

# BAUNTON

BAUNTON is a small parish straddling the Churn valley 3 km north of Cirencester.<sup>1</sup> Until 1935, when it gained a portion of Stratton parish,<sup>2</sup> it lay entirely east of the river Churn, which formed its western boundary with Stratton and Bagendon. Its eastern boundary follows the Roman Fosse Way, marching with Preston, Wiggold in Cirencester, and Ampney Crucis. The northern boundary with North Cerney, apart from a short stretch of a minor road, the Welsh Way, takes an irregular course following no natural features. Although a boundary with North Cerney had been established by 852, it apparently then took a straight course between the Fosse Way and Perrott's Brook,<sup>3</sup> so the present irregularities reflect later field boundaries. The southern boundary, with Cirencester, is also irregular in places, but turns north to follow a stretch of the Whiteway, and defines what was probably the former northern limit of Hare Bushes. The land gained from Stratton in 1935 extended the civil parish westward across the Churn as far as the Roman Ermin Street, north to a dry valley descending from Peewits Hill, and south to Baunton Lane. The parish comprised 1,340 a. in 1849, 695 ha in 2019. This account relates to the ancient parish as it existed before 1935, and to the modern civil parish for its history subsequent to that date.

## LANDSCAPE

Baunton village is ranged along a lane which follows the course of the Churn above its floodplain at around 120-130 m. above Ordnance Datum.<sup>4</sup> Away from the river valley the parish presents an undulating Cotswold landscape slightly lower-lying towards the south, at 130-140 m., but rising to 175 m at its northern tip. The bedrock geology is White Limestone of the Great Oolite group, overlain in the centre of the parish by outcrops of Forest Marble on which compartments of mixed woodland thrive. The Oolitic Limestone is dramatically exposed on either side of the A417 road where it crosses the parish. The river has cut into older strata, so that Fuller's Earth and limestones of the Taynton and Hampen formations outcrop along the valley sides in the area of Baunton village. In the valley itself are superficial deposits of alluvium and gravels. Most of the higher ground of the parish drains not into the Churn, but by streams which trend south and south-eastwards into headwaters of the Ampney Brook, like the Churn a tributary of the Thames.

Most land in the parish in 2019 was under arable cultivation, as it had been c.1770 and in the 1840s.<sup>5</sup> By the latter date sheep downland in the north of the parish had largely been converted to arable, and extensive areas of woodland planted, most of which survived in 2019. This gives the parish a well wooded appearance, especially in the south towards Hare Bushes, and on the former downland, where 50 a. previously devoted to sainfoin was planted with coppice woodland (The Sisters) after c.1800.<sup>6</sup> Meadows, including former water meadows, fringe the Churn along the valley bottom, separated from the large arable fields by coppice plantations on the slopes, which in places mask former quarries. Since 1997 the valley has been dominated by the sight and sounds of the A417 viaduct, and the traffic using it.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This account was written in 2019-21. It draws on research by Dr Beth Hartland (medieval period) and Dr Katy Layton-Jones (modern period).

<sup>2</sup> Youngs, *Admin. Units*, 164, 187.

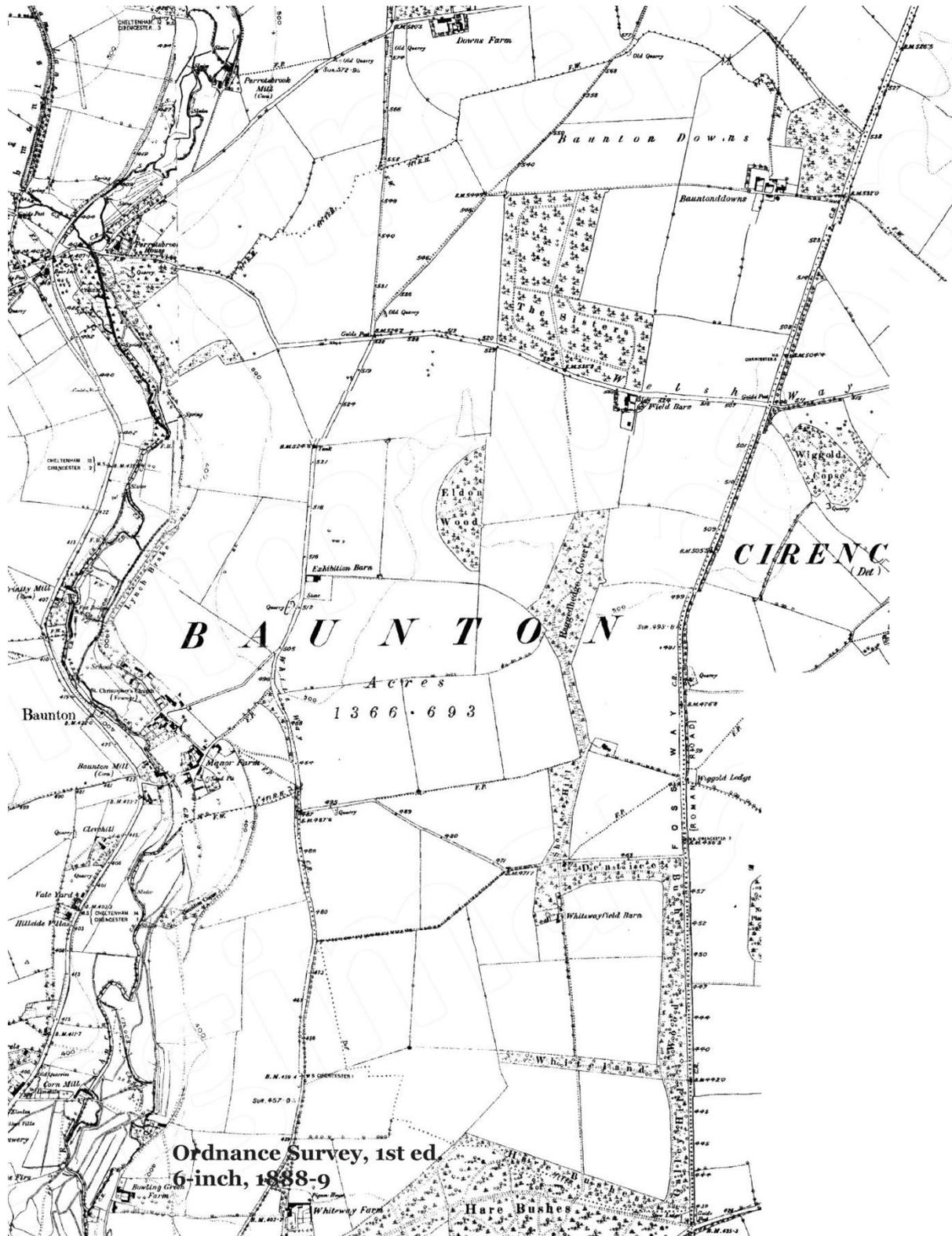
<sup>3</sup> Grundy, *Saxon Charters*, 60; *VCH Glos.* vii, 150.

<sup>4</sup> This para: OS 1:25,000, sheet OL 45; Geol. Surv. <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain>.

<sup>5</sup> Rudder, *Glos.* 266; GDR T1/19.

<sup>6</sup> GA, D674b/P/10; GDR T1/19. 'The Sisters' refers presumably to Jane and Mary Anne Masters.

<sup>7</sup> below: roads and bridges.



### ROADS AND BRIDGES

The Fosse Way, Baunton's eastern boundary, has been a major highway since its construction in the 1st century AD.<sup>8</sup> It was turnpiked in 1755 and disturnpiked in 1877.<sup>9</sup> A

<sup>8</sup> I.D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain* (1973 edn.), 150.

<sup>9</sup> *Glos. and Warws. Roads Act*, 28 Geo. II, c. 47; [check title] 34-5 Vic., c. 115.

second Roman road, the White Way, runs north across the parish, and remained in use as a minor road in 2019.<sup>10</sup> Known also as the Ridgeway, it was turnpiked from Cirencester as far as 'Baunton Gate' in Baunton in 1746/7 and disturnpiked in 1879.<sup>11</sup> A tollhouse stood at the parish boundary by the Dentice Bushes turning in 1858 but had been demolished before 1901.<sup>12</sup> Near the northern edge of the parish the White Way is crossed by another early route, the Welsh Way, part of a drovers' route from upland south Wales to the Home Counties.<sup>13</sup> This climbs from a crossing of the Churn at Perrott's Brook on the northern parish boundary, where a ford (Bereford in 852) had been bridged by the 13th century.<sup>14</sup> At the crossing of the White Way and Welsh Way a minor road leading across Baunton Downs towards Calmsden was made between 1768 and 1824.<sup>15</sup> The valley road from Cirencester to North Cerney is presumably of medieval or earlier origin, since Baunton village is ranged along it. It was in use as a through route in 1751, but of less significance than its counterpart west of the river (in Bagendon parish), and fell out of use after that road became the Cirencester to Cheltenham turnpike in 1825.<sup>16</sup> The Cirencester bypass dual carriageway road (A417) was constructed across the parish in 1996-7, and carried over the Churn valley by a viaduct some 16m above the valley floor. As part of the works a bridge was built to carry the White Way over the new road, but no direct access to the road from Baunton was provided.<sup>17</sup>

### POPULATION

Baunton's population probably never exceeded 100 until the late-18th century, nor 200 until the mid-20th. The two Domesday holdings taken together recorded in 1086 five villein and eight bordar households, with four slaves, suggesting a total population of c.70.<sup>18</sup> In 1327 nine,<sup>19</sup> in 1525 ten,<sup>20</sup> and in 1662 twelve householders were assessed for taxes.<sup>21</sup> In 1381 a total of 35 named adults in Baunton and Wiggold paid the poll tax.<sup>22</sup> A survey in 1650 recorded 16 families in the parish,<sup>23</sup> another of 1676 counted 56 adults,<sup>24</sup> and in c.1715 there were said to be 18 houses and 70 inhabitants.<sup>25</sup> An estimate c.1770 of 56 inhabitants was perhaps too low,<sup>26</sup> as the 1801 census recorded nearly twice that total, 108.<sup>27</sup> Thereafter Baunton's population followed the rural west country trend, rising until mid-century (187 in 1841) and then falling back, to 135 in 1881, 100 in 1901, and 87 in 1931. The 1935 boundary change added a modest c.15 to this total, but the establishment of a Polish resettlement camp within the enlarged parish dramatically increased the post-war population, to 744 in 1951. By 1961, following the camp's closure, there were 164 inhabitants, and this total rose steadily as new houses were built in the parish, to 224 in 1981 and 299 in 2011.<sup>28</sup>

### SETTLEMENT

<sup>10</sup> Margary, *Roman Roads*, 145-6.

<sup>11</sup> 20 Geo. II, c. 23; 42-3 Vic., c. 46.

<sup>12</sup> Glos. HER 9813; OS 6", sheet 51NE (1903 edn.).

<sup>13</sup> K.J. Bonser, *The Drovers* (1970), 186-7 (map), 197.

