Lighting

John Wood the Younger made no stipulation in building leases for the Circus about outside lamps or fittings for them. These would be provided by a lighting contractor employed by the relevant body. Conveniently John Wood was appointed by the Mayor in March 1755 as the surveyor to oversee lighting in Walcot, so he could ensure a neat mesh between buildings and lighting. However the post entailed a struggle to collect the lighting rate and Wood served his time reluctantly. Under the Act of 1757 the Walcot parish vestry was to provide public lighting.

By the time the Circus was finished the responsibility for lighting had shifted to the Commissioners created under the Act of 1766, who promptly ordered five new lamps around the perimeter of the reservoir. Following the covering of the reservoir in 1772 they ordered that three lamps should be fixed on top of it, each one facing an incoming street. The three lamps stood on three-pronged stands, depicted by Cozens (Illustration 42) and Malton (Illustration 43).
Most of the houses would have had lights supplied before the Commissioners took over, but on 18 November 1767 they ordered a lamp to be erected at Sir Peter Dennis's house in the Circus. His was the Circus House — one of the last to be finished.33 The prints of the Circus by Cozens (Illustration 13), Bonner (Illustration 19) and Malton all show lamps on either side of the street end of the entranceways of each house, held aloft by decorative ironwork supports fixed on top of the railings. Similar lamps appear in Malton's view of the Royal Crescent in 1777 and his aquatint of Queen Square in 1784 (Illustration 45).34 Clearly lamp-irons were supplied to a standard pattern.

The lamps themselves were of a type devised in the early 18th century. A glass bowl with a globular base had suspended within it an oil reservoir and wick. It was topped by a ventilated metal cap. The glass bowl could be suspended by its rim from a metal ring fitted to a wall bracket, overthrow or stand. The lamps could burn all night, but they required daily maintenance to clean and light.35 This was the work of the lighting contractor. At the end of the 18th century Mr Smeathurst cleaned Bath's 960 lamps twice a week and kept them burning from sunset to sunrise through the whole year.36
There is no record in the Commissioners’ Minutes and Survey Books of any new lighting scheme for the Circus until the arrival of gas. Yet physical evidence suggests that there was a second phase of oil-lighting in the late Georgian period. Supports remain for a system of entranceway overthrows interspersed with lights above the area railings (see above under railings). The existing overthrow of no. 14 Circus appears to date from this phase. It was evidently designed to support a globular oil lamp and has a prop for the lamplighter’s ladder. Similar ones at nos. 15 and 16 can be seen in Woodroffe’s sketch of c.1829 (Illustration 49).

The new scheme would have ensured a more even spread of light around the Circus, making the steps down to areas safer at night. Perhaps fashion played a part in the change. In the late 18th and early 19th century several new developments in Bath, such as Lansdown Crescent, Norfolk Crescent and New Sydney Place, were designed with overthrows.

By contrast the overthrow of no. 9 contains a lantern of the gas light type, now converted to electricity. The ironwork is late Georgian in style, but it was probably salvaged from another location. This overthrow first appears in one of the photographs illustrating a Country Life article on no. 9 in 1947. The article reveals the impressive collection of Georgian furniture and fittings that the then owners, Col. and Mrs Jenner, had assembled and moved to no. 9 in 1937. It seems likely that the Jenners had acquired an overthrow that fitted and had it inserted. There is no sign of the overthrow in a photograph of c.1910 showing no. 9 (Illustration 21).
By the time Woodroffe sketched the Circus, the oil lamps themselves had gone. In May 1818 an Act was passed for lighting with gas Bath, Walcot, Bathwick and Weston. The streets of the city were lit by the Bath Gaslight and Coke Company from September 1819. The company was empowered to make use of existing lampposts and lamp irons initially, but the system of suspending lamps from houses did not best fit the new fuel.

In 1825 the Commissioners were highly critical of Bath’s lighting. There was too much variation. While some lights, particularly in the Circus, were very brilliant, many were scarcely brighter than the poorest oil lamps. Lamps were generally too near the walls and houses, so that much of the light was lost. The Commissioners decided that the lamps should be placed within a foot of the edge of the pavement. Street lights were to move into the street. Interestingly, having made this general decree, the Commissioners three months later resolved that no alteration should be made in the public lighting of the Circus.

What had happened? We can guess that lobbying had gone on, but to what end? The clue lies in that comment on the brilliant lights of the Circus. Just as the Circus residents had apparently provided themselves with a superior watch box, so it seems they had somehow managed to acquire superior lighting from a public contractor. Still it can only be conjecture that the Circus already had the kind of street lighting that the rest of Bath was to acquire.

Woodroffe shows the gas lights placed along the edge of the outer pavement of the Circus, four to a segment. Since gas burned brighter than oil, fewer lamps were needed. The standard type of iron pillar appears more clearly in late photographs. A slender, fluted post holds a single lantern. A ladder prop juts out to one side.

Gas was a cheaper and better fuel, but gas lamps still needed daily attention. A lamplighter went round at dusk and dawn turning them on and off with his lamplighter’s pole – a combination pilot light and lever-hook. Every few days the lamps would need cleaning, hence the ladder support. All this effort was to end with electricity.

