

Other Parish Records

Background

In addition to the registers, minutes and poor law records, parish collections can contain a wide variety of other documentary sources. Unfortunately, not every parish is equally well stocked with records. Much depends on the chances of history - some parishes have extensive collections of records, whereas others may have next to nothing except the registers.

As well as administrative bodies such as the Vestry and the Overseers of the Poor, other parish officials would also have created records. These include the churchwardens, the surveyors of the highway, who had to report on the condition of the roads, and constables, who tried to maintain law and order.

Types of record

There may be maps and plans of the parish, church or churchyard. Many parishes hold copies of tithe and enclosure maps as well as a variety of other plans.

In addition to plans, there may also be records about the church building. These might include notes, specifications, accounts and formal permits (called faculties) granted by the bishop for work to be done on the fabric of the church or churchyard.

Some vicars gathered large amounts of information about parish history, or specific subjects that concerned them. For example, the Reverend Vaughan Thomas, vicar of Yarnton, was chairman of the Oxford Board of Health in addition to his parish duties. He amassed a collection of papers and public health notices on the cholera epidemics in Oxford in the mid nineteenth century.

Other items which can appear in parish collections include music manuscripts, records of parish charities and bequests to the poor. Many schools in parishes were initially run by the local Anglican Church, and their records may be found in parish collections. Although the school logbooks are catalogued elsewhere, you may find other records such as inspectors' reports, accounts or letters.

Where are these records?

Many parishes have transferred their records to Oxfordshire History Centre. The records themselves are not online.

Where is the catalogue?

For most parishes, a collection catalogue can be viewed online on [Heritage Search](#).

All parish collections have the prefix **PAR**. A list of parishes can be browsed within our catalogue list [here](#), in section Parishes (Ecclesiastical).

The few parish catalogues not yet on Heritage Search are accessible in pdf form via the [Digital resources for Oxfordshire History website](#).

More information

- Oxfordshire History Centre [catalogues](#)
- [Visiting](#) Oxfordshire History Centre
- [Contact us](#) to book a visit to consult archive documents