<sup>14</sup> *VCH Glos.* 7, 150; *Cirencester Cartulary*, 3, 825-6.

<sup>15</sup> GA, D674b/P/10; Bryant, *Map of Glos.* (1824).

<sup>16</sup> *VCH Glos.* 7, 150; GA, Q/SRh 1827 B/1.

<sup>17</sup> A.S. Hall, *Baunton* (1999), 69-70.

<sup>18</sup> *Domesday Book*, 465, 472.

<sup>19</sup> TNA, E 179/113/5, rot. 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 373.

<sup>21</sup> TNA, E 179/116/554, rot. 101.

<sup>22</sup> C.C. Fenwick (ed.), *Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381*, pt. 1, 301.

<sup>23</sup> *Trans. BGAS*, 83 (1964), 94.

<sup>24</sup> *Compton Census*, [check page].

<sup>25</sup> Atkyns, *Glos.*, 258.

<sup>26</sup> Rudder, *Glos.*, 267.

<sup>27</sup> Census, 1801.

<sup>28</sup> Census, 1801-2011.

Neolithic activity in the north of Baunton parish is attested by a ploughed out chambered long barrow identified near the Sisters in 2006 and excavated in 2016-17; and by the earlier discovery of a flint scatter in the same area.<sup>29</sup> Further west on Baunton Downs near the Welsh Way's descent to Perrott's Brook evidence in the form of pottery and coins has been found of a Romano-British settlement,<sup>30</sup> and cropmarks of possible field systems and trackways seen near the southern boundary west of Hare Bushes and elsewhere may be of late prehistoric or Romano-British date.<sup>31</sup> No indications of post-Roman or Anglo-Saxon activity have been found in what became Baunton parish.

Population totals suggest that until the 19th century Baunton never contained more than 20 dwellings, often fewer, and there is no evidence of medieval or later settlement away from the village nucleus, until inclosure in the 1760s. The village was in fact somewhat larger than these figures suggest, since the river was the parish boundary, and that part of the settlement on the further bank, including Baunton mill, lay in Stratton parish until 1935. Apart from the medieval chapel, later parish church, no building has been identified with surviving fabric earlier than the 17th century. Deductions about the topography of the medieval settlement must be based principally on the earliest extant detailed map (of 1768).<sup>32</sup>



The village street is part of a valley road running north from Cirencester to North Cerney and beyond, which atrophied north of Baunton after its counterpart west of the river (now A435) achieved prominence as the primary route towards Cheltenham.<sup>33</sup> A small triangular green, adjacent to a manor house (presumably successor to a medieval demesne complex)<sup>34</sup> was formed by the road's junction with a lane running south-west to a river crossing, which led to the mill. This continued north-eastward out of the valley to the fields. Closes and orchards associated with village houses ran in strips down to the river,<sup>35</sup> where earthworks of houses and barns have been identified;<sup>36</sup> and the regular continuous boundary up-slope from the village street suggests a planned settlement. The church lies at some

<sup>29</sup> Glos. HER 28551, 9804; <https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/news/2016-09-26/bu-archaeologists-uncover-6000-year-old-long-barrow-cotswolds> (accessed 28 Aug 2019).

<sup>30</sup> RCHM, *Glos.* i, 13; Glos. HER 29224.

<sup>31</sup> Glos. HER 2128, 32844, 32845.

<sup>32</sup> GA, D674b/P/10.

<sup>33</sup> above: roads and bridges.

<sup>34</sup> below: landownership, Baunton manor.

<sup>35</sup> The name 'Brook Hay' implies an inclosed or hedged paddock.

<sup>36</sup> Glos. HER 9859.

distance from the surviving manorial complex, and since Baunton was divided between two manors until c.1700 it is likely that a second demesne house existed nearby.<sup>37</sup>

After the open fields were inclosed c.1768 outlying farmsteads were established, subsequently known as Dillies Farm and Whiteway Farm,<sup>38</sup> but apart from these and Field Barn Cottage, no development had occurred beyond the earlier village limits by 1849, when the parish population had reached its apogee.<sup>39</sup> Almost no new building took place until Baunton House north of the church in 1934,<sup>40</sup> and five local authority houses (1-5 Mill View) 1946-8, but from the 1960s onwards many large detached houses were built, either infilling along the village street (Meadow View), or replacing or incorporating former farm complexes within the village (The Paddocks, Downs Way, Priors Court). A few new houses have also been built in secluded parts of the outlying parish.

The 1935 boundary change brought part of Stratton into Baunton parish, including the substantial 18th-century mill house, which was restored and enlarged in 1938.<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere the land acquired by Baunton was virtually unpopulated (apart from the 1940s Polish resettlement camp beside the Gloucester road) until the 1950s, when detached houses and bungalows in reconstituted stone began to line the northern side of Baunton lane.<sup>42</sup>

### BUILT CHARACTER

Limestone, probably quarried locally,<sup>43</sup> and stone slates for roofs, were the usual building materials until the 20th century. Baunton's buildings are therefore typical of vernacular Cotswold architecture. Apart from the church, of 11th- or 12th-century origin, the earliest buildings retain mid-17th century fabric, and are of rubble with dressed quoins, or of squared and coursed limestone. The Old Manor House and Downs farmhouse both retain substantial stonebuilt outbuildings, now converted to dwellings, and several 17th- and 18th-century cottages survive around the triangular green and opposite the church. The earliest buildings not in the vernacular tradition, but still using local materials, are the school with attached schoolhouse dated 1849, but thereafter little building took place in the parish until the substantial late arts and crafts Baunton House of 1934. Post-war local authority housing introduced brick as a building material, but most more recent housing, characterised by large detached houses, has been of reconstituted stone. Development along Baunton lane (until 1935 in Stratton) has been similar to that in Baunton village.

## LANDOWNERSHIP

### PATTERN OF LANDOWNERSHIP

The two Domesday estates in Baunton evolved into two manors, one of which remained in the same landowning family, the Georges, from before 1300 until c.1700. The other, Priors Court, belonged to religious foundations in Lechlade until 1508, and was purchased by the prominent Master family of Cirencester in 1569. Land in these manors was held at farm or leasehold by Cirencester abbey and Quenington preceptory, as well as by laymen. Thomas Master, by acquiring the Georges' interest c.1700, was able to combine the two manors, so

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<sup>37</sup> Suggested by the name 'Court Close' recorded in 1768 on three closes adjacent to the church. See below: landownership, Priors Court manor.

<sup>38</sup> GA, D674b/P/10.

<sup>39</sup> GDR T1/19.

<sup>40</sup> Verey and Brooks, 1, 163.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> OS, 1:25,000 map, sheet SP00 (1959 edn.).

<sup>43</sup> Elms Quarr(y) is a fieldname adjacent to the village in 1774 and 1849: GA D674b/P44; GDR T1/19; below, econ. hist..

that ownership of the whole parish continued in the Master family, from 1863 Chester-Master, into the 20th century.

## MANORS AND PRINCIPAL ESTATES

### BAUNTON MANOR

In 1086 there were two main landholders in Baunton who held of the king in chief. Geoffrey Orlateile held two hides and a virgate which had been in the possession of Bolli in 1066.<sup>44</sup> The descent of this estate through the late 11th and 12th centuries is obscure, but may be linked to the holding of the George family in Baunton, which can be traced from the late-13th century. The title to this land was granted for life before c.1300 by John de Milford to his ward, Robert de Pennington, with reversion to William de la Chaumbre, son of Richard, formerly lord of Baunton.<sup>45</sup> William de la Chaumbre, in his turn, granted all right in that land which his father had held in Baunton to Robert de Pennington and his wife, Christina.<sup>46</sup> In 1325 William, son of Robert de Pennington was in possession, and his heirs were his siblings, Robert, Henry, Nicholas and Alice, who was married to William George.<sup>47</sup>

By 1386 the title 'lord of Baunton' was being used of John George.<sup>48</sup> References to suit of court and heriots demonstrate that the land held by the George family had some of the characteristics of a manor. In 1398 seisin of the 'manor of Baunton' was delivered to another John George.<sup>49</sup> In 1403 the manor was granted to his son, John, and John's wife Elizabeth as a marriage settlement.<sup>50</sup> From this John the manor descended to Richard his son,<sup>51</sup> and from Richard to his son, Thomas.<sup>52</sup> The inquisition into Richard's lands at his death in 1508 recorded that the manor was held of the duke of Buckingham of the honour of Hertford.<sup>53</sup>

The George family did not at this period reside in Baunton, as they later did, but leased their substantial lands to local men. In 1473 Thomas George leased his land in Baunton to Richard Compton of Cirencester, gentleman, for a period of 30 years.<sup>54</sup> In 1483 this was superseded by a grant of the same land to John Edelatt of Baunton for a period of 60 years.<sup>55</sup>

The manor continued in the George family, father to son, until 1678. Thomas (d. 1517) was succeeded by John (d. 1556),<sup>56</sup> then Christopher (d. 1599),<sup>57</sup> Robert (d. 1623)<sup>58</sup> and John (1594-1678). This John George, a lawyer, represented Cirencester in parliament, 1626-46 and from 1661 until his death, having switched allegiance to the royalist cause in 1643.<sup>59</sup> He bequeathed the whole estate to his nephew, William George (d. 1707), who sold it in 1681

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<sup>44</sup> *Domesday Book*, p. 465.

<sup>45</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/32.

<sup>46</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/33.

<sup>47</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines 1300-1359*, 81 (no.457).

<sup>48</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/38.

<sup>49</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/39.

<sup>50</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/2.

<sup>51</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/3.

<sup>52</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/41.

<sup>53</sup> *Cal. Inq. post mortem Hen VII*, vol. 3, 264. The traditional account given by Rudder (267) is that the manor was held by Cirencester Abbey and came into the possession of the George family, who had an estate there, after the Dissolution. See below, this section: other estates.

<sup>54</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/41.

<sup>55</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/42.

<sup>56</sup> *Visit. Glos. 1623*, 247-8; Bigland, *Glos.*, 1, 372. [death date of Thomas, 1517, is from IGI via Ancestry – not confirmed].

