GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

DYMOCK

ANTONIA DOUTHWAITE AND VINCE DEVINE
GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
SHIRE HALL
GLOUCESTER
GL1 2TH
1998

TEXT & MAPS UPDATED MATTHEW TILLEY 2007
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us to produce the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: Jan Wills, the County Archaeologist who initiated and managed the project and edited the reports, for her help and support; Caroline Jamfrey and Jon Hoyle for the production of the covers and other artwork, Howard Brewer of Gloucestershire County Council and Pat Southern of IBM for support with all our IT problems, and the SMR staff of Gloucestershire County Council for access to the SMR database.

We would especially like to thank the Gloucestershire Victoria County History team, Nick Herbert and John Jurica, for allowing us access to unpublished typescripts of Volume V for the Forest of Dean and to their preliminary work on Northleach.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................................................................................................................... 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS ............................................................................................................................................................. 3

FIGURES ................................................................................................................................................................................ 4

A note about the maps ............................................................................................................................................................ 4

Original description of SMR maps ......................................................................................................................................... 4

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT .............................................................................................. 5

PERIODS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT .................................................................................................................................. 5

POPULATION FIGURES ............................................................................................................................................................ 5

THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY ........................................................................................................ 7

1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................................................................ 7

2 The concept of urbanism ...................................................................................................................................................... 8

3 Urbanism in Gloucestershire ............................................................................................................................................. 10

3.1 The Roman period ......................................................................................................................................................... 10

3.2 The Early Medieval period .......................................................................................................................................... 11

3.3 The Medieval period ................................................................................................................................................... 11

3.4 The Post-medieval period .......................................................................................................................................... 14

4 Conclusions .................................................................................................................................................................... 16

5 Bibliography .................................................................................................................................................................... 16

HISTORIC TOWNS IN THE FOREST OF DEAN (Map 1) ..................................................................................................... 17

DYMOCK .............................................................................................................................................................................. 20

1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................................................................ 20

2 The Prehistoric period..................................................................................................................................................... 20

3 The Roman period ............................................................................................................................................................. 20

3.1 Discussion ..................................................................................................................................................................... 20

3.2 Table of sites ............................................................................................................................................................... 21

4 The Early Medieval period ............................................................................................................................................. 22

5 The Medieval period ....................................................................................................................................................... 22

5.1 Domesday Book .......................................................................................................................................................... 22

5.2 The placename ............................................................................................................................................................. 22

5.3 The status of the settlement .................................................................................................................................... 22

5.4 The manor ................................................................................................................................................................. 23

5.5 The church (SMR 5360) ............................................................................................................................................. 23

5.6 Markets and fairs ........................................................................................................................................................ 23

5.7 Trade and industry ..................................................................................................................................................... 23

6 The Post-medieval Period .................................................................................................................................................. 23

6.1 The status of the settlement ..................................................................................................................................... 23

6.2 The church (SMR 5360) ............................................................................................................................................. 24

6.3 Markets and fairs ........................................................................................................................................................ 24

6.4 Transport ................................................................................................................................................................. 24

6.5 Trade and industry ..................................................................................................................................................... 24

7 The modern settlement .................................................................................................................................................... 24

8 Population .................................................................................................................................................................... 25

9 Plan analysis (Maps 13-15) .............................................................................................................................................. 25

9.1 Discussion ..................................................................................................................................................................... 25

9.2 Plan components ....................................................................................................................................................... 25

10 Future research ............................................................................................................................................................. 26

11 Sources ........................................................................................................................................................................ 27

11.1 Primary historical sources .................................................................................................................................... 27

11.2 Secondary historical sources .................................................................................................................................. 27

11.3 Archaeological sources ........................................................................................................................................ 27

11.4 Maps ....................................................................................................................................................................... 27

12 Bibliography .............................................................................................................................................................. 27

12.1 Published works ..................................................................................................................................................... 27

12.2 Maps ........................................................................................................................................................................ 28
FIGURES

Map 1 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: Forest of Dean District

Map 9 Dymock SMR Information: Roman
Map 10 Dymock SMR Information: Early Medieval
Map 11 Dymock SMR Information: Medieval
Map 12 Dymock SMR Information: Post-medieval
Map 13 Dymock: Medieval Plan Components
Map 14 Dymock: Post-medieval Plan Components
Map 15 Dymock: Development by Period

A note about the maps

The SMR maps in the original Historic Towns Survey (i.e Maps 9-12) are now out of date and have not been included within this revision although references to SMR numbers remain in the text. For up to date SMR information readers can contact the SMR on 01452 425705 or via email at archaeology.smr@gloucestershire.gov.uk. The other maps have been refreshed using current software and retain their original numbering as referred to in the text.

Original description of SMR maps

SMR maps: these maps show a selection of sites relevant to the discussion of the development of each town. The maps are not intended to provide a comprehensive gazetteer of all recorded archaeological sites in the settlements, and should therefore be only be used in the context for which they were produced. For further information about the archaeology of any area, the Sites and Monument Record should be consulted directly.

Plan component maps: these maps are intended to indicate the most likely areas of settlement in each town during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods, on the basis of present archaeological knowledge. They should not, however, be regarded as definitive, and the interpretations made will require revision as new evidence emerges from future work.
ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

Anon   Anonymous

c.    circa

C    Century [e.g. C12]

EH   English Heritage

GSIA   Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology

km kilometres

m   metres

n.d.   Undated

O.D.   Ordnance Datum

O.S.   Ordnance Survey

PCNFC   Proceedings of the Cotswold Naturalists Field Club

RCHME   Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)

SMR   Sites and Monuments Record

SMR 12345 An SMR site which is shown on the accompanying maps

SMR 12345 An SMR site which is not shown on the accompanying maps

TBGAS   Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

TRE   Tempus Rex Edwardus (i.e. during the reign of king Edward the Confessor)

PERIODS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

Palaeolithic  500,000 B.C. – 10,000 B.C.

Mesolithic   10,000 B.C. – 4,000 B.C.

Neolithic   4,000 B.C. – 2,200 B.C.

Bronze Age  2,200 B.C. – 700 B.C.

Iron Age   700 B.C. – A.D. 43

Roman   A.D. 43 – 410

Early Medieval  410-1066

Medieval  1066 – 1540

Post Medieval  1540 – 1901

Modern   1901 – present

POPULATION FIGURES

The text for each town considered in the GHTS includes a section about the historic population of the parish in which the settlement lies. This information has been drawn from a variety of sources, mainly taxation returns, ecclesiastical returns and what can generally be referred to as censuses. The nature of these sources often makes it unclear what area was included within the survey, and in many cases suburban developments were excluded from the figures. It is also important to note that the accuracy of the information available is variable, and relates to a society which was not accustomed to the same degree of numerical accuracy demanded today. Some enumerations were the result of antiquarian interest in the growth of settlements and were included within descriptions of the nature of the town, as is the case with the figures given by Atkyns (1712) and Rudder (1779). Other population surveys were required by the ecclesiastical authorities, and in the case of Gloucestershire, there were a number of such surveys in 1563, 1603, 1650 and 1676. The 1563, 1603 and 1676 surveys were intended to indicate the number of communicants, papists and nonconformists in the parish. As the surveys were undertaken by the local clergy, there may well have been a temptation to play down levels of nonconformity. The 1650 survey was intended to give an indication of levels of pluralism, as well as to indicate the general size of the communities served.

