 7/326/46.

¹³⁷GA, D871/E1.

¹³⁸GA, D871/E1. See below, Mills.

¹³⁹GA, D2700/QB17/8/1.

¹⁴⁰GA, D871/E3.

¹⁴¹Atkyns, *Glos.* 673.

hand and the remainder converted to freehold. After the lords of the manor moved to Lyegrove House in Old Sodbury, and subsequently while the manor was in the hands of absentee lords, the manor house was let to tenant farmers.¹⁴² In 1703 the manor house was let to James Manning with Sodbury Camp and all of the demesne land in the common fields of Little Sodbury and Old Sodbury.¹⁴³ The manorial estate *c.*1730 comprised 67 a. of arable in Little Sodbury's two common fields and other lands on the hill, and pasture grounds (including 10 a. in Old Sodbury Common Mead) worth £195 a year.¹⁴⁴ In that year, the farmer noted that the profits of butter, cheese and milk produced on the farm amounted to £60, £15 less than the cost of maintaining the cows and employing a dairy maid.¹⁴⁵ By 1738 several of these pasture grounds had been let to Edward Rice, who was still in possession in 1750, when he may also have been the tenant of the manor house.¹⁴⁶

At the end of the 18th century the demesne land, which comprised the majority of the parish, was divided between a few farms. The largest of these, comprising *c.*395 a. of largely arable land above the escarpment, was let with the parsonage house.¹⁴⁷ Another 93 a., of which only *c.*11 a. was arable land, was let with a farm known in 1793 as Late Chapman's but subsequently called Winchcombe Farm.¹⁴⁸ When 98 a. in the common fields were enclosed by parliamentary Act in 1794, only three land owners were affected, including the lord of the manor and the rector.¹⁴⁹

After enclosure, the majority of demesne land in Little Sodbury continued to be let as a single farm. In 1807 this comprised *c.*467 a. and included the manor house; by 1828 the farm comprised *c.*508 a.¹⁵⁰ Lyegrove farm included most of the remaining arable land lying in Little Sodbury in 1797, comprising *c.*168 a. in total.¹⁵¹ More land was added to Lyegrove from the common fields of Little Sodbury during the early 19th century, and in 1839 the part of the farm lying in Little Sodbury measured 227 a.¹⁵² Some of this was taken from Manor farm, which in 1839 amounted to 258 a.,¹⁵³ although it was held with another 252 a. in Old Sodbury.¹⁵⁴ Winchcombe Farm

¹⁴²GA, D871/A2; D871/E1.

¹⁴³GA, D871/E1.

¹⁴⁴GA, D871/E3.

¹⁴⁵GA, D871/E3.

¹⁴⁶GA, D871/A2-3.

¹⁴⁷GA, D871/T7.

¹⁴⁸GA, D871/T4.

¹⁴⁹34 Geo. III, c.70; GA, D2700/QB10/1/1. The fields of Old Sodbury were enclosed by the same award.

¹⁵⁰GA, D871/T8.

¹⁵¹GA, D2700/QB/4/6.

¹⁵²GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁵³GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁵⁴GA, GDR/T1/165.

remained the other large holding, comprising 163 a. in 1801 (still with only *c.*11 a. of arable),¹⁵⁵ but reduced to 125 a. by 1821.¹⁵⁶ Another small holding of less than 25 a. was let in the early 19th century,¹⁵⁷ and Horwood Gate Farm in Old Sodbury was held with land in Little Sodbury.¹⁵⁸ There were six landowners in the parish in 1839.¹⁵⁹ Principal amongst these was Henry Howard Hartley Winchcombe, the lord of the manor, who owned two-thirds of the parish, with 667 a.¹⁶⁰ Two other proprietors owned estates between 80 and 100 a., Toby Sturge (94 a.) and Revd Iltid Thomas (83 a.), who between them owned a large proportion of the former park. When the Great House and its lands were sold in 1842, only 6 a. of its 94 a. were arable land.¹⁶¹ Four other proprietors in 1839, including the Duke of Beaufort, owned estates of between *c.*9 a. and *c.*34 a.¹⁶² The glebe of the parish amounted to *c.*31 a. The tithe commissioners found that the parish consisted of *c.*336 a. of arable and *c.*539 a. of pasture. Barley and wheat were still favoured, but turnips and grass were also grown, in what was sometimes a five-year course. The parish contained 107 cows, 26 bullocks, 16 horses, and 680 sheep.

In the early 20th century the manorial estate was broken up and sold. The largest proportion was purchased by the Duke of Beaufort, who acquired approximately 300 a. of Manor Farm *c.*1901, comprising lands in both Little Sodbury and Old Sodbury.¹⁶³ Combined with the lands he also purchased at Lyegrove, this made him the proprietor of the largest estate in the parish in 1909 with 373 a., of which 272 a. were held by Daniel Iles with Lyegrove Farm and 62 a. were held by Thomas Bennett of Cross Hands Farm in Old Sodbury.¹⁶⁴ In that year the ladies of the manor still held 314 a., of which 218 a. was let to Harry Hatherell at Manor Farm, and 76 a. comprised Winchcombe Farm.¹⁶⁵ Two other proprietors held estates larger than 100 a. Thomas Bailey's 110 a. were divided between New House Farm, 95 a., and 15 a. of land, both let to tenants, while Leonard Taylor occupied his 107-a. estate at the Great House. There were also three small holdings, of between 4 a. and 31 a., the latter comprising part of Harwood Gate Farm in Old Sodbury, sold to William Butler in

¹⁵⁵GA, D871/T2.

¹⁵⁶GA, D871/T9.

¹⁵⁷GA, D871/T5.

¹⁵⁸GA, D871/T11.

¹⁵⁹TNA, IR 18/2873.

¹⁶⁰GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁶¹GA, D1388/SL3/90.

¹⁶²GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁶³GA, D2299/1137.

¹⁶⁴GA, D2428/1/69.

¹⁶⁵GA, D2428/1/69.

