

Old Sodbury

Old Sodbury is situated 38 km. (24 miles) south of Gloucester and 18 km. (11 miles) north-east of Bristol. The Cotswold Edge runs through the parish, dividing the fertile plateau in the east from the pastoral lower land to the west. The parish contains extensive commons and greens, the largest of which is intercommoned with neighbouring parishes to the north. The name Sodbury, meaning *Soppa's burh*,¹ refers to the prehistoric hill fort known as Sodbury Camp, the principal feature of the parish. It stands upon the edge of the scarp, overlooking the valley below, and is bisected by the parish boundary with Little Sodbury. It is located near the Port Way, the ancient route that runs between Gloucester and Bath, while other important routes connected Cirencester with Bristol and Malmesbury and Chippenham with the Severn crossing at Aust. The river Frome rises in the parish and runs west towards Bristol. This forms the northern boundary of the borough of Chipping Sodbury, established at the western end of the parish in the 13th century. The growth of Chipping Sodbury in the later 20th century has led to the expansion of the urban area into part of the ancient parish, but the majority of Old Sodbury remains rural in character.

Landscape, Settlement and Buildings

Boundaries and Parish Origins

The Ancient Parish

The ancient parish of Old Sodbury was estimated to comprise 3,000 a. in 1803,² while in 1839 the tithe commissioners computed the parish to measure c.3354 a.³ In 1881 and again in 1903 it was found to contain 3,729 a. (1,509 ha.),⁴ the earlier estimates perhaps not incorporating the common land it shared with the neighbouring parishes of Little Sodbury and Horton. The ancient parish formed a narrow compact block measuring almost 5 miles across from east to west at its widest point, with a tail stretching to the north along the western boundary.

A perambulation of the boundaries of Old Sodbury was recorded in 1783,⁵ and another in 1847.⁶ Its boundary with Yate was defined by Brinsham Stream, which ran to the north of Hampstead farm, the ancient road from Chipping Sodbury to Wickwar, and the river Frome. From the point where the boundary with Yate met the boundary of Dodington, it followed ancient enclosures and the lane from Chipping Sodbury to Dodington, leaving the course of the lane to the north of Dodington rectory to continue eastward to the lane

¹ *EPNS*, XL, 53.

² Rudge, *Glos.* II, 291.

³ GA, GDR/T1/165.

⁴ Census, 1881; OS 6", *Glos.* LXIX.SE (1903 edn).

⁵ GA, D247/74, 123–9.

⁶ GA, D10361/1.

from Combes End farm to Dodington. From here it ran south-east across land that by 1839 had been incorporated into Dodington Park, but which had formerly been part of the unenclosed South field, depicted on a map of 1709.⁷ Crossing the road to Bath, the boundaries continued to zig-zag around the line of the former headlands of the open fields as it ran east along the border with Tormarton. The straight lines of the border with Great Badminton and Little Sodbury to the east and north of Lyegrove house may indicate that the boundaries here followed the line of the ancient wall surrounding the estate. North-west of Lyegrove house, the parish boundary with Little Sodbury resumed a zig-zagging course to the west as it once again followed the line of strips within the open fields. Crossing the road to Bath once again, the parish boundary bisected Sodbury Camp and continued west along the boundary of Old Sodbury Common Mead and then Sodbury Common. Crossing a watercourse that feeds the Frome, the boundary with Little Sodbury followed no features as it ran in a straight line across the unenclosed common. A mere stone at a point called in 1847 Dyer's Corner marked the point where Old Sodbury met Little Sodbury and Horton. From here, the boundary continued in a straight line north-west to the edge of an ancient enclosure, which it skirted until it met the boundary with Yate.

The parish contained four manors. The largest of these, Old Sodbury, was centred on the main area of settlement around the parish church, and comprised most of the parish. Kingrove occupied the south-west of the parish, which Cottelscombe, later known as Combes End, lay along the southern border with Dodington. The borough of Chipping Sodbury was also reckoned a manor.

Sodbury Parish

The parish was combined with Chipping Sodbury in 1945 to form the new parish of Sodbury, with an area of 1553 ha. (3,836 a.).⁸ The boundaries were altered in 1990 to follow more clearly delineated topographical features, such as roads and field boundaries. Agricultural land in the east and south of the parish was exchanged with Badminton, Tormarton and Dodington; former quarries to the west of Wickwar road were acquired from Yate; and a housing estate to the south-west of Culverhill was transferred to Dodington.⁹ Despite the changes, the area of the parish remained 1553 ha.¹⁰

Landscape

The Cotswold Edge which runs north-south through the middle of the parish divides it into two distinct halves. The eastern half of the parish, above the escarpment, lies on Oolitic limestones *c.*180m above sea level, on which were laid out the parish's ancient open fields. The area is still largely employed for arable agriculture. Lying *c.*90m below this, the

⁷ GA, D2700/QB17/8/1.

⁸ Ministry of Health Order No. 104,708: County of Gloucester (Sodbury Parish) Confirmation Order, 1945; Census, 1951; 1971.

⁹ Local Government Order, Northavon (parishes) Order 1988.

¹⁰ Census, 2001; 2011.

western half of the parish forms a shallow valley for the river Frome, which rises in the scarp near the south-east boundary of the parish and is fed by numerous tributaries that leaves the pastoral plain liable to flood. Much of this land lies on Charmouth and Saltford Shale mudstones interspersed with outcrops of limestone, which has stimulated quarrying in the parish since at least the medieval period. To the north of the medieval borough of Chipping Sodbury, which was founded on a shallow hill on the western edge of the parish, outcrops of a variety of limestones has led to extensive modern quarrying along the boundary with Yate. The former site of Hampstead farm, in the north-west of the ancient parish, is in 2018 the location of a large quarry where 1m tons of limestone aggregate is extracted each year.¹¹ Sandwiched between the mudstone of the valley floor and the limestone of the Cotswold plateau, the escarpment comprises of Dyrham and Bridport sandstones, upon the well-drained soils of which stands the village of Old Sodbury.

The Cotswold Ridgeway, running along the crest of Old Sodbury Hill, formed the eastern boundary of the Forest of Horwood or Kingswood until its disafforestation in 1228.¹² Land to the west of the escarpment would have lain within the forest, possibly for several centuries before this date. The presence of a royal park in the parish before the Norman Conquest indicates that this was a hunting territory in the later Anglo-Saxon period,¹³ and it has been suggested that this might date back at least to the 8th century.¹⁴ Sodbury Common, which was formerly known as Horwood Common,¹⁵ stretches from the northern boundary of the parish to the outskirts of Chipping Sodbury, with a thin tongue stretching east between the boundaries of Little Sodbury to the north and the medieval deer park to the south. Two ancient enclosures called the Mead Riding and the Stub Riding were carved out of the unenclosed common during the 13th century, the name riding indicative of large-scale woodland clearances. There were also commons at Colts Green, Buckets Hill and Kingrove, respectively to the south of the deer park and of the borough of Chipping Sodbury, while the large enclosures called Gaunt's Field and Flint Close, whilst held in private hands, were also subject to common rights during Lammas.¹⁶ It seems likely that these commons were all once connected as a single large band of woodland covering the western end of the parish, gradually eroded by medieval assarting, and this land may have constituted a large part of the woodland measuring one league by league recorded at the time of Domesday. The Common was labelled Horwood Forest on

¹¹ Hanson Aggregates, 'Chipping Sodbury Quarry Overview' < <https://www.hanson-communities.co.uk/en/chipping-sodbury-quarry-overview> > [accessed 5 Apr. 2018].

¹² *Cal. Ch. Rolls*, 1226–57, 75, 84. For the history of the forest, see John S. Moore, 'The Medieval Forest of Kingswood', *Avon Past*, VII (1982), 6–16.

¹³ *Domesday*, 450.

¹⁴ Moore, 'Forest of Kingswood', 11.

¹⁵ GA, D2071/L4; D892/T74; 247/74, 123–9, 1783 perambulation of the manor. The name survives in Horwood Gate Farm, which stood by an entrance to the common.

¹⁶ GA, C/DC/E43.

Greenwood's 1824 map of Gloucestershire.¹⁷

Field names and the evidence of deeds attest to the formerly wooded nature of the south of the parish, and to later extensive woodland clearance. Large enclosures near Kingrove Common included the Leys, the King's Leys, and King's Riding.¹⁸ Several groves are recorded near the boundary with Dodington from the 13th century, and John Leland noted that a great plenty of wood remained in this part of the parish in 1545.¹⁹ Ellis Cottell held a large grove called Brankesworth, and was granted another in 1255.²⁰ This latter was still woodland in 1597,²¹ but had been converted to pasture by 1672.²² Brankesworth was also cleared of trees by the 17th century, after which date it was known as the Branch Hay.²³ Another piece of woodland, simply called the Grove, was enclosed in the late 15th century,²⁴ and had been converted to pasture by 1616.²⁵ A piece of land called the Ragge near Kingrove Common, first referenced in 1597,²⁶ also suggests woodland relating to the former forest.²⁷

Communications

Roads

Old Sodbury has been a waypoint on routes of national significance since ancient times. The Great Cotswold Ridgeway ran through the parish, following the crest of the Cotswold Edge between Bath and the West Midlands.²⁸ This route, known as the Bath Way, remained important through the Middle Ages and after. Another important route crossed this at right angles, descending the steep slopes of Old Sodbury Hill to connect Bristol with Chippenham and London. Local roads radiated from this crossing towards Dodington, Tormarton, and Marshfield. The borough of Chipping Sodbury was laid out on the Bristol road, the route of which was altered slightly to accommodate the new market. From here, roads travelled north to Gloucester and west to the Severn crossings at Aust and Redwick. In the late 17th century the road through Sodbury was considered part of the main route between the south-west and the south midlands.²⁹ Another road from Chipping Sodbury,

¹⁷ *Greenwood's Map of Gloucestershire* (1824).

¹⁸ Many of these field names remained in use at the time of the 1839 tithe award: GA, GDR/T1/165.

¹⁹ *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 Vols. (London, 1907–10), V, 95.

²⁰ *Abstracts of Feet of Fines Relating to Gloucestershire 1199–1299*, ed. C.R. Elrington, no. 537.

²¹ GA, D1571/F9.

²² GA, C/DC/E/43/1.

²³ GA, D2700/NC/9/1.

²⁴ TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

²⁵ GA, D1699/2.

²⁶ GA, D1571/F9.

²⁷ GA, D2700/NC/9/1; D1610/E47.

²⁸ G.B. Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Worcestershire and the Middle Severn Valley: Part I' *Archaeological Journal*, XCI (1934), 66–96.

²⁹ Ogilby, *Britannia*, 109–10 and plate 55.

travelling north-west over the river Frome to meet the ridgeway above Little Sodbury Hill, was part of a 'high route' that connected the market towns of the Cotswolds with Bristol, Gloucester and Tewkesbury.³⁰

The Cross Hands on Old Sodbury hill, located at the crossing of roads to Bath, Bristol, Chippenham, Cirencester, and Marshfield, appears in guide books for travellers from the late eighteenth century.³¹ The road from Cirencester to Bath was turnpiked in 1743.³² The road from Chippenham was turnpiked as far as the Cross Hands in 1752.³³ The road from the Cross Hands through Old Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury towards Bristol was turnpiked in 1800.³⁴ The road to Marshfield was turnpiked in 1804.³⁵ These roads were amalgamated into a single trust in 1849,³⁶ and disturnpiked in 1873.³⁷

The Bath road, now designated the A46, remains an important trunk route. Although the M4 motorway does not pass through Sodbury, its proximity has promoted the development of the parish as a dormitory for commuters, and has reduced the importance of the Chippenham road for long-distance travel.

Railways

Until the early 20th century, the closest station to Sodbury was that at Yate. Prompted by the opening of the Severn Tunnel in 1886, the Great Western Railway proposed a more direct route between London and South Wales, leaving the existing line at Wootton Bassett and travelling west through Badminton and Winterbourne to rejoin the existing route near Patchway, to the north of Bristol. An Act was acquired in 1896, and construction began in the following year. The new line ran across the parish, passing to the south of Chipping Sodbury and Colts Green before entering a tunnel to the west of Chapel Lane, emerging to the east of Lyegrove House. At c.2.5 miles long, the tunnel under the Cotswold Edge was the most significant feat of engineering required in the construction of the railway. The new line opened on 1 Jan. 1903, and later that year a new station was opened, called Chipping Sodbury but actually located near Colts Green. The station, which was the busiest of the four stations along the new section of track, was closed in 1961, although the line remains open in 2018, serving Bristol Parkway and stations in South Wales.

Branching off from this line, an inland sorting depot called Wapley Common was built during the Second World War on land that straddled the Old Sodbury boundaries with Dodington and Yate. Begun in 1940, it was originally intended to serve as a site where

³⁰ Abel Wanter, *History of Glos.*, Bod. Lib., MS Top. Glouc. 2, f. 96v.

³¹ Daniel Paterson, *A New and Accurate Description of all the Direct and Principal Roads in Great Britain* (12 edn., 1799), col. 500.

³² 16 Geo. II c.32.

³³ 25 Geo. II c.50; 18 Geo. III c.103.

³⁴ 39–40 Geo. III c.xlvi.

³⁵ 44 Geo. III c.lxix; 7 Geo. IV c.xii.

³⁶ 12–13 Vic. c.46.

³⁷ 36–7 Vic. c.90.

goods could be quickly transported away from the vulnerable dockyards at Avonmouth.³⁸ By the time it was completed, in 1942, the threat to the dockyards had receded, and Wapley Common was instead largely used by American armed forces to store aircraft parts in the build up to D-Day. After the war the depot served as a naval depot, but by 1966 the railway lines had been removed.³⁹ The site was subsequently used as a depot for the Highways Agency, and was replaced with a new housing development in the early years of the 21st century.

Buses

An omnibus ran through the village between Hawkesbury and Bristol once a week in 1894, when omnibuses running from Luckington and Sherston to Yate railway station also stopped in the village three days a week.⁴⁰ By 1897 the Hawkesbury omnibus also only ran as far as Yate station.⁴¹ The opening of Chipping Sodbury railway station reduced the demand for omnibus travel, and by 1906 there was just one omnibus a week stopping in the village, running from Hawkesbury to Yate station.⁴²

The Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company introduced a daily bus service between Old Sodbury and Bristol in 1921, stopping at Old Sodbury village, the Cross Hands, and Lyegrove. There were also daily buses to Malmesbury and Tetbury.⁴³ The Bath Tramways Company began running buses to Chipping Sodbury twice a week in 1927, stopping also at Old Sodbury and the Cross Hands.⁴⁴ By 1939 the Bristol company provided daily buses between Old Sodbury and Bristol, Cirencester, Malmesbury, and Tetbury, and the Bath company ran daily services to Bath.⁴⁵ In 1963 the renamed Bristol Omnibus Company ran daily services to Bristol, Chippenham, Malmesbury, and Swindon, and a bus to Bath four days a week.⁴⁶ In the late 1960s the Bristol company ran an express service between Weston-super-Mare and Oxford which stopped at the Cross Hands, but this had ceased to operate by 1970, perhaps as a consequence of the building of the M4 motorway.⁴⁷

Fosseway Coaches, based in Chippenham, introduced a daily service between Yate and Malmesbury in 1981, which also stopped at Old Sodbury.⁴⁸ The company also introduced a

³⁸ Oxford Archaeology, 'Wapley Common Inland Sorting Depot, Yate, South Gloucestershire', (Unpublished report, 2009), <<https://library.thehumanjourney.net/935/1/YATE%2008.pdfA.pdf>> [accessed 7 Apr. 2018].

³⁹ OS, 1:2500, Sheet 7181 (1969 edn).

⁴⁰ *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* (1894 edn.).

⁴¹ *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* (1897 edn.).

⁴² *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* (1906 edn.).

⁴³ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/6; GA, P300a PC 1/8, 133.

⁴⁴ BA, 39735/BAT/IM/4.

⁴⁵ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/7; 39735/BAT/IM/4.

⁴⁶ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/7.

⁴⁷ BA, 39735/BAT/IM/5.

⁴⁸ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/8.

weekly service to Thornbury in 1986.⁴⁹ Westward Travel ran a daily service between Wootton-under-Edge and Yate calling at Old Sodbury.⁵⁰ The Bristol company, renamed Badgerline and later absorbed into the First group of companies, continued to provide frequent daily services to Bristol in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.⁵¹ In 2018 there was no longer a direct service between Old Sodbury and Bristol. Services to Bath, Malmesbury, Stroud, Tetbury, Wotton-under-Edge, and Yate were provided in that year by Stagecoach West, replacing Wessex Connect, while Coachstyle of Nettleton (Wilts.) provided a service between Yate and Malmesbury.⁵²

Population

It was estimated that there were 120 communicants in the parish in 1551.⁵³ There were 47 households in 1563,⁵⁴ and 146 inhabitants in 1603.⁵⁵ There were 58 families in 1650,⁵⁶ and 107 people in 1676.⁵⁷ At the start of the 18th century Atkyns estimated the population to be about 200, accommodated in 48 houses.⁵⁸ Rudder suggested in 1779 that the population remained about the same,⁵⁹ but the 1801 census found the parish to contain 687 people.⁶⁰ The population of the parish fluctuated during the early 19th century before reaching a peak of 871 in 1841, after which it gradually declined to 690 in 1891.⁶¹ The construction of the new railway line between London and South Wales served to swell the population to 1,332 in 1901,⁶² but this had fallen again to 763 in 1911.⁶³ In 1931 there were 837 people living in the parish.⁶⁴

The parish was combined with Chipping Sodbury in 1945 to form the new parish of Sodbury.⁶⁵ The establishment of a new town at Yate to serve as an overspill for north

⁴⁹ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/8.

⁵⁰ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/8.

⁵¹ BA, 39735/BRI/IM/PM/10.

⁵² Travelwest, <<https://travelwest.info>> [accessed 8 Aug. 2018].

⁵³ J. Gairdner, 'Bishop Hooper's Visitation of Gloucester', *EHR*, XIX (1904), 116.

⁵⁴ *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.

⁵⁵ *Diocesan Populations Returns of 1563 & 1603*, 336.

⁵⁶ TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v; C.R. Elrington, 'A Survey of Church Livings in Gloucestershire, 1650', *Trans. BGAS*, 83 (1964), 97.

⁵⁷ *Compton Census*, ed. Whiteman, 545.

⁵⁸ Atkyns, *Glos.* 675.

⁵⁹ Rudder, *Glos.* 679.

⁶⁰ Census, 1801.

⁶¹ Census, 1841; 1891.

⁶² Census, 1901; GA, DA33/100/10, 153.

⁶³ Census, 1911.

⁶⁴ Census, 1931.

⁶⁵ Ministry of Health Order No. 104,708: County of Gloucester (Sodbury Parish) Confirmation Order, 1945;

Bristol also attracted an increased population to Sodbury, which had a population of 2,408 in 1951, an increase of a third since 1931.⁶⁶ The population remained stable for the next decade, measuring 2,439 in 1961, but grew by more than half to 3,834 in 1971, and increased again to 4,267 in 1981.⁶⁷ The population of the parish was recorded as 4,550 in 1991 after the boundary changes.⁶⁸ The population grew again in 2001 to 5,066, and fell slightly in 2011 to 5,045.⁶⁹ The Old Sodbury Built-up Area, comprising the eastern half of Sodbury parish, had a population of 661 in 2011.⁷⁰

Settlement

Prehistoric settlement appears to have been focused upon the higher ground of the parish, on the ridgeway along the boundary with Yate and on the Cotswold plateau. Few traces of neolithic or Bronze Age occupation have been recorded in the latter area, although scattered flint finds may be evidence of early activity within the area,⁷¹ perhaps associated with Bronze Age round barrows located along the parish boundary with Tormarton.⁷² Quarrying on high ground to the north of Chipping Sodbury revealed a late Bronze Age socketed axe.⁷³

In contrast to the scant evidence of settlement in the earlier period, there is significant evidence of Iron Age occupation in the parish. In particular, the large multivallate hillfort that straddles the parish boundary with Little Sodbury at the crest of the Cotswold scarp has been described as 'probably the best hillfort in Northavon [now South Gloucestershire]'.⁷⁴ Once thought to be Roman in origin, it is now widely accepted to date from the Iron Age.⁷⁵ The rectangular hillfort, known locally as Sodbury Camp, comprises a double rampart and ditch on three sides, with the west side left partly open to overlook the valley floor below. Within the ramparts is enclosed an area measuring approximately 4.5 ha. (11 a.). A second hillfort called Sodbury Camp was recorded on a map of 1777 on the ridge of higher ground that runs along the boundary with Yate to the north of Chipping Sodbury. Although apparently still extant in the early 20th century, when it was described as a univallate earthwork, it could not be identified in 1962, and the area was

Census, 1951.

⁶⁶ The population of the area comprising the new parish in 1931 was 1,810; Census, 1951.

⁶⁷ Census, 1961; 1971; 1981.

⁶⁸ The population of the new area comprising Sodbury parish in 1981 was 3,896: Census, 1991. Local Government Order, Northavon (parishes) Order 1988.

⁶⁹ Census, 2001; 2011.

⁷⁰ Census, 2011.

⁷¹ South Glos. HER, 15046–7; 20081; PAS, GLO-487098.

⁷² South Glos. HER, 2116; 2118–9.

⁷³ South Glos. HER, 2090.

⁷⁴ Chipping Sodbury EUS.

⁷⁵ NHLE, No. 1002486; South Glos. HER, 2103; RCHME, *Ancient and Historical Monuments in the County of Gloucestershire Iron Age and Romano-British Monuments in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds* (London, 1976), 103–4.

subsequently quarried.⁷⁶ Other Iron Age artefacts have been found in this area of the parish, including a brooch and a coin.⁷⁷ The two camps appear to be associated with nearby important routes which presumably date from at least this period. The hillfort on Sodbury Common lay next to the road to Wickwar, which was a salt way from at least the early medieval period, connecting Old Sodbury with Worcestershire. Sodbury Camp lies near the road which since at least Roman times has connected Bath with Cirencester and the Cotswolds.

It has been suggested that a network of Romano-British farms would have been strung along the Cotswold escarpment from Marshfield northwards.⁷⁸ Little evidence of Roman settlement has so far been found within Old Sodbury, although a rectangular ditched enclosure at Bennett's Gorse, to the east of the road to Tormarton, may be evidence of this settlement pattern.⁷⁹ That Sodbury Camp and the higher ground above the scarp continued to be occupied during the Roman period is suggested by the discovery of eight Roman coins, dating from between the 2nd and the 4th century, in or near Sodbury Camp. In the valley floor, the group of fields called the Chessels, lying below Sodbury Camp, might also be suggestive of a site of Roman occupation. Elsewhere on the plain, Roman tile fragments have been found north of Chipping Sodbury,⁸⁰ and Roman coins have been found south of the town,⁸¹ and south of Old Sodbury village.⁸²

There was an Anglo-Saxon estate belonging to the bishops of Worcester by the 8th century, and the name *Soppabyrg* was first recorded in a charter of c.903.⁸³ The open fields and commons that were shared by Old Sodbury and its smaller neighbour to the north suggests that these were laid out before Little Sodbury was detached as a separate estate. The estate was granted to a priest in the 8th century, and it has been suggested that this represents the foundation of a minster here, perhaps standing on the site of the modern parish church.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the estate had been appropriated by laymen by the 9th century, and no priest was recorded in the parish in 1086, perhaps indicating that any former ecclesiastical foundation had not survived into the 11th century.⁸⁵ There was a royal deer park in the parish by 1086, perhaps on the site of the modern Park farm.