The figures recorded in these surveys could be for communicants (i.e. anyone over the age of 16), men and women over 16, men, women and children, men over sixteen only, householders, households or families. In the case of Gloucestershire the figures generally relate to households, families and communicants. In order to gain a better indication of the true size of the population of a parish, calculations need to be made to convert communicants and households into men, women and
children of all ages. It has generally been accepted that to convert households into individuals the given figure should be multiplied by 4.25, while to add children under 16 to the number of communicants the figure should be multiplied by 1.5, based on the assumption that children made up approximately 33% of the general population.

It is possible to view the figures arrived at by these means as simplistic but it has been shown that they generally fit quite well with data from other seventeenth century sources (see Whiteman A (ed.) 1986, *The Compton Census of 1676*, for a full discussion of the issues). It is not intended that the figures given in the following text should be seen as correct values, but it is hoped that the information will provide an approximate indication of the order of size of the parish at a time when there were few other sources of information available.
THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

town n. 1. a densely populated urban area, typically smaller than a city and larger than a village. 2. a city, borough or other urban area.

urban adj. 1. of, relating to, or constituting a city or town. 2. living in a city or town. ~ Cf. rural.

1 Introduction

The Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey was undertaken between 1995 and 1998 by Antonia Douthwaite and Vince Devine of the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service and was funded by English Heritage as part of a national programme of county-based extensive urban surveys of small towns in England. All of the 37 settlements included in the survey once had, or have now, some urban characteristics, and range in date and type from the Roman towns of the Cotswolds through to the Post-medieval industrial settlements of the Forest of Dean and Stroud valleys (Table 1). Not all the settlements are urban at the end of the twentieth century: some are now greenfield sites and others are small villages, although a few have survived as urban foci for modern communities. Both Gloucester and Cirencester were omitted from the project since they were identified by English Heritage as major historic towns, with a considerable history of archaeological investigation meriting individual and detailed study (English Heritage 1992).

The extensive urban surveys were designed as tripartite projects to include: the enhancement of the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), in order to provide a comprehensive database for each settlement, the preparation of assessment reports which would summarise the state of archaeological knowledge for each settlement and the design of a strategy for the management of the archaeology of each town to be implemented mainly through the planning system. The database is now held as part of the Gloucestershire SMR, while the assessment and strategy reports each take the form of separate volumes covering the administrative districts of Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Tewkesbury. All three phases of the projects were based on the use of secondary, published sources, involved no fieldwork and were tightly constrained by the available resources.

Previous work on towns highlighting their archaeological potential and their vulnerability to development was undertaken in various parts of England, including Gloucestershire (Leech 1981), in the early 1980s. Changes in approaches to the management of the urban archaeological resource since then, particularly the greatly enhanced opportunities for its protection from the adverse effects of development through the planning system, prompted the new urban surveys of the 1990s.
2 The concept of urbanism

A town is a permanent human settlement with two chief and essential attributes. The first is that a significant proportion (but not necessarily a majority) of its population lives off trade, industry, administration and other non-agricultural occupations. The second...is that it forms a social unit more or less distinct from the surrounding countryside (Reynolds 1977, ix).

Although most people understand the term “town” in the modern context, the definition of urban areas in the past is far more varied, and modern concepts of urbanism tend to confuse more than they elucidate. For every period contemporary documents reveal a plethora of terms to describe settlements, depending upon their social, economic and legal status. Under the Roman empire there were seven distinct terms which could be used to place a settlement and its inhabitants in its context: *civitas*, *colonia*, *municipium*, *oppidum*, *urbs*, *vicus* and *polis* (polis). Any attempt to equate these words with modern terminology creates considerable confusion as there are just as many English terms to describe the status of any urban settlement: town, city, urban district, municipality, county borough, borough, any or all of which may or may not be a direct equivalent to the Roman terminology. Similarly, there are numerous Early Medieval and Medieval terms relating to settlements, including *vill*, *burghus*, *burh*, *wic* and *urbs*, some of which had very specific meanings while others are more difficult to define with precision.

This varied terminology has led archaeologists and historians to attempt to define urban status in terms of the roles towns played and their physical attributes which have survived in the archaeological record. This approach has been most successful in relation to settlements of the Early Medieval and Medieval periods, based on the work of Beresford (1967) and Biddle (1976), who have defined a town as a settlement possessing a combination of the following:

1) defences
2) a planned street system
3) market(s)
4) a mint
5) legal autonomy
6) a role as a central place
7) a relatively large and dense population
8) a diverse economic base
9) plots and houses of urban type (burgages and burgage tenure)
10) social differentiation
11) complex religious organisation
12) a judicial centre
13) the possession of a borough charter
14) a reference to the settlement as a *burgus* or representation by its own jury at the *eyre*
15) that it was taxed as a borough
16) that it sent members to any Medieval parliament

Table 1 illustrates where there is documentary evidence for some of the main urban characteristics of towns included in the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Defences</th>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Mint</th>
<th>Borough charter</th>
<th>Burgages/burgess tenure</th>
<th>Legal autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop’s Cleeve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisley</td>
<td>1687</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blockley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourton-on-the-Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheltenham</td>
<td>1226</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Campden</td>
<td>c1180</td>
<td></td>
<td>1154-89</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderford</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleford</td>
<td>cC14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dursley</td>
<td>1471/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>C12</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dymock</td>
<td>1225/6</td>
<td></td>
<td>C13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairford</td>
<td>c.1100-35</td>
<td></td>
<td>1221</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frampton-on-Severn</td>
<td>1245</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Stanley</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td></td>
<td>C13/14</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lechlade</td>
<td>1210</td>
<td></td>
<td>c.1235</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Stanley</td>
<td>1307-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydney</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minchinhampton</td>
<td>1269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitcheldean</td>
<td>1328</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-in-Marsh</td>
<td>1228</td>
<td></td>
<td>C13/14</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nailsworth</td>
<td>C18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newent</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>C13</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newnham</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>C12</td>
<td>1187</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northleach</td>
<td>1219/20</td>
<td></td>
<td>c.1227</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painswick</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestbury</td>
<td>1249</td>
<td></td>
<td>C13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Briavels</td>
<td>1208</td>
<td></td>
<td>C14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow-on-the-Wold</td>
<td>1107</td>
<td></td>
<td>C12</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroud</td>
<td>1570-1607</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetbury</td>
<td>1211-1287</td>
<td></td>
<td>c.1211</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewkesbury</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchcombe</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wotton-under-Edge</td>
<td>1252</td>
<td></td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: indicators of urban status in the Medieval period
3 Urbanism in Gloucestershire

3.1 The Roman period

The concept of urbanism is often considered to have been a continental imposition brought to Britain by the invading Roman army during the first century A.D. The geographer Strabo, writing during the late first century B.C. and the early first century A.D. implied that the backwardness of western Europeans outside Italy was due to their hunting and raiding way of life and that once they were converted to a settled agricultural existence, urbanisation would develop of its own accord (Wacher 1995, 33). However, there is evidence that some Iron Age hillforts and enclosures had begun to take on urban functions before the Roman conquest of A.D.43. The Iron Age settlements of Bagendon and Salmonsbury Camp in east Gloucestershire appear to have been densely populated, with streets, arrangements of dwellings and ancillary buildings, along with defences, and to have acted as centres of political, commercial and administrative activity (Friar 1991, 386). Compared with Roman towns they may still have been extremely primitive, and the imperial government would have been keen to establish towns on the Mediterranean scale which were an essential part of the Roman way of life, and also facilitated the tasks of administration, the collection of taxes, education and policing. Towns may also have been seen as a means of furthering the acceptance of the Roman government among the native population.