51. Sepia drawing of the Circus by Robert Woodroffe c.1829
Victoria Art Gallery, Bath and North East Somerset Council.
52. Detail from a photograph of the Circus by J. & J. Dutton c.1870
Shows gas street lights.
Bath Library.

53. Photograph of the junction of the Circus and Gay Street c.1895
Shows the first electric lighting. Bath Library.

In 1888 Henry George Massingham approached the Corporation with a scheme for electric lighting which they could scarcely resist. He would apply for a Board of Trade licence to operate it for seven years, but then the Corporation could take it over. Massingham formed the Bath Electric Light Company to fulfill the contract and was lighting the city on 24 June 1890. A plan of the lighting in 1891 shows only three lamps in the Circus, placed where the present streetlights stand – opposite the junctions with the incoming streets. Again brighter lights meant that less of them were needed. The new lights were carbon arc lamps on a 30 foot standard.4 The design can be seen in two Victorian photographs (Illustrations 28 and 53).

The Corporation took over the city’s lighting a little earlier than expected – in January 1897 – and promptly began considering an entire new set of lamps. Three firms tendered to supply them. After samples had been set up, observed and deliberated over, The Electric Lighting Committee gave the contract to the Electric Construction Company. By June 1898 new lamps had replaced the earlier ones throughout Bath.7 These municipal lampposts, bearing the city’s coat of arms, can be seen in photographs of the Circus from then on (Illustration 22) and remain there today.
The green

In 1799 the inhabitants of the Circus were up in arms. In dry weather clouds of dust were thrown up by horses and carriages trundling across Bath’s limestone pitching. That was a problem everywhere in Bath, but it seems that the open expanse of the Circus tempted stable-keepers and coach-masters to exercise their horses there. The Circus residents evidently complained initially to the Commissioners, but they simply passed on the problem. On 7 March the Commissioners agreed “that a proper fence to prevent the nuisance complained of by the inhabitants of the Circus ought to be erected by the proprietors of the Water Works there.”

It seems that the Circus Water Works was disinclined to act alone. So the residents took matters into their own hands. On 17 June a committee headed by Dr William Falconer at 29 Circus printed a proposal to enclose the central part of the Circus with an iron railing like that in St James’s Square, leaving a road around the circumference 38 feet wide, and to plant the centre with shrubs and flowers, or lay down grass. Their concerns were not all practical. A garden would greatly improve their view. The committee had the agreement of the Water Works, and even the promise of a donation. The expense of the project was to be covered by voluntary subscription. The cost of garden maintenance would be offset by the reduction in pitching maintenance (Appendix 5). The completion of the project was announced in another printed sheet, unfortunately undated. However the garden is mentioned in Bath guidebooks from 1801 and appears on a map published in the same year (Illustration 56), so it was probably finished in 1800.

The circle of trees on the map should not be taken as a carefully scaled depiction, but roughly indicates the design. It seems that there was a circle of planting to screen the reservoir cover, and grass surrounded by a gravel walk. Browne’s guidebook of 1801 describes “a fine reservoir surrounded by a beautiful shrubbery and green plat, girded by a gravel walk and enclosed by light iron palisades.”

The first view of the garden is Woodroffe’s in 1829 (Illustration 51). Unlike later engravings of the Circus, it accurately depicts the central railings with split shafts, as they appear in later photographs. Outside the railings is a pavement thriftily composed of sets rather than pennant. Sets would have been grubbed up to open the centre for the garden, so why not reuse them? A later engraving by Hollway also shows this pavement of sets (Illustration 57).

Dominating the Circus today are five majestic London Plane trees. A vexed question for decades has been the date that they were planted. Mark Cassidy, Parks Arboricultural Officer for Bath and North East Somerset, estimates their age at roughly 180 years on trunk diameter, but it is impossible to be accurate without cutting one down and counting its rings. However a planting date of c.1820 would not be wildly inconsistent with the pictorial and written evidence, given the speed at which the London Plane can grow.

56. Detail of map from Warner, History of Bath (1801)
Bath Record Office.
Woodroffe shows a tree towering over the Circus in 1829 (Illustration 51), but this may be an effect of the angle of view. Around 1835 Hollway depicted the tallest tree as about the height of the Circus roofs and a poorer engraving by Rock and Co. first issued in 1838 shows the trees at much the same height. Other planting is visible in these prints – shrubs or flowers – but the trees had taken over by the time photographs appear in the 1870s. The green has been the preserve of Planes, grass and daffodils ever since.

While guidebooks refer to the Circus's "charming shrubbery" into the 1830s, by 1847 the word is trees, "which rather interfere with its splendour from the gloom they impart." The critical tone became positively splenetic in the next decade. A certain B.S. sent a letter to a newspaper in the summer of 1856 protesting at "the overpowering mass of dark foliage." It was the start of a controversy that rumbles on to this day.