⁷⁶ South Glos. HER, 2101; Barry Cunliffe, 'Gloucestershire and the Iron Age of southern Britain', *Trans. BGAS*, CII (1984), 9.

⁷⁷ South Glos. HER, 2089; PAS, CCI-680703.

⁷⁸ Catchpole, Thesis, Appendix D: Chipping Sodbury, citing Russett.

⁷⁹ South Glos. HER, 2113.

⁸⁰ R. P. Wright, 'Roman Britain in 1953: I. Sites Explored: II. Inscriptions', *Journal of Roman Studies*, XLIV (1954), 109.

⁸¹ South Glos. HER.

⁸² PAS, GLO-47870E; GLO-9DCDE3.

⁸³ Sawyer, S 1446; Harmer, *Select English Historical Documents*, 25–7, 57–9; EPNS.

⁸⁴ Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600–800* (Cambridge, 1990), 156–7.

⁸⁵ Francesca Tinti, *Sustaining Belief: The church of Worcester from c.870 to c.1100* (Farnham, 2010), 241.

Medieval to c.1900

The principal settlement of Old Sodbury lies on the shallow lower slopes of the escarpment, concentrated upon lanes that run to the north and south of the main road. This used to take a direct route from the junction at the Cross Hands, making a steep descent into Old Sodbury village before continuing west to Chipping Sodbury. Another lane travels south-west from the Cross Hands junction towards Dodington, from which two lanes turn north and run in parallel to return to the main road. Of these two lanes, the western lane is now called Chapel Lane, while the eastern lane became the route of the Chipping Sodbury road, affording a less precipitous descent of the escarpment. The two lanes cross the main road, becoming respectively Cotswold Lane and Church Lane, climb up to a point where they converge at the northernmost point of the village, approximately midway up the escarpment.

To the north of this point where the two lanes converge, the parish church stands on a small promontory overlooking the Frome valley. Although the oldest parts of this church date from the 12th century, it may occupy the site of an older church. The medieval manor complex formerly stood near the west end of the church, but had been demolished by the time of John Leland's visit in 1545.⁸⁶ Its location is perhaps indicated by possible house platforms and fishponds in the field to the west of the church, the site still reached from Chapel Lane by a sunken lane.⁸⁷ A field called the Upper Court Orchard which formerly stood to the south of the church may have been named for the former manor house.⁸⁸ A large farmhouse called the Hayes House was erected on a site nearby the medieval church in the early 17th century.⁸⁹ Other than the parish church, no medieval buildings are known to survive. However, earthworks to the south of the manorial complex in the triangular area between the lanes and the main road, may be the remains of former house plots or the garden enclosures of tenements lining the two lanes.⁹⁰

Several buildings dating from the 16th and 17th centuries may occupy the sites of medieval tenements. At the southernmost extent of the village, on the main road, stands the house called Camers. Although it was apparently rebuilt in the early 17th century, it had comprised part of the estate of Westbury College until the latter's dissolution.⁹¹ To the west, a 17th-century house now called No. 1 The Green stands on the north side of the junction of Cotswold Lane and the Chipping Sodbury road.⁹² On the south side of the

⁸⁶ *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 Vols. (London, 1907–10), V, 94, 102.

⁸⁷ South Glos. HER, 3395; 9096–8.

⁸⁸ The first reference to the orchard dates from the early 17th century: GA, D2066/1. It can be identified on the tithe award map of 1839: GA, GDR/T1/165. An adjacent field is probably the Lower Court Orchard referred to in the early 18th century: GA, D871/M4.

⁸⁹ GA, D2066/1; NHLE, No. 1135877.

⁹⁰ South Glos. HER, 17964.

⁹¹ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XIX (I): 1544, 175–76; BA, AC/AS/1/1. See below, Landownership.

⁹² NHLE, No. 1129239.

Chipping Sodbury road, the Dog inn and Blair Cottage both also date from the 17th century.⁹³ Further south, along Chapel Lane, the origins of Village farm, now occupied by Overdale School, may also predate its 17th-century exterior.⁹⁴ What was another substantial house to its east, at one time the site of a brewery and now demolished, may also have had medieval origins.⁹⁵ The principal focal points of settlement in the 19th century were the junctions of Cotswold Lane and Church Lane with the road to Badminton, with the cottages becoming more dispersed as the lanes travelled further from these points.⁹⁶

The road to Chipping Sodbury provided another focus of settlement with a number of cottages and farm houses lying along its length, of which Blanchard's is certainly of medieval origin.⁹⁷ Settlement along the road and around the edges of Colts Green, across which it runs, is suggestive of purpresture and squatting by cottages, and presentments for encroachments were made in the 18th century.⁹⁸ Several large farmhouses of probable medieval origin lay on the outskirts of Chipping Sodbury. Settlement in the rest of the parish was dispersed. The former manor houses of Coombs End and Kingrove may have been the focus for small hamlets.⁹⁹ Although there is little evidence of such hamlets extant now, by the 19th century, and probably earlier, isolated farms lay along a lane connecting Combes End with Kingrove and Chipping Sodbury. Hampstead Farm, in the north of the parish, also had medieval origins. The medieval deer park was cleared of woodland in the 16th century, and its lodge remodelled as a large farmhouse. Two other farms of 17th-century origin stand between the former park pale and the boundary of Sodbury Common.

There was little settlement in the east of the parish, above the scarp. The medieval lodge of the park at Lyegrove, near the boundary with Badminton, was altered to serve as a mansion house in the early 17th century and subsequently served as a principal residences for the lords of the manor. The 17th-century coaching inn called the Cross Hands stands at the crossroads of the Bath and Chippenham roads. Another inn, called the Plough, stood to the north of it.

Since c.1900

The construction of the railway line through the parish led to a large increase in houses recorded in Old Sodbury from 179 in 1891 to 240 in 1901.¹⁰⁰ Many of these must have been temporary accommodation for the railway workers, as the figure had fallen again to 176 in

⁹³ NHLE, Nos. 1120242, 1135769.

⁹⁴ NHLE, No. 1320897.

⁹⁵ GA, GDR/T1/165; OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1886 edn); 1:10,000, (1982 edn).

⁹⁶ BL, OS Drawings, Chippings Sodbury (1816); GA, GDR/T1/165; OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1886 edn).

⁹⁷ NLHE, No. 1129236.

⁹⁸ GA, D247/74, 16–18.

⁹⁹ BLHE, No. 1312989.

¹⁰⁰ Census, 1891; 1901.

1911.¹⁰¹ In the following year, a survey of accommodation in Old Sodbury found numerous deficiencies with the housing stock.¹⁰² There was a scarcity of three-bedroom houses, most cottages only having two bedrooms, and there were eleven cases of overcrowding. Eleven cottages had thatched roofs, which were largely in poor condition. Thirty-seven houses had water closets, 118 had outdoor privies, and 18 used pails; 132 houses were connected to the water mains. The efforts of the district council to replace unsatisfactory accommodation, and the opening of the railway, stimulated new housebuilding in the parish, particularly in the area around the station on the south of the Badminton road.¹⁰³ There was also piecemeal infilling elsewhere in the village. Large villas were erected along the road between the station and Chipping Sodbury on small allotments taken out of the commons near Smarts Green.

After the First World War it was proposed to build 30 new houses in the parish, which the parish council desired to be scattered in semi-detached blocks.¹⁰⁴ Despite this 30 houses were deemed unfit for habitation in 1921.¹⁰⁵ The district council proposed to meet some of this need by acquiring Lower Combesend farm for the construction of 14 new homes,¹⁰⁶ but nothing came of this plan. Plans were also approved by the district council in 1924 for the erection of 16 new houses by private developers along Cotswold Lane.¹⁰⁷ In the following year the district council considered purchasing some of these when they were offered for sale by auction, but ultimately declined.¹⁰⁸ Four more houses were built on Chippenham road near the Cross Hands inn in 1929.¹⁰⁹ By 1931 there were 207 houses in Old Sodbury parish.¹¹⁰ Sodbury Rural District Council added to this number with the acquisition of a site to the north of Colts Green where it erected a row of houses between 1931 and 1936.¹¹¹

Following the creation of Sodbury parish in 1945 there was extensive development on agricultural land formerly in Old Sodbury parish surrounding the borough of Chipping Sodbury.¹¹² There was said to be an urgent need for 30 new houses in the centre of the parish.¹¹³ New houses were built by the district council on Cotswold Lane and Church

¹⁰¹Census, 1911.

¹⁰²GA, DA33/100/10, p 153.

¹⁰³OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1903 edn.).

¹⁰⁴GA, P300a PC 1/8, 97, 109–10.

¹⁰⁵GA, P300a PC 1/8, 145–6.

¹⁰⁶GA, DA33/100/14, 239.

¹⁰⁷GA, DA33/100/17, 182.

¹⁰⁸GA, DA33/100/19, 6, 136, 174, 196.

¹⁰⁹GA, DA33/100/22, 197, 217; DA33/100/23, 39.

¹¹⁰Census, 1931.

¹¹¹GA, DA33/100/25, 28, 47; DA33/100/29, 118; P300a PC 1/9, 60.

¹¹²See Chipping Sodbury, settlement.

¹¹³GA, P300a PC 1/9, 141.

Lane in the late 1940s,¹¹⁴ and along Chapel Lane in the early 1950s.¹¹⁵ By the 1970s the lanes comprising the village centre were lined with large new houses, reflecting the village's new role as a home for commuters.¹¹⁶ However, settlement outside the village core remained sparse. The upgrading of the Badminton road had also required the demolition of several cottages along its length.¹¹⁷

Landownership

Old Sodbury Manor

In the 8th century Worcester cathedral held an estate at Old Sodbury. Bishop Mildred (743–75) granted this to Eanbald, who in turn granted it to Eastmund, on condition that the holder be in holy orders. This condition was not upheld. In 888 the land was in the possession of Eadnoth, Aelfred and Aelfstan, none of whom were in holy orders. In that year Bishop Wrefrith challenged their possession of the land at the witan gathered by earldorman Aethelred. As none of the holders' relatives were prepared to enter holy orders, a compromise left Eadnoth in possession of the land paying 15s. annually to the bishop at Tetbury.¹¹⁸

In 1066 Old Sodbury was in the hands of Beorhtric, son of Aelfgar of Thornbury.¹¹⁹ In 1086 the manor was held of the king by Humphrey the Chamberlain who paid £16 10s. for it.¹²⁰ In the late 12th century the manor was in the custody of William le Gras, who paid an annual farm of £11 to the king.¹²¹ By the mid 13th century, the Gras family held the manor of the earls of Gloucester.¹²² During the reign of Edward I the manor came into the hands of the Weylaund family.¹²³ At the end of the 13th century the manor and borough were worth £45 17s. 6¼d.¹²⁴ When Thomas de Weylaund abjured the realm for treason in 1290 the manor was taken into the king's hand, but later replevied to his widow Margery as it had been held to them and the heirs of their son jointly.¹²⁵ In 1308 Richard Weylaund released the manor to the Earl of Gloucester from whom it was held.¹²⁶

Although Gilbert de Clare had the manor granted to himself and his corporeal heirs in

¹¹⁴GA, DA33/100/41, 26, 51, 74; DA33/100/42, 37.

¹¹⁵GA, DA33/100/44, 52; DA33/100/45, 48–9; DA33/100/46, 52; DA33/100/47, 24, 26.

¹¹⁶OS, 1:2500, ST7581 (1978 edn.).

¹¹⁷GA, P300a PC1/12.

¹¹⁸Sawyer, 1446; *Trans. BGAS*, 16 (1891–2), 227–8.

¹¹⁹*Domesday*, 450.

¹²⁰*Domesday*, 450.

¹²¹*Pipe R.* 1194 (PRS, 43, new series 5, 1928), 3.

¹²²*Cal. Close*, 1237–42, 395.

¹²³*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, nos. 810, 817, 855; *Cal. Close 1288–96*, 96.

¹²⁴TNA, SC 11/236.

¹²⁵*Cal. Close*, 1288–96, 96, 163.

¹²⁶*Cal. Close*, 1307–13, 132.

1313, his childless death in 1314 at the battle of Bannockburn caused the manor to descend to Eleanor, one of his three sisters and wife of Hugh Despenser the younger. Following Despenser's treason and forfeiture in 1327 custody of the manor was granted to Maurice de Berkeley,¹²⁷ but shortly thereafter it was restored to Eleanor and declared not forfeit.¹²⁸ In 1339 Eleanor's son, Hugh Despenser, granted the manor for life to his aunt, Alina Burnel (d. 1364).¹²⁹ In 1346 jurors returned that Alina held the manor for the service of one and a half and a fourth part knights' fees;¹³⁰ in 1347 another jury returned that Hugh held the manor for one knight's fee.¹³¹ On Alina's death the manor passed to Hugh's grandson, Edward Despenser (d. 1375).¹³²

The manor descended in the Despenser line. In 1376 Robert de Ashton was granted the wardship of the manor during the minority of the heir, Thomas.¹³³ After Thomas' attainder and death in 1400, his widow Constance (d. 1416) secured custody of the manor during the minority of her son Richard, when Henry IV willed 'that Constance not be removed... though another be willing to render more therefor'.¹³⁴ The manor was granted to Joanna of Navarre as dower in 1405,¹³⁵ following Constance's involvement in Owain Glyn Dŵr's rebellion.¹³⁶ In 1415 Richard Beauchamp, 13th earl of Warwick, was ordered to allow Constance to enjoy possession of the manor.¹³⁷ In 1439 the manor was held by Isabelle, Countess of Warwick, the daughter of Constance and widow of Richard.¹³⁸ Following the deaths of their son Henry and of his young daughter, the manor passed to their daughter Anne, wife of Richard Neville, 16th earl of Warwick, and through their daughter Isabelle to George, duke of Clarence (1449-1478). Following Clarence's death, custody of the manor during the minority of Edward, earl of Warwick (1475-1499), was settled upon Richard Foster for £13 6s. 8d. per annum by Edward IV¹³⁹ and to William Llewelyn by Henry Tudor in 1485.¹⁴⁰ In 1488, Anne, countess of Warwick, quitclaimed the manor, then farmed by Richard Foster of Little Sodbury, to the king;¹⁴¹ she received a grant of the manor for life

¹²⁷*Cal. Fine*, 1327-37, 73-4.

¹²⁸*Cal. Close*, 1327-30, 275.

¹²⁹*Cal. Pat.* 1338-40, 201.

¹³⁰*Feudal Aids*, II, 232.

¹³¹*Trans. BGAS*, 10 (1885-6), 284.

¹³²*Cal. Fine*, 1356-68, 284.

¹³³*Cal. Fine*, 1369-77, 339-40.

¹³⁴*Cal. Fine*, 1399-1405, 48, 105.

¹³⁵*Cal. Pat.* 1405-8, 4.

¹³⁶*ODNB*, sub 'Despenser, Constance, Lady Despenser (c.1375-1416).

¹³⁷*Cal. Close*, 1413-19, 246.

¹³⁸TNA, CP 25/1/292/69, no. 223.

¹³⁹*Cal. Fine*, 1471-85, no. 495

¹⁴⁰*Cal. Fine*, 1485-1500, no. 33.

¹⁴¹TNA, DL 29/638/10362; CP 25/1/294/79, no. 7.

in 1489.¹⁴²

In 1478 the king had appointed Sir Robert Poyntz to the office of the steward of the lordships of Sodbury *inter alia*.¹⁴³ In 1517 this office was granted in survivorship to Robert and Sir Anthony Poyntz,¹⁴⁴ the latter being in possession of the stewardship in 1522.¹⁴⁵ In 1530 Sir Anthony Poyntz was granted a lease of the lordships of Sodbury, including the manor, for a term of 21 years.¹⁴⁶ Two years later he surrendered this grant in favour of a new lease of the same length, on terms which allowed him to let the land and manor house to his brother-in-law Nicholas Wykes of Dodington.¹⁴⁷ Following the death of Sir Anthony in 1533, the lordship passed to his son Nicholas (knighted c.1535),¹⁴⁸ who sold his outstanding title in the manor to Sir John Walsh of Little Sodbury in 1541.¹⁴⁹ Walsh surrendered his title in 1542 in order to allow the lease to Nicholas Wykes to run.¹⁵⁰ A new lease of the manor was granted to Walsh in 1543,¹⁵¹ the lordship of which was then granted as part of Catherine Parr's jointure in 1544.¹⁵² Sir John Walsh was succeeded by his son Maurice, who in 1545 purchased the reversion of the lordship and manor of Sodbury for £519 12s. 8d.¹⁵³ The lordship and manor subsequently descended with Little Sodbury.¹⁵⁴

At the end of the 13th century the manor house consisted of a hall with rooms, a kitchen, two granges with goods and houses, and a garden with two dovecots, and was valued at 40*d.* a year.¹⁵⁵ During the tenure of Earl Gilbert (d.1297), the lord of the manor was occasionally in residence. The earl passed through Sodbury in August 1279,¹⁵⁶ and on 2 October 1293 chancery letters were issued from Sodbury, suggesting the temporary sojourn of the king as well as the earl.¹⁵⁷ The house, which stood near the medieval parish church, had apparently been demolished by 1545.¹⁵⁸

¹⁴²*Cal. Pat.* 1485–94, 298.

¹⁴³*Cal. Pat.* 1477–85, 99, 121.

¹⁴⁴*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1515–18, 1116.

¹⁴⁵*Military Surv. of Glos.* 1522, 2.

¹⁴⁶*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1524–30, 2944.

¹⁴⁷*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1531–32, 588.

¹⁴⁸*ODNB*, Sir Nicholas Poyntz (*b.* in or before 1510, *d.* 1556).

¹⁴⁹*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1543, 127–8.

¹⁵⁰*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1524–30, 2944.

¹⁵¹*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1543, 127–8; *Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1509–58, 'Wykes, Nicholas'.

¹⁵²*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1544, 82–3.

¹⁵³*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1545, 518.

¹⁵⁴See Little Sodbury, Landownership.

¹⁵⁵TNA, SC 11/236.

¹⁵⁶*Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* III, 274.

¹⁵⁷*Cal. Close*, 1288–96, 303; *Cal. Fine*, 1272–1307, 328.

¹⁵⁸*Leland*, V, 94, 102.

Cottelscombe or Combes End Manor

Coomb's End was one of several hamlets set out around greens in the parish of Old Sodbury.¹⁵⁹ The first mention of the manor of Coomb's End (*Cumb'*) dates from 1225, when it was held by the Cotel family, who also held the manor of Draycott Fitzpayne in Wiltshire.¹⁶⁰ In 1255 Ellis Cotel agreed to do suit at the manor court of Old Sodbury as other free tenants did.¹⁶¹ Two fines in the King's court between 1324 and 1326 transferred the manor of Coomb's End (*Cotelescombe*) from the Cotel family to John de Palton and his wife Joan and their heirs in tail.¹⁶² In 1346 the manor was granted to John de la Rivere and his wife Margaret for life, with remainder to their son Thomas and his wife Emma, daughter of Maurice de Berkeley, and their heirs in male tail.¹⁶³ In 1432 the manor of Coomb's End (*Combe Cotele*), described as by Old Sodbury, was quitclaimed by Stephen Hatfield and his wife Isabelle, and Maurice de la Rivere and his wife Margaret, to a group headed by Sir William Cheyney, including John Cottesmore and William Paston, justices of the King's court.¹⁶⁴ From 1459 the manor (*Cotellescombe, Combe Cotell*) was held during her lifetime by Alice, wife of John Newburgh, from Thomas Young (d. 1476), John Fortescue and William Venour.¹⁶⁵ The son of Thomas Young, also Thomas, was seised of the manor of Cottelscombe alias Combes End at his death in 1506.¹⁶⁶ The manor was entailed upon his nephew Hugh Young (d. 1534),¹⁶⁷ who was succeeded by his son John,¹⁶⁸ who sold the manor to Giles Dodington of Loxton (Som.) in 1542.¹⁶⁹ His son Henry was lord of the manor in 1569.¹⁷⁰

Arthur Player (d. 1610) of Siston was in possession of the manor in 1595, when he sold it to Thomas Estcourt (d. 1599) of Shipton Moyne.¹⁷¹ Estcourt sold two messuages and 96 a. of land at Combes End to Michael Neale of Yate in 1596¹⁷² and settled the manor of

¹⁵⁹Rob Iles, 'The medieval landscape of the southern Cotswolds', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 3 (1984). See above, Settlement and Landscape.

¹⁶⁰*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, nos. 140, 165; *VCH Wilts.* X, 195.

¹⁶¹*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 537.

¹⁶²*Glos. Feet of Fines 1300–59*, nos. 431, 475.

¹⁶³*Glos. Feet of Fines 1300–59*, no. 793.

¹⁶⁴*Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 554.

¹⁶⁵*Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 658. See also *ibid.* nos. 667, 757.

¹⁶⁶*Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. VII*, III, no. 170; TNA, C 142/19/142.

¹⁶⁷For the Young family, see *Trans. BGAS*, XV (1890–91), 227–45.

¹⁶⁸TNA, C 142/56/82.

¹⁶⁹A schedule annexed to a deed of 1688 lists a release from John Young to Giles Dodington of the manor of Cottelscombe alias Combesend in 1542: GA, D1610/T75.

¹⁷⁰John Collinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset* (Bath, 1791), III, 598. GA, D3365/13.

¹⁷¹TNA, CP 25/2/146/1902/37/38ELIZIMICH; *Glos. N&Q*, III, 238; *Visit. Glos.* 1623, 99; *Trans. BGAS*, XVII (1892–3), 159.

¹⁷²John Alexander Neale, *Charters and Records of the Neales of Berkeley, Yate, and Corsham* (Privately published, 1906), 12, 97.

Combes End on his son Thomas in 1597.¹⁷³ He sold the manor to George Russell (d. 1621) of Tormarton in 1602,¹⁷⁴ from whom it passed in the male line to Gabriel (d. 1663),¹⁷⁵ George (d. 1676),¹⁷⁶ and George (d. 1677).¹⁷⁷ The estate passed to the latter's son George, still an infant, but was heavily burdened with debts.¹⁷⁸ The creditors successfully sued in Chancery in 1679 for the sale of the estate, which was sold to Henry Somerset, 1st Duke of Beaufort in 1683.¹⁷⁹ The farm was sold by Henry, 5th Duke of Beaufort to Christopher Codrington of Dodington in 1795.¹⁸⁰ The estate belonged to Henry Gingell at his death in 1802,¹⁸¹ and his three children Daniel (d. 1860),¹⁸² Henry and Mary were still in possession in 1839.¹⁸³ The farm was sold c.1877.¹⁸⁴ The farm was bought from Henry Graham Bush and Edward Davis Gale in 1900 by George Hewitt Jones of Little Badminton,¹⁸⁵ but it was sold after his death in 1919.¹⁸⁶ Mrs. E. Hatherall owned the farm in 1921.¹⁸⁷

Hampstead Manor

An estate centred upon Hampstead was held by the priory of Bradenstoke, Wiltshire. This land, previously held by Adam Malherbe, had been granted to the priory by William le Gras the elder, and the grant was confirmed by his son William for the soul of Felicia his wife in the early 13th century¹⁸⁸ and by King John in 1209.¹⁸⁹ The younger William enlarged his father's initial gift by granting the canons 'all the land everywhere in length and breadth... which is opposite the canons' tenement on the east side', having recited the particulars of the grant to his men of Sodbury, and gave the canons permission to erect a dyke to separate their possessions 'of earth taken from his land and thrown towards theirs'.¹⁹⁰ Later in the 13th century this clause was clarified to mean that the canons' men

¹⁷³GA, D1571/F9. Fosbroke wrongly suggests that this relates to Colescomb in Elkstone: Thomas Fosbroke, *Abstracts of Records and Manuscripts Respecting the County of Gloucester*, II (Gloucester, 1807), 526.