1908.¹⁶⁶ The Duke of Beaufort subsequently purchased another 370 a. of the Sodbury manorial estates in 1910.¹⁶⁷

In 1920 the Duke sold Cross Hands Farm, consisting of c.275 a. including c.104 a. in Little Sodbury, mostly the arable land between the edge of the hill top and the Bath Road.¹⁶⁸ Purchased by Alfred Brooks, it was sold again in 1928 following his death.¹⁶⁹ The Duke sold another 65 a. of pasture in small parcels in 1920.¹⁷⁰ In 1933 most of the parish, above and below the hill, was employed as permanent grassland. Land either side of the Bath Road was used for arable, and there were fields used for arable north of Lyegrove House, and south and east of Great House Farm.¹⁷¹ There were three farms in Little Sodbury over 100 a. in 1943; Winchcombe Farm amounted to 190 a. and was occupied by the owner M. W. Harford, while New House Farm and Great House Farm, both c.120 a., were both occupied by tenants.¹⁷² There were four small holdings, the largest of which, Church Farm at 39 a., was occupied by a tenant, while Starvall Farm, 25 a. was owned by the tenant of 1909 and occupied by his son. The other two small holdings were below 15 a. in size. The remainder of the parish was probably returned with farms in Old Sodbury. Only oats were grown in the lower part of the parish in 1941 and 1942. The surveyors were very positive about the quality of farm management within the parish. In 2016 Church Farm was offered for sale with a Dutch barn and 6.75 a. of land.¹⁷³

Mills

Reference was made to the Windmill field in 1618.¹⁷⁴ It stood on the edge of the hill top to the west of the Bath Way,¹⁷⁵ perhaps at the site where an oxhouse and barton was built in the 18th century. The windmill was still standing in 1672.¹⁷⁶ The hill top above Little Sodbury House was called Wind Mill Down in the late 17th century.¹⁷⁷

¹⁶⁶GA, D4855/2/1/9.

¹⁶⁷GA, D2299/1137.

¹⁶⁸GA, D2426/Z4; D4855/2/1/10.

¹⁶⁹GA, D4855/2/1/18.

¹⁷⁰GA, D4855/2/1/10.

¹⁷¹*Land Util. Surv. Map*, Sheet 103 (135); Sheet 111 (1939).

¹⁷²TNA, MAF 32/87/219.

¹⁷³Sales particulars, Knight Frank, October 2016.

¹⁷⁴GA, GDR/B4/3.

¹⁷⁵TNA, C 202/41/4.

¹⁷⁶TNA, C 6/87/47.

¹⁷⁷GA, D1637/F12; D2066/1.

Parks

The medieval park of Lyegrove lay across the parish boundary with Old Sodbury. John Walsh was granted a license in 1511 to impark 500 a. and to have free warren in all of the demesne lands of the manor.¹⁷⁸ By 1517 Walsh had enclosed 260 a., comprising 244 a. of pasture, 16 a. of meadow and 20 a. of woodland.¹⁷⁹ The park was still being used for game in 1536, when deer and other game were liberated.¹⁸⁰ By his will of 1556, Maurice Walsh made a life-grant of a lease of the revenues of Little Sodbury Park to his mother, suggesting that the it may have been converted to pastoral uses by that date.¹⁸¹ It was certainly being used as pasture in the middle of the 17th century, by which date it had been divided into a number of smaller fields.¹⁸²

The warren at Little Sodbury comprised 100 a.¹⁸³ Nicholas Walsh petitioned Star Chamber during the reign of Elizabeth I, complaining that a large group, including men from Chipping Sodbury and Old Sodbury, had broken into the warren to hunt rabbits at night.¹⁸⁴ The warren had been destroyed and enclosed as several large fields of pasture by 1642.¹⁸⁵

Woodland

It is likely that Little Sodbury has never been heavily wooded, although some of the low-lying pasture grounds in the west of the parish may be the result of assarting. The parish contained only a small amount of woodland in 1086.¹⁸⁶ When John Walsh enclosed his park at Little Sodbury in the early 16th century it included 20 a. of woodland.¹⁸⁷ There were woods growing on the Little Park in 1606.¹⁸⁸ There was a coppice in Sodbury Camp in 1693,¹⁸⁹ and still in 1703, when there was also a grove near the barns to the north of the Camp.¹⁹⁰ A coppice measuring c.9 a. to the north of Lyegrove and belonging to Lyegrove House was recorded in the tithe

¹⁷⁸*L&P Hen. VIII, I: 1509–14, 441.*

¹⁷⁹*Trans. BGAS, 97 (1979), 76.*

¹⁸⁰TNA, KB 9/534.

¹⁸¹TNA, PROB 11/38/131.

¹⁸²GA, D2066/1.

¹⁸³See above, Landscape.

¹⁸⁴TNA, STAC 5/W3/14.

¹⁸⁵GA, D2066/1.

¹⁸⁶*Domesday, 459.*

¹⁸⁷See above, Parks.

¹⁸⁸GA, D2066/1.

¹⁸⁹GA, D1637/F12.

¹⁹⁰GA, D871/E1.

award of 1839.¹⁹¹ Unchanged at the start of the 20th century, it had been enlarged to c.17 a. by 1919.¹⁹² In 2018 the coppice measured c.21 a.

Industry, Crafts and Trades

As at Old Sodbury, the abundance of accessible limestone in the district encouraged quarrying. A man of Little Sodbury, presumably a mason, died in 1720 in possession of 18 loads of stone in 'the quarry at the bottom of Horwood', although it is not clear where this was.¹⁹³ The Ordnance Survey recorded the presence of a quarry, perhaps no longer used, to the north of Sodbury Camp in 1881.¹⁹⁴

Very few non-agrarian occupations were recorded in the parish before the 19th century. The proximity of the parish to Chipping Sodbury stimulated the weaving trade. Thomas Parker, who died in 1605, left his son two broad looms and a warping bar.¹⁹⁵ His son, John, was one of four weavers resident in the parish in 1608. Another John Parker, who died in 1670, was probably also a weaver.¹⁹⁶ There were also four carpenters noted in the parish in 1608.¹⁹⁷ Of 52 wills or inventories of parishioners produced between 1547 and 1788, only four of the individuals concerned held non-agrarian occupations: two tailors, one carpenter, and one glover.¹⁹⁸ Victorian directories only recorded the presence of farmers in the parish until 1897, when there was a shopkeeper and a wood dealer.¹⁹⁹ By the start of the First World War there was still a dealer in wood and there were two hauliers active in the parish, but the shop had apparently closed.²⁰⁰

Social History

Social Structure

In 1086 there were 4 villans, 2 bordars and 4 slaves.²⁰¹ In 1327 eight individuals were assessed at a total of £1 0s. ¾d.²⁰² The richest individual in the parish was Henry Whitelde, who was taxed at 5s. 2d. The lord of the manor, Jordan Bishop, was taxed at 3s. 10d., while another member of the family, William Bishop, was taxed at

¹⁹¹GA, GDR/T1/164.

¹⁹²OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1886, 1903, 1924 edns).

¹⁹³GA, GDR, Inventories, 1720/72.

¹⁹⁴OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1886 edn).

¹⁹⁵GA, GDR, Wills, 1605/175.

¹⁹⁶GA, GDR, Inventories, 1670/57; Wills, 1689/116.

¹⁹⁷Smith, *Men and Armour*, 192.

¹⁹⁸GA, GDR, Wills, Index.