The pavement around the Circus green was asphalted sometime before 25 January 1898, when the Corporation specified that three new arc lamps should be placed on the asphalt path in the Circus. "The date can be narrowed down further, since images of the Circus with gaslights show this pavement with setts, whereas it is asphalted in conjunction with the first electric lights (Illustration 53). So was the Bath Electric Light Company responsible for the asphalt? It would certainly have had to dig up the pavement to lay cable. A new pavement of pennant was laid by Bath City Council in May 1987. The present bench and litter bin on the pavement facing Gay Street were added shortly afterwards.

The Council was not moved to restore the garden railings, which fell victim first to Hitler and then to the fight against him. Bath was one of the targets of the Baedeker raids. On the night of 26/27 April 1942 one 500lb high explosive bomb dropped on the hub of the Circus.
The massive crater left in the green is shown in a water-colour by Norma Bull. She captured the scene from an upper window as the Bomb Disposal Service worked on two unexploded bombs, one of which had landed in the vault of No.4.\footnote{58}

The railings on the side nearest the bomb site were wrecked, and it seems that the rest were removed in 1943.\footnote{107} Two photographs taken in 1946 show the railing bases left without railings.\footnote{108} The railing bases on the war-damaged side of the green were still “an unsightly mess” in 1976, when Bryan Little used his column in the Chronicle to call for their reconditioning, resetting and partial renewal.\footnote{109} Instead they were removed in 1987 when the pavement was laid. They were put into store in case Councillors might decide to return them to the Circus.\footnote{110}

Bath City Council had acquired responsibility for maintaining the Circus green in 1958, by permission of the Circus owners and under the Open Spaces Act of 1906.\footnote{111} The Council moved swiftly to take down a rusty angle-iron and chain-link fence that had been erected sometime after 1947 to replace the railings.\footnote{112} It was removed in the late summer of 1959.\footnote{113} Evidently at some point the same fate befell the telephone kiosk which appears beside the north side of the lamppost facing Brock Street in a photograph of 1947.\footnote{114}

Then the Council moved to weightier matters. In February 1961 the Planning Committee considered felling the Circus trees. An explosion of protest followed. 500 students of Bath Technical College signed a petition to save the trees. Still there were some voices raised in favour
of felling, including that of Charles Kindersley, chairman of the Circus Owners Association, who felt that the trees dwarfed the Circus and masked the view intended by John Wood. In the end the Council compromised by lopping off lower branches to give a better view of the buildings.

However the trees were to acquire another enemy. The central tree of the group of the three opposite Brock Street became infected with the fungus Inonotus hispidus. It was heavily thinned in the hope of stopping the rot. But in 1990 the Parks Department found that the disease had progressed into the main stem of the tree and spread to a second tree. More tree surgery was needed. There was a 25 per cent thinning of the top canopies and 15 per cent thinning of the lower branches.

Still the trees dominate the Circus. What would its designer have felt about that? John Wood the Elder created a mock circle of trees with his tiers of columns topped with acorns. That the real thing should tower above it has a certain poignancy. Yet complaints continue that we can’t see the Wood for the trees.
Summary of phases of development

The Woods 1754-1768
The Circus was constructed, together with its central reservoir, under the direction of the two John Woods in succession. John Wood the Younger dictated the street surfacing with setts, the dimensions and pavement stone of the pavement, the design of the area railings, and almost certainly influenced the design and placing of the lamp irons on the railings, though lamps were placed at the centre of the Circus in 1766 by order of the Commissioners. Street lighting was from oil-lamps.

The Circus residents in association c.1770-c.1820
The residents of the Circus created a railed garden at its centre c.1800, with a pavement of setts around the railing. The London Planes would have been planted by the residents within the next two decades. It seems likely that the residents also chose to pay for a more attractive watch box between 1773 and 1782 and alterations to the area railings with new overthrows in the late 18th century or early 19th, since there is no evidence that either was supplied from the rates.

Gaslight and individual action 1819-89
Gas lighting in 1819 brought a significant change to the street scape. Lampposts were placed along the edge of the pavement. Lamp irons on area railings became redundant. Most of the overthrows and all the presumed lamp irons between them were removed. Some were replaced with cast-iron urn finials. The residents were no longer acting as a group. In the late 19th century it seems that some residents found the same solution to a problem of loose rails, for several houses had base rails, resting on iron balls, added to area railings, while a few acquired gates.

Bath Electric Light Company 1890-6
From 1890 the street lighting of the Circus has been provided by three lamps standing on the inner pavement, each facing an incoming street. The first electric lights were supplied by the Bath Electric Light Company. It seems that the inner pavement was asphalted c.1890, perhaps as a result of the Company laying cable.

Bath Corporation 1897-24
Bath Corporation took over responsibility for lighting the city in 1897 and had new lampposts erected in 1898, which remain in the Circus. The Corporation had already acquired the Circus Water Company in 1873 and was by this time responsible for street maintenance. In 1924 the Corporation replaced the setts in the Circus with tarmac.

The War and its aftermath 1939-57
The Circus suffered bomb damage in 1942 which wrecked a long stretch of the railings around the green, which were due to be removed anyway for the war effort. The few gates to main entrances were apparently also requisitioned in 1943. A chain-link fence was erected in the late 1940s or early 1950s to replace the railings.