¹⁷⁴TNA, CP 25/2/147/1927/44ELIZIEASTER; *Trans. BGAS*, XVII (1892-3), 198.

¹⁷⁵TNA, PROB 11/137/217; GA, GDR, Wills, 1621/36; 1663/63.

¹⁷⁶GA, GDR, Wills, 1676/180.

¹⁷⁷GA, D2700/NC9/1.

¹⁷⁸GA, D2700/NC9/1.

¹⁷⁹GA, D2700/NC9/1.

¹⁸⁰GA, D2700/NC9/1.

¹⁸¹GA, GDR Wills, 1802/128.

¹⁸²M.I. in Thornbury parish church.

¹⁸³GA, GDR/T1/165.

¹⁸⁴GA, D4018/E13.

¹⁸⁵GA, D4855/2/1/9; D2428/1/69.

¹⁸⁶GA, D4855/2/1/9; D2428/1/69.

¹⁸⁷GA, D2299/2414.

¹⁸⁸*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 131.

¹⁸⁹*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 163.

¹⁹⁰*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 131.

'may stand on his [le Gras'] land as often as necessary to repair their dyke, provided they do not carry away any of his soil without permission'.¹⁹¹ The Weylaund lords of Old Sodbury also granted land to Bradenstoke Priory to augment their holdings in Hampstead.¹⁹² In 1291 their holdings amounted to one carucate, valued at 12s. with stock worth 40s.¹⁹³ In 1336 Edward III allowed them to augment further their estate by a grant of the pasture called *La Steorte*, lying between the canons' wood and Horwood.¹⁹⁴ In 1342 x 1347 the prior's estate was referred to as 'the manor of Hamstede'.¹⁹⁵ In 1487–9 the prior of Bradenstoke owed 13s. 4d. for his land in Old Sodbury, consisting of a close called *le Sterte* and four a. of meadow.¹⁹⁶

With the dissolution of Bradenstoke Priory in 1539,¹⁹⁷ the manor or farm of Hampstead passed to the Crown. It was granted to Anne, widow of Sir Adrian Fortescue, in 1557,¹⁹⁸ from whom it passed to her son John Fortescue. The manor was let by Sir Francis Fortescue to Francis Doughty (d. 1634),¹⁹⁹ a merchant and alderman of Bristol, for three lives, who was to repair the farm and build a new barn of five or six bays from stone and tile.²⁰⁰ The Fortescue family sold the manor in reversion to Edward Stephens in c.1633,²⁰¹ and Doughty's heirs sold the remainder of the lease to Stephens c.1636,²⁰² after which it descended with the Sodbury manors.²⁰³ Sir Thomas Stephens sold the estate to William (later Sir William) Clutterbuck c.1675.²⁰⁴ Clutterbuck died in 1708, and his will appointed trustees to sell the estate and other lands to raise sums for the payment of his legacies.²⁰⁵ Despite this his wife Dame Susanna, who had subsequently married one of the trustees, was still in possession of Hampstead at the time of her death in 1717.²⁰⁶ She left Hampstead to her husband, John Romsey, for life, following which her trustees were to sell the estate for the payment of her legacies.

¹⁹¹*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 131–2.

¹⁹²*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 132.

¹⁹³*Tax. Eccl.* 237.

¹⁹⁴*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 132–4; *Cal. Pat.* 1334–8, 538; TNA, C 143/237/24.

¹⁹⁵*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 171–3.

¹⁹⁶TNA, DL 29/638/107362.

¹⁹⁷VCH Wilts. III, 275–88.

¹⁹⁸*Cal. Pat.* 1557–8, 197.

¹⁹⁹TNA, PROB 11/166/398, where the parish is wrongly called Oldsbury.

²⁰⁰TNA, C 2/JasI/H8/48.

²⁰¹Rudder, *Glos.* 678.

²⁰²TNA, C 8/80/9.

²⁰³See above, Old Sodbury Manor.

²⁰⁴TNA, C 8/200/11; Rudder, *Glos.* 678.

²⁰⁵TNA, PROB 11/504/183.

²⁰⁶TNA, PROB 11/561/177.

The estate was purchased from the trustees in 1722 by William Okey of Bristol.²⁰⁷ Following his death in 1749,²⁰⁸ the estate was purchased from his widow Elizabeth by John Elbridge and settled upon Elbridge's niece Rebecca, the wife of Henry Woolnough of Bristol.²⁰⁹ The estate passed to their daughter Elizabeth,²¹⁰ who married Sir John Hugh Smyth Bt (d. 1802) of Ashton Court (Som.).²¹¹ Elizabeth made common recoveries of the estates forming her inheritance in 1809,²¹² which she demised upon Revd Israel Lewis, vicar of Long Ashton (Som.) after her death in 1825,²¹³ despite the objection of her husband's nephew Sir John Smyth Bt.²¹⁴ Lewis died in 1841 and was succeeded by his son, Leyson Orton Lewis, who sold the estate in 1856 to Revd Henry Jones Randolph, the lord of Yate and Brinsham.²¹⁵ The estate descended with Yate until 1912, when it was sold by Henry de Beaumont Randolph to Alfred Brooks.²¹⁶ The farm was purchased c.1943 by the British Quarrying Co. of Chipping Sodbury.²¹⁷

Kingrove Manor

The first reference to the manor of Kingrove dates from 1473 when it was listed among the possessions of the late Robert Stanshawe (d. 1472).²¹⁸ Kingrove was probably initially laid out as a hamlet around a green.²¹⁹ At the turn of the 12th century Robert de *Kenegrave* who appears in the pipe rolls of King John's reign, took his name from the location.²²⁰ In the mid 13th century, Ralph son of Adam de *Kenegrave* acknowledged one yardland in Kingrove to be the right of John de Lyegrave;²²¹ and John de *Kenegrave* acted as a juror for the manor of Sodbury in the royal pleas of 1247–8.²²² A fine of 1255 which established Ellis Cotel's right to 15 a. of wood in *Kevingrave*.²²³ Robert Stanshawe's heir in 1472 was his son,

²⁰⁷Deed cited on <<http://www.durtnall.org.uk/DEEDS/Gloucestershire/501-614.htm>> [accessed 16 Jan. 2018].

²⁰⁸BA, EP/J/4/6, Will of William Okey, 1749.

²⁰⁹TNA, PROB 11/695/194; BA, AC/36074/11.

²¹⁰BA, AC/36074/11.

²¹¹*Burke's Peerage and Baronetage*.

²¹²TNA, CP 43/905; BA, AC/36074/18.

²¹³TNA, PROB 11/1337/61.

²¹⁴BA, AC/36074/18; AC/WO/1/50.

²¹⁵TNA, PROB 11/1943/4; Gloucestershire 132/20, *ancestordocs*,

<http://www.ancestordocs.co.uk/gloucestershire> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018]. See Yate, Landownership.

²¹⁶GA, D4855/2/1/18.

²¹⁷GA, D2299/7547.

²¹⁸GA D1086/T2/26.

²¹⁹Rob Iles, 'The medieval landscape of the southern Cotswolds', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* 3 (1984), 39.

²²⁰*Pipe R.* 1199 (PRS, 48, new series 10, 1933), 33; *Pipe R.* 1204 (PRS, 56, new series 18, 1940), 153.

²²¹*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 334.

²²²*Trans. BGAS*, 10 (1885–6), 302.

²²³*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 537.

Thomas.²²⁴ In 1487–9 John Badnaunt, who had married Robert Stanshawe's widow, was in possession of a tenement called Kingrove with the appurtenances at a rent of 33s.²²⁵ In 1497 John Stanshawe and his brother Humphrey made a fine of the manor and other possessions with William Freme, John retaining a life interest in the estate.²²⁶ Freme was acting in the interest of John Walsh (d. 1502), who intended the manor should pass to Nicholas Poyntz on his marriage with John's daughter, although the apparently marriage never took place.²²⁷ There was controversy between Poyntz and John Walsh's son Sir John after the death c.1516 of John Stanshaw who, notwithstanding his earlier transaction with John Walsh, had sold his estates to Poyntz.²²⁸ An agreement was reached whereby Sir John Walsh was to have Kingrove, amongst other lands.

The manor descended to Nicholas Walsh, who sold it to Henry Ligon of Upton St Leonards in 1564,²²⁹ from whom it passed to Sir Arnold Ligon. He sold the manor in 1605 to John Stratton of Seagrey (Wilts.).²³⁰ The manor was purchased from Edward Stratton by George Flower of Siston in 1635.²³¹ On his death later the same year the inquisition post mortem the estate was deemed to be held by knight's service and not in fee simple, leading to a suit in the court of wards over the value of the estate.²³² The manor was purchased in 1663 by Daniel Burcombe,²³³ from whom it passed to his sons Walter (d. 1729)²³⁴ and Stephen (d. 1733) and then Stephen's son Thomas.²³⁵ The manor was in the possession of John Parker in 1761, from whom it passed to his son, John (d. 1806),²³⁶ who demised it to his son, Phillip (d. 1859).²³⁷ His heir was his daughter Sophia Harford Adlam, wife of William Adlam of Chew Magna (Som.),²³⁸ who put the estate up for sale in 1903.²³⁹

Camers

The dean of the College of Westbury-on-Trym held a messuage in Old Sodbury called

²²⁴GA, D1086/T2/26.

²²⁵TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

²²⁶*Glos. Feet of Fines 1360–1508*, no. 791.

²²⁷TNA, PROB 11/13/206; *Visit. Glos.* 1623, 129.

²²⁸GA, D4431/2/100/1.

²²⁹GA, D1699/2; *Cal. Pat.* 1563–6, 141–2.

²³⁰GA, D1699/2.

²³¹GA, D1699/2.

²³²GA, D1699/2.

²³³GA, D1699/5.

²³⁴GA, D1699/4.

²³⁵GA, D1699/4.

²³⁶GA, D1699/2.

²³⁷GA, GDR Wills, 1806/105; D59929/1/1.

²³⁸*Calendar of the Grants of Probate and Letters of Administration 1859*, P Wills (Pa-Pon), 32.

²³⁹GA, D59929/1/1.

Camers, for which he had paid a farm of 4s. 2d. in the late 15th century.²⁴⁰ In 1522 the tenement and its land were valued at 66s. 8d.²⁴¹ Following the suppression of the college in 1544,²⁴² its possessions were granted to Sir Ralph Sadleir,²⁴³ who conveyed the estate to Nicholas Walsh in 1565.²⁴⁴ It descended with the manor until 1678, when it was conveyed with c.186 a. by Thomas Stephens (d. 1715) to his nephew, John Packer of Shellingford (Berks).²⁴⁵ His son Robert sold the estate to John Tyler of Corsham (Wilts.) in 1705, from whom it passed to his daughter Alice, wife of John Jones of South Cerney.²⁴⁶ It descended to Thomas Jones (d. 1768), who demised it by his will to his second son Thomas (d. 1787), whose heir was his son Thomas.²⁴⁷ This was presumably the Thomas Jones of Cirencester who sold the estate in 1814 to Christopher Codrington of Dodington.²⁴⁸ The estate subsequently descended with the manor of Dodington.²⁴⁹ By 1881 it was known as Home Farm.²⁵⁰ It was sold c.1919.²⁵¹

Old Sodbury Park

The park and its lodge were let to Hugh Ivy for 40 years in 1603,²⁵² but the lease was bought back into hand by Thomas Stephens following his purchase of the manor of Old Sodbury.²⁵³ The Park, comprising the lodge, 160 a. of land and the stream which formed most of the border of the estate, was sold in 1675 to Sir Matthew Hale.²⁵⁴ He demised the estate by his will of 1677 upon his grandson Gabriel,²⁵⁵ who sold the estate to Jacob Knight of Southmead in 1708.²⁵⁶ Knight sold the estate in 1717 to John Jelfe of Redland in Westbury-upon-Trym,²⁵⁷ whose heir was his daughter Katherine.²⁵⁸ She married Edward Powys of Shrewsbury, and they sold the estate to Sir William Codrington of Dodington in

²⁴⁰TNA, DL 29/638/107362.

²⁴¹*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 2.

²⁴²VCH *Glos.*, II, 106–8.

²⁴³*L&P Hen. VIII*, 1544, 175–6; BA, AC/AS/1/1.

²⁴⁴*Cal. Pat.* 1563–66, 308.

²⁴⁵GA, D547a/T62; D1610/T58.

²⁴⁶GA, D1610/T58.

²⁴⁷TNA, PROB 11/939/372; GA, D1610/T58; GDR, Wills, 1787/14.

²⁴⁸GA, D1610/T58.

²⁴⁹See Dodington, Landownership.

²⁵⁰OS Map, 25", *Glos. LXIX.11* (1882 edn).

²⁵¹GA, D1610/E158.

²⁵²GA, D1610/T60; D2066/1.

²⁵³GA, D2066/1.

²⁵⁴GA, D1086/T76; D1610/T60.

²⁵⁵TNA, PROB 11/353/141.

²⁵⁶GA, D1610/T60.

²⁵⁷GA, D1610/T60.

²⁵⁸TNA, PROB 11/638/345.

1736.²⁵⁹ The farm descended with the Dodington estate until its sale in 1919.²⁶⁰ It was in the possession of John Russell and William Gibbs in 1927, when it was again put up for sale.²⁶¹ In 1941 it was owned by Mrs Withers of Stapleton.²⁶²

Lyegrove

Lyegrove was also let to Hugh Ivy in the early 17th century, but was redeemed by Thomas Stephens when he purchased the manor.²⁶³ It was probably at this time that the lodge was remodelled, and Lyegrove House was subsequently often occupied by the lord of the manor or his sons. In 1678 the younger Thomas Stephens was resident at Lyegrove while his father lived at Little Sodbury House.²⁶⁴

Kington Priory

An estate in Sodbury was held by the priory of Kington (Wilts.) as a parcel of its manor of Great Somerford (Wilts.), where Sodbury men continued to owe suit at the manor court in the early 17th century.²⁶⁵ The destruction of the priory's medieval cartularies means that the origins of this estate cannot now be reconstructed.²⁶⁶ Following the dissolution of the priory its lands and revenues were granted in 1537 to Robert Long of Draycot (Wilts.) for 21 years, with a reversion to Sir Richard Long (d. 1546).²⁶⁷ Long conveyed the manor of Somerford with its Sodbury estates, comprising three fields of pasture, to his brother Robert (d. 1564) in 1545,²⁶⁸ whose brother William sold the estate to John Yew in 1570.²⁶⁹ Long conveyed the lands to Sir John Thynne (d. 1580) of Longleat in 1572,²⁷⁰ and Yew sold the manor to Thynne in 1577.²⁷¹ It subsequently descended in the male line to Sir John Thynne (d. 1604), Sir Thomas Thynne (d. 1639), and Sir James Thynne (d. 1670).²⁷²

St Bartholomew's Hospital

The Hospital of St Bartholomew's in Bristol owned lands in Sodbury,²⁷³ which were granted in 1531 with the rest of the hospital's possessions to Robert and Nicholas Thorne

²⁵⁹GA, D1610/T60.

²⁶⁰GA, D4855/2/1/9.

²⁶¹GA, D4855/2/1/17.

²⁶²TNA, MAF 32/106/221.

²⁶³GA, D2066/1.

²⁶⁴GA, D547a/T62.

²⁶⁵VCH Wilts. XIV, 194–204.

²⁶⁶VCH Wilts. III, 259–62.

²⁶⁷L&P Hen. VIII, XIII (1), 488.

²⁶⁸TNA, C 142/140/200; L&P Hen. VIII, XX (I), 227.

²⁶⁹Wiltshire Visitation Pedigrees, 1623, ed. G.D. Squibb (Harl. Soc. 105–6, 1954), 117–8.

²⁷⁰Cal. Pat. 1572–75, 420.

²⁷¹Longleat House, 8893.

²⁷²Cal. Pat. 1584–85 (List & Index Soc. 293, 2002), 91; TNA, C 142/195/118; C 142/290/110; C 142/765/47.

²⁷³BA, 40715/Ad/1/3; AC/WH/2/14.

(d. 1546) of Bristol for the foundation of a free school, later Bristol Grammar School.²⁷⁴ His son Nicholas (d. 1591) granted the estate to the corporation of Bristol in 1561,²⁷⁵ who in the same year demised the estate excluding the buildings housing the school upon him for a fee farm rent of £30.²⁷⁶ Thorne demised his estate to his three daughters,²⁷⁷ who agreed a partition in *c.* 1598.²⁷⁸ Following a dispute between the corporation and Alice Pykes, one of the daughters, her share was conveyed in 1619 to John Whitson and others, aldermen of the city, who in turn granted the estate to the corporation in 1621.²⁷⁹

Kingswood Abbey

Kingswood Abbey held a small estate in Sodbury,²⁸⁰ which was sold to Sir John Thynne in 1548, and they subsequently descended with the Longleat estates. In 1653 they were found to measure just 2 r., and were granted to Edward Ditchfield and others with other small parcels formerly belonging to the Abbey.²⁸¹

Rectory Estate

The rectory of Old Sodbury belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral.²⁸² Its estate comprised a court, with appurtenances, and four virgates of land with meadow and appurtenances.²⁸³ A 60-year lease was made of 10 a. of the rectory estate in 1392, the lessees were to replace the buildings on the land, and to pay a heriot of the best cow.²⁸⁴ In 1518 the rectory was let to Anthony Clerke and John Walsh for a term of 50 years.²⁸⁵ Walsh left the remainder of his lease to his widow Lady Anne in 1547,²⁸⁶ which she in turn demised upon her grandson Nicholas Walsh in 1560.²⁸⁷

The rectory estate, comprising *c.*83 a., was let in 1640 to John Byard for 21 years.²⁸⁸ The estate was sold during the Commonwealth to the Gloucester merchant William Angell,²⁸⁹ but reverted to the Dean and Chapter at the Restoration. The Byards remained in

²⁷⁴*L&P Hen. VIII*, V, 429; *Dugdale, Mon.* VI, 774; TNA, PROB 11/31/289.

²⁷⁵BA, JOr/1/1, ff. 213v–4v; 40715/Ad/1/1–3.

²⁷⁶BA, AC/WH/2/14.

²⁷⁷TNA, PROB 11/78/107.

²⁷⁸*Bristol Charities* (London, 1831), I, 31–32.

²⁷⁹*Bristol Charities* (London, 1831), I, 33–34.

²⁸⁰GA, 1086/E145.

²⁸¹TNA, E 317/Glos/17.

²⁸²For the vicar's glebe, see below, Religious History.

²⁸³*Registrum sive Liber Irrotularius et consuetudinarius prioratus beate mariae wigorniensis*, ed. W. Hale (Camden Society, old series, 91, 1865), f. 110a.

²⁸⁴Worc. Cath. Lby, B1579.

²⁸⁵Worc. Cath. Lby, Register 1499–1534, A6(ii), f. 105.

²⁸⁶TNA, PROB 11/31/481.

²⁸⁷GA, GDR, Wills, 1560/4.

²⁸⁸Worc. Cath. Lby, B684b.

²⁸⁹GA, D936/T6.

possession of the lease in 1682, when they sold it to the Marquis of Worcester.²⁹⁰ In 1712 the Dowager Duchess of Beaufort sold the lease to Nicholas Procter of Chelsea.²⁹¹ Giles Hitchins (1736) of Great Sherston (Wilts.) was in possession of the rectory in 1733, when he let it for six years to the vicar, William Hughes, at an annual rent of £90.²⁹² The rectory descended from Hitchins to his son, also Giles,²⁹³ but was in the possession of the sisters Anne Dorney and Sarah Adey in 1787.²⁹⁴ The latter died in 1789, and Dorney demised the lease to her granddaughter Elizabeth Dorney. The glebe was valued at £153 in 1815, when the tithes were thought to be worth £199.²⁹⁵ Elizabeth Dorney retained the estate until her death in 1846.²⁹⁶ Her heir was her cousin, Revd John Harding of Bockfield (Monm.), but the lease was in the possession of Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley, the lord of the manor, by 1851.²⁹⁷ He renewed the lease for 21 years in 1858.²⁹⁸

Economic History

Agriculture

The Middle Ages

In 1066 there were four ploughlands in demesne, and five ploughlands farmed by villeins.²⁹⁹ The manor also had one virgate of land in Droitwich which had rendered 25 sesters of salt, but in 1086 rendered nothing because the men had been so oppressed by the sheriff.³⁰⁰ Before the disafforestation of Horwood forest in 1228, all of the parish west of the Cotswold Edge lay within its boundaries. Field names beneath the escarpment attest to both the wooded nature of this landscape and also extensive assarting in the area.³⁰¹

A survey of Old Sodbury manor ascribed to the late 13th century distinguished between the value of the arable *super montem* and that *subtus montem*: on the hill there were 321 a. cumulatively worth 61s. 1½d., below the hill there were 352 a. cumulatively worth 105s. 2d.³⁰² There were also two grades of meadow, altogether amounting to 88 a. worth 102s. 6d., and a total of 56 a. of pasture was worth 21s.³⁰³ Fixed rents were paid by both free men

²⁹⁰GA, D6751/1.

²⁹¹GA, D6751/1.

²⁹²GA, D6751/1.

²⁹³TNA, PROB 11/676/475.

²⁹⁴WAAS, 009:1 6316. For the Adey and Dorney families, see GA, D2700/NC10/2.

²⁹⁵WAAS, 009:1 2602 75.

²⁹⁶GA, D936/Y39. TNA, PROB 11/2035/315.

²⁹⁷GA, D936/Y39.

²⁹⁸GA, D936/Y39.

²⁹⁹*Domesday*, 450.

³⁰⁰*Domesday*, 450.

³⁰¹See above, Landscape.

³⁰²TNA, SC 11/236.

