

A JACOBAN PIPED WATER SUPPLY IN CHIPPING CAMPDEN



For Chipping Campden Historical and Archaeological Society 1998

To the Gallant Reader.

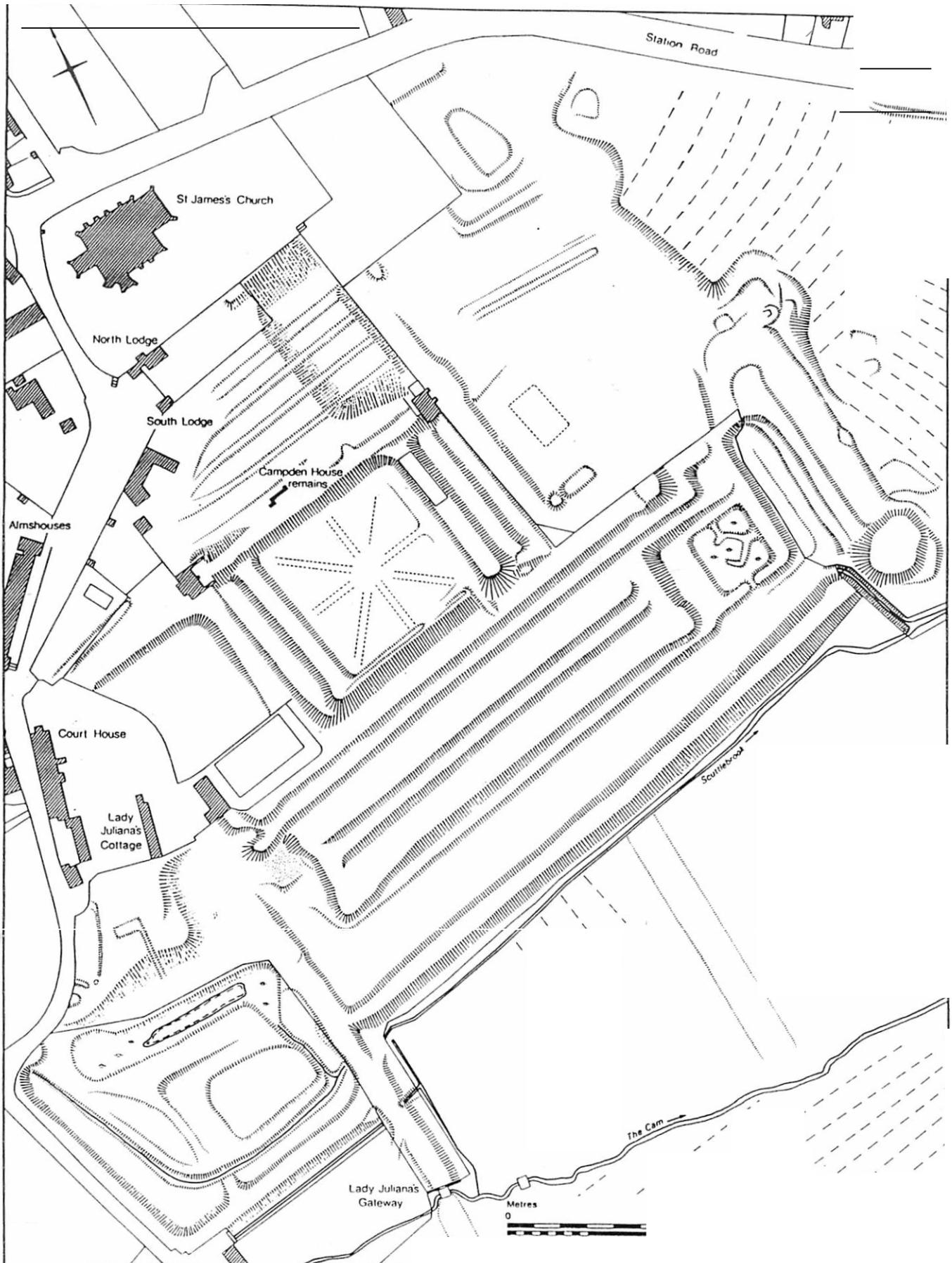
These pages form an unpolished collection of information, details and comments, and should be read judiciously and challenged as appropriate. They would benefit from strict editing. I feel guilty in that I have not given time to this burdensome task, nor imposed on my friends to do so. However, criticisms and connections will be gratefully welcomed and incorporated in a subsequent second edition.

