

## Anglo-Saxon to Domesday

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The archaeological record concerning 5th and 6th century Cirencester is inconclusive. One interpretation has the town suddenly abandoned in the fifth century, possibly due to an outbreak of a virulent plague and the surviving inhabitants taking refuge in the amphitheatre. This might explain the hundred of Chesterton occurring just outside Cirencester, the fortified amphitheatre being the 'chester' taken by the Anglo-Saxons at the battle of Derham in 577.<sup>1</sup> According to the account of the battle Cealwin and Cuthwin, kings of the West Saxons, fought against the Britons led by Commal, Condidan and Farinmail, at Derham (*Deorham*) and took many camps from them, including Cirencester.<sup>2</sup> An alternative interpretation sees a continuation of civic life at Cirencester, such that it was the location of a school in the Roman tradition attended by Gildas in the sixth century. This would explain why Cirencester was thought worth taking in 577. The absence of Cirencester from the list of the twenty-eight cities of Britain recorded in the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum* may be explained by a misinterpretation of *Kaer Lirion*, *Lerion* or *Lergum* for Leicester rather than Cirencester.<sup>3</sup>

In the 7th century Cirencester became a frontier garrison against the Mercians.<sup>4</sup> In 628 the West Saxon kings Cynegils (611-?642) and Cwichelm (d.636) fought against the Mercian king Penda (626/632-655) near the town of Cirencester (*quod vulgari sermon Cirnceastre*).<sup>5</sup> Having fought until nightfall the two camps came to an agreement, by which Penda took Cirencester. The largely Christian territory of the Hwiccas were thus incorporated into pagan Mercia.<sup>6</sup> The conquered territory, organised into the new principality of the Hwicce, was entrusted to a leading Northumbrian family.<sup>7</sup> A burial site excavated in 1909 may have been that of a warrior who accompanied Penda to Cirencester in 628. The Mercian period of occupation is attested to by coin finds. Two early pennies (675-750) have been found at Cirencester, as also two coins from the reign of the Mercian king Cenwulf (796-821), one struck at Rochester and the other at London.<sup>8</sup>

Antiquarian tradition has the Anglo-Saxon minister at Cirencester founded by a Saxon named Alwyn in the reign of King Egbert (802x839).<sup>9</sup> Archaeological evidence suggests the traditional dating of the foundation may be relatively accurate.<sup>10</sup> The Danish invasions of the 9th to 11th centuries impoverished Mercian churches through tributes and Danegeld contributions, as well as physically if the churches stood in the path of a pagan army. In 879 the army of pagans left

<sup>1</sup> A. Selkirk, 'Cirencester. Looking at 12 years of excavation in the town', *Current Archaeology* 29 (1971), 147-9; A. McWhirr, L. Viner & C. Wells, *Romano-British Cemeteries at Cirencester* (Cirencester Excavations II, Cirencester, 1982), 27.

<sup>2</sup> J.A. Giles (ed.), *A-S Chron.* (1914), 12.

<sup>3</sup> A. Breeze, 'Gildas and the Schools of Cirencester' 90 *The Antiquities Journal* (2010), 131-138.

<sup>4</sup> Rudder, *History and Antiquities*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> *A-S Chron.*, 16; A. Campbell (ed.), *The Chronicle of Aethelweard* (London, 1962), 1-56.

<sup>6</sup> E.I. Cambria, *The Eosteric Codex: Anglo-Saxon Paganism* (2015), 85.

<sup>7</sup> H.P.R. Finberg, *Early Charters of the West Midlands* (1961), 167.

<sup>8</sup> *Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds* [<https://emc.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/>].

<sup>9</sup> J. Collinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset* (Bath, 1791), II, 191.

<sup>10</sup> D. Wilkinson and A. McWhirr, *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey* (Cirencester Excavations IV, Cirencester 1998), 15.

Chippenham, as they had promised, and went to Cirencester (*Cairceri*) in the southern part of the land of the Hwicce. The army stayed at Cirencester for a year. On leaving Cirencester the army went to the East Angles (*ad Orientales Anglos perrexit*).<sup>11</sup> The Danes probably raided Cirencester again in 893 and in 1015, when the Anglo-Saxon church may have been damaged.<sup>12</sup>

In the 10th and 11th centuries Cirencester was visited by several of the English kings. King Aethelstan held a council at Cirencester in 935, attended by the sub-kings Constantin, Owain, Hywel, Idwal and Morgan. Aethelstan's charter records the location as 'in the city once built by the Romans called Cirencester (*Cirnecester*).<sup>13</sup> In 956 King Eadwig (955-959) made a grant at Cirencester to Worcester minster of five hides of land at Phepson in Worcestershire with salt-furnaces.<sup>14</sup> A synodical council held at Cirencester in 984 found Aelfric Cild (*dux, fl.990x1006*) guilty of high treason. He was expelled and his lands at Wormleighton, South Cerney and Farnborough forfeit to King Aethelred (978-1016).<sup>15</sup> At Easter in 1020 King Canute held a mycelgemot/meeting at Cirencester where Aethelweard (*dux, fl. 1018-1020*) and Eadwig ('King of the Ceorls', put to flight in 1017) were outlawed.<sup>16</sup>

At the time of Domesday Alwin the sheriff held two hides of land in Cirencester among his extensive Gloucestershire holdings.<sup>17</sup>

## Medieval Topography and Built Environment

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### **Communications**

The Roman roads remained important arteries for cross-country and local travel throughout this period<sup>18</sup> and the conjunction of the Fosse Way, Ermin Street, Akeman Street and the Whiteway at Cirencester gave the town strategic importance. The former Roman gates marked the entrances to the town, but within the walls the medieval road pattern developed independently of the Roman layout.<sup>19</sup> To the north of the town, two early routes of significance were a salt-way from Droitwich to Lechlade, and the old Gloucester-London road (often called the Welsh Way).<sup>20</sup> Cirencester was also part of the river-route to London, as indicated in the grants of the office of swanherd and commissions into offences relating to the royal swans along all the Thames, and its streams and tributaries, extending to Cirencester.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>11</sup> S. Keynes and M. Lapidge (eds), *Alfred the Great* (Harmondsworth, 1983), 67-110; *A-S Chron.* 54-5.

<sup>12</sup> Wilkinson & McWhirr, *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey*, 15.

<sup>13</sup> P. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (1968), no.1792.

<sup>14</sup> Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no.633; *Hemingi Chartularium ecclesie Wigorniensis*, 333; cf. Delia Hooke, *Worcestershire Anglo-Saxon Charter Bounds* (Woodbridge, 1990), 167.

<sup>15</sup> Sawyer, no.937; *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, VI, n.1312.

<sup>16</sup> *A-S Chron.*, 108; Rudder, *History and Antiquities*, 11.

<sup>17</sup> J. Morris, *Domesday Book Gloucestershire* (1982), 31; <https://opendomesday.org/name/alwin-the-sheriff-of-gloucestershire/>.

<sup>18</sup> F.M. Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England', *Economic History Review* 7 (1936), 1-21.

<sup>19</sup> T. Darvill & C. Gerrard, *Cirencester: Town and Landscape* (Cirencester, 1994), 91, 98.

<sup>20</sup> VCH Glos VII, 5, 14, 150-1.

<sup>21</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1408-1413*, p.203; *Cal. Pat. 1436-1441*, pp.225, 242; *Cal. Pat. 1441-1445*, p.153; *Cal. Pat. 1461-1467*,

By the late 15th century the roads within Cirencester were evidently in a state of some disrepair. In 1478 a petition came before parliament requesting the authority to force residents to pay for paving the streets in front of their houses. The people of the town complained that the paving of the town was defective to the point of being dangerous, but the inhabitants of the town could not be compelled to repair the paving under common law, and there were no communal funds available to pay for it. By the authority of parliament all persons with messuages, shops, tenements or other hereditaments in the town would henceforth assemble at Michaelmas to choose two conservators of paving who would ensure the maintenance of the paving in front of the said properties and out to the middle of the road in case of default by a proprietor and distraint them for the expense.<sup>22</sup>

Various merchants left sums of money for the repair of roads surrounding Cirencester. John Jones left 40s 'to the repair of the highways near Cirencester where it will be most necessary'.<sup>23</sup> Robert Richards (d.1483) was more generous and more specific requiring his executors to find £20 to expend upon the repair of the highways between Cirencester and the manor of Shuebrugge, and elsewhere.<sup>24</sup> Hugh Norres, senior (d.1535), left £5 for the repair of highways in Cirencester where the townsmen thought best;<sup>25</sup> and Gyls Paratt (d.1538) left 20s for the mending of highways.<sup>26</sup>

### **Cirencester Town**

At some point after the Conquest a castle was built at Cirencester, known from a single reference in the *Gesta Stephani* and thought to have been a motte and bailey or ringwork type.<sup>27</sup> Its location is not recorded. It may have stood on the western side of the town, on the site now occupied by Cirencester Park Mansion, with the motte close to Tetbury Road and the bailey extending north alongside Park Lane, allowing the castle to control access to the town from the west.<sup>28</sup> The curved area defined by Castle Street, Park Street and Black Jack Street may represent an outer bailey projecting towards the market place which was later colonised as the town flourished - the small plots in this area having little or no attached land, reminiscent of the infill which survived in the Market Place until the 19th century.

The minster continued to control much of the land to the east of Ermin Street, and this continued after the foundation of the St Mary's Abbey in 1117. The Abbey occupied much of the north-eastern part of the medieval town, and comprised the abbey church, with claustral buildings to the north, including cloister, chapter house, library, muniment room, refectory, dormitory and infirmary. The service buildings included kitchens, storehouses, stables, a hay barn, a fishpond, the abbey mills and a woolhouse as well as a number of lodgings and chambers, while two gatehouses controlled access into the abbey precinct<sup>29</sup>. The gates were the Spyringate in the north-eastern corner of the precinct, which led onto the White Way and on to Winchcombe and Worcester, and the Almerly Gate in Gosditch Street. The only structure which now survives is the Spyringate,

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pp.84, 278; *Cal. Pat. 1467-1477*, pp.222, 235; *Cal. Pat. 1477-1485*, pp.11, 24.

<sup>22</sup> TNA, SC 8/30/1459.

<sup>23</sup> TNA, PROB 11/17/352.

<sup>24</sup> GA, D4590/3/1.

<sup>25</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, Hugh Norres senior (1535).

<sup>26</sup> Worcs R. O., wills, Gyls Paratt (1538).

<sup>27</sup> *Gesta Stephani*, ed. K.R. Potter (Oxford, 1976), 138.

<sup>28</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester: Town and Landscape*, 107.

<sup>29</sup> E.A. Fuller, 'Cirencester Abbey Church', *Trans. BGAS* 17 (1892-3), 45

although the second gate is recorded as having been of similar construction<sup>30</sup>. The line of the precinct wall can be traced, and stretches survive in Gosditch Street and to the east of the present churchyard<sup>31</sup>. Work undertaken in 1964 revealed that the claustral buildings stood in the area of Abbey House and that the church was further to the south-east<sup>32</sup>.

By the post-Conquest period settlement at Cirencester was concentrated in the area to the north of Lewis Lane/Querns Lane and to the west of the abbey precinct. Plots had been laid out along both sides of Ermin Street as it ran north-south through the town, forming Dollar, Gosditch and Cricklade Streets and the Market Place. To the south of the market place the alignment of this road had shifted west of the Roman line, perhaps after the foundation of the minster church. Plots had also been laid out along the southern side of Castle Street, the northern side of Park Street and Black Jack Street and south of Coxwell Lane.<sup>33</sup>

The plots along either side of Dyer Street had been laid out by 1200 at the latest, representing a 12th century expansion of the settlement to the south-east. The plots were laid out over open field strips, preserving the S-shape of the strips in their boundaries.<sup>34</sup> The open field may have provided the only available space for expansion within the urban area by that date. Expansion also took place along Cecily Hill, extending the medieval settlement beyond the Roman defences, and incorporating the site of the church of St Cecilia and its churchyard on the southern side of the road. This area may have originated as an area of suburban settlement associated with an extra-mural chapel on the main road into town from Minchinhampton and Stroud.<sup>35</sup>

The medieval market place extended from the northern end of Gosditch Street to the northern end of Cricklade Street, and stretching east into Dyer Street from c.1200. A 1343 complaint by the townspeople against the abbey indicates that infilling of the area began in the early 13th century.<sup>36</sup> The High Cross stood at the western end of the market place with the Pig Cross at the northern end of Dyer Street opposite the entrance to the Waterloo Passage. Over time the area between the two crosses became filled with buildings forming the Shambles, Butcher Row, Butter Row and Shoe Lane. The market place also housed the abbot's gaol of 1221, the Boothall, the parish stocks and blindhouse, and closer to Dyer Street, the saltewiche.<sup>37</sup>

The boundary of the medieval township appears to have been adopted for the parliamentary borough in 1571. The exact line of the boundary was not recorded until the 19th century, but evidence for the medieval line is indicated by the sites of three stone crosses: one at the junction of Sheep Street and Castle Street, another at the southern end of Cricklade Street and the third in London Road near the bridge over the Churn. The line of the boundary would have run along Quern's Lane and Lewis Lane to follow the course of Sheep Street and Park Street, enclosing the properties along Cecily Hill as far as the Gumstool Brook, and then following the river before running along the back of Thomas Street and Gloucester. To the east the boundary ran along

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<sup>30</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester*, 108-9.

<sup>31</sup> D. Wilkinson & A. McWhirr, *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church & Medieval Abbey* (Cirencester, 1998), 1

<sup>32</sup> Wilkinson & McWhirr, *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church & Medieval Abbey*, 1

<sup>33</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester*, Figure 34.

<sup>34</sup> R. Reece & P. Broxton, 'S-Shaped Strips under Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 132 (2014), 125-9.

<sup>35</sup> A. D. McWhirr, *Studies in the archaeology and history of Cirencester* (British Archaeological Reports, 1976), 97.

<sup>36</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester*, 103.

<sup>37</sup> W. St Clair Baddeley, *A History of Cirencester* (Cirencester, 1924); E.A., Fuller 'Ancient Cirencester, and its streets and hundreds', *Wilts. Arch. & Nat. Hist. Mag.* 14 (1874), 220.

Gloucester Street, Dollar Street and Gosditch Street, excluding all parts of the abbey precinct, before following the river alongside the abbey wall.<sup>38</sup>

Expansion of the medieval settlement beyond the medieval bounds appears to have been underway by the later 12th century. This expansion took the form of suburban development along both sides of Gloucester Street, stretching north from the line of the Roman town wall. The Hospital of St John the Evangelist, founded 1168/9<sup>39</sup> lay at the junction of Gloucester Street with Spitalgate Lane, indicating that this area was relatively undeveloped at that date. A second phase of suburban development took place in the later 13th century, with a series of regular plots laid out further north along both sides of Gloucester Street, incorporating the site of the Hospital of St Lawrence, founded in the later 13th century,<sup>40</sup> again indicating that settlement had not expanded this far north at that date.

## Manors and Estates

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### **Cirencester**

The manor of Cirencester formed part of the ancient royal demesne. In 1066 it comprised five hides of land and was held by the king, the queen receiving the wool from the sheep.<sup>41</sup> William I granted it to William fitzOsbern, earl of Hereford (1067 x 1071) from whom it descended to his son, Earl Roger. Upon his revolt in 1075, the manor of Cirencester reverted to the Crown.<sup>42</sup>

In c.1155 Henry II granted his manor of Cirencester to the abbot and convent of Cirencester to hold 'during pleasure' for the completion of their abbey church.<sup>43</sup> The abbot and convent paid a farm of £29 for the vill, and for the hundred court of the liberty of the seven hundreds.<sup>44</sup> At the consecration of the abbey church in 1176 Henry granted that the church and canons should hold the rent due from Cirencester forever.<sup>45</sup> A further grant to the abbey, by Richard I in 1189, of Minety and the seven hundreds, in addition to the manor of Cirencester, in return for a farm of £30, may have confirmed and extended a situation which already existed.<sup>46</sup> At this date the abbot and convent received wide franchises throughout these lands,<sup>47</sup> as well as exemption from geld, aids, castle ward and other exactions and quittance from tolls. They paid £100 for this charter.<sup>48</sup> In 1391 the abbot requested a confirmation of the 1189 charter, which substituted for the 'ancient

<sup>38</sup> McWhirr, *Studies in the archaeology and history of Cirencester*, 103-4.

