

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**The Severn Flood-Plain at Gloucester in the Medieval and Early
Modern Periods**

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2006, Vol. 124, 9-36

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By JOHN RHODES

Presidential Address delivered at Clifton Cathedral, Bristol, 18 March 2006

Today the Severn flood-plain at Gloucester is a semi-derelict landscape of rubbish tips, trailer parks, wetland nature reserves and used and disused roads, railways and electrical apparatus. In the medieval and early modern periods it was a valued adjunct to the royal borough and castle, a rich meadowland fringed by bridges, causeways, fish-weirs, mills, wharves and the encroaching town. I shall deal with the different parts of the plain in the order in which they came to prominence, adding later evidence as a guide to tenures and values and as an aid to distinguishing between medieval and later structures. I shall contradict most previous writers on the subject, but would like to acknowledge their help and the facilities I have enjoyed in Gloucester Museum, Gloucester Cathedral Library and Gloucestershire Archives (formerly the Gloucestershire Record Office).

Physical geography

The plain is 1½ kilometres wide.¹ The alluvium consists of sand, silt and clay overlying peat within a buried channel more than 12 m deep.² The present river channel is meandering and almost level, at a gradient of 1:50,000. The river is close to the tidal limit, flowing downstream for more than eleven hours and upstream for less than one hour in every twelve. Because of the shape of the estuary, on 130 days a year the flow tide begins with the Severn bore, a wave up to 1.3 m high moving at 14 m.p.h.³ The effect of the bore is to erode material from the river-bank downstream and to deposit it on the bank upstream, thus blocking any stagnant branches such as the cut made in 1793 for the Hereford and Gloucester canal.⁴ Summer low water, before the building of navigation weirs, was 4.9 m above Ordnance Datum.⁵ Mean high water at spring tides is 7.7 m above datum⁶ and the natural surface of the plain is at 8.3–8.6 m.⁷ Floods are expected once in five years at 10 m and once in 100 years at 10.60⁸ or 11.18 m.⁹

1. Geolog. Surv. Gt. Brit. sheet 234 (1972).
2. *Soils in Glos. 1: sheet SO 82* (Soil Survey Record 13, 1973), 9; *Proc. Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club* 34, 148–51.
3. F.W. Beechey, *Remarks upon the Tidal Phenomena of the River Severn* (1849), 4, 19; F.W. Rowbotham, *The Severn Bore* (Dawlish, 1964), 23–5.
4. D.E. Bick, *The Hereford and Gloucester Canal* (Newent, 1979), 46.
5. 17.9 ft above O.D. less 0.65 ft for conversion from Liverpool to Newlyn datum: Beechey, *Remarks upon the Tidal Phenomena*, 14.
6. 26 ft less 0.65 ft as above: A.H. Gibson, *Construction and Operation of a Tidal Model of the Severn Estuary* (London, 1933), 5.
7. 28 ft and 29 ft less 0.65 ft as above: O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.14–15 (1902 edn.).
8. Levels on the E. channel at the Severn causeway extracted from the *River Severn at Gloucester Flood Risk Management Study* (Environment Agency Midland Region, 2005), 25–7, figs. 3.2–3.5.
9. The level quoted by the Environment Agency for development control purposes: W.J. Burton, 'Flood Risk Assessment', in Glouc. City Council planning application 03/01156/FUL. A flood in 1770 reached 11.5 m above O.D. (38.29 ft less 0.65 ft for conversion from Liverpool to Newlyn datum): C.N. Smith, *Swift Severn's Flood* (Gloucester, 1948), 29.

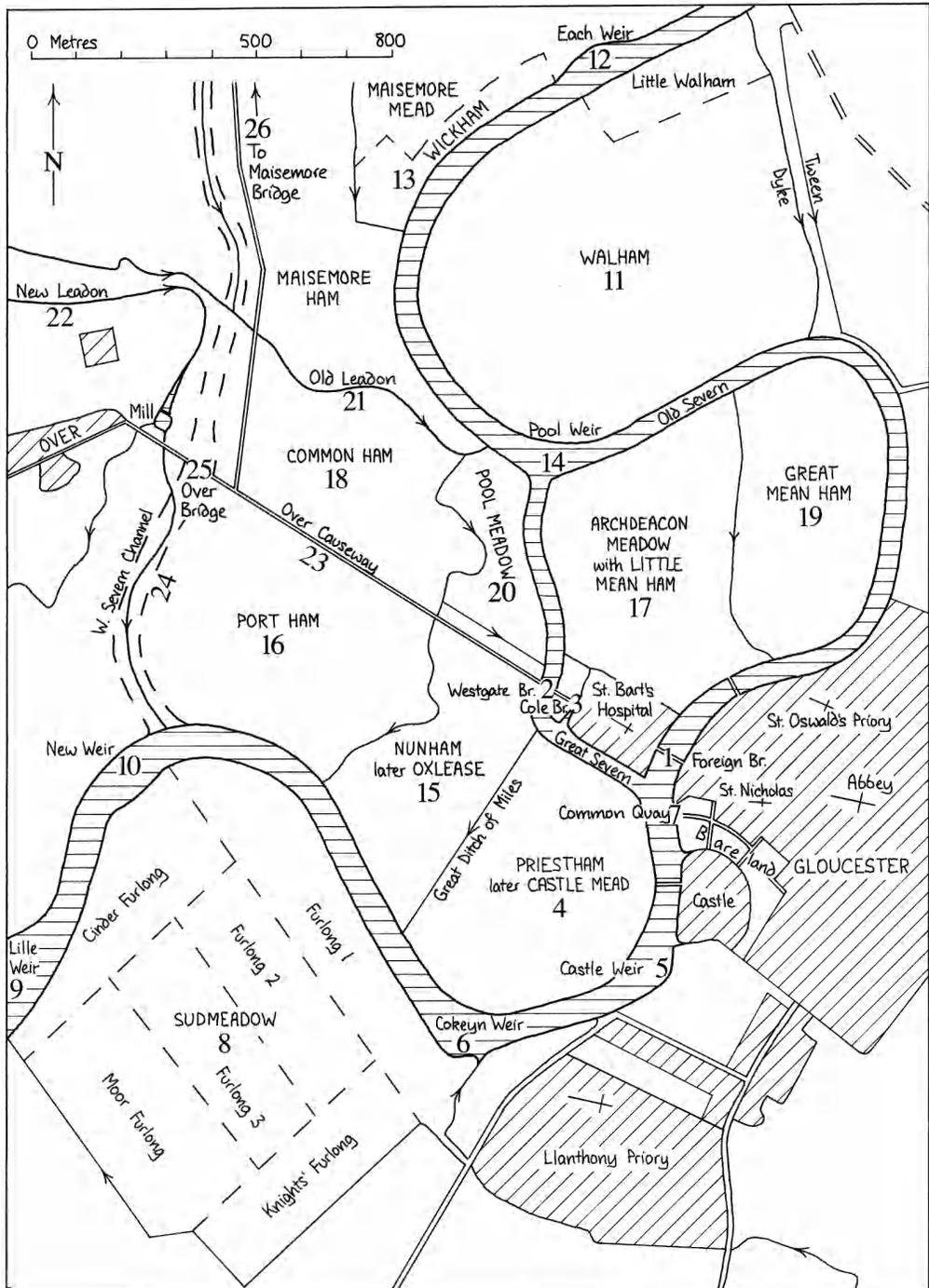


Fig. 1. The flood-plain in the 14th century. Islands at the weirs are not shown. Places are numbered in the order in which they appear in the text.

Alluvium in the Severn estuary has accumulated since Roman times to an average depth of 1.7 m, implying a rise of that amount in mean high water at spring tides.¹⁰ There is also evidence at Elmore, 7 km downstream, that meanders have been almost stationary since Roman times¹¹ and consequently that natural forces have remained in balance, with accretion matching the rise in tide levels. On that basis,¹² low water in Roman Gloucester was 3.2 m above Ordnance Datum, high water 6 m, the surface of the plain 6.6–6.9 m, a 5-year flood 8.3 m and a 100-year flood 8.9–9.5 m. Archaeology confirms those levels and shows that the rise since Roman times has been about 1 mm a year. For instance, in the 13th century the surface of the plain was at 8 m, and between 1510 and 1547 the floor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which was said to be *afore very subject to the rising of the Severne*, was raised from 9.20 to 9.75 m above Ordnance Datum.¹³

Since the 17th century the middle of the plain, being isolated between two channels of the river, has been called Alney Island,¹⁴ but that name is not certainly attested in the Middle Ages.¹⁵ Indeed we shall find that the west Severn channel did not then exist. Medieval Gloucester, befitting its status as a strategic and commercial centre, faced a deep and wide river in a single channel, comparable with the Tyne at Newcastle or the Thames at London.

Management of meadows

In the Middle Ages about 270 hectares of the plain lay within the hamlets and manors of Gloucester. On the east or near bank of the Severn were Sudmeadow of 71 hectares and Walham of 59 hectares, in which the hay was parcelled among many owners. On the west or far bank were 142 hectares in which the hay anciently belonged to Gloucester Abbey and St. Oswald's Priory, comprising Priestham and Nunham (or Castle Mead and Oxlease), Port Ham, Archdeacon Meadow, Great and Little Mean Ham, Common Ham and Pool Meadow.¹⁶ The names Walham, Priestham and Nunham refer to the earliest years of medieval Gloucester. Walham was the meadow of the indigenous Welsh or British inhabitants; Priestham and Nunham were land of the

10. Stephen Rippon, *The Severn Estuary* (London, 1997), 110, citing *Marine Geology* **83**, 225–35. At Elmore, 7 km downstream, the rise is 1.3–1.7 m: *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **108**, 18–19, 29–30. At Longford, 2 km upstream, and at Ripple (Worcs.), 23 km upstream, it is more than 1.2 m: L. Richardson, *The River Severn between Upper Arley and Gloucester* (privately printed, 1964), 40; *Glevensis* **14**, 30, cf. **26**, 31.
11. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **108**, 18, fig. 1; R. Hewlett and J. Birnie, 'Holocene environmental change in the inner Severn estuary', *The Holocene* **6** (1), 49–61, esp. p. 56. Thanks to Dr. Birnie for this reference.
12. Rowbotham calculated the rise as 1.8 m: *Glevensis* **12**, 5. Hurst argued for no rise except in low water above the weirs: H.R. Hurst, *Gloucester: The Roman and Later Defences* (Gloucester, 1986), 116.
13. *Antiq. Jnl.* **54**, 45, 50; *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **14**, 237. In Roman Gloucester the lowest surfaces, 6.27 m above O.D. for the bank of a creek in Quay Street and 6.75 m for a riverside wharf at no. 126 Westgate Street, were marginally above contemporary high water level: *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **103**, 60; Hurst, *Gloucester: The Roman and Later Defences*, 114–16. The next lowest, 8.12 m for the yard of a tilery at St. Oswald's Priory, was just below the 5-year flood level: C. Heighway and R. Bryant, *The Golden Minster...of St. Oswald at Gloucester* (CBA Research Report **117**, 1999), 51. The level of the lowest mosaic pavements, 9.1 m in Quay Street and at St. Mary de Lode, was within the range of a 100-year flood: *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **60**, 166–7 (30.19 ft less 0.65 ft for conversion from Liverpool to Newlyn datum); **121**, 108 & fig. 30, section 21 layer 224.
14. Gloucester Borough Records (GBR: in Gloucestershire Archives), acc. 7380/1/109.2 (inshire map).
15. *Alneio temp.* Hen. II, cited in A.H. Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* (English Place-Name Soc. 1964), **3**, 161, was the personal name of a donor to Kenilworth Abbey unconnected with Gloucester or Gloucestershire: *Cal. Charter Rolls* 1300–26, 278.
16. Medieval names are from W.H. Stevenson, *Cal. Rec. Corp. Glouc.* (Gloucester, 1893), p. 421. Areas are calculated from O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.10, 25.14–15, 33.2 (1902 edn.).

priests and nuns who occupied Gloucester Abbey as a double monastery from 679 to 767.¹⁷ The names show that in Anglo-Saxon times, when the flood-plain of the Avon at Bristol was marsh, the Severn plain at Gloucester was already managed as a landscape of *hamms* or enclosed meadows.¹⁸ An 18th-century agriculturalist called it *rich grassland liable to be overflowed by freshes and tides to which it owes its extraordinary fertility*.¹⁹ It was divided by boundary ditches which were scoured regularly.²⁰

In medieval Gloucester, as elsewhere, the meadows were normally closed from Candlemas (2 February) until midsummer when the hay was taken off; for the rest of the year they were open as pasture to eligible commoners.²¹ They were very valuable, those in the demesne of Llanthony Priory being valued in 1535 at 24*d.* an acre against 10*d.* for arable and 20*d.* for pasture.²² In the late Middle Ages they were used indiscriminately for wool, meat and cheese production. From 1515 320 Cotswold sheep from Coberley wintered at Walham, and from 1532 240 sheep from Aldsworth wintered beside the Severn at Maisemore.²³ At the Dissolution 400 sheep from Colesbourne wintered annually in the demesne of Llanthony Priory, either grazing in Sudmeadow or eating 40 loads of hay delivered from the meadow to the priory sheephouse.²⁴ But the Gloucester butchers, as we shall see, also fattened cattle there. Leland wrote *Cheese made there is in great price*.²⁵ Llanthony cheese was a delicacy sought or received in 1395 by the duchess of Gloucester, in 1417 by King Henry IV's widow, in 1419 by the countess of Stafford, in 1519 by the prior of Merton and in 1530 and 1532 by King Henry VIII.²⁶