The earliest Roman towns to develop would have been those on which the administration of the province was based - the civitates and the coloniae - some of which were based on early forts, while others derived from settlements of veterans who were given land at the end of their period of military service (e.g. Gloucester). Smaller towns developed around the other early forts where merchants and other civilians gathered to service the army, or at other significant locations on the network of Roman roads, such as the Foss Way or Watling Street, to serve the imperial messenger service along with other travellers who would need somewhere to stop overnight, to eat and change horses, and possibly to trade. Unlike the civitates and coloniae, there is little evidence of planning in many such settlements, which are more likely to have developed organically.

The Roman small towns at Bourton-on-the-Water, Dorn, Dymock, Kingscote and Wycomb (Andoversford) were included in the historic towns survey. At Bourton there are suggestions of continuity of occupation from the Iron Age into the Roman period; the Iron Age enclosure of Salmonsbury Camp lies just over 1km to the east of the Roman small town. The Roman settlement was initially focused around a posting station (mansio or mutatio) on the Foss Way near its crossing of the River Windrush, but then spread eastwards towards Salmonsbury Camp. Dorn is also thought to have served an administrative function during the later part of the Roman period (the late third to fourth centuries), possibly as a site where the official taxes (the annona) were collected; the defences around the eastern part of the site may have been constructed at this time. The Roman settlements at Kingscote and Dymock may also have had military origins – there is a suggestion that there may have been an early fort at Dymock from which a small agricultural and metal-working settlement developed, while considerable material of first century date has been found at Kingscote which then developed into a market centre, covering about 200 hectares by the later fourth century. Unlike the other Roman settlements in Gloucestershire, Wycomb is not associated with any major road and it is thought to have grown up around a site of ritual or religious significance pre-dating the Roman conquest. A settlement would have developed there either to serve the pilgrims and visitors to the site, or as a market centre for surrounding communities which were often associated with ritual sites.

Some Medieval settlements in Gloucestershire may also have developed on sites of Roman activity, including Bisley where there is evidence for Roman ritual activity, possibly associated with the wells; King’s Stanley, where there is evidence for a large Roman villa in the area of the later church; and Lydney which lies close to the Roman cult centre at Lydney Park. The nature of the relationship between the Roman and later settlements is not understood, and it is not clear to what extent the existence of Roman activity influenced the siting of later settlements.

The end of the Roman period in Britain is often thought to have been marked by a hiatus in urban life. There is little evidence for continuity of occupation in urban areas into the fifth century in the county, and it appears that the function of the towns died with the culture that they had been founded to sustain (Wacher 1995, 417). The fact that many sites were reoccupied in the later Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods may be due more to the fact that, by accident of geography, the sites were suitable for the economic and administrative functions of the period, just as they had been during the Roman period.
3.2 The Early Medieval period

The popular perception of the Dark Ages as one of deserted Roman towns, dilapidated villas and a reversion to barbarism still persists to a certain extent, and until 50 years ago academics were still debating the question of whether Anglo-Saxon towns existed at all. Roman towns fell out of use for a time, perhaps because they were too superficial an imposition on a society to which the idea of formal towns was alien. It is likely that the renaissance of internal and external trading networks prompted the increased centralisation of the production and sale of goods. From the eighth century specialist trading centres, such as Southampton and Ipswich, developed. Elsewhere the main impetus for urban development may have been a desire to control and promote economic activity, including the striking of coinage. A second important factor in the development of urban communities were the Scandinavian raids of the eighth and ninth centuries, which prompted Alfred and his successors to create the fortified settlements known as burhs. Some were established on the sites of Roman towns, while others were newly founded, but all were provided with defences of earth, timber or stone. The interest of the ruling elite in the promotion of towns gathered force throughout the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period, with increasing controls and prescriptions on the activities permitted within and outside urban areas: legislation of Edward the Elder and Aethelstan attempted to restrict trade to the towns, while the reform of the coinage by Eadgar in A.D.973 meant that the coins could only be struck in a burh.

The early church also played a significant role in the development of towns. From the seventh century onwards minsters were founded to serve as centres for the conversion and administration of large areas of England. A minster usually consisted of a church and outbuildings within an enclosure, served by a priest and a number of monastic or secular assistants. Such concentrations of priests would have required goods and services, which would in turn have attracted secular settlement to the area to serve those needs, and it is possible that these complexes may have provided the closest equivalent to towns in England until the creation of the burhs in the ninth century.

The tenth and eleventh centuries therefore saw the steady establishment of towns as centres of trade, finance, administration and ecclesiastical affairs, functions which continued into the post-Conquest period and have come to be viewed as indicators of urban status.

In Gloucestershire there is evidence that early minsters were founded at Tetbury, Berkeley, Cheltenham, Bishop’s Cleeve, Blockley, Bisley, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe and it is possible that their existence played a significant role in the development of urban functions at those sites. Winchcombe is also the only example of a burh in Gloucestershire, founded in the seventh or eighth century at the site of an early minster which developed into a monastic house, with a Mercian royal palace and a mint, surrounded by a defensive enclosure. For a while during the early eleventh century, the settlement was important enough to stand at the centre of its own shire - Winchcombeshire - until it was incorporated into Gloucestershire c.A.D.1017.

3.3 The Medieval period

From the tenth to fourteenth centuries the process of urbanisation acquired momentum as first royal and then secular and ecclesiastical landlords began to promote existing villages to urban status, or to found completely new towns on virgin sites. Towns were important as a source of income from markets, taxes and tolls. Existing settlements had the added advantage of containing the remains of the Anglo-Saxon administrative structure, with military and fiscal obligations, and many were also episcopal sees. They housed large clusters of the population and many stood at important road junctions or river crossings. Artisans and merchants also found that the towns presented opportunities for the creation of wealth and the advancement of social status.

Medieval landowners were quick to promote the development of urban communities on their land, obtaining income from property rents and tolls levied on trade and commerce. This revenue could be controlled through the establishment of a market in a specific area within the settlement and in the period 1199-1350 around 2500 market grants were issued.