<sup>39</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester*, 111.

<sup>40</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester*, 113.

<sup>41</sup> TNA, E 31/2/1/6238.

<sup>42</sup> *ODNB*, 'William fitz Osbern, earl (d. 1071)'; *ODNB*, 'Breteuil, Roger de , earl of Hereford (fl. 1071–1087)'.  
<sup>43</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, nos. 66, 67/19; *English Lawsuits from William I to Richard I*, II, no.347; *Red Book of the Exchequer*, II, 679.

<sup>44</sup> *Pipe R 1156-8*, (Rec. Com.), 49. That this included the hundred court is implicit in the term blanch'.

<sup>45</sup> *The Historical Collections of Walter of Coventry* (Rolls Series 58), I, 270..

<sup>46</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, nos.32, 77/17.

<sup>47</sup> soc and soke, toll and team, infangthief and outfanthief, 'hamsoca', 'gritbruch', 'blodwite', 'murdro', 'forstal' 'flemenefrit', 'ordel' et 'oreste'.

<sup>48</sup> *Pipe R 1190* (PRS n.s. 1), 58.

and disused' word flemenfrit a grant of all manner of the goods and chattels of felons and fugitives in the manor, township and seven hundreds.<sup>49</sup> Free tenants could still appeal to the king's court for justice if it was not given within the abbot's court.<sup>50</sup>

One right not specified in the 1189 charter was tallage, and Cirencester continued to be tallaged by the Crown throughout John's reign,<sup>51</sup> as it had during the reigns of his father and brother.<sup>52</sup> In 1223, during the minority of Henry III, this right came into question, and orders to tallage the vill were respited until the abbot's charters could be inspected in the Exchequer.<sup>53</sup> In 1246 Henry III allowed the abbot to tallage his men of Cirencester.<sup>54</sup> The grant was renewed in 1249 and 1253,<sup>55</sup> but in 1259 the king once more tallaged Cirencester as of his own right.<sup>56</sup>

Early in Edward I's reign the men of Cirencester resisted the king's tallage during the vacancy of the abbey, offering the king a gift of a palfrey worth 5 m. (£3 6s. 8d.) in lieu.<sup>57</sup> The abbot requested and was granted the right to tallage the manor in 1305,<sup>58</sup> and again in 1312.<sup>59</sup> This, the last royal tallage in England,<sup>60</sup> was the occasion of the abbot's most bitter battle over the issue.<sup>61</sup> A case was brought in the Exchequer by Nicholas de Stratton against the abbot, whom he claimed was usurping the royal rights. It was not resolved until 1321, when Edward II agreed that Richard's charter implied that the abbot should have a grant of tallage,<sup>62</sup> despite this not being expressly mentioned.<sup>63</sup> The abbot petitioned that the right be included in the king's confirmation charter for Cirencester.<sup>64</sup> This was not granted until 1343 when the king's charter expressly mention the abbot's rights of tallage,<sup>65</sup> albeit some thirty years after the last royal tallage had been levied.

The farm of £30 for the manor of Cirencester, town of Minety and the seven hundreds was not due to be paid at the king's Exchequer for the whole period of tenure of the abbot and convent. In 1287 the farm was assigned for life by Edward I to Matthew, son of John.<sup>66</sup> In 1299 it was assigned

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<sup>49</sup> TNA, SC 8/249/12448.

<sup>50</sup> TNA, KB 26/66, m.19.

<sup>51</sup> *Pipe R* 1203 (PRS n.s. 55), 63; *Cal. Mem.* 1207-8, 48.

<sup>52</sup> *Pipe R*. 1186-7 (PRS 37), 141; *Pipe R* 1187-8 (PRS 38), 110; *Pipe R* 1190, 55; *Pipe R* 1191-2 (PRS n.s. 2), 95; *Pipe R* 1195 (PRS n.s. 7), 182.

<sup>53</sup> *Cal. Fine 8 Hen. III*, 4-5, 31 [[https://finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/calendar/roll\\_021.html](https://finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/calendar/roll_021.html)]. An inspection of the abbot's charter certainly occurred in 1232 (*Cal. Chart.* 1226-1253, 145).

<sup>54</sup> *Cal. Close* 1242-1247, 404.

<sup>55</sup> *Cal. Close* 1248-1251, 176; *Ciren. Cart. I*, 48.

<sup>56</sup> *Cal. Fine* 35 Hen. III, 82.

<sup>57</sup> TNA, SC 1/28/183.

<sup>58</sup> TNA, SC 8/178/8881; *Ciren. Cart. I*, 42.

<sup>59</sup> *Cal. Close* 1307-1313, 520; *Ciren. Cart. I*, 46.

<sup>60</sup> J.F. Hadwin, 'The Last Royal Tallages', *English Historical Review* 96 (1981), 344-58.

<sup>61</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 118-19; discussed in E.A. Fuller, 'Cirencester: Manor and Town', *Trans. BGAS* 9 (1884-5), 315-17.

<sup>62</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 120/54.

<sup>63</sup> A point made by Master Nicholas de Stratton in 1312: "nulla mentione facta de aliquot tallagio reservato rel retento seu retinendo inde domino R.":TNA, PRO E 368/84, m.25d.

<sup>64</sup> TNA, SC 8/260/12966.

<sup>65</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 123/73, 130, 134/317;

<sup>66</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1281-1292, 269-70; *Cal. Close* 1279-1288, 480.

as part of the dower of Queen Margaret.<sup>67</sup> In 1319 Edward II gifted the farm to his brother, Edmund of Woodstock.<sup>68</sup> Following his death in 1330 the revenues were temporarily diverted to Queen Isabella,<sup>69</sup> but were restored to his late wife, Margaret countess of Kent by the end of that year.<sup>70</sup> In 1331, on account of the minority of Edmund of Woodstock's heir, the revenues were granted to Edmund de Bohun.<sup>71</sup> Following the majority of John, earl of Kent the farm due from Cirencester returned to the descendants of Edmund of Woodstock until the Dissolution.<sup>72</sup>

Although Cirencester abbey was to retain seisin of the manor until it was dissolved in 1539, exactly what this tenure included was contested. Following a petition from the townsmen in 1155, Henry II ordered the abbot to stop interfering with the free tenements which his men of Cirencester held in the vill.<sup>73</sup> The accession of a new king repeatedly provided an opportunity for the townsmen to challenge the abbey's rights within the manor, and for the abbey to seek to further secure its rights. At issue for the agricultural community were the services owed to the lord of the manor, while the mercantile community contested the question of whether Cirencester was a borough.<sup>74</sup>

The earliest statement of the customs and services due from the men of Cirencester on the king's demesne probably dates from c.1155, when Henry II granted the manor to the keeping of the abbey.<sup>75</sup> The services due from 57 tenancies were given in more or less detail, but no man was so free that he did not have to plough or carry with a cart if he had one.<sup>76</sup> An inquisition taken in John's reign established again the services due in the time of Henry II, which were now owed to the abbot of Cirencester.<sup>77</sup> This inquisition differed markedly from the first: no ploughings were owed, various payments were owed in lieu of labour service, and the obligation to pay merchet and tol were specified. The greater detail presented in the later statement indicates that it was a response to resistance in the performance of such services. A contemporary inquisition from 1209 established the boon-works due from the young men of Cirencester and from outsiders staying in the vill in harvest-season, after complaint was made to the full county court of Gloucester that the abbot exacted three days of work at harvest (*tres bederipas*) from only these individuals.<sup>78</sup> An inquisition in the Cirencester halmote court established that such works were due not from youths still living with their parents, who should be covered by their parents' *bederipas*, but only from those who had left their parents' house and were now *sulfoldes* (landless husbandman). In return they could buy and sell any merchandise (except horses) found within the town for a year following their service, exempt from payment of tol.<sup>79</sup> Outsiders who were residing in Cirencester

<sup>67</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1292-1301, 453. This was confirmed by Edward II whilst he was Prince of Wales: *Cal. Pat.* 1307-13, 217.

<sup>68</sup> *Cal. Chart* 1300-1326, 406.

<sup>69</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1327-1330, 511, 519.

<sup>70</sup> *Cal. Close* 1330-1333, 35.

<sup>71</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1330-1334, 99; *Cal. Pat.* , 1334-1338, 109; *Cal. Close* 1341-1343, 79-80.

<sup>72</sup> *Cal. Inq. p. m.*, X, 42; *Cal. Close* 1364-1368, 453-4; *Cal. Fine* 1405-1413, 212; *Cal. Inq. p. m.*, XXV, 369.

<sup>73</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 75; D. Rollison, *Commune, Country and Commonwealth* (Woodbridge, 2011), 20.

<sup>74</sup> R. H. Hilton, *A Medieval Society: The West Midlands at the end of the Thirteenth Century* (1966), 156-7.

<sup>75</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.20.

<sup>76</sup> E A. Fuller, 'Tenures – of land, by Customary Tenants in Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 2 (1877-78), 285-319.

<sup>77</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.267/124. This survey is also preserved in TNA, C 115/76, f. 253v.

<sup>78</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.266/123.

<sup>79</sup> H. Fox, 'Exploitation of the Landless by Lords and Tenants in Early Medieval England' in Z. Razi & R. Smith (eds), *Medieval Society and the Manor Court* (Oxford, 1996), 518-68.

on midsummer eve were liable to do the same three bederipas, but without the exemption from tol.

The attainment by Henry III of his majority provided the next opportunity for the men of Cirencester to challenge the abbot's demands. In 1224 they offered, and in 1225 paid, a fine of 10 m. (£6 6s. 8d.) for an inquisition into the customary services they owed for their Cirencester land before Richard I gave the manor to the abbot at fee-farm.<sup>80</sup> Their initiative was quashed later that year, however, by the abbot who paid twice as much to have a similar inquisition take place before the king at Westminster.<sup>81</sup> This inquisition, removed from the halimote court of Cirencester, went forward because it was beyond the reach of the abbot's tenants who, whilst personally free, held land which was in villeinage.<sup>82</sup> Unsurprisingly, and in addition to the services owed by individual tenancies, the jury found that everyone else who resided or stayed on the king's land in Cirencester owed three boon-works at harvest, three mowings, tax (*gablium*) and tol and could not marry their daughters without the lord's licence. Those who brewed beer for their own consumption were exempt from tol. The king's writ ordered the men of Cirencester to allow the abbot seisin of these customs and services.<sup>83</sup>

In 1247 the abbot and convent received confirmation of the liberties and customs granted to them by Henry I and Richard I, whether used yet or not.<sup>84</sup> In 1306 the men of Cirencester took the opportunity of Edward I's trailbaston enquiries to complain that the abbot's men had unlawfully broken his tenants' hand-mills and mill-stones. Their complaint failed because they owed suit at the abbot's mills according to the custom of the manor.<sup>85</sup> To preclude them from instigating any future prosecution on this point, the abbot made them remit any action which they might have had or have by reason of any trespass he or his men had done against them.<sup>86</sup>

Cirencester was interchangeably referred to as either a vill or a borough in early government records,<sup>87</sup> and probably would have evolved into a borough if Henry II had not granted the keeping of the manor to Cirencester abbey in 1155. This was very different from having been granted a borough charter. In 1342 the men of Cirencester claimed to have been granted such a charter by Henry I, which they alleged that the abbot had burnt in 1292.<sup>88</sup> The abbot paid the king a fine of £100 to obtain a new charter. Among other rights this established that in future the abbot and convent should hold Cirencester freely 'and not be impleaded by the king or his successors for any borough in Cirencester'.<sup>89</sup> There is no evidence that a borough charter existed, and no complaint was made at the time of the alleged offence. Had such a charter existed the abbot would presumably have used it in 1221, when he claimed that his charter named Cirencester as a

<sup>80</sup> TNA, E 372/69; E 372/70; *Cal. Fine* 9 Hen. III, 273.

<sup>81</sup> *Cal. Fine* 9 Hen. III, 294.

<sup>82</sup> *Cur. Reg.*, XII, no.1477; *Ciren. Cart. I*, 13/904; TNA, C 115/76, f. 142v. The sheriff of Gloucestershire was ordered to send knights and free tenants of Gloucestershire to Westminster to testify: *Cur. Reg.*, XII, no.896.

<sup>83</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 268/125.

<sup>84</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 49/36-7.

<sup>85</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 349; Fuller, 'Cirencester: Manor and Town', 303-315.

<sup>86</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 350.

<sup>87</sup> *Pipe R.* 1186 (PRS 36), 141; *Pipe R.* 1199 (PRS n.s. 12), 31; H.P.R. Finberg, *Gloucestershire Studies*, 68-79; *Ciren. Cart. I*, xxxvi-xl.

<sup>88</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 126.

<sup>89</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 123/73.

borough (*nominatur Burgus*), and that it was indeed a borough (*manerium illud est Burgus*).<sup>90</sup> In fact, his charter did not refer to Cirencester as a borough but as a manor.<sup>91</sup>

### **Chesterton**

Alwin's two hides of land in Cirencester, worth £10 in 1066, were held in 1086 by Hugh, subtenant of William fitz Baderon, lord of Monmouth, valued at only 70s.<sup>92</sup> A grant by Withenoc de Monmouth, lord of Monmouth (1075-82), to the abbey of St Florent at Saumur (Anjou) of a hide of land at Cirencester with a plough and oxen, seems not to have received royal confirmation.<sup>93</sup> The Domesday estate descended in the de Monmouth line until c.1250, to William's great-great-grandson, John de Monmouth, when it was first described as the manor of Chesterton.<sup>94</sup> The name, however, is recorded slightly earlier, in 1220, when *Cestreton* was assessed at one carucate.<sup>95</sup>

In the mid-13th century Ralph de Wysham surrendered his right to the manor of Chesterton to his lord, John de Monmouth, in order that he might then grant the manor to Geoffrey de Langley, lord of Siddington, and Matilda his wife, and their heirs.<sup>96</sup> The manor was held by a descendant of this family until 1511. Before the grant to Geoffrey, the manor had been held as dower by Gelewysa, widow of Ralph de Wysham's grandfather (also Ralph).<sup>97</sup> After Ralph surrendered the manor she held it directly of John de Monmouth<sup>98</sup> until his grant to Geoffrey de Langley, which stipulated that he and his heirs should be free to enter into the manor after the death of Gelewysa without contradiction.<sup>99</sup>

Geoffrey de Langley, the son of a minor Gloucestershire knight, rose to become chief justice of the forest and steward to Prince Edward. When he died in 1274, Chesterton formed part of a portfolio of estates worth £200 annually centred in Warwickshire and Gloucestershire, but extending to Somerset and Derby.<sup>100</sup> On his death Chesterton passed with the inheritance of his second wife, Matilda, and the lands of which they were jointly enfeoffed, to their son, Robert (d. by 1280).<sup>101</sup> After Robert's death Chesterton passed to his half-brother Sir Geoffrey de Langley (d.1297).<sup>102</sup> From Geoffrey the manor descended to his son, Sir Edmund de Langley (d.1316), and from Edmund through the line of his daughter Joan, wife of Roger de Ledecote.<sup>103</sup> In 1302, when Edmund's mother Emma quitclaimed the manor to him, there were still serfs as well as free

<sup>90</sup> D.M. Stenton (ed.), *Rolls of the Justices in Eyre being the rolls of Pleas and Assizes for Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire 1221, 1222* (Selden Society, 59), no.83.

<sup>91</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.31/4.

<sup>92</sup> TNA E 31/2/1/6502

<sup>93</sup> *Cal. Doc. France*, 407.

<sup>94</sup> P.R. Coss, *The Langley Cartulary* (Dugdale Society 32, 1980), no.82.

<sup>95</sup> *Book of Fees* (1920), I, 308-9.

<sup>96</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 21.

<sup>97</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 21.

<sup>98</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 22.

<sup>99</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 22.

<sup>100</sup> P. Coss, *The Langley Family and its Cartulary*, (Dugdale Society Occasional Papers 22, 1974), 4.

<sup>101</sup> Coss, 'Langley Family and Cartulary', 4.

<sup>102</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 740.