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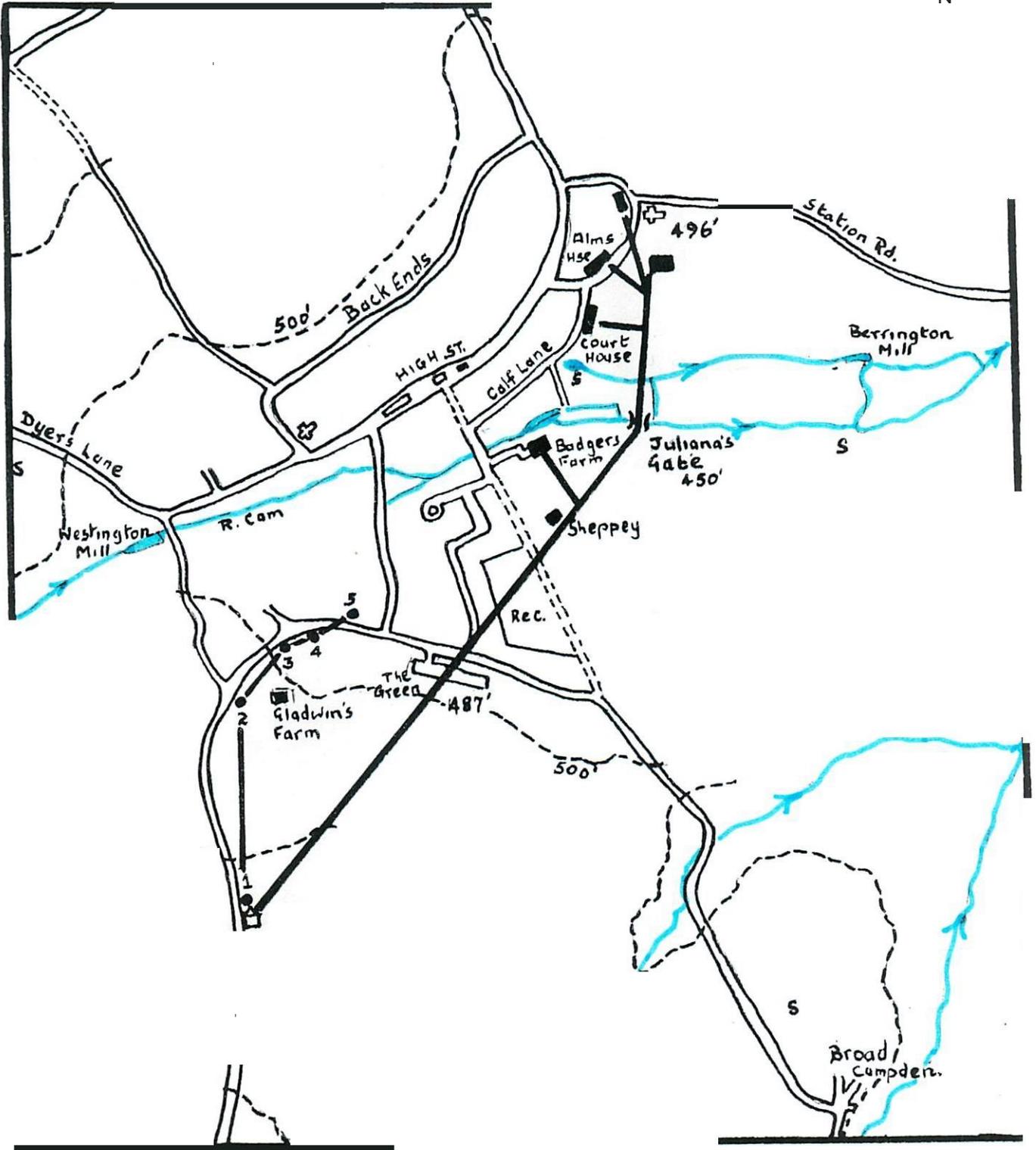
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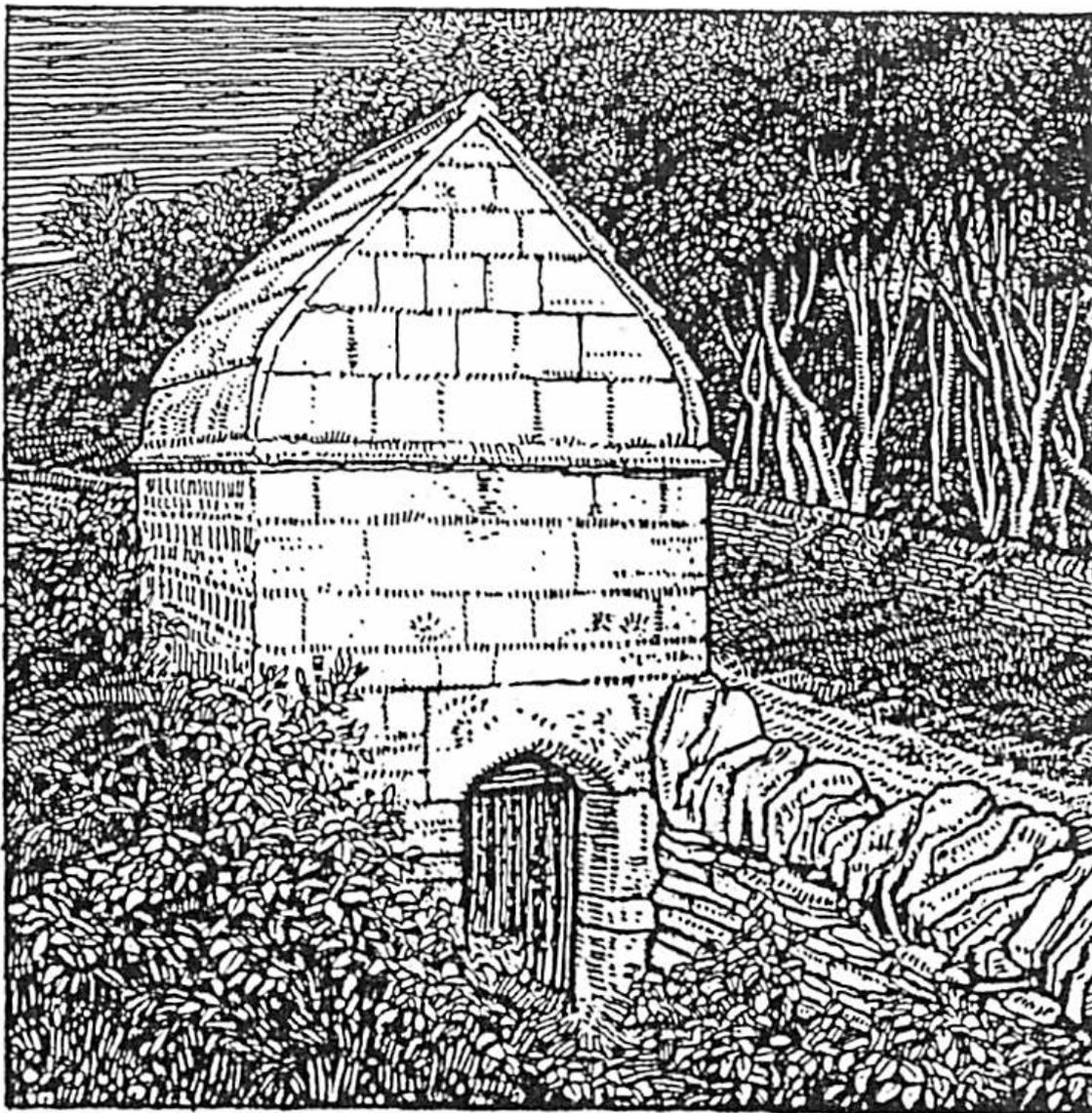




Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire: earthwork plan (copyright RCHM E)

THE CONDUIT





F.L. Griggs 1876-1938 The Old Conduit 1919

Pen and ink on white paper. The subject is a small seventeenth century building on the very outskirts of Campden on Westington Hill. As with 'A Cattle Byre' it occurs in the artist's own record of his drawings and is stated to have been made in August 1919 for inclusion in the Campden book, having been copied by an engraver. A fine example of Griggs' later black and white work. From the collection of Russell Alexander.

A JACOBAN PIPED WATER SUPPLY IN CHIPPING CAMPDEN.

The Conduit House and Conduit form a fascinating part of Chipping Campden's history. They are, in fact, an important part of the town's heritage. Unfortunately, it is too late to preserve the conduit. The Conduit House, on the other hand, is in excellent condition and must be preserved for the future.

It is generally believed that the Conduit House was built in 1612 by Sir Baptist Hicks, Lord of the Manor, 1606 -1629, to provide protection for the spring, which was to supply piped fresh water to the Almshouses and/or his new Campden House.

There now follows an examination of the supporting evidence, including an examination of old maps, relevant literature, other documents; and information gleaned from local residents, e.g. Fred Coldicot, Eric Haines, Maurice Howman, to name but three.

My interest in this nearly four hundred year old water supply was aroused as a result of me, on a visit to Campden, enquiring about "that little stone building on the side of the road as you come down Westington Hill into Campden". I explained that, having walked and driven past it a number of times, it was, to all intents and purposes, a solid structure with a fancy roof. Maybe it was something left over from the last war.

However, whilst making a few local enquiries, was soon informed that "it" was not solid; and that "it" was known as the Conduit, or Water, House. Further questioning indicated the possible existence of an interesting story with many unanswered questions. A number of people knew some of the answers, but it was obvious, that not all the answers were known by any one person; nor were they to be found in any one of the reference books which are generally available. Hence this modest piece of research which is an attempt to co-ordinate and collate the information, which is available from these various sources.

THE CONDUIT HOUSE

The three obvious questions to be considered are: Why was it built? Who built it and When?

WHY WAS IT BUILT?

The Conduit House (Grid Ref. 148382) is approximately 9.0 ft x 7.5 ft., and about 6 ft from ground level to the eaves. Inside, however, it is at least 9 ft from floor to the eaves, plus the height of the roof. The door measures 5ft. x 2ft.

The Conduit House Door

It goes without saying that it was not erected simply to provide a convenient location for the 6-13.6ft above sea level bench mark, which is on the road side wall. This bench mark is recorded on the older Ordnance Survey maps, but the Conduit House, as such, is not.



The following authors tell us;-

Rushen - "to control the water supply to the almshouses..." It is reasonable to ask what "to control" means in this context.

Powell ".- (it) marks the source of the freshwater..." This is better, but why "mark" this particular source?

Was the real purpose to protect a spring from contamination by animals and, possibly, people? Would this have been a concern to anyone in 1612? - ie. almost 400 years ago, or 8 years before the Pilgrim Fathers sailed for America (1620), 7 years after the Gunpowder Plot, 13 years before Charles I succeeded James I (1625). If so, we are looking at a very advanced concept. Was the cause of typhoid and cholera known at this time? Once the link with water pollution had been established then clearly there would be a need for protection; but in the early part of the 17th century? Was it not much later in the mid 19th century that, for example, a cholera outbreak in London was linked to a particular water pump? The outbreak cleared up when the pump handle was removed.

It is interesting to note that in 1814 the Court Leets of Westington and Combe ordered that 'no ducks nor geese shall be turned out to injure the Water in the said Hamlet. If any are found trespassing in the Water, they may be killed and taken for their trouble.' Many people, therefore, did recognise the need to avoid poor quality

water and this is probably one explanation for the large number of pubs and ale houses in the town, and the popularity of ale\beer.

WHO BUILT IT (and owns it)?