Foreign Bridge (Fig. 1, no. 1)

In Roman times the Severn skirted the east edge of the plain, passing a Roman masonry wharf on the site of no. 126 Westgate Street.²⁷ A Roman wall on top of the wharf, retaining the ground at 10 m above Ordnance Datum, is best interpreted as the wing wall of a high Roman bridge over

17. Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* 2, 141, 143, 149; *Victoria County Hist. (V.C.H.) Glos.* 2, 53 with date corrected as in H.P.R. Finberg, *Early Chart. W. Midlands* (Leicester, 1961), p. 163.
18. For the *mersshe of Bristow*, Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* 3, 96; for *hamms*, Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past* (Chichester, 1988 edn.), 112–14.
19. George Turner, *General View of the Agriculture of Glos.* (London, 1794), 33. The grassland at Gloucester appears to be natural, unlike that at Elmore which was reclaimed from a freshwater lake behind Roman flood-banks: Hewlett and Birnie in *The Holocene* 6 (1), 56 *contra* Allen in *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 108, 29–30.
20. E.g. in 1302: Hist. MSS. Com. 27, 12*th* Rep. appendix 9, p. 425.
21. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 403–4; Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* 422–4.
22. *Valor Eccl.* (Rec. Com.) 2, 430. The Severn meadows at Minsterworth were valued in the 13th century at 24*d.* an acre against 6*d.* for arable: PRO (The National Archives), C 115/77, s. 1 no. 154.
23. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* ed. W.H. Hart (Rolls Ser.) 3, appendix p. 292; *V.C.H. Glos.* 7, 9.
24. *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, ed. John Rhodes (B.G.A.S. 2002), pp. 112, 128.
25. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 245.
26. PRO, C 115/76, ff. 95v., 129v.; C 115/78, f. 180; *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, p. 150; *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 5, pp. 750, 758.
27. Hurst, *Gloucester: The Roman and Later Defences*, 114–16. There is no evidence to support Hurst's argument (*ibid.* p. 3) that at the start of the Roman period the river flowed further E. along the present Three Cocks Lane, otherwise called St. Mary's Street. That street overlies sand and gravel at levels of c.8 m above O.D. (26.80 ft less 0.65 ft for conversion from Liverpool to Newlyn datum) typical of a Pleistocene gravel terrace or a Holocene overbank sediment but not of lateral accretion through migration of the Severn channel: *Proc. Cotteswold N.F.C.* 34, 148–52; Hewlett and Birnie in *The Holocene* 6 (1), 53–4, 56–7. At St. Oswald's Priory the sand lay at 9.0–9.4 m: Heighway and Bryant, *The Golden Minster*, 48, fig. 2.4. Roman reclamation in Quay Street was not of the Severn channel but of a tributary creek: *Glevensis* 25, 16–17.

the Severn.²⁸ But by the 11th century the Roman river bed had been filled in to a height of 8.6–8.9 m above Ordnance Datum, and was occupied by burgages extending at least 36 m west of the Roman wharf.²⁹

If a bridge was built in Anglo-Saxon times it stood further west.³⁰ The Severn crossing at Gloucester was the starting-point of military campaigns in 1055 and 1063,³¹ and by 1086, as we shall see, there was a causeway across the plain. Possibly a bridge was among the structures at Gloucester destroyed during civil unrest in 1088.³² Be that as it may, the great bridge of Gloucester (*pons magnus Glocestrie*) was begun on 15 May 1119.³³ According to a 15th-century account it had stone piers from the outset and was promoted by Nicholas, a priest associated with what became St. Nicholas's church.³⁴ Leland described it as a *bridge on the cheife arme of Severne that runneth hard by the towne, of 7 great arches of stone*.³⁵ Despite that description, the channel which it crossed was shrunken in his time, being called the Little Severn from 1370 and the Old Severn in 1529.³⁶ From 1493 the bridge was called Foreign Bridge.³⁷ The name reflects the fact that it straddled a central island and that its western part remained open while its eastern part was gradually choked or infilled.³⁸ The name is best interpreted as meaning that by 1493 the west or outer part, the *pons forinsecus*, was the only part to be watered at low tide and had given its name to the whole.

The four easternmost arches, of sandstone ashlar, were found by excavation in 1973 and the four westernmost were sketched in 1712. Since two were common to both records the arches actually numbered six, including a flood-arch on the west bank. Five were round arches of 12th-

28. Hurst, *Gloucester: The Roman and Later Defences*, 114–16, with contrary interpretation. In the 19th century the yard of no. 126 Westgate Street, over the surviving top of that wall, was the highest spot in the neighbourhood: map in GBR, L 10/1/2, where it appears as Davenport's Court. Rowbotham argued against a Roman bridge (*Glevensis* 12, 5), but the site of Gloucester at the head of an estuary is analogous to that of Roman bridge-heads like *Pons Aelius* (Newcastle upon Tyne) and London, and bridge engineering was well understood since Caesar took only 10 days to bridge the Rhine: Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 4, 17–18. For Romano-British bridges, *Archaeol. Jnl.* 118, 136–64; B. Watson *et al.*, *London Bridge* (London, 2001).
29. To no. 138 Westgate Street: *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 48.
30. The siting of St. Oswald's Priory implies a fortified bridge in the 10th century: Michael Hare, *The Two Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Gloucester* (Deerhurst Lecture 1992, Deerhurst, 1993), 5.
31. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 12.
32. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, p. 80.
33. Gregory of Caerwent in British Library (BL), MS. Cotton Vespasian A.v, f. 197v., with reading *magnus* rather than *magorus* as in *Glevensis* 27, 43. Thanks to Michael Hare for this reference. For confirmation of the date, *Annals of Tewkesbury, Annales Monastici* (Rolls Ser.) 1, 45.
34. Thomas Harsfeld's breviary, BL, MS. Cotton Domitian A.iv, ff. 226–7, which adds (probably apocryphal) details as follows. The want of a bridge was felt when King Henry I held a great council at Gloucester and knights, priests and royal clerks were drowned while crossing the Severn by ferry. Walter, sheriff of Gloucestershire, offered to build a bridge of stone piers but the king did not wish him to control it and failed to persuade Gloucester Abbey to build it. Instead the king supported the initiative of Nicholas, a priest, and Wlwald, a burgess, who had bought stone for the purpose. Nicholas promoted the bridge in honour of St. Nicholas, having seen a vision of the saint in St. Hothelph's (later St. Nicholas's) church. The same story appears in Cambridge, Trinity Coll. MS. 0.2.53. Thanks to Julian Luxford for these references.
35. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 236.
36. *Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern* 2, f. 8v.; *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, p. 257.
37. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 242.
38. *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 48–9, pl. 10, figs. 15, 17.

century form but the widest opening (the second from the east) was a segmental or basket arch of a later profile.³⁹ The eastern approach ramp was flanked on the north by a massive 12th-century retaining wall which was breached in the 13th century for an entry to the river bank by Bulgers Lane, later called Dockham or Swan Lane.⁴⁰

In the years 1443–55 the Old Severn was so reduced that the borough blocked the easternmost arch by letting the river-bed north and south of it on building leases.⁴¹ The mouth of the channel downstream remained a navigable creek which in 1535 was flanked on the west by the storehouse of Ald. Robert Poole, a trading partner of John Smythe of Bristol.⁴² From 1550 to 1570 the bridge incorporated a *comyn jaks*.⁴³ In the years 1552–7 so little water was passing under it that the borough, having been elevated to a city, recut the channel upstream to Walham. Nevertheless, the city repaired the bridge in 1555 for £25 and in 1581 for £14, placing 1000 bricks and 14 tons of Highley sandstone from Shropshire (*Higgle stone*) in arches tied with iron cramps.⁴⁴ The second arch from the east was blocked in 1639 when the city let another strip of the river-bed south of it for building;⁴⁵ in 1643 the city also offered to let $\frac{3}{4}$ acre (0.3 ha) adjacent for a grist mill, but the lease was not taken up.⁴⁶ In 1649 the bridge was repaired again with 10,000 bricks and new coping stones.⁴⁷ The westernmost arch (the flood-arch) was obstructed in 1654 with a shop suspended over its south portal and was blocked in 1711 with a salt-house on the north.⁴⁸ The navigable channel had formerly passed through the third arch from the west, which was scored by tow-ropes at its south-east angle,⁴⁹ but by 1712 the river had become confined to the second

39. *Ibid.*, where Hurst's reconstruction of a bridge of 7 arches is incompatible with other evidence. The total distance from the E. side of his arch no. 1 (as plotted by him) to the W. side of the arch which spanned Dockham Ditch in 1712–1851 (as plotted by the O.S.), a distance which he interprets as the overall width of the river, is not 73 m as he shows it but 61 m when the two plans are reconciled. Of the arches sketched in 1712 the easternmost was shown as flanking the former nos. 77–8 Westgate Street and therefore lay not on the site of his arch no. 4 but of his no. 3. Consequently his reconstruction shows one arch too many, and the pairs of cutwaters sketched in 1712 did not lie between his arches 4, 5 and 6 but between 3, 4 and 5: R. Atkyns, *Ancient & Present State of Glouc.* (1712), pl. 2; GBR, L 10/1/2, plan of Glouc. by the O.S. for the Glouc. Board of Health 1851. For the former nos. 77–8 Westgate Street, GBR, J 3/3, ff. 131–2 and J 4/12, plan 6. For arch profiles, D. Harrison, *Bridges of Medieval England* (Oxford, 2004).
40. A.P. Garrod and C. Heighway, *Garrod's Gloucester* (W. Archaeol. Trust, 1984), 32–3, where the measurements given (in the text, not the accompanying drawing) show that the ramp was 7 m wide overall rather than 9 m as in *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 47, fig. 17. For the lane, Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 278; *V.C.H. Glouc.* 4, 368.
41. *Rental of Houses in Gloucester A.D. 1455*, ed. W.H. Stevenson (Gloucester, 1890), 52b, 58; GBR, J 4/12, plans 4, 16. Before 1443 the bed to the south was let only as a curtilage: Terrier of Llanthony Priory, PRO, C 115/73, f. 47 (45).
42. GBR, J 5/5; *Ledger of John Smythe 1538–50* (Bristol Record Soc. 28, 1975), *passim*.
43. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 9, 130v.
44. *Ibid.* ff. 38, 38v., 51, 64, 209v., cf. *ibid.* f. 114. For Highley stone, Arthur Price in D. Verey and A. Brooks, *Buildings of England: Glouc.* 2 (New Haven, 2002), 32; Geol. Surv. Gt. Brit. sheet 167 (1939).
45. GBR, J 3/3, ff. 131–2; J 4/12, plan 6.
46. Offered to Anthony Hathway: *ibid.* B 3/2, pp. 260, 262, 264; cf. *ibid.* F 4/6, p. 155.
47. *Ibid.* F 4/5, f. 397.
48. *Ibid.* J 3/4, pp. 291–4; J 3/8, f. 19; J 4/12, plans 9, 23.
49. Personal observation, 1973.



Fig. 2. Westgate Bridge from the north: pen and wash drawing by Bernard Lens (c.1681–1740). The waterwheel drove a pump from 1694 until the 1740s. By 1789 the second span from the gate had been rebuilt in masonry and the fourth had become a round, not a pointed arch. The fifth and sixth, which lay outside the river channel, were walled up before 1818. Copyright Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery (cat. no. 1801).

arch from the west;⁵⁰ it remained navigable through that arch until 1743, serving Willmott's (or Wilcocks's) glasshouse from 1672⁵¹ and the great glasshouse from 1694.⁵²

Westgate Bridge (Fig. 1, no. 2; Fig. 2)

After the construction of Foreign Bridge the first part of the causeway beyond it, being readily accessible, was annexed to the royal borough and laid out as a street of burgages.⁵³ One of the burgages, given to Kingswood Abbey, was described in the early 13th century as lying beyond the

50. Atkyns, *Ancient & Present State of Glos.* pl. 2.

51. GBR, J 5/7; F 4/7, pp. 69, 76, 367, 439, 442; F 4/9, pp. 18, 24, 398, 404. For the Willcockses, glass-makers of Newnham, Gloucester, Bristol and Chelwood (Som.), Gloucestershire Archives (GA), D 154/T 2; *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 47, 244–5.

52. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 108, 122–3; GBR, J 3/8, ff. 75–7, 260v. The city culverted the channel, latterly called Dockham Ditch, in 1825 and converted it to a foul sewer in 1853, burying the last surviving arch of the bridge: *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 242, 266–7.