<sup>103</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 22.

tenants.<sup>104</sup> The first extant reference to the court of Chesterton dates from the period of Edmund's tenure.<sup>105</sup>

The manor descended from Joan and Roger de Ledecote to their son, Roger, who took the name 'de Chesterton'.<sup>106</sup> From Roger it descended to his daughter, Elizabeth, wife of John de Barndsley.<sup>107</sup> Their tenure of the manor was contested by the descendants of Edmund de Langley (d.1316) by his second wife. In 1417 John de Langley, son of John de Langley of Atherton-upon-Stour, Warwickshire, gained possession of the manor, which he then leased back to John de Barndsley.<sup>108</sup> John de Langley was noted as lord of Chesterton in the courts of the seven hundreds of Cirencester c.1421-1437.<sup>109</sup> From John de Langley the manor passed to his niece, Isabel de la Pole.<sup>110</sup> Isabel's husband, William de Langley of Knowlton, Kent, died in 1483, seised of the manor of Chesterton, with an annual value of £6 13s. 4d.<sup>111</sup> The manor then passed to William's son, another John de Langley of Knowlton, who sold it in 1511 to John Strange of Cirencester.<sup>112</sup>

Strange had previously acquired land in the manor, beginning in 1501 with a toft, 4 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow and 4 acres of pasture in Cirencester and Chesterton.<sup>113</sup> These premises had been recovered by the grantees in the same year, and as an attorney in the common pleas for Gloucestershire, Strange may have represented them, the grant representing his payment. In 1507 he purchased for £26 13s. 4d. a larger parcel of land in Chesterton, comprising a messuage, 60 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow and 4 acres of pasture, from John de Langley.<sup>114</sup> The 1511 sale, of 2 messuages, 4 tofts, 300 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, and 40 acres of pasture for £146 13s 4d, brought the remainder of Chesterton manor into John Strange's ownership.<sup>115</sup>

An inquisition in 1537 after Strange had died found that the manor's annual value was £10 0s. 8d., and it was held of Cirencester abbey for fealty and suit at the abbot's hundred court of Crowthorne for all services.<sup>116</sup> John's son, Anthony (c.1499-1544) inherited, and in the same year conveyed the site and land of the manor to four trustees for his own use and that of Margaret his wife and their heirs.<sup>117</sup> These trustees still held it in 1544 after Anthony's death, when an inquisition recorded its annual value as £10 6s. 4d.; by then it was held of the king of his manor of Cirencester, doing suit every three weeks at his hundred of Crowthorne.<sup>118</sup> Margaret was presumably still alive in 1551/2, when her son John granted the premises he would inherit to Thomas Arundel in return for a yearly

<sup>104</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 21.

<sup>105</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 21.

<sup>106</sup> J.L.Kirby, *The Hungerford Cartulary* (Wilts. Record Society 49, 1993), 126-7.

<sup>107</sup> TNA, SC 8/23/1127.

<sup>108</sup> Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 3; TNA, C 1/5/168; *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, XIX, no.611.

<sup>109</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 740.

<sup>110</sup> See *VCH Glos. IX*, 222.

<sup>111</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, Henry VII, III, no.676.

<sup>112</sup> TNA, CP 40/995; GA, D2525/E143.

<sup>113</sup> GA D2525/E143.

<sup>114</sup> GA D2525/E143; TNA, CP 40/984.

<sup>115</sup> TNA, CP 40/995; GA D2525/E143.

<sup>116</sup> TNA, C 142/58/76.

<sup>117</sup> GA, D2525/E143.

<sup>118</sup> TNA, C 142/69/122.

rent.<sup>119</sup>

### **Wiggold**

Wiggold may be identified with a two-hide estate in Cirencester held in 1066 by a free man, for which he paid 20s. in the farm, and did service for the sheriff throughout the whole of England. William fitz Osbern, earl of Hereford (1067 x 1071) gave this land to one of his men, and put it outside the farm.<sup>120</sup>

The manor is first recorded by name in 1154 x 1158 when Manasser Biset, steward (dapifer) of Henry II and a landholder in five counties,<sup>121</sup> granted his mill of Wiggewald, which Hugh the miller held, and 10s. rent from his other mill in Wiggold, to Eynsham abbey (Oxon).<sup>122</sup> Shortly thereafter Manasser granted his land of Wigewalt to his brother, Bartholomew Biset for the service of a quarter of a knight's fee.<sup>123</sup> Wiggold continued to be held by the Bisets and their descendants for at least the next century.<sup>124</sup>

William Biset exchanged his land in Wiggold and Oldington (Worcs.) with lands in Normandy belonging to Anfrid de la Marche, also known as Anfrid Thorel. Anfrid was to render the service of one sore hawk annually for Wiggold, and the manor was to return to William and his heirs should Anfrid die without issue from his wife, Felicia.<sup>125</sup> Following contention between Eynsham abbey, Anfrid Thorel and Maiden Bradley priory (Wilts.) over Wiggewald mill, it was agreed before the abbot of Cirencester c.1175-90 that should the current miller be removed, all parties should agree on the replacement.<sup>126</sup> Before c.1200 Anfrid granted the canons of Cirencester the half-virgate which Walter the miller held, together with his house and curtilage.<sup>127</sup> Cirencester and Eynsham abbeys then together granted Wiggold mill, held of them by Hugh Mace, to Geoffrey Marshal in return for a yearly render of £1 14s. and a relief of £1 14s. from his heirs.<sup>128</sup> Felicia and Anfrid presumably did not have legitimate issue, since grants made in Wiggold by Felicia to members of her Cardonville family,<sup>129</sup> who in turn granted land to Cirencester abbey, were challenged by John Biset in the king's court in 1230.<sup>130</sup> Various agreements resulted, confirming John's right in Wiggold.<sup>131</sup> In particular, the abbot of Cirencester acknowledged that the men of Wiggold did not have to do suit at his hundred court; this could be done by the bailiff of the manor. The abbot should have the imprisonment of any of John's men of Wiggold who committed a crime demanding it, his chattels, in the case of loss of life or limb, to belong to John; the chattels of any man committing a crime in Wiggold who did not hold land there to belong to the abbot.

<sup>119</sup> GA D2525/E143.

<sup>120</sup> TNA, E 31/2/1/6238; C. Taylor, *An Analysis of the Domesday Survey of Gloucestershire* (1889), 163.

<sup>121</sup> *VCH Wilts.*, III, 295.

<sup>122</sup> H.E. Salter, *Eynsham Cartulary* (1907), I, 103.

<sup>123</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 263.

<sup>124</sup> *Cal. Mem.* 1326-7, , no.1712.

<sup>125</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 262.

<sup>126</sup> *Eynsham Cartulary*, I, 103.

<sup>127</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 254/299.

<sup>128</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 203.

<sup>129</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 309/168, 310/169, 315/174, 316/175, 317/176.

<sup>130</sup> *Cur. Reg.* 1227, 2663; *Cur. Reg.* 1230, 888, 1879, 2006, 2406; *Cur. Reg.* 1233, 618; *Cur. Reg.* 1237, 749, 1194, 1562.

<sup>131</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines 1199–1299*, 45, 55, 58, 67; *Ciren. Cart. I*, 207, 208/306, 260/338.

John Biset died in 1241, holding land in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Hampshire and Worcestershire.<sup>132</sup> Wiggold passed to his eldest daughter, Margery, wife of Richard de Rivers/Redvers, who in 1242 leased it for ten years to Cirencester abbey, at an annual rent of £2 13s. 4d.<sup>133</sup> The lease specified that the abbot was to receive 52 a. of fallow land in Wiggold without stock, and all the harvest of the last full year of the lease. Margery's right to the manor was unsuccessfully challenged during this lease by her sisters, Ela and Isabella, who claimed a share of the three carucates in Wiggold and Cirencester that she had inherited.<sup>134</sup> In 1256 Margery, by then widowed, agreed another ten year lease with the abbey who were to pay £2 13s. 4d. annually for the first five years, and £10 annually in silver for the remainder at Winchester fair. They were to have first refusal at a just price, if Margery sought to extend the lease or sell the manor within that term. No sale was agreed, however, as in 1284-5 Walter Springald held Wiggold for the service of a quarter of a knight's fee from John de Rivers, presumably Margery's heir, who in turn held of the barony of Forde (Devon, later Dorset).<sup>135</sup>

The descent of the manor of Wiggold during the 14th century is obscure until John Corbet, recorded as lord between 1362 and 1382.<sup>136</sup> This John was married to Emma le Waleys, lady of the manor of Coates. For a time therefore the manors of Wiggold and Coates descended together, Emma and John's daughter and heir, Alice, bringing both to her first husband, Roger Wyght (d.1393). An inquisition in 1382 found that Roger was lord of Wiggold in right of his wife, and held a three-weekly court at will.<sup>137</sup> Alice secondly married William Rye, and an inquisition in 1402 concerning Cirencester guild merchant described him as lord of Wiggold. The jury also returned that the lords of Wiggold had held courts for their tenants in Cirencester by their stewards at their manor of Wiggold from before living memory, and levied issues, fines and amercements from their tenants.<sup>138</sup> Alice and William were jointly named as lords of Wiggold and Coates in 1409.<sup>139</sup>

Both Coates and Wiggold descended to Anselm Rye. This Anselm and his wife Joan sold both manors to persons unknown before c.1454, as appears by a complaint by George Houton who claimed to have been defrauded by them under pretence of a sale of the manors which, in fact, had already been sold.<sup>140</sup> Wiggold next appears as a possession of Sir William Nottingham (d.1483). Nottingham bought Coates from a William Llewelyn,<sup>141</sup> but no record has been found of his purchase of Wiggold. He died holding the manor, worth £10 beyond reprise, of the king as of the honour of Hereford, by service unknown.<sup>142</sup> Elizabeth, Nottingham's third wife and widow, brought the manors of Coates and Wiggold to her husband, Richard Poole.<sup>143</sup> Richard's will of 1517 bequeathed Wiggold to each of his sons, William, Henry and Leonard, in turn if the former should

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<sup>132</sup> *Cur. Reg.* 1249, 1499.

<sup>133</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 265.

<sup>134</sup> *Book of Fees*, I, 308-9.

<sup>135</sup> *Feudal Aids*, II, 243.

<sup>136</sup> J.D. Thorp, 'History of the Manor of Coates, County Gloucester', *Trans. BGAS* 50 (1928), 145.

<sup>137</sup> TNA, C 143/400/19.

<sup>138</sup> TNA, C 143/434/5.

<sup>139</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines 1360-1508*, 82-3.

<sup>140</sup> TNA, C 1/1489/87.

<sup>141</sup> Thorpe, 'History of the Manor of Coates', 151.

<sup>142</sup> TNA, C 141/4/37.

<sup>143</sup> TNA, C 1/57/239.

die without legitimate issue, provided that Henry and Leonard undertook to provide a life jointure in the manor for Anne, William's wife.<sup>144</sup> In fact William, of Newton (Warws.), and Anne sold Wiggold manor for £100 to George Prator of Latton (Wilts.) in 1549.<sup>145</sup>

### ***Pirie and Archibalds***

The estates later known as the manors of Archibalds and Pirie have been identified with the lands held by two free men with two ploughs in Cirencester in 1066.<sup>146</sup> Having originally straddled Dyer Street, which appears to have been laid over an existing cultivated Cirencester field,<sup>147</sup> Archibalds and Pirie manors probably came to be concentrated on opposite sides of the street, Archibalds to the north and Pirie to the south.<sup>148</sup>

### ***Pirie***

Robert de Pyrie held land before 1216, later identified as this estate and consisting of a half-hide,<sup>149</sup> as a serjeanty, owing service to Cirencester abbey.<sup>150</sup> Before 1189 the service attached to this serjeanty involved conducting the king's treasure within Gloucestershire and beyond.<sup>151</sup> The right to hold the serjeanty and the land attached to it was disputed in 1200 and again in 1220, citing previous holders William, son of John, and Robert, son of Gilbert, from whom it descended to Robert de Pyrie.<sup>152</sup>

The abbey's right to the service was confirmed in 1225,<sup>153</sup> but subsequently the serjeanty was taken in hand by Henry III, and he was in receipt of it until 1246, when it was alienated.<sup>154</sup> The service owed was rented for 13s. 4d., including the military service which the fee owed, and which was calculated at one twentieth of a knight's fee.<sup>155</sup> Following alienation it was permissible for the land to be divided, and by 1248-9 no fewer than 23 tenants held land valued at 62s. from Richard de Pyrie.<sup>156</sup> During his tenure the capital messuage of the fee was located on Dyer Street.<sup>157</sup>

In 1258 the king released all the alienated Cirencester serjeanties to the tenure of the abbey; the fine for the Pirie serjeanty was £20.<sup>158</sup> Over the course of the next twenty years the abbot and convent of Cirencester acquired the manor of Pirie, and this was confirmed by Richard's son, Reginald.<sup>159</sup> The 'court of the fee of Pirie' is referred to in 1335, by when the manor had been in the

<sup>144</sup> TNA, PROB 11/18/595.

<sup>145</sup> Lancs. Archives, DDTO O 5(6).

<sup>146</sup> TNA, E 31/2/1/6238; Taylor, *Analysis of the Domesday Survey of Gloucestershire*, 163-4.

<sup>147</sup> Reece & Broxton, 'S-Shaped Strips under Cirencester', 125-9.

<sup>148</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42, ff.7v, 11; *Ciren. Cart. III*, 265.

<sup>149</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 242.

<sup>150</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 267/124.

<sup>151</sup> E.A. Fuller, 'Tenures of Land by the Customary Tenants of Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 2 (1877-8), 298.

<sup>152</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 242, 247; *Rot. Cur. Reg.*, IX, 120; *Rot. Cur. Reg.*, X, 1, 28).

<sup>153</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 268/125.

<sup>154</sup> TNA, C 145/6, no.15, E 372/94, E 372/98jH. Barkly, 'Testa de Nevill Returns for Gloucestershire', *Trans. BGAS* 14 (1889-90), 45-7.

<sup>155</sup> TNA, C 145/6, no.15.

<sup>156</sup> *Book of Fees*, II, 1188.

<sup>157</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42 ff.2v, 3v, 5.

<sup>158</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 50, 51/38; *Cal. Fine* 1257-58, no.302.

<sup>159</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 196, 242.

tenure of the abbey and convent of Cirencester for more than fifty-five years.<sup>160</sup> The court was not mentioned when the men of Cirencester petitioned for a gild merchant in 1402 because it was a court held by the abbot and convent, and the petitioners could not demonstrate the freedoms of authorities independent of the abbey. The land of Pirie remained in the tenure of the abbey until the Dissolution.

### *Archibalds*

Unlike Pirie, Archibalds, the manor which emerged from the holding of the other free man recorded in 1066, survived as an independent unit throughout the medieval period. From c.1200 to 1434 it descended within the Archibald family.

A royal inquest taken in John's reign (c.1209-11) reported that Robert Archibald (Erkenbaud) held land in Gloucestershire by serjeanty.<sup>161</sup> An inquest dating from the same reign into the services formerly due to Henry II and now due to the abbot of Cirencester noted that 'the land of Robert Erkinbald accounts for itself by hunting' (*se defendit per veauteriam*).<sup>162</sup> A later inquisition into alienated serjeanties specified that Archibalds in 1252 was held in return for providing the king with two or three greyhounds (leporarios); the service had never been rendered, and for this reason Richard Archibald, by then deceased, had been impleaded in court.<sup>163</sup> This Richard was holding the manor of Archibalds in 1241 when he successfully challenged Stephen de Harnhill over a right of way across his land in Cirencester.<sup>164</sup> He was still living c.1250,<sup>165</sup> but had been succeeded by his son, Geoffrey, by 1252.<sup>166</sup> In 1258 Henry III informed Geoffrey that he had given all the serjeanties in the manor of Cirencester back to the abbot and convent of Cirencester to be held of them and their successors.<sup>167</sup> Geoffrey was succeeded as lord by Bartholomew Archibald (Erkembaud), who was in possession of the manor c.1276-1308.<sup>168</sup> From Bartholomew it descended to William Archibald, who had seisin during the first half of the 14th century.<sup>169</sup> It was presumably his son William, who was accused with his father and others of assaulting one Walter of Cirencester in 1336, who held the manor in 1368.<sup>170</sup> In 1402, when the inquiry was held into whether Cirencester should have a gild merchant, the manor was again held by a William Archibald.<sup>171</sup> The first reference to a court of Archibalds manor comes from this inquiry, which reported that William Archibald and his ancestors had, from time immemorial, a fee in the vill of Cirencester . . . commonly called Erchebaundeis, with various tenements, rents and possessions in Cirencester, and that they were accustomed to hold three-weekly courts for their Cirencester tenants by their stewards, from which William received for his own use the issues, fines and amerancements arising therefrom.