Whenever the Conduit House was built, it was, and remains, an important part of Campden's history. It is, of course, not a solid structure, although it is easy to see why so many people believe it to be so. The 5 ft x 2 ft entrance, on the town side of the building, is low down and hidden from the road by the field wall. Perhaps this is why it has survived in its present condition for so long. Although it is now securely locked, the existence of a door should NOT be publicised. Being sited on the road side, it is vulnerable to vehicular damage and, if for no other reason, ownership needed to be established (it now has been) to ensure adequate long term protection. When, in the 1960's, itinerant farm workers started to use it for their ablutions, apparently somebody cared enough to lock the door. At a later stage, the lock was removed and free access was possible.

As to ownership, both Lady Maureen Fellows and Eric Haines believed that "it" may belong to the Gainsborough family. On the other hand it seemed to be sited partly on what was Gladwin's farm land, and partly on County Council roadside land. The ownership question was not clarified in 1923, when the Conduit House was excluded from the sale of that part of Lord Gainsborough's land which was bought by Albert Wilkinson and which was sold on to S.F. Gladwin. A specific note was made on the plan attached to the conveyance, that the site of the Conduit House was not included in the sale. Although the title deeds go back to 1898, when the land was owned by the then Lord Gainsborough, it is not possible to tell from the plans attached to the earlier Abstract of Title whether or not the site of the Conduit House, was owned by him (Letter from New and Saunders, Solicitors, Evesham, 27th September, 1983 to S.A.Gladwin).

On the upper side of the building the field boundary is a 1939/40 wall, which was built by Sam Gladwin Walter's father to replace an elder hedge which apparently does not make a good agricultural fence. This wall meets the Conduit House on the field side. On the town side, the field boundary meets the corner of the Conduit House on the road side. Therefore, the field boundary could be said to run diagonally though the Conduit House and therefore cannot be used to determine private or Council ownership.

The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England reports that "The Conduit House and conduit do not appear in our records." The Department of the Environment also does not include the Conduit House in its 1994 List of Buildings. However, Gloucestershire C.C. Planning Department confirms that it is a Grade II Listed Building ie. "...one of the buildings of special interest, which warrants every effort being made to preserve them." (All buildings before 1700, and most between 1700 and 1840, are Listed.) The Department does not possess any information on its ownership. It has confirmed, however, that on the 8th June 1983, the Conduit House was included in a List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historical Interest under Section 54 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1977. (Letter from Director of Planning, Cotswold District Council).

In 1983 the Town Clerk of Campden considered it possible that "responsibility for maintenance rests with the Town Council, under whose "wing" it is. Until recently, therefore, it could not be established who actually owned the Conduit House, and who was responsible for its upkeep and maintenance.

Presumably, the Ordnance Survey must have sought, and obtained, permission to affix their bench mark on the Conduit House, (or would they?). It was their normal policy to select only a solid, stable and permanent structure for this purpose, as, for example, Izods Barn at the top of Blind Lane (now converted into residential accommodation).

Early in 1992 Eric Haines bought land in Westington, including that on which the Conduit House stands. He has now established his ownership to it. So, at last, the question of ownership has been answered. Eric is to be congratulated for his achievements in preserving this building.

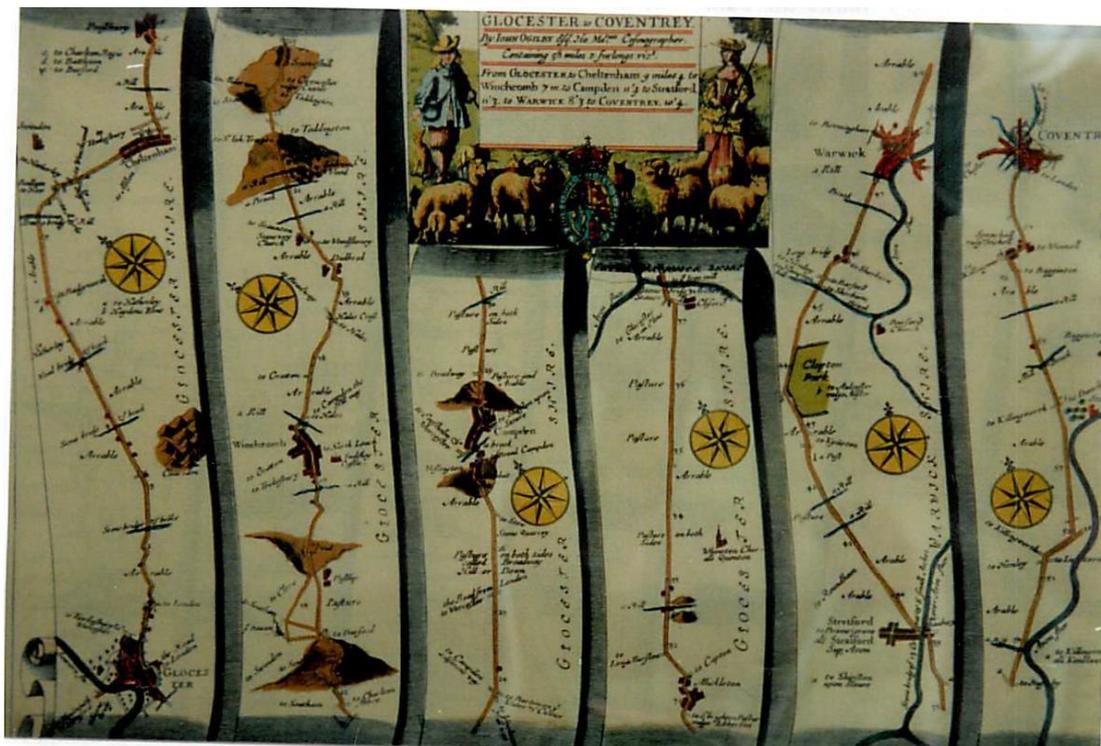
HOW OLD IS IT?

The immediate reaction of anyone looking at the Conduit House is that it is "Not that old". Was it really built in 1612?

What do the old maps tell us?

Maps are an invaluable source of information especially those produced in the late 19th century by the Ordnance Survey. The 1st edition of the O.S. map, dated 1884, does not show the Conduit House, nor does the 25 inch. version of 1885. It does appear, however, on the 1903 map and, to quote the County Archivist "the obvious inference being that it was constructed between the two dates!" It is to be found (named and marked) on the 25 ins. and 6 ins. maps of 1903, and on the 6 ins. map of 1924.

The earliest reference to the Conduit House which I have found is on John Ogilby's (1600-1675) strip road map from his Britannia Series. published in 1675.



Conduit House - Maps Consulted

1675	(reproduced by Rushen)	C.H. first appears as a landmark on John Ogilby's road map; too small to identify to what it actually refers.
1799		C.H. or C. marked refers to Conduit Lane.
1828	1" OS	refers to Westington Conduit.
1884	6" OS	C.H. nor C. marked Conduit Hill.
1885	25"	C.H. nor C. marked - reference to Conduit Hill Bench small square and black line down west side of C. Hill (?
1885	6"	--ditto--
1903	25"	C H named and marked still Conduit Hill. (Cam on north Meadow.)
1903	6"	C H named and marked.
1924	6"	C H named and marked

"Conduit" is clearly written, but it is impossible to determine whether this refers to an adjacent symbol for a building or to the road known as Conduit Hill. Rushen, in his book of 1911, reproduces a 1799 map drawn at Enclosure time. Neither the Conduit House nor the conduit is marked, although he must have known both existed as the map does refer to "Conduit Lane Furlong".

The 1in map of names Westington Conduit but the scale is too small to be able to determine to what it actually refers. The cartographic evidence, therefore, to support a pre-1675 date of construction relies entirely, and not surprisingly, on Ogilvy's "strip" map.

What do the books tell us?

Rushen (Page 168) - "Further along, and near the top of the first steep bank of Conduit Hill Road is the conduit house, on the left, built by Sir. Baptist Hicks. It is well built of stone,..." So here is the first indication of who built it!

Whitfield, in his book of 1958 (Page 109) only infers that Sir Baptist Hicks built the Conduit House. "In addition to building the almshouses Sir Baptist Hicks. went so far as to provide a special water supply for his new dependents, making a conduit from the springs (note the plural) on Westington Hill to a central point in front of the houses. The elegant little Conduit House on Westington Hill is still to be seen, and the water, after feeding a cattle and horse trough on its way, still flowed until quite recently."