Bath City Council and B&NES 1958-present
Bath City Council took over responsibility for the Circus green in 1958 and removed the chain-link fence the following year. In 1987 the Council removed the railing bases around the Circus green and laid a pennant pavement to replace the asphalted pavement. A bench and litter bin were sited on the new pavement by 1989. Council maintenance of the green has included tree surgery on the Planes.
Significance

The distinction of the Circus itself can scarcely be overstated. It was a powerfully original concept in urban planning. It is the centrepiece of an influential assemblage of square, circus and crescent. Although Wood brought the square from London to Bath, the circus and crescent were exported from Bath to London and elsewhere. The work of the Woods had a considerable impact on the British urban landscape.17

The late Georgian Circus garden was typical of its time. By the end of the 18th century the concept of central, railed gardens for city squares was well established.18 John Wood the Elder had planned a formal garden decades earlier for Queen Square. It is not clear why he (or his son) preferred the piazza approach for the Circus. The addition of a garden brought the Circus into closer harmony with Queen Square on the one hand and the mus in urb of the Royal Crescent on the other.

The original area railings and their stone plinths are typical of the work of the Woods in Bath, except for the ‘clusters’ of bars linked to a post-Wood lighting scheme. Such clusters have a rarity value in Bath. The only other examples are in Beaufort Square, where the garden railings support gas lights and could date from the late Regency period.

60. Doubled pairs of bars support an overthrow in Beaufort Square Photograph by Stephen George.

61. Overthrow of 14 Alfred Street with replica oil lamp

The overthrow of no. 14 Circus is of interest both as the sole survivor of a scheme for the Circus, and as part of a notable heritage. Bath's huge late Georgian expansion has left a legacy of decorative overthrows. Though many were removed when their purpose was gone, enough survive to illustrate the range of designs. Complete sets of overthrows in Lansdown Crescent and New Sydney Place show how uniform façades were often finished with a uniform lighting scheme. By contrast the ornate overthrow of 14 Alfred Street (Illustration 61) was presumably the choice of an individual householder, together with the Adamesque door case unique to the street.

Most of Bath's overthrows date from a decade or so either side of 1800 and were designed to support oil-lamps. Yet as late as 1860 an ironwork arch was created to hold a gas-lamp over the steps down from Bennett Street to the Assembly Rooms, which can still be seen today.19 The city is a living museum of the history of street lighting.

The Circus is one of the glories of Bath, but it can be appreciated to the full in the wider setting of Bath’s extraordinary Georgian heritage.
Notes

AL. Autograph letter.
BL. Bath Reference Library.
BR. Bath Record Office.
BHSS. Mark Beaton, Mike Chapman, Andrew Crutchley, Jane Root, Bath Historical Streetscape Survey completed for Bath and North East Somerset District Council in February 1999.

VAG. Victoria Art Gallery, Bath and North East Somerset Council.

