



VCH Oxfordshire Texts in Progress

Chadlington

6. Local Government

Manor Courts and Officers

Separate courts baron for Shippenhull and Wahull manors were held by 1279 (when one of Wahull's villein tenants served as reeve),¹ and in 1346 the courts raised 10s. and 3s. 4d. respectively. After the manors were combined in 1366 there was presumably just a single court baron for Chadlington West,² which by 1637 met sporadically at Lower Court and was said to have recently issued bylaws relating to Chadlington West's open fields.³ Eynsham abbey's Chadlington tenants attended Charlbury's manor court in the 15th and 16th centuries,⁴ while Chadlington East manor had a court baron by 1637 and presumably throughout the Middle Ages:⁵ court rolls survive from 1679 to 1814, and include field orders issued in 1769 and 1776.⁶ A specially-convened 'court leet and baron' for 'Chadlington manor' in 1783 evidently concerned both East and West townships, and appointed a hayward and a 17-man jury with Chadlington East's lord Lock Rollinson as foreman.⁷

Other obligations reflected pre-Conquest tenurial connections. Shippenhull's lord and freeholders owed suit to the manor court of Shipton-under-Wychwood, which also retained leet jurisdiction in Shippenhull;⁸ a Chadlington tithingman still paid 6d. cert money at Shipton's annual view of frankpledge in the 16th century,⁹ and as late as 1613 some Chadlington freeholders complained that they owed suit and chief rents to both Chadlington West's and Shipton's manor courts.¹⁰ Leet jurisdiction in Chadlington East was reserved to Spelsbury's manor court, to which Chadlington officers including a tithingman, a constable, and a hayward presented various nuisances and offences between the late 15th century and 1822.¹¹ View of frankpledge on Wahull manor belonged to the lord of Chadlington hundred,

¹ *Rot. Hund.* II, 736–7, 738; 'Oxon. Eyre, 1261', II, 249.

² TNA, C 135/82/1, no. 26; above, landownership.

³ TNA, E 134/13Chas1/Mich24. No ct rolls are known.

⁴ OHC, E36/4/1/F1/1–2; TNA, SC 6/957/26; SJC, MUN VI.59–60, 70.

⁵ TNA, E 134/13Chas1/Mich24.

⁶ OHC, Fi. IV/xiii/1–8.

⁷ *Ibid.* PAR56/17/N1/1; above, econ. hist. (1500–1800).

⁸ *Rot. Hund.* II, 736–7; cf. above, landownership.

⁹ Merevale Hall (Warws.), Dugdale MSS, HT I/14; OHC, E36/2/2/CR/118; TNA, SC 2/197/64; *ibid.* LR 2/189, f. 107; *Glos. Archives*, D9125/3/26, f. 25; *VCH Oxon.* XIX, 26, 81.

¹⁰ TNA, C 2/Jas1/O3/9.

¹¹ *Rot. Hund.* II, 747; OHC, E36/2/2/CR/1–144; cf. Jordan, *Hist. Enstone*, 56, 309–13 (containing some errors); above, landownership.

whose bailiff held an annual court leet in Chadlington in the 1270s and collected 12*d.* cert money.¹² That pattern continued in the 1540s (when a tithingman and two constables presented various offences including breaking the assizes of bread and ale),¹³ and in 1637 the bailiff still held a court leet once or twice a year at 'Two Crosses' in Westend, although no later records have been found.¹⁴

Wahull's lord and tenants (and presumably those of the wider parish) were also required to attend the three-weekly Chadlington hundred court in 1279, paying 8*d.* wardpenny and 16*s.* hidage.¹⁵ The same fixed sums were collected in 1547 and 1552,¹⁶ and in 1637 inhabitants still attended three-weekly hundred courts at Shipton Court in Shipton-under-Wychwood, which had been held within living memory at a house in Eastend, and 'anciently' at the nearby Hawk Stone in Spelsbury.¹⁷ By the 1660s the Chadlington hundred courts had apparently lapsed.¹⁸

Parish Government and Officers

Two chapelwardens or churchwardens were mentioned c.1447 and in 1530,¹⁹ and two constables and two overseers of the poor in 1642.²⁰ By 1662 each constable served one of the two townships (East and West),²¹ Chadlington West's constable being assaulted in 1716 whilst attempting an arrest.²² By the early 19th century each township appointed its own constable, overseer of the poor, and surveyor of highways,²³ although poor relief was administered jointly by a select vestry, Chadlington East bearing a quarter and Chadlington West three quarters of the total cost.²⁴ The East and West surveyors were respectively awarded two stone pits and nine stone pits at enclosure c.1812, when the parish also became responsible for a public sheepwash near Curdle Hill.²⁵ In 1827 the undersheriff seized a mahogany table belonging to West's surveyor Charles Stought after he failed to appear at the Quarter Sessions to answer a complaint that he had let a road fall into disrepair: it emerged that the summons had been served in East rather than West, Stought

¹² *Rot. Hund.* II, 738.

¹³ TNA, SC 2/197/20–1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* E 134/13Chas1/Mich24.

¹⁵ *Rot. Hund.* II, 738.

¹⁶ TNA, SC 2/197/20; *ibid.* LR 2/189, f. 109.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* E 134/13Chas1/Mich24; above, vol. overview (govt).

¹⁸ *VCH Oxon.* XIX, 26.

¹⁹ OHC, E36/4/1/F1/1; *Visit. Dioc. Linc.* II, 45.

²⁰ *Prot. Retns.* 81.

²¹ TNA, E 179/255/3.

²² OHC, Cal. QS, I, f. 189.

²³ *Ibid.* PAR56/5/F1/1–5; PAR56/2/A2/1.

²⁴ *Ibid.* PAR56/5/A6/1; PAR56/5/A7/1.

²⁵ *Ibid.* enclo. award and maps.

claiming in his defence that the two townships were ‘separate and distinct places as regards their roads’.²⁶ Both surveyors were replaced in 1864 by two waywardens on the new Chadlington Highway Board, one each for East and West.²⁷

The vestry met in the church house in the early 19th century, and in the 1820s there was an annual Easter vestry at which the Hemming charity accounts were presented.²⁸ Vestry minutes survive from 1884, when meetings were held in Eastend either in the reading room or at the school.²⁹ Under the 1894 Local Government Act the vestry’s civil functions passed to a parish council, which from 1895 rented land to create allotments,³⁰ and from 1901 to 1968 maintained the parish burial bier, renting a building in Eastend for its storage. The public sheepwash was sold in 1940,³¹ but in 2024 the parish council remained responsible for the allotments and children’s playground, and was represented on the Memorial Hall and sports and social club committees.³² The parish belonged from 1834 to Chipping Norton Poor Law Union, from 1894 to Chipping Norton Rural District, and from 1974 to West Oxfordshire District.³³

²⁶ OHC, PAR56/2/A2/1; Roche, ‘Notes’, 9.

²⁷ OHC, HB6; *London Gaz.* 8 Jan. 1864, p. 102.

²⁸ OHC, MS Oxf. Archd. Oxon. b 23, ff. 18, 47; *12th Rep. Com. Char.* (Parl. Papers 1825 (348), x), p. 181.

²⁹ OHC, PAR56/2/A1/1.

³⁰ *Ibid.* PC56/A1/1; OS Map 1:2500, Oxon. XX.7 (1899 edn).

³¹ OHC, PC56/A1/1–4; PC56/D1/1 and 7.

³² <https://chadlington-pc.org.uk/about> (accessed Nov. 2024); cf. above, social hist. (since 1800).

³³ Youngs, *Admin. Units*, I, 394; *Oxon. Atlas*, 144–5, 150–1.