

Archdeaconry records

The Archdeaconry of Oxford was part of the Diocese of Lincoln until the creation of the Diocese of Oxford in 1542. The archdeaconry generated many of the same types of records as the diocese. Because the bishop and archdeacon sometimes used the same officials, there was overlap in the records. It can be difficult to tell which records belong to the Bishop (the Diocesan records) and which to the Archdeacon in the C16th and C17th.

The collection contains the records of the Archdeaconry of Oxford and also of peculiar jurisdictions in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

Peculiars were ecclesiastical areas within the Diocese of Oxford, but outside the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Oxford, such as Banbury, Buckingham, Langford, and Thame.

In 1836 the Archdeaconry of Berkshire was also transferred to the Diocese of Oxford from the Diocese of Salisbury. In 1845 the Archdeaconry of Buckingham was transferred from the Diocese of Lincoln

The **court records** (ARCH/1) deal with cases concerning the behaviour of the clergy, marriages, morals and religious beliefs of the laity, tithes, wills, church fabric and parish customs.

The **visitation records** (ARCH/2) were created from the visits made by the archdeacon or his officials to every parish every few years.

The **financial records** (ARCH/3) include fees and account books, and procuration books (procurators managed the affairs of other people).

The **records of clergy** (ARCH/4) include mandates for induction of clergy into church livings, sequestration bonds for taking over a benefice (after the resignation or inability of the incumbent clerk in performing their duties) and subscription books including clergy ordination lists and institutions to livings, recording basic information on the names of clerks, their qualifications and careers

The **parochial records** (ARCH/5) contain the annual transcripts of parish register entries.

The **benefice papers** (ARCH/6) include terriers (surveys) of church lands and property, and property leases and accounts

Interesting Examples

In 1696 the parish churchwardens presented (reported) to the archdeacon that George Fuller had sold his wife to Thomas Heath after she had been weighed on scales at Chinnor Market.

Where are these records?

The Archdeaconry of Oxford records, C16th-C21st, and records of the peculiar jurisdictions, C16th-C19th, are at Oxfordshire History Centre.

The records of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire are at [Berkshire Record Office](#) and the records of the Archdeaconry of Buckingham are at the [Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies](#)

Where is the catalogue?

The Archdeaconry of Oxford catalogue can be searched on the History Centre's Heritage Search online catalogue www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/heritagesearch . All the records have the prefix ARCH.

Visiting and contacting the Oxfordshire History Centre

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/visiting-oxfordshire-history-centre>