¹⁹⁹*Post Office Dir.* (1863 edn), *Kelly's Dir.* (1879, 1897 edns).

²⁰⁰*Kelly's Dir.* (1914 edn).

²⁰¹*Domesday*, 459.

²⁰²TNA, E 179/115/3.

3s. Two other individuals were assessed at more than 2s. each. Robert Werkemon, described as French in the subsidy rolls, was assessed as an alien householder in 1443.²⁰³

The wealth of Sir John Walsh, lord of the manor in the early 16th century, was assessed at £100 or more in 1522,²⁰⁴ and again 1524.²⁰⁵ He was one of the wealthiest in the county.²⁰⁶ Walsh was responsible for £5 of Little Sodbury's total assessment of £6 6s. 2d., £1 more than the assessment of Old Sodbury.²⁰⁷ Below Walsh, the second wealthiest individual was Richard Berkeley, assessed at £16 in 1522 and £10 in 1524, while Geoffrey More was valued at £13 in 1522 but only £3 in 1524.²⁰⁸ Walsh's wealth and status enabled him to maintain a large household at his house, and five of his servants were assessed for their wages in 1524,²⁰⁹ the figure rising to eight the following year.²¹⁰ Walsh was assessed at £3 for £120 of land in 1537.²¹¹ Of 19 adult males in 1608 only the lord of the manor, Walter Walsh, was described as esquire and there were no other gentlemen.²¹² Nine men were described as husbandmen, four men called Gale were a family of carpenters, and four men were weavers; one other man, the son of a weaver, was not given an occupation.

The contrasting wealth between the lords of the manor and their tenants is underlined by the extant probate records. Of the extant wills proved before the Restoration, only the Walsh family made reference to items of wealth such as the silver bowls bequeathed by Lady Anne Walsh in 1560.²¹³ When her grandson Nicholas died, the manor house was furnished with wainscot beds, Turkish carpets and Arras hangings, and contained a well-stocked armoury. His possessions, divided between Little Sodbury and Olverston, were valued at £180.²¹⁴ In 1672 the manor house was assessed as having 23 hearths.²¹⁵ One other property, held by William Chapman, was assessed at six hearths, presumably the farmhouse now

²⁰³TNA, E 179/113/107, m. 2; E 179/113/108, m. 2. 'Robert Werkemon', *England's Immigrants 1330–1550*, <<http://www.englishimmigrants.com/person/54680>> [accessed 23 Jan. 2019].

²⁰⁴*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 4.

²⁰⁵*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 144.

²⁰⁶*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 8.

²⁰⁷*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 144–5.

²⁰⁸*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 4–5; *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 144–5.

²⁰⁹*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 144.

²¹⁰*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 311.

²¹¹TNA, E 179/114/217.

²¹²Smith, *Men & Armour* (1608),

²¹³TNA, GDR, Wills, 1560/4.

²¹⁴TNA, E 178/863/5.

²¹⁵TNA, E 179/247/14, rot. 51d.

known as Winchcombe Farm, called Late Chapman's farm in the late 18th century.²¹⁶ Of the remaining 18 properties, nine were assessed for one hearth, two for two hearths, and seven for three hearths. A substantial mansion house, now known as the Great House, was built in the late 17th century. In the early 18th century, the rector Henry Bedford made bequests of his silver spoons and tankards and a collection of books,²¹⁷ while another man was in possession of a silver cup and a clock.²¹⁸

The presence of the Walsh family, and later the Stephens family, as lords of the manor occasionally brought the inhabitants into contact with the wider political nation. Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn stayed at Little Sodbury Manor in August 1535.²¹⁹ Nicholas Walsh was selected to represent the county in the parliament of 1563.²²⁰ Edward Stephens served in the Long Parliament, having been elected for Tewkesbury in 1643, and was chosen to represent the county in the Convention parliament of 1660.²²¹ In the later 17th century the Stephens family preferred Lyegrove House in Old Sodbury as their principal residence, and for more than a century after the death in 1728 of Edward Stephens the lords were distant absentees.²²²

In 1831 all but one of the 31 men aged 20 or above were employed in agricultural activities. Of the six farmers, four were able to employ labourers, and two worked their farms themselves; the remaining 24 men were agricultural labourers.²²³ In 1851 two farmers employed labourers on their farms, which together comprised approximately two-thirds of the whole parish, while the other four farms were worked directly by the farmers and their families. Of the remaining 35 adult men, one was employed as the local relieving officer, two worked stone, one was a shepherd, and 28 were employed as labourers. Three men were unemployed, one a pauper and two described as retired. Of the four women who gave an occupation, two were labourers, one a dress maker, and one a housekeeper.²²⁴ The 1881 census revealed a greater range of occupations in the parish, although still those typical to a rural parish.²²⁵ Farm labour and related rural occupations still predominated, with 16 labourers and two shepherds, a carpenter and a haulier. One family combined a

²¹⁶GA, D871/T4. See above, Economic History.

²¹⁷TNA, PROB 11/560/92.

²¹⁸TNA, PROB 11/571/172.

²¹⁹TNA, E 101/422/1.

²²⁰*Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1558–1603, pp.

²²¹*Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1660–90, pp.

²²²See above, Landownership.

²²³Census, 1831.

²²⁴Census, 1851.

²²⁵Census, 1881.

bakery, managed by the mother, with a shop in which her sons worked as a blacksmith, a wheelwright and a coach builder. The rector, three farmers and school mistress also provided employment for nine domestic servants.

The parish's six farms still provided the principal employment within the parish in 1911, employing more than half the men as gardeners, carters, shepherds, cowmen or labourers.²²⁶ There were also three men who dealt in wood or hay and straw. The recently-constructed railway provided employment for two men, and another man was the local section man for the county council. The six farmers, the rector and the schoolmaster provided work for 11 domestic servants, six male and five female. Two other women worked as a labourer and a laundress respectively. There was also a licensed hawkers with his wife and eight children staying in a tent on the side of the road to Chipping Sodbury on Census day in 1911. Although the Baron de Tuyll was not lord of the manor, his presence at the Manor House provided the parish with a focal point, and his establishment on the eve of the Second World War included seven domestic servants and an artist.²²⁷ The retired soldier Lt-Col Philip Walker also maintained a household of seven domestic servants at the Great House. The five farmers, one a woman, continued to provide the main source of employment in the parish, but there were also two quarrymen, two railway workers, a mason, and a shoemaker. The establishment of the aircraft factory at Yate provided further employment for three men, in the stores, on the factory floor, and as a clerk. Other than Mabel Weaver, the farmer of Church Farm, domestic work, both paid and unpaid, provided the only form of employment for the women of the parish.