<sup>57</sup> *Visit. Glos. 1623*, 247-9.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Hist. Parl. Commons, 1660-1690* (<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/george-john-1594-1678>, accessed 19 Aug. 2019).

to his brother James.<sup>60</sup> James died in 1684 and it passed back to his heir William,<sup>61</sup> who retained it despite family litigation,<sup>62</sup> and sold it to Thomas Master between 1699 and 1702.<sup>63</sup>

Thomas Master (d. 1710) was succeeded by his son Thomas (d. 1749), and Thomas's grandson, also Thomas.<sup>64</sup> When he died in 1823 Baunton passed to his daughter Jane Master, who retained it until her death in 1862; her sister Mary Anne, widow of John, Lord Carteret, inherited, but she died the following year.<sup>65</sup> Her heir was William Chester-Master, her cousin, who already owned the Chester estates in Gloucestershire, and who died in 1868.<sup>66</sup> Baunton then passed with the Chester-Master estates, to William's eldest son, Thomas William (d. 1899), to his son, also Thomas William, who was killed in action in 1914, and then to Richard Chester Chester-Master, his eldest son.<sup>67</sup> Richard, who had been chief constable for Gloucestershire, was also killed in the war, in 1917, leaving a son William Alfred Chester Chester-Martin, who inherited upon coming of age in 1924.<sup>68</sup> William died in 1963 and was succeeded by his son, Mr Richard T Chester-Master (b. 1927).<sup>69</sup>

Only one householder in Baunton in 1662 was assessed on more than two hearths. This was John George, who had ten hearths,<sup>70</sup> and so it is likely that he occupied the house (in 2019 the Old Manor House and subdivided), a largely mid-17th century long rectangular building of two storeys and attic, built of local rubble limestone with dressed stone quoins.<sup>71</sup> If the date, on architectural evidence, is correct, it was John George, owner 1623-78, who built or rebuilt the existing house.

#### PRIOR'S COURT MANOR

The second major landholder in Baunton in 1086 was Eadric, son of Ketil, who inherited three hides and three virgates of land from his father, a thegn of King Edward.<sup>72</sup> Eadric also inherited his father's lands in Alkerton.<sup>73</sup> In 1123 the lands which had been held by Eadric were granted to Walter of Gloucester by King Henry I.<sup>74</sup> King Stephen confirmed the lands to Miles of Gloucester in 1136 or 1137.<sup>75</sup> As Miles was made first earl of Hereford by the Empress Matilda in 1141, these lands descended to the later de Bohun earls.

The Hospital of St John the Baptist, Lechlade (founded 1228) was a landowner in Baunton by 1251.<sup>76</sup> The hospital held land jointly with Cirencester abbey until 1301 when they agreed to divide this land for their singular use.<sup>77</sup> The land the hospital held of the earl of Hereford and Essex was reckoned as half a knight's fee in the late fourteenth century.<sup>78</sup> An inquisition post mortem into the lands held by Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford (d. 1373), revealed that his tenants in Baunton were the prior of Lechlade, the abbot of

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<sup>60</sup> GA, P86/1 CH 1/4-5.

<sup>61</sup> TNA, PROB 11/377/260.

<sup>62</sup> TNA C 8/513/28, C 8/541/105, C 10/280/28, C 10/242/19; GA, P86/1 CH 1/56-7.

<sup>63</sup> GA, P86/1 CH 1/57.

<sup>64</sup> *Landed Gentry*, (1898 edn,) i, 1013.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Landed Gentry*, (1898 edn,) i, 1013-14.

<sup>67</sup> *Landed Gentry*, (1937 edn,) i, 1554-5.

<sup>68</sup> Fox-Davies, *Armorial Families* (1929), i, 357.

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.thepeerage.com/p60014.htm#i600138>).

<sup>70</sup> TNA E 179/116/554 rot 101.

<sup>71</sup> Nat. Heritage List 1090241; Verey and Brooks, 1, 163.

<sup>72</sup> *Domesday Book*, p. 472.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *VCH Gloucestershire* vol 10, pp. 123-127.

<sup>74</sup> *Charters of the Earldom of Hereford, 1095-1201* ed. D.M. Walker (RHS Camden 4th Series, 1, (1964), p. ?

<sup>75</sup> *Charters of the Earldom of Hereford, 1095-1201*), p. ?

<sup>76</sup> *VCH Glos.* vol 7, 106; *Close Rolls, 1247-1251*, p. 562.

<sup>77</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, vol iii, pp. 825-6.

<sup>78</sup> *Cal. Inq. Post Mortem*, vol 13, p. 141; *Cal. Close Rolls, 1381-1385*, pp. 512-13.

Cirencester and Henry de Pennington.<sup>79</sup> In a partition of the de Bohun lands in 1384, overlordship of the prior of Lechlade's holding in Baunton passed to the earl of Derby.<sup>80</sup>

When the hospital was dissolved in 1476, its possessions passed to the chantry of St Mary, Lechlade,<sup>81</sup> which was itself dissolved in 1508, and then to St Nicholas's college in Wallingford castle (Berks. now Oxon.).<sup>82</sup> In 1529 the college sold its manor of Baunton, valued at £6 13s. 4d. in 1522,<sup>83</sup> to Thomas Stour and William Young of Lechlade, from whom it passed to Denis Toppes of Lechlade by Dorothy his wife, Stour's daughter.<sup>84</sup> Toppes sold it in 1569 to Richard Master, and it descended to his son George and his son William, who was in possession in 1650.<sup>85</sup> It continued in the ownership of the Master family, and was subsumed within their Baunton manor after 1700. The manor was known as Priors Court by 1529,<sup>86</sup> and in 1685 was stated to comprise 500 a. of arable land and 15 a. of meadow, with three messuages; it lay partly in North Cerney.<sup>87</sup> Portions of the manor, including the capital messuage of Priors Court, were leased to tenants during the 17th and 18th centuries.<sup>88</sup>

'Court Close' occurs as the name of three closes adjacent to Baunton church on a map of 1768, although no major building was then depicted on them.<sup>89</sup> The demesne complex of Priors Court manor may therefore have stood in this area, but no substantial house survived by 1662 to pay the hearth tax.<sup>90</sup> Downs farmhouse nearby, which retains 17th-century fabric,<sup>91</sup> may have been associated with this manor.

## OTHER ESTATES

### *Cirencester Abbey*

Cirencester Abbey held land in Baunton from the late twelfth century when Richard Murdac made a gift of 5 acres to the canons and a further gift of 4 acres for the chapel of St Mary Magdalene.<sup>92</sup> Further small bequests were made in the early-13th century,<sup>93</sup> and substantial pasture was acquired in the mid-13th century.<sup>94</sup> In the mid- to late-13th century, Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford confirmed Henry of Farley's gift of all his land in Baunton to the canons of Cirencester abbey.<sup>95</sup> In the later-15th century and at the time of the dissolution, the abbot and canons held the George family lands, referred to as 'the manor of Bruges', in Baunton at farm.<sup>96</sup>

### *Hospital of Quenington*<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> *Cal. Inq. post mortem* vol 13, p. 141. The de Bohuns still held the lands in Alkerton as well.

<sup>80</sup> *Cal Close Rolls 1381-1385*, pp. 512-13.

<sup>81</sup> *Monasticon Anglicanum*.

<sup>82</sup> *VCH Glos.* vol 7, 119.

<sup>83</sup> *Military Survey*, 106, where it was still assigned to the chantry.

<sup>84</sup> GA, D674b/ T62.

<sup>85</sup> GA, D674b/ T2; D674b/ E67, ff.7-8.

<sup>86</sup> GA, D2762/T7. Thus it relates to the prior of Lechlade, not the prior of Cirencester, as has been assumed (e.g. A.S. Hall, *Baunton: a Cotswold village history* (1999), 44).

<sup>87</sup> GA, D674b/T/27.

<sup>88</sup> GA, D674b/E/67; D182/III/36.

<sup>89</sup> GA, D674b/P/10.

<sup>90</sup> TNA E 179/116/554 rot 101. House platforms north of the churchyard may denote its site.

<sup>91</sup> Nat. Heritage List 1090239. No evidence has been found to associate Priors Court manor with the modern Priory Court development of outbuildings associated with the Old Manor House.

<sup>92</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, vol I, pp. 228-9.

<sup>93</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, vol I, pp. 229-30, 233-4, 250-2.

<sup>94</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, vol I, pp. 237-8; *Cirencester Cartulary*, vol iii, pp. 823-5.

<sup>95</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, iii, no.333, p. 824.

<sup>96</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/41; *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, vol ii, p. 469.

<sup>97</sup> cf. <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol2/p113a>.

In 1535 the preceptory of Quenington farmed the site of the manor. They also derived income from free and customary tenants.<sup>98</sup> After the preceptory's dissolution their Baunton property was sold in 1554 to John Waters and Thomas Carpenter.<sup>99</sup> Its later history has not been traced.

#### *Jordan of Cirencester/Jordan Scotmodi*

Jordan Scotmodi was a servant of the abbey of Cirencester who ran affairs there to his own advantage in the early thirteenth century.<sup>100</sup> In the late-13th century his land was in the hand of his daughter, Margery, who granted it to Thomas de Cavenham;<sup>101</sup> he in turn granted it after c.1300 to Thomas and Roger de Mattishall.<sup>102</sup> It may have belonged in the 16th century to the Damsell family.<sup>103</sup>

## ECONOMIC HISTORY

### AGRICULTURE

#### *Medieval agriculture*

In 1086 the land held by Geoffrey Orlateile comprised 3 ploughlands farmed by bordars and villeins, and 8 a. of meadow. There was no demesne.<sup>104</sup> In contrast the land held by Ketil comprised 3 ploughlands in demesne, 1 ploughland farmed by villeins, and 15 a. meadow.<sup>105</sup> The abbot of Cirencester still retained demesne lands in Baunton in 1535.<sup>106</sup> At the dissolution the abbey's holding, as farmer of Baunton manor, was 561a.; the Priors Court manor in 1569 comprised 746a.<sup>107</sup>

Two open fields, north and south, existed in Baunton by c.1200,<sup>108</sup> cultivated in single acres within named furlongs.<sup>109</sup> Henry of Farley, a tenant in 1249, possessed 60 a., equally distributed in each field,<sup>110</sup> and another 13th-century tenant, Adam Godard, held a half-virgate in the north field, computed at 16 a.<sup>111</sup> In 1249 a tenant was running 300 sheep on Baunton's downland,<sup>112</sup> and in 1300 another had pasturing rights for 6 oxen, 300 ewes and other, unspecified, animals.<sup>113</sup> In the sixteenth century, John George bequeathed pasture for 600 sheep to his descendants.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, p. 462.

<sup>99</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1553-1554*, 347-8.

<sup>100</sup> cf. VCH Cirencester Abbey account.

<sup>101</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines 1199-1299*, 19 (no.100), 71 (no. 349); GA P86/1/CH/1/34.

<sup>102</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/35.

<sup>103</sup> An endorsement on GA P86/1/CH/1/35 describes the deed as relating to 'Damselles house'. Robert Damselle was a Baunton taxpayer in 1525: *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 373. William Damsell was involved in litigation over sheep pasturage in 1551-3: TNA, C 1/1303/3-5.

<sup>104</sup> *Domesday Book*, 465.

<sup>105</sup> *Domesday Book*, 472.

<sup>106</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, p. 468.

<sup>107</sup> TNA, IR 18/2636.

<sup>108</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* i, 229-30.

<sup>109</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* i, 228-30, 233-4. Furlong names include 'Torfolang' (late-12th cent.), 'Kingsmere' and 'Dentquisle' (c.1200), and 'Rocforlong' (1230x1250).

<sup>110</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* i, 237-8.

<sup>111</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* iii, 826-7.

<sup>112</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* i, 237.

<sup>113</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/34.