This last comment implies that water no longer flowed in 1958. This is not the case. Furthermore, the Conduit House covers one outlet, which is fed by a number of springs; Powell (1982), also, is not specific, but the context of his comments suggest that the Conduit House, in fact, was built at the same time as the conduit. "The small ogee- roofed conduit house on Westington Hill marks the source of the fresh water which he [Sir Baptist Hicks] piped down to these almshouses - it later supplied his mansion as well. David Verey, in his "The Buildings of England, Cotswold Volume", tells us that "On Westington Hill is the Conduit, a little Jacobean building erected by Sir Baptist Hicks in 1612 to provide a water supply for the inmates (indeed) of the almshouses."

The Glos. County Planning Department is even more specific:- "The structure was, indeed, built in 1612 in connection with Campden House, by Sir Baptist Hicks.

So can we, at this point, be sure about who built the Conduit House, when, and why? Can we also be satisfied that it was built in 1612? Is the evidence irrefutable? The answer to Why was it built? is the problem.

What does the architecture tell us?

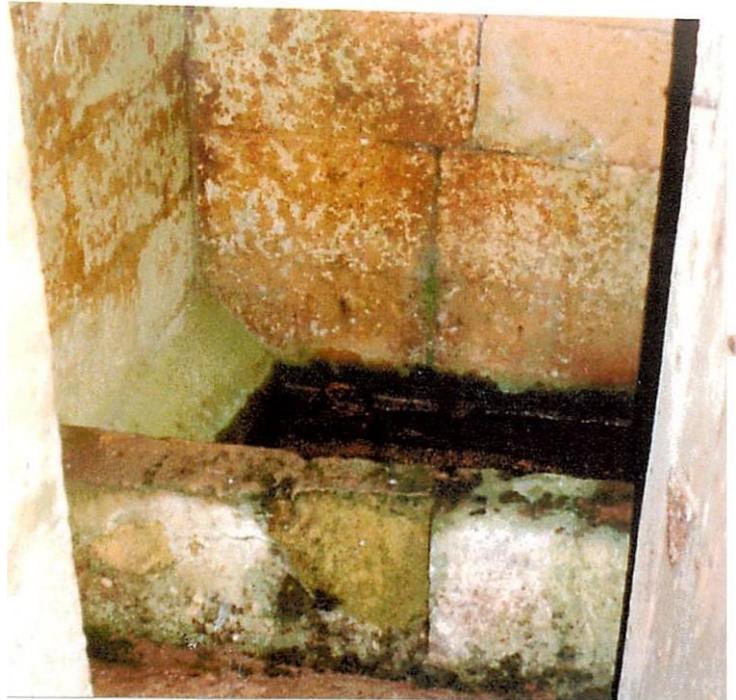
The Conduit House is described as a Jacobean (1603-1625 James I) structure with an ogee roof. Ogee is defined in my dictionary as a pointed arch having an "S" shaped curve on both sides. The Campden Conduit House is not curved on either side. An alternative and perhaps more accurate description of the roof is "keel arch".

A more detailed description is included in the Department of the Environment's Schedule of Listings. "A simple rectangular structure in ashlar (which was also used for the almshouses) with a tall four centre arch roofing in coursed stone flags (i.e. vaulted). Walls and roof are divided by a continuous cornice. Low four centre arched doorway to south. An impressive little building ..." It is very well preserved and in excellent condition both inside and out. Built of high quality stone with first class jointing, it is probably consistent in age with the Almshouses, Banqueting Halls and Lady Juliana's Gateway. Ashlar is defined as a block of hewn stone with straight edges for use in building. I have found no reference to, nor reports about, the Conduit House having been repaired. So, in its present condition, is this consistent with it's age? Is the present structure the original one allegedly built in 1612? I think it probably is.

There is some pitting of the exterior stone work. Someone suggested, that some of this might be the work of one, Charlie [Sykes] Seitz, a drover, who took animals from the Square to the railway station after a sale at the fair. He was a local character and, apparently, a fearsome looking man. He would visit local farms for food handouts. Charlie was an Anglo-Indian, born in Bombay, the son of a wealthy doctor. He became the assistant to Dr. Morris at Cotswold House and won a Diploma from the Royal Collage of Surgeons. Local amateur dramatics was one of his interests. His home was a cottage next to the Chapel in Broad Campden, where, in 1927. aged 77 he was found dead at the bottom of the stairs. A story is told that, once, when the worse for drink. he took "pot shots", with a shotgun, at the Conduit House, from the other side of the road. His control must have been good in spite of the size of the target. It is also alleged that, on another occasion, it took six policemen to arrest him for being drunk in Stratford.

What does the inside of the Conduit House tell us?

Although Rushen says that there are "... two stone tanks, controlling the water supply... into which fast flowing clear water pours in and out again.". There is, in fact (1996) only one spring head, or stone trough, inside --Conduit House. (*Have there been changes since Rushen wrote his book in 1910-11?*) It is probable that the source of this water is in springs higher up and on both sides of the road. Eric Haines, apparently, has a requirement in his deeds that the springs are not to be disturbed by farming activities.



The most interesting feature of the interior is the initials, names and dates which have been carefully and skilfully carved into the stonework, presumably by the men who worked on, repaired, and/or maintained the conduit. Obviously, these curved initials and dates cannot be relied upon totally for dating purposes, just as, in the same way present day graffiti would not be. However, the superior quality of the craftsmanship is remarkable. It is easy to pick out the earliest date which is 1641. This worker could well have seen the Campden Mansion burning in 1645; or he may have gone off to fight at Edgehill. He may even have joined the crowds going to see the gruesome execution of Joan Perry and her two sons on Broadway Hill in 1661 (see *The Campden Wonder*).



Also to be seen carved into the walls are :- 1661 : 1686 : 1688 : W 16194 : 1706 EH
1706 AS : 1735 RB. Splendidly carved, in two separate hearts, are:- *R Lane Plumber*
1814 and:- *W. Lane, Plumber Campden* 1807.



These last two inscriptions are interesting in that they link to a sheet of lead, displayed in the muniments room in St. James Church, on which is inscribed "R. Lane Campden cast this roof in the Year 1826-1827". Also inscribed on this lead is "J. Haines" and "H.S.Skey". Was this the Skey whose family was connected with the Campden Lygon Arms? John Skey bought the Lygon for £1 1 4d in 1921).

Finally, the almshouses were built in 1612 and Campden House was built between 1612/13 and 1620. How their water supply is linked to the Conduit House introduces an interesting story. But before proceeding three questions should be borne in mind:-

- Was the Conduit House also built in 1612, and is the present structure of that age?
- Was the Conduit House built to protect the spring and if, so, from what?
- Was the Conduit House built to supply the almshouses, or to supply Campden House and only supplied the almshouses until the House was ready for occupation?

THE CONDUIT

The comment which really astounded me whilst reading the literature was made by Roger Leath on page 13 of his "Historic Towns in Gloucestershire" (1979). He writes "In about 1612 a water supply leading from the Conduit House on Westington Hill to the almshouses was built by Sir Baptist Hicks. ITS EXACT COURSE IS NOT KNOWN." This I could not believe, so I set out to prove, at least to my own satisfaction, that this could not be true.

It is generally known that the spring water from the Conduit House was piped via a conduit (defined as "a pipe for carrying a fluid") to the almshouses and other establishments, with an overflow pipe feeding the Westington troughs. As such it must have been a significant feature of Campden history over a long period, and

someone must have known where it was and, presumably, worked on it when repairs and maintenance were necessary.