<sup>160</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 268.

<sup>161</sup> *Red Book Exch*, II, 463.

<sup>162</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 267/124.

<sup>163</sup> TNA, C 145/6, no.15.

<sup>164</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines 1199-1299*, 71.

<sup>165</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 288/145.

<sup>166</sup> TNA, C 145/6, no.15.

<sup>167</sup> *Cal. Pat.*, 1247-1258, 624.

<sup>168</sup> GA, D1448/T8; *Ciren. Cart. III*, 189, 199; Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 68, 73, 75-78.

<sup>169</sup> GA, D1448/T9; Coss, *Langley Cartulary*, 60, 74, 93; *Ciren. Cart. II*, 268; *Cal. Pat.* 1334-38, 354.

<sup>170</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1334-38, 354; *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, XI, no.254.

<sup>171</sup> TNA, C 143/434/5.

In 1434 Thomas Archibald sold the estate, with his mansion house in Dyer street called Erchebaudesplace, where his maternal uncle William Erchebaud had formerly dwelt, to Thomas Gerveys and his wife Matilda, and their heirs. Thomas retained a life interest in and use of an 'upper room and a chapel at the upper end of the hall of the mansion' for himself and his servants, a stable for his horse, easement of the hall for himself, his friends and servants, use of the apple orchard and all closes adjacent to the pools and fish ponds, and rabbits within the rabbit warren.<sup>172</sup> The site of Archibalds mansion house has been located to around 23 (formerly 104) Dyer Street.<sup>173</sup>

The manor remained in the tenure of the Gerveys family until 1512, when Robert Gerveys sold it to Richard Osmond, a Cirencester woolman. The appurtenances of the manor included its sovereign courts and the fruits of courts. It was then leased back to Robert Gerveys and Alice his wife for life.<sup>174</sup> In 1521 Robert Osmond of Cirencester, gent., granted a thirty-one year lease to Christopher Toll of Cirencester, gent., and Elizabeth his wife, the widow of Robert Ricards.<sup>175</sup> The lease included the mansion place called Archebaldes Place and houses appertaining to it in Chepyngstrete. Its land lay in the fields of Preston, Baudington (?Boddington), Spitalgate and Portfield. The manor then included a stone quarry called Boroes, though the tenant was not to take any stone therefrom, nor timber growing there, except to repairs the mansion house or other buildings pertaining to it. Rent was also due from the chantry of Our Lady within the parish church of St John the Baptist and from the chantry of St Christopher there. In the lay subsidies of 1523 and 1525, Christopher Toll was returned as the richest person in Cirencester hundred, having £200 in lands and £10 in goods.<sup>176</sup>

At the time of the Dissolution the manor was presumably still in the possession of Christopher Toll, as a new lease of the manor to Robert Straunge began in 1551.<sup>177</sup>

## **Other Estates**

### *Rectory*

In 1066 and 1086 the church of Cirencester held two hides of land and six acres of meadow in chief of the king in free alms and quit of all customs, for which they paid 40s.<sup>178</sup> When Henry I created his new foundation of Cirencester abbey in 1117 this land, together with that formerly held by the Saxon minster, was part of its endowment, and the abbey held it until the Dissolution. The obligation to pay the 40s. for the 6 a. of meadow was dropped by King John in 1199.<sup>179</sup>

### *Llanthony Secunda Priory*

Shortly after the refoundation in 1136 of Llanthony priory near Gloucester,<sup>180</sup> the prior and convent gained an interest in Cirencester from Walter de Ashley of Cirencester, who granted them all the

<sup>172</sup> GA, D674b/T19.

<sup>173</sup> *Programme of Archaeological Works: Waterloo Car Park, Cirencester* (Cotswold Archaeology Report, 2014).

<sup>174</sup> GA, D674b/E67, ff.20-20d.

<sup>175</sup> GA, D674b/T19; TNA, PROB 11/19/118, 11/25/212.

<sup>176</sup> *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 5, 395.

<sup>177</sup> GA, D674b/E67, f.21.

<sup>178</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.19; A. K. B. Evans, 'Cirencester's Early Church', *Trans. BGAS* 107 (1989), 118.

<sup>179</sup> *Rot. Chart. I*, 10.

<sup>180</sup> *VCH Glos. II*, 87.

land which he held in the borough of Cirencester.<sup>181</sup> To this was added a grant of all the tithes from her meadows of Cerney and Cirencester by Margaret de Bohun, daughter of Miles of Hereford and lady of Cerney.<sup>182</sup>

In 1261 the prior of Llanthony and abbot of Cirencester reached an agreement concerning the services owed at the abbot's courts by the prior's men, contention having arisen. Before the itinerant justices in Gloucestershire it was decided that the prior's men in Cirencester and Minety would do frankpledge twice a year at the hundred court, and that the prior or his attorney would also do suit at the inner court (*intrinsecam curiam*) of the abbot in Cirencester for his tenements held there. In addition they agreed to hold no plea for any of their tenements in Cirencester under the king's little (*parvum*) writ of right.<sup>183</sup>

In 1312 the prior's ten tenants in Cirencester, as sokemen of the ancient demesne, were regarded as exempt from tallage imposed by the abbot. They were Richard Skarnynge, William Kene, Peter Matteshulle, Elias le Bakere, Nicholas Muleward, Thomas Gusche, John le Flecchare, Richard de Cotes, Giles Beaupyne and Walter le Muleward.<sup>184</sup> One tenement lay in Dollar Street (1299), another in Battle Street (1347). One was held of the fee of the earl of Hereford, another of the fee of Wiggold.<sup>185</sup> In the late 14th century the prior's tenants who voluntarily held themselves to be serfs (*qui volent affidare se esse natives*) were acknowledged to be free from toll imposed by the abbot.<sup>186</sup> The prior himself did not have a house in Cirencester. When he visited the abbey in 1511 he stayed 'at bedde' in the town.<sup>187</sup>

### *Abbey of St Peter's, Gloucester*

In the papal taxation of 1291 the abbey of St Peter's, Gloucester had 32s. in fixed rents in Cirencester.<sup>188</sup>

## Local Government

Beth Hartland & John Chandler

### ***Crown and Military Activity***

The *Misae* roll for 1208-9 accounted for the costs of Thomas de Samford staying at Cirencester for two nights with 21 horses and 12 men en route from Northampton to Oxford.<sup>189</sup> Cirencester served as a muster point for King John during his civil war against the barons in 1215,<sup>190</sup> and his government was based there for a period, probably at the abbey.<sup>191</sup> The minority government of

<sup>181</sup> TNA, C 115/83, f.158.

<sup>182</sup> TNA, C 115/74; D. Walker, 'The Honours of the Earls of Hereford in the Twelfth Century', *Trans. BGAS* 79 (1960), 198.

<sup>183</sup> TNA, C 115/83, m.xx (img\_7863); *Ciren. Cart. III*, no.374.

<sup>184</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 125.

<sup>185</sup> TNA, C 115/75.

<sup>186</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 742.

<sup>187</sup> *Cal. Regs. Priory of Llanthony*, 97.

<sup>188</sup> *Tax. Eccl.*, 232b.

<sup>189</sup> *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 163.

<sup>190</sup> *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 134.

<sup>191</sup> *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 128-9, 148, 151-2, 181, 195; *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 362.

his son, Henry III, was likewise based at Cirencester during 1218-1219,<sup>192</sup> and in 1220 the papal legate, Pandulf, ordered the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, not to leave the parts of Cirencester until his messengers had returned.<sup>193</sup> Pandulf himself was returning from Wales (via Cirencester) to London.<sup>194</sup> The government was in Cirencester again in 1223-4,<sup>195</sup> 1225-6<sup>196</sup>, 1229<sup>197</sup> and 1230<sup>198</sup>, as evidenced by the dating of documents.

In the summer of 1233 the men of Cirencester were involved in the royal attempts to capture Richard Marshal, earl of Pembroke who was travelling to Gloucester to treat with the king again. Following a prohibition against tourneying made at Oxford, on 31 July orders were sent to those men of the hundred of the abbot of Cirencester who were sworn to arms to come to Cirencester and stay there to guard the crossing-places there and arrest any who came into that vill armed with horses and harnesses. If the men could not be arrested a hue was to be raised, all coming when the cry was raised, and the men followed from vill to vill until they could be arrested.<sup>199</sup> Learning of this plan, Marshal retreated to his Welsh estates and prepared for rebellion. Cirencester was again involved in the Marshal affair when the king ordered a meeting of bishops to Cirencester to discuss the actions to be taken against disturbers of the peace.<sup>200</sup> A tournament was prohibited to be held at Cirencester in 1236.<sup>201</sup>

Cirencester provided a base for royal government during the 13th-century Welsh campaigns. Henry III's Chancery and Wardrobe were at Cirencester in May 1240,<sup>202</sup> and the Chancery was there in the summer of 1241.<sup>203</sup> The government returned to Cirencester for Christmas 1276 during Edward I's war against Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, prince of Gwynedd,<sup>204</sup> and for a longer stay in January and February 1282 during Edward's last Welsh war.<sup>205</sup> The bishop of Bath and Wells retired from court at Cirencester on 13 February 1282, delivering the seal into the Wardrobe.<sup>206</sup>

In November 1321 Edward II ordered an army to muster at Cirencester by 13 December 1321,<sup>207</sup> when Roger Mortimer of Chirk, justice of South Wales, was to meet the king at there to discuss the

<sup>192</sup> *Cal. Fine 2 Hen. III*, 227-8; TNA, PRO SC 1/6/30-1.

<sup>193</sup> W. Shirley (ed.), *Royal and other historical letters illustrative of the reign of Henry III*, I, (London, 1862), 116.

<sup>194</sup> TNA, PRO SC 1/1/74.

<sup>195</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1216-1225*, 405, 414-15, 473-4; *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 575; *Cal. Fine 8 Hen. III*, 404, 408.

<sup>196</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1225-1232*, 61; *Cal. Fine 10 Hen. III*, 278.

<sup>197</sup> *Cal. Fine 13 Hen. III*, 244.

<sup>198</sup> *Cal. Close 1227-1231*, 188; *Cal. Pat. 1225-1232*, 255, 367; *Cal. Lib. 1226-40*, 136; *Cal. Fine 14 Hen. III*, 454.

<sup>199</sup> *Cal. Close 1232-34*, 318.

<sup>200</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1232-47*, 32.

<sup>201</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1232-47*, p.148.

<sup>202</sup> *Cal. Close 1237-42*, 191; *Cal. Lib. 1226-40*, 469.

<sup>203</sup> *Cal. Close 1237-42*, 270, 310, 318; *Cal. Pat. 1232-47*, 243, 253, 255; *Cal. Lib. 1240-5*, 57, 63, *Cal. Fine 25 Hen. III*, 476-7, 550.

<sup>204</sup> *Cal. Fine 1272-1307*, 76; *Cal. Close 1272-9*, pp.365-6, 410; *Cal. Pat. 1272-81*, pp.186-7.

<sup>205</sup> *Cal. Fine 1272-1307*, 158; *Cal. Close 1279-88*, pp.146-7, 178-9; *Cal. Pat. 1281-92*, pp.9-10; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vol i, no.1255; TNA, PRO SC 1/12/25, SC 1/13/26, SC 1/13/29, SC 1/14/8-9, SC 1/12/80.

<sup>206</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1281-92*, p.10.

<sup>207</sup> *Cal. Close 1318-1323*, 508.

state of affairs in Wales.<sup>208</sup> Edward was at Cirencester by 21 December,<sup>209</sup> where he spent Christmas, granted protection and pavage to the men of Cirencester on 27 December<sup>210</sup> and was still there the next day,<sup>211</sup> but had reached Worcester by 31 December. According to one chronicler, this army, which was to put down the rebellion of those nobles and barons who opposed Edward's favourites, Hugh Despenser the Younger and Elder and others, occupied the whole countryside around Cirencester.<sup>212</sup>

Cirencester sent six armed footmen for service in Scotland for 40 days in 1322 at their own expense.<sup>213</sup> Cirencester, Gloucester and Bristol were exempted from an order for 640 men to be armed and arrayed for the keeping of the peace in accord with the Statute of Winchester.<sup>214</sup> In 1324-5 the king requested that Cirencester send ten foot soldiers to join his campaign to Gascony to reclaim the duchy at the king's wages. This request was repeatedly postponed, and before any of the force sailed, Cirencester (along with Bristol and Gloucester) had been exempted from sending foot soldiers. This did not excuse one Dungal Sharp of Cirencester, selected among many others to serve in the duchy as a foot soldier, from being in contempt of the king's order for having delayed the expedition by 'not wishing to go'.<sup>215</sup> Following the capture of Edward II by the queen and her party in November 1326, the Great Seal of England was given into the safe custody of Bishop Airmyn of Norwich by Queen Isabella at Cirencester.<sup>216</sup>

Cirencester held a pivotal role in the raising of war funds under Edward III. In 1334 the king requested that the abbot expedite the delivery of his share of the tenth granted to the king for a campaign against the Scots.<sup>217</sup> In 1339 the abbot was ordered to organise the collection of wool in his locality and ensure its delivery to named deputies in order to make up the shortfall in the grant made to the king in parliament.<sup>218</sup> In 1341 Stephen Beste of Cirencester, merchant, acted as one of the attorneys of the *Bardi* to receive all wool assigned to them by the king.<sup>219</sup> Cirencester was designated as a place for the collection of wool,<sup>220</sup> and in 1347 the king ordered the abbot of Cirencester to deliver a strong house in his abbey for the receipt of the king's wool in Gloucestershire.<sup>221</sup>

It was at Cirencester that the rebellion of the earls of Salisbury and Kent in 1399 came to an end.<sup>222</sup> Henry IV pardoned the men of Cirencester for beheading the earls and granted them all goods and

<sup>208</sup> *Cal. Close 1318-1323*, 506.

<sup>209</sup> *Cal. Fine 1319-27*, 82.

<sup>210</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1321-1324*, 42.

<sup>211</sup> *Cal. Close 1318-23*, 411, 416; *Cal. Pat. 1321-24*, 39, 41-45; *Cal. Fine 1319-27*, 82-5; I, C61/35, mem. 17-18 [<http://www.gasconrolls.org/>].

<sup>212</sup> H. R. Luard (ed.), *Flores Historiarum* III (1890), 344-5.

<sup>213</sup> *Cal. Close 1318-23*, 552.

<sup>214</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1324-1327*, 10.

<sup>215</sup> TNA, PRO C 61/36 m.xx. ; *Gascon Rolls*, C61/49, mem. 29d.

<sup>216</sup> Rymer, *Foedera* II, 169.

<sup>217</sup> *Cal. Close 1333-37*, 356.

<sup>218</sup> *Cal. Fine 1337-47*, 131.

<sup>219</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1340-43*, 341; *Cal. Close 1341-43*, 320.

<sup>220</sup> *Cal. Close 1341-43*, 231; *Cal. Fine 1347-56*, 8.

<sup>221</sup> *Cal. Close 1346-49*, 293.