<sup>114</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/4.

Meadowland beside the Churn close to the mill is recorded c.1250,<sup>115</sup> part of which had been divided by a raised bank into closes before 1301.<sup>116</sup> At that date an agreement was made between Cirencester abbey and St John's hospital, Lechlade, to divide in severalty Court close and two meadows, 'Wyth Innelak' and 'Outmede', which had previously been allotted by roods.<sup>117</sup>

### *From 1540 to Inclosure*

A dispute in 1551-3 following Cirencester abbey's dissolution outlined a tenant's rights and obligations to pasture 300 sheep.<sup>118</sup> The demesne lessee, on whose land the sheep were pastured, provided hurdles and sustenance for the shepherd, in return for the right to fold the flock and dung his land; the sheep-owning tenant maintained a sheeppen and was entitled to the first hay crop of a specific meadow. Typical of the mixed farming of the period on a small scale was Thomas Haynes who, at his death in 1588, possessed a cow, a bullock, 40 sheep and 32 bushels of barley.<sup>119</sup>

A 1630 terrier of the landholding of Paul Barte, who held 130 a. distributed in the south field, and 147 a. in the north field, may be used, by reference to fieldnames on later maps, to reconstruct Baunton's pre-inclosure open field arrangement.<sup>120</sup> The south field extended from the Cirencester boundary at Spitalgate Hedge and Galley ('Gallow') Hill, northwards beside the Fosse way as far as a 'ragged hedge' which may have divided the two fields. This hedge ran to the south of Welsh way ('London way' in the terrier), which at one point the south field abutted. The north field occupied much of the remainder of the parish apart from the village area and river valley, and a relatively small area of downland in the north-east, which it abutted, north of Welsh way. East of Baunton village and between the two fields was an area described as 'hitchings', the name suggesting that it was subject to intensive cultivation outside the normal open-field rotation.<sup>121</sup> The demesne arable of Elinor George, like that of the tenantry, lay intermixt in the two open fields, and 13 tenants, besides Barte, are referred to in the terrier, although the lands of only one, Richard Hamlet, are described; he held c.35 a. distributed roughly equally between the two fields, including 5 a. in the hitching furlong.

In 1653 the demesne consisted of 340 a. of arable, 20 a. meadow and 8 a. pasture, with common for 30 beasts and 400 sheep, which could be let at an annual rent of £80.<sup>122</sup> Six years earlier John Barnes was granted a 99-year lease on 135 a. arable, equally divided between the two fields, to which was attached common for 16 beasts and 150 sheep.<sup>123</sup> When the demesne lord, James George, died in 1684 his possessions were reckoned to be worth £554, of which £140 was in hay (he died in July), £68 in growing crops, £63 in horses, £60 in ricks of grain and pease, £43 in wool and £35 in cattle.<sup>124</sup> He appears to have had no sheep, but kept pigs and 24 beasts; and he was growing barley (80a.), oats (29a.), wheat and pease (21a. each). A large tenant farmer, Nathaniel Webb, who died some 40 years later in October 1725 worth £415, had stores of wheat, barley, oats and beans worth £135, sheep (£100), horses and equipment (£60), cattle (£30) and hay (£24).<sup>125</sup>

### *Inclosure and After*

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<sup>115</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* iii, 760.

<sup>116</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* iii, 825.

<sup>117</sup> *Cirencester Cart.* iii, 825-6.

<sup>118</sup> TNA, C 1/1303/3-5, transcript in Hockaday abs.

<sup>119</sup> GA, GDR Inventories 1587/43.

<sup>120</sup> This para: GA D674b/E37.

<sup>121</sup> J Field, *Hist. of Eng. Field-Names* (1993), 17-18; P. Cavill, *New Dict. Of Eng. Field-Names* (2018), 207.

<sup>122</sup> GA D45/E7.

<sup>123</sup> GA D674b/E67, f. 9v (lease dated 1647).

<sup>124</sup> TNA, PROB 5/383.

<sup>125</sup> GA, GDR Inventories 1726/45.

After c.1700 almost the entire parish was in the single ownership of the Master family,<sup>126</sup> who therefore had no need to instigate a formal process of inclosure by act or agreement. In fact a large close named New Ground, which occupied the hillside east of the village flanking the lane which climbs to the White Way,<sup>127</sup> had been created before 1684.<sup>128</sup> By 1768, as depicted on the earliest surviving estate map of the parish,<sup>129</sup> much of the high ground formerly occupied by the two open fields had been divided into the rectilinear and subrectangular closes typical of formal inclosure; this was partly achieved by two straight north–south field boundaries each extending some 1.5km. The ancient hedgeline dividing the two open fields remained as a prominent feature, but elsewhere only in the south of the parish towards Hare Bushes had hedges become established, suggesting perhaps that in 1768 inclosure over much of the parish was then fairly recent.<sup>130</sup>

In 1772 and 1791 Baunton was farmed by two large tenant farmers and one much smaller.<sup>131</sup> These may be identified with Baunton Lower farm, whose tenant Francis Bedwell in 1823 farmed 391a. arable and 45a. pasture in the south of the parish, including 47a. in Cirencester; Baunton Upper farm, which by 1823 was much larger, and whose tenant Joseph Porter had 669a. arable and 153a. pasture; and Downs Farm, by 1823 included as part of Porter's Upper farm.<sup>132</sup> Bedwell at this time was paying £300 in annual rent, and Porter £530 and £270 for his two farms.<sup>133</sup>

Between c.1823–c.1833 under Jane Master, lady of the manor, an extensive programme of tree-planting was conducted,<sup>134</sup> so that by 1849 she had in hand 135a., almost all plantations and woodland.<sup>135</sup> Baunton Upper farm, thereby diminished, was then occupied by Mary Ann Porter, Joseph's widow, with 656a., and Baunton Lower farm was divided between two occupiers, Thomas Tarling (Manor Farm) with 257a. and Robert Lane (Whiteway Farm) with 187a.; William Dean had Downs farm with 97a.<sup>136</sup> Woodland excepted (153a.), in 1849 most land in the parish was described as arable (1,058a.), with only 61a. downland pasture and 35a. meadow.<sup>137</sup>

In 1866 the first crops and livestock returns for Baunton portray a mixed farming economy, with 425a. under arable cereals (wheat, barley and oats), 239a. forage crops, and 416a. clover, grass and permanent pasture.<sup>138</sup> There were 83 head of cattle, including 11 milch cows, 985 sheep and 89 pigs.<sup>139</sup> Thirty years later, in 1896 and with only two tenant farmers, the statistics show a marked contraction of arable (260a. cereals, 145a. forage crops), but little change in grassland (432a.). Livestock had reduced too: 57 head of cattle, 768 sheep and 85 pigs.<sup>140</sup>

To allay the agricultural depression beginning in the 1870s there are signs that farming in the parish was being mechanised. A traction engine driver lived in Baunton in 1881 and there were three 'farm engine drivers' in 1891.<sup>141</sup> The sale of Upper farm's stock in 1898 included threshing tackle, chaff machines, mills and other machinery, self-binding reapers and mowing machines.<sup>142</sup> Although both Upper and Lower farms entered the 20th

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<sup>126</sup> Above, Landownership.

<sup>127</sup> Its position is shown on GA D674b/P10.

<sup>128</sup> TNA, PROB 5/383.

<sup>129</sup> GA D674b/P10.

<sup>130</sup> Rudder, who was a contemporary and neighbour, believed that inclosure took place about 1768 (*Glos.*, 266); Bigland (*Glos.* i, 145) reported wrongly that the common fields were inclosed in 1776.

<sup>131</sup> GA D674b/E2.

<sup>132</sup> GA D674b/E3.

<sup>133</sup> GA D674b/E84.

<sup>134</sup> The location and dates of each have been added to a 1774 map: GA D674b/P44.

<sup>135</sup> GA GDR T1/19.

<sup>136</sup> GA GDR T1/19. This was renamed c.1890 The Dillies (OS 25", *Glos.* XLIII. 15, 1st and 2nd edns.).

<sup>137</sup> TNA IR 8/2636.

<sup>138</sup> TNA MAF 68/26/18.

<sup>139</sup> TNA MAF 68/25/16.

<sup>140</sup> TNA MAF 68/1609/16.

<sup>141</sup> TNA RG 11/2556, 27-33; RG 12/2033, 88-93 [check].

<sup>142</sup> *Glos. Chronicle*, 12 Mar. 1898, p. 1.

century with new tenants the acreage they farmed, c.830a., was unchanged between 1896 and 1926, the principal difference being an increase in grass for mowing at the expense of forage crops; there were fewer sheep (660) but more cattle (88).<sup>143</sup> By the 1930s most arable land in the parish lay east and south-east of the village, and along the northern boundary.<sup>144</sup> The farm labour force, which had totalled 30 across both farms in 1851, was reduced to 17 in 1926.<sup>145</sup> After 1940 German and Italian prisoners were set to work on Baunton's farms,<sup>146</sup> and still in 1956 farmwork was labour intensive, with 21 employed in the fields. By then although the acreage cultivated for cereals (283a.) and forage (68a.) was little changed, livestock had become the dominant concern. Grassland for mowing (403a.) and for grazing (519a.) had nearly doubled in extent, far more pigs were reared (210 in 1956 compared with 39 in 1926), and there were then 121 cows and heifers, and 227 other cattle.<sup>147</sup>

Mary Ann Porter remained tenant of the Upper farm until her death in 1855,<sup>148</sup> when her son Thomas Tarling Porter took over, farming 600a., and continued until shortly before he died in 1898.<sup>149</sup> The tenant from c.1900 was Frederick W. Cambray, partnered by his son Percy F Cambray by 1910, who had taken over by 1919 and continued until retirement after 1931.<sup>150</sup> In 1910 the farm comprised 449a. arable and 102a. pasture, and the Cambrays described themselves as farmers and thrashing machine proprietors.<sup>151</sup> By 1938 the tenant was William Westlake, and he occupied the farm until 1961 or later.<sup>152</sup> Thereafter the farmhouse was divided from its farm buildings and sold by the Chester-Master estate; the buildings were demolished and houses (Downs View) were built on the site c.1965.<sup>153</sup> The farm was known as Baunton farm or Downs farm in the 20th century.<sup>154</sup>

The Lower farm, known by 1885 as Manor farm,<sup>155</sup> comprised c.290a. between 1851 and 1910, and was said at the latter date to be chiefly arable.<sup>156</sup> From 1849 until it was sold in 1958 by the estate, it had four longstanding tenants: Henry Butt in the 1850s and 1860s; George Townsend, c.1880-1900; Tom Hill, c.1919-c.1938; and Christopher Wilcox (d. 1965), from c.1938 until he purchased the house, and was still living there in 1960.<sup>157</sup> Richard Wilcox combined farming with a haulage business from Manor farm by 1971 until the mid-1990s.<sup>158</sup>

Downs farm, in the north of the parish, was known as Dilly's or Dillies farm by 1851,<sup>159</sup> and seems in the later 19th century to have been largely run with the Upper farm; the farmhouse was occupied in 1871 by a carter and in 1891 by a labourer.<sup>160</sup> A tenant there in 1901 sold his stock of 350 sheep and 10 bullocks to give up farming.<sup>161</sup> But by 1910 Samuel Beard, the tenant since 1906 or earlier, had built up a holding of 194a. in Baunton, with a further 181a. in North Cerney, almost wholly arable, and this had passed to his son William

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<sup>143</sup> TNA MAF 68/3295/4.