³⁰³TNA, SC 11/236.

and *nativi*, worth a total of £8 7s. 1½*d.*³⁰⁴ The customary tenants owed different amounts of work to the lord: 12 customars owed work twice a week and another three owed work once a week; two more customars owed works between Michaelmas and Lammas Day (*gulam Augusti*), and four owed work three times a week during the Autumn. No work was owed during the three holy weeks of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.³⁰⁵ An extent from 1295–6 reckoned the cottagers to number 18, when a total of four virgates of land were held in villeinage.³⁰⁶ The rents of the free tenants amounted to £8 13s. 7½*d.*, with a further 3s. 1½*d.* provided in kind.³⁰⁷ The demesne arable amounted to 464½ a. in 1295–6.³⁰⁸ This connection with the saltworks at Droitwich remained, valued at 16*d.*³⁰⁹

By 1327/8 at the latest the 18 customars on the manor were selling rather than performing their works on the demesne, suggesting a reduction in the amount of arable being farmed directly by the lord.³¹⁰ By 1327/8 large amounts of the arable land had been converted to pasture, with 146 a. of the 352 a. formerly used as arable beneath the hill specified as being used for pasture.³¹¹ A total of 377 a. of pasture was recorded within the manor in that year, possibly indicating that arable land above the hill had also been converted to pasture. It is not clear how the canons of Bradenstoke managed their land in Old Sodbury.³¹² In the late 13th century one Nicholas Phelip held a tenement of the canons in return for a rent of 2s. per annum.³¹³ However, in 1327 the prior had a servant resident in the parish, which might suggest more direct management of their resources.³¹⁴

An extent from 1487–9 listed ten free tenants, including the widow of lord of the manor of Kingrove, the dean of the college of Westbury-on-Trymm, and the lord of Little Sodbury, who collectively paid rent of £6 4s. 11*d.* and 1lb of pepper.³¹⁵ The 27 customary tenants paid a total rent of £41 10s. ½*d.*, although some of these payments were still set by custom, such as the two hens called '*poundehennys*' or 3*d.* instead of them.³¹⁶ All of the demesne land was being farmed, and much of the pasture land was already held in severalty.

³⁰⁴TNA, SC 11/236.

³⁰⁵TNA, SC 11/236.

³⁰⁶TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

³⁰⁷TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

³⁰⁸TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

³⁰⁹TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

³¹⁰TNA, E 199/13/2.

³¹¹TNA, E 199/13/2.

³¹²See above, Landownership.

³¹³*Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, 186.

³¹⁴TNA, E 179/113/5, rot. 26.

³¹⁵TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

³¹⁶TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

The Early Modern Period

In the 1540s Leland described the 'champaine ground' lying between Wickwar and Chipping Sodbury, which contained little wood, presumably referring to the large open commons in the north-west of the parish. Leland found a great plenty of wood in the south of the parish.³¹⁷ An award of the Council of the Marches in 1553 recorded that there were seven copyholders, each holding one yardland, and 19 cottagers, all of whom were to have common of pasture in Horwood common.³¹⁸ The lack of manorial records from the 16th century leaves few clues about agriculture in this period, although there is evidence of improvements presumably initiated by the Walshes. Land to the east of Horwood and Kingrove commons had been enclosed and granted to several copyholders before 1553.³¹⁹ Land at the Chestles, where evidence of ridge and furrow is suggestive of its former employment for arable, had been taken from copyhold tenements by the start of the 17th century and enclosed as a single large close of pasture.³²⁰ In the large common fields on the plateau above the scarp, a large new inclosure was made by Henry Walsh (it is not clear which one) in the common field of Old Sodbury during the late 16th century.³²¹ This may refer to the slopes of the escarpment north of the Badminton road, referred to on a map of 1709 as Old Sodbury Field.³²² If so, it may be the tynning described as 'newly enclosed' for sheep in the early 17th century,³²³ and said in 1665 to amount to 70 a.³²⁴ Another sheep sleight was enclosed at Lyegrove around the same time.³²⁵ At Hampstead, in the north-west corner of the parish, the tenant grubbed up a field of briars to increase the tillage on the farm, which already had very good quality arable fields, where wheat, barley and oats were grown.³²⁶

When the Stephens acquired the manor early in the 17th century, a survey recorded 28 copyholders and another 19 lease-holders, some of whom held more than one property.³²⁷ Of the copyholders, ten farmed only pasture and meadow, only three holding over 10 a., including one of the parish's millers. Sixteen copyholders mixed arable with stock farming, of whom four larger farmers combined between 27 and 50 a. of arable with between 5 and 36 a. of pasture or meadow each, and twelve held between 8 and 30 a. The large amounts

³¹⁷Leland, V, 95–96.

³¹⁸Rudder, *Glos.* 673–4.

³¹⁹Rudder, *Glos.* 673–4.

³²⁰GA, D2066/1.

³²¹GA, D3365/10.

³²²GA, D2700/QB17/8/1.

³²³GA, D340a/T91.

³²⁴GA, D2066/1.

³²⁵GA, D2066/1; D340a/T91.

³²⁶GA, GDR/127, 399, 423.

³²⁷GA, D2066/1. Thomas Stephens, who held the manor on lease during its acquisition, has not been numbered among the lease-holders.

of pasture land in the parish is reflected in the predominance of lease holders who held only pasture and meadow, ranging from Hugh Ivy, who held the 120 a. of the old park and also the new sheep sleight at Lyegrove, to Richard Norris, who held a small parcel of ground for 6*d*. Nine others held between 1½ and 24 a. of pasture or meadow, including two who held 24 a. each. Only four tenants held arable land by lease, including one tenement of 180 a., divided almost equally between arable and pasture, and a second amounting to 46 a. of arable and 16 a. meadow. Two small tenements were held by copy and five by lease. Three of the tenants still owed capons as well as money rents.

Probate evidence from the parish underlines the importance of stock farming. Only three extant wills from before the Restoration make any reference to arable farming, while several testators referred to leases of pasture grounds or made legacies of cattle. Thomas Atwood (d. 1567) was engaged in both arable and stock farming on a significant scale, keeping both cows and a large flock of sheep.³²⁸ Thomas a Parsonadge (d. 1572) also practised mixed farming, and his will indicated he had large amounts of corn and grass in the field, a yoke of oxen, and he made legacies of 30 cows and 40 sheep (the latter representing less than half of his flock).³²⁹ William Parker (d. 1591), left 16 cows and 80 sheep.³³⁰ In the early 17th-century, the parish's two millers and a cutler all supplemented their trades by keeping stock, making bequests of cows or sheep.³³¹

The evidence of probate inventories indicates a concentration on livestock rather than arable farming. In 1685 the estate of William Burcombe, yeoman, was valued at £129, of which £91 was in livestock and winter fodder and £8 in 7cwt of cheese.³³² In 1688 the estate of Richard Woodward, yeoman was valued at £170, of which £89 was in stock and hay with a further £34 in two tons of cheese.³³³ The large amount of pasture and meadow available to the parishioners enabled them to keep large numbers of cattle to supply the cheese market at Chipping Sodbury.³³⁴ The inventories also show that a large number of horses were kept. Thomas Rodman had 8 horses and 3 colts, when his goods were valued in the spring of 1717, which together with their tack represented 40% of the value of his estate.³³⁵ He also had 12 cows, 8 yearlings and a bull, representing 45% of his estate. Sheep were a rarer commodity with some yeomen having none at the time of their death. Thomas Weeks, whose inventory was compiled in mid-March 1663 had a flock of 180 sheep, some with lambs, appraised at £60.³³⁶ He also had 16 cows and a bull worth £50 and

³²⁸GA, GDR, Wills, 1567/160.

³²⁹GA, GDR, Wills, 1572/162.

³³⁰GA, GDR, Wills, 1591/271.

³³¹TNA, PROB 11/122/319; PROB 11/127/110; PROB 11/130/101.

³³²GA, PROB 1685/67.

³³³GA, PROB 1688/72.

³³⁴ See Chipping Sodbury, Economic History.

³³⁵GA, PROB 1717/17.

³³⁶GA, PROB 1663/7.

24 young cattle worth a further £30. Weeks was a substantial yeoman, who kept 8 oxen for ploughing. He had 20 acres of wheat and around 2 acres of vetch for fodder growing, as well as substantial stocks of wheat, pease and barley. Those inventories that included more than 20 sheep all include some evidence of arable farming, except that of the vicar William Sheen, who in 1676 had 2 cows, 35 sheep and 45 fleeces.³³⁷

A survey early in the 18th century returned the names of 18 freeholders, 14 leaseholders, and 20 copy holders within the manor, although some men may have held estates of more than one type.³³⁸ These tenements varied greatly in size, from a plot of 20 square feet of waste to copy-holds comprising *c.*60 a. Open-field arable cultivation was still practised in 1709, when a map was produced depicting strips in the two common fields.³³⁹ The two fields occupied much of the plateau to the east of the Bath road, divided by the Badminton road into the North and South fields. More enclosures of the common fields took place during the late 17th century,³⁴⁰ although in the early 18th century lands belonging to small-holdings were still dispersed in small strips through the two fields.³⁴¹ To the east of the two common fields, and stretching north into Little Sodbury, were the lands attached to the Lyegrove estate, referred to as Lyegrove field, although they were not held in common. The west-facing slopes of the escarpment were also given over to arable in the south of the parish, at places called Crundall and Dunswell, on either side of the lane from the Cross Hands inn to Combesend farm.³⁴² Strip lynchets at the latter are suggestive of medieval cultivation,³⁴³ but individual strips are depicted on a map as late as 1709.³⁴⁴ By the early 18th century, some of the South Field had been enclosed and converted to pasture.³⁴⁵ In the late 18th century, it was declared the ancient custom of the manor to stock no more than two sheep per acre in the common fields, which were enclosed between 1 November and 25 March each year. No other animals were to be stocked in the common fields.³⁴⁶ In 1777 Francis Holborow was presented for stocking 69 sheep in the South field despite only holding 6 a. there, for which he paid a fine of £3 16s.³⁴⁷ During the 18th century landholders also undertook expensive drainage schemes to improve the low-lying pasture land in the centre of the parish, which was liable to flood. The Chipping Sodbury Town Lands charity held several plots of near the river Frome, and

³³⁷TNA, PROB 4/8464

³³⁸GA, D871/M4.

³³⁹GA, D2700/QB17/8/1.

³⁴⁰GA, D547a/T62.

³⁴¹GA, D871/M4.

³⁴²GA, D2700/NC9/1; D2700/QB10/5/4.

³⁴³South Glos. HER, 2923.

³⁴⁴GA, D2700/QB17/8/1.

³⁴⁵GA, D3365/12.

³⁴⁶GA, D247/74, 28.

³⁴⁷GA, D247/74, 68.

in 1766 the bailiff was granted a lease of 14 years on one of these pieces, in order that he could recoup the considerable sums he had already expended improving it 'by underground draining'.³⁴⁸ Beginning in 1771, Sir William Codrington Bt. also laid out a number of underground drains across Parks farm.³⁴⁹

In the late 18th century the lord took a number of copyholds back in hand,³⁵⁰ and by that time most of the agricultural land in the parish was divided between several large farms. The largest of these was the main demesne farm, centred on the former lodge of Lyegrove park. The house was occupied by the lord of the manor, who kept *c.*42 a. in hand.³⁵¹ The residue of the farm, a compact estate lying on the eastern boundary of the parish and stretching across the boundary into Little Sodbury to the north, was let to James Hatherill. Comprising 580 a., of which 412 a. were in Old Sodbury, the farm was made up of 289 a. of arable land and 121 a. of pasture. Combes End farm, purchased by the Duke of Beaufort in the late 17th century,³⁵² amounted to *c.*304 a. in the 18th century, comprising *c.* 186 a. of arable, 82 a. of pasture and 36 a. in the common mead.³⁵³ A large holding was built up during the 18th century by the Adey family, combining *c.*178 a. of arable with *c.*71 a. of pasture largely in the centre of the parish,³⁵⁴ which descended to Ann Dorney in 1789, following the death of her sister Sarah Adey.³⁵⁵ This she combined with the rectory estate, which she leased from the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, comprising another 70 a. of arable and 51 a. of pasture and meadow.³⁵⁶ In the north-west corner of the parish, surrounded on three sides by commons or the Ridings, Hampstead farm consisted of *c.*190 a., predominantly pastoral.³⁵⁷ Camers comprised *c.*187 a., divided almost equally between arable in the common fields and pasture or meadow.³⁵⁸ Parks farm, purchased by Sir William Codrington Bt. in 1736,³⁵⁹ comprised 172 a. of pasture.³⁶⁰ On the edge of Chipping Sodbury parish, a farm at Buckets Hill comprised 102 a., mostly of pasture but including Gauntsfield, subject to rights of common when the crops were harvested, and the former woodland of Cotterell Grove, some of which had been converted to arable.³⁶¹

³⁴⁸GA, D2071/B6, 7 Feb. 1766.

³⁴⁹GA, D1610/P18.

³⁵⁰GA, D247/74.

³⁵¹GA, D2251.

³⁵²GA, D2700/NC9/1. See above, Landownership.

³⁵³GA, D2700/QB8/8/1.

³⁵⁴GA, D3365/11.

³⁵⁵GA, D2700/NC10/2.

³⁵⁶WAAS, 009:1 6316. See above, Landownership.

³⁵⁷BA, AC/E/8; AC/WO/1/57.

³⁵⁸GA, D1610/T58.

³⁵⁹GA, D1610/T60.

³⁶⁰GA, D1610/P18.

³⁶¹GA, D1610/T12.

From the 1790s

Enclosure of the common fields, affecting *c.*600 a. of arable land in the common fields and 106 a. in the common mead, was achieved by an award and parliamentary Act on 1794.³⁶² Under the award, allotments of land in the North and South fields were divided between 14 landowners. More than half of the arable land, some 305 a., was divided almost equally between the two principal proprietors, Winchcombe Henry Hartley and the Duke of Beaufort. Two other substantial holdings were consolidated, with an award of 75 a. to Thomas Jones for Camers and 98 a. to Ann Dorney, who received a further 48 a. as lessee of the impropriate rectory. The remaining 73 a. was divided between seven landowners, four as tenants of the lord, with only two landowners being awarded over 25 a. Large allotments were also made out of the common mead to Hartley, Dorney, Jones, and the Duke of Beaufort, the latter receiving a quarter of the whole amount, while 12 more landowners, including five copyholders, received smaller allotments, some of less than one acre.

An assessment of tithes made in 1815 recorded 1,045 a. of arable land within the parish, including 57 a. belonging to the glebe.³⁶³ The remaining 988 a. was divided between 19 owners, the holdings varying in size from the 313 a. of James Hatherell at Lyegrove to seven holdings amounting to less than 10 a. In 1838 the parish was said to comprise 997 a. of arable, 2,066 a. of pasture and 300 a. of commons.³⁶⁴ Wheat, barley, oats, beans, peas and vetches were farmed, but with no fixed system across the parish, the farmers indiscriminately choosing a four-course, five-course or six-course rotation according to their individual preference. The extensive pasturage within the parish accommodated 215 cows, 100 bullocks, 35 horses, and 900 sheep.

In the early 19th century the Hatherell family were the principal farmers in the Sodburys, farming the largest demesne farms belonging to Old Sodbury and Little Sodbury. Lyegrove farm was leased by John and James Hatherell in 1813, when it measured 658 a., including the land in Little Sodbury.³⁶⁵ In 1839 the lord of the manor, Winchcombe Henry Howard Harley, was still the largest proprietor in the parish, with his 1,024 a. representing approximately one-third of all the land, the majority of which continued to be occupied by the Hatherell family. Lyegrove was still let to James Hatherell, the Old Sodbury portion of the farm comprising *c.*444 a. of the 670 a. total. Hatherell was a proprietor in his own right, holding another 138 a. of freehold land in the parish.³⁶⁶ Another *c.*254 a. of the Old Sodbury demesnes were let to his kinsman, William Hatherell, the tenant of Little Sodbury House, who combined with a similar amount of land in that

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

³⁶³WAAS, 009:1 6316.

³⁶⁴TNA, IR 18/2874.

³⁶⁵GA, D871/T10.

³⁶⁶GA, GDR/T1/165.

parish.³⁶⁷

The remaining c.326 a. of Hartley's land was divided between eight tenants, none of whom held more than 80 a. in the parish, although some combined these holdings with land held of other proprietors, and land in other parishes. William Cottle held Lower Combesend farm, which in 1839 comprised 77 a. William Higgs had held Horwoodgate farm, at the edge of Sodbury common, with 61 a. from Hartley since 1807,³⁶⁸ which by 1839 he farmed with another 110 a. in Little Sodbury.³⁶⁹ The Plough inn was held with 70 a. in 1839, an increase from the 55 a. the farm had comprised 20 years earlier.³⁷⁰ Charles Beaton combined 38 a. from Hartley with another 81 a. from Sir William Codrington. Three of Hartley's tenants held premises amounting to less than 20 a., as did Hartley himself.

Following the enclosure of the common fields, the neighbouring lord of the manor, Sir William Codrington, began consolidating his possessions within the parish. Besides Parks farm, he already owned another 40 a. in the parish in the late 18th century. In 1795 Combesend farm was acquired from the Duke of Beaufort,³⁷¹ and in 1814 Camers was purchased from Thomas Jones.³⁷² In 1839 his nephew Christopher Bethell Codrington was the second largest proprietor in the parish, with 567 a.³⁷³ Half of the estate, comprising 226 a., was let with Camers farm, while Parks farm comprised another 208 a.³⁷⁴ His remaining estate was divided between four other tenants, the largest unit consisting of the 81 a. held by Charles Beaton, including c.17 a. in the South field that had been converted from arable to pasture. Of the other estates only three measured more than 100 a. Elizabeth Dorney had inherited her aunt Ann's estates, now measuring 239 a., and the lease of the rectory's 96 a., divided into two farms comprising 265 a. and 70 a. Hampstead farm measured 194 a. and Hayes farm 104 a. The remaining land was divided between ten landowners, only two of whom held estates of larger than 50 a.

The situation remained similar in the early 20th century.³⁷⁵ The largest farm was Lyegrove Farm, owned by the Duke of Beaufort in 1900,³⁷⁶ comprising 620 a. in 1909 and let to Daniel Iles. There were seven more farms of between 122 a. and 230 a., mostly occupied by tenant farmers. Two others, Plough Farm and Cross Hands Farm, also belonged to the Duke of Beaufort and were both let to Thomas Bennett. Parks Farm (230

³⁶⁷GA, GDR/T1/165.

³⁶⁸GA, D10235. The estate was subsequently partitioned between his five nephews in 1858.

³⁶⁹GA, GDR/T1/164.

³⁷⁰GA, D871/T14.

³⁷¹GA, D1610/T65.

³⁷²GA, D1610/T58.

³⁷³GA, GDR/T1/165.

³⁷⁴GA, GDR/T1/165.

³⁷⁵GA, D2428/1/69.

³⁷⁶*Citizen*, 2 Oct. 1900, 4.

a.) and Home Farm, formerly called Camers (201 a.) were both occupied by tenants of Sir Gerald Codrington. Hampstead Farm remained unchanged from the previous century, while Hayes Farm (141 a.) was the only one occupied and farmed by the proprietor. The Hatherells continued to have a presence in the parish, with Harry Hatherell combining 32 a. belonging to himself with c.126 a. belonging to three other proprietors, while William Hatherell farmed another 82 a. at Combes End. There were three more smaller farms, Fromebridge, Kingrove and Harwoodgate farms, and smallholdings elsewhere in the parish. In the 1930s arable cultivation in the parish was largely confined to the plateau above the escarpment, although much of this too had been converted to grassland, while small pockets of arable land could be found amongst the permanent pasture land in the valley floor.³⁷⁷ The only significant amounts of woodland lay to the north of Lyegrove House.

In 1943 the three largest farms in the parish, all located above the escarpment, were the only farms that could be described as genuinely mixed.³⁷⁸ More than half of Lyegrove Farm's 923 a. were dedicated to the growing of crops, predominantly wheat, oats and barley, with root vegetables, beans and other crops. The farm's grassland could support 182 cows and 526 sheep. Plough Farm (406 a.) and Cross Hands Farm (288 a.) also dedicated at least half of their land to arable cultivation, and the latter also maintained a large flock of 212 sheep, while both kept almost 50 cows. The remaining estates, large and small, were all predominantly given over to pasture land, with at least two-thirds occupied by permanent grasslands, and some smallholdings comprising only pasture. Five farms comprised between 110 a. and 219 a., but only Hampstead Farm set aside more than 20 a. for the growing of crops. Most arable land was planted with wheat and oats, but potatoes, turnips and swedes were also grown, as were fodder crops such as kale and vetches. The large amount of pasture available in the parish, supplemented by the extensive commons, supported over 900 cows, with six farms having stock exceeding 50 head of cattle. The farm surveyors regarded the majority of estates as well managed, noting that two of the farms were amongst the best in the region, but also observed the low productivity of the hilly ground. Despite this, when Hampstead Farm was purchased in 1943, it comprised 103 a. of pasture, 6 a. of pasture orchard and c.86 a. of arable, much of which had been converted from pasture during the course of the Second World War.³⁷⁹ Much of the land was considered of poor quality and was poorly drained.

Commons

Following the disafforestation of Horwood in 1228 those parts of it which were not assarted during the medieval period were used as commons. The largest of these, also called Horwood, lay across the north-west of the parish and extended into the neighbouring parishes of Little Sodbury, Horton, and Yate. In 1671 the total area of

³⁷⁷*Land Util. Surv. Map*, Sheet 103 (135); Sheet 111 (1939).

³⁷⁸TNA, MAF 32/106/221.

³⁷⁹GA, D2299/7547.

Horwood common was estimated at c.2,000 a.³⁸⁰ The common lay open across the four parishes, the boundaries of which were distinguished by merestones. The inhabitants of Old Sodbury, Little Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury all claimed rights of common in the whole of Horwood.³⁸¹ In 1668 William Paston, the lord of the neighbouring manor of Horton, sought an Act of Parliament to enclose of certain coppices within his manor that formed part of the common.³⁸² This was opposed by Sir Thomas Stephens and his tenants.³⁸³ In reply Paston asserted that the men of the Sodbury parishes had no right of common in Horton, and their beasts were impounded if they strayed over the boundary.³⁸⁴ Having failed to prevent the enclosures at the assizes, Stephens and his tenants started a Chancery suit,³⁸⁵ but despite their objections the bill passed.³⁸⁶

A number of small allotments were made from the commons to poor people of the three Sodbury parishes by the lord of the manor in the early 19th century.³⁸⁷ Proposals for the enclosure of Horwood and Kingrove commons were circulated by the agent of the lord of the manors in 1827.³⁸⁸ It was suggested that allotments should be made to every house within Chipping Sodbury, upon which the building of new houses would be prohibited. It was intended that these new allotments would provide work for poor labourers within the town, and reduce the burden of the poor rates on householders. The new allotments would still be subject to common rights from the three Sodbury parishes between certain dates, the proportion of sheep, cattle or horses that each proprietor could turn out into the commons to be determined by the amount each paid in poor rates. To oversee the new arrangements, two haywards would be appointed, one by the vestry of Chipping Sodbury the other jointly by the vestries of Little Sodbury and Old Sodbury. The proposals did not find favour, however, and the commons remained open.

New regulations of the commons were issued in 1908.³⁸⁹ For the purpose of pasturing animals in the commons throughout the year, the value of a donkey or pig was calculated at one stint, one head of cattle under the age of two at two stints, one head of cattle over the age of two at three stints, and a horse at five stints. A total of 2,780 stints were divided between landowners in the three parishes, including 1,000 awarded to the Chipping

³⁸⁰TNA, C 7/326/46.

³⁸¹TNA, C 7/326/46.

³⁸²CJ, IX, 60; LJ, XII, 196.

³⁸³LJ, XII, 204, 219; Parl. Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/1/331/153.

³⁸⁴*The answer of William Paston Esq, to the petition of Sir Denis Gauden, and Sir Thomas Stephens Knights, in behalf of themselves, and the tenants of Yate, Market Sodbury, Old Sodbury, and Little Sodbury, in the county of Gloucester humbly presented to the consideration of the Lords spiritual and temporal in Parliament assembled* ([London, c.1668]), BL, General Reference Collection 190.g.13 (428).

