

Other Parish Records

In addition to the Parish Registers parish collections can contain a wide variety of other documentary sources. Sadly not every parish is equally well stocked with records. Much depends on the chances of history, with the result that whereas some parishes have large extensive collections of records, others may have next to nothing except the registers. However, in theory, there are a great variety of records which you may find from a parish.

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.

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

Where to find records

Many but by no means all parishes have a catalogue online. Enter PAR and the name of the parish into our [Heritage Search](#) and choose the "Archive Catalogue" collection to see if the catalogue you want is there.

If the parish you are interested in does not appear you will need to visit the History Centre to look at the catalogue in printed form.

[Visiting and contacting the Oxfordshire History Centre.](#)