<sup>144</sup> Land Utilisation Survey (<https://digimap.edina.ac.uk/roam/map/environment>, accessed 10 Sept. 2021).

<sup>145</sup> TNA HO 107/1968, 157-61; MAF 68/3296/4.

<sup>146</sup> Hall, *Baunton*, 61.

<sup>147</sup> TNA MAF 68/4533.

<sup>148</sup> GA, GDR V1/450.

<sup>149</sup> *Glos. Chronicle*, 12 Mar. 1898, p. 1; *Nat. Probate Calendar* (via Ancestry.com).

<sup>150</sup> TNA, RG 13/2449, 64-5; Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1902-31 edns.).

<sup>151</sup> TNA, IR 58/20924; Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1910 edn.).

<sup>152</sup> British Phone Books (via Ancestry.com), 1938-61; Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1939 edn.).

<sup>153</sup> A. S. Hall, *Baunton: a Cotswold Village History* (2nd edn., 2009), 49.

<sup>154</sup> Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1910-39 edns.); OS 25", *Glos. LI. 2*, 2nd and 3rd edns.

<sup>155</sup> OS 25", *Glos. LI. 3*, 1st edn. (1885).

<sup>156</sup> TNA, HO 107/1968, 157-161 (and later census returns); *ibid.* IR 58/20924.

<sup>157</sup> TNA, HO 107/1968, 157-161 (and later census returns); Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1856-39 edns.); British Phone Books (via Ancestry.com), 1938-61; 1939 England and Wales Reg. (via Ancestry.com); Hall, *Baunton*, 44.

<sup>158</sup> British Phone Books (via Ancestry.com), 1971-84; Hall, *Baunton*, 60.

<sup>159</sup> TNA, HO 107/1968, 157.

<sup>160</sup> TNA, RG 10/2647, 102-8; RG 12/2033, 88-93 [check].

<sup>161</sup> *Wilts & Glos. Standard*, 31 Aug. 1901.

before 1923.<sup>162</sup> By 1939 it was farmed by William Westlake's father Samuel, suggesting that it was subsequently merged with their main holding.<sup>163</sup>

In 1969 mixed and cattle farming were recorded in Baunton, but thereafter agricultural censuses give no returns specifically for the parish, as its land was farmed from elsewhere. The general pattern of mixed farming, mostly cereals, was established by the 1970s, and novel crops, including linseed and oilseed rape, were widespread by 1988, alongside barley and wheat.<sup>164</sup> In 2019 wheat, barley and rape were still the main crops, alongside permanent grass and areas of woodland, the latter occupying mostly the same compartments as those planted in the 1820s.<sup>165</sup>

## MILLS

Two watermills were powered by the Churn at Baunton, although both stand in adjacent parishes. Trinity mill is in Bagendon and is considered elsewhere;<sup>166</sup> Baunton mill lay in Stratton until 1935 but is considered here.

Earthworks visible on aerial photographs close to the mill site on the east bank of the Churn may relate to a precursor of the existing buildings.<sup>167</sup> No documentary references to a mill or miller in Baunton have been discovered, but it may be that one of the two Stratton mills recorded from 1545 relates to Baunton mill.<sup>168</sup> The existing mill and miller's house, of squared limestone under stone slate tiled roof, appears on architectural grounds to date from the mid-18th century.<sup>169</sup> It continued in use as a corn mill until 1936, and was converted to a private house for James Dugdale, to the design of Eric Cole, in 1938.<sup>170</sup>

## QUARRYING

The names of post-inclosure fields on rising ground north of Baunton village (Morter Pitts and Hickmons Pitts in 1768, Elms Quarry in 1774) attest to former stone quarrying in the area.<sup>171</sup> In 1909 a quarry near Exhibition barn, Whiteway, was in local use for the estate and roads;<sup>172</sup> and in 1930 two other stone quarries were active: Baunton Lane quarry and Sisters Road quarry.<sup>173</sup> Exhibition quarry was greatly enlarged during the 20th century, and supplied building stone for the King George V wing of the Royal Agricultural University.<sup>174</sup> Since 1996 part of its site is traversed by the A417 Cirencester by-pass road, where its stone is exposed in a cutting.<sup>175</sup>

# SOCIAL HISTORY

## SOCIAL CHARACTER AND THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

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<sup>162</sup> TNA, IR 58/20924; Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1906-31 edns.).

<sup>163</sup> England and Wales Reg. (via Ancestry.com); Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1939 edn.).

<sup>164</sup> Agric. and Hortic. Census, 1969-2003 (<https://digimap.edina.ac.uk/roam/map/agcensus>, accessed 10 Sept. 2021).

<sup>165</sup> Crop Map 2019 (<https://digimap.edina.ac.uk/roam/map/environment>, accessed 10 Sept. 2021).

<sup>166</sup> Above, Bagendon, econ. hist.; mills.

<sup>167</sup> Glos. HER 9859.

<sup>168</sup> Below, Stratton, econ. hist; Stratton Mill.

<sup>169</sup> NHL 1340877; Verey and Brooks, *Glos.* I, 163.

<sup>170</sup> Hall, *Baunton*, 48; GA D4423/1.

<sup>171</sup> GA D674b/P10; D674b/P44.

<sup>172</sup> TNA IR 58/20924, no. 33.

<sup>173</sup> GA DA22 113/1, 8 Dec 1930.

<sup>174</sup> OS 1:25,000 map, sheet SP00 (1959 edn.); GA D1817/3.

<sup>175</sup> Above, landscape.

Baunton's small population throughout its history, and its proximity to Cirencester, upon which it usually depended for its religious provision and where its owners usually lived, militated against it developing a strong independent streak.

Cirencester's dominance has been felt in various ways. In the religious sphere<sup>176</sup> the patron of Baunton's living was its abbey, and later the leading Cirencester family of Master, subsequently Chester-Master. Baunton's church (or chapel) was dependent on Cirencester's parish church, and its parishioners until 1625 had to be buried there. With no clergy house Baunton's priest lived elsewhere, often Cirencester, and there was little investment in the church fabric. In the secular sphere<sup>177</sup> Baunton's agriculture – virtually its only livelihood before the 20th century – was controlled partly from 1569 and wholly from c.1700 by the Master and Chester-Master family. In the 16th century, and probably at other times, its pasture was regarded as an adjunct of Cirencester,<sup>178</sup> and in terms of land management Baunton was seen sometimes as one component of a much larger holding centred on the town.<sup>179</sup> Its uplands were planted during the 1820s to create a sporting estate for the Masters,<sup>180</sup> and its farmland was enjoyed by huntsmen and coursers based in Cirencester.<sup>181</sup>

Since Baunton developed few facilities of its own, it depended not only on Cirencester for the provision of services, but also on its neighbours, Stratton and Bagendon. Some village properties, notably Baunton mill, stood west of the Church and so fell until 1935 in Stratton parish; another mill adjacent to the village, Trinity mill, stood in Bagendon, as did the Bear inn at Perrott's Brook and Baunton golf course.<sup>182</sup> With the closure of Baunton school in 1935 village children were taught in Stratton or Cirencester.<sup>183</sup> The office of curate, if not served from Cirencester, was held by the incumbents of Bagendon (one of whom lived at North Cerney) or Stratton, with which ecclesiastical parish it was combined as a single benefice in 1876.<sup>184</sup>

It is likely that until inclosure in the 1760s the entire population lived along the village street and the small green adjacent to the river crossing at its southern end. Even so, two foci seem to have developed, reflecting the two manors which existed until c.1700. Thus the green, mill and manor house were neighbours, and the church, a second manor house (no longer extant) and later the school stood apart further north. Such nucleation in a small area of the parish, along a valleyside road, was commonplace in a medieval openfield regime, and outlying farmsteads only colonised the high ground once the large common fields were inclosed.

The structure of agrarian society is seen in the 1608 muster, where one large tenant farmer, Paul Barte (with 277 a. of arable in 1630),<sup>185</sup> was listed having five servants or employees, alongside four lesser yeomen farmers, ten husbandmen, a tailor and five unspecified.<sup>186</sup> This invites comparison with a tax list from 1525, when ten households were assessed at £6 (two), £5 (one), £4 (two), £3 (one), £2 (one), £1 (three);<sup>187</sup> also with the 1662 hearth tax. At this date, probably unusually, the principal landlord, John George, was resident, with ten hearths; four village houses had two hearths, and seven had one (poorer cottages were exempt).<sup>188</sup> It would have been from this group of a dozen or so households that the overseers recorded between 1681 and 1722, and the other parish office-holders, would have been drawn.<sup>189</sup> After inclosure the village hierarchy narrowed, with just two or

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<sup>176</sup> Below, religious hist.

<sup>177</sup> Above, econ. hist.

<sup>178</sup> Cal. Pat. 1589-1590, 75-6 (408).

<sup>179</sup> E.g. GA D674b/P44, 1774 map of Stratton, Baunton, Preston with Cirencester.

<sup>180</sup> Above, econ. hist., agriculture; inclosure and after.

<sup>181</sup> Below, this section.

<sup>182</sup> Above, Bagendon, econ. hist; social hist.

<sup>183</sup> Below, this section.

<sup>184</sup> Below, religious hist., religious life.

<sup>185</sup> GA D674b/E37.

<sup>186</sup> Smith, *Men and Armour*, 250.

<sup>187</sup> *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 373.

<sup>188</sup> TNA E 179/116/554 rot 101.

<sup>189</sup> GA P39/IN/4/1 (Hinton's notes, p. 2).

three large farmers, tenants of an absentee lord, and so wielding considerable local clout.<sup>190</sup> In the 19th century they recruited a transient workforce year by year, which was reflected in a fluctuating school roll,<sup>191</sup> and which was another factor detracting from a sense of community.