In addition to the foundation of a market, many landlords attempted to promote existing villages to borough status. The grant of a borough charter conferred a number of privileges of administrative, teneurial and legal character, the most important of which was the right to burgage or freehold tenure, for a rent and without labour services. In the period from 1199-1350 c.370 new boroughs were created by the king, lords and bishops. One of the most characteristic features of towns of this period is the burgage plot - long, thin strips of land extending back from the main street which allowed as many burgesses as possible access to the street frontage and the trade which it
afforded. In Gloucestershire at least 22 small towns acquired borough status during the Medieval period, with most charters being granted during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tewkesbury</td>
<td>by 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchcombe</td>
<td>by 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Campden</td>
<td>1154-1189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newnham</td>
<td>1187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>1190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dursley</td>
<td>C12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow-on-the-Wold</td>
<td>C12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetbury</td>
<td>c.1211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairford</td>
<td>c.1221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northleach</td>
<td>c.1227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lechlade</td>
<td>c.1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wotton-under-Edge</td>
<td>1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dymock</td>
<td>C13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newent</td>
<td>C13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestbury</td>
<td>C13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Stanley</td>
<td>C13/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-in-Marsh</td>
<td>C13/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minchinhampton</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheltenham</td>
<td>1313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painswick</td>
<td>1324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Briavels</td>
<td>C14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: earliest documentary references to borough status.

The units of settlement described as towns during this period were plentiful but remained very small, about 95% of the population of England was still rural, and the main difference between the new towns and the rural villages was that the former contained a substantial proportion of traders and craftsmen whose services would be drawn on by the villagers of the surrounding area (Palliser 1987, 55). This pattern of new foundations and promotions continued until the outbreak of the Black Death (1348–1369) which effectively curtailed the creation of new towns. Up to this time, town growth had been achieved mainly through the attraction of immigrants from surrounding rural populations, who were accommodated through the infilling of open areas and the sub-division of existing burgage or tenement plots.

The Norman and later Medieval town was thus an important instrument of political, administrative and economic control, flexible enough both to exert control over an area and to allow it to be exploited commercially. Through this process English towns were adapted to become a major economic force.

The Medieval small towns of Gloucestershire fit into this general pattern. A number of settlements in the central and eastern part of the county, such as Berkeley, Cheltenham, Tetbury, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe had begun to develop during the Early Medieval period, but the vast majority of the towns in the county owe their existence to the Medieval fashion for founding new markets and boroughs during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Table 3 shows the market towns in the county and the dates at which they received their market charters: 15% of all Medieval market grants were made during the twelfth century, and 55% during the thirteenth century.
Amongst the boroughs founded after 1086, some appear to have been added on to existing non-urban settlements, while others could have been new creations. Towns in the first category include Stow-on-the-Wold, Northleach, Moreton-in-Marsh, Chipping Campden, Wotton-under-Edge and possibly Dursley. Such settlements generally comprise a large market area which is sometimes triangular or square, and sometimes formed by widening the main street to allow stalls to be set up along its length, with burgage plots fronting onto all available sides. The earlier settlement, to which the borough was attached, can often be seen in a less regular pattern of property boundaries, usually clustered around the church. Towns of the second category include Fairford, Lechlade and Painswick. These settlements also have a well defined market area, but a more complex street pattern, incorporating more than one main street, with burgages also laid out along the subsidiary streets.

The history of the development of towns in the Forest of Dean, is rather more diverse. Some followed a pattern similar to those outlined above, of foundation and development around a market during the Medieval period and thus have a similar layout, such as Newent and Newnham; St. Briavels was connected closely with the development and administration of the Royal Forest of Dean. Other settlements – Coleford, Lydney and Mitcheldean - were the product of the industrial development of the Forest, based on the exploitation of its natural resources, particularly iron and coal.

The Stroud valleys, which would become such an important area of settlement during the Post-medieval period, show little evidence for urban development during the Medieval period, apart from areas at the edge of the Cotswold Scarp such as Dursley, Bisley and Painswick, where the settlement pattern is similar to that found elsewhere on the Cotswolds. The main reason for this is likely to have been the nature of the terrain, which was

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tewkesbury</td>
<td>by 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchcombe</td>
<td>by 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>by 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairford</td>
<td>c1100-1135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stow-on-the-Wold</td>
<td>1107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Campden</td>
<td>c1180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newnham</td>
<td>C12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Briavels</td>
<td>1208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lechlade</td>
<td>1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetbury</td>
<td>1211-1287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northleach</td>
<td>1219/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dymock</td>
<td>1225/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheltenham</td>
<td>1226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-in-Marsh</td>
<td>1228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frampton-on-Severn</td>
<td>1245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestbury</td>
<td>1249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wotton-under-Edge</td>
<td>1252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painswick</td>
<td>1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newent</td>
<td>1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Stanley</td>
<td>1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydney</td>
<td>1268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minchinhampton</td>
<td>1269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Stanley</td>
<td>1307-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitcheldean</td>
<td>1328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleford</td>
<td>C14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dursley</td>
<td>1471/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroud</td>
<td>1570-1607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisley</td>
<td>1687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nailsworth</td>
<td>C18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderford</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: market charters by date
mostly unsuitable for Medieval industries and agricultural exploitation, but which was ideally suited to Post-medieval advances in manufacturing techniques.

3.4 The Post-medieval period

The mid-sixteenth century marked a further important phase in the development of English towns. The dissolution of the Monasteries and the suppression of religious houses, especially friaries, chantries and pilgrimages had an enormous impact on urban life. Large areas of land and buildings were put up for sale, and were converted into houses or redeveloped by their new, secular owners. The economic impact on towns dependent upon church landlords or pilgrimage cults was therefore severe. Other factors also affected the success of the small towns founded during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. Some failed because they had been poorly located, others because of direct competition from near neighbours, and yet others due to the economic changes of the period. Many of the towns which continued to flourish did so by specialising in a certain product at market, such as cheese, wool, grain or leather goods, while others specialised in a particular industry or manufacturing process.

During the later Medieval period changes to the industrial and commercial geography of England also had a significant effect upon the development of towns in the country. One of the main English exports up to the fourteenth century had been raw wool, which was shipped to the continent where it was made into finished cloth to be sold back to England. The wars with France in the early fourteenth century forced an end to this trade, providing the opportunity for the production of cloth to spread rapidly through the rural areas of England. Within a few years finished cloth had replaced raw wool as one of the country’s main exports. Numerous small settlements began to develop in rural areas to service this trade, away from the constraints of the town guilds, which enabled cloth to be produced more cheaply, thereby competing with the Flemish weavers who had dominated the trade up to this time. These settlements were strikingly different from those of earlier towns; they were not confined within town walls and were often not connected to earlier settlements, but took the form of straggling developments along the sides of valleys. The new cloth industry thus allowed small rural settlements in favourable locations to develop into prosperous towns.