53. Nigel Baker and Richard Holt, *Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester* (Aldershot, 2004), 95–6; *Rental of Glouc. 1455*, 52b–56b, 58–70.

bridge between the hospital and an outer brattice (*exteriorem britaschiam*) or castle (*castellum*),⁵⁴ meaning the West Gate. That description reflects a period when the West Gate itself was more conspicuous than any Westgate Bridge, and when the burgages were not yet known by their later description as 'between the bridges' (*inter pontes*).⁵⁵ The present channel under Westgate Bridge seems to be artificial, passing squarely in front of the site of the gate and turning at a right angle to flank the burgage plots.⁵⁶ The most plausible explanation is that the river, obstructed by the piers of the Foreign Bridge and the houses adjacent, scoured a breach through the causeway in front of the gate, and was trained along the south boundary ditch of the burgage plots so as to give them waterfront access.

According to a later inquisition, the West or Westgate Bridge was begun in the reign of Henry II by a chaplain, Nicholas Walred, with the help of a burgess, William Myparty. Myparty provided a house, later rebuilt as St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he and Walred lived with a community of workmen and infirm. After the founders' deaths the community continued under the rule of a hermit priest.⁵⁷ The local parish church of St. Nicholas, described in 1203 as the church of Gloucester Bridge, was under royal patronage and served by royal chaplains,⁵⁸ of whom Walred may have been one. In 1221 the parson of St. Nicholas claimed to be keeper of Gloucester Bridge.⁵⁹ Nevertheless the king recognised Walred's community in 1221 as holding that title; in 1229 he recognised it as the hospital of St. Bartholomew and made it patron of St. Nicholas's church.⁶⁰ In 1264, when the bridge was broken, the hospital received four oaks to repair it and apparently had it repaired by the following year.⁶¹ The hospital continued to seek money for it until 1456.⁶² But the borough contributed 20s. to its maintenance in 1302, and by 1487 had assumed full responsibility for what was called *the great burgge over Sevarne into Walis and the marches*.⁶³

By 1370 Westgate Bridge had become more important than Foreign Bridge, the channel beneath it being known as the Great Severn (*Magna Sabrina*).⁶⁴ In 1447 it was said to have four arches, in 1505 to be built of freestone, arched and embowed, and in the 1540s to have five great arches.⁶⁵ Of its 12th-century structure the east approach survived under later accretions until 1973, built

54. Berkeley Castle Muniments, MSS. SC 189, 201. The outer north gate was also described as a brattice (*bretaschiam*) at that time: Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Frocester B, p. 251 no. 575.

55. E.g. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 108, 122, 145, 151.

56. As argued by Baker and Holt, *Urban Growth: Glouc. & Worc.* 95–6, where however the dates of the Foreign and Westgate bridges are confused: cf. *ibid.* 118.

57. *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 3, p. 80; Dugdale, *Mon. Angl.* (London, 1849) 6, 689.

58. *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium 1201–16* (Rec. Com.), 31, 34.

59. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, pp. 321–2.

60. *Cal. Charter Rolls 1226–57*, 98; *Cal. Patent Rolls 1216–25*, 320; cf. 1258–66, 595.

61. *Close Rolls 1264–8*, 9. In Feb. 1264 the king's party had ordered Roger de Clifford, constable of Gloucester Castle, to destroy all bridges over the Severn *except* that at Gloucester, which was to be defended against Simon de Montfort: *ibid.* 1261–4, 374. By the end of 1264 every bridge over the river had been broken, but in June 1265 Gloucester Bridge was again the only one open: *Annals of Dunstable, Annales Monastici* 3, 235; *Cal. Patent Rolls 1258–66*, 487.

62. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 242.

63. *Hist. MSS. Com. 12th Rep.* appendix 9, pp. 406, 424–5. Formerly the hospital as keeper of the bridge had licensed encroachments on the river bank both there and at Westgate Bridge, but in the 1440s the borough took over that function likewise: *Rental of Glouc. 1455*, 52b, 58, 70; terrier of Llanthony Priory: PRO, C115/73, f. 47 (45). In 1495 the hospital's responsibility for the bridge was still at issue in the King's Bench: S. Rudder. *New Hist. Of Glos.* (Cirencester, 1779), 88.

64. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, p. 257.

65. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 243.

of oolite ashlar and pierced with two round arches; both were blocked in the 13th century when tenements were built against them, and one of them carried a gatehouse which was rebuilt around it in the early 16th century.⁶⁶ In the years 1553–5 the city rebuilt the great arch next to the gate for £19, another great arch for £20 and an arch of the west abutment for £21, all in stone; it used 104 tons of Highley sandstone, bought from one Palmer at 2s. 4d. a ton. It spent £43 on the bridge in 1559 and £36 in 1566, employing both masons and carpenters; in 1582 it placed another 72 tons of Highley stone there at a cost of £22.⁶⁷ In 1570 it erected a *gin* or *capstand* upstream in Little Mean Ham *to drawe trowes through the bridge*.⁶⁸

In 1629 the city repaired wooden spans in the bridge and in the adjacent Over Causeway (Fig. 1, no. 23; see below) for £16, drawing more than 300 ft (90 m) of timber at 40 ft to the ton from Highleadon and Upton (St. Leonards) and fitting four braces (*laces*). In 1637–8 it spent a further £41 on *proppinge under the bridge*, making a coffer dam (*stanke*) and placing 71 tons of red stone, two tons of *whetherstone* and 200 boards.⁶⁹ Masonry repairs continued in 1638–9 with 2,100 bricks bought from Richard Clarke of Tewkesbury at 11s. a thousand *to rayse the wall at the further end*, in 1644–5 with 23 loads of stone from the bishop's house at Over Vineyard, in 1648–9 with 15 tons of coping stone bought at 4s. 6d. a ton, two draughts of red stone and 9,500 bricks and in 1653–4, when the bridge was again propped and protected by coffer dams, with 47 tons of red stone and 200 bricks.⁷⁰

Meanwhile in 1643–4, owing to the civil war, the city spent 13s. 6d. on *taking up [a timber span of] the bridge* and constructed a drawbridge there with 18 loads of timber and ironwork under the direction of Caesar Godwyne at a cost of £47, towards which Ald. Thomas Pury contributed £30. The drawbridge spanned the navigable channel, being raised in 1645–6 to pass an *aple boat & pinnace* and in 1648–9 to pass the trows of Thomas Hoare.⁷¹ Another span of the bridge was broken in 1645–6 and was made good for £38 with planks and oaks from Woolridge in Hartpury. The drawbridge was re-planked in 1649 but was taken down and rebuilt in 1650–1 for £109, at Parliament's expense, with brass bearings and 25 tons of timber at 26s. 8d. a ton. It continued to be raised regularly for the passage of vessels.⁷²

In 1668 the city repaired *parte of the bridge or arch without the West Gate lately fallen downe*, and in 1693–4 it paid £30 to Abraham Meadway, bricklayer, for *building a new arch at the West Bridge*.⁷³ Further repairs followed in 1710, when 18 tons of stone were bought for the bridges, in 1716 and in 1726–7, when £22 was spent on placing 5,000 bricks in the bridge and causeway.⁷⁴ As described in 1727,⁷⁵ and as indicated in a drawing of the same period (Fig. 2), the bridge had four openings over the river of which the second and third were timber spans (one evidently replacing the drawbridge) and the first and fourth were pointed arches of brick and stone. The drawing shows

66. *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 49–51, pll. 11–12, figs. 18–19; for the abutting tenements, *Rental of Glouc.* 1455, 70.

67. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 44v., 50v., 73v., 114, 214v.

68. *Ibid.* ff. 130v., 134. In 1646 and 1659 it set up *a winlesse at the pen to draw up the boates*, probably for the same purpose: *ibid.* F 4/5, f. 312; F 4/6, p. 304.

69. *Ibid.* F 4/4, pp. 20–3; F 4/5, ff. 79–81, where 67 tons of red stone were said to be supplied in 1637–8 by Goodwife Barnsley. It was Triassic sandstone and probably from Worcs., since Thomas Pew of Bewdley (Worcs.) supplied Gloucester with red stone in 1639: *ibid.* f. 113v.

70. *Ibid.* F 4/5, ff. 103, 275, 397; F 4/6, p. 12.

71. *Ibid.* B 3/2, p. 317; F 4/5, ff. 244v., 265, 275, 304, 387.

72. *Ibid.* F 4/5, ff. 312, 407, 425v., 435v., 450v., 456v., 474v.; F 4/6, p. 5.

73. *Ibid.* B 3/3, p. 391; F 4/7, p. 603; for Meadway's trade, *Reg. Freemen of Glouc. 1641–1838*, ed. J. Juřica (B.G.A.S. 1991), 45.

74. GBR, B 3/8, pp. 362, 649; F 4/8, pp. 39, 517.

75. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 243, citing PRO, E 134/1 Geo II Hil/4.

two additional masonry arches rising from the water on the west, but they are best interpreted as part of a viaduct carrying the west abutment beside a washing-place (attested in 1659) or a water-filled clay-pit communicating with the river.⁷⁶ A further £42 was spent on the bridge and causeway in 1750 and £183 in 1754–5, including £79 for masonry, £46 for carpentry and £12 for ironwork;⁷⁷ it was probably then that the second span from the east was rebuilt as a masonry arch and the west abutment was made solid. The resulting structure, as drawn in 1789 and c.1818,⁷⁸ can have contained little medieval fabric except in the cores of the piers.

The river at and above Westgate Bridge was claimed by the burgesses as a common fishery. In 1368 they obtained consent from Gloucester Abbey to fish 7 km of the channel with nets and boats, from Castle Mead upstream to Longridge End on the boundary of Ashleworth. Senior burgesses could fish for recreation without charge, while anyone catching fish for sale was to render *1d.* a year to the abbey kitchener.⁷⁹ But in 1414 the prior of Llanthony sued four fishermen for tethering unusual and novel engines (*ingenia insolita et noviter imaginata*), meaning long-nets, across the river there to stop fish from entering his weirs downstream.⁸⁰

An inquisition in 1302 had found that it was not to anyone's harm if the king allowed St. Bartholomew's Hospital to construct a mill on the river.⁸¹ A boat mill was probably intended, since the tidal range was too great and the head too small for a conventional mill. But in 1447 the king licensed the borough to build two mills under one or two of the four arches of the bridge.⁸² The borough built a mill-house in 1452 on the downstream side of the east abutment, but this was disused in 1509 when the borough let at *2s.* a year *the fisshynge of the foren bowe* under Westgate Bridge *with a fisshynge were by the same brigge called Mille Were*.⁸³ In 1550 the fishery extended from a *cogan* (meaning a weir) above the West Gate on the north to the *Castel Lake* on the south. It was relet as the fishing under three arches at *20s.* in 1586 and at *26s. 8d.* in 1625, when the lessee was forbidden *to tye or fasten any of his ingens for fishinge to the bridge*.⁸⁴ In 1694 the city allowed the building of a waterworks engine below the bridge, probably another boat mill; the engine operated until the 1740s⁸⁵ (Fig. 2).

Cole Bridge (Fig. 1, no. 3)

In the eastern approach to the west gate was Cole Bridge, described by Leland as a bridge *that bath an arch or 2 and serveth at a time for a ditch or dreane of the meads*. The city rebuilt it in 1586,

76. For another part of the viaduct, *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 51 & figs. 18–19; *Glevensis* 22, 28; for the washing place, GBR, F 4/6, p. 303. For clay-pits see below, The Principal Common Meadows.

77. GBR, B 3/10, f. 136; F 4/10, pp. 160, 380, where Thomas Pace appears as payee; for Pace as bricklayer, *Reg. Freemen of Glouc. 1641–1838*, 113.

78. Glouc. City Mus. Art 1016 (drawing by J. Farington); T. Fosbrooke, *Original Hist. of Glouc.* (London, folio edn. 1819), pl. opp. p. 65 (engraving by T. Bonnor). The bridge was rebuilt in 1816, 1941, 1973 and 2000: *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 243; *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 50, figs. 18–19, with a synthesis from Farington and Bonnor; *Glouc. Citizen* 25 Jan, 11 Oct. 1999; 20, 22 May 2000.

79. GBR, B 2/2, f. 145, transcribed and translated in GA, B 137/11660/GS, p. 4.

80. PRO, C 115/76 (Reg. Wyche), f. 76v. Long-nets (*trinks*) were forbidden in 1423 under 2 Hen. VI, c. 15.

81. *Inq. post mortem Glos.* 1305–58 (Index Libr. 40), 5.

82. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 15, cf. pp. 397–8; *Cal. Patent Rolls 1446–52*, 70–1.