Despite this, a number of communal activities have been recorded. A horticultural show begun in 1872 in Stratton had become the Stratton and Baunton (Cottagers) Horticultural Show by 1878 and continued annually (with a break during wartime) each summer until its 55th show in 1931; it was not held in 1932 or subsequently.<sup>192</sup> For many years from 1883 it included a fête and often a brass band.<sup>193</sup> The fête was revived after 1953 and fêtes, bonfires and barbecues were held sporadically in later years.<sup>194</sup>

The Vale of White Horse (Earl Bathurst's) hounds regularly hunted over Baunton's farmland in the 19th and 20th centuries, as did the Cirencester Coursing club, which held a Baunton stakes competition in the 1860s.<sup>195</sup> A cricket club which existed in 1911 and 1912 appears to have been short-lived,<sup>196</sup> although a team from the Whiteway Rovers camp played in 1934-5.<sup>197</sup> Baunton football club played in the Cirencester & district league from 1921 until 1928, but not in 1929 nor apparently thereafter.<sup>198</sup> A tradition current by 1902 that Jack Broughton, a pioneer boxing champion who devised an early set of rules for the sport, was born in Baunton c.1700 appears to be without foundation.<sup>199</sup> Boxing was, however, one of the activities encouraged at a boys' club run in the former school between the 1930s and 1950s.<sup>200</sup> No public house is recorded in Baunton parish, although the Bear inn at Perrott's Brook (in Bagendon) was frequented by villagers, who fielded skittles and darts teams there in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>201</sup>

Headingham 'Rover's camp' for training unemployed men was established near Whitewayfield barn in 1934, and a library building and a new hut were built there in 1935.<sup>202</sup> By 1939 it comprised 13 timber huts, but during wartime it was requisitioned by the War Department, which built 3 timber huts and 50 Nissen huts.<sup>203</sup> Between 1947 and 1949, when it was dismantled, the camp was occupied by squatter families who were then rehoused.<sup>204</sup>

An isolation hospital was opened at Baunton mill in 1940 to accommodate 24 evacuee patients and 8 staff.<sup>205</sup> It continued in use until 1945, treating primarily aged and sick evacuees, but also local people for infectious diseases.<sup>206</sup>

[The 'Daglingworth' Polish camp 1940s-50s to be covered here or in Stratton?]

As farming mechanised in the later 20th century, with less need for manual labour and far greater mobility, Baunton in common with Cotswold society generally was transformed. New housing, especially in the part of the modern parish transferred from

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<sup>190</sup> Above, econ. hist., agriculture; inclosure and after.

<sup>191</sup> Below, this section.

<sup>192</sup> *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 31 Aug. 1878, p. 5; *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 8 Aug. 1931, p. 7; 6 Aug. 1932, p. 7; below, Stratton, social hist.

<sup>193</sup> GA, P39 MI 1/1.

<sup>194</sup> A.S. Hall, *Baunton: a Cotswold village history* (2nd edn. Baunton, privately published, 2009), 58-9.

<sup>195</sup> e.g. (hunting) *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 10 Nov. 1860, p. 8; 4 Dec. 1909, p. 2; (coursing) 16 Nov. 1861, p. 8; 2 Feb. 1867, p. 8.

<sup>196</sup> *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 8 July 1911, p. 3; GA, P39 MI 1/1.

<sup>197</sup> *Glos. Echo*, 16 July 1934, p. 5; 1 July 1935, p. 5.

<sup>198</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 1 Oct. 1921, p. 4; *North Wilts. Herald*, 23 Aug. 1929, p. 15.

<sup>199</sup> F. Henning, *Fights for the Championship* (London: Licensed Victuallers Gazette, 1902), 14; *Oxford DNB*.

<sup>200</sup> Hall, *Baunton*, 56.

<sup>201</sup> Hall, *Baunton*, 54-5.

<sup>202</sup> Hall, *Baunton*, 31; GA, DA22 100/9, p. 436; *Glos. Echo*, 16 July 1934, p. 5; GA, DA22 110/3, p. 136; DA22 100/10, pp. 98, 150.

<sup>203</sup> GA, DA22 114/2, pp. 243, 248, 249.

<sup>204</sup> GA, DA22 114/3, 26 Jan. 1949.

<sup>205</sup> GA, DA22 110/3, pp. 322, 346, 348.

<sup>206</sup> GA, DA22 100/12, pp. 108-9; DA22 100/13, pp. 59-60, 64, 73.

Stratton in 1935, and the renovation of old buildings for comfortable residential use, changed the demographic, so that most residents by the later 20th century no longer depended on agriculture, instead deriving their wealth from a diverse range of occupations conducted elsewhere.<sup>207</sup>

## EDUCATION

The vicar [sic] of Baunton was given £20 in 1709 by Viscount Weymouth's educational charity.<sup>208</sup> In 1818 there was no day school in the parish, but an unendowed Sunday school was attended by 40 children.<sup>209</sup> This or another Sunday school, supported by a weekly payment of 3s. to the teacher by Jane Master, catered in 1833 for 17 boys and 10 girls.<sup>210</sup> There was also at this date a day school instructing three boys and three girls at their parents' expense.<sup>211</sup> No schoolmaster or mistress was resident in Baunton in 1841 and no children were described as scholars.<sup>212</sup>

A schoolroom 27ft. x 16ft. and attached schoolmistress's house were built in 1849 on land donated by Miss Master almost opposite the church.<sup>213</sup> In 1851 a schoolmistress, Sarah Carter, was living and teaching there, and 22 Baunton children were described as scholars.<sup>214</sup> A widow, Jane Barker, was appointed c.1858 and remained in post until her sudden death in 1878, when her role was taken by a daughter, also Jane; in 1891 she was forced to resign having failed to achieve her teaching certificate.<sup>215</sup> Both women were very highly regarded by parishioners. Between 1891 and 1935, when the school closed, only four schoolmistresses were employed, three serving for more than a decade.<sup>216</sup>

In 1871 there were 47 children in Baunton described as scholars, and 34 in 1881, but the number on the school register and number attending fluctuated quite widely from year to year, since many labouring families moved each autumn from one hiring to another.<sup>217</sup> In 1893 there were 29 on the register, 45 in 1897, and then between 38 and 46 1900-10, declining to 28 in 1915, between 21 and 27 1920-5, 14 in 1929 and 17 in 1934.<sup>218</sup> In 1906 and 1911 children attending from outside the parish were transferred to other schools in order to bring the number below 35, although there was accommodation for 54.<sup>219</sup>

Described as a National school in 1871, the name was changed to Baunton Church of England School in 1906.<sup>220</sup> In 1922 it was reorganised as a junior school, and children over 10 were transferred to Stratton school.<sup>221</sup> In the same year the school house was repaired and let to a tenant.<sup>222</sup> In 1895 and 1903 the condition of the school fabric was criticised, but the standard of teaching was generally praised by inspectors.<sup>223</sup> Reminiscences of several former pupils were collected and published in 1999.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Census 1971-2011.

<sup>208</sup> *Gen. Digest of Endowed Charities* (H.C. Papers, 1875, 199), pp. 64-5. It is possible that this relates to a different Baunton.

<sup>209</sup> *Educ. Of Poor Digest*, 319.

<sup>210</sup> *Educ. Enq. Abstract*, 302.

<sup>211</sup> *Educ. Enq. Abstract*, 302.

<sup>212</sup> TNA, HO 107/354/11.

<sup>213</sup> Date on building; it is not shown on the 1849 tithe map, but its site was part of a plot occupied by four cottages: GDR T1/19.

<sup>214</sup> TNA, HO 107/1968, ff. 157-61.

<sup>215</sup> *North Wilts. Herald*, 6 April 1878, p. 8; *Wilts. & Glos. Standard*, 28 Nov. 1891, p. 6; TNA, ED 21/5717.

<sup>216</sup> GA, S39/1-2; Kelly's *Dir. Glos.* (1894-1927 edns.).

<sup>217</sup> TNA, RG 10/2647, ff.102-8; RG 11/2556, ff.27-33; GA, S39/1.

<sup>218</sup> GA, S39/1; TNA ED 21/5717; ED 21/28686.

<sup>219</sup> GA, P39 SC1/1, pp. 11, 13; GA, S39/2, p. 31; *Public Elem. Schs.* 1906, 181.

<sup>220</sup> TNA, RG 10/2647, f.106v; GA, P39 SC1/1, p. 10.

<sup>221</sup> TNA, ED 21/28686, H.M.I. rept, 1923; GA, P39 SC1/1, pp. 33-5.

<sup>222</sup> GA, P39 SC1/1, pp. 37-8.

<sup>223</sup> TNA, ED 21/5717; ED 21/28686.

<sup>224</sup> A. S. Hall, *Baunton: a Cotswold Village History* (2nd edn., 2009), 22-7.

In 1935 the departure of children from the village reduced the number on register from 18 to 5, and the schoolmistress left for another post.<sup>225</sup> Despite the managers' regrets the school was closed in the same year.<sup>226</sup> Between 1940 and 1942 the schoolroom housed evacuees, and in 1943, when about 20 children of school age were living in Baunton, there was a proposal to reopen the school, but this was not carried through, and children attended schools in Stratton and Cirencester.<sup>227</sup> The school buildings remained in 2021, in private occupation.

## SOCIAL WELFARE

### *Charities for the Poor*

The churchwardens and curates in 1683 declared that no land, stock of money or gift had been given to the parish for charitable uses.<sup>228</sup> No benefactions were known to Bigland in the later 18th century,<sup>229</sup> nor to the Charity Commissioners reporting in the 1820s.<sup>230</sup>

### *Poor Relief*

During the period 1681-1719, for which accounts survive, two overseers, chosen annually by their predecessors, were drawn from 13 families, mostly engaged in farming, who probably served also the other parish offices.<sup>231</sup> Annual disbursements averaged below £5, and only 14 paupers were relieved during the almost 40 years described. Regular payments were made to parishioners to attend the poor, occasional small sums were given to poor travellers, and there was a single payment for medical assistance. There is no reference to a parish workhouse at this period. For many years only one inhabitant was disbursed regular relief.

In 1776 there was still no workhouse, and £29 8s. 1d. was spent on poor relief.<sup>232</sup> The annual expenditure on Baunton poor during the period 1833-5 averaged £93, after which the parish became a constituent of Cirencester poor law union.<sup>233</sup>

## RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Baunton was a parochial chapelry of St John's parish church, Cirencester, and its religious worship was overseen by Cirencester abbey until the dissolution, and thereafter controlled by the manorial landowning families of George and Master. A poor living and a small parish with no parsonage house, it was usually served by clergy whose residence and principal care was elsewhere in the neighbourhood. From 1876 its religious life has been linked with that of Stratton.

## CHURCH ORIGINS AND PAROCHIAL ORGANISATION

Cirencester abbey claimed that a chapel dependent on St John Baptist, Cirencester, existed at Baunton from the time of the abbey's foundation, c.1131.<sup>234</sup> Before c.1192 it was described

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<sup>225</sup> GA, S39/2, p. 247; TNA, ED 21/28686.

<sup>226</sup> TNA, ED 21/28686.

<sup>227</sup> GA, P39a PC/1/1, meetings 1940-3.

<sup>228</sup> GDR, V5/39T/1.

<sup>229</sup> Bigland, *Glos.* i, 145.

<sup>230</sup> *20th Rep. Com. Char.*

<sup>231</sup> This para: GA P39/OV/2/1. F.H. Hinton's detailed comments on this document are in GA P39/IN/4/1.

<sup>232</sup> *Rep. on Returns made by Overseers of Poor* (H.C. Papers, 1776-77, 9), 354.