<sup>222</sup> H.T. Riley (ed.), *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani* (1866), 325-6, 329.

chattels of traitors found in Cirencester at the time of their arrest, excepting gold and silver and jewels.<sup>223</sup> The men of Cirencester were also granted 4 does and a tun of wine and the women of Cirencester 6 bucks and a tun of wine annually.<sup>224</sup> John Cosyn of Cirencester was singled out for his particular good service in resisting the traitors, receiving a grant of 100 m. p.a. for life.<sup>225</sup> In 1403 the hundreds of Cirencester and Bisley were ordered to assemble 'all able fencible men, footmen and horsemen' at Gloucester for five days 'to resist the rebels in Wales'.<sup>226</sup> From Gloucester the king moved to Cirencester in pursuit of the jewels, money, harnesses, goods and chattels of the traitors of 1399 which had not been surrendered to the Crown.<sup>227</sup> Chancery enrolments show the king stayed in Cirencester from 30 October to 9 November 1403.<sup>228</sup>

In the 15th century individuals from Cirencester and the abbot often played a role in raising the king's taxes in Gloucestershire.<sup>229</sup> The abbot was also on occasion responsible for distributing the allowance on such taxes within Gloucestershire.<sup>230</sup> In 1435 the abbot lent the king £30 for the defence of the realm,<sup>231</sup> and in 1436 the abbot was requested 'to induce notables of the county... to lend the king a considerable sum of money'.<sup>232</sup>

On 30 April 1471 Edward IV reached Cirencester on his march west from London. Here he received news that Margaret of Anjou had reached Bath, and turned south to meet her.<sup>233</sup>

The military survey of 1522 revealed that there were 19 men in Cirencester town equipped with a harness, 3 men had two harnesses, two men had three harnesses and Christopher Tolle, the richest man in Cirencester, had five. The only other items of armour mentioned in the survey of Cirencester town were four *sallets*.<sup>234</sup>

### **Manorial Administration**

In the reign of Henry II the vill of Cirencester was administered by a reeve and bailiffs.<sup>235</sup> By a grant c.1155 Henry granted the abbot and convent the hundred and liberty of Cirencester. Thereafter the officers of local government within Cirencester had to answer to the abbey's seneschal, or bailiff, of the liberty. In 1204 King John granted that the abbey and convent should be free of the sheriff in the liberty of Cirencester (Cirencester and the Seven Hundreds) in respect of pleas of the crown and summonses.<sup>236</sup> In 1302 the 'people of Cirencester' noted that the abbot's liberty and return of shrieval writs meant that despite indicting evildoers maintained by the abbey nothing

<sup>223</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1399-1401*, 225.

<sup>224</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1399-1401*, 318.

<sup>225</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1399-1401*, 183.

<sup>226</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1401-1405*, 440.

<sup>227</sup> *Cal. Fine 1399-1405*, 41.

<sup>228</sup> *Cal. Fine 1399-1405*, 231, 238; *Cal. Pat. 1401-1405*, 307, 309, 312, 316, 322, 324-7, 329, 334, 361, 365, 440.

<sup>229</sup> *Cal. Fine 1399-1405*, 188; *Cal. Fine 1405-1413*, 179; *Cal. Fine 1413-1422*, 85, 220, 301, 415; *Cal. Fine 1430-1437*, 283; *Cal. Fine 1437-1445*, 147; *Cal. Fine 1445-1452*, 37, 126, 172; *Cal. Fine 1461-1471*, 85, 103, 231; *Cal. Fine 1485-1509*, no.390.

<sup>230</sup> *Cal. Fine 1437-1445*, 214, 325.

<sup>231</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1429-1436*, 467.

<sup>232</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1429-1436*, 528.

<sup>233</sup> *Recueil des Croniques d'Engleterre 1447-1471*, 666.

<sup>234</sup> *Military Surv. of Glos 1522*, 100-102.

<sup>235</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 66.

<sup>236</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 41/6.

was done concerning their attachment.<sup>237</sup>

Articles of the view of frankpledge dating from the early 14th century are recorded in the cartulary of Cirencester Abbey.<sup>238</sup> A late-14th-century document records that within the liberty of Cirencester there was a view of wardstaff which occurred three times a year, at Michaelmas, Martinmas and Hockday. The tithingman of each tithing was to come with his reeves and there present all things which had occurred against the peace and the king's crown. Within each hundred in the liberty there was a staff called the wakestaff which was passed from vill to vill at the view of the hundred, after receipt of which the vills ought to be vigilant in accordance with the Statute of Winchester. In 1394 the tithingman for Chesterton was Thomas Bonde, and for Wiggold was Henry Ameneye.<sup>239</sup> The tithingman of Wigwold ought to come with all his tithing twice a year to present before the lord's bailiff. They owed no cert money. The tithingman of Chesterton ought to present twice a year with his tithing, at Michaelmas and Hockday, and give 10d of cert money on the latter.<sup>240</sup>

The Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 valued the two views of frankpledge within Cirencester at £10 18s 8d per annum, which comprised cert money, fines for brewing beer and amerancements for the same, and the perquisites of the halimote court held there, after the fee of the bailiff, John George. The same survey valued the perquisites of the court of the seven hundreds of Cirencester at £9 3s 4d, after the fee of the bailiff, Edmund Tame.<sup>241</sup>

The halimote court in Cirencester was where the unfree men of Cirencester could challenge the rights, or assumed rights, of the abbot.<sup>242</sup>

<i>Year</i>	<i>Office</i>
1199	William, seneschal of abbot <sup>243</sup>
1281	William de Braderugge, abbot's woodward <sup>244</sup>
1306	John de Dunesdun, bailiff of abbot <sup>245</sup>
1321	Robert de Aston, bailiff of liberty of abbot of Cirencester <sup>246</sup>
1327	Robert de Aston, collector of tax in Gloucestershire <sup>247</sup>
1329	Robert de Aston, keeper of lands of alien men in Gloucestershire <sup>248</sup>
1389/90	Henry Cave, bailiff of Cirencester <sup>249</sup>
1393	Henry Cave, bailiff of Cirencester <sup>250</sup>
1403	Robert Andrew, bailiff of liberty of Cirencester <sup>251</sup>

<sup>237</sup> TNA, PRO SC 8/313/E98.

<sup>238</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 651.

<sup>239</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 741.

<sup>240</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 739.

<sup>241</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, II, 463-5.

<sup>242</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 267/124.

<sup>243</sup> *Cal. Mem. 1199-1200*, 42.

<sup>244</sup> *Cal. Inq. Misc. I*, no.1250

<sup>245</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 349

<sup>246</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1321-1324*, 42-4

<sup>247</sup> Franklin, *Taxpayers of Medieval Gloucestershire*, ??

<sup>248</sup> *Cal. Close 1327-1330*, 429

<sup>249</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 695

<sup>250</sup> TNA, PRO C 131/210/9

1440	John Gerveys <sup>252</sup>
1535	John George, bailiff of Cirencester <sup>253</sup>
1539	Robert Strange, bailiff of Cirencester <sup>254</sup>
<b>Office Holders within the liberty of the seven hundreds of Cirencester</b>	

### ***Borough Administration***

There is no good evidence that Cirencester had a borough administration before the grant of a guild merchant to the men of Cirencester by Henry IV in 1403.<sup>255</sup> In that year the men of Cirencester successfully petitioned Henry IV, who was then staying in the town, to grant them a guild merchant.<sup>256</sup> The guild had all the usual liberties, privileges and customs and was able to appoint its own officers, including a master, on an annual basis. The guild was to be quit of all suits of shire and hundred courts and other burdens such as toll and carriage throughout the realm. Importantly the master of the guild was enabled to receive any recognisances of debts made before them according to the Statue of Acton Burnell, thus relieving the men of Cirencester of the necessity to register such debts in London.<sup>257</sup> The guild also had all rights pertaining to the clerk of the market of the household, including the assize of bread, wine and ale and other victuals, weights and measures.

The abbey successfully contested the grant on the grounds that it was contrary to the liberties of the house and therefore illegal.<sup>258</sup> This pleading indicates that the guild had a court of pie powder held from day to day whenever they pleased, and a prison for the commitment of debtors, not members of the guild. In admitting the abbot's bondmen to the guild, and thus granting them access to the pie powder court, the bondmen were emboldened to refuse to perform services to the abbot and convent and to pay the tolls usually due within Cirencester market.

### ***Gaol***

The abbot and convent of Cirencester had the right to the custody of prisoners taken with the villis and hundreds pertaining to the manor of Cirencester.<sup>259</sup> In 1222 the abbot of Cirencester was granted permission to build a gaol 'for thieves and malefactors' captured within the seven hundreds which they held of the king by fee farm for the imprisoning and keeping of their prisoners.<sup>260</sup> In May 1223 the king asked the abbot to keep certain prisoners, transferred from Gloucester castle whilst Eleanor, countess of Richmond, was herself under house-arrest there, in his gaol at Cirencester.<sup>261</sup> When the prisoners were returned to Gloucester castle in July, the abbot was instructed that he was not to keep the king's prisoners in future except by special command.<sup>262</sup>

<sup>251</sup> TNA, PRO C 1/225/55-60.

<sup>252</sup> TNA, PRO C 131/230/19.

<sup>253</sup> *Valor Eccl.* II, 463-5.

<sup>254</sup> GA D621.

<sup>255</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 12.

<sup>256</sup> TNA, PRO C 143/434/5; *Cal. Pat. 1401-1205*, 292

<sup>257</sup> TNA, PRO C 241.

<sup>258</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* II, 738; h. Hall (ed.), *Select Cases concerning the Law Merchant A.D. 1239-1633* ii *Central Courts* (Selden Society, 1930), xcvi-c.

<sup>259</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 123.

<sup>260</sup> *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 490.

<sup>261</sup> *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 543, 555.

<sup>262</sup> *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 556.

In 1236 the abbot came to an agreement with the lord of Wiggold that the abbot should have custody of any of his men which ought to be imprisoned for any default committed within the abbot's hundreds.<sup>263</sup> In 1249 the abbots of Cirencester and Winchcombe came to an agreement regarding their respective jurisdictions by which thieves taken in the Winchcombe manors of Haselton or Yanworth should be delivered to Cirencester gaol by the abbot of Winchcombe's bailiffs.<sup>264</sup> There was clearly confusion over jurisdictions within the Seven Hundreds as the jurors reported in 1274 that the bailiffs of Cirencester had wrongly taken William Costard of Foxton to the bishop of Worcester's bailiff instead of delivering him to Cirencester gaol. The bishop of Worcester's bailiff then delivered Costard to the sheriff of Gloucester at Gloucester castle.<sup>265</sup> In 1310 the bishop of Worcester issued a sentence of excommunication upon those 'sons of iniquity' who kept the friars of St Augustine's, Oxford, who were 'putting up unsuspectingly' in Cirencester, in the gaol all night.<sup>266</sup> The gaol continued in use throughout the medieval period.<sup>267</sup>

## Economic activity

Beth Hartland & Jan Broadway

### ***Agriculture including Woodland and Mills***

#### *Mills*

At the time of the Domesday there were three mills in Cirencester worth 30s.<sup>268</sup> A fourth, St Mary's Mill, was added by the abbey of Cirencester after the first abbot, Serlo, exchanged some of the abbey's land for a water-course to power it.<sup>269</sup> By the end of the 13th century, the abbey of Cirencester had gained control of all four mills and the local watercourses. The abbey monopoly was resented by the local population, who resorted to hand-mills to circumvent their obligation to use the manorial mills.<sup>270</sup>

Brain's mill was located at Gildenbridge on the Gloucester Road where the mill pond meets the Churn.<sup>271</sup> It was named after a former tenant, Robert Brain, who had held of William Bluet of Daglingworth. The abbey had secured control of the mill and its watercourse by the mid-13th century.<sup>272</sup> A grant from Bluet of the meadow called Reshal on either side of the water of Churn above Brain's mill gave them access to the watercourse.<sup>273</sup> The share of the mill formerly held by Robert Brain was granted to the abbot by Simon of Matson.<sup>274</sup>

The two Barton mills were situated at the opposite end of the Mill Pond from Brain's Mill. Both

<sup>263</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 208.

<sup>264</sup> *D. Royce (ed.), Landboc, sive Registrum Monasterii de Winchelcumba II* (Exeter, 1903), 380-2.

<sup>265</sup> *Rot. Hund. I*, 166-7.

<sup>266</sup> *Register of Bishop Reynolds 1308-1317* (Worracs. Hist. Soc., 1927), 17.

<sup>267</sup> TNA, PRO CP 40/211, m.16; TNA, PRO SC 8/279/13947; *Cal. Pat. 1441-6*, 368; TNA, PRO C 1/48/83, C 1/163/48.

<sup>268</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 19.

<sup>269</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 28; Evans, 'Cirencester Abbey: From Heyday to Dissolution', 116.

<sup>270</sup> Evans, 'Cirencester Abbey: From Heyday to Dissolution', 116-117.

<sup>271</sup> Evans, 'Cirencester Abbey: From Heyday to Dissolution', 117.

<sup>272</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 335/290; *Ciren. Cart. III*, 191, 308.

<sup>273</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 191.

<sup>274</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 308.

were referred to as Clerks Mills (Clerkenemulles) in the late-13th century,<sup>275</sup> although one of them was more usually known as Mace mill, after the 12th century miller, Hugh Mace.<sup>276</sup> In the 12th century both belonged to the lord of Wiggold. Mace mill was initially granted by Manasser Biset to Eynsham Abbey. At the turn of the 13th century the abbot of Eynsham granted this mill, to Geoffrey Marshal of Cirencester in return for a yearly payment of £1 14s.<sup>277</sup> In 1221 the mill was the subject of an assize of mort d'ancestor between Thomas Mace and Geoffrey Marshal.<sup>278</sup> In c.1240 Stephen of Harnhill granted the mill to the abbot and convent of Cirencester, who were to pay the annual rent to Eynsham, in return for keeping his anniversary with masses and the distribution of bread to the poor.<sup>279</sup> Geoffrey Marshal's descendant, Matilda, quit her claim to the mill to Cirencester abbey in 1261.<sup>280</sup> In the papal taxation of 1291 the mill was valued at £4 8s. The rent due to the abbot of Eynsham was said to be 44s per annum,<sup>281</sup> but this conflated the payments due from both Barton Mills. The second Barton Mill was granted to Cirencester abbey by Walter of Cheltenham, rector of Ampney St Mary, in the late-13th century.<sup>282</sup> In 1279 Walter granted the mill to the abbey in return for a life interest in it,<sup>283</sup> for which he was to render a rose to the abbey per annum.<sup>284</sup> This may have been the mill which was included in the lease of the manor of Wiggold to the abbey in 1242.<sup>285</sup>

### **Trade, including markets and fairs, and innkeeping**

Merchants in Cirencester were subject to the payment of a toll on each occasion that they bought and sold throughout the entire year.<sup>286</sup> The merchants of Cirencester were freed of this obligation during the brief period (1403-1417) they held a guild merchant in the town.<sup>287</sup> The poll tax returns of 1380 named nine individuals as merchants, but did not specify whether they specialised in particular commodities such as wine or wool.<sup>288</sup>

The earliest mention of the wine trade in Cirencester dates from 1221 when it was recorded that wine had been sold against the assize.<sup>289</sup> In 1226 the king granted that a sexterce [a pint and a half] of wine could be sold for 10d in the vill of Cirencester for a period of 25 days, after which the assize of wine was to be held to once more.<sup>290</sup> The 10d. rate was granted for a longer period in July 1229 when it was to extend until Easter the following year. Unlike the vintners of Hereford who received a similar grant in return for 3m or a tun of wine, the wine merchants of Cirencester did not have to

<sup>275</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 202.

<sup>276</sup> E.A. Fuller, 'Medieval Cirencester', *Trans. BGAS* 54 (1932), 114; *Ciren. Cart. III*, 203.

<sup>277</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 203.

<sup>278</sup> Stenton, *Rolls of the Justices in Eyre*, no. 234.

<sup>279</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 269/126.

<sup>280</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 205-7; *Glos. Feet of fines, 1199-1299*, 136.

<sup>281</sup> *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate P. Nicholai* (1802), 234.

<sup>282</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 195.

<sup>283</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 307.

<sup>284</sup> *Glos. Feet of Fines, 1199-1299*, 86.

<sup>285</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 265; *Cal. Pat., 1247-1258*, 584.

<sup>286</sup> *Ciren. Cart. II*, 472.

<sup>287</sup> See below, Borough Administration.

<sup>288</sup> TNA, PRO E 179/113/35a,

<sup>289</sup> Maitland, *Pleas of the Crown*.