The effect of these economic changes was felt very strongly in Gloucestershire where the towns of the Cotswolds had specialised in the marketing of locally produced wool. Many of these towns, such as Northleach and Winchcombe, fell into decline during this time as they were not located in areas suitable for the manufacturing of woollen cloth. Prosperity spread instead to the valleys around Stroud where easy access to high quality Cotswold wool, to abundant supplies of fuller’s earth, to water of a quantity sufficient to drive a number of mills and to Bristol as an outlet for the finished product allowed numerous small valley hamlets to develop into towns serving the cloth industry. Three kinds of English cloth were produced, the finest of which was broadcloth; kerseys were a lighter, cheaper and often coarser cloth and worsteds were the cheapest and did not require fulling. Gloucestershire held foremost place in the production of broadcloth, mainly due to the steep-sided valleys in the Stroud area which were well suited to the creation of reservoirs for the large fulling mills, and later for the dyehouses for the coloured cloth which supplanted the finished broadcloth. This is how settlements such as Chalford, Nailsworth and Stroud developed from the later fourteenth century, spread out along the sides of the river valleys and clustered around the mills. Within these towns evidence for the cloth trade is well preserved, not only in the form of large mill buildings, but in the architecture of the houses of the weavers, who produced the cloth, and the large, commodious dwellings of the clothiers who owned the mills, and distributed the wool to be woven.

In the Forest of Dean the settlements which developed during the Medieval period - Lydney, Newnham, Newent, Coleford and Mitcheldean - did not expand or develop greatly between the later Medieval period and the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, when new industrial techniques were developed and large scale mining operations began as the free miners were persuaded to sell their rights to speculators and entrepreneurs. This industrial activity was so concentrated in the area of Cinderford Bridge that a new town developed purely to service the requirements of the mine owners and their workers.

From the mid-seventeenth century the conglomeration of buildings and social classes which had characterised so many Medieval towns was superseded by the introduction of new urban styles from the continent, which reflected the growing prosperity of the period. The concept of large open circuses, squares and terraces of elegant town houses dominated the urban scene for the next two centuries, exemplified in the Gloucestershire context by the development of Regency Cheltenham, with its pump rooms, promenades, elegant terraces and town houses. Elsewhere the picture was not quite so pleasant, the industrial towns also had terraces, but these were usually ‘blind-backed’ or ‘tunnel-backed’ with inadequate sanitation for the large families who occupied them. This form of dwelling can still be seen at Lydney and in the Oldbury development at Tewkesbury (although the houses have
been modernised for modern use). Innovations in methods of transport also played an important role in the
development of settlements, encouraging the separation of commercial, residential and industrial areas, as people
no longer had to live in the same area that they worked. Most of the Gloucestershire small towns show some
evidence of nineteenth century redevelopment, and most also have examples of Victorian civic pride in the form of
public buildings such as libraries (Stroud) and town halls (Bisley, Stow-on-the-Wold, Nailsworth and Painswick).
4 Conclusions

Perhaps the most striking conclusion of this survey of the historic small towns of Gloucestershire is its demonstration that, despite documentary evidence of the Medieval or earlier origins of the majority of settlements, there is as yet very little archaeological evidence for most of them.

The town centre redevelopments of the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s were not generally preceded by archaeological investigation and during this period many sites of high potential in the historic cores of small towns were destroyed without record. It was not until the later 1980s, and the advent of Planning Policy Guidance 16 (DoE 1990), that a more systematic approach to the archaeological evaluation and recording of sites in small towns became possible. Most recent large scale development has, however, tended to be away from the street frontages in the historic cores of towns, and the archaeological investigation in the latter areas has therefore been on a very small scale.

The summary of archaeological evidence provided by the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey assessment reports and the policies contained in the strategies will, however, provide a good basis for ensuring that, in the future, sites of archaeological potential in small towns are managed appropriately and not developed without an assessment of the archaeological implications and implementation of suitable mitigation strategies.

5 Bibliography

Snyder CA 1997, *A Gazetteer of Sub-Roman Sites in Britain*.
HISTORIC TOWNS IN THE FOREST OF DEAN (Map 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Borough charter</th>
<th>Burgages/burgess tenure</th>
<th>Legal autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinderford</td>
<td>Industrial town</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleford</td>
<td>Small market town</td>
<td>C14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dymock</td>
<td>Roman small town; Small market town</td>
<td>1225/6</td>
<td>C13</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydney</td>
<td>Small market town; Industrial town</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitcheldean</td>
<td>Small market town</td>
<td>1328</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newent</td>
<td>Medium-sized market town</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>C13</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newnham</td>
<td>Medium-sized market town</td>
<td>C12</td>
<td>1187</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Briavels</td>
<td>Small market town</td>
<td>1208</td>
<td>C14</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About one third of the county of Gloucestershire lies west of the River Severn and the greater part of this area forms the administrative district of the Forest of Dean. The area is geologically and topographically complex and comprises a number of distinct zones: the steep-sided Wye valley which forms its western boundary; the central high ground, much of which is above 200m, consisting of mineral-bearing limestones and sandstones, and now extensively forested; the Leadon valley to the north bordering Herefordshire; and the low-lying land alongside the Severn estuary. The natural resources of the area – sandstone, limestone, iron, coal and timber – have formed the basis of an industrial economy from the Roman period onwards.

The early archaeology of the Forest of Dean is as yet little studied, in particular information about prehistoric settlement is sparse. In the Roman period local iron deposits became the basis of an important industry although the location and nature of the industrial sites and their contemporary settlements remains to be investigated. From the eleventh century the central area was designated as a royal forest, the purpose of which was the protection of the beasts of the forest (red, roe and fallow deer, along with wild boar) for hunting, along with the trees and undergrowth which protected them, and which was known as the *vert*. This area was owned by the Crown, and governed by Forest law. The mineral wealth of the area was exploited by the Free Miners, who had the exclusive right to extract coal, iron ore and stone from the Forest, subject to the payment of royalties, which were codified during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Between 1611 and 1613, the Crown allowed the first charcoal blast furnaces to be built in the Forest, and within a generation 12 blast furnaces and 13 substantial forges were operating on a considerably larger scale than ever before. However, due to the government’s concern to protect its timber stocks during the later seventeenth century, the industry foundered and had almost reached the point of extinction by the early eighteenth century. It began to revive during the 1820s when smelting works were opened, or re-opened, at Parkend and Cinderford. New iron mines were opened throughout Dean, and by the mid-nineteenth century the Forest was producing over 100,000 tons per annum. However, by the end of the century iron mining and smelting had almost ceased.

Officially, settlement was not allowed within the area of the Royal demesne, but the Forest always attracted large numbers of squatters, poor men attracted by the chances of sporadic employment in the mines as well as by the opportunities for poaching, and who were regularly expelled by the officers of the Crown. In 1735, despite a large-scale eviction only 50 years before, a large number of cottages were recorded to have been erected at the borders of the Forest, the inhabitants of which were said to live by *rapine and theft* (Finberg 1955, 88). In 1788 the number of cottages and encroachments had almost doubled, and upwards of 200 cottagers were said to be resident in the Forest, occupying 589 cottages and 1385 acres of land. It is likely that these people had been attracted by the increasing industrialisation of the area, along with the increased accessibility of some settlements following the construction of new roads from 1761 onwards.