1. Green (1904), 141-6.
3. 128-9.
7. Mowl and Earnshaw, 179-204.
11. Ison, 106.
15. Mowl and Earnshaw, 71.
18. Smollett, Humphrey Clinker, 34. Smollett used the light disguise of his fictional character Matthew Bramble to express his own views.
19. Mowl and Earnshaw, 182-204, particularly 192.
20. The statue was torn down in the Revolution, but replaced by the present equestrian statue of Louis XIV in 1822.
22. Mowl and Earnshaw, 186-7 and frontispiece.
23. BA RO 0051/1/1: Deed of 1 November 1754 to John Wood the Younger, which cites this earlier covenant. By the time the Circus was built Thomas and Margaret Garrard were dead, so the promised rents were granted to Margaret's heir Sir Peter Rivers Gay on 11 February 1768 (BA RO 0051/1/8).
25. Bath Chronicle 27 May 1754, p.4, col. 3.
26. Bath Advertiser 22 November 1755, p.4, col.3; 27 December 1755, p.4, col.3.
29. Marks, "Journals of Mrs Lybbe Powys", 31: extract from 21 August 1759. The nine houses would now be counted as ten. William Pitt had taken a double-sided plot. By 1766 he had moved to no. 11 and his former house was divided into nos. 7 and 8: BA RO Bath rate book 1766, pp.79-80.
30. Courtauld Institute of Art, Conway Library, photograph from the Thomas Robins sketchbook, no.17. Three pages later in his Bath sketchbook is a drawing (no. 20) dated 1759.
32. Bath Journal 17 May 1762, p.4, col.3.
33. Bath Reference Library, Walcot Estate Papers, AL 1682-4, 1687-8, 1690, MS 1649.
35. BA RO Bath rate book June 1768, 81-82.
37. Correspondence, 3, 348-53.
39. Marks, "Journals of Mrs Lybbe Powys", 31: extract from 21 August 1759. Minor editing by the present author to conform to modern English usage.
41. [Young], Tour (1768), 134.
42. Warner, 87.
43. 6 Anne c. 42.
44. 12 Geo. II, 20; 30 Geo. II c. 65.
45. 6 Geo. III c. 70.
46. 58 Geo. III c. 55; BHSS, 77-79.
47. 14-15 Vic. c. 104.
48. 33-34 Vic., 205.
49. BA RO Walcot Estate Papers AL 1687.
50. BA RO Walcot Estate Papers AL 1691.
51. 6 Geo III, c. 70, 326-7.
52. BA RO 0091/1/10; This was an 800-year lease at an annual rent of £250.
53. An unresolved problem is the date of the Spern view. It is supposedly dated 1757, but shows the reservoir built in 1758. The last figure of the date on it is indistinct.
55. Bath Reference Library Walcot Estate Papers MS 1649; 16 February 1758.
57. Derrick, Letters, 87.
58. The feature can still be seen on some later maps, copied from earlier ones.
59. BA RO CP 1/1, [25].
61. Victoria and Albert Museum, water-colour, reproduced in Ison.
62. BA RO CP, 1/1a Commissioners' Minutes 1782-1810, 7 May 1801 (Gravel Walk), 26 December 1808 (Nile Street); BA RO CP, 529: Commissioners' Survey Book 1814-1837, 8 September 1814 (Green Park Place), 31 October 1816 (Queen Square Chapel Yard).
63. BHSS, 46.  
64. BaRO P2020: Photocopy of lease 20 July 1757 from John Wood to John Ford and Thomas Jelly of the plot of 1 Circus; BaRO BC 153/2242: Conveyance 2 September 1760 by John Wood to James Colman of 4 Circus.  
65. BaRO CP 3/4, 75, 94; Water rate books.  
69. BHSS, 35-7.  
71. BaRO P2020: Photocopy of lease 20 July 1757 from John Wood to John Ford and Thomas Jelly of the plot of 1 Circus; BaRO BC 153/2242: Conveyance 2 September 1760 by John Wood to James Colman of 4 Circus.  
72. Neale, 117-8; Hanham was still supplying pantom for paving in Bath and Bristol in 1868 (Hamilton).  
73. Fawcett, [6, 11].  
74. Penrose, 42, 52.  
75. BaRO CP 1/1, 7, 12.  
76. Ayres, 95-6; Cruickshank and Burton, 9, 14.  
77. BaRO P2020: Photocopy of lease 20 July 1757 from John Wood to John Ford and Thomas Jelly of the plot of 1 Circus; BaRO BC 153/2242: Conveyance 2 September 1760 by John Wood to James Colman of 4 Circus.  
78. Ison [1948], 151.  
79. BaRO BC 153/5714.  
80. Cruickshank and Burton, 91-3; Building of Bath, fig.5.  
81. BaRO P2020: Photocopy of lease 20 July 1757 from John Wood to John Ford and Thomas Jelly of the plot of 1 Circus; BaRO BC 153/2242: Conveyance 2 September 1760 by John Wood to James Colman of 4 Circus.  
82. The photographs for Smith’s book were taken prior to the war-time removal of railings and gates.  
83. City of Bath Index of Minutes of Council and Committees, 544.  
84. Bath Advertiser, 15 November 1755, p.2, col.3; Bath Journal 12 January 1756, p.4, col.2; Wood was pilloried in verse.  
85. BaRO CP 1/1, [r1, d2].  
86. The Circus House was so named in 1872. Previously it was 9 Bennet Street. BaRO CP 1/1, [r4]; Bath rates books and directories; City of Bath Act 1851 Committee Minutes, vol.7, 176; Bath Chronicle 4 January 1798.  
87. VAG 1904-1; 1926.232.  
88. Cruickshank and Burton, 6-10.  
89. Warner, 340 n.  
90. BaL ML/16: photograph can only be dated between 1890 (absence of gaslights) and 1924 (sets present); Country Life 102, 978-81, 1926-9.  
91. 58 Geo. III, 55.  
92. BHSS, 79-80.  
93. BaRO CP 3/29 Commissioners’ Survey Book 1814-1837, 1 September 1825, 10 December 1825.  
94. BHSS, 87-92.  
96. BaRO CP 1/1a, [p.130].  
97. Physician to Bath General Hospital 1784-1819 (Rolls, 167).  
98. BaL Broadsheets and posters no. 21.  
100. The tree gets its name from its popularity for planting in London squares, streets and parks, due to its tolerance for urban pollution. Many specimens there are apparently over 100 years old, dating from the late Georgian period when gravel walks and grass were giving way to shrubs and trees for urban public gardens.  
101. Barratt, [1821], 102, repeated in later editions by Ford and Duffield to 1834; Tanshall, 220.  
103. BaRO, Minutes of the Urban Sanitary Committee 1898, 74.  
105. Bench and litter bin are mentioned in 1949 in an article on the proposal for a statue of John Wood (Bath Chronicle 16 August 1949).  
106. http://www.theijwarcens.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/bathblitz/bombblitz.htm; BaRO Acc 146.  
107. City of Bath Index of Minutes of Council and Committees, 544; 21 September 1942 The Ministry of Works and Planning has notified Town Clerk that the schedule of unnecessary railings prepared by the Council is to be superseded by a new one drawn up by the Ministry. Smith, Bath (1944), pl.14 shows the railings, but given the usual time from preparation to publication, the photograph was probably taken in the previous year, evidently in the spring, since the daffodils were in bloom.  
108. English Heritage National Monuments Record AA463346 and 8614.  
111. BaRO Deed Pk 3443; City of Bath: Minutes of the Council and Committees 1958, 444.  
112. The chain-link fence does not appear in a photograph of 1947 (Country Life 102, 979.) It does appear in a photograph of c.1956 (BaRO P225).  
114. Country Life 102, 97.  
117. Summerson, “John Wood and the English town-planning tradition” in Heavenly Mansions, 87-110. See also B&NES, City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2.4.  
118. Cruickshank and Burton, 195, 201-2.  
Bibliography