³⁸⁵TNA, C 7/326/46; C 7/510/44.

³⁸⁶LJ, XII, 247; 19&20 Chas. II, c.12; Parl. Archives, HL/PO/PB/1/1667/20C2n14.

³⁸⁷GA, D1610/E139.

³⁸⁸GA, D1610/E139.

³⁸⁹GA, D1610/E140.

Sodbury Town Trust on the behalf of the inhabitants of the town. To maintain the commons and enforce the bye-laws twelve conservators were appointed, one for each of the manors, appointed by the lord of the manor, one for Chipping Sodbury Rural District Council, three for Chipping Sodbury parish meeting, three for Old Sodbury parish meeting, and two for Little Sodbury parish meeting. The three manorial conservators were to hold office for life at the pleasure of the lord, while those appointed for the council and parish meetings were to serve three year terms. Three allotments, measuring 15 a. in total, were enclosed from the commons and allocated to the three parishes to be used as allotment gardens by the poor of each parish. The owners of Gaunt's Field and the Mill Acre also took the opportunity to purchase the common rights of their respective fields.

Parks

There was a park at Old Sodbury in 1066,³⁹⁰ and perhaps dating to as early as the 8th century.³⁹¹ The way between the park and the water flowing to the mill was obstructed by William de Weylaund in the 1270s.³⁹² In 1280 Thomas de Weylaund was granted free warren in his demesne lands in Old Sodbury, Little Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury.³⁹³ A second park, at Lyegrove, was created by William Crassus during the 13th century. Its creation impinged on Ellis Cotel's right of estovers and may be linked to a complaint from Cotel in 1255.³⁹⁴ At the end of the 13th century, there were 100 a. of underwood in the old park, and more underwood in the park of *Lydegrave*, and the pannage was worth 2s. per annum.³⁹⁵ There were two dovecots at the end of the 13th century: an established one worth 20s. per annum, and a newly-built dovecot which had not yet been valued.³⁹⁶

The park at *Leigrave* was not stocked in 1307, and it may never have been stocked; in the same year, the old park was stocked with deer, and had herbage worth 13s. 4d. beyond their sustenance.³⁹⁷ In 1327/8 a parker was employed who earned 1½d. per day.³⁹⁸ The parker's wage may explain why the park was not worth anything beyond the sustenance of the deer in 1337.³⁹⁹ In 1375 the value of the pasture was the same, although the underwood was now valued at 40d.⁴⁰⁰ In 1377 the parker, David Hunte, took 2d. per day out of the issues of the manor.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁰*Domesday*, 450.

³⁹¹Moore, 'Forest of Kingswood', 11. See above, Landscape.

³⁹²*Rotuli Hundredorum*, 175b.

³⁹³*Cal. Chart.* 1257–1300, 236.

³⁹⁴See below, Woodland.

³⁹⁵TNA, SC 11/236.

³⁹⁶TNA, SC 11/236.

³⁹⁷TNA, C 133/129/1; *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, IV, 321.

³⁹⁸TNA, E 199/13/2.

³⁹⁹TNA, C 135/51/12 (5); *Cal. Inq. p. m.*, VIII, no. 132.

⁴⁰⁰TNA, C 135/253/1; *Cal. Inq. p. m.* XIV, no. 209.

⁴⁰¹*Cal. Pat.* 1374–1377, 456-7; *Cal. Close* 1377–1381, 49.

In the late 15th century royal custody of the lordship of Sodbury provided the king with an opportunity for the dispersal of patronage. In addition to the appointment as parker of his servant William Burton, who was already gentleman of the king's ewery,⁴⁰² the king created the office of 'master of the game of the park of Sodbury', which he granted with the stewardship of the lordship to Robert Poyntz in 1478.⁴⁰³ The next parker was another royal servant, John Coket, yeoman of the king's chamber, appointed in 1481.⁴⁰⁴ It was Richard III's intention in 1485 that Coket should receive an annuity of £8 10*d.* in addition to his fees.⁴⁰⁵ This was considerably more than the 60*s.* 8*d.* that John Paunton had received.⁴⁰⁶ In 1492 the office of parker was granted to the new lord of Little Sodbury manor, John Walsh (d. 1502), with reversion upon his death to his brother-in-law Richard Foster (d. 1504).⁴⁰⁷ In 1513 Sir Maurice Berkeley (d. 1523) was made keeper of the park,⁴⁰⁸ and in 1519 the king made a gift of a buck in summer and a doe in winter from the park to Lady Joan Guildford.⁴⁰⁹ Following the death of Berkeley, Francis Poyntz was made keeper.⁴¹⁰ In 1545 the first vesture of a meadow called Gymeade, amounting to 3 a. and lying to the south of the old park, was reserved for the pasture of the deer.⁴¹¹ In his will of 1556 Maurice Walsh demised to his son Walter his lease of the lodge of Old Sodbury Park, and also a day-house there where he kept a number of cattle.⁴¹² That at least some of the park had been converted to pasture by this date is confirmed by the presence of these cattle and by the horses that Walsh kept in the park.

In the early 17th century the old park, also known as the King's Park, comprised the house or lodge and several closes of pasture estimated to contain 120 a.⁴¹³ These were let to Hugh Ivy for a term of 40 years in 1603, but the remainder of his lease was redeemed for £400 when the manor was purchased by Thomas Stephens in 1605.⁴¹⁴ By 1642 the park had been let to Andrew Pynnell and Richard Stephens,⁴¹⁵ for an annual rent of £180.⁴¹⁶ The park, comprising 160 a. in total and including a close called the Little Park to the south of

⁴⁰²*Cal. Pat.* 1477–1485, 82.

⁴⁰³*Cal. Pat.* 1477–1485, 99.

⁴⁰⁴*Cal. Pat.* 1477–1485, 288.

⁴⁰⁵*Cal. Pat.* 1477–1485, 508–9.

⁴⁰⁶*Cal. Pat.* 1485–1494, 43; TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁴⁰⁷*Cal. Pat.* 1485–1494, 371.

⁴⁰⁸*L&P Hen. VIII*, I, 731.

⁴⁰⁹East Sussex Record Office, SAS/G21/17.

⁴¹⁰*L&P Hen. VIII*, III, 1492.

⁴¹¹*L&P Hen. VIII*, XX: 1, 518.

⁴¹²TNA, PROB 11/38/131.

⁴¹³GA, D2066/1.

⁴¹⁴GA, D1610/T60; D2066/1. See above, Landownership.

⁴¹⁵GA, D2066/1.

⁴¹⁶GA, D1086/T76.

the river, was sold by Sir Thomas Stephens to Sir Matthew Hale in 1675.⁴¹⁷

The park at Lyegrove was enclosed by a wall in the early 17th century,⁴¹⁸ which still stood at the end of the century.⁴¹⁹ The park of Lyegrove was estimated to contain 300 a. in 1642, and the farm of Lyegrove outside the park another 350 a.⁴²⁰ The land within the park wall had begun to be divided into large enclosures by 1691. The enclosures with the woodland amounted to c.78 a., but the remainder was still described as 'the plain of the park'.⁴²¹ By the end of the 18th century the whole park had been enclosed and was farmed from a farmhouse near to the former Lodge, now called Lyegrove House.⁴²² The memory of the park was retained in the names of fields lying in Little Sodbury parish in the 19th century.⁴²³

Woodland

In 1066 there was woodland 1 league in length and breadth.⁴²⁴ In 1228 the Earl of Gloucester made a fine with the king by which his lands, including those in Old Sodbury, were disafforested.⁴²⁵ The disafforestation of Kingswood allowed him to make assarts and create parks in the woods.⁴²⁶ In 1255 Ellis Cotel complained that William Crassus had deprived him of his woodland in Old Sodbury, and was granted 15 a. of wood lying at Kingrove.⁴²⁷ In addition to the underwood of the two parks, there were two small groves with underwood worth 20*d.* a year.⁴²⁸ In 1327/8 the sale of underwood and pasture from these locations raised 16*s.* 2*d.* over a thirty week period from June to October.⁴²⁹ In 1487–9 3*s.* 4*d.* was paid for the enclosure of the wood called the Grove.⁴³⁰ The woodland at Lyegrove amounted to 18 a. in 1545.⁴³¹ In 1795 the woodland at Lyegrove amounted to 33 a., which was kept in hand by the lord of the manor.⁴³² This had grown to 40 a. by 1909.⁴³³

An 8-a. site on Chapel Lane was operated as a commercial nursery by a company called

⁴¹⁷GA, D1086/T76; D1610/T60.

⁴¹⁸GA, D340a/T91.

⁴¹⁹GA, D1799/T26.

⁴²⁰GA, D2066/1.

⁴²¹GA, D1799/T26.

⁴²²GA, D2251/1; D2700/QB/4/6/1. See above, Agriculture, for the farm at Lyegrove.

⁴²³GA, D2700/QB4/6/1; GDR/T1/164.

⁴²⁴*Domesday*, 450.

⁴²⁵*Cal. Fine*, 1216–1224, 12/171; *Cal. Chart.* 1226–1257, 75.

⁴²⁶*Cal. Chart.* 1226–57, 75.

⁴²⁷*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 537.

⁴²⁸TNA, SC 11/236.

⁴²⁹TNA, E 199/13/2.

⁴³⁰TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁴³¹*L&P Hen. VIII*, XX: 1, 518.

⁴³²GA, D2251.

⁴³³GA, D2428/1/69.

Landcare in 2018, producing trees, shrubs, hedging plants, and flowers.⁴³⁴

Mills

In 1066 there was a mill rendering 5s. per annum. By 1086 another mill had been added by the reeve, rendering 40*d.* per annum.⁴³⁵ Extents and surveys taken at the end of the 13th century valued these two water mills variously at 20s. and 26s. 8*d.* per annum.⁴³⁶ The mills had fallen into disrepair and were ruinous by the reign of Edward III, and were worth no more than 8s. a year. In 1487–9 there were again two water mills.⁴³⁷

Two mills were recorded in the manor among a survey of copyholds and leases in the early 17th century.⁴³⁸ One of these mills, probably that standing to the north-west of Lower Combesend Farm, was held by Thomas Burcombe with 9 a. of land. This grew to a holding of 12 a., mostly pasture, when the mill was granted to Robert Ogbourne in 1712.⁴³⁹ This was probably the same mill that was operating as a steam mill by 1851.⁴⁴⁰ Although the building, now called the Old Mill, is much altered, parts of it date from the early 17th century.⁴⁴¹ It had apparently ceased to function as a mill by 1891.⁴⁴²

The other mill, held in the early 17th century by Thomas Russell, probably stood on a site near Chipping Sodbury.⁴⁴³ No lease for a mill was recorded under the manor of Chipping Sodbury in the early 17th century, which may point to Russell's mill being that on Brook Street within Chipping Sodbury. Alternatively, it may have stood on the boundary with Yate, on the site of the mill now called Cow Mill, parts of which date to at least the late 17th century.⁴⁴⁴ In the early 20th century the mill employed 3 men, and produced 1,000 tons of corn a year.⁴⁴⁵

There may have been a third mill on the brook to the north of Chipping Sodbury, at a site where the river flows around either side of a withy bed.⁴⁴⁶ A windmill stood on high ground on Horwood common in 1783, near the boundary between Old Sodbury and Little Sodbury.⁴⁴⁷

⁴³⁴< <http://www.landcaretrees.co.uk/about.html> > [accessed 1 Jan. 2019].

⁴³⁵*Domesday*, 450.

⁴³⁶TNA, C 133/77/3 (16); C 133/129/1.

⁴³⁷TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁴³⁸GA, D2066/1.

⁴³⁹GA, D871/E1; D871/M4.

⁴⁴⁰TNA, HO 107/1956, f. 149.

⁴⁴¹NHLE, No. 1129292.

⁴⁴²TNA, RG 12/1994, f. 91.

⁴⁴³GA, D2066/1.

⁴⁴⁴NHLE, No. 1313096.

⁴⁴⁵GA, C/AP/R1/SB1/21.

⁴⁴⁶Roger Leech, *Small Medieval Towns in Avon* (Bristol, 1975), 10, 12.

⁴⁴⁷GA, 247/74, 123–9.

Quarrying

The prevalence of good limestone deposits near the surface encouraged the development of small quarries throughout the parish,⁴⁴⁸ evidenced by the widespread use of freestone as a construction material. A quarry at Old Sodbury belonged to John Thynne's manor of Great Somerford in the late 16th century.⁴⁴⁹ In the early 18th century a quarry called the Green Quarry lay in the common fields near the Marshfield way,⁴⁵⁰ presumably the same quarry near Chippenham Road and called Turner's Quarry in the 1780s.⁴⁵¹ There were also quarries at Bowling Hill in the early 18th century,⁴⁵² and two quarries near Buckets Hill in the late 18th century.⁴⁵³ A stone carver and a quarryman were amongst Old Sodbury testators of the early 19th century.⁴⁵⁴ A quarry was opened near the old bridge over the brook from Chipping Sodbury to Wickwar in 1855, to produce stone to repair local roads.⁴⁵⁵ In 1861 four men were employed as quarrymen in Old Sodbury, and a fifth as a mason.⁴⁵⁶ The tithe award and Ordnance Survey maps record the existence of four sites of quarries in the parish, at the Stub Riding, south of Chipping Sodbury, and to the south and west of Lyegrove House.⁴⁵⁷ None were larger than c.4 a. in size.

Extensive quarrying also took place at Barnhill, to the north of Chipping Sodbury in Yate parish. By the start of the 20th century both the Barnhill and Brook Street quarries had expanded towards each other, and they combined to form a single quarry in the 1920s.⁴⁵⁸ Besides Barnhill, tenders were received by the rural district council to produce stone for the local highways from quarries at Brook Street, Lillyput (possibly in the parish of Dodington), and the Stub Riding in the early 20th century.⁴⁵⁹ In 1901 the Old Sodbury portion of the quarry comprised c.2 a., but by 1955 the Barnhill quarry had expanded to occupy most of the land to the west of the Stub Riding, including the former Riding Quarry, and c.22 a. of the site lay within the parish of Sodbury. In 1923 blasting at the expanding Barnhill site caused the road between Brook Street and the Wickwar Road to collapse.⁴⁶⁰ In 1941 the quarry was employing 186 men and 6 women, reduced from 300

⁴⁴⁸Rudder, *Glos.*, 672; Rudge, *Hist. of Glos.* 285–6.

⁴⁴⁹SA, DD\SE/17/1.

⁴⁵⁰GA, D871/M4.

⁴⁵¹GA, D247/74, 98.

⁴⁵²GA, D871/M4.

⁴⁵³GA, 247/74, 16, 34–5.

⁴⁵⁴GA, GDR, Wills, 1808/81; 1851/86.

⁴⁵⁵GA, P302 VE 2/2.

⁴⁵⁶TNA, RG 9/1743, ff. 139, 140, 151.

⁴⁵⁷GA, GDR/T1/165; OS, 6", *Glos. LXIX.SE–SW* (1886 edn).

⁴⁵⁸OS, 6", *Glos. LXIX.SW* (1903, 1924 edns).

⁴⁵⁹GA, DA33/100/7, 94.

⁴⁶⁰GA, DA33/100/17, 33.

men pre-war, and produced 240,000 tons of stone a year.⁴⁶¹ In 1941 there was also a concrete roofing tile factory, which pre-war had employed 25 men, and produced c.10,000 tons of tiles each year.⁴⁶² An asphalt mixing plant had also been established by 1949.⁴⁶³ Both factories were still functioning in the early 1970s,⁴⁶⁴ but were subsequently demolished.

Hampstead Farm was purchased by the British Quarrying Company in 1943,⁴⁶⁵ but it was not until 1977 that quarrying began at the 198 a. site.⁴⁶⁶ Quarrying at Barnhill had ceased by the mid-1950s,⁴⁶⁷ and the focus of quarrying moved to the northern boundary of the parish. Part of the disused site near the town of Chipping Sodbury has been redeveloped to provide a new housing estate and supermarket. In the early 21st century the quarry continued to produce limestone, which was converted on site into crushed stone, asphalt, concrete, and agricultural lime.⁴⁶⁸ In 2018 the quarry, including the Hampstead Farm site, employed 18 people, and produced 1,000,000 tonnes of limestone aggregate a year.⁴⁶⁹

The large number of quarries in the area meant that lime kilns were common. In 1487-9 there were two lime pits farmed by William Hale and Robert Knyght.⁴⁷⁰ There was a lime carrier resident in the parish in 1608.⁴⁷¹ In the 18th century the quality of the local limestone and the cheapness of the abundant coal of the district combined to produce high demand for Sodbury lime, which was distributed across the country.⁴⁷² One man in 1851 recorded his occupation as a lime burner.⁴⁷³ There were lime kilns recorded on the Ordnance Survey map in a small quarry to the east of the Wickwar Road in 1881.⁴⁷⁴

Other Industry, Crafts and Trade

The occupational surnames of taxpayers in 1327 suggest that Old Sodbury was home to

⁴⁶¹GA, C/AP/R1/SB1/21.

⁴⁶²GA, C/AP/R1/SB1/21.

⁴⁶³GA, P300 PC 1/7, 17.

⁴⁶⁴OS Map, (1971 edn.); GA, P300 PC 1/13, 4 Dec. 1974.

⁴⁶⁵GA, D2299/7547.

⁴⁶⁶Hanson Aggregates, *Chipping Sodbury Quarry Overview*, <<https://www.hanson-communities.co.uk/en/chipping-sodbury-quarry-overview>> [accessed 29 Dec. 2018].

⁴⁶⁷Ridge Wood, *Quarrying In and Around the Ridge*, <<http://www.ridge-wood.org.uk/thequarries.html>> [accessed 29 Dec. 2018].

⁴⁶⁸D.I.E Jones *et al*, *Spon's Quarry Guide to the British Hard Rock Industry* (London, 2006), 31.

⁴⁶⁹Hanson Aggregates, *Chipping Sodbury Quarry Overview*, <<https://www.hanson-communities.co.uk/en/chipping-sodbury-quarry-overview>> [accessed 29 Dec. 2018].

⁴⁷⁰TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁴⁷¹Smith, *Men and Armour*, 193.

⁴⁷²Rudder, *Glos.* 672.

⁴⁷³TNA, HO 107/1956, f. 176v.

⁴⁷⁴OS Map, 25", *Glos.* LXIX.10 (1882 edn).

millers, carpenters, tailors, smiths and skimmers.⁴⁷⁵ Of 189 testators from Old Sodbury between 1544 and 1857, only 28 ascribed to themselves non-agrarian occupations. The proximity to the cloth market of Chipping Sodbury is evident in the presence of four clothiers and a clothworker amongst them⁴⁷⁶, and they also included three cordwainers⁴⁷⁷, two tailors⁴⁷⁸, and a cutler.⁴⁷⁹ A family of weavers were resident in the parish in the late 16th century, combining their trade with farming a small freehold estate.⁴⁸⁰ In 1608 there were two bakers, three coal drivers, a clothier, a glover, a lime carrier, a mason, a mercer, two millers, a smith, a tailor, a tinker, and five weavers resident in the parish.⁴⁸¹

In the middle of the 19th century, the majority of craftsmen and tradesmen were employed in occupations typical of a rural community, including several blacksmiths, carpenters, butchers, tailors, and shoemakers.⁴⁸² At least five men were employed in the stone trade as masons or stonecutters, and there was an auctioneer, dealers in coal and salt, and a sign painter. Other tradesmen in the second half of the 19th century included a draper, a furniture dealer, and wine and spirit merchants, as well as the usual smiths, carpenters, and wheelwrights.⁴⁸³ There were three shops in the village in 1863, and four in 1897. Brewing was established at Hill House by the Hatherall family during the 19th century, and a large brewery had been constructed on the site by 1884, when it was purchased by James Mason Perrett.⁴⁸⁴ Brewing continued until c.1922, when the brewery equipment was sold off.

A brick works was erected in a field to the west of Chapel Lane during the construction of the railway. Using clay extracted during the building of the tunnel under Sodbury Hill, it produced bricks for the railway and other uses. It was demolished after the completion of the railway.⁴⁸⁵ A petrol station and garage was built c.1963 at the Green on Badminton Road.⁴⁸⁶ Proposals to erect a petrol station on the east side of the Bath Road in the 1960s were rejected by the parish council.⁴⁸⁷ In 2018 there were two petrol stations in the parish, one on the west side of the Bath Road at a site formerly called Perry's Garage, and the other at the Green. An engineering firm producing metal parts was established by

⁴⁷⁵TNA, E 179/113/5; *Taxpayers of Medieval Gloucestershire*, ed. P. Franklin (Stroud, 1993), 112–3.

⁴⁷⁶GA, PROB 1626/63, 1626/165, 1710/113, 1737/94.

⁴⁷⁷GA, PROB 1754/88, 1767/209, 1841/176.

⁴⁷⁸GA, PROB 1703/178, 1705/69.

⁴⁷⁹TNA, PROB 11/122/319.

⁴⁸⁰GA, D3365/13.

⁴⁸¹Smith, *Men and Armour*, 193–4.

⁴⁸²TNA, HO 107/1956, ff. 149–77.

⁴⁸³*Post Office Dir. of Glos.* (1863, 1870 edns); *Kelly's Dir. of Glos.* (1879, 1885, 1897 edns).

⁴⁸⁴OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1886 edn); Tim Edgell, *Cotswold Pubs and Breweries* (Stroud, 2013),

⁴⁸⁵OS, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1901, 1921 edns).

⁴⁸⁶GA, P300 PC 1/11, 64, 116; OS Map, 1:10,000 (1971 edn).

⁴⁸⁷GA, P300 PC 1/11, 108; P300 PC 1/12, 26 Sep. 1968.

Geoffrey Ship at a site near the north end of Chapel Lane c.1973, and was dissolved c.2012.⁴⁸⁸ DPS Construction, a company undertaking commercial ground work and civil engineering projects, was established in 2014 on the site of a former railway depot to the west of the Dog inn, and was still active in 2018.⁴⁸⁹

Social History

Social Structure

In 1066 Old Sodbury was held by Beorhtric, son of Aelfgar, one of the richest thegns in Saxon England. He held land throughout south-west England, including a large estate at Thornbury.⁴⁹⁰ There were 12 villeins, 4 bordars and 18 slaves on the manor.⁴⁹¹ Following the Conquest, the manor was granted to the Queen, and held by a court official,⁴⁹² so it is unlikely that any lord was resident during the late 11th century.

During the late 12th and early 13th century the Crassus lords may have been frequently resident at Old Sodbury, their principal English manor, and especially after the loss of their extensive Norman estates in 1204.⁴⁹³ A member of this family founded Chipping Sodbury c.1218.⁴⁹⁴ The family were also active in Wales and Ireland, and in 1270 they exchanged their lands in England, including at Old Sodbury, for estates in Ireland.⁴⁹⁵ Thereafter, the lords were usually distant absentees until the 16th century. The earl of Gloucester – overlord of the manor – was occasionally resident at Old Sodbury during the late 13th century, and the King may also have visited in the 1290s.⁴⁹⁶ The lords were not taxed as residents in 1327, when 27 individuals were assessed at a total of £2 16s. 8½d.⁴⁹⁷ Chipping Sodbury appears to have been taxed within the township of Great Sodbury, and so it is difficult to distinguish one from the other, although some individuals can be identified. The wealthiest was Henry, the servant of the prior of Bradenstoke, assessed 6s. 3d. for his estate at Hampstead. John le Fayre, who probably held the Vayre house on the edge of Chipping Sodbury, was assessed at 5s. 6d., and one Thomas de *Lokynton*

⁴⁸⁸'Shipp Engineering Limited', *Companies in the UK* <<https://www.companiesintheuk.co.uk/ltd/shipp-engineering>> [accessed 1 Jan. 2019].