By the later nineteenth century the central Forest of Dean had been developed into a complex industrial zone incorporating coal and iron mines, iron and tinplate works, foundries, quarries, wood distillation works producing an array of chemicals, along with a network of railways and tramroads. The population of the area increased rapidly as the industries grew and many of the Forest towns show evidence for considerable expansion with the construction of new houses and public buildings during this period.
The towns which developed in the district are as diverse as the area. All lie outside the central afforested zone. Dymock has origins in the Roman period and may first have developed as a military site at the junction of two routes. Most of the rest of this group of towns first developed as market centres during the Medieval period, St. Briavels having in addition a specialised function as the administrative centre of the Royal Forest. Cinderford, a much later industrial settlement, gained a distinctive plan based on its origins in assarts on the edge of the Forest in which small industrial sites and associated houses were established.
Map 1: Gloucestershire - Forest of Dean District
DYMOCk

1 Introduction

Dymock (SO 699313) lies in north-west Gloucestershire between Newent and Ledbury, about 20km to the north-west of Gloucester, close to the border with Herefordshire. It is situated on an outcrop of Lower Red Sandstone bordering the southern edge of the floodplain of the River Leadon.

A settlement grew up on the site during the Roman period, perhaps connected with an early fort close to the junction of two Roman roads, and numerous finds of Roman material have been recovered from a wide area around the modern settlement. The Medieval settlement at Dymock acted as a market centre for the surrounding area, and for a short period during the thirteenth century, the town also enjoyed borough status. The economy of the Post-medieval settlement was based on agriculture, especially the growing of fruit and the production of cider and perry.

2 The Prehistoric period

Evidence for pre-Roman activity at Dymock has been found in the area of the present cricket ground to the east of the settlement, and a field to the north-east. Finds include a flint arrowhead (SMR 5354) said to be from Dymock which is in the Hereford Museum, a Gallo-Belgic gold coin of the Belocasses found during the nineteenth century (SMR 5358), a silver coin of the Dobunni and pottery of the early first century A.D. found during excavations in 1958 (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 7).

3 The Roman period

3.1 Discussion

Rudder, writing towards the end of the eighteenth century, recorded that ancient foundations have been found in the fields about a quarter of a mile from the church with old paved causeys (1779, 409). Although Rudder thought that these remains related to the Medieval borough, it is also possible that they related to the extensive Roman settlement at Dymock, covering about 15 hectares, stretching from the north-western edge of the existing village eastwards into the cricket ground. The settlement is thought to have developed on a ridge of high ground above the flood plain of the River Leadon, close to the junction of the Roman road from Magnis (Kenchester) to Glevum (Gloucester) (SMR 7677), and a second road from the east (SMR 9338), which may have originated at the Roman settlement in the Oldbury area of Tewkesbury, although its course has not been traced over the full distance. The Ravenna Cosmography shows that the road between Gloucester and Kenchester passed through two unidentified settlements – Epocessa and Macatonium. Gethyn-Jones has identified Epocessa as Stretton Grandison, while Macatonium may have been the settlement at Dymock (1966, 11).

Leech (1981, 30) has suggested that Roman occupation may have originated with a fort situated to the east of the stream which flows into the River Leadon, considerably to the east of the modern village. Three parallel ditches were discovered in this area in 1966, which have been dated from a Claudian coin found in association, although there is little evidence to indicate that they were of military origin.

The topography and road layout suggest that the focus of the settlement may have been the highest ground, where the Medieval church now stands, and considerable evidence for Roman activity has been found over the rest of the area of the modern village. Most of the evidence is in the form of pottery, metalwork and coins (see Map 9 and the table of sites in section 3.2, below). The pottery has been dated to the second to fourth centuries and includes Samian, Black Burnished wares and coarse wares. Coins from the area include issues of Claudius, Nero and Carausius. A number of burials have also been discovered, including a skeleton found c.1900 and a funerary urn found in 1938 (SMR 14045).

In addition to the evidence from the modern village, two other main areas of Roman activity have been identified: the sewage works (SMR 15285) and the cricket pitch (SMR 18402), both to the east of the village. The investigations at Dymock sewage works produced evidence for several phases of timber-framed buildings covering an area of about 300 square metres. The buildings were enclosed by a boundary ditch with a gated entrance. Also within the enclosed area were numerous pits from which large quantities of slag were recovered along with the remains of moulds for jewellery and fine tools, indicating that metalworking was being carried out in the vicinity.
Outside the enclosure ditch were five adult inhumations, orientated roughly north-south, four of which were in coffins while one was a shroud burial (Catchpole forthcoming).

Work at the cricket ground during the 1960s and 1970s by the Malvern Research Group identified further Roman settlement along the line of the road thought to have originated at Tewkesbury. A section cut across the road adjacent to the occupation area revealed that the total width of the road had been about 6m and the total thickness of the gravel metalling was 0.3m. No dating material was found in the road metalling but material from the occupation area indicated dates between the mid-second and mid-third centuries A.D. (Waters 1972, 12).

### 3.2 Table of sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMR No</th>
<th>NGR</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4415</td>
<td>SO 70393113</td>
<td>Linear feature, possible line of Roman road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5351</td>
<td>SO 700312</td>
<td>Roman settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5357</td>
<td>SO 71823177</td>
<td>Coin of Tiberius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6806</td>
<td>SO 69933131</td>
<td>13 sherd s of Roman pottery found near the village school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7677</td>
<td>SO 80001917</td>
<td>Line of Roman road between Gloucester and Kenchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9338</td>
<td>SO 710310</td>
<td>Possible line of Roman road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14040</td>
<td>SO 69833134</td>
<td>Evidence for Roman occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14041</td>
<td>SO 69403136</td>
<td>Evidence for Roman occupation found in the school garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14042</td>
<td>SO 69913136</td>
<td>Roman coins and pottery found 1939 and 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14043</td>
<td>SO 70143123</td>
<td>Stone layer, possible evidence for Roman occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14044</td>
<td>SO 69793128</td>
<td>Roman pottery and coins found 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14045</td>
<td>SO 96743120</td>
<td>Roman pottery and funerary urn found 1938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 The Early Medieval period

The church of St. Mary (SMR 5360) is situated at the highest point in the settlement, very close to the projected line of the Roman road from the Tewkesbury area. The fabric in the lower parts of the walls of the church has been identified as Anglo-Saxon in date (Taylor and Taylor 1965, 221-222). A priest is also recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (see section 5.1, below).

No other archaeological evidence for this period has been found in the area of the modern settlement.

5 The Medieval period

5.1 Domesday Book

Dymock is first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, as land once held by King Edward, and still belonging to the Crown. 42 villagers, 10 smallholders and 11 freedmen are recorded, along with a priest and 4 riding men. The value of the manor is given as £21 (Moore 1982).

5.2 The placename

In 1086 the manor was called Dimoch, which had become Dimmoc(k) or Dymmoc(k) by 1156. This name remained in use through to at least 1777, although other spellings were also used, including Dimmack, Dimhock and Dimmuk. Ekwall has suggested that the name may be derived from a combination of the Welsh word ty, meaning “house”, and mock meaning “swine”, i.e. a pigsty (Smith 1964, 168). Smith, however, considers it more likely that the name is instead derived from din, meaning fort (Smith 1964, 168).