Ayres, James, Building the Georgian City (New Haven and London 1998).
Barratt, J., Historical and Local New Bath Guide (Bath [1821, 1822, 1823]).
The Building of Bath (Building of Bath Museum, Bath).
Colvin, Howard, Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 3rd edn.
Derrick, Samuel, Letters written from Leverpoole, Chester ... Bath, 2 vols. (London 1767).
Egan, Pierce, Walks Through Bath (Bath 1819).
Fawcett, Trevor, Paving, Lighting, Cleansing: Street improvement and maintenance in eighteenth-century Bath (The Building of Bath Museum: Bath [1994]).
Ferrner, Bengt, Ferrner’s Journal 1759/1760: An industrial spy in Bath and Bristol ed. A. E. Woolrich (Eindhoven [1986]).
Green, Mowbray, The Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath (1904).
   (London 1868).
Mowl, Timothy and Earnshaw, Brian, John Wood Architect of Obsession (Bath 1988).
Ncrale, R.S., Bath: A Social History 1680-1850 or A valley of pleasure, yet a sink of iniquity (London 1981).
Pope, Cornelius, New Bath Guide (Bath [1762, 1763, 1764, 1766, 1768]).
Rolls, Roger, Hospital of the Nation (Bath 1988).
Summerson, John, Heavenly Mansions, and other essays on architecture (London 1949).
Tunstall, James, Rambles about Bath (1847).
Warner, Richard, History of Bath (Bath 1801).
Wood, John, Essay Towards a Description of Bath, 2nd edn. (Bath 1749, reissued 1765).
[Young, Arthur], A Six Weeks Tour through the Southern Counties of England and Wales...: in several letters to a friend by the author of the Farmer's letters [i.e. Arthur Young] (Dublin 1768).
Appendix 1: Listed Building Descriptions for the Circus

Circus

Nos 1 to 30 (consec) including Circus House
(formerly listed as Nos 1 to 30 (consec))
Date listed: 12 JUN 1950. Date of last amendment: 11 AUG 1972

I

Architect: John Wood the elder. Work carried out by his son. Circa 1753-59. 3 storeys and mansard. 3 or 4 windows. Divided into 3 blocks, all of the same size but each with a different number of houses. 3 distinct orders; Doric on ground floor with triglyphs and metopes enriched and each differently carved, Ionic on 1st floor and Corinthian on 2nd floor. Impressive array of coupled columns (324 pairs in all) with bands of ornament at upper and lower storeys and acorns crowning parapet above each coupled order. Masonry between columns is not curved but this is not apparent. No 7 built for William Pitt. No 14 Lord Clive lived 1774. No 24 Gainsborough.

[Author's note: see page 13 above for new information that Gainsborough actually lived at no. 17.]

Brock Street

(South Side) Nos 1 to 18 (consec)
Date listed: 12 JUN 1950. Date of last amendment: 12 JUN 1950

II (No 1 is II*)

Architect younger Wood. Brock Street is an important link between The Circus and Royal Crescent and in the Woods planned layout of Queen Square, Gay Street, Circus, Brock Street and Royal Crescent. It connects The Circus with Royal Crescent. Circa 1754-9. No 1 has enriched porch (really belonging to The Circus). Dentilled cornices.

(North Side) Nos 19 to 24 (consec) No 24A 12.6.50. Nos 25 to 35 (consec) 12.6.50. No 36 (including Nos 1 to 4 Circus Mansions)
Date listed: 12 JUN 1950. Date of last amendment: 11 AUG 1972

II (No 36 is II*)

Brock Street is an important link between The Circus and Royal Crescent and in the Woods planned layout of Queen Square, Gay Street, Circus, Brock Street and Royal Crescent. North side is similar to South side. The Venetian window over entrance to Brock Street Hall with coupled Ionic columns is considered to be one of the best in Bath. No 36 has porch belonging to Circus.
Appendix 2:
Lords of the manor of Walcot

William SAUNDERS =

Mary SAUNDERS = Robert GAY
  d. 1728
  London barber-surgeon
  MP for Bath 1720-22, 1727-34
  d. 1738

Thomas GAY            Margaret = Thomas GARRARD            Sir Benet GARRARD
  d. 1752            d. 1765                d. 1758            d. 1767

