

Archdeaconry and Peculiar Records

Background

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 16th and 17th centuries.

The collection contains the records of the Archdeaconry of Oxford and 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

Classes of records:

Court records deal with cases concerning the behaviour of the clergy, marriages, morals and religious beliefs of the laity, tithes, wills, church fabric and parish customs.

Visitation records were created from the visits made by the archdeacon or his officials to every parish every few years.

Financial records include fees and account books, and procuration books (procurators managed the affairs of other people).

Records of clergy 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

Parochial records contain the annual transcripts of parish register entries.

Benefice records include terriers (surveys) of church lands and property, and property leases and accounts



Where to find these records

The Archdeaconry of Oxford records, 16th-21st centuries, and many of the records of the peculiar jurisdictions, 16th-19th centuries, are at Oxfordshire History Centre.

The records of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire and of some peculiar jurisdictions are at [Berkshire Record Office](#). The records of the Archdeaconry of Buckingham and of some peculiar jurisdictions are at [Buckinghamshire Archives](#)

Catalogue

The Archdeaconry of Oxford catalogue can be searched on the History Centre's [Heritage Search](#) online catalogue.

More information

- Oxfordshire History Centre [catalogues](#)
- [Visiting](#) Oxfordshire History Centre
- [Contact us](#) to make an enquiry about the records