5.3 The status of the settlement

Surviving documents of the thirteenth century indicate that by this date Dymock had become a borough. An undated “extent” of the period 1216-1272 records 66 burgesses paying an annual rent of 65 shillings, and an entry dated 1288 in the cartulary of Newent priory, refers to a burgage which abuts as far as the king’s highway. In width moreover between the hedge which was the aforesaid Walter’s and other burgages (Beresford and Finberg 1973, 113; Leech 1981, 30). Another entry in the same cartulary mentions 26 messuages at Dymock. However, the borough appears to have been short lived and by 1317 the settlement was no longer recognised to have borough status, although a charter of 1433 still refers to the inhabitants and tenants of the town of Dymock (Leech 1981, 30). Earthworks (SMR 9651) to the south of the main road through the village may indicate an area of the borough which was later abandoned.
5.4 The manor

This manor, as appears by Domesday Book, was the ancient demeans of the Crown, and was therefore exempted from contributing to the wages of the knights of the shire (Atkyns 1712, 393).

In 1070 King William gave the manor of Dymock to William FitzOsbern of Breteuil, whom he also created Earl of Hereford in that year. In 1075 FitzOsbern’s son rebelled against the King and the manor was taken back under Crown control until the later eleventh century when the demesne was alienated to Flaxley Abbey (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 17).

5.5 The church (SMR 5360)

The present church is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the earliest surviving fabric dates from the early Norman period, with additions of c.1120-1140. The early Norman church consisted of a nave, a central tower (no longer in existence) and an apse, of which little now remains, while the twelfth century additions include the south doorway of the nave and the chancel arch (Verey 1980, 176). These two phases of construction represent an important Norman church. The style of the early twelfth century additions characterises a local school of Norman sculpture to which Dymock has given its name, and which is roughly contemporary with the Herefordshire school to the north.

Verey has suggested that the church was in ruins by the fourteenth century, necessitating extensive rebuilding: the east end of the chancel was rebuilt, a north transept and south chapel were added and the west end of the nave was rebuilt. A western tower was added later, in the fifteenth century (Verey 1980, 175-176). The pre-fourteenth century ruinous condition of the building may have been due to the building having been sacked. No documentary evidence exists to support this theory but it is known that the thirteenth century saw a period of serious border warfare with the Welsh, during which west Gloucestershire is thought to have suffered heavily (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 35).

Anno 56 Henry III (1271/72) the church and advowson were given to the abbey and convent of St. Mary of Cormeilles, which also held the priory at Newent. The abbey had established a cell at Newent, whose prior acted as bailiff and steward for all the abbey’s Gloucestershire estates (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 35). The advowson of Dymock and Newent churches passed to the collegiate church of Fotheringhay (Northants) under Henry IV (1411), and finally passed to Sir Richard Lee anno 1 Edward VI (1547/48) (Anon 1908, 2-3).

Dymock was part of the Diocese of Hereford until 1541 when it was transferred to the Diocese of Gloucester (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 2).

5.6 Markets and fairs

According to Rudder (1779, 409) Dymock was privileged with a weekly market and annual fair anno 10 Henry III (1225/6), while Atkyns reported that anno 7 Henry IV (1405/6) a privilege was granted to the inhabitants of Dymock which exempted them from tolls in the markets and fairs (1712, 393). The day on which the market was held and the date of the fair have not been recorded.

5.7 Trade and industry

Much of Dymock’s early prosperity appears to have been based on its status as a market town. The name Butcher’s Row or Butcher’s Lane appears in court rolls of the Medieval period and may indicate at least one trade carried out in the town. Sheep were also important to the local economy, and it was from Rye Lands in Dymock, about 1km from the church that Edward III (1327-1377) is thought to have selected the sheep which he presented to the King of Spain for improving the Spanish breed (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 3).

6 The Post-medieval Period

6.1 The status of the settlement

By the Post-medieval period the importance of Dymock as a trading centre had diminished considerably, possibly due to competition from the successful market at Newent, about 5km to the south-east. Rudder, writing in the later eighteenth century, also suggested that the settlement had shrunk in size by this time, recording that Many houses were deserted and fell into ruin, of which the antient foundations have been found in the fields above a quarter of a mile from the church... (1779, 409).
6.2 The church (SMR 5360)

In 1852 the church needed urgent repairs and the Bishop gave permission for the vicar to take services in the village school during the work (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 42). Further restoration took place in the 1870s under John Middleton, during which, according to Verey (1980, 176) *the whole of the interior has been most disastrously scraped.*

There are no nonconformist chapels in Dymock, although 18 nonconformists were recorded in the parish in the Diocesan Surveys of 1676.

6.3 Markets and fairs

There is no evidence for any Post-medieval markets or fairs being held at Dymock, although unofficial gatherings may well have taken place, and it is likely that the inhabitants would have attended those held at Newent to the south-east.

6.4 Transport

The Hereford and Gloucester canal (SMR 5303) was constructed during the early nineteenth century and passed along the western edge of the settlement, as did the nineteenth century railway from Gloucester to Ledbury (SMR 5893), built in 1885, which partly re-used the canal bed.

6.5 Trade and industry

Following the loss of borough status and the decline of the market in the fourteenth century, agriculture is likely to have played the major role in the economy of the settlement. Smith’s Men and Armour for Gloucestershire in 1608 lists a schoolmaster, 36 servants, 31 yeomen, 40 labourers, 17 husbandmen, 4 tailors, 3 butchers, 5 shoemakers, 8 masons, 4 weavers, 3 carpenters, a smith, a milner and a wheeler among the able-bodied male population of the settlement (165 men altogether were recorded).

During the eighteenth century the growing of fruit became a major occupation in the area, aided by the fertility of the soil, and the Gloucestershire historians of the eighteenth century comment that several thousands of hogsheads of cider and perry were made at Dymock during a good year (Gethyn-Jones 1966, 5).

7 The modern settlement

Dymock is now a small village, retaining a few local services. Very little modern development has taken place, although small estates have been built to the west of the main street, one across the line of the dismantled railway, and individual new houses have infilled vacant land within the village.

The majority of houses in Dymock date from the seventeenth century and later, although there are also a few of fifteenth and sixteenth century date. Among these are The Old Nailshop (SMR 13018), a brick-nogged house built in the sixteenth century, which was the home of Wilfred Gibson, one of the Dymock poets, who was associated with Rupert Brooks, L. Abercrombie and R. Frost. Wood’s Cottage (SMR 13646) is also thought to have been built in the fifteenth century, as is The Old Cottage (SMR 13647), which has brick-nogged timber-framing and some rendering. Later buildings are of brick, and include Ann Cam’s School (SMR 13294) which was rebuilt in 1825 and the new Rectory which was designed by Stratton-Davis c.1950.
8 Population

(After Percival n.d.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Communicants</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Nonconfor-mists</th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1551</td>
<td>440</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c.660</td>
<td>Percival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1563</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c.451</td>
<td>Percival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c.600</td>
<td>Percival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c.595</td>
<td>Survey of Church Livings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1676</td>
<td>531</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>c.815</td>
<td>Compton Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Atkyns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>Rudder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1316</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a full explanation of this table, please see page 5 above.