Sources:
Bath Reference Library Walcot Estate Papers;
*Gentleman's Magazine* 1738, 604;
*London Magazine* 1752, 481.
Appendix 3: Laying the foundation stone of the Circus 7 February 1754

A general Joy diffuses itself through every Rank of Inhabitants here, on the Prospect of the Advantage that will arise to the Trade of this City from the New Buildings going to be erected on the North Side of the Town, after the Designs, and under the Directions, of that celebrated and eminent Architect and Antiquarian, John Wood, Esq., who this Day laid the first Stone towards the Execution of them, with great Solemnity, amidst the Acclamations and unanimous Applause of Thousands. His Buildings already erected in this City, have been of so great Benefit to this Place in particular, and to the Country in general, that while they remain standing Monuments to the World of his Taste in Architecture, they will with grateful Hearts be looked on by our latest Posterity as the Works of that great Benefactor, and the Name of WOOD, the Restorer of Bath, will always be sacred here.

This Building will be called the King's Circus, being a circular Area of Three Hundred and Eighteen Feet in Diameter, surrounded with three equal and similar Piles of Building in Theatrical Stile, and in the Center is proposed a superb Equestrian Statue of his Sacred Majesty King George. There are three Streets to lead into it, each terminated with a Pile of Buildings: but the principal Approach will be one of the Streets called Barton-Street, leading from Queen's [sic] Square to the Circus, and will be in Length Six Hundred and Sixty Feet, and by its regular and gentle Ascent in the whole Length, will give such a Magnificence to the Circus (which is level) as Imagination can scarcely conceive.


Thursday 7 February 1754

Bath. The first stone of the building which is to be called the King's Circus, and is to consist of 33 elegant houses, was laid. It is to be a circular area, of 318 feet diameter, surrounded by three equal and similar piles of building, in theatrical style. In the center is to be an equestrian statue of his majesty, and three streets, 52 feet wide are to lead to it, each terminated with a fine building. But the principal approach will be one of the streets, called Barton street, leading from Queen's square to the Circus, in length 660 feet.

Building leases granted by John Wood for the Circus

Listed using present numbering. Source: BaRO 0051/1/12 and 13, where no other source is cited.

1 Circus: 20 July 1757 to John Ford and Thomas Jelly (BaRO PP2080)
2 Circus: 20 September 1760 to John Ford and Thomas Jelly.
3 Circus: 13/14 November 1765 to William Colborne of Bath, esq. (BaRO BC153/565/1).
4 Circus: 3 January 1755 to James Coleman of Bath, carpenter (BaRO 0051/1/8).
5 Circus: 3 January 1755 to the Hon. Grace Trevor of Bath. [Widow of John, Lord Trevor]
6 Circus: 3 January 1755 to the Rt. Hon. Lady Lucy Stanhope of Bath.
7 and 8 Circus: 3 January 1755 to the Rt. Hon. William Pitt, esq.
9 Circus: 3 January 1755 to William Ainslie of Melbury, Dorset, gent.
10 Circus: 3 January 1755 to Edward Fisher of Queen's College, University of Oxford.
1 Brock St: 31 December 1765 to Benjamin Colborne of Bath, esq.
36 Brock St: 3 August 1765 to Andrew Sproule of Bathford, esq. (BaRO 0413/1/3)
11 Circus: 16 May 1765 to Andrew Sproule of Bathford, esq.
12 Circus: 1/2 October 1764 to Andrew Sproule of Bathford, esq. (BaRO BC153/571/2)
13 Circus: 1/2 October 1764 to Andrew Sproule of Bathford, esq.
14 Circus: 19 June 1764 to Andrew Sproule of Bathford, esq.
15 Circus: 13/14 August 1764 to Charles Rodburne of Bath, joiner (BaRO BC153/572/1).
16 Circus: 17/18 October 1764 to George Clark of Bath, joiner.
17 Circus: 28/29 December 1764 to Hugh Penny of Lyncombe and Widcombe, mason.
18 Circus: 4/5 October 1765 to John Davies of Bath, joiner (BaRO 0509/1 and PP 2086).
19 Circus: 29 July 1766 to John Davies of Bath, joiner.
Circus House: 9 August 1766 to John Latty of Bath, ironmonger.
20 Circus: 19 June 1766 to Thomas Clement of Bath, mason.
21 Circus: 19/20 December 1765 to John Brabant of Bath, cabinet maker (BaRO BC153/563/1-2).
22 Circus: 19/20 December 1765 to John Brabant of Bath, cabinet maker (BaRO BC153/562/1-2).
23 Circus: 26/27 October 1764 to William Bolwell of Lyncombe and Widcombe, mason (BaRO BC153/561/1-2).
25 Circus: 22/23 June 1764 to William Street of Bath, apothecary.
26 Circus: 19/20 December 1764 to Thomas and Daniel Brown of Bath, joiners.
27 Circus: 2 October 1762 to James Colman of Bath, carpenter.
28 Circus: 30 September 1763 to Samuel Dancey of Bath, joiner (BaRO 0330/1/1).
29 Circus: 7 October 1763 to Richard Haddock of Crocus Court, Fleet Street., London, esq.
Appendix 5: Scheme for the Circus garden 1799

TO THE
INHABITANTS OF BATH,
ENCOURAGERS AND WELL-WISHERS OF IMPROVEMENTS,
AND PARTICULARLY TO THE
PROPRIETORS OF HOUSES
IN
THE CIRCUS
AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BATH, JUNE 17, 1799.