In the later 20th century, the social profile of the parish underwent significant change, in part brought about by construction of the M4 near to the village. Little Sodbury has become a dormitory village in which the large majority of employed residents travel some distance to work by car, predominantly in the direction of Bristol.²²⁸ The social profile of the parish has also undergone significant change, and more than half of those in work held management positions or ran their own small businesses.²²⁹ While the largest sector represented among the population was wholesale and retail trade, medicine and social care was also a significant source of employment. In contrast to previous centuries, agriculture only provided employment for three individuals. In 2011 there were more individuals aged 65 or over (20 in total) than there were 15 or under (15), and this age profile was reflected in the fact that almost one-fifth of the population was either retired or looking after a family member.

²²⁶Census, 1911.

²²⁷TNA, RG 101/5120J.

²²⁸Census, 2011.

²²⁹Census, 2011.

Education

In 1818 there was a day school in the parish, with a man and his wife paid one guinea a month by the incumbent to teach the children of the poor.²³⁰ This had lapsed, however, by 1833, when it was reported that there was no school in the parish.²³¹ A 'school room' is referred to in May 1858, when it was licensed for divine service during the rebuilding of the church.²³² Vestry meetings were held in this room until April 1859 and this was also the location presumably of the Sunday school mentioned in 1863.²³³ The Sunday school may have become the parochial school, with a mistress, referred to in 1868.²³⁴

In 1870 the school room was described as 'much dilapidated' in an application to build a mixed school for 45 children and accommodation for a mistress.²³⁵ £594 was raised locally, mostly by voluntary contributions, towards the buildings costs of £861, to which the Diocesan Association and the Committee of Council on Education contributed a further £25 and £125 respectively.²³⁶ The school was erected on land on the southern perimeter of the churchyard, the site having been donated by Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley, the lord of the manor.²³⁷ The single classroom, of three bays, has a reticulated three-light north window in 14th-century style, with solid chimney-stack to west and two-storey attached schoolhouse to south, and was built of squared limestone with mullioned windows and ashlar quoining. The architects were R. S. Pope & Son of Bristol.²³⁸

The National school opened in March 1877 under a temporary teacher, who was replaced in the following November by a certified mistress.²³⁹ In addition to the three Rs, needlework and singing were taught.²⁴⁰ The expected number of pupils never materialised, partly because some local children continued to attend the neighbouring schools.²⁴¹ In 1879 the school had 24 pupils on roll, and in 1897 the average attendance was 23.²⁴² Following an inspector's report in April 1901 that criticised the school's management, the school was closed on 24 May 1901; the

²³⁰*Educ. of Poor Digest*, 311.

²³¹*Educ. Enq. Abstract*, 326.

²³²GA, P301 VE 2/1.

²³³GA, P301VE 2/1; Post Office Dir. Glos. (1863 edn), 340.

²³⁴*Slater's Dir. Glos. et al* (1868 edn), 250.

²³⁵TNA, ED 103/112/40, 759–60.

²³⁶TNA, ED 103/112/40, 775.

²³⁷GA, D2186/115; TNA, ED 103/112/40, 761.

²³⁸GA, D2186/115. The building survived in 2016 as a private house.

²³⁹TNA, ED 103/112/40, 774; GA, P301 SC 1/1, 1.

²⁴⁰GA, P301 SC 1/1, 22.

²⁴¹TNA, ED 103/112/40, 774; GA, P301 SC 1/1, 7.

²⁴²GA, P301 SC 1/1, 20; *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* (1897 edn), 291.

average attendance at the time was 22.²⁴³ The building was being used as a Sunday school by 1903, and in 1914 it was reported that local children attended the schools in Horton and Old Sodbury.²⁴⁴

Social Welfare

Parish expenditure on poor relief amounted to c.£59 in 1776, and an annual average of c.£67 in the years 1783–5. This figure had almost doubled by the year 1802–3, when c.£123 was expended as out-relief to nine individuals permanently, and another three occasionally.²⁴⁵ Expenditure on maintaining the poor came to £85 in the year ending Easter 1815, providing out-relief to 15 people, nine permanently.²⁴⁶ In the final decade of the Old Poor Law the cost of poor relief in the parish varied between a high of c.£92 in 1824–5 and a low of £74 in 1831–2, returning to c.£92 in the year 1834–5.²⁴⁷ A year later, following the creation of the Chipping Sodbury Poor Law Union, Little Sodbury's expenditure on relieving the poor fell to c.£58.

The Commissioners to Enquire into Charities found no eleemosynary charities in the parish in the early 19th century.²⁴⁸ The lord of the manor, Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley, made an annual dole of bread and beef to the poor of Little Sodbury in the 1820s and 1830s.²⁴⁹ Mrs Nina Katherine Webley-Parry (d. 1917),²⁵⁰ one of the former ladies of the manor, left £300 to the parish for the annual interest to be distributed in coal or clothing for the poor of the parish, at the discretion of the rector.²⁵¹

Communal Life

Eighteen parishioners were members of a friendly society in 1814,²⁵² but it is not clear whether a separate friendly society for the parish was ever established.

The former parish school room was in use as a parish room in 1932, when the former school house was let to the District Nursing Association.²⁵³ Both the school

²⁴³GA, P301 SC 1/1, 339, 341; GA, P301 SC 1/2.

²⁴⁴OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1903 edn); *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* (1914 edn), 306.

²⁴⁵*Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, pp. 176–7.

²⁴⁶*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, pp. 150–1.

²⁴⁷*Poor Law Returns (1830–1)*, p. 68; *Poor Law Returns (1835)*, p. 67.

²⁴⁸TNA, CHAR 2/94.

²⁴⁹*Bath Chron.* 3 Jan. 1822, p. 2; 29 Dec. 1831, p. 3.

²⁵⁰*Lond. Gaz.* 15 Mar. 1918, p. 3341.

²⁵¹GA, P301 VE 2/1.

²⁵²*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, pp. 150–1.