<sup>233</sup> *2nd Rep. of Poor Law Comms.* (H.C. Papers, 1836, 595), 522; below, Cirencester, workhouse.

<sup>234</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, 123/73, p. 100.

by a donor both as a chapel (*capella*) and as a church (*ecclesia*); it had a priest (*sacerdos*) and parishioners, and received tithes and churchscot.<sup>235</sup> The priest was described c.1200 as a chaplain.<sup>236</sup> The fabric of the existing nave and chancel is Norman work of the 12th century, and a 12th-century base is incorporated into the font, suggesting that baptismal rights were enjoyed from an early period.<sup>237</sup> Baunton may have been served by canons of Cirencester abbey, although a rector is recorded in 1402 and a curate in 1535.<sup>238</sup>

Until 1625, when its graveyard was consecrated, Baunton church did not have burial rights, and parishioners were buried in Cirencester.<sup>239</sup> The first burial took place in 1627,<sup>240</sup> but it was still regarded as a chapel in 1633, to which the incumbent of Cirencester was required to find a curate.<sup>241</sup> In 1876 Baunton and Stratton were united as one benefice, although they remained separate ecclesiastical parishes.<sup>242</sup> A proposal in 1935 to disunite them and to unite Baunton with Bagendon did not take effect;<sup>243</sup> another in 1984 to unite the parishes with Bagendon lapsed.<sup>244</sup> In 1994 a benefice comprising Bagendon, Baunton, Stratton and North Cerney was created.<sup>245</sup> In 2019 Baunton was one of nine parishes forming the Churn Valley benefice.<sup>246</sup>

In the 12th century the church was dedicated to St Mary Magdalene,<sup>247</sup> and an image of that saint was venerated there in 1535;<sup>248</sup> but the dedication had been changed by c.1750 to St Christopher;<sup>249</sup> this continued until the 1890s, but thereafter St Mary Magdalene was the usual dedication.<sup>250</sup> St Christopher was still sometimes regarded as the dedicatee as late as 1925.<sup>251</sup>

#### *Advowson and Church Endowment*

The advowson of Baunton, as a chapelry of St John Baptist, Cirencester, belonged to the abbot and convent of Cirencester.<sup>252</sup> Following the dissolution John George, lord of the manor, was granted the tithes of Baunton in 1543 and so became lay impropriator.<sup>253</sup> After c.1672, confirmed in 1681, the lord, then James George, and his successors were permitted by the bishop to present to the perpetual curacy;<sup>254</sup> members of the Master family, as manorial successors to the Georges, presented on at least nine occasions between 1737 and 1844.<sup>255</sup> When Baunton and Stratton became one benefice in 1876 Thomas Chester-Master

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<sup>235</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, 239/325, 240/326, pp. 228-9.

<sup>236</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, 241/327, p. 230.

<sup>237</sup> Nat. Heritage List, 1340878; Verey and Brooks, *Glos.* I, 162-3.

<sup>238</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, xxxii; below: religious life.

<sup>239</sup> GA, P39/IN/4/1; *Parsons' Notes*, 16; Rudder, *Glos.* 267.

<sup>240</sup> Bigland, *Glos.*, I, 146.

<sup>241</sup> I.M. Calder (ed.), *Activities of the Puritan Faction of the Church of England 1625-33* (London, 1957), 13, 40; cited by R. Reece, 'Alexander Gregory: vicar of Cirencester 1627 to 1662' (unpublished).

<sup>242</sup> *London Gazette*, 26 May 1876, p. 3164; GA, P39 VE2/1, 7 April 1948.

<sup>243</sup> GA, P319 VE/2/2, 26 Feb. 1935.

<sup>244</sup> GA, P39/IN/4/8.

<sup>245</sup> GA, P39/IN/4/8.

<sup>246</sup> <http://www.churnvalley.org.uk/> (accessed 29 Oct. 2019).

<sup>247</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, 239/325, 240/326, pp. 228-9.

<sup>248</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, 470.

<sup>249</sup> *Benson's Survey*, 147; cf. Rudge, *Hist. of Glos.* I225. It is uncertain whether the change was in consequence of discovering the mural c.1737 (below: church architecture) or had occurred before the reformation, when the mural was presumably exposed to view. The prevalent notion that the church was rededicated after the discovery of the St Christopher wall painting in 1876 is incorrect.

<sup>250</sup> *Clergy List* (1889 edn.), pt. 2, 326; *ibid* (1894 edn.), pt. 2, 326, and subsequent editions.

<sup>251</sup> e.g. F. Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications* (1899), vol. 1, 180 and vol. 3, 44, who regarded St Christopher as the ancient and current dedication. *Kelly's Dir. of Glos.*, (1914 edn); *Citizen*, 17 Sept. 1925, p. 5.

<sup>252</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, ii, 418/449, pp. 375-6; *Cal. Chart. R., 1341-1417*, pp. 22-3.

<sup>253</sup> *L&P Hen VIII*, XVIII(1), 553.

<sup>254</sup> GA, P86/1 IN 6/3, f. 93v.

<sup>255</sup> GDR, D2/32/1-9.

held the advowson of both,<sup>256</sup> and the family continued to present until the 1994 rearrangement, after which it was one of three patrons.<sup>257</sup>

In the mid thirteenth century oblations at Baunton rendered 10s. 4½d. to the abbey annually,<sup>258</sup> and a *mortuarium* of a horse worth 5s was given for forgotten tithes.<sup>259</sup> The 1535 valuation recorded annual oblations at St Mary Magdalene's image of 6d., but charity money and other oblations were subsumed within the total for Cirencester.<sup>260</sup> The salary of Baunton's curate at this date was compounded 'by ancient usage' at £6 13s. 4d.<sup>261</sup> A survey in 1650 valued the living at £9,<sup>262</sup> and in c. 1710 its annual value to the curate was said to be £10,<sup>263</sup> which had risen to £15 in 1750.<sup>264</sup> Before inclosure in 1776 the curate was receiving c.£13 in small tithes, but thereafter the impropiator paid him £30, and he also received an augmentation from Queen Anne's Bounty.<sup>265</sup> In 1828 the augmentation was £10, and the impropiator paid £50.<sup>266</sup> The perpetual curacy was worth £67 in the 1860s.<sup>267</sup>

### *Clergy Houses*

There is no reference to a clergy house in a terrier of 1683.<sup>268</sup> In 1735, 1772 and 1849 there was no house for the minister.<sup>269</sup> After 1876 the parish was served from Stratton, so that no vicarage house was built.<sup>270</sup>

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

Their dependence on Cirencester for ministry and some sacraments through the medieval period probably restricted its inhabitants' allegiance to Baunton's church, and little is known of its priests and laity. There were, however, bequests to support its worship and fabric. In the late twelfth century, Richard Murdac granted 4 acres of land, along with tithes and renders, to the abbot and convent of Cirencester for the maintenance of a light in Baunton chapel.<sup>271</sup> This he did for the salvation of the souls of himself, his wife and all his ancestors.<sup>272</sup> Other bequests were intended for the repair of the fabric of the church: in c.1200 Alice, wife of Payn of Baunton, bequeathed 2 a. of land in Baunton for the repair of the church;<sup>273</sup> Richard Carpenter left 6d. annually for the church fabric;<sup>274</sup> and John George (d.1556) also left a bequest for the repair of the body of the church.<sup>275</sup> Surprisingly, since Cirencester abbey, as an Augustinian house, could supply its own canons as chaplains or curates, a rector, Thomas Slaughter, was recorded in 1402.<sup>276</sup> In 1535 the salary of a curate celebrating

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<sup>256</sup> *London Gazette*, 26 May 1876, p. 3164.

<sup>257</sup> GDR, D1/271; GA, P39/IN/4/8.

<sup>258</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, D(W)1788/P54/B8, f.5v.

<sup>259</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, D(W)1788/P54/B8, f.19v.

<sup>260</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, 470.

<sup>261</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, 470.

<sup>262</sup> C R Elrington, 'The survey of church livings in Gloucestershire, 1650', *Trans BGAS* 83 (1964), 94.

<sup>263</sup> Atkyns, *Glos.*, 257.

<sup>264</sup> *Benson's Survey*, 147.

<sup>265</sup> GA, P86/1 IN 6/3, f. 94r.

<sup>266</sup> GDR, V5/39T/2.

<sup>267</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Glos.* 1863, 203; *Clergy List*, 1868.

<sup>268</sup> GDR V5/39T/1.

<sup>269</sup> *Benson's Survey*, 147; GA, P86/1 IN 6/3, f. 94r; GDR, T1/19

<sup>270</sup> below: religious life.

<sup>271</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, no.239/325, pp. 228-9.

<sup>272</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, no.240/326, p. 229.

<sup>273</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, i, no.241/327, pp. 229-230.

<sup>274</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Dugdale 42, m.16v-17.

<sup>275</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/4.

<sup>276</sup> *Reg. Clifford*, 73.

the mass and the costs of the sacraments were paid by the canons of Cirencester abbey acting as custodian of the parish church of Cirencester.<sup>277</sup>

After the reformation Baunton was usually served by priests with other responsibilities in Cirencester or nearby parishes. Between 1578 and 1761 (apart from 1622-79) successive rectors of Bagendon were also recorded as curates of Baunton.<sup>278</sup> The last of these, Edward Pickering Rich, was a published poet, who lived at North Cerney.<sup>279</sup> Others were Cirencester schoolmasters. Henry Topp (d. 1666), master of the free school, served Baunton as preacher in 1623 and curate between 1647 and 1662.<sup>280</sup> In 1647, as attested by four parishioners and recorded by Topp, a 'miracle' occurred, when an old table in the parish clerk's house exuded a blood-like liquid for almost 24 hours.<sup>281</sup> A later master, James Grooby, was perpetual curate of Baunton, 1812-29, and vicar of Swindon (Wilts.) from 1823.<sup>282</sup> Alexander Gregory, incumbent of Cirencester, 1627-62, served Baunton in 1642 and perhaps at other times.<sup>283</sup> In 1683 it was declared that no land, money or gift had been given to Baunton church apart from a velvet pulpit cloth and cushion.<sup>284</sup>

Between 1794 and 1812 the perpetual curacy was held by another incumbent of Cirencester, the aristocratic William Shippen Willes (d. 1822) of Astrop House (Northants.), in plurality, since he was also canon and succentor of York.<sup>285</sup> Under Grooby and his successors Baunton was generally served by stipendiary curates dwelling in Cirencester, a practice continued under George Francis Master, perpetual curate 1843-75, who was also rector of Stratton but frequently absent on account of ill health.<sup>286</sup> Master's death in 1875 precipitated two significant changes to Baunton's religious life. The vacancy triggered an inspection of the church fabric by the diocesan surveyor, Frederick Waller, which initiated its restoration;<sup>287</sup> and the benefice was combined with Stratton.<sup>288</sup> A notable and long-serving incumbent of the combined benefice was Edward Henry Ball, rector 1888-1938.<sup>289</sup> Canon Ball died in 1941.<sup>290</sup>

Prior to restoration the church had seating for 77, and attendance in 1851 on census Sunday was 23 in the morning and 46 in the afternoon, with over 40 Sunday school pupils at each service.<sup>291</sup> Between 1912 and 1917 the usual pattern of Sunday services was a weekly evensong and a monthly morning holy communion.<sup>292</sup>

Although Baunton and Stratton were a single benefice it was established at a vestry meeting in 1937 and confirmed in 1948 that Baunton should continue to hold separate vestry and parochial church council meetings, and records survive from 1936.<sup>293</sup> Meetings were then held in the school room, which was made available for church use, until 1967, but thereafter in the church nave or in members' houses. Annual meetings were held each spring

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<sup>277</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, p. 470.