EVERY person of taste or judgment perceives how inferior, in point of beauty and elegance, the appearance of the Circus is to the other open spaces in this City that have the advantage of a garden in their centre. Though the Architecture of the Circus be inferior to none of the others, the broad barren place, which it surrounds gives a coarse and melancholy air to it, and renders the view from the rooms that look into it unpleasent. This is farther heightened by the clouds of dust, which, in dry weather, are raised from so large a surface of stone, hourly rubbed by the attrition of the wheels of the carriages, and of the feet of the horses that pass through it; and, what is worse, of those horses and carriages which to the great nuisance and injury of the inhabitants, are exercised and drawn about, not to carry people about their lawful and proper business, but to save trouble to stable-keepers and coach-masters.

To improve the appearance of this elegant pile of building, to abate the nuisance of dust and noise of carriages, and to diminish the expense of paving so large a surface, it is proposed to enclose the middle part with iron railing, like that in St. James's-Square, the good effects of which are acknowledged by all; leaving a road in the circumference thirty-eight feet wide, which is enough to contain five carriages abreast, which will be fully sufficient for every purpose, and to plant the central part with shrubs and flowers, or to lay it down with grass as may be thought proper. The proprietors of the water-works to whom the central part belongs are ready to concur in any plan of this kind.
THE expense necessary to carry the same into execution, is proposed to be raised by a voluntary subscription of the inhabitants and proprietors of the houses in the Circus, and its environs, and all other well-wishers to improvements.

---

**COMMITTEE**

For Directing and Managing the Improvement.

| DOCTOR FALCONER. | Mr. TEMPLE. |
| DOCTOR PARRY. | Mr. DEANE. |
| Mr. WALMESLEY. | COLONEL SCOTT. |
| Mr. SHAWE. | Mr. MILFORD. |

Treasurer, - - Mr. MILFORD.

WE whose names are subscribed do agree to pay the sums set opposite our names:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duke of Marlborough,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Thornton, Esq. London,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors of the Water,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Falconer, No. 29, Circus,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Hopkinson, No. 10, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Milford, No. 24, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. H. Parry, No. 27, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Walmesley, No. 14, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Shawe, No. 16, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Piunkett, No. 4, ditto,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm. Colborne,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Andre,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Treshcer,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Nagle,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel Scott,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Elizabeth Noel,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. G. Temple, No. 7, Circus,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Fletcher,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Tuckell,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Sainsbury,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ross, No. 17, Circus,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel Charlton,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executors of Mr. Coe,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executors of Benjamin Colborne, Esq.</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Krauter,</td>
<td>10 10 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

62. Broadsheet of 1799
Published in Guidelines no. 45 (January 1993), 4-5.
The original is in the possession of descendants of Dr Falconer.
Appendix 6: Photographs of the Circus May and June 2004

Patching of squares in area railings.

63. 1 Brock Street
Square strengthened with strip bolted on top.

64. 22 Circus
Old square strengthened with square on top.

65. 6 and 7 Circus
Square strengthened with strip bolted underneath.

66. 17 Circus
Hole in square filled in.
Appendix 6: Photographs of the Circus May and June 2004

Cast-iron urns on area railings.

67. 2 Circus
Cast iron urn bolted on.

68. 10 Circus
Iron urn bolted on.

69. 6 Circus
Urn finial on central shaft.

70. 24 Circus
Urn finial on central shaft.
Victorian alterations to railings.

71. Railing 13 Circus
Victorian plinth, base rail and balls, but re-use of late Georgian clusters of bars.

72. Railing 10 Circus
Base rail and balls added, but clusters retained.

73. Railing 3 Circus
Victorian plinth with no bases for clusters, clusters themselves removed and base rail and balls added.

74. Railing 29 Circus
Victorian plinth copying late Georgian bases for clusters, although the clusters themselves were removed.
Appendix 6: Photographs of the Circus May and June 2004

Remnants of gate hinges

75. 5 Circus
Remains of gate hinge on east side of entranceway.

76. 5 Circus
Remains of gate hinge on west side of entranceway.

77. 10 Circus
Remains of gate hinge on south side of entranceway.

78. 10 Circus
Remains of gate hinge on north side of entranceway.
Maps

79. Detail from an Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1885 and published in 1886.

80. Detail of OS map marked to show the location of high explosive bombs dropped in 1942.
Blue = unexploded.
Red = exploded.
Red infill and hatching indicate damage to buildings.
Bath Record Office.
Etching of the Circus 1773 by John Robert Cozens
Victoria Art Gallery, Bath and North East Somerset Council.