²⁵³GA, GDR/V5/366/14.

room and dwelling house were sold in 1951, when they became a private residence.²⁵⁴

Leisure and sport

The parish lay within the wide territory hunted by the Duke of Beaufort's Hunt, which regularly met at Old Sodbury.²⁵⁵ The churchwardens of Little Sodbury paid for three foxes caught by the Duke of Beaufort's huntsman in 1735, and for four badgers caught by the huntsman in Sodbury Camp in 1736.²⁵⁶ There was a fox catcher in 1754.²⁵⁷

Religious History

Church Origins and Parochial Organization

No church is mentioned in Domesday Book.²⁵⁸ The earliest record of the church dates from the late 13th century, when reference was made to its rector.²⁵⁹ A small church, apparently dating from the early 16th century but perhaps on the site of an earlier structure, stood close to the manor house.²⁶⁰ Although the benefice had full parochial rights, this church lacked a graveyard, and so corpses had to be carried to Old Sodbury for burial. The church was demolished in 1858, and a larger church with a churchyard was built on a new site.²⁶¹ The church is, uniquely, dedicated to St Adeline, an obscure 12th-century Norman abbess. The first documentary evidence of the dedication dates from the 15th century.²⁶² It has been suggested that Adeline may be a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon names Aethelwine (*Æðelwine*) or Aethelwyn (*Æðelwyn*), perhaps referring to a West Saxon saint or a now-forgotten member of the local Hwiccian ruling family.²⁶³ The parish was united with that of Old Sodbury by a scheme of 1923.²⁶⁴ The united benefice was dissolved in 1955, when Little Sodbury was instead united with the benefice of Horton.²⁶⁵ Little Sodbury was

²⁵⁴GA, P301 VE 2/1.

²⁵⁵See Old Sodbury, Social History.

²⁵⁶GA, P301 CW 2/1.

²⁵⁷GA, P301 CW 2/1.

²⁵⁸*Domesday*, 459.

²⁵⁹*Cal. Various Chancery Rolls 1277–1326*, 56.

²⁶⁰NHLE, No. 1136845.

²⁶¹NHLE, No. 1115004.

²⁶²WAAS, Register of Bishop John Carpenter, I, f. 190.

²⁶³*Trans. BGAS*, 106 (1988), 8; G.R. Jones, 'Church Dedications and Landed Units of Lordship and Administration in the Pre-Reformation Diocese of Worcester', (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Univ. of Leicester, 1996), 143–4; *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (5th rev. edn.), sub 'Egelwine'. An alternative candidate, Aethelwine, bishop of Lindsey, seems less likely: *idem.*, sub 'Aethelwine'.

²⁶⁴*London Gaz.* 30 Dec. 1921, pp. 10628–9.

²⁶⁵*London Gaz.* 4 Feb. 1955, pp. 701–1.

united with Old Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury in 2004.²⁶⁶ This new benefice was united with Horton in 2009 to form the Sodbury Vale benefice.

Advowson and Church Endowment

The advowson of the church descended with the manor.²⁶⁷ The Queen presented to the benefice in 1584,²⁶⁸ and the Bishop collated to the benefice in 1600.²⁶⁹ Upon the union of Old Sodbury with Little Sodbury, the patron of Little Sodbury was to present to the new benefice on the second of every three turns,²⁷⁰ which continued to be true after the union with Horton.²⁷¹

The church of Little Sodbury was valued at £2 6s. 8d. in 1341,²⁷² at £6 13s. 4d. in 1522,²⁷³ and at £6 10s. 8d. in 1535.²⁷⁴ In the late 16th century the glebe was said to consist of 42 a. of arable, c.18 a. of meadow and c.6 a. of pasture.²⁷⁵ In the early 17th century it was found to comprise c.29 a. of arable, c.18 a. of meadow, and c.6 a. of pasture,²⁷⁶ and in 1603 was said to be worth £6 10s.²⁷⁷ During the incumbency of George Boswell (rector 1613–61) the lord of the manor, Edward Stephens, exchanged 10 a. of glebe dispersed through the open fields of the parish for 10 a. enclosed at Ditchmore.²⁷⁸ The living, wrongly described as a vicarage, was valued at £36 in 1650.²⁷⁹ In the late 17th century the glebe was said to comprise 23 a. of arable and 6 a. of pasture, and it was claimed that 1 a. of meadow had been illegally withheld from the rectory for over 50 years.²⁸⁰

The living was thought to be worth £70 in the early 18th century,²⁸¹ and £124 in 1785.²⁸² Three years later the inhabitants compounded with the rector to pay 2s. an

²⁶⁶*Yate and Sodbury Gazette*, 5 Mar. 2004.

²⁶⁷For the history of the manor see above, Landownership.

²⁶⁸*Cal. Pat.* 1583-84 (List and Index Soc., 287, 2001), 108.

²⁶⁹Hockaday Abs. ccclxiii.

²⁷⁰*London Gaz.* 30 Dec. 1921, pp. 10628–9.

²⁷¹*London Gaz.* 4 Feb. 1955, pp. 701–1.

²⁷²*Non. Inq.* 418.

²⁷³*Military Surv. of Glos.* 1522, xx.

²⁷⁴*Valor Eccl.* II, 492.

²⁷⁵GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²⁷⁶GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²⁷⁷'Survey of the Diocese of Gloucester, 1603', ed. W. J. Shiels, in *An Ecclesiastical Miscellany* (BGAS Records Section, XI, 1976), 85.

²⁷⁸GA, GDR/V5/277T. For Boswell, see below, Religious Life.

²⁷⁹TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v.

²⁸⁰GA, GDR/V5/277T; GA, D547a/F32.

²⁸¹*Bp. Benson's Surv.* 35.

²⁸²GA, D547a/F32.

acre for pasture and 3s. an acre for arable in lieu of tithes.²⁸³ At the enclosure of the parish in 1795, the rectory was awarded 8 a., lying between the Bath road and the old enclosure at Ditchmore.²⁸⁴ In 1823 the living was valued at £240,²⁸⁵ and still in 1831.²⁸⁶ In 1839 the glebe was found to comprise *c.*23 a. of arable and *c.*6 a. of pasture, and the tithes were commuted for £200.²⁸⁷ The arable land was sold to the Duke of Beaufort in 1906.²⁸⁸ The tithes were valued at £151 in 1914.²⁸⁹ An augmentation of £172 was granted to the rectory in 1928, but this was only to continue until the union with Old Sodbury took effect upon the next vacancy.²⁹⁰ Following the union, the remaining 6 a. of glebe were sold in 1932,²⁹¹ the proceeds from which were invested for the augmentation of the united benefice.²⁹²

Rectory House

In the early 17th century the rectory house was described as consisting of 15 bays, presumably including barns and stables, all built of brick.²⁹³ This was replaced in the late 17th century by a substantial stone house, comprising 5 bays,²⁹⁴ which was subsequently remodelled during the 18th and 19th centuries.²⁹⁵ Across a small courtyard from the house, a separate stone barn and stable stood against the village street.²⁹⁶ Under the terms of the scheme to unite Little Sodbury with Old Sodbury, the rectory house was made redundant.²⁹⁷ Following the death of the last incumbent of Little Sodbury in 1932, the house was sold.²⁹⁸

Religious Life

Little is known about the medieval priests who served Little Sodbury. Master William Mounceaux, presented to the parish by Jordan Bishop *c.*1338, also held a

²⁸³GA, D547a/F32.