I was also intrigued by the County Archivist's covering letter when he sent me copies of the early maps which I had requested. "I have not been able to find any other maps (to the 1884 map) of Chipping Campden showing the conduit - in the lower left you will find a dotted roadway marked 'From Stow-on-the-Wold' and next to this a dark line. From the references to troughs along its route and the fact that it seems to pass under roads at two points (top of Sheep Street and the path by the Cotswold Garage) I believe that this is the conduit. On the top sheet you will be able to follow its progress up Sheep Street until its termination below the cross (his mark) in the upper centre of the copy. It is open to question whether this is the open drain from the top of the hill to the river opposite the Silk Mill or just the field boundaries. It is certainly not the conduit. This is one time when the maps are not helpful.

Why was the conduit built? Rushen says it was to provide a water supply to the almshouses "...controlling the water supply to Sir Baptist Hicks' almshouses". Whitfield tells us that it was "...to provide a special water supply for his new dependents"; or as Verey prefers "...to inmates of the almshouses". Powell says "...it supplied fresh water piped down to the almshouses"; and more significantly "it later supplied his mansion as well." How much later and, if later, why?

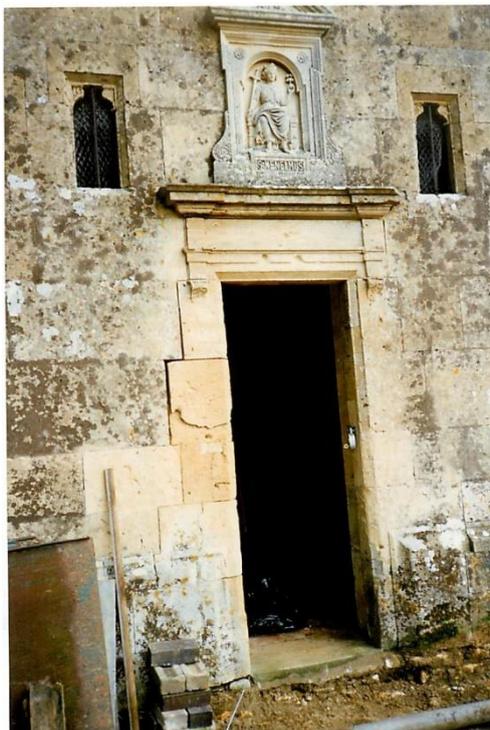
The County Planning Officer confirmed that the conduit "functioned until the early 20th century, supplying Sir Baptist Hicks' almshouses."

Even though Sir Baptist Hicks was a great philanthropist, and a very rich man, is it likely that he would provide an expensive and innovatory engineering project for a few of the poorer people of Campden? Is it not more likely that he intended to provide his new and grand mansion, which would cost £29,000 to build and £15,000 to furnish - colossal sums in those days - with a clean, reliable supply of fresh water? According to Nicholas Kingsley (*The County Houses of Gloucestershire*, 1989), Sir Baptist Hicks plunged into a number of projects at Campden in 1612 including "the creation of the town's water supply". Surely a euphemism?



There is, perhaps, a third possibility. Why pipe a supply of drinking water from a source one mile away when there were, and still are, a number of springs much nearer to the proposed site for mansion? Was the head of water, which resulted from using the much higher Westington spring, significant or was it simply that the nearer and lower level springs were polluted? Did Sir Baptist Hicks know of a similar enterprise undertaken in 1193-1196 by the monks of Winchcombe Abbey, which had been established by King Kenulf, King of Mercia, some three hundred years earlier? Did he base his own project on it? There are remarkable similarities.

Under the leadership of Abbot Rolph (1184-1194), the monks (usually about 20 monks + officials and servants) set out to obtain a safe water supply. They had numerous problems, namely, to find a suitable source of water, to obtain concessions to bury pipes, to cross the valley of the River Isborne and to fund the purchase of expensive and necessary lead pipes and the cost of the skilled labour. These proved a drain on the Abbey's financial resources. Nevertheless, a long pipe line from a spring above Sudeley Castle was constructed. The spring was protected by a stone structure, on the site of which is now to



be seen an elaborate Victorian conduit house. Apparently, the Abbey well, which was fed by the conduit, is still to be seen in the lounge of the private house by the church. In 1299 John de Sudeley gave the monks full permission to repair the water pipe, but they had to make good all digging damage in seed ground and meadow - "in the Warren". However, if John damaged the pipe he had to pay 6/5d for each day on which he neglected to repair the breakage (The History of Winchcombe Abbey, Gordon Haigh (Skeffington) 1950)

The Campden Conduit House spring is one of many between the 600ft. and 700ft. contours on either side of the Westington Hill road. They mark the level where, in simple geological terms, the Upper Lias Oolitic limestone ('egg stone' in Greek because, in appearance, it resembles fish roe i.e. a mass of small granules) sits on the Upper Lias clay. The limestone is a sedimentary rock laid down in water when the Severn valley was flooded 60 million years ago. It is relatively soft but does harden on exposure to the air and makes good building stone. However, it has many fissures, is porous and water sinks through. The surface being dry this is where the old salt ways and cattle roads were to be found. The Upper Lias sands and clay, on which the limestone lies, is approx. 50-60 ft. thick and provides an impervious layer, which holds water. Being then much wetter, it supports lush vegetation and, therefore, good pasture land and woodlands e.g. Lynches Wood below Dover's Hill.

Where the limestone and clay meet, springs emerge and, because they provided a never failing water supply, were important in determining the location of human settlements and activities, e.g. the many isolated farm buildings which are a feature

of the landscape in this area. Until Dutch barns came along, farm buildings tended to be sited in the sheltered valleys, and with labour being so cheap the daily movement of animals between farms and upper pastures and fields was not a problem. It is interesting to note that some springs were attributed medicinal properties e.g. Mosely's Spring, to the south of Berrington Mill and the Cam which was believed to possess healing properties for eyes and wounds. (Rushen)

Below the Upper Lias clay are the sands and clays of a different geological age ie. Middle Lias. In the valley bottoms, alongside the river, which cuts into the Middle Lias. alluvium is found A walk up the Cam valley is very revealing, in that not only are differing limestone and clay landscapes clearly to be seen, but the Cam itself rises (emerges is a better description) just below the 700 ft. contour, and the valley above, now dry, continues almost up to the Broadway road. Springs along the sides of the valley, at approximately this height, are easily identified.

Not only is the supply of spring water linked to the geology, but so is the possibility of its pollution. Sewage disposal, by means of soakaways, was only possible on the limestone - as in Stow in the 19th century, but at a price, namely contamination of water supplies. Seepage of sewage into the water sources probably resulted in serious smallpox outbreaks in 1833 and 1852. Apparently many houses and shops in Stow still dispose of sewage and waste into soakaways, some of which, it is alleged, emerges at Bourton So it is not surprising that a system of water carts was developed to bring water to the houses. This also removed the need for people to visit springs and wells in order to obtain water. But all this was 200 years after the Conduit House and conduit were built.

Did Sir Baptist Hicks pipe his fresh water from Westington to avoid having to use the nearer, low lying springs, which emerged from under the clay and, therefore, were probably polluted from the town's cesspits and soakaways? The latter were found under houses and shallow wells could easily be contaminated. The lack of ample supplies of clean drinking water could explain why there were so many pubs and alehouses at this time. Ale was the staple, and probably the safest, drink.

Today, the major sources of Campden's dependable water supply are the springs, or deep bore holes, in Blockley and Dovedale, (as they were before mains water arrived in 1906-08) with only the minimum required treatment, ie chlorination, as a precaution, carried out at Sheafhouse, near Blockley. Water can also be brought into the supply from Donnington Reservoir, Bourton borehole and the Upper Swell spring source. Originally the water was piped direct into the town. This is no longer the case, the water being pumped to a holding reservoir on Kingcombe Lane and to a second service reservoir at Longlands, near Mickleton.

So how did the spring water from the Conduit House reach Sir Baptist Hicks mansion and the almshouses?