83. Let to Nicholas Elietts: GBR, J 5/3; *Rental of Glouc. 1455*, 70.

84. GBR, F 4/3, f. 9v.; J 3/1, ff. 49v., 229v.–230.

85. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 263; D.A. Pearce, *History of Water Supply in Glos.* (privately printed, 1988), 18–19: copy in GA libr.

laying a new foundation of timber, and repaired it in 1649 with 3,000 bricks and new coping stones.⁸⁶ From the 13th century or earlier it was flanked on the north by a stone cross.⁸⁷ The bridge spanned the Cole Brook, 'Cole' meaning 'culvert'.⁸⁸ Upstream the brook was winding and formed the west boundary of the property of St. Bartholomew's Hospital;⁸⁹ downstream it was a creek (*fovea*) flanking no. 219 Westgate Street, in 1349 the dwelling of Adam Honsum, fisherman.⁹⁰

Priestham, later called Castle Mead (Fig. 1, no. 4)

Priestham and Nunham, on the river bank below the bridges, originally belonged to the manor of Abbot's Barton which was given to Gloucester Abbey between 735 and 767.⁹¹ Some time before 1095 Walter of Gloucester, sheriff of Gloucestershire, built a new castle on the bank opposite,⁹² annexed Priestham under the name of Castle Mead and gave four acres of the mead to his new foundation of St. Owen's church.⁹³ In 1137 Walter's son and successor, Miles, gave all of Castle Mead, together with what he called the tithes of Priestham, to his new foundation of Llanthony Priory.⁹⁴ Nevertheless the tithes of Castle Mead were collected until the Dissolution not by Llanthony Priory but by Gloucester Abbey.⁹⁵ In 1154 Miles's son and successor Roger, earl of Hereford, acknowledged the abbey's title to both Nunham and Priestham, which he described in three parts. From the Severn to the course of a ditch which existed in Walter's time he held Priestham at will, and from thence to the great ditch of Miles (*magnum fossatum quod Comes Milo fecit*) he surrendered it to the abbey; those two parts were evidently Castle Mead. From Miles's great ditch to the boundary ditch of Nunham (*lacum qui dividit Prestehamme et Nunnehamme*) he claimed a right of common pasture for his manor of King's Barton annually from Whitsun eve; that part, together with Nunham, formed the meadow later called Oxlease. Roger had occupied Nunham through urgent necessity (*propter imminentem necessitatem*), but he surrendered it forthwith.⁹⁶

After Roger's death in 1155 King Henry II claimed the castle⁹⁷ but the castle purlieu remained in the hands of Roger's family. Between 1160 and 1165 his brothers, Henry and Mahel of Hereford, gave Castle Mead to Llanthony Priory a second time under the name of Priestham, a gift confirmed by the king.⁹⁸ But in 1192 the priory acknowledged again that Priestham belonged to Gloucester Abbey and that what it had been given was only the tenancy of a part at 13s. 4d. a

86. GBR, F 4/3, f. 239v.; F 4/5, f. 398.

87. *Rental of Glouc. 1455*, 26b, 56b; PRO, C 115/75, f. 60 (94), no. 338.

88. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 236; 51, 171.

89. GA, D 3269/39, ff. 72–4.

90. *Rental of Glouc. 1455*, 68; Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 347–8, 355–6, 360.

91. Abbot's Barton was given in the time of Abbess Eafe (735–67) and confirmed by the under-king Aldred (777–90): *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, pp. 4, 7, 64; Finberg, *Early Chart. W. Midlands*, p. 41. In 1265 (see below) the part of Priestham called Castle Mead was transferred to the royal manor and hundred of King's Barton (*Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, p. 257) but the remainder of Priestham and Nunham, called Oxlease, remained in Abbot's Barton: Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 26.

92. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, pp. lxxvi, 59.

93. *Camden Misc.* 22 (Camden 4th Ser. 1), p. 38.

94. W. Dugdale, *Mon. Angl.* 6, 136.

95. They passed to the dean and chapter, who in 1590 commuted them for 5 a (2 ha) of meadow let at 26s. 8d. a year, the 5 a being plotted in 1799: GA, D 936/E 12/1, f. 109; D 936/E 118/164.

96. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, pp. 84–5; for the marginal strips see *Cal. Patent Rolls 1555–7*, 103.

97. H.M. Colvin *et al.*, *Hist. of the King's Works: Medieval* (London, 1963), 651.

98. *Camden Misc.* 22, pp. 48, 50, 60; PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 58.

year. The priory made good its title by surrendering to the abbey in exchange burgages of that value in the streets now known as Westgate Street and Kingsholm Road.⁹⁹ The burgesses of Gloucester also claimed an ancient right of common pasture after the hay was carried in Castle Mead, describing it as the prior of Llanthony's south meadow of Priestham,¹⁰⁰ and the abbey confirmed that right about 1235.¹⁰¹

A bridge over the Severn connected Castle Mead to the castle. Henry III renewed the timbers of the bridge in the years 1222–7, fortifying it with a barbican and a timber brattice beyond the river, and repaired it again in the years 1251–6.¹⁰² Between 1263 and 1265, during the Barons' War, the royal constable Roger de Clifford seized the mead, presumably for the use of his mounted garrison, and shut the burgesses out of their pasture.¹⁰³ But in 1264 the rebel John Giffard burnt the bridge over the Severn as far as the castle drawbridge (*tubrugge*).¹⁰⁴ The king's son Edward set eight carpenters to work on it for three weeks, fixing 39 beams and a quantity of boards. At the same time the gated brattice or gatehouse in the mead (*britaschia ad caput pontis ultra Sabrinam ... porta brutaschie predictae ultra Sabrinam*) was rebuilt in stone. Up to 14 masons and up to 38 labourers worked on it for 10 weeks, using 235 cart-loads of ordinary stone, about 440 blocks of freestone and 9 beams.¹⁰⁵ After another siege in 1265 the bridge was almost pulled down again (*prostrati*), and in 1270 the sheriff repaired it.¹⁰⁶ But in 1331 it was said to need rebuilding a third time, and the brattice in the mead was said to need a new lead roof. The brattice stood 9 m west of the present river bank.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, in 1265 Llanthony Priory had conveyed Castle Mead to the king, describing it as 60 acres (24 ha) of Priestham worth £6 a year, in exchange for 46 acres (18 ha) of Sudmeadow and 16 acres (6 ha) of Walham.¹⁰⁸ From 1265 to 1268, when Adam of Grenville, Reynold of Acle and Maci de Bezille were constables, the burgesses again enjoyed common pasture there; but in 1268 the king assigned half the meadow to the constable to support the castle, and the burgesses were shut out permanently from 1269 when Peter de Champvent took office.¹⁰⁹ In practice the whole of Castle Mead became a perquisite of the castle constable,¹¹⁰ except in 1555 when the reversion of it was let separately for £13 6s. 8d. a year.¹¹¹

99. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, pp. 7–8; counterpart deed in *A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton* (Pipe Roll Soc. new series 36), p. 263, from PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 70.

100. *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, p. 127.

101. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, p. 241; for the date, Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 163.

102. *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum* (Rec. Com.) 1, 490, 623b, 648b; 2, 57, 100b, 116, 136b; *Cal. Liberate Rolls* 1226–40, 32; 1247–51, 366.

103. *Glevensis* 35, 20–3; *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, p. 127.

104. *Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester* (Rolls Ser.) 2, lines 11,234–57 *contra Flores Historiarum* (Rolls Ser.) 2, 487.

105. Constable's accounts, GA, D 4431/2/56/1, m. 3. Hurst in *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 102, 95 dates this work 1265 but the accounts confirm that it began *in adventu Domini Edwardi quando venit ad succurrendum castrum*, for which see *Glevensis* 35, 21.

106. *Glevensis* 35, 22; *Cal. Liberate Rolls* 1260–7, p. 284; 1267–72, pp. 120, 129.

107. As discovered in 1928: *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 102, 95, 116.

108. *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, pp. 98, 119; *Cal. Charter Rolls* 1257–1300, 55; *Cat. Ancient Deeds* 3, p. 321; *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, p. 18. The unit of measurement was that later defined as the statute acre, because Castle Mead was measured in the 19th century as 64 a (26 ha): O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.14 (1902 edn.).

109. *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, p. 127; *Cal. Patent Rolls* 1266–72, 209; for the constables, *ibid.* 206, 653–4.

110. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 245.

111. Let to Ald. John Rastell, capper, when the courtier Henry Jerningham was constable: *Cal. Patent Rolls* 1555–7, 103. In 1679, when Godfrey Becke of London, goldsmith, and Thomas Orson of Moreton-in-Marsh, cordwainer, were joint constables, it was sublet to Ald. Thomas Price: PRO, PROB 11/361, f. 356.

Castle Weir and Cokeyn Weir (Fig. 1, nos. 5 and 6)

Before 1095 Walter the sheriff gave to St. Owen's church the tithes of the castle fishery (*piscaria castelli*), later described more fully as a fish-weir in the Severn by the castle (*gortum in Sabrina iuxta castellum*).¹¹² This can plausibly be identified as the Gloucester fishery of Domesday, held before 1066 by Baldwin and in 1086, outside the king's hands, by Roger of Berkeley.¹¹³ In 1137 Miles conveyed the tithes to Llanthony Priory.¹¹⁴ Between 1143 and 1155 Roger, earl of Hereford, gave to the priory another fish-weir at Cokeyn, 500 m downstream, and between 1160 and 1165 Roger's brother Henry added the gift of the Castle Weir itself.¹¹⁵ Little of the Castle Weir survived the siege of 1264.¹¹⁶ In 1267 the weir houses were said to have been burnt, a nearby building destroyed and timber carried away to the value of £8 6s. 8d.¹¹⁷ In 1269 the king inquired whether the priory had ever had a weir there. The answer given was that the priory once had a pond edged with wood (*stagnum ligneum*) and a mill, with traps (*burochii*) and other engines for catching fish.¹¹⁸ The priory evidently recovered the weir and rebuilt it, because in 1395 the priory kitchener was prosecuted for catching fry both at Cokeyn and Castle weirs.¹¹⁹ In 1276 the prior was said to have raised Cokeyn Weir as a purpresture, but in 1464 an Admiralty inquisition found no fault with it.¹²⁰

Fish-weirs on the Severn were destroyed by the king's order in 1535.¹²¹ But at the Dissolution the priory still had pasture and fishing rights at an island by the castle (*le ileland iuxta castrum Gloucestrie*), which can be identified as the site of the fish-house and weir.¹²² A house or fish-house still stood there in 1610.¹²³

The Common Quay (Fig. 1, no. 7)

The Barons' War led to a catastrophic change in the urban waterfront. According to Leland, *The ould key on Severne stood hard by St. Oswaldes [Priory], and for strife between the towne and St. Oswaldes house it was thence remooved*.¹²⁴ That quay, on the Old Severn, was evidently approached by Powke Lane, which the prior of St. Oswald had licence to close in 1290 where it traversed his property.¹²⁵ As we have seen, the Old Severn remained accessible at Foreign Bridge but had ceased to be the main channel by the 14th century.

112. *Camden Misc.* 22, pp. 38, 50.

113. *Domesday Book* (Rec. Com.) 1, 162.

114. Dugdale, *Mon. Angl.* 6, 136.

115. *Camden Misc.* 22, pp. 18, 48; for the location of Cokeyn, *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, p. 38.

116. It is to be distinguished from 'the king's weir and half-weir of Gloucester', which belonged to the castle from 1255 to 1324 or 1345 but were 8 km downstream at Minsterworth: Extent of Minsterworth, PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 154; *Close Rolls* 1254–6, 111, 256, 326; *Cal. Liberate Rolls* 1260–7, 255, 284; 1267–72, pp. 58, 116, 185, 205–7; *Cal. Close Rolls* 1323–7, 72; *Cal. Charter Rolls* 1341–1417, 40; *Cal. Patent Rolls* 1343–5, 551. Thanks to Terence Moore-Scott for these references.

117. *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, p. 115.

118. *Ibid.* p. 126, referring to a weir which lay under the priory, was the fourth upstream from the king's weir and was given by Walter of Gloucester and Margaret de Bohun. Although the first two descriptions might better suit Cokeyn Weir, the third confirms its identity as Castle Weir.

119. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 62, 144–8.

120. *Rotuli Hundredorum* (Rec. Com.) 1, 178; *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, p. 38.

121. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 9, pp. 50, 166; 14 (1), p. 60.

122. PRO, C 66/700, mm. 41–2. For weirs at islands, *Reg. Llanthony 1457–1525*, pp. 104–5; *Glevensis* 26, 15; 27, 5–6.

123. J. Speed, map of Gloucester in *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (London, 1610).

124. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 236.

125. *Cal. Patent Rolls* 1281–92, 356; *Rental of Glouc.* 1455, 50b.