⁴⁸⁹'DPS Construction', *Companies House* <<https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/09301617>> [accessed 1 Jan. 2019].

⁴⁹⁰Beorhtric 36: Beorhtric, son of Aelfgar, fl. 1066', *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, <<http://domesday.pase.ac.uk/Domesday?op=5&personkey=38865>> [accessed 23 Jan. 2019].

⁴⁹¹*Domesday*, 450.

⁴⁹²Humphrey 4: Humphrey the chamberlain, fl. 1066x1086'. *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, <<http://domesday.pase.ac.uk/Domesday?op=5&personkey=40699>> [accessed 23 Jan. 2019].

⁴⁹³*Trans. BGAS*, 116 (1998), 144–8.

⁴⁹⁴See above, Settlement, Landscape and Buildings.

⁴⁹⁵*Trans. BGAS*, 116 (1998), 147–8.

⁴⁹⁶See Old Sodbury, Landownership.

⁴⁹⁷TNA, E 179/115/3.

(Luckington?) was assessed at 5s. Although the Cotel family had conveyed away the manor in the previous year,⁴⁹⁸ Maud Cotel still held land worth 3s. in 1327.

In 1487–9 there were 11 free tenants in the manor. The leading free tenant was John Badnaunt, who held Kingrove by right of his wife,⁴⁹⁹ and rented several other closes of pasture called le Christofer, Royfeld, le Notehyll, and lez Roches next to the Grett Rydyngge, for a total rent of £3 11s. 4½d. and 1lb of pepper.⁵⁰⁰ John Newburgh, who held Combes End by the right of his wife Alice, owed a rent of 5s. The lord of the manor of Little Sodbury, Richard Foster, held a freehold tenement in Old Sodbury, the manor of which he also farmed along with the park of Lyegrove for a total rent of £13 11s. 8d.⁵⁰¹ There were a further 28 customary tenants of the manor.⁵⁰²

The military assessment of 1522 listed 38 individuals, including the rector of the church. The wealthiest landholder, Sir John Walsh, held lands worth £35, more than twice the value of all the others together.⁵⁰³ Hugh Young, who held the manor of Combes End, was assessed for lands worth £9, and the Dean of Westbury was assessed at £3 6s. 8d. for his messuage called Camers.⁵⁰⁴ Four other men were assessed for lands valued between 20s. and 40s.⁵⁰⁵ The yeoman William Darke senior and his son John was assessed with goods valued at £50 in 1522,⁵⁰⁶ and £40 in 1524.⁵⁰⁷ Six others were assessed at over £10 in 1524, the list headed by Nicholas Parsonage, whose wealth was valued at £17.⁵⁰⁸ Twenty-two of the 39 taxpayers in 1524 were worth £2 or less.⁵⁰⁹ William Kyngescote held lands worth £12 in 1546, one-eighth of the sum assessed upon the lord of the manor, while two men held goods worth £16 and £17 respectively, placing them on a par with some of the richest men in Chipping Sodbury.⁵¹⁰ In total, twenty men in Old Sodbury were assessed for land or goods worth £5 or more in 1546.

Over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries several families established large holdings within the parish, investing surplus wealth in the acquisition of more land.⁵¹¹ Although there were no men described as gentlemen among the 53 adult males in 1608, three were

⁴⁹⁸See above, Landownership.

⁴⁹⁹See above, Landownership.

⁵⁰⁰TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁵⁰¹TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁵⁰²TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁵⁰³*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 2. See also Little Sodbury, Social History.

⁵⁰⁴See above, Landownership.

⁵⁰⁵*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 2.

⁵⁰⁶*Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 3.

⁵⁰⁷*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 144.

⁵⁰⁸*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 143–4.

⁵⁰⁹*Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 143–4.

⁵¹⁰TNA, E 179/114/265.

⁵¹¹See above, Economic History.

yeomen and one a clothier.⁵¹² One of the ten husbandmen held enough land to be assessed for the subsidy,⁵¹³ and two more husbandmen could employ three servants between them.⁵¹⁴ The proximity to Chipping Sodbury encouraged non-agricultural occupations, and 19 men gave a trade, including five weavers, three coal drivers, and a lime carrier; there were also eight labourers, seven servants, and a shepherd. One of the yeomen of 1608 described himself as a gentleman in his will six years later,⁵¹⁵ and the descendants of another would adopt the style by the middle of the 17th century.⁵¹⁶ In 1662 and again in 1672 Sir Thomas Stephens was assessed for 14 hearths at Lyegrove House.⁵¹⁷ Henry Atwood, with six hearths in 1662, was one of the wealthiest parishioners, and at his death in that year his possessions were valued at almost £1,000.⁵¹⁸ Of the remaining 37 properties assessed to pay the tax in 1662, three were assessed at five hearths, four at four, six at three, 16 at two, and eight at one.⁵¹⁹ In 1672 18 of the 58 properties assessed for tax were excused payment.⁵²⁰ Thomas Adey (d. 1685), a wealthy farmer whose estate was valued at almost £1,000 at probate, held property in Horton, Dodington and Chipping Sodbury as well as Old Sodbury.⁵²¹

For more than a century after the death of Edward Stephens in 1727 the lord of the manor was not resident in the locality, and Lyegrove House was let to tenant-farmers.⁵²² The House was re-occupied by the lords of the manor after their principal residence at Bucklebury (Berks.) was destroyed by a fire c.1830.⁵²³ In 1831 almost three-fifths of the parish's families were chiefly employed in agriculture.⁵²⁴ The parish contained 27 farmers, 20 of whom provided employment for the 88 agricultural labourers in the parish. There were two professionals, presumably including the vicar, 33 men aged 20 or over were employed in retail, trades and crafts, and 31 were employed as general labourers. There were six male and 31 female servants of all ages, and 15 adults were not classified. Agriculture remained the chief source of employment for the men of the parish in 1881, the 18 farmers employing 123 labourers, one-third of whom were under the age of 20.⁵²⁵

⁵¹²Smith, *Men and Armour* (1608), 193–4.

⁵¹³TNA, E 179/116/481.

⁵¹⁴Smith, *Men and Armour* (1608), 193–4.

⁵¹⁵TNA, PROB 11/123/559.

⁵¹⁶GA, GDR, Wills, 1645/129; Inventories, 1663/11.

⁵¹⁷TNA, E 179/116/554, rot. 96; TNA, E 179/247/14, rot. 50d.

⁵¹⁸GA, GDR, Inventories, 1663/11.

⁵¹⁹TNA, E 179/116/554, rot. 96.

⁵²⁰TNA, E 179/247/14, rot. 50d; E 179/116/544.

⁵²¹GA, GDR, Inventories, 1685/4.

⁵²²See above, Landownership; Economic History.

⁵²³VCH *Berks.* III, 291.

⁵²⁴*Abstract of Population Returns of Great Britain, 1831* (Parliamentary Papers, 1833 (149), xxxvi–xxxviii), 210–1.

⁵²⁵Census, 1881.

Besides the usual rural trades and crafts, there were two quarrymen, two masons, a stone merchant, and four hauliers of stone and coal. Domestic service provided employment for three-fifths of the females of the parish, and 9 per cent of the males. A further one-fifth of the parish's women found employment as dress-makers or seamstresses.

Following the death of the Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley in 1881, the manor descended equally to his four nieces.⁵²⁶ They were not resident, however, and Lyegrove was let to well-to-do tenants. Charles Jacoby, a former lace manufacturer from Nottingham, took up residence at the house in 1885.⁵²⁷ In 1891 they were maintaining 11 domestic servants in the premises, but the house was apparently vacant in 1901, shortly after its purchase by the Duke of Beaufort.⁵²⁸ The construction of the railway caused a very large influx of navvies into the Sodbury area *c.*1898,⁵²⁹ and the 1901 census recorded a population almost double that of ten years previously.⁵³⁰ There were 95 railwaymen and 152 navvies in the village in that year, as well as 25 more men employed at the brickworks that was erected at the entrance to the new railway tunnel. Many of these workers were accommodated in specially erected huts, while many villagers found an extra source of income by taking in boarders,⁵³¹ including some who had rooms built onto their cottages to provide extra accommodation.⁵³² Besides attracting numerous outsiders to the village, railway work proved attractive to local men, at least 26 being employed building the railway or at the brickworks, while the number of agricultural labourers had fallen to 37.⁵³³

On the eve of the Second World War, the nearby aircraft factories provided employment for many of the villagers, while others worked at the local quarries.⁵³⁴ There were also a number of lorry drivers resident in the village. Lyegrove House was purchased by the Earl of Westmorland,⁵³⁵ and occupied by his family until the death of his wife in 1984.⁵³⁶ During the 20th century Sodbury parish became a dormitory for commuters, with two-thirds of aged between 16 and 74 holding professional roles or running their own businesses.⁵³⁷ One-quarter of the population was aged 65 or over, and a similar figure were retired.

⁵²⁶See above, Landownership.

⁵²⁷*Lond. Gaz.* 20 Sep. 1887, 5060; *The Times*, 9 Aug. 1895, 5.

⁵²⁸Census, 1891, 1901. See above, Landownership.

⁵²⁹Sodbury District Medical Officer of Health, Annual Report, 1898, 23. 38.

⁵³⁰Census, 1901.

⁵³¹Census, 1901.

⁵³²G. Tily, *The Three Sodburys: An Introduction* (Yate, 1994), 229.

⁵³³Census, 1901.

⁵³⁴TNA, RG 101/5120C-D.

⁵³⁵*Country Life*, 14 Dec. 1929.

⁵³⁶*The Times*, 27 Sep. 1984, 18.

⁵³⁷Census, 2011.

Communal Life

Friendly societies

In 1817 an Annual Benefit Society was established in Old Sodbury, meeting at the Cross Hands.⁵³⁸ The society closed before 1837.⁵³⁹ Re-established in 1842, it had 87 members in 1846, falling to 53 in 1850.⁵⁴⁰ It marked each year with an annual banquet at the Dog inn.⁵⁴¹ The society was re-established in 1882 at the National schoolroom in the village,⁵⁴² and had 78 members in 1885,⁵⁴³ falling to 36 members in 1899⁵⁴⁴ and 19 by 1910, when it was dissolved.⁵⁴⁵

The Sodbury Union Real Benefit Society was established in 1842 at the Bell inn.⁵⁴⁶ In that year, the members met for a dinner before marching with banners and music from the Bell to Dodington House and then to Chipping Sodbury.⁵⁴⁷ The Duke of Beaufort Lodge of the Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows was established in 1843 at the Dog inn.⁵⁴⁸ Its members joined those of other lodges in the district for a dinner and dance at Chipping Sodbury in 1845.⁵⁴⁹

Social activities of religious organisations

During the 19th century the local clergymen took a leading role in providing the working men of the village with respectable diversions. The vicar, Canon Nash, was instrumental in the establishment of a cottagers' horticultural society in the village, which held an annual fête where prizes were awarded for the best produce and the best model house.⁵⁵⁰ A brass band was established in the village in the 1860s, by the church choir master.⁵⁵¹ A Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association met in 1890.⁵⁵²

A church institute was established at Old Sodbury in 1911.⁵⁵³ Regular dances and entertainments were arranged there, and it was expanded with the erection of a new

⁵³⁸GA, Q/RSf/2.

⁵³⁹*Return of Friendly Societies* (Parliamentary Papers, 1837 (71), LI), 9.

⁵⁴⁰*Abstract of Returns Respecting Friendly Societies, 1846–50* (Parliamentary Papers, 1852–3 (31), C), 52–3.

⁵⁴¹*Bristol Mercury*,.

⁵⁴²*Rep. Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1883* (Parliamentary Papers, 1884 (324), LXXVI), 109.

⁵⁴³*Rep. Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1886* (Parliamentary Papers, 1887 (103), LXXVII), 108.

⁵⁴⁴*Rep. Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1901* (Parliamentary Papers, (35), LXXII), App. K, 35.

⁵⁴⁵*Rep. Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1911* (Parliamentary Papers, (159), LXXVI), App. J, 152.

⁵⁴⁶*Rep. Chief Registrar of Friendly societies, 1875* (Parliamentary Papers, 1876 (424), LXIX), 257.

⁵⁴⁷*Bristol Mercury*, 4 June 1842, 8.

⁵⁴⁸*Bath Chron.* 2 Nov. 1843, 3.

⁵⁴⁹*Bristol Mercury*, 19 July 1845, 8.

⁵⁵⁰*Western Daily Press*, 28 Aug. 1869, 3; 30 Aug. 1872, 3.

⁵⁵¹*Bristol Times & Mirror*, 17 Sep. 1864, 5; 17 Aug. 1867, 8.

⁵⁵²*Western Daily Press*, 19 Nov. 1890, 6.

⁵⁵³GA, P302 IN 4/11.

recreation room in 1924.⁵⁵⁴ Meetings of Sodbury parish council were held there until 1962.⁵⁵⁵

Inns

There were premises in Old Sodbury called the Talbot in 1714.⁵⁵⁶ The Bell, the Cross Hands, the Dog, and the Plough were all referred to in the 18th century.⁵⁵⁷ The Cross Hands, which reputedly took its name from an inscription on a Roman coin found nearby, stands at the crossroads of the Bath road and the Badminton road. Its convenient location led to its use as petty sessions court from the 18th century until 1890, making it the last Gloucestershire inn to host sessions.⁵⁵⁸ The Dog was the venue of the court leet and view of frankpledge in the 1770s.⁵⁵⁹ Courts were held in the Plough in the 1840s, and subsequently in the Cross Hands.⁵⁶⁰ The Plough had ceased to be an inn by 1863.⁵⁶¹ The Bell, the Cross Hands, and the Dog continued to trade as public houses in 2019.

Besides the inns on the main roads through the parish, there were also beer houses on the outskirts of Chipping Sodbury. One of these was probably the 'bush house' referred to in 1833 where brawling led to a 105-minute boxing match which left one of the pugilists dead.⁵⁶² In the late 19th century there was a beerhouse on Brook Street, near Chipping Sodbury, called the Red Cow, or simply the Cow.⁵⁶³ Its license was not renewed in 1935.⁵⁶⁴

Leisure and sport

Old Sodbury lay within the extensive territory of the Badminton Hunt, and the hunt regularly met at the Bell inn during the 19th century, and the Cross Hands inn during the 20th century.⁵⁶⁵ The Hunt continued to operate in 2019. Horse racing also took place on the commons of Sodbury in the middle of the 19th century,⁵⁶⁶ but they failed to be established as a regular event.

There was a cricket team at Old Sodbury by 1868,⁵⁶⁷ which was still competing in the

⁵⁵⁴*Western Daily Press*, 27 Sep. 1924, 5; 19 Dec. 1924, 8.

⁵⁵⁵GA, P300a PC 1/11.

⁵⁵⁶GA, GDR, Inventories, 1714/30.

⁵⁵⁷GA, D247/74; D2700/QB10/5/1; *Bath Chron.* 2 Dec. 1790, 2; *Glouc. J.* 28 Nov. 1796, 3.

⁵⁵⁸See above, Local Government.

⁵⁵⁹GA, D247/74.

⁵⁶⁰GA, D2700/MD2/1.

⁵⁶¹*Post Office Dir.* (1863 edn), 341.

⁵⁶²*Leamington Spa Courier*, 13 July 1833, 1.

⁵⁶³Census, 1861; 1891; 1901.

⁵⁶⁴*Western Daily Press*, 2 Feb. 1935, 6.

⁵⁶⁵*The Times*, 23 Dec. 1919, 5; 13 Jan. 1938, 5; *New York Times*, 24 Oct. 1982.

⁵⁶⁶See Chipping Sodbury, Social History.

⁵⁶⁷*Bristol Daily Post*, 17 Sep. 1868, 3.

1890s.⁵⁶⁸ Cricket was played at Colts Green common in the early 20th century.⁵⁶⁹ After 30 years of disuse the conservators agreed to allow the common to be used as a playing field in 1950, as a permanent memorial to the Festival of Britain.⁵⁷⁰

A playing field for children was established in 1938, when 8 a. opposite Home Farm was given to the village as the Annie-Margaret Wilson Memorial Playing Field.⁵⁷¹

Education

In 1818 Old Sodbury had three dame schools, which 32 children attended, and a recently established Sunday school that catered for 50 boys and 60 girls.⁵⁷² The incumbent noted that the parish lacked provision for the children of the poor, many of whom attended the Baptist school in Chipping Sodbury.⁵⁷³ In 1833 there were three day-schools in the parish, which 24 males and 18 females attended at their parents' expense; two of these schools, containing 28 children, had started in 1830. Attendance at the Sunday school, which was supported by the vicar and principal inhabitants, had dropped by 1833 to 20 boys and 16 girls.⁵⁷⁴ By 1838 about 70 children attended the Sunday school by subscription, the boys meeting in the vestry, the girls in a small room in a cottage some hundred yards from the church.⁵⁷⁵ At this date the parish also had a dame school and a Sunday school at the Baptist chapel, which was built in 1835.⁵⁷⁶

An application was made to the National Society in 1838 to build a mixed school for 50 boys and 50 girls, the children to be limited to 8 years of age, and 2*d.* a week charged for their tuition.⁵⁷⁷ The building, which had a single schoolroom, was erected on land to the south-east of the parish church donated by the lord of the manor.⁵⁷⁸ After an inspector's report of 1867 criticised the school premises, in 1869 the building was demolished and a new schoolroom built to the east of the former site on the opposite side of Church Lane on land again provided by the lord of the manor.⁵⁷⁹ The new school opened in September 1869 and an evening school began in the following month.⁵⁸⁰ The average attendance of the National School in 1870 was 56, and in 1871 was staffed by a certificated master, a pupil

⁵⁶⁸*Bristol Mercury*, 2 Sep. 1892, 3.

⁵⁶⁹GA, P300a PC 1/10, 151.

⁵⁷⁰GA, P300a PC 1/10, 151.

⁵⁷¹GA, P302 IN 4/10; *Western Daily Press*, 11 July 1938, 5.

⁵⁷²*Educ. of Poor Digest*, 1818, I, 312, 325.

⁵⁷³*Educ. of Poor Digest*, 1818, I, 312.

⁵⁷⁴*Educ. Enq. Abstract*, 326.

⁵⁷⁵TNA, ED 103/138/36, 207–8.

⁵⁷⁶TNA, ED 103/138/36, 207, 211; site visit, 2016.

⁵⁷⁷TNA, ED 103/138/36, 211.

⁵⁷⁸TNA, ED 103/138/36, 208, 211; GA, D6822/18.

⁵⁷⁹GA, D6822/18; GA, P302 SC/1.

⁵⁸⁰GA, D6822/18.

teacher and a monitor.⁵⁸¹ An inspector's report of the same year noted that some parents wished to send their children to the school in Chipping Sodbury, which was closer to their homes. Following this, in 1873 a proposal for Old Sodbury to become a contributory educational district for Chipping Sodbury was rejected, although provision was made for 12 local children to attend school in Chipping Sodbury.⁵⁸²

By 1898 numbers had been much increased by an influx of the children of the navvies who were building the local railway line.⁵⁸³ An extra teaching assistant was recruited and the contractors of the railway line erected a temporary wooden teaching room on the school's north wall; by this date the main schoolroom had been divided into two.⁵⁸⁴ Average attendance was 105 in 1900 and remained at just over 100 until 1902, after when it fluctuated between 69 and 98 until 1911. At over 100 again between 1912 and 1915, it thereafter oscillated between 64 and 91 until 1929, when it was 70.⁵⁸⁵ The windows in the main school building were replaced in 1906 and the roof of the temporary room was overhauled around the same time; the windows in the latter were replaced in 1908.⁵⁸⁶ In 1907 the school had been ordered to remove the temporary room on the grounds that it was unsuitable for teaching and blocked out the light in the main building.⁵⁸⁷ A new schoolroom was built in 1911 on the site of the temporary room and improvements were also made to the toilets and the playground; the work was funded in part from a grant from the National Society.⁵⁸⁸

In 1929 the curriculum, in addition to the three Rs, included history, geography, poetry, singing and art, although the latter was taught only to boys.⁵⁸⁹ Average attendances fluctuated between 59 and 84 between 1930 and 1938, and from 1948 children aged 13 and over attended Chipping Sodbury Church of England school.⁵⁹⁰ There were 51 children on roll in 1953 and management of the school was transferred to the Gloucester Diocesan Council of Education in 1954.⁵⁹¹ A temporary classroom was built in 1966 to accommodate pupils relocated from Tormarton.⁵⁹²

Fear of the school's closure during the 1980s prompted a successful local campaign to

⁵⁸¹TNA, ED 103/112/40, 759; GA, D6822/18.

⁵⁸²TNA, ED 21/5939.

⁵⁸³TNA, ED 21/5939.

⁵⁸⁴TNA, ED 21/5939; GA, D6822/18.

⁵⁸⁵TNA, ED 161/5849.

⁵⁸⁶TNA, ED 21/5939.

⁵⁸⁷TNA, ED 21/5939.

⁵⁸⁸TNA, ED 21/5939; GA, P302 SC/1.

⁵⁸⁹TNA, ED 21/28905.

⁵⁹⁰TNA, ED 161/5849.

⁵⁹¹TNA, ED 161/5849.

⁵⁹²G. Tily, *The Three Sodburys* (Yate, 1994), 286.

ensure its survival,⁵⁹³ and there were 95 pupils in 2015.⁵⁹⁴

Social welfare

In the year 1776 the parish expended almost £222 on poor relief, a figure which had slightly fallen in the following decade, when the average annual expenditure for the years 1783–5 was £216.⁵⁹⁵ In 1803 c.£250 was spent providing out-relief to 69 people, although half of these only received payments occasionally.⁵⁹⁶ The parish spent £496 to maintain the poor in the year 1812–3, a figure that had fallen to £385 two years later.⁵⁹⁷ Over the same period, the total number of people receiving relief fell, from 40 permanent and 30 occasional recipients of out-relief in 1812–3, to 46 permanent and 8 occasional recipients in 1814–5.⁵⁹⁸ The parish spent c.£361 on poor relief in the year 1824–5, which rose to c.£471 two years later, and fell again to c.£329 in 1828–9.⁵⁹⁹ Spending rose again in 1830–1 to c.£410, fell in the following year to c.£310, then rose to c.£520 in 1832–3, falling slightly in the following year to c.£510.⁶⁰⁰

The Chipping Sodbury Poor Law Union, formed in 1835, ordered in 1836 that aged and infirm paupers were to be allowed between 2s. and 2s. 6d. a week in relief.⁶⁰¹ In Old Sodbury 27 individuals, including two children, cost the parish a total of £3 8s. 6d. a week in relief.⁶⁰²

The Commissioners to Enquire into Charities found no charities for the poor in the parish in the early 19th century.⁶⁰³ The lord of the manor, Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley, made an annual Christmas dole of bread and beef to the poor of the parish during the 1820s and 1830s.⁶⁰⁴ In 1918 £300 was left by Nina Katherine Webley-Parry, one of the ladies of the manor, for the provision of coal and clothing for the poor of the parish each year.⁶⁰⁵ The vicar was the sole trustee. It ceased to operate in the late 20th century, its funds having been all spent.⁶⁰⁶

⁵⁹³<http://www.oldsodbury-pri.s-gloucs.sch.uk/our-community/history-about-our-school> (accessed 11 August 2016).