²⁸⁴GA, D2700/QB10/5/1.

²⁸⁵Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

²⁸⁶*Rep. Com. Eccl. Revenues*, 422–3.

²⁸⁷GA, GDR/T1/164.

²⁸⁸GA, P301 VE 2/1.

²⁸⁹GA, P301 CW 3/4.

²⁹⁰*London Gaz.* 26 Oct. 1928, p. 6890.

²⁹¹GA, D2299/5023.

²⁹²GA, GDR/V5/366/14.

²⁹³GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²⁹⁴GA, GDR/V5/277T; D2299/5023.

²⁹⁵NHLE, No. 1321169.

²⁹⁶GA, GDR/V5/277T.

²⁹⁷*London Gaz.* 30 Dec. 1921, pp. 10628–9.

²⁹⁸GA, D2299/5023; GDR/V5/366/14.

benefice in the diocese of York, and was owed money by his patron.²⁹⁹ Nicholas Adams, the rector of the parish c.1366 until 1370,³⁰⁰ was owed £48 for wool traded by him to a Bristol merchant.³⁰¹ He subsequently held the vicarage of Old Sodbury.³⁰²

Sir John Walsh apparently built a new church for the parish adjacent to his enlarged manor house in the early 16th century. Sketches made of the church shortly before its demolition reveal a small building, consisting of short nave entered on the south side through a doorway underneath a low tower.³⁰³ A small aisle projected by the north-east corner, containing the pew of the lord of the manor. Constrained by its proximity to Sodbury Hill, the church had no chancel, while concerns about contamination to the water supply of the manor house meant that there was no graveyard.³⁰⁴ The building was demolished in the middle of the 19th century, and much of its material reused in the construction of a new church on a different site.³⁰⁵ Only a short section of the original coursed rubble walls, including the doorway of the south entrance, remain standing at the original location.³⁰⁶

Walsh's household at Little Sodbury Manor became a focal point for early Protestantism in the county, where he played host to similarly-minded members of the gentry like William Tracy and reformist preachers and teachers. Most prominent of these was William Tyndale, who Walsh employed as tutor to his children in the 1520s.³⁰⁷ While at Little Sodbury Tyndale translated Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis Christiani* into English, and may have begun his translation of the New Testament there too. Tyndale preached in the church at Little Sodbury and elsewhere in the area, and his confrontations with local clerics brought him to the attention of the chancellor of the diocese, although he escaped punishment. Tyndale left Little Sodbury for London early in 1523.³⁰⁸ The former friar John Erley also visited Little Sodbury.³⁰⁹ Despite Walsh's evident enthusiasm for Protestantism, his will of 1547 conformed to the doctrines of the day, and he bequeathed his soul to God, the Virgin Mary and 'to all the celestially company of heaven'.³¹⁰ Walsh's widow Anne felt under

²⁹⁹WAAS, Register of Thomas Hemenhale, f. 7; TNA, C 241/111/68.

³⁰⁰WAAS, Register of William Lynn, f. 8d.

³⁰¹TNA, C 241/153/35.

³⁰²See Old Sodbury, Religious History.

³⁰³Hodges, *Some Ancient English Homes*, 208–9; Atkyns, *Glos.* 674.

³⁰⁴*Parson's Notes*, 279.

³⁰⁵See below.

³⁰⁶NHLE, No. 1136845.

³⁰⁷ODNB, sub 'Tyndale, William (c.1494–1536).

³⁰⁸ODNB, sub 'Tyndale, William (c.1494–1536).

³⁰⁹*Trans. BGAS*, 90 (1971), 151. For Erley's career, see Litzenberger, *English Reformation and the Laity*, 29.

³¹⁰TNA, PROB 11/31/481.

no constraints in 1560, however, bequeathing her soul solely to God her redeemer.³¹¹ Two other Little Sodbury wills drawn up in the 1560s, and both witnessed by the rector, made unequivocally Protestant bequests of the soul.³¹²

John Clarke was presented to the rectory of Little Sodbury in 1537, and retained it until his death in 1584.³¹³ In 1551 Bishop Hooper found that Clarke knew the Lord's Prayer and could repeat the articles of faith, although he could not prove them from scripture, and he could not repeat the Ten Commandments.³¹⁴ In 1563 the churchwardens presented that he also served a second cure.³¹⁵ There was no carpet for the communion table in 1572, and one of the parishioners was presented for refusing to come to church.³¹⁶ Two presentations were made to the rectory in 1584, Thomas Betterton in July and John Savage in October. In both instances the rectory was said to be vacant by reason of death, but it is not clear whether Betterton had died or his presentation had been made void.³¹⁷ Savage, who may previously have been the chaplain at Stone, retained the benefice until his death in 1600.³¹⁸

Thomas Hooke was collated to the benefice by the Bishop in 1600, after the rectory had been left vacant for more than six months by Walter Walsh.³¹⁹ Hooke had been vicar of Hawkesbury since 1584, and he served both parishes until his death in 1613.³²⁰ He was succeeded by George Boswell (d. 1661),³²¹ presented by Walter Walsh who was still in possession of the advowson at this date.³²² A second presentation was necessary in 1619,³²³ because Boswell's father had purchased the living for him.³²⁴ Boswell may not have satisfied the godly inclinations of his new patron, Edward Stephens, who employed Richard Fowler as his chaplain, and preacher at Little Sodbury in the 1620s and 1630s.³²⁵ Fowler was suspended in 1635 by

³¹¹GA, GDR, Wills/1560/4.

³¹²GA, GDR, Wills/1561/103; GDR/Wills/1564/53.

³¹³CCED, 45464.

³¹⁴EHR, 19 (1904), 116.

³¹⁵Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³¹⁶Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³¹⁷Cal. Pat. 1583-84 (List and Index Soc., 287, 2001), 104, 108.

³¹⁸CCED, No. 163198.

³¹⁹Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³²⁰CCED, No. 154574.

³²¹*Alumni Oxon.* 1500-1714, I, 153. Boswell has been conflated with another minister of the same name: CCED, 67996. That Boswell, who held two Essex livings until his sequestration, died in 1653: TNA, PROB 11/237/69. The rector of Little Sodbury was buried at Horton in 1661: GA, P182 IN 1/1.

³²²Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³²³Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³²⁴Cal. SP Dom. 1619-23, 22.

³²⁵Bigland, *Glos.* II, 245.