Downstream from Foreign Bridge the Great Severn, at the site of the present Gloucester Quay, was cut off from the town in the 13th century by the burgages of the Fullers' Street, now called Lower Quay Street. That street then ran from Westgate Street southwards to the castle, and the backs of its burgage plots, such as that of Haulf the shipsmith, faced the river.¹²⁶ But after the siege of 1264 the king's son Edward cleared the ground north of the castle to create the Bareland, a free-fire area extending along the river for 140 m. Except for one plot called Myrivale belonging to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the cleared plots were never recovered by their lay and ecclesiastical owners. Instead, by 1364 the burgesses had seized the Bareland as corporate property, laid out the present Quay Street and divided the land north of that street into parcels which were built up between 1413 and 1443.¹²⁷

At the end of the street they built the common quay, to the repair of which a burgess bequeathed money in 1390.¹²⁸ Ultimately it was built of stone, with iron cramps mentioned in 1568, rubbing-posts (*powles which are sett to save the key*) mentioned in 1570, a brass fender (*brassen head*) mentioned in 1582 and slipways attested in 1610.¹²⁹ By 1550 the city had driven a causeway along the river bank from the quay to Foreign Bridge, cutting off the backs of burgage plots in Westgate Street.¹³⁰ In 1570 it reconstructed that causeway on *new ground*, and in 1582 it apparently extended the quay alongside as far as the mouth of the Old Severn, in the course of work costing £25. Among other things it used 4 tons of Highley sandstone, 18 tons of Ashleworth stone, 12 tons of paving stone and quantities of earth, gravel, Forest lime, great posts and iron cramps. In 1586 it fixed a chain there weighing 282 lb (128 kg).¹³¹ The exit to Foreign Bridge was redefined in 1639 as a causeway 5 ft (1.5 m) wide emerging onto a bridge pier between an existing tenement (sometime no. 76 Westgate Street) on the east and a new tenement (sometime no. 77) on the west; it was later called Anchor Alley or Little Quay Lane.¹³²

The south part of the Bareland waterfront was used until the end of the Middle Ages as a tip for butchers' waste, latterly railed off under the punning name of Marybone Park. It was not until 1622–3 that the city extended the quay southwards as *the new key*¹³³ past the frontage of Marybone Park, where houses and storehouses were built between 1610 and 1639 by Ald. Toby Bullock and between 1633 and 1644 by Anthony Edwards; in 1650–1 a causeway was raised in front of Edwards's house with 245 loads of earth from the castle.¹³⁴ The city repaired the quay in 1636 with 16 tons of *red stone* bought at 3s. a ton from an *over countryman*, in 1638–9 with four loads of Crickley Hill weatherstone bought at 2s. 4d. a load from William Gayes of Witcombe, in 1644–5 with 69 loads of stone brought from the bishop's house at Over Vineyard, in 1648–9 with 140 loads of stone and rubble brought from St. Owen's church, in 1657–8 with 19 loads of Crickley

126. Haulf's frontage to the river was 31 ft 6 in (9½ m) wide: GBR, J 1/265, cf. 432–3, 463; *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 367.

127. Terrier of Llanthony Priory, PRO, C 115/73, ff. 44–7 (43–5); GBR, J 1/981, 1935. Since Edward was said to have fined the burgesses £1,000 but only £100 reached the king (*Glevensis* 35, 20), the fine may have included a bond not to enclose or rebuild their properties.

128. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 251; will of John Anlep, GA., Hockaday Abstracts 213, 1390.

129. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 124v., 130v., 215v.; Speed, Map of Gloucester (1610).

130. GBR, B 2/2, ff. 80v.–81. See Baker and Holt, *Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester*, 79: 'Two or three plots curved strongly west towards the river [making] a perpendicular approach to the waterfront ... but the usual rules of foreshore reclamation did not operate [whereby] the plots [would have] extended ad infinitum as the waterfront moved'.

131. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 130v., 134, 215, 239v.; Speed, Map of Gloucester (1610).

132. GBR, J 3/3, ff. 131–2; *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 368.

133. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 251–2; Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 43; *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 102, 93.

134. GBR, J 3/1, f. 37 & pp. 193–4; J 3/3, ff. 75v.–76, 146–8, 209–10; F 4/5, ff. 409v., 431v.

Hill stone and 39 tons of *red sandstone* bought at 2s. 2d. a ton net (or 4s. 4d. delivered) from John Doughton of Worcester, and in 1659 with 8 tons of *gray stone for the key slip* bought at 9s. a ton from Edward Plevy. The work in 1644–5, which cost £64, involved making a coffer dam (*stank*), cutting out old piles and making new piles.¹³⁵ An outfall (*goute*), built there in 1654 with 5,500 bricks, may have been connected with the castle ditch or with a trough (*thruffe*) which was laid in Quay Street in 1650–1.¹³⁶

Sudmeadow (Fig. 1, no. 8)

Sudmeadow lay within a bend of the Severn south-west of the town. Between 1141 and 1143 Miles of Gloucester confirmed the gift to Llanthony Priory of four acres (1.6 ha) of what was then called the knights' meadow (*in prato militum*), namely two acres given by his cousin William de la Mare and two given by Robert fitz Jordan.¹³⁷ Between 1175 and 1189 Miles's daughter and heir Margaret de Bohun confirmed a gift to Gloucester Abbey by the same William de la Mare of 3¾ acres (1.5 ha) of Sudmeadow.¹³⁸ Some time after 1181 another two acres (0.8 ha) of Sudmeadow were given to Llanthony Priory by Roger fitz Alan, lord of Harescombe.¹³⁹ Fitz Alan, like de la Mare, owed knight service to Miles's family and presumably had used the meadow to feed his mounts when attending the family at Gloucester Castle.¹⁴⁰ All these plots can therefore be attributed to what in the 13th century was called the knights' furlong of Sudmeadow (*in dicto prato cultura quod dicitur particula militum*): one of six furlongs each nominally 40 perches (200 m) wide, divided transversely into strips each nominally 8 perches (40 m) deep and thus amounting to two acres (0.8 ha). The knights' furlong was then held in strips by the prior of Llanthony, the lord of Harescombe and the lord of Matson;¹⁴¹ it was the easternmost furlong of Sudmeadow, in which 1½ strips still belonged to the parish of Harescombe in 1838.¹⁴²

In 1265, as already mentioned, the king conveyed 46 acres (18 ha) of Sudmeadow, worth 2s. an acre, to Llanthony Priory from his manor of King's Barton, subject to a tithe of hay to St. Mary Magdalen's Hospital.¹⁴³ Thereafter Llanthony Priory and Gloucester Abbey were the principal owners of the centre of the meadow, which lay in four furlongs. In the first furlong, by the Severn on the north, the priory and the abbey each had 7 strips, alternating them yearly. In the second and third furlongs the priory had 15 strips while the abbey and its tenants of Saintbridge (in Upton St. Leonards) had 16 strips, of which 14 were alternated. In the fourth furlong, called *Mor Forlong*,

135. Ibid. F 4/5, ff. 16v., 106, 276–8, 395; F 4/6, pp. 261, 307. For Pea-grit weatherstone from Crickley Hill in the parish of Badgeworth, Price in Verey and Brooks, *Buildings of England: Glos.* 1, 26.

136. GBR, F 4/6, p. 15; for the trough, F 4/5, f. 431. The quay was rebuilt on a new line in 1888: *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 253.

137. Dugdale, *Mon. Angl.* 6, 137, corrected by *Camden Misc.* 22, pp. 17, 43; for de la Mare, *ibid.* p. 38. The gift was later confirmed by Sir William Mansell: PRO, C 115/77, s.1 no. 96.

138. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, pp. 80–1; for the date, *Camden Misc.* 22, p. 61.

139. PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 95; for the date, *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 10, 89, 110.

140. *Camden Misc.* 22, pp. 52–3.

141. PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 152. For the layout, GA, D 134/P 8; Q/RI 70, map R.

142. Gloucester Diocesan Records (GDR: in GA), T1/93, plot 223. In 1540 the priory demesne included land in the parish of Haresfield (then the mother church of Harescombe), evidently that in Sudmeadow given by Roger fitz Alan: *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 16, 383–4, citing PRO, C 66/700, m. 41. Its identity was lost in 1662 when Viscount Scudamore vested the tithes in the church of Hempsted: 13 & 14 Chas. II, cap. 11 (Private Act).

143. *Cal. Charter Rolls* 1257–1300, 55; *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, pp. 98, 119. The farm of King's Barton, then held by the abbot of Gloucester, was adjusted accordingly: *Cal. Liberate Rolls* 1267–72, p. 116.

the priory had 2 strips, the abbey 3 strips and other owners 5 strips.¹⁴⁴ Despite minor changes,¹⁴⁵ the 13th-century property of Llanthony Priory was plotted in the 18th century, furlong by furlong, with little change as belonging to the Llanthony estate, the 13th-century property of the tenants of Saintbridge as owing tithes to the church of Upton St. Leonards, and the 13th-century property of Gloucester Abbey as belonging to the abbey's former manors of Abbot's Barton and Barnwood with Wotton.¹⁴⁶ Three leaseholders and ten copyholders of Barnwood and Wotton shared 21 acres there in 1650. The furlongs were separated by tracks which in 1791 were called *swathways*.¹⁴⁷ After mowing, as recorded in 1662 and 1794, the lord of Llanthony put horses and sheep into the meadow without stint from 1 November to 23 April, and other occupiers put in two cows for each acre.¹⁴⁸

The west margin of Sudmeadow was called *Sinderforlong*, a name which suggests a Roman smelting site; it abutted Lille Weir on the Severn.¹⁴⁹ A flood-bank between the meadow and the river was built by order of the Commissioners for Sewers in 1540, the cost of £10 14s. being shared between Gloucester Abbey and Arthur Porter as receiver of the dissolved priory of Llanthony.¹⁵⁰

Lille Weir and New Weir (Fig. 1, nos. 9 and 10)

Lille Weir, which has just been mentioned, and New Weir were fisheries on the Severn in Churcham parish held by the kitchener of Gloucester Abbey, who in 1395 was accused of catching fry there; with Each and Pool weirs (see below), they had belonged to the abbey since 1086.¹⁵¹ In 1526 the abbey let both weirs, with a house at New Weir, for £5 6s. 8d. a year payable to the kitchener. The lease included a withy bed at Sudmeadow extending from the Severn Parting (*a particione aque Sabrine*) to *Lilwere thorn*, and further beds of withies and willows at Port Ham and elsewhere. It also included fishing in the Abbot's Pool, meaning the west Severn channel, to which we shall return. Before selling their catch the lessees were required to offer eels to the abbey kitchener at 6d. a stick, lampreys at 6d. a hundred, *taile floks* (presumably a grade of salmon) at 2s. 8d. a serving and white fish at 20d. a serving. At the end of the lease they had to surrender to the kitchener a *bilbote* worth 23s. 4d., presumably a billyboy or sailing barge.¹⁵²

In 1535 both weirs were destroyed by the Gloucestershire Commissioners for Sewers. In 1542 John Arnold bought the freehold of what remained, as part of the late abbey's manor of Highnam, at a reduced valuation of 13s. 4d. a year.¹⁵³ In 1580 the property descended to Sir Thomas Lucy,¹⁵⁴ who let it in 1598 as a fishery at £7 13s. 4d. a year. The lease included willows at a Neight or island

144. PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 152.

145. The priory estate gained 2 a in 1476, gained 8 a in 1542 and lost 3 a in 1543, while the abbey estate lost 3½ a in 1791: GBR, J 1/1165, 2081B; *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 17, p. 212; 18 (2), p. 53.

146. GA, D 134/P 8; Q/RI 70, map R. The Llanthony estate then belonged to the duke of Norfolk, the manor of Abbot's Barton to the city and the manor of Barnwood with Wotton to the dean and chapter: *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 393, 395–6, 413.

147. GA, D 1740/E 1, E 3, P 2; GBR, J 1/2081B.

148. 13 & 14 Chas. II, cap. 11 (Private Act); Turner, *Agriculture of Glos.* 34.

149. PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 152; cf. Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* 4, 18.

150. PRO, SC 6/Hen. VIII/1224, m. 2. In 1693 a *pit in Southmed* was open and supplied 20,000 bricks for Newark house on the Llanthony estate: Scudamore Papers, BL, Add. MS. 11046(6), f. 38. Thanks to Bridgett Jones for this reference.

151. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 62, 144–5, 148; *Domesday Book* (Rec. Com.) 1, 165v.

152. Let to John Giffard and William Cooke: Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern 1, f. 266v. no. 341.

153. GA, Hockaday Abstracts 152, 1541, from PRO, E 318/39 (Particulars for Grants); *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 17, p. 157. For the destruction, *ibid.* 9, pp. 50, 166.

154. *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 18.

which lay opposite the west corner of Sudmeadow¹⁵⁵ and was evidently the site of Lille Weir, the weir taking its name from Lilleton or Linton adjacent downstream,¹⁵⁶ New Weir lay close upstream.¹⁵⁷

Walham (Fig. 1, no. 11)

Walham, to the north of Gloucester, lay within a meander formed by the Great Severn and the Old Severn, later called Dockham Ditch.¹⁵⁸ Its east boundary in the 18th century was a ribbon of meadow called Tween Dyke or Queen Dyke, a meadow flanked by ditches and claimed in 1789 as waste of the manor of Kingsholm. Tween Dyke is best interpreted as an old road from Gloucester to Sandhurst, skirting the furlongs of Longford West Field which the present road cuts diagonally.¹⁵⁹

In 1265 the king conveyed 16 acres (6 ha) of Walham, worth 2s. an acre, to Llanthony Priory from his manor of King's Barton.¹⁶⁰ Walham, like Sudmeadow, lay in furlongs 40 perches (200 m) wide which were subdivided into transverse strips at 4 perches to the acre (20 m to 0.4 ha), a layout which did not survive inclosure in 1799. The priory's property there consisted of 5 acres (2 ha) in an upper furlong of which 4 were awarded annually by lot, 6 acres (2.4 ha) in a middle furlong and 4 irregular parcels called *dengore* and *scrove*.¹⁶¹ The hospitals of St. Bartholomew and St. Margaret also acquired small parcels of Walham, variously described in the Middle Ages as lying by a boat mill (*molendinum corale*) and by a weir called Each Weir (*Asbe Were*).¹⁶² The manor of Kingsholm had five parcels totalling 16³/₄ acres (6.8 ha) in 1607, mostly at the semicircular west end where eight strips radiated from a central dole stone.¹⁶³

Gloucester Abbey had meadow there which was held at the Dissolution under various tenures. In 1515 the abbey assigned meadow at Walham and elsewhere, with summer pasture at Coberley, at £10 a year for the sustenance of 320 sheep included in a lease of its manor of Abload in

155. Let to Thomas Grasing of Over: GBR, B 2/1, f. 40. The Neight was described in 1607 as a meadow of 6¹/₂ a (2.6 ha) having Mickle Meadow on N. and W. and the Severn on S. and E.: GA, D 326/E 1, f. 11v. For the location of Mickle Meadow, *ibid.* D 326/E 2; GDR, T1/53.

156. Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* 3, 159; cf. 3, 164.

157. The S. extremity of Abbot's Pool fishery was defined in 1526 as the two weirs of Lille Weir and New Weir, and in 1598 as Lilwere thorn: Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern 1, f. 266v. no. 341; GBR, B 2/1, f. 110.

158. O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.10–11, 25.14 (1886 edn.); for Dockham Ditch, *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 251.

159. GA, D 326/M 24; Q/RI 70, maps C–D; GBR, J 4/12 (18th-cent. map copied in *Glevensis* 26, 18). For a contrary view (inconsistent with evidence presented here) identifying Tween Dyke with the Old Severn, Wantner in Bodleian Libr. MS. Top. Gloucs. c. 3, f. 127; *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 384; *Glevensis* 12, 8.

160. *Cal. Charter Rolls* 1257–1300, 55; *Cal. Inq. Misc.* 1, pp. 98, 119. The farm of King's Barton, then held by the abbot of Gloucester, was adjusted accordingly: *Cal. Liberate Rolls* 1267–72, p. 116. The priory granted 7 a (3 ha) to Philip of Hatherley but recovered the grant in 1287: PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 nos. 90–1.

161. PRO, C 115/77, s. 1 no. 153. It was alienated from the Llanthony estate between 1540 and 1559: *ibid.* C 66/700, m. 41; C 142/118/56.

162. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 219, 250–1, 410, 415. For *coral[la]* (boat), *Dict. Med. Latin from Eng. Sources*, fasc. 2 (London, 1981). The boat mill belonged to Gloucester Abbey's manor of Abload in Sandhurst: *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, 88.

163. GA, D 326/E 1, ff. 52, 53v., 59v., 60v.

Sandhurst.¹⁶⁴ It possessed 12 acres (4.9 ha) called Little Walham which ran with its manor of Abbot's Barton and passed in 1542 to the city.¹⁶⁵ Another 50 acres (20 ha) in 44 parcels ran with the abbey's manor of Barnwood with Wotton and passed in 1541 to the dean and chapter. Seven leaseholders and 17 copyholders of Barnwood and Wotton shared the 44 parcels in 1650.¹⁶⁶ In 1794 parcels of the meadow were still being allocated by lot, and when the hay was cleared the tenants of neighbouring hamlets had common without stint.¹⁶⁷

Each Weir, Wickham and Pool Weir (Fig. 1, nos. 12–14)

Each Weir, which has just been mentioned, belonged to Gloucester Abbey and was connected with an islet on the opposite bank of the Severn beside Maisemore Mead.¹⁶⁸ William the Conqueror had given the abbey the right to fish in the Severn beside its land, and Henry II gave it the right to license others to fish there. Between 1263 and 1284 the abbey licensed John Daubeney, lord of Kingsholm, to fish in the Severn with two boats and nets, except in a length running by Each Weir from Pukeput to Puldich and a length running by Pool Weir from Tinternspulle to Gloucester Bridge.¹⁶⁹ In 1398, as already mentioned, it licensed the burgesses similarly.¹⁷⁰ In 1395 the abbey kitchener was accused of catching fry in Each and Pool weirs.¹⁷¹ In 1527 the abbey let both weirs at £6 a year to three husbandmen of Maisemore together with a *were house*, pasture called the *Neete* (i.e. islet) and trees at Sampley (in Maisemore), Pool Meadow and Port Ham. As at Lille Weir, the lessees were required to sell lampreys, eels, *taille floks* and white fish at fixed prices to the kitchener; they also had to look after the kitchener's stock of eels.¹⁷² Weirs on the Severn, as we have seen, were destroyed in 1535.¹⁷³ But the sites of Each and Pool weirs passed to the dean and chapter, who in 1602 let Each Weir at 12*d.* a year to Thomas Cooke of Rea in Hempsted with fishing in the river and an acre of Maisemore Mead.¹⁷⁴ Another 10 acres (4 ha) of Maisemore Mead, on the river bank immediately downstream, were called Wickham and belonged to the late abbey's manor of Barnwood, being parcelled in 1650 among 12 copyholders and one leaseholder.¹⁷⁵

164. The hay from Walham was presumably fed to them at Abload sheephouse, built in 1381–1412: *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, p. 55; 3, p. 292. By a legal fiction the provision for sheep was included in subsequent leases of Abload from 1632 to 1800 but the lessee was barred from suing for possession: GA, D 936/E 77.

165. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 17, p. 488, calendared more fully in Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 26. In 1621 the city let the property with Ryecroft Sandpits: GBR, J 3/1, pp. 159–61. It was called Little Walham, lying at the NE. corner of the meadow, and in 1799 was the only part of Walham not re-allotted: GA, Q/RI 70, maps B–D.

166. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 16, p. 572; GA, D 1740/E 1, E 3, cf. P 2.

167. Turner, *Agriculture of Glos.* 34.

168. *Glevensis* 26, 14–15.

169. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, p. 155; 2, pp. 79–80, 186.

170. GBR, B 2/2, f. 145, transcribed and translated in GA, B 137/11660/GS, p. 4.

171. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 62, 144–5, 148.

172. Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern 1, f. 280v. no. 362. Sampley was at Upper Parting, alias *a place on the Severn called Samperley Ende*: GA, D 326/E1, f. 11v.

173. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 9, pp. 50, 166; 14 (1), p. 60.

174. GA, D 936/E 12/1, ff. 187–8, repeated in 1617 and 1634: *ibid.* E 12/2, ff. 3, 321v. The meadow was located in later leases for which see *Glevensis* 26, 15; I.M. Kirby, *Diocese of Glouc., Catalogue of Records of the Dean and Chapter* (Gloucester, 1967), 59.

175. GA, D 1740/E 1, cf. E 2, P 2; *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, p. 88.

Pool Weir took its name from the same length of the Severn as Pool Meadow, its site being indicated by the weir house on the bank opposite as plotted on a map of 1610.¹⁷⁶ In 1547 the dean and chapter let to Bernard Jennings, skinner of London, *one house called the weere house lyenge within Archdeacon's Meade*, together with the meadow. They relet the property in 1636 and 1641, but by 1649 the house had ceased to exist and only the meadow remained.¹⁷⁷ Arguably the house originally stood on an island at the parting of the Old Severn and the Great Severn, an island approached from Archdeacon Meadow but later attached to Severnside Farm in Walham.¹⁷⁸

The Principal Common Meadows: Oxlease, Port Ham, Archdeacon Meadow with Little Mean Ham and Common Ham (Fig. 1, nos. 15–18)

The manor of Maisemore, on the west bank, was given to Gloucester Abbey in 1101.¹⁷⁹ About the year 1235 the abbey challenged the right of the Gloucester burgesses to common pasture in that manor. The outcome was that the burgesses paid £23 6s. 8d. for a right of common pasture after the hay was carried in all the abbey's meadows west of the Severn except those belonging to its foreign manors. In practice their right extended to Port Ham, Archdeacon Meadow and Little Mean Ham in the manor of Maisemore and Oxlease in the manor of Abbot's Barton. They also obtained common pasture throughout the year in the Common Ham, which was described as lying between Gloucester Bridge and the Old Leadon (*inter pontem Gloucestrie et Veterem Ledene*).¹⁸⁰ Those were still the bounds of the Common Ham in 1447, when the burgesses obtained a right to dig there and remove earth.¹⁸¹ 'Gloucester Bridge' meant Over Causeway, on the south boundary, while the Old Leadon was the north boundary ditch facing Maisemore Ham.

Maisemore Ham was not a common meadow of the burgesses but was common to the abbot and his Maisemore tenants. About the year 1507 animals from there began to appear in the Common Ham in excessive numbers. The burgesses impounded the animals and the tenants of Maisemore challenged their right to impound. Litigation continued in spite of arbitration by Sir Alexander Baynham and three others, and in spite of the burgesses' agreement to concede more than the arbiters required. On 9 June 1513 the abbot entered the dispute. He obtained a writ ordering the arrest and trial of 12 burgesses and their adherents on trumped-up charges of riot and affray. On 19 and 20 May, according to the abbot, 140 burgesses had entered the abbot's meadow with staves and knives, shovels, spades and mattocks and dug a ditch 8 ft (2.4 m) wide, 10 ft (3 m) deep and more than 100 perches (500 m) long. They came away in triumph *with taburs*

176. Speed, Map of Gloucester (1610), discussed in the note below.

177. GA, D 936/E 12/1, f. 20; E 12/2, ff. 343, 407; E 1, pp. 57–8.

178. In 1610 the house was plotted ambiguously (Speed, map of Gloucester) as lying by the Great Severn, either S. of the Old Severn (Dockham Ditch) in Archdeacon Meadow or N. of it in what is now Walham. Severnside Farm, although built after the Gloucester Inclosure of 1799 on an estate of 38½ a (15.6 ha) allotted to the dean and chapter's Barnwood manor (GA, Q/RI 70, map C no. 80; Kirby, *Glouc. Rec. Dean & Chapter*, p. 99), incorporates an older wall of limestone ashlar on the river bank which may be a relic of the weir house: *Glevensis* 26, 17. In the 19th century the farm was situated in Walham but approached by a bridge from Archdeacon Meadow: O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.14 (1886 edn.).

179. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, p. 12; 2, p. 22; original grant at Berkeley Castle reprinted in *Glouc. Citizen*, 31 Mar. 2006.

180. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, pp. 240–1. For the date and the identity of the meadows, Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 162–3, 421–6. For the manors, *ibid.* p. 26; *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, pp. 82, 263; *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 17, p. 695. Maisemore Ham and Maisemore Mead were excluded, apparently as foreign parts of Maisemore manor.

181. GBR, B 2/1, f. 198.

and hornys bloing and piping and set barrels of ale at the high cross, where they drank with loud shouts and cries. But according to the burgesses, they were merely scouring the ancient ditch between the Common Ham and Maisemore Ham, and the concourse was of men, women and children who came to see them work; in the evening the town tabret met them with his tabor at the West Gate and led them in procession to the high cross like workmen at harvest time, after which they drank and went home *in Goddes peace and the kynges*. On 17 May, according to the abbot, 60 burgesses broke into the house of the abbot's chandler John Barbour, through the windows as well as the door, and beat him and a fellow-servant with swords, bills and staves. On 19 May at midnight they attacked the abbot's servant Richard Frensche with swords, bows and arrows and left him for dead. But according to the burgesses these were merely arrests by warrant of a J.P. *according to the kynges lawes*.

More allegations were added as the suit proceeded. On 16 May, according to the abbot, 30 burgesses drove the abbot's cattle from the meadow *with force and ryote*. On 18, 19 and 21 June they impounded sheep, horses and an ox belonging to the abbot and his Maisemore tenants and left them for 31 hours without food. But according to the burgesses *the complaynauntes, contrary to ther promise, of ther willfull and cruel myndes*, had deliberately put in the animals to *do damage feisaunt and destroy the comyn*. On 16 and 17 July, according to the abbot, the burgesses put horses and cattle into Archdeacon Meadow among the abbot's standing haycocks. But according to the burgesses the abbot should have cleared his haycocks long before and his hayward was already pasturing tethered beasts there. On 27 October 1513 the prior of Llanthony and the abbot of Winchcombe sat as arbitrators and unhelpfully ordered the burgesses to fill in the new ditch.¹⁸²

In 1518 the parties arrived at a comprehensive agreement. The burgesses could pasture 5 beasts each, and those who were butchers could pasture 20 sheep each. The Common Ham was open to them throughout the year, although they shared it with 280 sheep belonging to the abbey. The abbey also kept pigs in the Common Ham in pits from which the burgesses dug earth and clay for use in the town; the pits were at the east end (Fig. 3) and were exploited for brick-earth from 1649. Archdeacon Meadow was open to the burgesses from when the hay was carried until 2 February, and also took 10 of the abbey's horses; the abbey was allowed to widen a bridge there crossing the Old Severn to the abbot's Woodbarton barn, a crossing which thereafter gave its name to the church of St. Mary de Lode. Port Ham was open to the burgesses for the same period; it also took oxen and cows from Maisemore for the first month of the season, and some of the abbey's 280 sheep from 1 November. Oxlease was open to them from 23 June to 2 February and also took lambs from the abbey's manors of Maisemore and Over.¹⁸³

The quarrel with the men of Maisemore was finally settled in 1519 by Edmund Tame and two others as arbitrators. Each side was to meet its own legal costs. Any sheep or cattle found in the wrong meadow were in the first instance to be driven to the place where they belonged; only if they strayed a second time were they to be taken to the pound.¹⁸⁴

The first mowing of the common meadows remained in the abbey's hands. Archdeacon Meadow had been described in 1248 as a meadow of 20 acres (8 ha) in dispute between the abbey and the

182. Ibid. B 8/7, transcribed in GA, B 137/11660GS, pp. 9–11; *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, pp. xxxix–xlvii, from Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Newton, ff. 61v.–65. For a contrary view, that the charges of riot were substantiated, *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 61; *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 120, 191.