<sup>290</sup> *Rot. Litt. Claus*, II, 136.

give a grant to the king in return for this favour.<sup>291</sup> A 14th-century wine merchant is commemorated in a (now incomplete) brass in the parish church.<sup>292</sup>

The first reference to a named wool merchant occurs in 1242 when the sheriff of Southampton was ordered to keep safe the wool and chattels of Michael de Hispania, merchant of Cirencester.<sup>293</sup> The surviving 13th century accounts indicate that Cirencester abbey was a major trader in wool.<sup>294</sup> In the mid-14th century the abbey was the site for the collection and storage of wool used by Edward III to fund his French campaigns.<sup>295</sup> In 1341 Stephen Beste of Cirencester acted as an attorney of the Bardi, Florentine bankers, to receive all wool assigned to them by the king; and Richard le Deyghere ('dyer') of Cirencester complained that he had not been recompensed for the wool taken from him to the king's use.<sup>296</sup> A memorial of c. 1440 to the wool merchant, Robert Page survives in the Trinity chapel of Cirencester parish church.<sup>297</sup> There was an ordinance in operation in Cirencester in the late 15th century that no person should pack any 'clakked woll clipped or cleused' (that is clipped and cleaned so that it could be packed more closley and weighed less) upon pain of forfeiture of the same.<sup>298</sup> In the mid-16th century George Prator, lord of Wiggold, was said to be pasturing between 500 and 1000 sheep a year at Wiggold.<sup>299</sup>

<i>Occupations given in Cirencester Poll Tax returns of 1380<sup>300</sup></i>	
bagger	2
baker	4
brewer	19
butcher	3
carpenter	1
clerk	1
cook	1
draper	2
goldsmith	2
harper	1
huckster	5
innkeeper	1
labourer	38
mason	2
merchant	9
painter	4
?potter	1
saddler	1
servant	55

<sup>291</sup> *Cal. Fine. Rolls, 1229-1230*, nos.229-230.

<sup>292</sup> C.T. Davies, *The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire* (1899), 16-18.

<sup>293</sup> *Close Rolls, 1237-1242*, p.482.

<sup>294</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W)1788/P54/B8.

<sup>295</sup> See below, Local Government.

<sup>296</sup> TNA, SC 8/226/11288.

<sup>297</sup> Davies, *Monumental Brasses*, 39-42.

<sup>298</sup> TNA, C 1/27/253.

<sup>299</sup> Hockaday Abs. 156, 1552

<sup>300</sup> TNA, E179/113/35a.

skinner	4
smith	5
spicer	1
tailor	21
tanner	1
tiler	2
unable to work (with no occupation given)	3
weaver	5
woolmonger	1

### ***Manufacturing, including textiles***

After a riot in 1414 at least 9 weavers were mentioned in the subsequent pardon.<sup>301</sup> In 1439 William Smale of Cirencester ‘wever’ was pardoned for not appearing in a plea of trespass.<sup>302</sup> Looms were bequeathed by the wills of William Tholle (d. 1498)<sup>303</sup> and Richard Tylladem (d.1538).<sup>304</sup>

Quarries in the Querns area of Cirencester appear to have been little used in the medieval period, when the extant Roman walls provided a source of building stone.<sup>305</sup> References within the Cirencester Cartulary mention quarries as boundary markers, not working sites. Mid-13th century charters reference both the quarry of Crundles (held by Alexander Doggevel)<sup>306</sup> and the quarry near Tor Barrow (*juxta Tereberewe*).<sup>307</sup> Other charters refer to land in the east field extending as far as the quarry.<sup>308</sup> In the 16th century a lease of the manor of Archibalds mentioned *Boroës Quarry*, stone from which could be used if for repair of the mansion house.<sup>309</sup>

## Social History

Beth Hartland & John Chandler

### ***Population***

The Domesday Survey recorded the servile population of Cirencester as numbering 54 under Edward the Confessor: 31 villains, 13 slaves and 10 bordars.<sup>310</sup> The lay subsidy of 1327 listed 91 taxpayers subject to individual assessment for the vill of Cirencester (including the wardens of the two hospitals in the vill and 7 subtaxers).<sup>311</sup> The individual poll tax assessment for Cirencester in 1379/80 taxed 574 people; another 42 were taxed in Bagendon and Wiggold.<sup>312</sup> The military survey

<sup>301</sup> Hockaday Abs. 155, 1414.

<sup>302</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1436-1441*, 209.

<sup>303</sup> Hockaday Abs. 155, 1498.

<sup>304</sup> Worcester Record Office, Richard Tylladem, 1538.

<sup>305</sup> A. McWhirr, L. Viner & C. Wells, *Romano-British Cemeteries at Cirencester* (Cirencester Excavation Committee, Cirencester, 1982), 28.

<sup>306</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 279.

<sup>307</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, 212, 252.

<sup>308</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, 242-3, 246-8, 306-8; *Ciren. Cart. II*, 667.

<sup>309</sup> GA D674b/T19.

<sup>310</sup> TNA, PRO E 31/2/1/6238.

<sup>311</sup> *Glos. Subsidy Roll, 1327*, 16-17.

<sup>312</sup> TNA, PRO E 179/113/35A.

of 1522 for Cirencester was organised by street and thus individuals could occur more than once. The 94 entries listed for Cirencester in the survey may represent 87 individuals and institutions. The wealthiest men, Christopher Tolle, Henry Tapper and Hugh Nores all lived in Chipping Street and held land worth £280, £200 and £200 respectively.<sup>313</sup> Another four men were listed under Chesterton.<sup>314</sup> The returns for the lay subsidy of 1523 listed 10 men and women with goods or lands over £40 in Cirencester hundred, all of whom were 'de Cirencestre' and were listed in the military survey of Cirencester in 1522.<sup>315</sup> In 1525 107 men and women had taxable wealth of over £1.<sup>316</sup>

<i>Value of Goods</i>	<i>Chipping Street</i>	<i>Abbot Street</i>	<i>Cricklade Street</i>	<i>Gosditch Street</i>	<i>St Cecily Street</i>	<i>Castle Street</i>	<i>St Lawrence Street</i>
£200+	3						
£100-£200				1			
£50-£100	5	1				2	
£20-£50	7	1	4	5			
£10-£20	3			3		1	
£5-£10	8	3	3	4		2	
£2-£5	4	2	1	3	2		1
<i>Geographical distribution of wealth in Cirencester, 1522</i>							

## **Charities**

### *St John's Hospital*

The 12th-century remains of the hospital and chantry of St John the Evangelist are on Spitalgate Lane,<sup>317</sup> where there is also archaeological evidence of a chapel of c. 1320.<sup>318</sup> The present roof is presumed to date from the mid-15th century, with some reuse of earlier timbers.<sup>319</sup>

In their 1342 bill of complaint the men of Cirencester claimed that Henry I founded the hospital in 1133 for the poor and sick who were to pray for the souls of the king and his heirs, giving the foundation a third of his demesnes of Cirencester and his entire demesne in the forest of Oakley.<sup>320</sup> Subsequently the claim in relation to Oakley was altered to three cartloads of underwood per week.<sup>321</sup> They further claimed that Henry I had established a chaplain as warden of the hospital to sing mass before the poor there for the souls of him and his heirs, and that this chaplain was to

<sup>313</sup> *Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 100-2.

<sup>314</sup> *Military Surv. of Glos. 1522*, 106.

<sup>315</sup> *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, 5.

<sup>316</sup> *Bristol & Glos. Lay Subsidy*, li, 395-7.

<sup>317</sup> Verey and Brooks, *Glos. II*, 179.

<sup>318</sup> R. Leech & A. McWhirr, 'Excavations at St John's Hospital, Cirencester, 1971 and 1976', *Trans. BGAS* 100 (1982), 191-209.

<sup>319</sup> A. Arnold, R. Howard, C. Litton, 'List 184: Dendrochronology Dates from Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory', *Vernacular Architecture* (2007), 109.

<sup>320</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.124.

<sup>321</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.126.

receive a livery in the abbey of Cirencester, taking such bread, beer and cooked meat as a canon takes every day, but that the office had long since been sold to laymen.<sup>322</sup> In 1462 appointment to the chapel and wardenship of the hospital was in the hands of the archbishop of Canterbury, when Master Thomas Eggecombe was collated to that position.<sup>323</sup> When Archbishop Morton made a visitation of the abbey in 1498, no *custos* of the hospital was listed.<sup>324</sup> In 1538 the abbot and convent unanimously appointed Henry Hill, then in minor orders, to the wardenship of the hospital. They undertook to provide him with sufficient bread, meat and fish, as well as four cartloads of wood from 'Ockleywode' a year, and two cartloads of hay. If the payment of any instalments of his fee was more than six weeks in arrears, he was empowered to distrain the abbot and convent.<sup>325</sup> In 1535 it was recorded that this fee was 40s yearly.<sup>326</sup> In 1327 the warden of St John had been assessed for tax at 6d.<sup>327</sup>

An account of the foundation of the hospital from c.1320, when the abbot and convent of Cirencester licensed the daily celebration of the mass in the hospital, maintained mass had never previously been heard in the hospital.<sup>328</sup> The bishop of Worcester's grant for this oratory confirms that the celebration of the mass at St John's, if it had ever been said, had long since ceased.<sup>329</sup> The abbot maintained that the poor, old and sick at the hospital had been supported by the income of the abbey, by the daily distribution of the almoner, and the alms and largesse of the faithful.<sup>330</sup> The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* suggests that the surplus from rents specifically granted for the support of the hospital were returned to the general abbey coffers, which suggests that the hospital was indeed maintained from the abbey's general income,<sup>331</sup> and with the abbot's view that any mortuaries received from those dying in the hospital belonged to the abbey.<sup>332</sup> Bequests to the hospital occur from the 13th to the mid-16th century.<sup>333</sup> Edward III's charter of 1343 supported the abbey's contention that the hospital was founded for the support of the poor, and its needs met by the alms of the abbot and convent and their predecessors who had provided custodians in the hospital as often as needed.<sup>334</sup>

The men of Cirencester alleged in 1342 that the abbot had created a sorority in the hospital of women under an order associated with that of the abbey canons, and that the canons had

<sup>322</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, nos.124, 126.

<sup>323</sup> Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Bouchier, f.86A.

<sup>324</sup> C. Harper-Bill, *The register of John Morton, archbishop of Canterbury 1486-1500* (Canterbury and York Society, vol. 78, 1991), no.465.

<sup>325</sup> Bodleian, MS Rawlinson B. 326, 131.

<sup>326</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, 468.

<sup>327</sup> TNA, PRO E 179/113/5.

<sup>328</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.361/314.

<sup>329</sup> E. Pearce (ed.), *Bishop Cobham's Register 1317-1327* (Worcs. Hist. Soc., 1930), 72.

<sup>330</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.361/314.

<sup>331</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.361/314.

<sup>332</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, no.315.

<sup>333</sup> *Ciren. Cart. III*, no.309, 324; Hockaday Abs. 155, 1397, 1402, 1406, 1410, 1498; TNA, PROB 11/2A/30, 11/2A/42, 11/2A/66, 11/2A/186, 11/2A/200, 11/2A/356; GA, D4590/1, D4590/3/1; Worcs. R. O., Wills, Walter Brede (1537), Gylys Paratt (1538); *Cal. Pat. 1301-7*, 419; W. Marett (ed.), *Calendar of Register of Henry Wakefield, Bishop of Worcester 1375-95* (Worcs. Hist. Soc., 1972), no.155.

<sup>334</sup> *Ciren. Cart. I*, no.123.

committed acts of debauchery with the sisters in the hospital.<sup>335</sup> Whilst this allegation was not repeated by the Cirencester jury who travelled to Westminster, the 1352 ordinance for the future regulation of the abbey did specify that the sisters of the hospital of St John were henceforth, like those of the hospital of St Lawrence, to be over fifty years of age, poor, sick and unable to work.<sup>336</sup> The men of Cirencester did repeat an allegation that one Alice de Weston had paid the abbot £60 in order to appropriate the chantry to herself.<sup>337</sup>

In 1535 the income of the office of the warden of the hospital was £6 5s 1d: £3 1s 9d from rents of assize in Cirencester, 13s 1d from rent of a close in Stratton, 11s from a portion of the tithes of corn at Northcote, and £2 from rents outside Cirencester received by the abbot. Expenses came to 5s 6d, and a regular annual payment to the hospital folk of 13s 4d for salt and meal to make 'olera' (vegetables). Alms of 6s 8d were made to the sisters of St John by the almoner. The abbot and convent paid a pension of 40 m. per annum to the master of the hospital.<sup>338</sup>

On 1 August 1538 Henry Hill was appointed as custos of the hospital. His predecessor was Hugh ? Coct.<sup>339</sup>

In 1546 the income of 'The Hospital of Seynt John the Evangelist' was recorded as £4 13s 7d. The hospital was 'the church for the said poor folk' and in ornaments and chattels had goods worth 26s 6d.<sup>340</sup> According to an 18th-century catalogue of benefactions the hospital was founded for three poor men and three poor women.<sup>341</sup>

### *St Lawrence's Hospital*

The hospital of St Lawrence was founded as a leper hospital for men in the latter part of the 13th century by Edith Biset, lady of Wiggold.<sup>342</sup> As a leper hospital, St Lawrence's may have had a chapel, as suggested by Leland's notes.<sup>343</sup> The hospital and its chapel may have been pre-dated by a Romano-British cemetery church.<sup>344</sup> Certainly there was a chapel of St Lawrence in the mid-13th century when its income was accounted for in obediary accounts of Cirencester Abbey.<sup>345</sup> Its absence from 1268 suggests that it was converted to a hospital in the late 1260s.<sup>346</sup> The location of the hospital, on the corner of Gloucester Street and Barton Lane, may help to indicate the limits of Cirencester town in the late 13th century.<sup>347</sup> In 1327 the warden of the house of St Lawrence was

<sup>335</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, no.124.

<sup>336</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, no.172.

<sup>337</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, nos.124, 126.

<sup>338</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, 468-9, 471.

<sup>339</sup> Bodleian, MS Rawlinson B. 326, 131.

<sup>340</sup> TNA, PRO E 301//21, no.37.

<sup>341</sup> GA, P86/1 CH 20/2.

<sup>342</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 126; Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester: Town and Landscape*, 93.

<sup>343</sup> Leland, *Itin.*, I, 129.

<sup>344</sup> R. Reece and C. Catling, *Cirencester: the development and buildings of a Cotswold town* (British Archaeology Reports 12, Oxford, 1975), xx.

<sup>345</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W)1788/P54/B8, 1-18.

<sup>346</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W)1788/P54/B8, 19v.

<sup>347</sup> Darvill & Gerrard, *Cirencester: Town and Landscape*, 113.

assessed for tax at 7d.<sup>348</sup>

Around 1336 the hospital was refounded as an almshouse for women by the abbot and convent of Cirencester. The townspeople alleged that the abbot had taken away the charters belonging to the hospital, which documented the 40s. worth of land and one acre of meadow near 'Clerkesmede', appropriated by the abbot, which the people of the town had granted to the hospital for its support, the rest of the necessary money coming from their alms. The master of the hospital, John Baudynnton, ordained by Adam, bishop of Worcester in 1335, had been ousted by the abbot and his position given to a sister.<sup>349</sup> In their first complaint to the king the men of Cirencester implied that the abbot had converted St Lawrence's hospital into a house for fallen women and their children.<sup>350</sup> The character of the women admitted to the house was not mentioned in the further pleading in Chancery, nevertheless in 1352 ordinances concerning the future regulation of Cirencester abbey during a time of vacancy stipulated that, as at St John's, women admitted to the hospital should be over the age of fifty, sick, poor and unable to work.<sup>351</sup> Possibly the abbot had been trying to address a social problem which two 16th-century wills met by leaving money to support the marriages of poor maidens of good fame.<sup>352</sup>

Edward III's charter of 1343 to the abbot and convent of Cirencester recorded that the hospital was founded for the sustenance of the poor and supported by the abbot and convent who were allowed to remove its custodians if there were reasonable cause.<sup>353</sup>

In 1397 John Boyes left 6d each to the sisters of St Lawrence's hospital.<sup>354</sup> In 1410 Gilbert Glasyer left 6s 8d to the brothers and sisters of the hospitals of St John and St Lawrence.<sup>355</sup> At the time of Leland's visit there were two poor women resident in the hospital endowed with lands.<sup>356</sup> The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* noted that the abbey distributed alms of 8s 8d per annum to the sisters of St Lawrence.<sup>357</sup> The chantry survey of 1546 recorded that these lands were worth 66s 7d, and that this money was going to the support of only one poor women 'for the other is dead'.<sup>358</sup>

### *Holy Trinity Hospital*

There is a single reference to this hospital, found in the will of Joan Spicer of Cirencester (d.1445).<sup>359</sup> Possibly this was connected to the canons of the church of the Trinity, who petitioned Edward I for the confirmation of the charter granted to them by Henry III.<sup>360</sup> Fuller concluded that the hospital mentioned in Joan's will was probably the hospice on Gosditch Street which a 17th

<sup>348</sup> TNA, PRO E 179/113/5.