Archbishop Laud's Vicar-General upon suspicion of being 'factiously addicted', and for refusing to wear a surplice.³²⁶ William Kemp was intruded into the living in 1656,³²⁷ but Boswell regained possession after the Restoration.³²⁸

Boswell's successor was Paul Hartman, originally from Thorn (Toruń) in Poland. Hartman had been ordained a deacon in the Moravian church, but was ordained into the Church of England by Bishop Skinner of Oxford in 1658, where he was also a minor canon of Christ Church.³²⁹ Hartman was presented to Shillingford (Berks.) in 1674, and Marmaduke Sealy (d. 1696), formerly a teacher at Tetbury,³³⁰ was presented to Little Sodbury in his place.³³¹ During the incumbency of his successor, Henry Bedford (rector 1696–1717), after 'many disputes and hearings' before the chancellor of the diocese, it was finally established in 1703 that the rector had no obligation to repair any part of the church, the whole burden of which fell upon the parishioners.³³² A bell inscribed with the words 'God save the Queen & send us peace' was hung in the tower c.1707.³³³ Marked with the initials AR, it was probably made by the Gloucester bell founder Abraham Rudhall, or his son of the same name.³³⁴

During the 18th and 19th centuries the parish was frequently held in plurality with other livings, and the cure may often have been served by curates. Thomas Lodge, who was presented in 1724, held the living with that of Hazleton from 1727.³³⁵ Communion was held four times a year during the early 18th century, for which a new cup was purchased c.1731.³³⁶ Robert Coates was appointed as curate in 1744, with a salary of 15 guineas a year,³³⁷ and presented to the rectory on the death of Lodge six years later.³³⁸ During this period, there were two services every Sunday, consisting of morning prayers and an afternoon sermon.³³⁹ A new communion table

³²⁶*Cal. SP Dom* 1635, xli; *CCED*, No. 150632; *Calamy Revised*, 209–10.

³²⁷Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

³²⁸*CCED*, No. 67996.

³²⁹*Alumni Oxon.* 1500–1714. Thomas C. Ferguson, 'The Moravian Episcopate and the Episcopal Church', *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 71 (2002), 512. His brother Adam Samuel Hartman was created a bishop of the same church in 1673: *idem.*, 515.

³³⁰WSA, D1/14/1/1c/35–9.

³³¹Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 163384.

³³²GA, P301 IN 1/1.

³³³H.T. Ellacombe, *Church Bells of Glos.* (Exeter, 1881), 63.

³³⁴*ODNB*, sub 'Rudhall, Abraham, the elder'.

³³⁵Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 157640.

³³⁶GA, P301 CW 2/1.

³³⁷*Bishop Benson's Survey*, 35.

³³⁸Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 142277.

³³⁹Bp. *Benson's Surv.* 35.

made of mahogany was acquired in 1757, and a new font was purchased in the following year.³⁴⁰ Coates' successor, Nathaniel Booth, already held Welford (Warwks.) and Kencot (Oxon.) when he was presented to Little Sodbury in 1783, although he resigned the latter at that time.³⁴¹ Booth was presumably resident, because his death in 1788 necessitated the temporary appointment of a curate.³⁴² Henry Willis, who was presented to Little Sodbury in the same year, had served as a Royal Navy officer during the Seven Years War, before being ordained later in life. He was also vicar of Wapley with Codrington and perpetual curate of Rangeworthy, domestic chaplain to Henry Harbord, 1st Baron Suffield, and in 1792 he was presented to East Shefford (Berks.), all of which livings he retained until his death in 1794.³⁴³ His curate, also appointed in 1788, was to have a salary of £25 a year.³⁴⁴ There was no curate in 1794, when Willis' death necessitated the appointment of another.³⁴⁵ His successor, Richard Coxe, was already vicar of Bucklebury (Berks.),³⁴⁶ the principal seat of the Hartleys, the patrons of Little Sodbury.³⁴⁷

Gaius Barry, presented to the rectory in 1819, was also a minor canon of Bristol Cathedral and the stipendary curate of Walcot (Som.) and he was given dispensation to remain there due to the small value of Little Sodbury.³⁴⁸ Instead, the cure of Little Sodbury was performed by a succession of stipendary curates who were often themselves forced to hold more than one living. Thomas Smith, the school master at Chipping Sodbury grammar school, served as curate for two years from 1820 with a stipend of £50, until he was appointed stipendary curate at Chipping Sodbury.³⁴⁹ David Jones, licenced at Little Sodbury in 1822 also with a stipend of £50, was also curate at Westerleigh chapel, where he resided.³⁵⁰ In 1828 Richard Templeman was licenced curate with a salary of £80.³⁵¹ In 1832 Barry's son James was appointed as his curate, again with a salary of £80.³⁵² James Barry continued to act as his father's curate until his death in 1849, although he had also acquired two curacies in

³⁴⁰GA, P301 CW 2/1.

³⁴¹Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 22929.

³⁴²GA, P301 CW 2/1.

³⁴³Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 20907.

³⁴⁴GA, D547a/F29.

³⁴⁵GA, P301 CW 2/1.

³⁴⁶Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 91955.

³⁴⁷See above, Landownership.

³⁴⁸Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 41812; *Gentleman's Mag.* Dec. 1812, 585.

³⁴⁹Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 164872.

³⁵⁰Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 155821.

³⁵¹Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 165315; *Rep. Com. Eccl. Revenues*, 422–3.

³⁵²Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *CCED*, No. 138673.

Somerset in the last two years before his death. He was not long survived by his father, who died in 1851.

Barry was succeeded as rector by James George Edward Hasluck, formerly curate at Chipping Sodbury, who would serve the cure at Little Sodbury for half a century.³⁵³ In 1851 the church could accommodate 133 in total, including free sittings for 68.³⁵⁴ There were two services every Sunday, averaging a total attendance of 41, plus ten Sunday school children.³⁵⁵ In 1858 it was decided to build a larger parish church on a new site at Little Sodbury Green.³⁵⁶ The new church, consecrated in 1859, was built to the same plan as the original church and incorporated material from it, including the 18th-century bell.³⁵⁷ To the nave and south-west tower were added a new aisle and a vestry room on the north side of the church. Land was also set aside for a grave yard, allowing burials to take place in the parish for the first time. Upon Hasluck's death in 1901, Henry Herbert Yeoman Colledge was presented to the rectory,³⁵⁸ the last rector of the separate benefice of Little Sodbury. In 1914 the church possessed a silver chalice, silver flagon and silver paten, and a brass alms dish,³⁵⁹ all of which it still held in 1948.³⁶⁰ The parishioners expressed a preference for the traditional service in 1928,³⁶¹ and in the early 21st century services continued to be performed using the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.³⁶² In 2011 the attendance at Little Sodbury church varied between 10 and 33, with an average weekly attendance of 19.³⁶³ In 2018 there was one evening service a week in the parish.³⁶⁴

³⁵³Hockaday Abs. cccxliii; *Alumni Oxon.* 1715–1886, II, 624; GA, P301 IN 2/1.