THE MAIN CONDUIT

The main conduit, as distinct from the overflow, followed a direct line from the Conduit House on Westington Hill to Juliana's Gateway by Haydon's Mill. It passed under the river and continued up the slope to the almshouses and vicarage. At the Conduit House its height was 64:1 ft. above sea level. It then dropped by 156ft. to

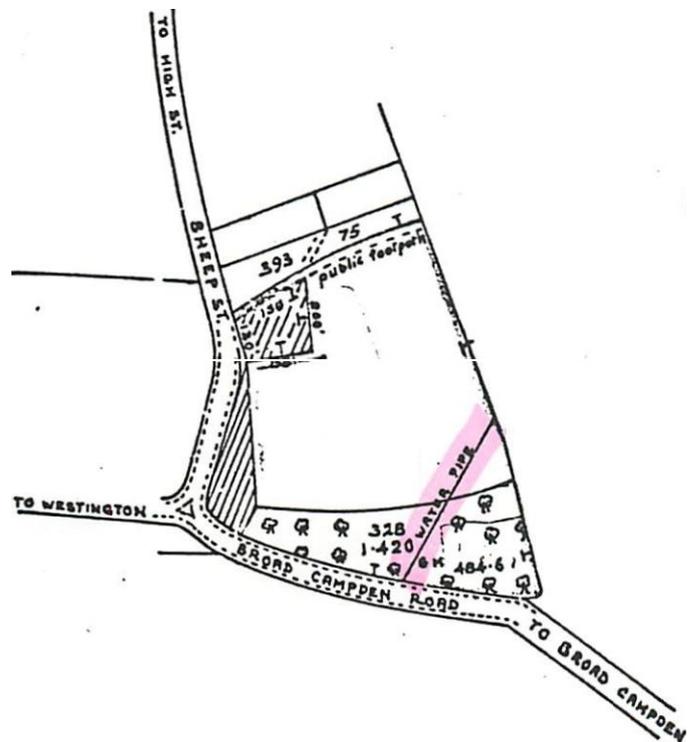
487ft. above sea level at Catbrook. rose approximately 10ft. to the Sheppey; dropped to 458 ft. at the river, and then rose to 496ft. at the church. Over a distance of 1 mile there was a net fall of approximately 140/150ft. The resultant head of water, thus produced, would have been more than adequate to power garden fountains, which, apart from being decorative, would have provided the necessary means of relieving the great pressure, which must have built up in the small 1 ¼ ins. diameter lead pipe. A piece of this pipe was on display in the Woolstapler's Hall Museum before it closed in 1996.

At various times over the years lengths of glazed pipes were substituted when the repair of leaks was necessary. The lead pipe was, on average, only about 18 ins. below the surface and badly furred up inside; as one would expect after 400 years! Gradually the volume of water was reduced, not only by lime scale, but also by the addition of more outlets as various people tapped into the pipe.

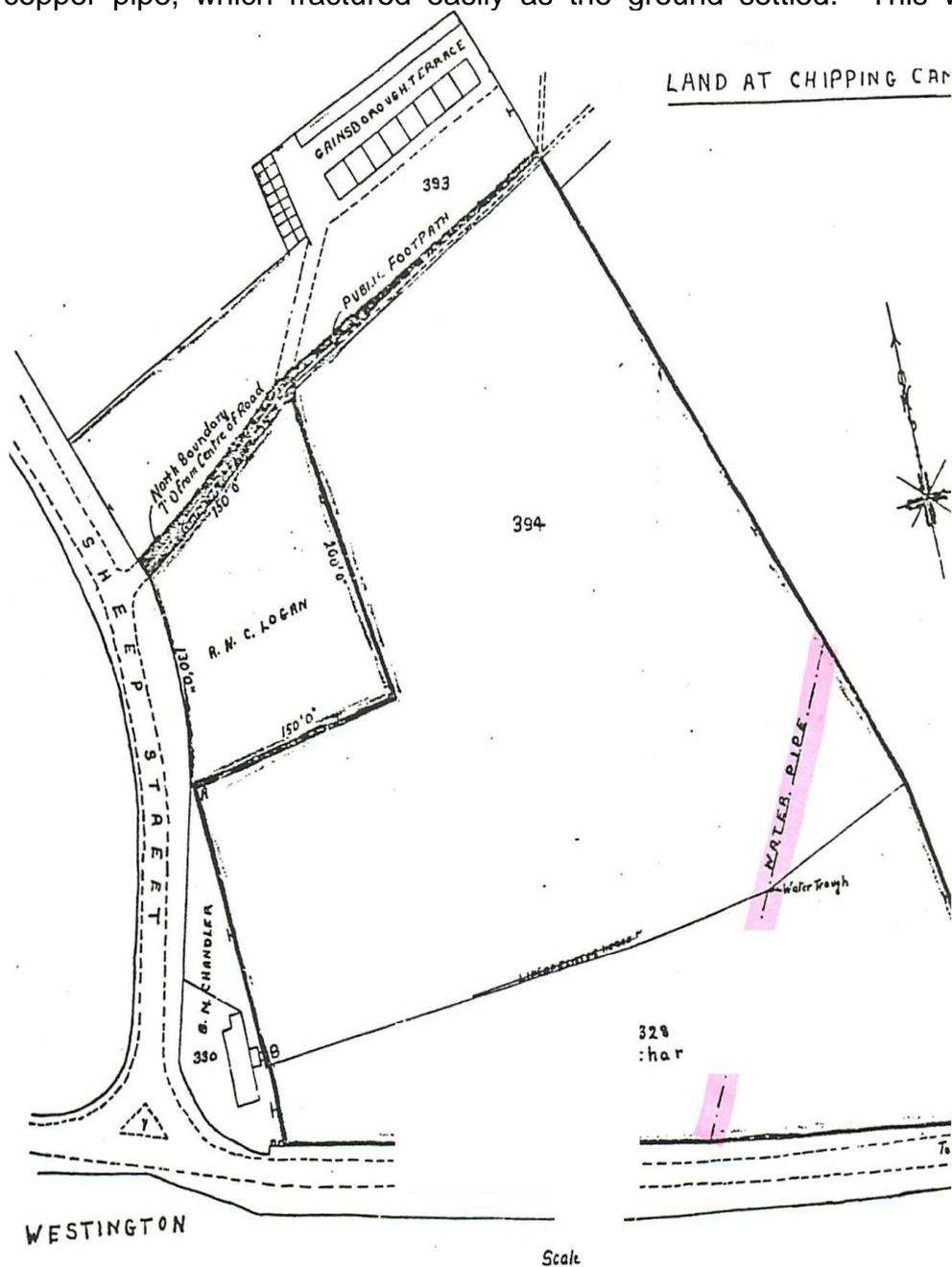
The quality of the water was, apparently, excellent, and must have been comparatively pure. It is reported as being clear and sparkling and the local youngsters were not inhibited from drinking it. Although the spring from which the water flowed was well away from pollution, and was protected by the Conduit House, the soft lead of the pipe made it prone to leaks. One would have thought that this in itself would have made it vulnerable to contamination but apparently not.

Three springs to the west of the Conduit Hill road, in what was the old Westington Common, and one to east of the road fed, (and still do feed) the main spring which flowed (flows) into the stone trough inside the Conduit House. The water then ran out at the front of the trough and into the lead pipe. This was the point at which the flow had to be stopped with whatever was handily available whenever leaks somewhere in the pipe had to be repaired.

From here the conduit passed across what was/is Gladwin's farmland and cherry orchard to what is now The Green. This stretch, apparently, caused the most trouble because of the tree roots, and was often damaged when trees were uprooted. Normal farming activities did not help either. At a much later date the conduit water was possibly used for vegetable washing. When the houses on The Green were built the lead pipe was replaced by one made of polythene, which, being flexible, gave little trouble. However, to permit a repair, one resident's garden did have to be dug up, to his great displeasure (/ wonder who this was). The conduit then skirts round the house at the junction of Cherry Orchard and Catbrook. Mr. Futers told me (1997) that his deeds show the pipe passing across his garden at the rear of his property.



Unfortunately the property developer in the early 1990s replaced some of the lead with soft copper pipe, which fractured easily as the ground settled. This was



probably an important factor in the dwindling flow, and indirectly contributed to problems for the production of milk at Badger's Farm which relied heavily on the conduit water as a cheap and plentiful water supply. Somewhere here, there was a branch pipe to a trough in what was Bobby Coldicott's cherry orchard (Fred Coldicott's uncle, a fruit and vegetable merchant, who, at one point lived at the Kettle on the High Street) which was behind the council houses in Catbrook.