<sup>349</sup> *Ciren. Cart.*, I, 126.

<sup>350</sup> *Ciren. Cart.*, I, 124.

<sup>351</sup> *Ciren. Cart.*, I, 172.

<sup>352</sup> TNA, PROB 11/19/118; Worcs R. O., wills, Hugh Norres senior (1535).

<sup>353</sup> *Ciren. Cart.*, I, 123/73.

<sup>354</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2A/42.

<sup>355</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2A/356.

<sup>356</sup> Leland, *Itin.*, I, 129.

<sup>357</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, 469.

<sup>358</sup> TNA, PROB E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>359</sup> TNA, PROB 11/3/518.

<sup>360</sup> TNA SC 8/321/E468.

century survey identified as having been maintained by a fraternity.<sup>361</sup>

### **Education**

From the mid-13th century there was an abbey school, with the earliest known reference to the Master of the Scholars dating from 1242.<sup>362</sup> A Master Richard of Cirencester who granted land to the abbey in the early to mid 13th century may have been associated with this abbey school<sup>363</sup> and a strong scholarly tradition at Cirencester may have attracted men of the calibre of Alexander Nequam to the abbey.<sup>364</sup> In 1340 one Walter Brounyng of Sandhurst, aged then 21, began his studies.<sup>365</sup> The bishop of Worcester, Thomas Polton, supported a poor boy at school in Cirencester and left him £4 when he died in 1433 should he wish to continue his studies.<sup>366</sup> The master of a school for boy choristers received a pension, when the abbey was closed.<sup>367</sup>

There was probably a free school in Cirencester from c.1457, when John Chedworth, bishop of Lincoln, was granted a licence to found a chantry in the church of St John the Baptist, Cirencester.<sup>368</sup> The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* recorded that 'Humphrey ..., master of the grammar school there, has a certain annuity of £10 for his expenses paid by the monastery of Winchcombe forever by order and foundation of Sir John Chedworth, bishop of Lincoln'.<sup>369</sup> This £10 endowment was charged upon the manor of Sherborne.<sup>370</sup> In 1487 the schoolmaster of Cirencester was Master Simon Moreland.<sup>371</sup> In 1534 Elizabeth Tolle left £10 in her will for the repairing of a new school house in Cirencester.<sup>372</sup>

## **Religious History**

**Beth Hartland & John Chandler**

### **Parish Church, origins and status**

The church of St John the Baptist is first specifically mentioned in 1222 in a confirmation by Pope Honorius III to the abbot and convent of St Mary Cirencester of the church of St John, with the hospital, other churches (the chapels of St Cecilia, Wiggold and Baunton) and the vill of Cirencester with the seven hundreds.<sup>373</sup> Architectural evidence points to an early Norman church, with the chancel rebuilt and widened in the latter part of the 12th century.<sup>374</sup> While the canons of St Mary's Cirencester later claimed to hold the church of St John the Baptist and its chapels from time

<sup>361</sup> E.A. Fuller, *The Parish Church of St John Baptist*, Cirencester (Cirencester, 1882), 13.

<sup>362</sup> Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc. I, 281; I. Kirkby, *Diocese of Gloucester* (1968), 4-5.

<sup>363</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 280/137.

<sup>364</sup> Evans, 'Cirencester Abbey: From Heyday to Dissolution', 117-122.

<sup>365</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.* XI, 124.

<sup>366</sup> *Reg. Chichele*, II, 492.

<sup>367</sup> *L&P Hen. VIII*, XVI, 27.

<sup>368</sup> Below, Bishop Chedworth's Chantry.

<sup>369</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, 447.

<sup>370</sup> GA, D678/1 M1/2/11, m.1.

<sup>371</sup> E. A. Fuller, 'Cirencester Free Grammar School', *TBGAS* 11 (1886-87), 117-118.

<sup>372</sup> TNA, PROB 11/25/212.

<sup>373</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 161/93.

<sup>374</sup> Fuller, *St John the Baptist*, 5.

immemorial, there is no firm evidence for the foundation date for the church.<sup>375</sup> None is mentioned in Domesday.

The parish church is the largest of the old parish churches of Gloucestershire, being 157 feet in internal length and 104 feet in breadth.<sup>376</sup> Its size meant it could accommodate visitations of the people and clergy of the deanery of Cirencester by the bishop of Worcester,<sup>377</sup> and the church was used as a meeting place to carry out other ecclesiastical business by the bishop.<sup>378</sup> The original chancel was rebuilt and widened in the late 12th century, and its east end was probably lengthened in the 13th century, as was most of the south chancel aisle.<sup>379</sup> The Lady Chapel was built c.1240-1250 above a barrel-vaulted crypt.<sup>380</sup> In the early 1340s, the church's sanctuary was threatened by a 'multitude of armed men' who threatened to remove Walter Beket from the church, unless he admitted his felony. Walter was subsequently pardoned for admitting killing John de Flete, who was still alive.<sup>381</sup>

At the beginning of the 15th century, bequests, amounting to 80s, were made in wills towards the building of a new belfry.<sup>382</sup> Judging by the names given to two bells in a will of 1499, they may have been gifts of the Trinity and Jesus Brotherhoods.<sup>383</sup> The Lady Chapel was almost entirely rebuilt in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century in Perpendicular style.<sup>384</sup> In the late-15th century a relatively shallow porch was built against the south aisle wall, flanked by tall octagonal battlemented stair-turrets. This was then expanded into the great south porch in a second phase c.1490-1500.<sup>385</sup> After the Dissolution, the porch was used as a town hall, and local tradition maintained that the porch was built by the abbey on its own land for the conducting of its secular business.<sup>386</sup> The building of the porch may have been a joint venture between the town and abbey. Leading citizens left specific bequests for the building of the porch in their wills: in 1453 John Gerveys left £10;<sup>387</sup> in 1492 Robert Stone left 40 of his best sheep,<sup>388</sup> in 1497 John Benet left 13s 4d;<sup>389</sup> in 1501 John Avening left 40s.<sup>390</sup> Leland tells us that Alice Avening left a very substantial gift of 100 marks, and that her sister, the mother of Bishop Ruthall, also contributed along with others.<sup>391</sup>

<sup>375</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 123/73.

<sup>376</sup> Fuller, *St John the Baptist*, 1.

<sup>377</sup> *Reg. Sede Vacante*, 285, 389, 399-400, 430.

<sup>378</sup> *Bishop Cobham's Register*, 8; *Register of Bishop Reynolds*, 9, 140-7; *Ciren. Cart.* III, 316; R.M. Haines (ed.), *Calendar of the Register of Adam de Orleton, Bishop of Worcester 1327-1333 (Worcs. Hist. Soc., 1979)*, no.1; *Reg. Sede Vacante*, 415-17; *Calendar of Register of Henry Wakefield*, no.908.

<sup>379</sup> Fuller, *St John the Baptist*, 5.

<sup>380</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I, 249.

<sup>381</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1343-1345*, 439-40.

<sup>382</sup> Hockaday Abs. 155, 1402, 1406; TNA, PROB 11/2A/66.

<sup>383</sup> Fuller, *St John the Baptist*, 13.

<sup>384</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I, 250.

<sup>385</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I, 250.

<sup>386</sup> Baddeley, *History of Cirencester*, 290.

<sup>387</sup> Hockaday Abs., 155, 1453.

<sup>388</sup> TNA, PROB 11/9/231.

<sup>389</sup> TNA, PROB 11/11/94.

<sup>390</sup> TNA, PROB 11/12/294.

<sup>391</sup> Leland, *Itin.*, I, 129.

Work on replacing the 13th century nave began in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>392</sup> The shields and merchants' marks that adorn the Tudor nave speak to the communal nature of the building effort,<sup>393</sup> as do specific bequests in wills for the 'mydle ile',<sup>394</sup> and 'roodelofte',<sup>395</sup> and the common stipulation for wives, as sole executrices, to dispose of the remainder of their husbands' goods as they thought best for the health of their souls.<sup>396</sup> John Pratt (d.1513) gave £40 to the construction of the middle aisle and £6 13s 4d to help build the scaffolding for the construction of the same, on condition that work began within a year of his death. If work did not begin within this time period, the money was to be spent on a priest to sing masses for himself and his friends taking £6 13s 4d a year whilst the money lasted.<sup>397</sup> Thomas George (d.1517) left 40s to the new building of the church of St John the Baptist to be paid over four years.<sup>398</sup>

The churchyard of St John the Baptist was first mentioned in a charter of 1242, by which the abbot and convent of St Mary's acquired half a wall near the churchyard from Walter de Panes.<sup>399</sup> Requests to be buried in the churchyard occur in two wills from 1469, one from 1499 and three wills from 1537.<sup>400</sup>

### ***Endowment and Patronage***

#### *Advowson*

In the mid-14th century the men of Cirencester alleged, among other things, that the abbot had usurped the right of presentation to the church from the king since John's reign.<sup>401</sup> Pursuit of this allegation was dropped when Edward III confirmed all the abbey's charters in return for a fine of £300.<sup>402</sup> The advowson of St John the Baptist brought with it the right to present to the chapels of Wiggold, St Cecilia and Baunton. In the early 13th century the abbot and convent negotiated with the lord of Wiggold to be relieved of the obligation to maintain a perpetual chantry on the manor. The lord of the manor was to provide a chaplain at his own cost if he wished to hear divine service at Wiggold, but all offerings at the chapel were to remain to the abbot and convent.<sup>403</sup>

An inquisition taken in 1310 confirmed the ancient custom by which the abbot and convent were entitled to receive a parishioner's best beast as mortuary if the lord received no heriot, and their second best beast if the lord did receive heriot.<sup>404</sup>

<sup>392</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I., 250.

<sup>393</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I, 251.

<sup>394</sup> TNA, PROB 11/19/118; Worcs. R. O., wills, John Pratt 1513.

<sup>395</sup> TNA, PROB 11/24/28.

<sup>396</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, Thomas George 1517, William Heydon 1537, Gylys Paratt 1538.

<sup>397</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, John Pratt 1513.

<sup>398</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, Thomas George 1517.

<sup>399</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 277/133; *Ciren. Cart.* III, 323.

<sup>400</sup> Hockaday Abs., 155, 1469; TNA, PROB 11/11/658; Worcs. R. O., wills, Walter Brede (1537), John Fox (1537) & Thomas Hayward (1537).

<sup>401</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 126.

<sup>402</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 132.

<sup>403</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* I, 260/338.

<sup>404</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* III, 316.

*Value*

The total value of the church, including offerings at the high altar in money and kind and tithes of sheaves, was reckoned at £35 16s 6½d in 1263/4.<sup>405</sup> Gifts for tithes forgotten (mortuaria) could be received in kind, a horse worth 5s. being received in 1268,<sup>406</sup> and money was expended on collecting such mortuaria.<sup>407</sup> The largest mortuarium in extant wills was 13s 4d, left by Robert Richards in 1518 together with 'a standing cup of silver with a cover to make a pyx at the high altar there for to put in the blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ'.<sup>408</sup>

A survey dating from the reign of Henry III valued the church, which the abbot of St Mary's Cirencester had to his own use, at 40 m. per annum. No vicar was appointed.<sup>409</sup> In 1254 the church was valued at 30 m. per annum.<sup>410</sup> In the papal taxation of 1291 St John the Baptist was taxed at £28 13s 4d; the tithe was valued at £2 17s 4d.<sup>411</sup> In the royal taxation of 1341 the church was taxed at 43 m.<sup>412</sup> In the ecclesiastical survey of 1535, the keeper of parish church of Cirencester accounted for £29 2s 6d income.<sup>413</sup>

*Nottingham's service*

Founded in 1483 by Sir William Nottingham and consisting of a priest to say divine prayer at the altar of St Thomas the Martyr in the Lady Chapel where William's parents, William Nottingham and Christina, were buried<sup>414</sup> for the souls of William, his late wives, Cecily and Elizabeth, his parents and all faithful men departed.<sup>415</sup> The maintenance of the priest was provided for by lands and tenements in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire which in 1548 were worth £15 8s 9d *per annum*.<sup>416</sup> In 1535 these lands, and land in Burford, Lincolnshire, were valued at £16 6s 2½d *per annum* beyond respite.<sup>417</sup> In 1548 the incumbent was Sir Thomas Neele, 54 years of age, who took £4 *per annum*.<sup>418</sup> In 1546 the service had been valued at £16 2s 1d, and the priest's stipend given as £5 6s 8d *per annum*.<sup>419</sup> On 1 September 1480 William enfeoffed John, bishop of Worcester, John Keke, John Trye and Thomas Hamchirche of these lands.<sup>420</sup> A larger group of men were specified in his will to assign the lands as 'a good and lawful estate' to divers persons to be named and limited by the warden of the weavers, the wardens of the church of St John the Baptist in Cirencester and the wardens of the chapels of the Holy Trinity and Blessed Mary the Virgin. These lands also provided

<sup>405</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.14v.

<sup>406</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.19v.

<sup>407</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.10.

<sup>408</sup> TNA, PROB 11/19/118.

<sup>409</sup> TNA, SC 12/18/22.

<sup>410</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* II, 459.

<sup>411</sup> *Tax. Eccl.*, 221.

<sup>412</sup> *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 408.

<sup>413</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, 470.

<sup>414</sup> Davies, *Monumental Brasses*, 68-9.

<sup>415</sup> GA, D4590/3/1

<sup>416</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>417</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, vol ii, p.447.

<sup>418</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>419</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>420</sup> TNA, C 141/4/37.

for the maintenance of four poor men dwelling in 'a certain house built and ordained' by William for that purpose in 'Batellstreete', the men to be chosen by the wardens of the weavers, the church and chapels aforesaid.<sup>421</sup> This building was subsequently known as St Thomas's Hospital (now Weaver's Hall), and Battle Street was renamed Thomas Street after the almshouse.<sup>422</sup> The name of St Thomas presumably came from the almshouse's association with the chantry established by William Nottingham at the altar of St Thomas the Martyr in the Lady Chapel of the parish church. It was known as 'St Thomas' House' by the late 1530s when bequests were made to the poor men living there by Walter Brede (d.1537)<sup>423</sup> and Richard Tylladem (d.1538), whose connection to weaving is shown by bequests of two looms and a chase to family members.<sup>424</sup>

In return for their weekly payment each of the poor men was to remember William Nottingham and all the faithful departed in their prayers.<sup>425</sup> In 1548, £6 18s 8d *per annum* were given in alms to the said poor men. In 1548 the chantry had ornaments valued at 16s, and one chalice which could not be valued as, at the time of the survey, it had been taken to London.<sup>426</sup>

### *Alice Avening's service*

Founded by Alice Avening, probably the widow of John Avening (d.1501) of Cirencester. John's will specified that a temporary chantry be established, requesting that Alice should provide for two honest priests to sing and pray for his soul, and the souls of his parents and benefactors for one year at the altar of St Katherine.<sup>427</sup> John was to be buried in the chapel of St Katherine, in an arch prepared over the north side of the altar. In 1673 a memorial brass commemorating John Avening and Alice his wife and eight children was still in place in St Katherine's chapel.<sup>428</sup> The survey of Gloucestershire chantries taken in 1548 recorded a chantry founded by Alice Avening consisting of a priest celebrating at the altar of St Nicholas and St Katherine for the souls of Alice and all Christian people. The lands bequeathed in support of this priest in Hartham (Wilts), Pyrton (Wilts), Througham and Cirencester<sup>429</sup> were then worth £9 16d. The incumbent in 1548 was Sir Henry Jones, 48 years of age, taking £6 13s 4d for his maintenance *per annum*. The chantry had ornaments valued at 2s.<sup>430</sup> In 1546 it had been noted that the priest also received 10s for celebrating three masses *per annum* at the manor of Hartham.<sup>431</sup> According to Leland, Alice, aunt to bishop Ruthall of Durham, also gave 100 m. to the building of the porch.<sup>432</sup> Alice's name also appears on the capital of one of the pillars on the north of the south aisle.<sup>433</sup>

<sup>421</sup> GA, D4590/3/1.

<sup>422</sup> Verey & Brooks, *Glos.* I, 178.

<sup>423</sup> Worcs. R.O., wills, Walter Brede, 1537.