³⁵⁴*Religious Census, 1851*, 109.

³⁵⁵*Religious Census, 1851*, 109.

³⁵⁶GA, P301 VE 2/1, 4 Mar. 1858; 28 May 1858.

³⁵⁷NHLE, No. 1115004.

³⁵⁸GA, P301 IN 2/1.

³⁵⁹GA, P301 CW 3/4.

³⁶⁰GA, GDR/V5/366/14.

³⁶¹GA, P301 VE 2/1, 5 Oct. 1928.

³⁶²'Little Sodbury Parish Profile', Sodbury Vale Benefice, <<http://svbcofe.org.uk/ls/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/LS-Parish-Profile-October-2015.pdf>> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

³⁶³2011 Parish Spotlights: Little Sodbury, Diocese of Gloucester, <<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Wotton-160167-Little-Sodbury-St-Adeline.pdf>> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

³⁶⁴'Little Sodbury', A Church Near You, <<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14202>> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

Nonconformity

There were no recusants recorded in the parish in 1603.³⁶⁵ In 1686 there were three nonconformists and no Catholics.³⁶⁶ In the early 18th century there were six Baptists.³⁶⁷ A meeting house was registered in the parish in 1832.³⁶⁸ The Baptists continued to meet there later in the 19th century, connected first with the chapel of Chipping Sodbury and then with the chapel at Old Sodbury.³⁶⁹ A mission room had been established by 1884,³⁷⁰ and a chapel was built at Little Sodbury End in 1890.³⁷¹ A manse associated with the chapel was built on land adjoining the Baptist chapel in Old Sodbury,³⁷² let to tenants from 1926 until 1974, when it was sold.³⁷³ Originally part of the Bristol Baptist Association, the chapel resigned from it in 1979, and is now a member of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.³⁷⁴ In 2018 there was a weekly evening service held in the chapel.³⁷⁵

Local Government

Manorial Government

There are no extant manorial records for the parish.

Parochial Government

Little Sodbury was served by two churchwardens in 1600,³⁷⁶ and by a single churchwarden by 1727.³⁷⁷ During the 18th and early 19th centuries the churchwardens served for several years in a row, and some served more than once. In the century after 1728 only nine men served as churchwarden, none serving for less than three years in a row, with one man serving for two terms respectively of eight and 22 years, and another serving a single term of 33 years. From 1826 it

³⁶⁵Survey of the Diocese of Gloucester, 1603', ed. W. J. Shiels, in *An Ecclesiastical Miscellany* (BGAS Records Section, XI, 1976), 85.

³⁶⁶*Compton Census*, 536.

³⁶⁷*Bp. Benson's Surv.* 35.

³⁶⁸*Dissenters' Meeting-House Certificates*, p. 123.

³⁶⁹*Bristol Mercury*, 10 June 1881, p. 3.

³⁷⁰*Western Daily Press*, 26 Sep. 1884, p. 3.

³⁷¹BA, 41360/4/2.

³⁷²See Old Sodbury, Nonconformity.

³⁷³BA, 41360/4/2.

³⁷⁴Tyndale Baptist Community Church, < <https://tyndale.org.uk> > [accessed 20 Sep. 2018].

³⁷⁵Tyndale Baptist Community Church, < <https://tyndale.org.uk> > [accessed 20 Sep. 2018].

³⁷⁶GA, GDR/V1/220.

³⁷⁷GA, P301 CW 2/1.

became usual for two churchwardens to be appointed, although it was still common for individuals to serve more than one year in a row.³⁷⁸

The parish raised an average of *c.*£74 a year by the parish rates in the three years ending at Easter 1785, when annual spending on the poor averaged *c.*£67.³⁷⁹ Both of these figures fell in the following year, although revenues of *c.*£64 still exceeded expenditure of *c.*£59. These figures had more than doubled by the year 1802–3, when spending of *c.*£123 on poor administration and *c.*£40 on other business meant that total expenditure of *c.*£163 exceeded revenues of *c.*£154.³⁸⁰ The parish raised £114 in rates in the year 1812–3, a figure which was wholly expended by the parish, with *c.*£87 spent on the administration of the poor and *c.*£25 spent on other business.³⁸¹ Spending on the administration of the poor increased in the following year to *c.*£97 but spending on other business fell to £19, leaving a surplus of *c.*7 on revenues of £123.³⁸² In 1814–5 expenditure on the poor administration remained at a similar level as the previous year, but spending on other business increased to £42, leading to expenditure of £139, the same sum as was raised by the parish through the rates.³⁸³ Spending on the relief of the poor in the ten years between 1824–5 and 1833–4 varied between £74 and £92 a year.³⁸⁴ In the year ending Easter 1835 the total expenditure of the parish was *c.*£114, of which *c.*£50 was expended upon relief of the poor.³⁸⁵ Little Sodbury was included in the newly-formed Chipping Sodbury Poor Law Union in that year. In 1835–6 its expenditure remained at a similar level, but spending on relief of the poor increased to *c.*£58.³⁸⁶

The vestry appointed two churchwardens and nominated two overseers and two surveyors of the highway each year in the mid 19th century.³⁸⁷ The parish joined the Sodbury Highway Board in 1863.³⁸⁸ The parish comprised part of the Chipping Sodbury rural sanitary authority, and later part of the rural district council of the same name, to which it returned one member.³⁸⁹ From 1894 the vestry concerned itself only with ecclesiastical matters. Little Sodbury was too small to be represented by a parish council, and so all business concerning the parish was conducted by a

³⁷⁸GA, P301 CW 2/2.

³⁷⁹*Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 176–7.*

³⁸⁰*Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 176–7.*

³⁸¹*Poor Law Abstract, 1818, 150–1.*

³⁸²*Poor Law Abstract, 1818, 150–1.*

³⁸³*Poor Law Abstract, 1818, 150–1.*

³⁸⁴*Poor Law Returns (1830–1), 68; Poor Law returns (1835), 67.* See above, Social History.

³⁸⁵*Poor Law Com. 2nd Rep. App. E, p. 122.*

³⁸⁶*Poor Law Com. 2nd Rep. App. E, p. 123.*

³⁸⁷GA, P301 VE 2/1.

³⁸⁸GA, P301 VE 2/1.

³⁸⁹*Bristol Mercury, 7 Dec. 1894, p. 3.*

parish meeting.³⁹⁰ Under the terms of the award for the regulation of Sodbury commons, made in 1908,³⁹¹ the parish meeting of Little Sodbury appoints two of the 12 conservators of the commons.³⁹²

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³⁹⁰*Glouc. J.* 1 Dec. 1894, p. 8.

³⁹¹See Old Sodbury, Economic History.

³⁹²GA, D1610/E140.