In 1924 P. C. Rushen purchased land (now Cherry Orchard) from Albert Wilkinson and the following appears in the Abstract of Title: "Except and reserving to the vendor his heirs and assigns and other persons similarly entitled the right to the free passage of water from the Conduit House and Spring on Westington Hill through the existing pipeline lying under part of the said lands with the right to enter upon the said lands for the purpose of repairing and maintaining such pipeline paying compensation to the purchaser his heirs or assigns for all damage to the surface of the said lands and the crops thereon."



From here it crossed what is now the recreation ground, which was opened in 1921 (or was it 1928?). This section never gave any serious trouble. Nevertheless, the cricketers were always worried in case it did fracture and the square had to be dug up. On one occasion, when a leak did occur, a water diviner was called upon to help locate the exact spot. This was Charlie Stanley, who died in 1991, and who was a carpenter with Pyments. Mrs. Stanley lives in Littleworth (1997). Another, and older, water diviner, a Mr. Bennett, (not been able to trace details) also assisted in locating the exact position of the conduit when repairs were necessary.

From the recreation ground the conduit passed under Will Keyte's orchard and very close to the Sheppey - in fact outside the bay window of the sitting room. This house was built by Alan Warmington's father on land bought from the Gainsborough sale in 1923, for Horace Badger to give to his daughter Bessie, who was Will Keyte's wife. Fred Coldicott erected pheasant pens on this field before the house was built. The footings for the property were very close to the conduit and provided a convenient free water supply. It is said to have fed a tap in a lean-to kitchen and may have led to the story that Will could sit in his lounge and hear the water flowing underneath. However, the present occupier, Mrs. Hoskins (1997) told me that only recently she had had the stand pipe, which was in the garden outside the lounge window, removed.

From the Sheppey the pipe crossed the corner of Badger's field to a trough in the top corner. From near there a branch pipe put in when the Sheppey was built, supplied Badger's Farm with water as mains water was not available at this time. Fred Badger improved and developed the farm, which his father, Horace, had bought from the Gainsborough Estate sale in 1926. It was an island in the middle of the Haines's land. The conduit provided the essential, and free, water for the farm animals. It is not surprising that Fred insisted on maintaining the conduit for as long as possible thereby safeguarding his water supply. Whenever the flow was interrupted, for whatever reason, his employees were sent to make immediate repairs, taking with them their shovels and a loaf of bread. When pushed into the pipe at the point of fracture, the bread held back the water long enough for a leak to be repaired. The pressure of water eventually pushed the soggy obstruction through. Maurice Howman, who joined Fred Badger in 1953, was the last man to work on the conduit in order to keep the water flowing. Another man to work on the pipe much earlier, in the 1920s, was "Bummer" Haines, a local plumber, with whom Fred Coldicott worked on a job at Burnt Norton, and who had a shop on the High Street next to the old Grammar School. His name can be seen on a number of manhole covers in Broad Campden. Mr. Merriman, who lived at Sandalwood, Back Ends, and who died in 1992, was another who worked on the conduit. During the 1960s it became clear that, because of the time spent on essential repairs, and the now restricted flow of water, continued repairs on the conduit would be unsafe. Consequently, in 1967, the farm went on to town water by linking into the water main in George Lane. Higher standards in milk processing made a reliable water supply even more essential. The change from churns to storage tanks also made it necessary to have large supplies of water. The surprise, therefore, is not that the conduit went out of use at this time, but that it had supplied water for so long. Alongside the trough in the field opposite the Sheppey is a man hole cover, which provides access to the stop taps which enabled the flow to the farm and in the main pipe to be turned off. In this way leaks below this point could be repaired without someone having first to go all the way up to the Conduit House to plug the pipe. When this had to be done the men used whatever was immediately available e.g. a stick from the hedge, a stone or a bit of cloth.

We know that water was still flowing through the conduit in 1966. In fact, cement for the house, named Rours Close, in Calf Lane opposite the rear of Badgers Hall, and built by Maurice Howman, was mixed using conduit water taken through a flexible pipe from the farm. HMSO Report on "Wells and Springs in Gloucestershire" (1930) reported that "the conduit was still supplying the almshouses, but no longer supplies the mansion." This is an interesting section of the conduit route. This field always seems to support a flock of sheep; just as it did in years past, when there were 5 fields known as Sheppey. The land sloped down to the river, which would have been used, in the heyday of the wool trade, to wash the animals before shearing. Consequently, a cleaner and, therefore, more valuable fleece was produced. The Sheppey would have been used to hold the sheep after washing, as sheep pasture, and also as a lambing enclosure.

"Wash sheepe for the better wheare water doth runne,
And let him go cleanly and play in the sunne."

The conduit crossed the river at Juliana's Gateway, where it was very near the surface. This was probably one of its most vulnerable sections. It froze in winter. Boys took delight in pushing nails into it to see the resultant fountain. However, being near the surface and therefore readily accessible, it was easy to repair. Often a bucket of cement would suffice. The pipe passed through the wall below the gateway and at the present time, it can be seen rising from the ground for approximately 1 foot before entering the stone sill. The lead pipe is clearly visible. This is the only point where it can be seen in situ. It has been suggested that the previous owners of Hayden's Mill, at some time, also tapped into the conduit. There is a raised embankment or causeway from the Gateway up to the grounds of the mansion. Rubble found here, when repairs were being made gave every indication that they were from the foundations of an old roadway. Could this have been the route taken by the coaches from the Hicks mansion to Broad Campden so as to avoid driving through the town? Much of the pipe in this section was removed when the sewer pipe to connect the Court House to the sewage works was being laid. Fred Coldicott worked on this project.

Once the Conduit reached the old Campden House grounds, its exact route is more difficult to trace. There was certainly a supply for watering the animals at Court Farm, (which was situated immediately behind the Court House) at one time owned by the Haydons and later Hopkins. At this point the pipe had worn thin and, with the not inconsiderable back pressure, frequently fractured. Again, normal farming activities did not help.

The Conduit pipe is only visible here at Juliana's Gateway





From the Sheppey, via Juliana's Gateway

Another branch of the conduit supplied the Court House, where there are two large storage tanks in the roof to which a feed pipe is to be seen alongside a buttress. The weight of the tanks is said to have affected adversely the structure of the building. The wall facing Calf Lane is 11ft. out of the vertical. Apparently, the restoration and renovation of the Court House for Lord Gainsborough was Fred Coldicott's first contract after setting up in partnership with Val. Hobbs. (died 1997) after leaving Pyments in 1969.

There is some evidence that a branch pipe was used to fill the "New Pool" cart wash, which was built in 1835 and which for maintenance is now under the "wing" of the Town Council. There is an inlet pipe in the Court House wall of the pool and a drain hole with wooden plug on a chain (It would be interesting to know when it was last filled with water and used for the purpose intended).

A third branch pipe supplied Sir Baptist Hicks' almshouses through the tap (with a trough under) in the terrace wall built for £1000 in 1612 (but see O.S. map of 1903 which shows it) acknowledged as "the crowning achievement of the domestic Cotswold style and mason craft of the early 17th century." The present trough is relatively recent, being dated 1818. Apparently, around the mid-19th century (1837+) the tap was the only source of water for the boys attending the infants school, in what is now the Church Rooms. This tap was also the source of water for the cartwash, or "New Pool". There is a drain hole with chain on the Court House side. Mains water did not arrive in the town until the war. The raised pavement and the trough in front of the almshouses are Listed Grade 1. The County Council is responsible for maintenance of the wall and pavements, and presumably the trough, although it could belong to the Trustees of the Almshouses. There was a tithe barn to the rear but it was demolished just before 1939.