9 Plan analysis (Maps 13-15)

9.1 Discussion

Despite the quantity of Roman finds from Dymock, very little can as yet be deduced about the form and character of the settlement. This remains an important theme which would merit further research (see section 10, below).

It is most likely that the Early Medieval settlement at Dymock was centred around the church (Area 1) which is pre-Conquest in origin. The Medieval settlement is likely to have expanded from this nucleus along the line of the main road to the east and west of the church. The Medieval borough at Dymock was very short lived and consequently has left little clear evidence of its form. Although all the land bordering the main road may have been part of the borough (Areas 4-8), property boundaries recorded on the earliest maps of the settlement do not have the typical burgage plot form, with the exception of Areas 10 and 11. Despite their distance from the church, these long and thin plots may be the remnants of burgage tenements. The market (Area 2) would probably have been held along the main street, possibly extending northwards towards the church on to the area which is now an open green. The area immediately to the east of the church may have also formed part of an extended market area, or have been included within the churchyard before being built up (Area 9).

The Medieval settlement may have been larger than the present village, as suggested by many of the eighteenth century antiquarian writers - "...the town was formerly much larger than the village is at present..." (Rudder 1779, 409) - stretching to the south-east of the church (Area 3) where earthworks to the south of the main road may be evidence for Medieval settlement, abandoned during the town’s economic decline during the later Medieval and early Post-medieval periods.

There was no expansion of the settlement during the Post-medieval period, although many houses were refronted or rebuilt in accordance with the fashions of the time. Modern developments have been dealt with in section 7, above.

9.2 Plan components

9.2.1 Medieval (Map 13)

1. The church of St. Mary and the surrounding churchyard

2. Probable site of the Medieval market

3. Possible area of Medieval settlement, since abandoned

4. Area of Medieval settlement to the north-east of the main street

5. Area of Medieval settlement to the south-west of the main street

6. Area of Medieval settlement to the west of the church
7. Area of Medieval settlement to the south of the church
8. Area of Medieval settlement to the east of Ledbury Road
9. Area of infill of churchyard or market area
10. Possible area of Medieval burgage plots to the north of the main street
11. Possible area of Medieval burgage plots to the south of the main street

9.3.2 Post-medieval (Map 14)
12. The church of St. Mary and the surrounding churchyard
13. Area of Post-medieval settlement to the west of the main street
14. Area of Post-medieval settlement to the south of the main street
15. Area of Post-medieval settlement to the east of the Ledbury Road
16. Area of Post-medieval settlement to the west of Ledbury Road
17. Area of Post-medieval development to the north of the main street
18. Area of Post-medieval development to the south of the main street
19. Area of Post-medieval development to the north of the main street
20. Area of Post-medieval development to the south-west of the main street

10 Future research

Priorities for future work include:

1. The origins of the Roman settlement at Dymock: it has been suggested that there may originally have been a fort on the site, which would have stimulated the development of a small settlement to provide goods and services for the troops. Alternatively the close proximity of two major roads may have stimulated the development of a small settlement to take advantage of passing trade.

2. The courses of the two Roman roads: neither of which has been traced for any distance.

3. The extent and nature of the Roman settlement at Dymock: it is unclear whether it fulfilled the functions of a small town, or whether the surviving remains indicate a rural estate concentrated around a villa or similar structure.

4. Although there has been considerable archaeological interest in the Roman settlement at Dymock, the results of many excavations and investigations have not been properly published. Full publication should therefore be considered a priority.

5. Continuity between the Roman occupation at Dymock and Early Medieval activity in the area, especially in view of the evidence of an early church situated in the centre of a Roman settlement.

6. The nature and extent of Early Medieval activity at Dymock is unclear: the presence of a pre-Conquest church suggests that there was contemporary settlement in the area.

7. The extent of surviving Anglo-Saxon fabric in the existing church building, and other archaeological evidence for this building.
8. The extent of the Medieval borough, and the character of occupation within it.

11 Sources

11.1 Primary historical sources

Information about the town and manor of Dymock is relatively sparse, although a few medieval references to the status of the settlement do exist. The surviving material has only been studied where it has been reproduced in secondary sources.

11.2 Secondary historical sources

Dymock has not yet been covered by the Victoria County History for Gloucestershire, although several local historians have devoted much time to exploring the archaeology and history of the settlement, most notably Gethyn-Jones. Mention is also made of the settlement in the works of eighteenth century historians, such as Atkyns, Rudder and Bigland. Little other information is currently available.

11.3 Archaeological sources

Finds of the Roman period have been made all over Dymock in a piecemeal way since c.1900. The first archaeological investigations within the area of the modern settlement began during the 1940s when the churchyard was extended, and subsequent work has been associated with the provision of water mains and sewerage. The Malvern Research Group carried out excavations within the area of the Roman settlement from 1957 until the mid-1970s, which resulted in numerous finds of the Roman period, including road surfaces, evidence for timber and stone structures, metal working and occupation of second to fourth century date. Unfortunately, the lack of full publication of the results of these investigations prevents a full understanding of the extent and layout of the Roman settlement.

There have been two recent significant investigations within the Roman settlement. Firstly, in 1993 an evaluation on the northern edge of the village (SMR 15175) identified possible evidence of a Roman period metal working site. Secondly, in 1997 excavations in advance of the extension of Dymock Sewage Works (SMR 15285) revealed evidence for a sequence of buildings, metal working and a number of burials.

11.4 Maps

The earliest maps available are the tithe map of 1847 and the first edition Ordnance Survey 25”:1 mile survey of 1880. Both maps illustrate the extent of the Post-medieval settlement before any modern (twentieth century) development was undertaken.

12 Bibliography

12.1 Published works

Bigland R 1791, Historical Manuscripts and Genealogical Collections relating to the County of Gloucestershire.
Catchpole T forthcoming, Archaeological excavation at Dymock Sewage Treatment Works, Dymock, Gloucestershire: Post-excavation assessment.
Gethyn-Jones JE 1966, Dymock Down the Ages.
Percival AC n.d., Gloucestershire Village Populations.
Renn DF 1973, Norman Castles in Britain.
Rudder S 1779, A History of Gloucestershire.
Smith AH 1964, The Place Names of Gloucestershire Vol. III.

**12.2 Maps**

Tithe map, 1847
Ordnance Survey first edition 25":1 mile map, 1880
MAP 13
Dymock
Medieval Plan Components

Legend
Medieval features (Polys)
- Green: Areas of Medieval settlement
- Red: Church & churchyard
- Blue: Infill of churchyard
- Purple: Market place
- Cyan: Possible area of Medieval settlement
- Yellow: Possible burgage plots

© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Gloucestershire County Council 100019134 2007

Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service
Dyson Hall, Highgate Street
Gloucester, GL1 2TH
Tel: 01452 528701
Fax: 01452 527656
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk
email: archaeology.smr@gloucestershire.gov.uk

DRAWN BY: SMR
SCALE: 1:6,245
DATE: 06 October 2007
DRAWING NO: MAP 13