<sup>424</sup> Worcs. R.O., wills, Richard Tylladem, 1538.

<sup>425</sup> GA, D4590/3/1.

<sup>426</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>427</sup> TNA, PROB 11/12/294.

<sup>428</sup> Davies, *Monumental Brasses*, 207-11.

<sup>429</sup> *Valor Eccl.* II, 447.

<sup>430</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>431</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>432</sup> Leland, *Itin.*, I, 129.

<sup>433</sup> Davies, *Monumental Brasses*, 207-11.

*Robert Ricard's service or St Anthony's service*

Robert Ricard's will provided that, in addition to a perpetual obit in the Lady Chapel funded by a tenement in Chepyngstrete granted to the wardens of that chapel, a chantry should be founded before the altar of St Anthony funded by lands which Robert held in the hundred of Berkeley which exceeded £8 *per annum* in all issues, and which were to be held by 10 or 12 of the most honest persons in Cirencester.<sup>434</sup> The priest so employed should sing and say daily masses for the souls of Robert, his wife, their parents, kin, friends and all Christian souls at the altar of St Anthony for ever. He should receive £8 sterling *per annum*. Furthermore he willed that the priest should freely instruct four children selected by the churchwardens in the 'singing of plain song and pricked song for the maintenance of the divine service there'.

The survey of 1535 claimed that Robert Ricard's widow, Elizabeth Toll was enfeoffed with lands in six manors in Gloucestershire for the use of the chaplain of the chantry of St Anthony within St John the Baptist, Cirencester which were worth £6 8s 11d per annum beyond respite.<sup>435</sup> The 1548 chantry certificate for the resulting chantry recorded that the priest taught two, not four, children. The lands belonging to the chantry were then worth £7 13s 5½d; the priest, Sir William Wylson aged 46 years, took £6 15¾d per annum; and the chantry had no ornaments, plate or jewels.<sup>436</sup> The 1546 chantry survey reported that the priest took a salary of £6 13s 4d per annum.<sup>437</sup>

*John Jones' service*

Details of the service established by John Jones are found in an early version of his will, dated 1505, but proved 1513,<sup>438</sup> and a 18-century transcript of an indenture of a will, dated 1508.<sup>439</sup> The indenture provided that the funds from six tenements within Cirencester should be used to support a priest to say Mass for the souls of John, his parents, those he was most bound to pray for, and all Christian souls, and specified which services should be read on which days. The chantry was to last for 60 years after his decease. Thereafter the tenements were to be sold to the highest bidder and the money expended upon 'singing of Mass, making of the Highways, and other charitable deeds and alms to poor men' within one or two years. However in 1548 the chantry commissioners reported that the tenements were to remain to the town and their revenues used on the mending of highways and in other useful ways.<sup>440</sup> In 1548 the incumbent was Sir Stephen Redfern, aged 57 years, who took 106s 8d per annum. The lands were yearly worth £8 6s 8d. There were ornaments to the value of 8s. The 1546 chantry survey did not record this service. The 1535 ecclesiastical survey had valued the lands at £7 6s 2d per annum beyond respite, which was to be used for the chapel for a term of years and beyond that in fulfilment of John Jones' will.<sup>441</sup>

*Bishop Chedworth's Chantry*

In 1457 John Chedworth, bishop of Lincoln, was granted a licence 'to found a chantry of two, three

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<sup>434</sup> TNA, PROB 11/19/118.

<sup>435</sup> *Valor Eccl.* II, 447.

<sup>436</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>437</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>438</sup> TNA, PROB 11/17/352.

<sup>439</sup> GA P86/1 VE 2/1, 123r-124r.

<sup>440</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>441</sup> *Valor Eccl.* II, 447.

or four chaplains to celebrate divine service in the parish church of St John the Baptist, Cirencester, at the altar of St Nicholas and St Katherine or other altar for the good estate of the king, queen Margaret, Edward, prince of Wales, and the said bishop and for their souls after the death and the souls of the king's progenitors and the parents and benefactors of the bishop'.<sup>442</sup> The chantry was located in the south choir aisle, a space which contained three (still extant) wall paintings of St Catherine, St Nicholas and St Christopher.<sup>443</sup> The chantry was not mentioned in either the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 nor the chantry certificates of 1546 and 1548.

### *Jesus Service*

Although regarded as identical by Maclean,<sup>444</sup> there is no evidence that Bishop Chedworth's Service and the Jesus Service were the same chantry. The Valor Ecclesiasticus recorded the Jesus Service as having lands worth £6 per annum in Cirencester and Charlton (Wilts) for the use of one chaplain.<sup>445</sup> According to the 1546 chantry survey the Jesus service was worth £4 6s 8d per annum, and the priest took 68s per annum.<sup>446</sup> The later chantry certificate of 1548 recorded that the service had been founded by persons unknown and maintained a priest praying for the souls of the founders and all Christian souls until about 6 or 7 years previously, whence the rent from the land put in feoffment for the chantry had been employed upon repairs to the church.<sup>447</sup> The end-date of the service is therefore in doubt. A fraternity of Jesus was in existence by the late-15th century, Thomas Nele specifying that he was to be buried in the 'chapel of the fraternity of Jesus' in 1495'.<sup>448</sup>

### *St Christopher's Service*

There is no evidence for the foundation of this chantry. The ecclesiastical survey of 1535 reported that the guardian of St Christopher's service held lands lying in Cirencester and Northleach worth £6 5d beyond reprise for the use of a chaplain.<sup>449</sup> In 1548 a chantry was recorded which had lands and tenements in feoffment to the value of £5 12s 8d per annum for the support of an organ player. The incumbent, Thomas Edmond, 40 years of age, took 100s yearly for this service.<sup>450</sup> In the 1546 chantry survey the priest's stipend was given as £4 19s 1d.<sup>451</sup>

### *Holy Trinity Service*

The Holy Trinity service was established in 1382 when Nicholas Poynter, Robert Playn and John Boys sought royal permission to grant the manor of Bagendon and other lands in Cirencester and Baunton to two chaplains celebrating at the altars of the Holy Trinity and St Mary in the parish

<sup>442</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1452-1461*, 338-9.

<sup>443</sup> E. Pridgeon, 'Researching medieval wall paintings: a guide to archival sources in England and Wales', *The Local Historian* 45 (2015), 7.

<sup>444</sup> J. MacLean, 'Chantry Certificates, Gloucestershire', *Trans. BGAS* 8 (1883-4), 286, fn.1.

<sup>445</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, vol ii, p.448.

<sup>446</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>447</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>448</sup> TNA, PROB 11/10/492.

<sup>449</sup> *Valor Eccl.* II, 448.

<sup>450</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>451</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

church of Cirencester.<sup>452</sup> In this Poynter, Playn and Boys were acting as representatives of the fraternity which had been conceived during the reign of Edward III for the support of two priests,<sup>453</sup> and they were to grant these lands to the chaplains celebrating at the altars of the Holy Trinity and St Mary.<sup>454</sup> In 1391 William Overynton and John Yonge, chaplains of the Holy Trinity and St Mary in St John's church, Cirencester and lords of Bagendon, jointly presented to the church of Bagendon.<sup>455</sup> The 1548 survey did not refer to celebration at the altar of St Mary,<sup>456</sup> and provision may have changed after licence granted in 1392 to grant land to a chaplain celebrating in the chapel of St Mary.<sup>457</sup> However, two chaplains of the Trinity chantry were named as lords of Bagendon in the first half of the 15th century,<sup>458</sup> and two priests were named as incumbents of the Trinity service in the 1548 survey.<sup>459</sup> The name St Mary may simply have been dropped to avoid confusion with the St Mary Service in the Lady Chapel. The 1535 survey referred to Thomas Best and Thomas Phillips as the chaplains of the two chantries of Holy Trinity, having lands in Cirencester and Bagendon worth £17 ½d beyond respite per annum.<sup>460</sup> A will proved in 1410 included a bequest of 3s 4d to the fraternity of the Holy Trinity.<sup>461</sup> In 1438 Richard Dixton made a bequest of cloth for vestments.<sup>462</sup> The former chantry priest, Ralph Parsons, was buried in the chapel of the Holy Trinity in 1478.<sup>463</sup> In 1546 the fraternity of the Holy Trinity was valued at £6 10s 4d, of which 33s 4d were paid per annum for obits and 40s contributed to the maintenance of the church and the chapel of the Holy Trinity.<sup>464</sup>

#### *Our Lady or St Mary's service, in the Lady Chapel*

The 1548 chantry certificate stated that the service had been founded by William Archibald and others who gave the land, worth £12 10s in 1548, for the maintenance of a priest at the altar of our Lady.<sup>465</sup> In 1392 William Archibald and 12 others, including Nicholas Poynter and John Boys, were allowed to grant land in Cirencester to a chaplain in the chapel of St Mary in the parish church.<sup>466</sup> This land amounted to seven messuages, not held in chief, of the value of 10 m. p.a.<sup>467</sup> The origins of St Mary's service predated the formal licence and appears to have been established around the time of the building of the Lady Chapel.<sup>468</sup> The earliest dated gift to the service of St

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<sup>452</sup> TNA, C 143/400/19.

<sup>453</sup> TNA, C 47/39/61.

<sup>454</sup> TNA, C 143/400/19.

<sup>455</sup> *Calendar of the Register of Henry Wakefield*, no.619.

<sup>456</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>457</sup> TNA, C 153/419/19.

<sup>458</sup> *Ciren. Cart.* II, no.740.

<sup>459</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>460</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, 447.

<sup>461</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2A/356.

<sup>462</sup> Hockaday Abs., 155, 1438.

<sup>463</sup> Davies, *Monumental Brasses*, 75-6.

<sup>464</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>465</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>466</sup> TNA, C 153/419/19.

<sup>467</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1391-6, 157, 173-4.

<sup>468</sup> *Cirencester Cartulary*, III, 320, 322. Above, Parish Church, origins and status.

Mary contained in the Lady Chapel register is from 1311.<sup>469</sup> Other grants in the register suggest a communal responsibility for any such service: two messuages at Gildenbrigge granted towards 'the sustenance of a certain chaplain who celebrates divine service to the honour of God and St Mary in the parish church of Cirencester each day' were to remain in the possession of the parishioners of Cirencester;<sup>470</sup> another grant noted that the chapel had been constituted by all the parishioners of Cirencester.<sup>471</sup>

The general support of the community for the chapel of St Mary may be inferred from the differential monetary bequests to the lights before images or altars in the church.<sup>472</sup>

The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* valued the lands held by the service within the vill at £9 8s 2d.<sup>473</sup> In 1546 the Lady Service was valued at £12 7s 8d *per annum*;<sup>474</sup> in 1548 its lands and tenements were valued at £12 10s *per annum*. The incumbent in 1548 was Sir Thomas Taylor, 33 years of age, taking a yearly stipend of £7 for the service. No plate or jewels were reported as belonging to this service.<sup>475</sup> The 1460 inventory of goods belonging to the chapel listed little of particular value, but there were then a few small items of gold and silver or gilt.<sup>476</sup>

### ***Other Chantries***

Three temporary chantries of 1 to 3 years did not indicate which chapel the services should be celebrated in: Nicholas Poynter (d.1406),<sup>477</sup> John Pratt (d. 1513) I,<sup>478</sup> and Hugh Norres, senior (d. 1535).<sup>479</sup> Three temporary chantries were established in the chapel of the Holy Trinity: Joan Spycer (d.1445),<sup>480</sup> John Twynyho (d.1486),<sup>481</sup> and John Benet (d.1497);<sup>482</sup> and two in the chapel of St Katherine: John Avenyng (d.1501)<sup>483</sup> and Richard Osmonde (d.1517).<sup>484</sup> Henry Gayrstang of Cirencester (d.1464), established a chantry of a priest celebrating before the altar of St Edmund the Confessor during his wife's lifetime. He also left a primer to be chained within the 'chapel' of St Edmund.<sup>485</sup> Should his son and daughter die, Adam Baker (d.1489) wanted their legacies to be used to establish a chantry in the chapel of St Mary with a priest to pray for himself and his parents.<sup>486</sup> Henry Tapper (d.1531) left funds for a priest to pray for his soul, the souls of his friends

<sup>469</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42, f.15v.

<sup>470</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42, f.7.

<sup>471</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42, f.16.

<sup>472</sup> Hockaday Abs. 155, 1469.

<sup>473</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, II, p.447.

<sup>474</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>475</sup> TNA, E 301/22.

<sup>476</sup> Bodleian, MS Dugdale 42, f.22v-23.

<sup>477</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2A/200.

<sup>478</sup> Worcs. R.O., wills, John Pratt 1513.

<sup>479</sup> Worcs. R.O., wills, Hugh Norres senior (1535).

<sup>480</sup> TNA, PROB 11/3/518.

<sup>481</sup> TNA, PROB 11/7/295.

<sup>482</sup> TNA, PROB 11/11/94.

<sup>483</sup> TNA, PROB 11/12/294.

<sup>484</sup> TNA, PROB 11/18/507.

<sup>485</sup> Hockaday Abs. 155, 1464; Fuller, *St John the Baptist*, 11-12.

<sup>486</sup> TNA, PROB 11/8/297.

and all Christians at the altar of St James, taking £6 6s 8d per annum as stipend for the space of ten years.<sup>487</sup> He also established an obit to be supported from the rent of his tenement in Chepinstret.

## **Religious Life**

### *Management and guilds*

Surviving obedientiary accounts of Cirencester abbey show that one canon, Richard Berne, acted as warden or keeper of the church of St John the Baptist for the period 1262-1268.<sup>488</sup> He was succeeded as keeper in 1268 by Adam de Scriveham, Adam Necus and Hyllarius<sup>489</sup> and Hyllarius went on to act as sole warden until 1274.<sup>490</sup> In 1274 the wardens were Hyllarius and Gervase,<sup>491</sup> in 1275 Gervase and James,<sup>492</sup> and in 1276 James and John de Rodinton.<sup>493</sup> The wardens were responsible for paying the wages of chaplains and deacons and other expenses of the church, such as repairs to the chancel<sup>494</sup> and maintenance of the priest's house.<sup>495</sup>

The parishioners were responsible for the maintenance of the nave. The chantry survey of 1546 reveals that there were then three fraternities in Cirencester, which had the maintenance of the church as one of their aims. The Brotherhood of the Trinity contributed 40s per annum to the maintenance of the church and the chapel of the Holy Trinity. The St Katherine Brotherhood contributed 14s. per annum to the maintenance of the parish church, and the Brotherhood of St John the Baptist contributed 2s. per annum.<sup>496</sup>

In 1494 Thomas Nele requested burial within the chapel of the fraternity of Jesus.<sup>497</sup> The two images of St Clement in the church and the bequests of Hugh Norres (d. 1535) suggest there may also have been a guild of St Clement in Cirencester.<sup>498</sup>

### *Staffing*

1343: Peter de Gounceuz, parson of church of Cirencester<sup>499</sup>

1513: Sir William Calwey, parish priest; Sir ?Goas; Sir Robert Gale; Sir William Pole; Sir Richard Nicholas; Sir Robert Drake, Sir John Cusse, Sir Thomas Kyng; William Offer, curate<sup>500</sup>

1513: William Offer chaplain<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> TNA, PROB 11/24/28.

<sup>488</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, ff.1-19 *passim*.

<sup>489</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.19.

<sup>490</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, ff.20v-29 *passim*.

<sup>491</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.32v.

<sup>492</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.34.

<sup>493</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, img\_6004

<sup>494</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, f.23v.

<sup>495</sup> Staffs. R.O., D(W) 1778 P54 B8, ff.14v-15v.

<sup>496</sup> TNA, E 301/21, no.37.

<sup>497</sup> TNA, PROB 11/10/492.

<sup>498</sup> TNA, PROB 11/5/254; Worcs. R. O., wills, Hugh Norres senior (1535).

<sup>499</sup> *Cal. Pat. 1343-1345*, p.16.

<sup>500</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, John Pratt 1513.

<sup>501</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, Richard Scaryning 1513.

1527: William Alstone, parish priest of Cirencester; Adam Haryet, Jesus priest<sup>502</sup>

1537: Priest John Foscotte, John Wyllys<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>502</sup> TNA, PROB 11/22/456.

<sup>503</sup> Worcs. R. O., wills, William Wilkyns 1537.