The Almshouses Trough



A fourth outlet in the conduit was to be found in the vicarage, where the pipe ended at either a tap in the kitchen, or, it has been suggested, a fountain in the garden. Whichever it was, Canon O'Loughlin, Vicar of Campden (1936-65), who was an engineer before ordination, apparently had a right to a free water supply (*I have not found any documented evidence to support this*). Although the vicarage was on mains water at this time, I am told that he was never slow in calling for immediate action should the conduit flow drop. He suspected Badgers Farm of taking more than a fair share of his water. Jill Wilson, curator of the muniments room at St, James' church, has given me (1997) the following extract from an undated typed manuscript note by Miss Kennaway, daughter of C E Kennaway (Vicar of Campden 1852-1872):- "...the Conduit near the quarries from which the stone came for the almshouses. It is a curious old stone building. In my Father's time pipes were connected with the Vicarage. as the water was superior to what was used in the house at that time.

There may have been a tap inside the church gate. Although Eric Haines and others remember one being there, its exact location has not been established. Even if it did exist I have found no evidence to indicate that it was fed by the conduit. There is a trough in the wall on the school side of Cider Mill Lane but almost certainly, it has no connection with the conduit.

The important question is whether Sir Baptist Hicks built the conduit to supply water to the almshouses or to his magnificent new house, which he was about to start building. The 25 ins. O.S. map of 1851 shows, and names, the almshouses. In brackets alongside is the date 1624. Apparently the date 1625 (death of James I) is etched on the side of the building. If either of these dates is correct they are

significant. However, it is generally held that they were built in 1612.

The 17th century was an age of much large house building for the nobility. In Gloucestershire alone 22 country houses which were architecturally distinguished family residences, with permanent and elaborate decorations and furniture, were built between 1590 and 1640. Another ? were converted from medieval manors (Kingsley). At the same time it was a period of national decline due to continental competition. Between 1620 and 1640, 1800 Englishmen emigrated to the New World.

In this period, Campden House was built between 1613 and 1620 on a spur above low lying, marshy ground along the River Cam. The site is probably that of a previous manor in Berrington (Moreton in the Marsh). This spur lies between Scuttlebrook (or Cattlebrook) on the west side, and a similar combe on the east, where there is also a spring. Raised terraces in front of the house descended southwards to the river (referred to on the 1903 and 1924 O.S. maps as the Cam). This is the "river" on the north side of Pool Meadow. In the middle of these terraces were enclosed gardens and water features so characteristic of 16th century early Renaissance estates. A feature of the east terrace was a water "parterre", which would have featured statuary or a fountain. Apparently there was something similar in Robert Cecil's garden at Hatfield in about 1611 (Paul Everson). A link between the two estates is provided by Michael, Sir Baptist Hicks' elder brother, who was Secretary to Lord Burghley and a friend of his son Robert Cecil. The water features in that garden are well documented. The Campden gardens were created as the mansion was being built, which was one reason for the high building costs. They were further developed by his daughter, Juliana, after Sir Baptist Hicks' death in 1629. There were probably strong connections with gardeners at the Jacobean and Carolean courts, and especially with Lucy Harrington, Countess of Bedford.

In 1645 Campden House was destroyed by fire by the retreating Royalists before the Battle of Naseby to prevent it becoming a Parliamentary stronghold - a tragedy



for Campden and all concerned.

It is possible, although not probable, that one additional bonus from the construction of the conduit was the provision of a head of water for the fountains and ponds in the gardens -as much as for a clean water supply for the house. We know that there were other springs much nearer than Westington e.g. the one to the west of the Coneygree and the spring feeding the Pool. There was no shortage of wells in the town. However, water from these sources was probably not of the required purity

The lower garden was defined by a broad angled canal with a dam on the lower side to retain water. This area is now marshy sheep pasture. On the east the spring, referred to above, fed a "canal" or basin with a mound at the end of it (distorted now by slumping) to provide a vantage point overlooking Pool Meadow and the Cam. The present pool is described by Whitfield as "...the Boat Pool - a great pool." It was probably just an ornamental spring-fed lake and/or a fish pond. The water was held back by the causeway which led down to Juliana's Gateway and wider which the brook flowed. This causeway probably took a metalled road down to the Gateway and up the field to the end of the Sheppey drive. The theory is that it provided a "short cut" from the mansion, so by-passing the town.

The Scuttlebrook ran from the Hoo, going underground from Wolds End to Leasbourne, and then in an open channel to Church Street. There it formed a pool outside what was Wixey's shop on the north corner. In 1825 North End Terrace was built and soon afterwards, in 1831 or 1832, the channel was covered and piped via two small culverts under Woolstapler's Hall and the British Legion into Cotterell's Orchard. It was reculverted in 1985 as part of the replacement of the sewers and storm drains after the 1982 floods - the third floods in 15 years.

The present water features, including the leats and channels to and from the mills (Hayden and Berrington), are artificial, being essential ingredients of the managed landscape of the site. The mill ponds themselves are probably original, as it would have been too costly to resite them once they had been built. This total control of the valley's water courses are integral with the garden layout. Even the two mills are integrated into this wider setting. This helps to explain the difficulties in trying to interpret the existing drainage system within the normal geographical and geological principles, especially down stream from Haydon's Mill; and to correlate what is on the maps with what one sees on the ground.

CONDUIT OVERFLOW

The one remaining element in the conduit story is that of the overflow for the surplus water from the Conduit House spring. There was twice as much water flowing into the Conduit House as the small bore conduit pipe could take. The surplus was conducted away in an overflow pipe down Westington Hill. Probably built at the same time as the main conduit it formed an intrinsic feature of the control of the spring. Without it, the trough in the conduit house would have overflowed out of control. So a number of troughs were fed by this overflow, just as the main conduit fed a series of troughs on its way to the almshouses and vicarage.

Trough 1 was/is located immediately below the Conduit House. It is still there but is covered over and overgrown. Apparently there was/is a grill in it, out of which the

water flowed. It was filled in by the Council in about 1965. Before this, and in the late summer, it often attracted as many as 70-80 itinerant pea pickers. They generally caused a nuisance by using it for their ablutions, and consequently polluting the troughs lower down the road. The Health Inspector and many others, were not too happy about this. Even earlier, in 1953, a similar problem had occurred. It would be a worthwhile exercise to uncover this trough.

Trough 2 was of iron construction and was to be found at the entrance to what was Gladwin's Farm (now Poplars Court Housing Development) and opposite, what was the old Westington Pound.



The large Trough (No. 6), Westington

The overflow then fed a tap in the box hedge on the side of the garden of Old Poplars Farmhouse. It cannot be seen now, although it could still be there.

Trough 3 is small, made of stone and to be found outside Rose Cottage, home of the late Miss Gell. The pipe formed a U-shape with the tap on the top.

Trough 4 is the large stone one on the road side. It is outside Westington Old Farm, or what was known as Home Farm, and was owned at one time by Fred Coldicott's grandfather. The old buildings were destroyed in a fire. Apparently there was insufficient water to fight the fire and cider was used instead. It is said that the first mowing machine in the area was lost in this fire. The trough is not included in the deeds of Old Farm (Martin Samuelson) and, therefore, could still be the property of Lord Gainsborough, from whom the property was bought; it could be under the "wing" of the Town Council. The trough was not only used to water livestock but steam traction engines filled up here. It is referred to by John Horne in his "Chipping Campden from the Grassroots,(1982) as being opposite Izod's House and "being supplied with water from the overflow of Sir Baptist Hicks's RESERVOIR'. In the past youngsters used to spray water over each other by putting their fingers on the outlet. It was not used after the 1950s.

The overflow terminated in a fountain in what is now Shepherds Close. Previously there were three cottages (Mrs. Bickley lived in one and now lives in the corner house at the bottom of Sheep Street) and farm buildings. The overflow supplied water to troughs for the farm animals. Eventually, the water was taken underground to Langate Brook which was used to short circuit surface water into the Cam. (Is this where the water, still flowing into the Conduit House, goes today? It must go somewhere). An important piece of further research is needed to discover exactly where the present day conduit water flows to.

CONCLUSION

The principal objectives of this exercise were to question the reliability of some of the generally accepted evidence and facts to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge and, of most importance, to collect in one place as much as possible of the information relating to the conduit and Conduit or Water House which resides in so many different memories and sources.

Gordon Croot

[edited Mary Fielding May 2017]