⁵⁹⁴<<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/109175?tab=absence-and-pupil-population>> [accessed 29 July 2016].

⁵⁹⁵*Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 176–7.

⁵⁹⁶*Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 176–7.

⁵⁹⁷*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 150–1.

⁵⁹⁸*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 150–1.

⁵⁹⁹*Poor Law Returns (1830–1)*, 68.

⁶⁰⁰*Poor Law Returns (1835)*, 67.

⁶⁰¹GA, G/SO/8a/1, 14.

⁶⁰²GA, G/SO/8a/1, 18.

⁶⁰³TNA, CHAR 2/94.

⁶⁰⁴*Bath Chron.* 3 Jan. 1822, 2; 29 Dec. 1831, 3.

⁶⁰⁵GA, GDR/V5/366/15.

⁶⁰⁶Char. Com. Website, No. 240617.

Medical services

A pair of cottages on Sodbury Common were acquired in 1896 and converted into an isolation hospital.⁶⁰⁷ Initially a single ward with two beds,⁶⁰⁸ it was expanded with the purchase of a railway contractor's wooden office in 1903.⁶⁰⁹ In 1909 the hospital provided 11 beds for patients and two for nurses, besides accommodation for a caretaker, and a common privy.⁶¹⁰ The hospital could only treat one type of infectious disease at a time.⁶¹¹ In 1927, during a smallpox outbreak at Bristol, the hospital at Sodbury was designated as the smallpox hospital for the five rural and urban district councils of Chipping Sodbury, Kingswood, Mangotsfield, Thornbury and Warmley.⁶¹² This arrangement was subsequently made permanent, when it was also decided to enlarge the hospital.⁶¹³ In 1948 the hospital, which then had 12 beds, became part of the North-East Bristol General Hospital Group.⁶¹⁴

Religious History

A church may have existed in Old Sodbury since Anglo-Saxon times, but none was recorded at Domesday. The present church was founded in the 12th century, and granted to the chapter of Worcester cathedral early in the 13th. Until the 19th century, the vicarage was often held by absentees with a connection to the chapter, which this may account for the growth of nonconformity in the parish under the influence of the Baptist church at Chipping Sodbury. The latter town was a chapelry of Old Sodbury until it was finally separated in the early 19th century, although the vicar of Sodbury retained the right of presentation to the new perpetual curacy.⁶¹⁵ During the 20th century the parish was united with neighbouring benefices as a result of declining of church attendance, and it is now part of the Sodbury Vale Benefice.

Church Origins and Parochial Organization

Although the grant of Worcester cathedral's estate at Sodbury was originally intended for men in holy orders,⁶¹⁶ it is not clear whether any church was attached to the estate, and none was recorded in 1086.⁶¹⁷ The church of Old Sodbury had been founded by 1107, in which year Richard fitz Hamo, who granted the church to Tewkesbury Abbey, died.⁶¹⁸ This

⁶⁰⁷GA, DA33/100/3, 60–5, 149.

⁶⁰⁸Sodbury District Medical Officer of Health, Annual Report, 1898, 23.

⁶⁰⁹GA, DA33/100/5, 455.

⁶¹⁰GA, DA33/100/8, 125–6.

⁶¹¹Glos. County Council Medical Officer of Health, Annual Report, 1920, 32.

⁶¹²GA, DA33/100/21, 134.

⁶¹³GA, DA33/100/21, 177–8; *Western Daily Press*, 25 Feb. 1928, 9.

⁶¹⁴*Western Daily Press*, 8 Apr. 1948, 3.

⁶¹⁵See Chipping Sodbury, Religious History.

⁶¹⁶See above, Landownership.

⁶¹⁷*Domesday*, 450.

⁶¹⁸Gordon Tily, *The Three Sodburies: An Introduction* (Yate, 1994), Appendix L.

grant was confirmed by the bishop of Worcester in 1149.⁶¹⁹

In 1221 the pope confirmed the church of Sodbury to the use of Tewkesbury Abbey on condition of providing fit persons as vicar.⁶²⁰ In 1232 the bishop of Bath and Wells settled a dispute between the bishop of Worcester and the abbot of Tewkesbury over various churches, including Old Sodbury.⁶²¹ In 1235 the bishop of Worcester assigned the church of Sodbury, which was vacant and in his gift, to the sacristan of Worcester cathedral priory for the fabric of the church of Worcester, and for providing a payment of one mark for a pittance on the bishop's anniversary.⁶²² In 1285 Thomas de Weyland quitclaimed all right in the advowson of the church of Old Sodbury to the prior of Worcester in return for being received into the benefits of all prayers in his church.⁶²³

In 1290 the sacristan of Worcester cathedral priory presented to the vicarage of Old Sodbury,⁶²⁴ and the presentation to the vicarage remained with the sacristan throughout the medieval period. Tewkesbury Abbey may not have officially surrendered its right to the church, as the royal confirmations of charters granting churches to Tewkesbury made in 1300 and 1496 did not except Sodbury from the confirmations.⁶²⁵ The original grant made by Robert fitz Hamo was also confirmed by the earl of Gloucester in 1260.⁶²⁶

At the dissolution of the priory of St Mary, Worcester, the rectory of Old Sodbury was transferred to the dean and chapter of the newly founded cathedral church of Worcester.⁶²⁷ The presentation of the next vacancy to the vicarage was granted in 1550 to two Worcester tradesmen.⁶²⁸ The Crown presented to the vicarage in 1660, during a vacancy of the see.⁶²⁹

The parish was united with Little Sodbury in 1923.⁶³⁰ The united benefice was dissolved in 1955, when Old Sodbury was instead united with Chipping Sodbury.⁶³¹

Advowson and Church Endowment

In 1277 the vicar was permitted to let the farm of the fruits of his church for five years.⁶³²

⁶¹⁹*Eng. Episc. Acta* 33: Worcester 1062–1185, no. 85.

⁶²⁰*Cal. Papal Letters*, I, 81.

⁶²¹WRO, Register of Bishop Giffard, f. 341. The primary dispute appears to have been over the church of Fairford, see *Annales Monastici*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, 5 Vols. (London, 1864–9), I, 82.

⁶²²*Eng. Episc. Acta* 13: Worcester 1218–1268, no. 35; *Annales Monastici*, IV 427; *Registrum sive Liber Irrotularius et consuetudinarius prioratus beate Mariae Wigorniensis*, ed. William Hale (London, 1865), ff. 108a, 110a.

⁶²³*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 863.

⁶²⁴WRO, Register of Bishop Giffard, f. 316.

⁶²⁵*Cal. Chart.* 1257–1300, 490; *Cal. Pat.* 1494–1509, 94.

⁶²⁶*Original Acta of St Peter's Abbey Gloucester c.1122 to 1263*, no. 190.

⁶²⁷*L&P Hen. VIII*, XVII: 1542, 31–32.

⁶²⁸GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶²⁹*Calamy Revised*, 438.

⁶³⁰*London Gaz.* 30 Dec. 1921, 10628–9.

⁶³¹*London Gaz.* 4 Feb. 1955, 701–1.

⁶³²WRO, Register of Bishop Giffard, f. 72d.

In 1291 the church of Old Sodbury was taxed at £10, and the portion of the vicar was taxed at £5 6s. 8d.⁶³³ The church received rents from burgages within Chipping Sodbury in the 14th century.⁶³⁴ The pix of the church held no goods or land in 1522.⁶³⁵ The vicarage was valued at £14 6s. 8d. in 1535.⁶³⁶ The living was reckoned to be worth £50 in 1650,⁶³⁷ and £200 in 1750.⁶³⁸

In 1809 the vicar was entitled to all tithes of the parish other than those of corn, and also excluding the tithes of the Mead and Stub Ridings and the land of the rectory estate. There was no glebe belonging to the vicarage other than the gardens of the vicarage house.⁶³⁹ After Chipping Sodbury was made a perpetual curacy in 1822, the vicar of Old Sodbury was to pay the curate there £30 a year from his tithes.⁶⁴⁰ A petition against tithes from the parishioners was presented to the House of Commons in 1831.⁶⁴¹ The living was valued at £490 in 1831, after the payment of £30 a year to Chipping Sodbury,⁶⁴² at which level the income remained in 1851.⁶⁴³ The stipend due from the vicar to the perpetual curate of Chipping Sodbury was increased to £60 in 1860.⁶⁴⁴ The vicarage was granted c.2 a. of land adjoining the vicarage house, formerly belonging to the rectorial glebe, by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1865, when the remainder of the glebe was enfranchised to the lord of the manor.⁶⁴⁵ The commuted tithes were valued at £356 in 1907, and the rent of the vicarial glebe amounted to c.£12.⁶⁴⁶ An augmentation of £30 was granted by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1908.⁶⁴⁷ In 1930 the vicar's income comprised £400 from the tithe rent charges, £86 10s. from tithe redemption annuities, £30 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and £20 from the rent of the glebe, making a total income of £536 10s. The Gloucester diocese board of finance agreed to augment the living by another £12.⁶⁴⁸

⁶³³*Tax. Eccl.* 221.

⁶³⁴GA, D2071/T2/7.

⁶³⁵*Military Surv. of Glos.* 1522, 3.

⁶³⁶*Valor Eccl.* II, 492.

⁶³⁷TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v; C.R. Elrington, 'The Survey of Church Livings in Gloucestershire, 1650', *Trans. BGAS*, 83 (1964), 97.

⁶³⁸*Bishop Benson's Survey*, 34; GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶³⁹GA, GDR/V5/278T.

⁶⁴⁰GA, P302 IN 3/1.

⁶⁴¹*Morning Chronicle*, 2 Feb. 1831, 3; *Evening Mail*, 9 Feb. 1831, 5; *Evening Standard*, 10 Feb. 1831, 1.

⁶⁴²*Rep. Com. Eccl. Revenues* (Parliamentary Papers, 1835 (67), xxii), 422–3.

⁶⁴³*Religious Census 1851*, ed. Munden, 101.

⁶⁴⁴GA, P302 IN 3/2.

⁶⁴⁵GA, GDR/V5/278T; *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 7 Sep. 1861, 3.

⁶⁴⁶GA, P302 IN 4/7.

⁶⁴⁷GA, P302 IN 3/3

⁶⁴⁸GA, P302 IN 3/3.

Vicarage House

There was a good vicarage house with two small gardens in 1809.⁶⁴⁹ The house, built of free stone and occupying three floors, was extended in 1857 with the addition of a south-east wing.⁶⁵⁰ Extensive outbuildings were also added to the premises in 1857.⁶⁵¹ In 1904 the house comprised a dining room, library, sitting room, two drawing rooms, and seven bedrooms, besides the kitchens and servants' quarters.⁶⁵²

Religious Life

Little can be learnt about religious life in medieval Old Sodbury beyond the names of some of the clergy. A perpetual vicar, Walter, was present by 1270,⁶⁵³ and one William of Worcester was vicar in the last decade of the 13th century.⁶⁵⁴ Nicholas, called Morrice, was the parish priest by 1300,⁶⁵⁵ but he may have been replaced by Henry of Sodbury by 1305.⁶⁵⁶ This might be Sir Henry Costantyn, who was the vicar in 1328,⁶⁵⁷ and probably still in 1340.⁶⁵⁸ Nicholas Adams, who was vicar from 1370 until 1387,⁶⁵⁹ had previously held the rectory of Little Sodbury.⁶⁶⁰ In 1379 the subsidy roll recorded the presence of three chaplains and a clerk in the parish, besides the vicar, at least one of whom may have served the chapel in Chipping Sodbury.⁶⁶¹ Adams exchanged the vicarage with William Brightlampton of Bristol in 1387,⁶⁶² a cleric whose career suggests he was well connected within the church hierarchy.⁶⁶³ Brightlampton exchanged Old Sodbury with Philip Scherer for another Bristol benefice in 1393.⁶⁶⁴ In the late 15th century the vicarage was held by John Taylour,⁶⁶⁵ professor of theology and provost of Oriel College, Oxford, and vice-

⁶⁴⁹GA, GDR/V5/278T.

⁶⁵⁰GA, GDR/V5/278T; NHLE, No. 1320898.

⁶⁵¹GA, GDR/V5/366/15.

⁶⁵²GA, GDR/V5/278T.

⁶⁵³WRO, Register of Geoffrey Giffard, f. 72v.

⁶⁵⁴WRO, Register of Geoffrey Giffard, f. 316; *Cal. Various Chancery Rolls 1277–1326*, 56.

⁶⁵⁵WRO, Register of Geoffrey Giffard, f. 445.

⁶⁵⁶*Register of Bishop William Ginsborough 1303 to 1307*, ed. J.W. Willis Blund (Oxford, 1907), 106, 157. Sodbury may refer to Little Sodbury.

⁶⁵⁷WRO, Register of Adam Orleton, f. 18d.

⁶⁵⁸WRO, Register of Wulstan de Bransford, f. 18v, where the priest is only referred to as 'Sir Henry'.

⁶⁵⁹WRO, Register of William of Lynn, f. 8d.

⁶⁶⁰See Little Sodbury, Religious Life.

⁶⁶¹TNA, E 179/58/5, m. 3.

⁶⁶²*A Calendar of the Register of Henry Wakefield, Bishop of Worcester 1375–95*, ed. Warwick Paul Marett, Worcestershire Historical Society, n.s. VII (1972), 56.

⁶⁶³TNA, C 131/42/6; C 131/208/33; C 241/180/93, 98. Brightlampton was later rector of St Thomas the Apostle, London: *Cal. Pat. Henry V Vol II*, 119.

⁶⁶⁴*Register of Henry Wakefield*, 125.

⁶⁶⁵WRO, Register of Thomas Pelton, f. 207v.

chancellor of the university in 1486–7.⁶⁶⁶

Sir Thomas Sergeant was the vicar by 1541.⁶⁶⁷ Sergeant, whose will reveals a certain degree of wealth and luxury, was literate and bequeathed a number of books at his death in 1546.⁶⁶⁸ The Benedictine Humphrey Webley, a prebendary at Worcester who already held the vicarage of Crophorne (Worcs.), was presented to Old Sodbury in 1546,⁶⁶⁹ but he was replaced by William Ramsey in the following year.⁶⁷⁰ Ramsey was deprived in 1554 for being married,⁶⁷¹ and awarded a pension out of the stipend of his successor, John Ball.⁶⁷² Ramsey was restored to the parish in 1559, but died later in the same year.⁶⁷³ Ball was apparently reinstated as vicar following Ramsey's death, and in 1563 the churchwardens objected that he held the parish with two others,⁶⁷⁴ including the neighbouring parish of Dodington.⁶⁷⁵ In the same year the churchwardens presented one of the parishioners for not having received the Communion for over a year.⁶⁷⁶ Thomas Howells alias Powell was presented to the vicarage in 1568, following the death of Ball.⁶⁷⁷ Two parishioners were presented for not receiving Communion in 1569. As they were found to attend the chapel of Chipping Sodbury instead, the case was dismissed.⁶⁷⁸

Marmaduke Chapman held the vicarage from 1601 until his death in 1645, for most of that time also serving the cure at Didmarton.⁶⁷⁹ Roger Horton was presented for not paying tithes and not receiving the Communion in 1617.⁶⁸⁰ Francis Doughty, whose religious views drew him into conflict with the Laudian authorities in the 1630s,⁶⁸¹ held Hampstead Farm⁶⁸² and was curate at the nearby chapel of Rangeworthy, in Thornbury

⁶⁶⁶*Epistolae Academicæ Oxon.* ed. Henry Anstey (Oxford, 1898), II, 408, 467–9; *The Historical Register of Oxford University* (Oxford, 1900), 23, 535.

⁶⁶⁷GA, Hockaday Abs.; *The Ledger of John Smythe, 1538–50*, ed. Jean Vanes, Bristol Record Society, XXVIII (1975), 172–3.

⁶⁶⁸GA, GDR, Wills, 1545/331.

⁶⁶⁹*Alumni Oxon. 1500–1714*, Webley, Humphrey; *Fasti Eccles. 1541–1857*, VII, 130.

⁶⁷⁰GA, GDR/D1; *CCED*, No. 161822.

⁶⁷¹G. Baskerville, 'Elections to Convocation in the Diocese of Gloucester under Bishop Hooper', *English Historical Review*, LXIV (1929), 24.

⁶⁷²GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶⁷³Baskerville, 'Elections to Convocation', 24.

⁶⁷⁴GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶⁷⁵*CCED*, No. 130523.

⁶⁷⁶GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶⁷⁷GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶⁷⁸GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁶⁷⁹*CCED*, 129991; *Alumni Cantab.*

⁶⁸⁰TNA, STAC 8/172/8.

⁶⁸¹*CSPD*, 1635–6, 471, 479, 487, 505; H.A. Parker, 'The Revd Francis Doughty', *Publications of the Colonial Historical Society*, X (1907), 262–4.

⁶⁸²See above, Land Ownership.

parish, as well as at Boxwell and Leighterton.⁶⁸³ Following the death of Chapman in 1645, Edward Potter was presented to the vicarage, presumably the same man who had also held the benefices of Abenhall and Longhope since the 1620s.⁶⁸⁴

Potter was presumably deprived as a pluralist, as William Sheene was admitted to the vicarage in 1646.⁶⁸⁵ Sheene signed the *Gloucestershire Ministers' Testimony* in 1648,⁶⁸⁶ and was described as a preaching minister in 1650.⁶⁸⁷ The Commonwealth church surveyors recommended that the parish be united with Little Sodbury, but this was not done.⁶⁸⁸ Sheene conformed at the Restoration and was instituted to the vicarage by the Crown in 1660,⁶⁸⁹ but Potter was restored to the benefice by 1662,⁶⁹⁰ where he remained until his death in 1676.⁶⁹¹ Potter was censured for contumacy in 1669.⁶⁹²

Potter's successor was John North, who would hold the vicarage until 1722. From the late 17th century the Eucharist was celebrated three times a year, at Easter, Whitsun and Christmas.⁶⁹³ During the early 1680s the church records reveal a ceremonial turn and increased conflict with Dissenters, coinciding with the reign of Royalist and future nonjuring Bishop Robert Frampton.⁶⁹⁴ In 1681–2 the parish paid for an order against sectaries, and in 1682–3 for a warrant to disturb meetings. In the same year, the churchwardens were presented concerning who received the sacrament at Easter, and in the following two years they procured orders compelling attendance and punishing irreverent behaviour in church. In 1683–4 the communion table was railed in. A silk-fringed feather cushion and cloth were made for the pulpit in 1684–5, and the canopy was repaired in the following year. In 1684–5 the anniversary of the Restoration was celebrated, and in the following year the defeat of Monmouth's Rebellion, the anniversary of the execution of Charles I, and the birthday of James II were all observed. Despite the orders concerning attendance at the church earlier in the decade, there were said to be no nonconformists living in the parish in 1686.⁶⁹⁵ In 1685–6 the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, Creed, and other verses were painted on the walls, as were the Royal Arms. A new Book of Canons was acquired in 1686–7. For two decades after 1689 there was a marked

⁶⁸³CCED, 149667; J. Bell, *Empire, Religion and Revolution in Early Virginia, 1607–1786* (Basingstoke, 2013), 90.

⁶⁸⁴*Walker Revised*, ed. A.G. Matthews (Oxford, 1948), 176; CCED, Nos. 82781 and 132750.

⁶⁸⁵*Calamy Revised*, ed. A.G. Matthews (Oxford, 1934), 438.

⁶⁸⁶*Glos. Ministers' Testimony* (London, 1648); *Glos. N&Q*, I, 329–31.

⁶⁸⁷TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v; Elrington, 'Survey of Church Livings', 97.

⁶⁸⁸TNA, C 94/1, f. 30v; Elrington, 'Survey of Church Livings', 97.

⁶⁸⁹*Calamy Revised*, 438.

⁶⁹⁰CCED, No. 82781;

⁶⁹¹GA, GDR/V1/221; *Walker Revised*, 176.

⁶⁹²GA, GDR/B4/3/2258.

⁶⁹³GA, P302 CW 2/1.

⁶⁹⁴ODNB, 'Frampton, Robert (bap. 1622, d. 1708)'.

⁶⁹⁵Compton Census, ed. Whiteman, 545.

decrease in the amount spent on bread and wine for the three Communion celebrated each year, suggesting reduction in the numbers attending. In 1693–4 the Royal Arms were altered, and in the following year the bells were rung to mark the death of Mary II. Prayers were read for Queen Anne and for Princess Sophia in 1702. A new seat was set up in the chancel in 1704–5.

From the 18th century the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral frequently presented the holders of Cathedral offices to the vicarage and the vicarage was often held with other benefices, so that it is probable that the incumbents were frequently absent. William Hughes, a minor canon of Worcester, was presented to in 1722.⁶⁹⁶ He held the vicarage until his death in 1768, in plurality with the neighbouring benefice of Dodington from 1750.⁶⁹⁷ Hughes was succeeded briefly by William Harley, the fifth son of the Earl of Oxford, who already held the rectory of Everley (Wilts.) and a prebend in Worcester cathedral, but he died in 1769.⁶⁹⁸ The next incumbent was Philip Duval, another prebend and pluralist who held the rectory of Broadwas (Worcs.).⁶⁹⁹ Well-connected at court, Duval resigned his prebend in 1772 to take up a canonry of Windsor,⁷⁰⁰ and he resigned the vicarage in 1786.⁷⁰¹

Charles Neve, presented to the vicarage in 1795, was the son of a prebend of Worcester, who from 1808 also held the vicarage of White Ladies Aston (Worcs.).⁷⁰² His wife Sarah, a prominent Catholic and notable benefactor to her faith within the county, founded the Catholic church in Chipping Sodbury in 1838.⁷⁰³ During the later years of his life Neve was permitted to reside in Bath for his health,⁷⁰⁴ where he died in 1828.⁷⁰⁵ The parish was served by curates, one of whom, the Irishman William Samuel Birch, served under three successive vicars.⁷⁰⁶ Appointed curate by Neve in 1827, with a salary of £70, he was retained by Neve's successor, John Davison, with an increased salary of £130. At the time of his institution Davison held prebends in both St Paul's Cathedral and Worcester, and also the rectory of Upton upon Severn (Worcs.).⁷⁰⁷ Davison resigned the vicarage after two

⁶⁹⁶ODNB, *sub.* 'Hughes, William (1718/19–98), writer on music and Church of England clergyman'; CCED, 154948.

⁶⁹⁷CCED, 154948.

⁶⁹⁸CCED, 30365.

⁶⁹⁹CCED, 73090.

⁷⁰⁰*Fasti Eccles.* 1541–1857, VII, 120.

⁷⁰¹Although records in the Diocesan Archives give his death as the reason for the vacancy in 1786, he did not die until 1808.

⁷⁰²CCED, No. 37036; *Gent. Mag.* XCVIII: 2 (Nov. 1828), 474; *Fasti Eccles.* 1541–1857, VII, 126.

⁷⁰³See Chipping Sodbury, Religious History.

⁷⁰⁴GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁷⁰⁵*Gent. Mag.* XCVIII: 2 (Nov. 1828), 474.

⁷⁰⁶CCED, No. 90987.