<sup>278</sup> *CCED*: Richard Burton, 1578-1622; Thomas Poulton, 1679-1713; William Huntington, 1713-38; E.P. Rich, 1738-61.

<sup>279</sup> *Original Poems on Several Occasions* (2nd, edn. 1721); *VCH Glos.* vii, 153.

<sup>280</sup> Wood, *Athenae Oxon.*, iii (1817 edn.) 83-4; *CCED*; GA, P39 IN 1/1; below, Cirencester, social hist.

<sup>281</sup> GA, P39/1/1, 1653; *Glos. N&Q*, iii, 71; ix, 167-8. The date of the alleged occurrence, 24 Feb. 1646/7 (though recorded 6½ years later), was shortly after Charles I was handed over to Parliament, so there may have been Royalist significance.

<sup>282</sup> *CCED*; below, Cirencester, social hist.

<sup>283</sup> *CCED*; Reece, 'Alexander Gregory'.

<sup>284</sup> GDR, V5/39T/1.

<sup>285</sup> *CCED*; Burke, *Landed Gentry* (1879 edn.), ii, 1746; he was painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence: <http://www.artnet.com/artists/thomas-lawrence/portrait-of-rev-william-shippen-willes-of-astrop-mFFsX2IwfdUGVXXmyNemQA2> (accessed 16 June 2021).

<sup>286</sup> Hockaday Abs; below, Stratton: religious hist.

<sup>287</sup> GA, D2593/2/323.

<sup>288</sup> Above, Church origins and parochial organisation.

<sup>289</sup> GA, P39 VE2/1; below, Stratton: religious hist.

<sup>290</sup> GA, P39 MI1/1.

<sup>291</sup> Munden, *Religious Census*, 248.

<sup>292</sup> GA, P39 MI1/1.

<sup>293</sup> GA, P39 VE2/1-3.

during the 1970s and 1980s, at which two churchwardens and other officers were chosen; there were usually c.20 parishioners on the electoral roll.<sup>294</sup> In 1997 Baunton was stated to be the smallest and weakest in terms of numbers and finances of the four parishes that then made up the benefice.<sup>295</sup> Parochial church council meetings for Baunton continued to be held four or five times annually during the early 2000s, and a pattern of weekly Sunday morning services and monthly evensong services in summer was established or continued in 2001.<sup>296</sup>

## CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

### *Church Building*

Eighteenth-century commentators, unaware of the fifteenth-century wall painting of St. Christopher, were rather disparaging in their comments upon the church, referring to it as 'a small mean building' consisting of only a nave,<sup>297</sup> and as being 'small without a steeple.'<sup>298</sup> The mural painting of St. Christopher ferrying a child across a river, which dominates the nave north wall, was discovered c.1737 and left exposed 'for some time, and attracted the curiosity of many persons,' but was then covered over.<sup>299</sup> It was rediscovered during church restoration, 1876-7, and conservation work was carried out c.1936, c.1959 and 2003.<sup>300</sup>

The church retains its 12th-century proportions, with its small rubblestone nave divided from a coursed limestone chancel by a Norman arch.<sup>301</sup> The fenestration is later, but medieval, and there is no east window. The south porch is Tudor with door fittings of the same period. Evidence of doors and a stairway to the rood loft survive, and part of the Perpendicular rood screen itself has been reused as a reredos. The upturned 12th-century font bowl forms the base for its polygonal 16th-century replacement. Displayed along the south wall is a medieval altar frontal of embroidered silk, featuring a crucifixion, double-headed eagles and a rebus, perhaps signifying the donor's name.<sup>302</sup> Within a modest open bellcote at the apex of the nave west wall hang two bells of 1776 by Thomas Rudhall.<sup>303</sup> The church possesses a silver chalice with paten cover dated 1577.<sup>304</sup> A general restoration by Waller and Son in 1876 added a vestry adjoining the chancel north wall, and renewed the roof, as well as uncovering the mural painting;<sup>305</sup> some windows were damaged by intruders while the restoration was in progress.<sup>306</sup> Further church repairs were undertaken and a new heating system installed in 1963-4.<sup>307</sup>

## NONCONFORMITY

Alexander Gregory, curate in 1642, may have held moderate Puritan or Presbyterian beliefs.<sup>308</sup> The minister in 1676 claimed that there were no nonconformists in Baunton,<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> GA, P39 VE2/2.

<sup>295</sup> GA, P39 IN 4/10.

<sup>296</sup> GA, P39 VE2/3.

<sup>297</sup> Bigland, *Glos.* I, 145.

<sup>298</sup> Rudder, *Glos.* 267.

<sup>299</sup> GA, P86/1 IN 6/3, f. 93v.

<sup>300</sup> GA P39 IN/4/1; P39 VE2/3, 19 May 2003.

<sup>301</sup> This para: NHL 1340878; Verey and Brooks, *Glos.* I, 162-3.

<sup>302</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, 18 (1901), 70-3, with plates (copy in GA, P39/MI/2). The name (perhaps the donor) may be John Aston. It was restored in 1876: GA, P39/IN/4/3.

<sup>303</sup> *Glos. Ch. Bells*, 139.

<sup>304</sup> *Glos. Ch. Plate*, 17.

<sup>305</sup> *North Wilts. Herald*, 23 Dec. 1876, p. 8.

<sup>306</sup> *Glouc. Jnl.*, 15 July 1876, p. 8.

<sup>307</sup> GA, P39/CW/3/1-2

<sup>308</sup> GDR 207; *Glos.Hist.* 11 (1997) 2-9.

<sup>309</sup> *Compton Census* (ed. Whiteman), 542.

but two inhabitants underwent adult baptism in 1708 and 1709,<sup>310</sup> and the house of one of them, Robert Hancocks, was certified for dissenting worship in 1727.<sup>311</sup> He was presumably the ‘teacher’ in whose house six Anabaptists were said to meet in 1735 and 1743;<sup>312</sup> no later record of nonconformist worship in the parish is recorded.

## ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Christopher George, lord of Baunton manor 1556-99, was included on a list of Catholic sympathisers dated 1574.<sup>313</sup> No recusants were reported in the parish in 1676,<sup>314</sup> and no Roman Catholic worship in the parish has been recorded subsequently.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### MANORIAL GOVERNMENT

No manorial records are known to survive pertaining to either Baunton or Prior’s Court manors. A tenant of Baunton manor was required to pay suit of court twice each year in 1386 and forfeit a heriot on the last life.<sup>315</sup> Courts leet and baron, and perquisites of waifs, strays and felons were included in a valuation of Baunton manor in 1653.<sup>316</sup> Tenants were admitted to land within the manor at a court held in 1666.<sup>317</sup>

### PARISH GOVERNMENT

#### *Before 1894*

A volume of overseers’ accounts extending from 1681 to 1719 is the only parish record, apart from registers, known to survive from before the later 19th century.<sup>318</sup> It is wrongly labelled churchwarden accounts, although there is one item of expenditure, in 1713, on the church bells.

Thomas Porter, a local farmer, was recorded as highway surveyor in 1856.<sup>319</sup> In 1872 two parish overseers were appointed but no-one qualified to be parish constable.<sup>320</sup> In 1836 Baunton became a constituent of Cirencester poor law union, in 1863 of Cirencester highway district, and in 1873 of Cirencester rural sanitary district.<sup>321</sup>

#### *From 1894*

Following a well-attended lecture in Baunton schoolroom about parish councils in September 1894, a parish meeting was inaugurated under the chairmanship of the vicar,

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<sup>310</sup> GA, D1417/2/1.

<sup>311</sup> A. Jones (ed.), *Dissenters’ Meeting-House Certificates* (Glos. Record Ser. 32), 30 (no. 225).

<sup>312</sup> *Benson’s Survey*, 147.

<sup>313</sup> *Miscellanea*, vol. 8, 1913 (Catholic Record Soc.), 127.

<sup>314</sup> *Compton Census* (ed. Whiteman), 542.

<sup>315</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/38.

<sup>316</sup> GA D45/E7.

<sup>317</sup> GA P86/1/CH/1/43.

<sup>318</sup> GA P39/OV/2/1; see also F.H. Hinton’s comments in GA P39/IN/4/1, and above, social hist., social welfare.

<sup>319</sup> *Wilts. & Glos. Standard*, 19 April 1856.

<sup>320</sup> *Wilts. & Glos. Standard*, 6 April 1872.

<sup>321</sup> Youngs, *Admin Units*, 608-9; GA HB5 (catalogue); GA DA22/100/1.

E.H. Ball.<sup>322</sup> In the same year Baunton entered Cirencester rural district, but did not nominate a councillor to represent the parish.<sup>323</sup> Parish meetings may have been held in Baunton, although no minutes survive until 1939, and at times Baunton business may have been discussed at Stratton parish council meetings.<sup>324</sup> Parish meetings were held and minuted in Baunton between 1939 and 1976, when the last was held; although intended to take place annually, only five meetings appear to have taken place between 1953 and 1973.<sup>325</sup> Until 1967 (when three attended) meetings were held in the schoolroom; the next meeting, in 1973, attended by eight, took place in the church.<sup>326</sup> Business discussed at parish meetings included housing provision, water supply and a village trust fund. In 1974 the meeting applied to become a parish council, which replaced it and met for the first time in 1976.<sup>327</sup> In 2019 six councillors were elected unopposed and in 2020 and 2021 an annual meeting and four quarterly meetings of the council were held.<sup>328</sup>

[11,945 words]

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<sup>322</sup> *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 8 Sept 1894, p. 5; 8 Dec. 1894, p. 4.

<sup>323</sup> *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 8 Dec 1894, p. 3.

<sup>324</sup> *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 5 Apr. 1902, p. 3, implies a Baunton parish meeting; *Wilts. & Gos. Standard*, 1 Jan 1902, p. 5 refers to a Stratton-with-Baunton parish council meeting. *Glos. Echo*, 13 Oct 1933, p. 6 reports an objection raised by Baunton parish meeting.

<sup>325</sup> GA, P39a PC/1/1.

<sup>326</sup> GA, P39a PC/1/1.

<sup>327</sup> GA, P39a PC/1/1.

<sup>328</sup> [https://www.baunton.org.uk/parish\\_council.html](https://www.baunton.org.uk/parish_council.html) (accessed 29 July 2021).