183. GBR, B 8/7, transcribed in GA, B 137/11660/GS, pp. 5–8, and calendared in Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 421–6. By 1649 the stint of a burgess had been reduced to 3 beasts: GBR, B 3/2, p. 516. For brick-pits, *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 121, 235. For Woodbarton, GBR, J 5/5; GA, D 936/E 12/1, f. 242v. For St. Mary de Lode, so called from 1523, *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 303.

184. GBR, B 2/2, f. 4, transcribed in GA, B 137/11660/GS, pp. 12–13; cf. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 427.

archdeacon of Gloucester. In that year the archdeacon conceded 8 acres (3.2 ha) to the abbey, and the rest of his holding passed to the abbey by exchange in 1475.¹⁸⁵ In 1541 the meadow passed to the dean and chapter, who let the first mowing of it in 1547.¹⁸⁶ They relet it in 1636 at £6 13s. as a meadow of 18 acres (7.3 ha) united with Little Mean Ham of 39 acres (15.7 ha), and it remained a united meadow of 57 acres (23 ha) until 1848.¹⁸⁷

Port Ham passed in 1541 to the bishopric of Gloucester as part of the manor of Maisemore, subject to a lease to John Arnold and Arthur Porter and a separate lease of two acres beside the causeway ditch.¹⁸⁸ In the 17th century the bishops let the first mowing of it, described as a meadow of 67 acres (27 ha), at a rent of £7 17s. 4d.¹⁸⁹ Oxlease passed in 1542 to the city as a meadow of 34 acres (13.8 ha) belonging to the manor of Abbot's Barton.¹⁹⁰ It had formerly been slightly larger on the east, where in 1555 a strip one perch (5 m) wide and a parcel called the *lystes*, or tilting ground, were annexed to Castle Mead.¹⁹¹ The city let Oxlease in 1621 at a rent of £42, later reduced to £37.¹⁹²

The abbey's title to sheep pasture in Oxlease, Port Ham and Common Ham also passed to the city with the manor of Abbot's Barton. In 1571 the city's lessee agreed to reduce the stint from 480 to 240 sheep and not to put them into Oxlease before 31 October. A 21-year lease was granted in 1579 for a fine of £30 and rent of 6s 8d.¹⁹³

Great Mean Ham and Pool Meadow (Fig. 1, nos. 19 and 20)

Great Mean Ham, to the east of Archdeacon Meadow, belonged to St. Oswald's Priory, from which it passed in 1540 to John Jennings.¹⁹⁴ Jennings's grant excluded 6 acres (2.4 ha) which the priory had let in 1525 with the manor of Tulwell.¹⁹⁵ It also excluded a small parcel called *Little Severne against Twindicke or the pearsh adjoining to Mean Ham* which the city let in 1647 at 16s. 8d. a year subject to the burgesses' *priviledge of common*.¹⁹⁶ In the 19th century all of Great Mean Ham was subject to the same common rights as the other common meadows, supposedly by grant of the abbey but more probably by grant of the priory or its royal predecessors.¹⁹⁷ In times of emergency, as in 1643–6 and 1660, the city flooded Mean Ham by setting a dam of planks (*kayshides*) in the

185. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, pp. 82–3; Rudder, *New History of Glouc.* 426.

186. To Bernard Jennings of London, skinner: *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 16, p. 572; GA, D 936/E 12/1, f. 20.

187. GA, D 936/E 1, pp. 57–8; D 936/E 12/2, ff. 343, 407; D 1740/E 5/5, ff. 15, 168.

188. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 16, p. 572; 17, p. 695; Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern 2, f. 106v. no. 205.

189. In 1610 to Laurence Wilshire of Barton Street, clothier, in 1629 to Richard Hackett of London, dyer, and in 1638 to James Wood of Gloucester, clothier: GA, D 936/E 12/2, ff. 167–8, 367v.–368.

190. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 26. The measurement, given there erroneously as 20 a, was corrected at a survey in 1546: GBR, B 2/1, f. 31v.

191. *Cal. Patent Rolls* 1555–7, 103.

192. To John Price: GBR, J 3/1, pp. 177–80 & f. 235. It was relet at £20 in 1660 and 1662 to Ald. James Stephens and in 1682 to Anthony Suffield and John Wood, the latter lessees paying a fine of £155; *ibid.* B 3/3, pp. 148, 261, 818.

193. To Thomas Best, in succession to Henry Taynton: *ibid.* B 3/1, ff. 32v., 66.

194. *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 15, p. 292.

195. GA, D 1740/E 1, f. 124.

196. Let to John Purlwent: GBR, J 3/4, pp. 60–3; F 4/6, p. 157. 'Pearsh' meant osier bed: Smith, *Place-Names of Glouc.* 4, 160.

197. GA, D 4430/2; GBR, B 3/33, General Report by the Common Meadows Committee of the Council 1899, p. 9.

Old Severn at Dockham, thus causing the River Twyver to rise and turn the north-west environs of the city into *marsh grounds* unfit for artillery. A second dam of stone, built in 1643 across the south boundary ditch of Little Mean Ham at its outfall into the Great Severn, helped to regulate the water level.¹⁹⁸

Pool Meadow, to the east of the Common Ham, was not common but several property of Gloucester Abbey.¹⁹⁹ In 1540, described as a meadow of 13 acres (5.3 ha) in the late abbey's demesnes of Abbot's Barton and Maisemore, it was sold to Arthur Porter of Llanthony, who resold it before 1559.²⁰⁰ By the 1690s brick kilns had been established there.²⁰¹

The rivers Old Leadon and New Leadon (Fig. 1, nos. 21 and 22)

In 1447, as already mentioned, the north boundary ditch of the Common Ham was called the Old Leadon.²⁰² Until the 20th century that ditch met the west channel of the Severn directly opposite the mouth of the Leadon or Old Leadon river, which drains much of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire.²⁰³ The name shows that in 1447 the west channel did not exist and the River Leadon flowed east across the plain to discharge above Foreign and Westgate bridges. But in 1518 the bounds of the Common Ham were described differently, as running from the West Gate *to the ende of the cawsey that ledyth from Maismore to the West Brigge of Gloucester, and from thens to a crosse that standith on Maismore Cawsey called Old Ledon Crosse, and so from thens to the newe dyche. Oon half of the newe dyche* was to continue as it was, and the other half was *to extend to the corner of Pul Medowe adjoynnyng to the water of Severne.*²⁰⁴

Several conclusions may be drawn. First, Old Leadon Cross marked Maisemore Ham Bridge, which carried Maisemore Causeway across the course of the Old Leadon. That bridge and that cross can be identified as those which were built in the early 13th century bearing an inscription which was recorded in 1513: 'In honour of our lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified for us, William fitz Anketil of Linton made this cross and thus began the bridge of Maisemore'.²⁰⁵ It was a timber bridge, which the city repaired with 150 planks in 1593.²⁰⁶ Secondly, the west Severn channel came into existence and captured the Old Leadon between 1447 and the early 16th century. Thirdly, the ultimate cause of the dispute over grazing rights in 1507–19 was that the redundant course of the Old Leadon had silted up and allowed animals to stray. Fourthly, the objection to the new boundary ditch of 1513 was that it failed to follow the natural meanders of the old river and struck a direct line to the burgesses' advantage.

198. GBR, F 4/6, p. 353; B 3/2, p. 267; J. Washbourn, *Bibliotheca Gloucestrensis* (Glouc. 1825), 42, 384. The abortive proposal for a mill at Foreign Bridge (q.v. above) may be connected.

199. GBR, B 8/7.

200. PRO, C 66/700, m. 41, calendared in *Letters & Papers Hen. VIII* 16, p. 384; PRO, C 142/118/56.

201. Prospect of Glouc. by J. Vorsterman (1643–99) repr. in Alan Sutton, *Views of Glos.* (Stroud, 1992), pl. 17.

202. GBR, B 2/1, f. 198.

203. O.S. Map 1:2,500, Glos. 25.10 (1886 & 1902 edns.).

204. GBR, B 8/7.

205. *Scriptum crucis super pontem de Maismore: In honorem domini nostri Jesu Christi qui pro nobis crucifixus erat, coesie croz fist William fitzAnkettil de Lilton et si seoli [i.e. celui] William fitzAnketill comenza le pont de Mazemore:* Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Newton, f. 64v., where it appears among the documents cited above concerning the common meadows. William fitz Anketil was the abbey's tenant shortly before the time of Abbot Henry (Blunt, 1205–24, or Foliot, 1228–43): *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 1, p. 366, cf. pp. 23–9.

206. GBR, F 4/3, f. 290v.

Further west, at Over, the River Old Leadon was so called to distinguish it from the New Leadon, an artificial watercourse built by Gloucester Abbey in the 1240s to divert the Leadon into the abbey's Over mill.²⁰⁷ Below the mill the New Leadon passed under the end of Over Causeway through two bridges of which one, called *Ledene Brugg*, was in 1300 the east limit of the Forest of Dean.²⁰⁸ Despite its alternative name of *Leadon Bowe* it had a wooden span, repaired in 1580 with half a ton of beams and 125 ft (38 m) of boards and again in 1656 with 73 ft (22 m) of timber; in 1661 it was rebuilt in masonry with 1,500 bricks.²⁰⁹

Downstream from Leadon Bridge the New Leadon followed the course later taken by the west Severn channel. Thus the outfall of the New Leadon was constructed 2½ km downstream from that of the Old Leadon, making as great an impact on the plain at Gloucester as the Mill Avon on the plain at Tewkesbury.²¹⁰

Over Causeway (Fig. 1, no. 23; Fig. 3)

In 1086 the hundredal meeting-place for Highnam, Lassington and two other places was a *Lange Brige*, meaning Over Causeway.²¹¹ About the year 1235, as already mentioned, Over Causeway was called Gloucester Bridge among the bounds of the Common Ham, which it flanked throughout its length.²¹² In the 12th and 13th centuries it was assigned with Westgate Bridge to St. Nicholas's church and St. Bartholomew's Hospital; indeed in 1221 the parson of St. Nicholas, as keeper of Gloucester Bridge, tried to claim a strip of meadow 40 ft (12 m) wide on each side of the causeway.²¹³ But in 1487, as already mentioned, the borough claimed responsibility for it as *the great burgge into Walis and the marches*.²¹⁴ In the 1540s Leland described it as *a great causey of stone forced up through the lowe meadowes of Severne, in which be divers double arched bridges to dreane the meadowes at floodes*, 36 arches altogether.²¹⁵

In 1540 Joan Cooke of Gloucester endowed the borough with £5 a year to spend on the bridge and causeway, and in 1542 Thomas Bell of Gloucester gave a similar endowment.²¹⁶ The borough, having been elevated to a city, spent £22 on the causeway in 1554, £17 in 1570 and £29 in 1574, and another £10 in 1594 when two arches fell.²¹⁷ In 1627 it was said to be 16 ft (4.8 m) high.²¹⁸ Despite Leland's description it probably only had a stone surface over an earth embankment, since a breach in it was repaired in 1638 for 1s. 4d.; it was lined with rails of which some were renewed

207. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 2, pp. 269–70. In 1607 an acre of meadow there called *Fludgate Plot* had the Old Leadon on NE. and the New Leadon on SW: GA, D 326/E 1, f. 10.

208. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 66, 176. For maps and illus., GBR, J 4/2; Atkyns, *Ancient & Present State of Glos.* pl. 3; Nigel Bailey, *Over & Over Again* (Gloucester, 2000), 10, 14–15, 37.

209. GBR, F 4/3, f. 203; F 4/6, pp. 124, 398. For the location, beside a gravel pit, *ibid.* F 4/5, f. 338.

210. *V.C.H. Glos.* 8, 112.

211. The hundred also included Moorcroft in Minsterworth (for which see T. Moore-Scott, *Hist. of Minsterworth* (Cheltenham, 2006), 30–1) and Preston near Dymock: *Domesday Book* (Rec. Com.), ff. 164v., 165v., 167v. The term *long bridge* was used similarly for causeways at Berkeley and Tewkesbury: *V.C.H. Glos.* 2, 123; 8, 114; Smith, *Place-Names of Glos.* 2, 229–30.

212. *Hist. & Cart. Mon. Glouc.* 3, p. 240.

213. *Ibid.* 1, pp. 321–2.

214. *Hist. MSS. Com. 12th Rep.*, appendix 9, p. 406.

215. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 236; Rudder, *New History of Glos.* 88.

216. R. Austin, *The Crypt School* (Gloucester, 1939), 154; GBR, B 2/2, ff. 24v.–25.

217. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 50v., 139v., 170, 306v.

218. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* p. 43.