⁷⁰⁷CCED, No. 55238; *Fasti Eccles.* I, 58; VII, 124.

years and was succeeded by Godfrey Faussett, another prebend of Worcester,⁷⁰⁸ who resigned less than two years later.⁷⁰⁹ Thomas John Blofeld held the vicarage for four years,⁷¹⁰ and was replaced by Robert Napier Raikes, the son of the promoter of Sunday schools, who was presented to the vicarages of both Old Sodbury and Longhope in 1837.⁷¹¹ Raikes chose to reside in the later,⁷¹² employing a succession of curates to serve the cure in Old Sodbury until his death in 1851.⁷¹³

The absenteeism of the incumbents, combined with the proximity to chapels in Chipping Sodbury, contributed to the growth of the Baptists in Old Sodbury. Houses within the parish were licensed for worship by the Baptists in 1807, 1819 and 1827. A barn was converted for use as a chapel in 1835,⁷¹⁴ although it was not registered as a chapel until 1844.⁷¹⁵ The chapel could accommodate 150 people, and in 1851 there were two services each Sunday, with a total average congregation of 130.⁷¹⁶ The chapel was a branch of the chapel at Chipping Sodbury and served by ministers from there.⁷¹⁷

Religious life since 1851

Allen Wheeler, vicar from 1851, was a minor canon at Worcester, and had served for the previous 30 years as precentor of the Cathedral. He also held the rectory of Broadwas (Worcs.).⁷¹⁸ Already elderly by the time of his presentation, he was permitted to absent himself from the parish for the sake of his health,⁷¹⁹ and the cure was again served by curates. In 1851 there were two services every Sunday, averaging a total attendance of approximately 260, including 50 Sunday school children who attended both services.⁷²⁰ The church at this time could accommodate approximately 400, with 120 free sittings, but it was dilapidated. Wheeler died in 1855, and his successor for almost half a century was Robert Seymour Nash. In 1858 the church underwent a major project of restoration, supported in part by a grant from the Incorporated Church Building Society, in which all but the medieval tower was rebuilt.⁷²¹ While the church was closed services were

⁷⁰⁸*Fasti Eccles.* VII, 126.

⁷⁰⁹GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁷¹⁰CCED, No. 111556; GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁷¹¹GA, Hockaday Abs.; *Alumni Oxon.* 1714–1886, III, 1171.

⁷¹²VCH *Glos.* XII, 253.

⁷¹³GA, Hockaday Abs.; *Alumni Oxon.* 1714–1886, III, 1171.

⁷¹⁴*Western Daily Press*, 26 June 1885, 6; *Religious Census 1851*, ed. Munden, 101.

⁷¹⁵*Dissenters' Meeting-House Certificates and Registrations for Bristol and Gloucestershire 1672–1852*, ed. Anthea Jones, Gloucestershire Record Society, 32 (2018), 153–4.

⁷¹⁶*Religious Census 1851*, ed. Munden, 101.

⁷¹⁷GA, D6717.

⁷¹⁸*Alumni Oxon.* 1714–1886, IV, 1533.

⁷¹⁹GA, Hockaday Abs.

⁷²⁰*Religious Census 1851*, ed. Munden, 101.

⁷²¹See below, Church Architecture.

conducted in the nearby National schoolroom.⁷²² During Nash's incumbency music played an important role in services in the parish. An organ was installed in 1858, and there was also a choir, accompanied by a brass band.⁷²³ A choral association centred on Old Sodbury and incorporating the other parishes of the deanery of Hawkesbury was established in 1864, when a choral festival was organised.⁷²⁴ This became an annual event, and the Sodbury association inspired the founding of others elsewhere in the diocese.⁷²⁵ A new organ was installed in 1875.⁷²⁶

The strength of the General Baptists in Old Sodbury apparently declined after the middle of the century, and the chapel there was subsequently used by Plymouth Brethren and later by Particular Baptists.⁷²⁷ A mission was re-established in the village by the General Baptist congregation at Chipping Sodbury, and worship at the separate chapel of Old Sodbury was resumed c.1879.⁷²⁸ In 1884 the congregation there numbered 33, and the chapel maintained the mission stations at Little Sodbury and Codrington which had previously been branches of the chapel at Chipping Sodbury.⁷²⁹ Following the departure of the popular pastor, A. J. Parker, in 1885,⁷³⁰ the chapel at Old Sodbury was 'grouped' with the chapels of Chipping Sodbury and Yate, to be served by A. Lemon, the pastor at Chipping Sodbury.⁷³¹

In 1907 the church could accommodate 270 people, and 73 people took Communion at Easter in that year. Services were held daily, and the incumbent was assisted by eight readers, an organist, a paid 'blower', and a choir of 25.⁷³² A lay reader was also employed in the church in 1948.⁷³³ In 1956 the new vicar was said to have greatly increased the congregation at the parish church after enthusiastically visiting every household in the parish.⁷³⁴ By contrast, the Baptist community in Old Sodbury struggled to maintain itself, and the numbers attending the chapel declined during the later 20th century. By 1972 the congregation comprised the pastor and his wife, and two elderly couples.⁷³⁵ The departure in that year of the pastor left the congregation in a precarious position, and in 1973 it was

⁷²²GA, P302 CW 3/2.

⁷²³*Western Daily Press*, 31 July 1869, 2.

⁷²⁴*Bristol Time and Mirror*, 17 Sep. 1864, 5.

⁷²⁵*Wilts. and Glos. Standard*, 23 Jan. 1869, 6.

⁷²⁶GA, GDR/V5/278T.

⁷²⁷*Western Daily Press*, 26 June 1885, 6.

⁷²⁸*Western Daily Press*, 5 June 1879, 3.

⁷²⁹*Western Daily Press*, 5 June 1884, 7; 26 Sep. 1884, 3; *Bristol Mercury*, 4 Sep. 1884, 6.

⁷³⁰*Western Daily Press*, 26 June 1885, 6.

⁷³¹*Bristol Mercury*, 18 June 1886, 3.

⁷³²GA, P302 IN 4/7.

⁷³³GA, GDR/V5/366/15.

⁷³⁴BA, 41360/7/2.

⁷³⁵BA, 41360/7/2.

decided to dissolve the congregation and close the chapel.⁷³⁶ The disused chapel was converted into a private house in 1973 and sold in the following year.⁷³⁷

The congregation at the parish church has declined over the 20th century. In 2001 78% of the village defined themselves as Christian (of any denomination), a figure which fell to 67% ten years later.⁷³⁸ Over the ten-year period 2006–15 the usual Sunday attendance fluctuated between 25 and 36 people.⁷³⁹ The largest attendance in 2011 was at Christmas, when 106 people (approximately one-sixth of the village population) attended the service, more than twice the number (48) who had attended on Easter Day that year.⁷⁴⁰ In 2018 there was a morning service on most Sundays in the month, although Communion was only celebrated twice a month.⁷⁴¹

Church Architecture

The church of St John the Baptist dates from the 12th century, although it has been much altered over the centuries, and was largely rebuilt in the middle of the 19th century.⁷⁴² The church comprises an Early English three-stage tower of the 13th century at the west end, a nave with north and south aisles, north and south transepts, and a chancel. The church, built of the rubble stone typical of the area, preserves Late Norman features such as the south doorway with chevron mouldings, and two small windows at the western ends of the aisles. In 1858 the parish acquired a faculty for the restoration of the church, citing its dilapidation and inadequate accommodation.⁷⁴³ Although the tower was left largely untouched, much of the rest of the church was taken down and rebuilt by T. H. Wyatt *c.* 1858.⁷⁴⁴ Clock dials were added to the tower in celebration of Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887.

Inside, the chancel arch dates from the 13th century, and east end of the nave and the chancel reveal 14th-century details, but much of the interior dates from the 19th-century restoration. The nave is separated from the aisles by arcades of three bays, resting on round piers with waterleaf capitals. A restored piscina was sited in the north transept. A gallery, added at the west end in 1778, the pews, pulpit, and reading desk were all

⁷³⁶BA, 41360/7/2.

⁷³⁷BA, 41360/7/2.

⁷³⁸Census, 2001; 2011.

⁷³⁹2016 Statistics for Mission, Diocese of Gloucester, <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Wotton_160170_Old-Sodbury-St-John-the-Baptist.pdf> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

⁷⁴⁰2011 Parish Spotlights: Old Sodbury, Diocese of Gloucester, <<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Wotton-160170-Old-Sodbury-St-John-the-Baptist.pdf>> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

⁷⁴¹'St John's Old Sodbury', Sodbury Vale Benefice, <<http://svbcofe.org.uk/os/church-services>> [accessed 29 Sep. 2018].

⁷⁴²NHLE, No. 1320899; Verey and Brooks, *Glos.* I, 534–5.

⁷⁴³GA, P302 CW 3/1–2; P302 VE 2/2.

⁷⁴⁴GA, P302 CW 3/4.

replaced, with additional seating installed in the transepts.⁷⁴⁵ A grant of £80 was made by the Incorporated Church Building society towards the reseating of the church, under the terms of which 236 seats, all but the front seven pews of the nave, were made free.⁷⁴⁶ The former vestry room was demolished during the restoration of the church, and subsequently the room at the base of the tower was used as a vestry.⁷⁴⁷

The octagonal font is Perpendicular, but the stone pulpit dates from Wyatt's restoration, and the reredos from the late 19th century.⁷⁴⁸ The north transept contains two tomb recesses, containing military effigies in stone and wood dating from the late 13th or early 14th centuries. Numerous baroque tablets of the 17th and 18th centuries commemorate former parishioners, including the vicar William Sheen (d. 1676), and the lord of the manor Edward Stephens (d. 1728). The stained-glass window date from between the restoration in 1858 and the early 20th century, and include a monument to Canon Nash (d. 1905),⁷⁴⁹ the vicar under whom the Restoration was undertaken.

The church had four bells until 1764, when they were replaced by one large one. It is inscribed 'I to the Church the living call & to the grave do summon all.'⁷⁵⁰ The church goods in 1904 comprised a silver chalice bearing the date 1757, and a cup, paten and flagon, all dated 1848.⁷⁵¹ These last three were presumably the items stolen in 1975, and replaced with a new silver cup and paten.⁷⁵²

A number of good 18th-century chest tombs stand in the churchyard, which stands on a plateau giving excellent views across the valley below towards the Severn. By the early 20th century the churchyard was becoming full, and a piece of land to the south of it was granted by the ladies of the manor for its extension in 1906, almost doubling its size.⁷⁵³ A lychgate erected at the entrance to the graveyard in 1920 serves as a memorial to those who died in World War One.⁷⁵⁴

Local Government

Manorial Government

In the 13th century the Hundred Roll jurors reported that Thomas de Weylaund claimed to hold return of writs, assize of bread and beer, and the right to have a pillory and

⁷⁴⁵GA, P302 CW 3/1.

⁷⁴⁶Church of England Record Centre, ICBS05155.

⁷⁴⁷GA, P302 CW 3/4.

⁷⁴⁸GA, P302 CW 3/1.

⁷⁴⁹GA, P302 CW 3/1.

⁷⁵⁰GA, GDR/V5/278T.

⁷⁵¹GA, GDR/V5/278T. J.T. Evans, *Church Plate of Glos.* (Bristol, 1906), 188.

⁷⁵²GA, P302 SP 1.

⁷⁵³GA, P302 VE 2/2.

⁷⁵⁴GA, P302 MI 7; GDR/V5/366/15.

tumbrel.⁷⁵⁵ There may also have been a prison and gallows at Old Sodbury, as the jurors reported the flight of a thief from the prison of Sodbury who was returned to Old Sodbury for hanging.⁷⁵⁶

The free tenants owed suit at the manor court.⁷⁵⁷ The pleas and perquisites of the manor and borough were each worth 20s. in the late 13th century.⁷⁵⁸ The view of frankpledge in 1295–6 rendered 6s. 8d.⁷⁵⁹ A customary payment due at four yearly terms called *Notepeny* rendered £5 12s. 2d. in 1295–6.⁷⁶⁰ The profit from *Notepeny* was much less in 1327/8, suggesting a substantial reduction in population levels.⁷⁶¹ In 1327/8 the court was valued at 26s. 6d. over a thirty-week period from October to June.⁷⁶² An extent from 1487–9 suggests that the manor court was then held twice a year.⁷⁶³

The bailiff of Old Sodbury manor in 1398/9 was Robert Stevenes.⁷⁶⁴ The steward of the lordships of Sodbury between 1478 and 1485 was Sir Robert Poyntz.⁷⁶⁵ His tenure was temporarily interrupted in 1483 by the appointment of Nicholas Baker alias Spycer.⁷⁶⁶

There are no extant records of the manorial court from the 16th and 17th centuries. Of the smaller estates in the parish, Cottelscombe certainly functioned as a manor, with some of its tenants holding property by customary tenure.⁷⁶⁷ In the 18th century a court leet and view of frankpledge for the manor of Old Sodbury was held each year. All landowners and residents owed suit at the court leet, while everyone except freeholders owed suit at the view of frankpledge.⁷⁶⁸ At that time the business was limited to the admission and surrender of tenants, the presentment of encroachments and nuisances, the recording of bylaws, and the appointment of officers.⁷⁶⁹ In the early years of the 18th century the court appointed a tithing man, who collected the common fine due to the lord, worth 6s. 7d.⁷⁷⁰ The stocks and the whipping post were out of repair in 1711, and still in 1712.⁷⁷¹ There was

⁷⁵⁵*Rot. Hund.* 175b.

⁷⁵⁶*Rot. Hund.* 177b.

⁷⁵⁷*Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, no. 537.

⁷⁵⁸TNA, SC 11/236; TNA C 133/77/3 (16).

⁷⁵⁹TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

⁷⁶⁰TNA, C 133/77/3 (16).

⁷⁶¹TNA, E 199/13/2.

⁷⁶²TNA, E 199/13/2.

⁷⁶³TNA, DL 29/638/10362.

⁷⁶⁴TNA, SC 6/1122/13.

⁷⁶⁵*Cal. Pat. 1477–1485*, 121; *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII* (2 vols. RS, 1873–7), I, 58.

⁷⁶⁶*Cal. Pat. 1477–1485*, 404–5.

⁷⁶⁷GA, D3365/13.

⁷⁶⁸GA, D871/M4; D247/74.

⁷⁶⁹GA, D247/74.

⁷⁷⁰GA, D871/M4, D247/74, 33.

⁷⁷¹GA, D871/M4.

no ducking stool in the parish in 1718,⁷⁷² but there was a whipping post in 1722.⁷⁷³

By 1770 the court leet appointed a constable each year, and the homage jury appointed a hayward, and also two sheep tellers from 1776.⁷⁷⁴ The steward and bailiff of the manor was usually the same as those appointed for the manor of Chipping Sodbury.⁷⁷⁵

The courts met at the Dog inn between 1770 and 1776, and subsequently at the Cross Hands inn.⁷⁷⁶ The court leet and court baron met in 1842, possibly after having been in abeyance for a long period, at the Plough inn.⁷⁷⁷ The court and view continued to meet, from 1849 once more at the Cross Hands inn, until the start of the 20th century. Each year they appointed one constable and two haywards, one for Horwood common and the other for the remainder of the parish.⁷⁷⁸ In 1850 they presented that stocks should be erected 'for the securing idle and disorderly persons and drunkards', and in 1856 that the pound was out of repair.

Parochial Government

Two churchwardens served Old Sodbury parish by 1563.⁷⁷⁹ By the late 17th century the Churchwardens apparently served according to house-row.⁷⁸⁰ A vestry probably existed by then, recording the appointments of churchwardens and supervisors of the highways.⁷⁸¹

There were two overseers in 1755.⁷⁸² In the three years ending at Easter 1785 an average of c.£230 was raised by the parish rates, which rose to c.£250 in 1785–6.⁷⁸³ Expenditure on the administration of the poor, including lawsuits and expenses, amounted to an average of c.£216 in the three years 1782–5, rising to c.£222 in the year ending Easter 1786.⁷⁸⁴ In 1802–3 £271 was spent on the administration of the poor from a total expenditure of £299, £5 less than was raised by the rates in that year.⁷⁸⁵ The parish raised £454 in the year 1812–3, when total spending exceeded revenues by more than £100, of which c.£516 was spent on the administration of poor relief and the remainder on expenses such as church rates,

⁷⁷²GA, D871/M4.

⁷⁷³GA, P302 CW 2/1.

⁷⁷⁴GA, D247/74.

⁷⁷⁵GA, D247/74.

⁷⁷⁶GA, D247/74.

⁷⁷⁷*Glos. Chron.* 22 Oct. 1842, 3.

⁷⁷⁸GA, D2700/MD2/1.

⁷⁷⁹GA, Hockaday Abs. cccxliii.

⁷⁸⁰GA, P302 CW 2/1.

⁷⁸¹GA, P302 CW 2/1.

⁷⁸²GA, Q/SR/1755/D.

⁷⁸³*Poor Law Abstract*, 1804, 176–7.

⁷⁸⁴*Poor Law Abstract*, 1804, 176–7.

⁷⁸⁵*Poor Law Abstract*, 1804, 176–7.

highway rates, and county rates.⁷⁸⁶ In the following year the total raised from the parish rates rose to £704, when expenditure fell to £571, including £492 for poor relief. Although spending on poor relief fell to £385 in 1814–15, the total expenditure of £499 exceeded revenues by £51.⁷⁸⁷ Between Easter 1824 and Easter 1834 annual expenditure on the relief of the poor varied between c.£309 and c.£520.⁷⁸⁸ The parish was included within the Poor Law Union of Chipping Sodbury after its formation in 1835,⁷⁸⁹ causing expenditure on poor relief to fall from £302 in 1834–5 to £271 in 1835–6.⁷⁹⁰ Despite this, total expenditure by the parish in the same period rose from £397 to £463.⁷⁹¹ An assistant overseer was appointed in 1850, with a salary of £8.⁷⁹²

In the late 17th century two men were chosen each year to serve as supervisors of the highways. The two men chosen in 1680 did not serve, as the highways were instead repaired by the means of a special rate, collected and disbursed by three other men chosen for that purpose.⁷⁹³ An assistant surveyor was appointed in 1856.⁷⁹⁴ The parish was included in the Chipping Sodbury Highway Board when it was formed in 1863,⁷⁹⁵ and a way-warden was appointed for the parish.⁷⁹⁶ Up until that point, the main routes through the parish had been administered by the Sodbury turnpike trust,⁷⁹⁷ and the vestry declared that they would prefer the trust to be continued in order to keep down the rates.⁷⁹⁸

During the 19th century the parish was administered by a vestry, records for which are extant from 1838. It largely concerned itself with the nomination of parochial officers, raising the parish rates, maintaining the roads, and repairing the church.⁷⁹⁹ The parish was included in the Chipping Sodbury rural sanitary authority from 1873, which later became the rural district council of the same name.⁸⁰⁰

From 1894

In 1894 a parish council was inaugurated for Old Sodbury, taking on many of the former

⁷⁸⁶*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 150–1.

⁷⁸⁷*Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 150–1.

⁷⁸⁸*Poor Law Returns, 1825–9*, 68; *1830–4*, 67. See above, Social History.

⁷⁸⁹GA, G/SO/8a/1.

⁷⁹⁰*Poor Law Com. 2nd Rep. App. E*, 122–3.

⁷⁹¹*Poor Law Com. 2nd Rep. App. E*, 122–3.

⁷⁹²GA, P302 VE 2/1, 12 Apr. 1850.

⁷⁹³GA, P302 CW 2/1.

⁷⁹⁴GA, P302 VE 2/2, 25 Mar. 1856.

⁷⁹⁵GA, P302 VE 2/2, 8 Oct. 1862; Q/AH/2.

⁷⁹⁶GA, P302 VE 2/2, 25 Mar. 1867.

⁷⁹⁷See above, Communications.

⁷⁹⁸GA, P302 VE 2/2, 4 Mar. 1866.

⁷⁹⁹GA, P302/VE 2/1–2.

⁸⁰⁰GA, DA33/100/1.

functions of the vestry.⁸⁰¹ Seven councillors were elected, including the vicar and the Baptist minister, one of the largest farmers in the parish, a brewer, a quarryman, and two labourers.⁸⁰² The vicar, Canon Nash, was the first chairman.⁸⁰³ Between 1897 and 1910 there were frequently only seven nominees for the council, and consequently no elections were held in many years.⁸⁰⁴ One of the council's earliest acts was to adopt the Lighting & Watch Act, and five gas lamps funded by a public rate were installed in the village.⁸⁰⁵ The council took over from the vestry the nomination of the overseers and the parish school manager.⁸⁰⁶ Following the introduction of new regulations, the parish council were to appoint three of the 12 conservators who were to manage the commons in the three Sodburys.⁸⁰⁷

After the First World War, the council was concerned with the state of housing and the roads in the parish. In 1921 it was decided to employ the unemployed on road-widening schemes in the parish.⁸⁰⁸ The council objected to plans to transfer much of the west of the parish into Chipping Sodbury parish, first in 1923,⁸⁰⁹ and again in 1938.⁸¹⁰ An alternative proposal to amalgamate the two parishes into one new parish of Sodbury was agreed, on condition that representation of the two former parishes be equal on the new parish council.⁸¹¹ Delayed by the Second World War, the new parish was created by an order of 1945, and the Old Sodbury parish council met for the last time in March 1946.⁸¹²

Utilities

The water mains were extended from Chipping Sodbury to Old Sodbury and Little Sodbury *c.*1898.⁸¹³ A pumping station was constructed in the village to lift water onto the Cotswold plateau. A small reservoir, presumably a water tower, was also built on a field to the west of Lyegrove House.⁸¹⁴

Justice

The Cross Hands inn gave its name to one of the county's petty sessional divisions from

⁸⁰¹GA, P300a PC 1/7.

⁸⁰²*Bristol Mercury*, 6 Dec. 1894, 6.

⁸⁰³GA, P300a PC 1/7, 25 Mar. 1895.

⁸⁰⁴GA, P300a PC 1/7.

⁸⁰⁵GA, P300a PC 1/7, 4 Dec. 1895.

⁸⁰⁶GA, P300a PC 1/7–8.

⁸⁰⁷GA, P300a PC 32/1.

⁸⁰⁸GA, P300a PC 1/8, 144.

⁸⁰⁹GA, P300a PC 1/8, 160.

⁸¹⁰GA, P300a PC 1/9, 94.

⁸¹¹GA, P300a PC 1/9, 101–2.

⁸¹²GA, P300a PC 1/9, 151–2.

⁸¹³Sodbury District Medical Officer of Health, Annual Report, 1898, 38.

⁸¹⁴OS Map, 6", Glos. LXIX.SE (1903 edn).

the early 18th century.⁸¹⁵ The court continued to be held at the inn until the late 19th century.⁸¹⁶ The sessions moved to the new petty sessional court built adjoining Chipping Sodbury police station c.1892.⁸¹⁷ Although listed as having a police station in 1902,⁸¹⁸ by 1914 Old Sodbury appears to have been served by the Chipping Sodbury police station.⁸¹⁹

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⁸¹⁵GA, D1401.

⁸¹⁶*Bristol Mercury*, 10 Oct. 1890, 8.

⁸¹⁷*Bristol Mercury*, 19 Oct. 1892, 6.

⁸¹⁸Thomas, *Glos. Constabulary*, 35.

⁸¹⁹*Kelly's* 1914, 114, 306-7.