



VCH Oxfordshire Texts in Progress

Cornwell

Local Government

Manor Courts and Officers

Courts for the de Greys' free and customary tenants in Cornwell were evidently held by the 13th century, although no court rolls are known.¹ Three farms remained copyholds of Cornwell manor in 1614, but if courts continued they presumably lapsed at enclosure in 1669.² Cornwell tenants of Salford manor presumably attended the Salford courts,³ one tenant being presented for default at a court of survey held for Salford manor in 1446,⁴ while a cottage and garden in Cornwell village, owned until 1308 by the Knights Templar, long remained a copyhold of the Gloucestershire manor of Temple Guiting, to whose manor court the tenant owed suit twice a year in the 1360s.⁵

By 1279 the lord of Cornwell also owed three-weekly suit at Chadlington hundred court (performed on his behalf by a free tenant in lieu of rent), and paid 4s. 6d. hidage, 3d. wardpenny, 12d. certainty money, and 12d. for the sheriff's tourn. An annual view of frankpledge for the hundred was held at Cornwell by the bailiff of the earl of Gloucester (as lord of the hundred), who collected any fines.⁶ The views continued in 1547–9, when Cornwell's tithingman paid 4s. 6d. hidage, 3½d. wardpenny, and 2s. certainty money, and fines were levied for excessive mill tolls, failure to clear a passageway, and failure to repair a road.⁷

Parish Government and Officers

A single churchwarden was appointed by 1530,⁸ his successors often serving for several years at a time. Two sidesmen were noted in 1614, and in 1901 a rector's and a people's

¹ *Rot. Hund.* II, 740–1.

² OHC, MS Oxf. Archd. Oxon. b 40, f. 102; above, econ. hist.

³ *Rot. Hund.* II, 728, 741; above, landownership (Salford manor estate).

⁴ TNA, SC 2/197/61.

⁵ *Cal. Inq. p.m.* XII, p. 121; *VCH Glos.* II, 113; above, landownership (other estates).

⁶ *Rot. Hund.* II, 741.

⁷ TNA, SC 2/197/20–1; cf. *ibid.* LR 2/189, f. 109v.

⁸ *Visit. Dioc. Linc.* II, 44.

warden were chosen.⁹ Other officers included a parish constable (mentioned in 1642 and 1833, when he was assaulted);¹⁰ a parish clerk (mentioned by 1731 and paid £2 10s. in 1811 and £4 in 1880);¹¹ and a single overseer of the poor, replaced from 1835 by a guardian of the poor. Overseer's accounts survive from 1819 to 1835, the same book recording a 'private rate' for Cornwell's poor collected by parish officers between 1854 and 1864.¹² No reference to a surveyor of highways has been found, although from 1864 a Cornwell waywarden represented the parish on the new Chadlington Highway Board.¹³

Vestry meeting minutes survive from 1874, when the churchwarden doubled as waywarden.¹⁴ In 1894 the vestry was superseded for civil purposes by a parish meeting of which the rector was elected its first chair, and which continued in 2023.¹⁵ The parish belonged to Chipping Norton Poor Law Union from 1834, Chipping Norton Rural District from 1894, and West Oxfordshire District from 1974.¹⁶

⁹ OHC, MS Oxf. Archd. Oxon. b 40, ff. 102–5; *ibid.* MS Oxf. Dioc. b 38, f. 69; *ibid.* PAR73/5/F1/1; PAR73/2/A/1. There were perhaps two churchwardens in 1642 and 1753: *Prot. Retns*, 86; OHC, Cal. QS, IV, 226.

¹⁰ *Prot. Retns*, 86; above, social hist. (since 1800).

¹¹ OHC, par. reg. transcript, burials 1731, 1733; *ibid.* MSS Oxf. Dioc. d 572, f. 95; d 580, f. 75; *ibid.* PAR73/5/F1/1.

¹² *Ibid.* PAR73/5/F1/1; above, social hist. (welfare).

¹³ OHC, HB6; *London Gaz.* 8 Jan. 1864, p. 102.

¹⁴ OHC, PAR73/5/F1/1.

¹⁵ *Oxon. Weekly News*, 12 Dec. 1894; <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk>; <https://meetings.westoxon.gov.uk> (both accessed June 2023). Parish meeting records have not been located.

¹⁶ Youngs, *Admin. Units*, I, 395; *Oxon. Atlas*, 144–5, 150–1.