Fig. 3. Detail from a West Prospect of Gloucester engraved by Johannes Kip (c.1653–1722) for R. Atkyns, *Ancient & Present State of Glos.* (1712), pl. 3. In the foreground the River New Leadon passes through Over Mill and splits between two small bridges. Immediately beyond, Over Bridge crosses the West Severn Channel and Over Causeway crosses the plain; the artist shows only half the true number of arches and spans. In the background Westgate Bridge crosses the Great Severn to the West Gate. Copyright Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery.

in 1596 with 10½ tons of timber.²¹⁹ The arched bridges were also largely of timber, one being repaired in 1636 with 2 *peeses of timber layd in the bottome of the arch*, another in 1638 with *newe plankeing, newe rayles, a peece of timber to make a sell and paveing upon the newe arch that was newe planked* and a third in 1649 with six *peeses of timber 19 ft (5.7 m) longe at 8d. a ft*. More substantial repairs were undertaken in 1650 for £19 with 14 tons of *red stone*, in 1656 for £120 with 30 tons of red stone, 200 loads of *weatherstone from St. Oswald's church and cramps to coope the wall* and in 1657 for £80 with 31,000 bricks.²²⁰ The causeway was lined with ditches and 4 m wide, tapering to 2.9 m at Westgate Bridge,²²¹ it was barely wide enough for two-way traffic, some of which was diverted through the Common Ham (Fig. 3). The western part of it was turnpiked in 1726 and widened in 1778, and the whole was rebuilt in 1823–4.²²²

The West Severn Channel (Fig. 1, no. 24)

The west channel of the Severn arose through a natural process of bifurcation, breaking through a levee into a lower backwater on the opposite side of the plain.²²³ As we have seen, it came into existence between 1447 and 1507, capturing the River Old Leadon and breaching Maisemore Causeway and Over Causeway in places where only culverts or flood-arches existed before. It can therefore be attributed²²⁴ to the flood of October 1483, when the duke of Buckingham *with all his power marched through the Forest of Deane entending to have passed the river of Severne at Gloucester. Before he could attayne to Severne side, by force of continuall rayne and moysture, the ryver rose so high that yt overflowed all the cuntry adjoining, insomuch that men were drowned in their beddes, houses with extreme violence were overturned, children were swimming about the fieldes in their cradelles and beastes were drowned on hilles, which rage of water lasted continually 10 dayes, insomuch that in the cuntry adjoining they call yt to this daie the greate water or the duke of Buckyngham's greate water.*²²⁵ It was probably the expense of bridging the new channel which caused the borough in 1487 to seek a reduction in the fee-farm rent, citing the *great costis and importune chargis of maintaining the great burgge over Sevarne into Walis and the marches.*²²⁶ That was the occasion when St. Bartholomew's Hospital ceased to maintain the river crossing, as we have seen. The county of Gloucestershire had no interest in the crossing, because the borough had been made responsible for an inshire extending beyond the Severn in the same year as the flood.²²⁷ In the 1540s the new channel was described as *a great arme of Severne called Owseburne*, or more probably *Overse B[ol]urme.*²²⁸ In 1526, 1541 and 1598 it was described as a fishery called Abbot's Pool, running with Lille Weir and New Weir.²²⁹

219. GBR, F 4/3, f. 314; F 4/5, f. 76v.

220. Ibid. F 4/5, ff. 19v., 76v., 392v., 407v.; F 4/6, pp. 122–3, 191.

221. Hist. MSS. Com. *12th Rep.* appendix 9, p. 425; GBR, F 4/3, ff. 124v., 307v.; *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 243; *Antiq. Jnl.* 54, 51 & figs. 18–19.

222. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 243

223. For the process, *Glevensis* 12, 5.

224. A theory also proposed by the editor of the *Glouc. Jnl.*, 26 Nov. 1770. Thanks to Hugh Conway-Jones for this reference.

225. Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble Families of Lancaster and York*, ed. H. Ellis (London, 1809), 394. For the date, E.F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1961), 626.

226. Hist. MSS. Com. *12th Rep.* appendix 9, p. 406.

227. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 54.

228. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 245. In the 16th century the name Over Bridge was commonly contracted to *Ov's Bridge*, e.g. GBR, F 4/3, f. 37v.

229. It extended to those weirs from a place beyond Maisemore Bridge called Samperley End on the Severn, meaning Upper Parting: *Glouc. Cath. Libr., Reg. Malvern* 1, f. 266v. no. 341; GA, Hockaday Abstracts 152, 1541, from PRO, E 318/39 (Particulars for Grants); GBR, B 2/1, f. 110; GA, D 326/E 1, f. 11v.

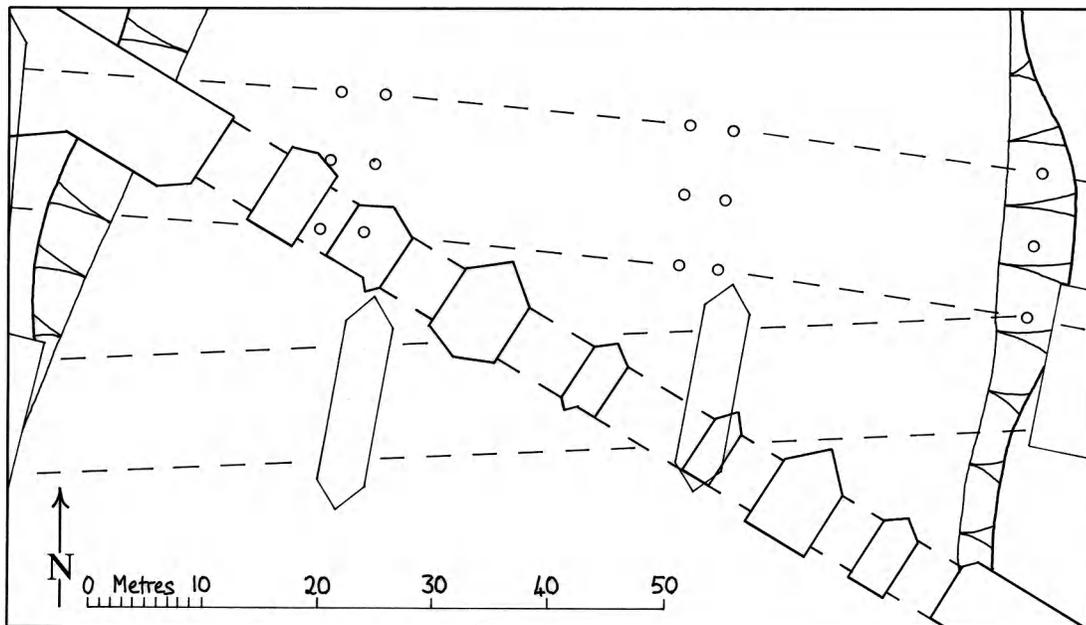


Fig 4. Old Over Bridge (running NW–SE) in relation to successive railway bridges of 1851 (north) and 1953 (south). Later road bridges, further north, are not shown. From a plan of bridge foundations by the Severn River Board, 1951 (copy in Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery); detail of piers and spans from a plan of *c.* 1834 (Gloucestershire Archives, Q/AB/3/10). For dates, see *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 16.

Over Bridge (Fig. 1, no. 25; Fig. 4)

Over Bridge, over the west channel, was described in the 1540s as *a bridge of 8 arches at the ende of the causey, not yet finished*.²³⁰ The city spent £27 on it in 1555, £34 in 1556 and £43 in 1567, employing masons, carpenters and paviors; Highley sandstone was used there, as at Westgate Bridge. Expenditure continued annually until 1572. In 1578 the city spent £18 on *makinge a newe pier* and repairing the arches, which were of timber; it renewed 2 summers, 4 sleepers, 16 ties (*enterdizes*), 2 braces (*laces*), 22 planks, 22 posts, 2 rails and a gravel surface.²³¹

In 1591 the city rebuilt the bridge for £96. It drew timber from Churcham Grove, from Piper's Grove in Highnam and from Woolridge in Hartpury, and stone from Longe of Ashleworth, meaning lias limestone from a quarry at Woolridge in Hartpury of which the lease was renewed in 1596 for Thomas Longe. The deck was sealed with *claye, over timber and plankes [and] under stone and gravell*. The sum of £48 was raised towards the cost by a levy on the hundred of Dudstone and King's Barton, £5 from Joan Cooke's bequest and £9 from a ferry which plied between 21 August and 25 September.²³²

230. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 14, 236.

231. GBR, F 4/3, ff. 44v., 50v., 57, 119, 124v., 129, 134, 139v., 146v., 196.

232. *Ibid.* J 3/1, ff. 214–21; for Longe's lease, GA, D 936/E 12/1, f. 134v. The entrance of the medieval quarry is now the garden of 'Quarstones' in Broad Street, Hartpury, at SO 801249: inf. from Mary McGhee; for the stone quarried, *Brit. Geol. Surv. sheet 216* (1988).

The bridge may have been among those destroyed by flood in 1606, because the city rebuilt it again in 1611 for £121, of which £22 was spent on stone, £11 on timber and £4 on bricks.²³³ In 1642 the city spent a further £36 on placing 10,000 bricks and 14 tons of red stone there; £24 was recovered by a levy on the hundred. More repairs were undertaken in 1650 with 86 ft (26 m) of planks 2 in (50 mm) thick, in 1651 with cramps set in lead, in 1657 with 6,000 bricks and in 1659 with 32 tons of red stone.²³⁴ Meanwhile in 1644 the main span was made into a drawbridge, which was mended after being broken down in 1645–6 and was partly re-planked in 1648 and 1650; hooks were provided for its chains in 1653.²³⁵

In 1662 Over and the rest of the inshire passed out of the city's control, and by 1672 the county of Gloucestershire had taken responsibility for the bridge. After further repairs in 1742 it had five arches of brick and three of stone,²³⁶ the piers being irregular in size and spacing (Fig. 4).

Maisemore Bridge (Fig. 1, no. 26)

The Maisemore Bridge of the 13th century, as we have seen, was Maisemore Ham Bridge on the River Leadon. Maisemore Bridge proper, on the Severn by the village, only became necessary when the west Severn channel broke through Maisemore Causeway. Manorial tenants were responsible for it until the 18th century.²³⁷ In 1545 John Falconer of Gloucester bequeathed £10, and in 1578 Joan Goldstone of Gloucester bequeathed £13, for its repair.²³⁸ In 1644 the royalist Colonel Mynne, who was based at Newent, cut it down.²³⁹ As described in 1710 the bridge, although *much frequented by great numbers of people travelling from the city of Gloucester into severall parts of Herefordshire & Worcestershire & elsewhere lying farther remote from these countrys, being made of timber, [had] severall times within this 40 years last past been carryed away by inundations of water in the river of Severne, and by the often repaireing of it the timber [of the manor] was much diminished.* Maisemore Causeway was then *fit only for a single horse*, indeed the strip of land between it and the river was *used as a way for want of a sufficient causeway.* It was not until that year that the building of a masonry bridge was put in hand.²⁴⁰

Epilogue

The medieval history of the common meadows became an issue after 1875, when Gloucester City Council entrusted their management to a committee of city freemen.²⁴¹ In 1887 the freemen claimed that they, and not the council, had succeeded to the common rights granted in 1518, and in 1891 they sued the council for encroaching on their privileges.²⁴² The town clerk, George Sheffield Blakeway, refused to answer the suit until an archivist had set in order all the council's

233. GBR, J 3/1, ff. 208–10; cf. *Glos. Notes & Queries*, 2, 380.

234. GBR, F 4/5, ff. 193–4, 237, 407, 429v.; F 4/6, pp. 190, 307.

235. Washbourn, *Bibliotheca Gloucestrensis*, 85, 308; GBR, F 4/5, ff. 312, 339, 373, 482v.

236. *V.C.H. Glos.* 4, 113; 10, 16 & pl. opp. p. 20. The bridge was renewed further N. in 1829 (*ibid.*) and 1974: Bailey, *Over & Over Again*, 13.

237. GA, D 177/I/1, f. 23.

238. Stevenson, *Rec. Corp. Glouc.* pp. 436, 447.

239. Washbourn, *Bibliotheca Gloucestrensis*, 74, 91.

240. GA, D 177/I/1, f. 23; for a subvention from the city, GBR, B 3/8, p. 307; F 4/8, p. 39. The bridge was rebuilt again in 1785 and 1956: *Glos. History* 1992, 4–7.

241. GBR, B 3/19, 1 Oct. 1875.

242. GA, D 4430/1, 4.

medieval archive. The archive gave him grounds for a counter-claim. The agreement of 1518 entitled each burgess to pasture his own beasts, up to a maximum of five; but the freemen's leaders, being shopkeepers, had no animals and were breaking the agreement by letting the pasturage. Accordingly, under the Gloucester Corporation Act of 1894 the council took powers, which it exercised in 1899, to buy out the freemen's rights with a view to turning the meadows into public recreation and pleasure grounds.²⁴³ In the 100 years since then only a fraction of the meadows has been laid out for the purpose intended; but we have to thank Blakeway for opening up the borough archive which is the chief source of this address.

243. 57 & 58 Vict. cap. 91 (Local Act), s. 85; GBR, B3/33, General Report by the Common Meadows Committee to the Council, 1899.