

# WELLS CATHEDRAL

## ARCHIVES

The collection at Wells Cathedral comprises three separate archives, those of the Dean and Chapter, the College of Vicars Choral and Wells Old Almshouses. All three have been catalogued in detail, but are not currently in the form of a searchable database, which would enable them to be made available on our website. These brief outline catalogues will at least give guidance as to what records exist among our holdings. Some of the most recent records may not yet be open for public inspection. The Dean & Chapter archive also contains an extensive collection of plans and photographs.

It should be noted that we hold very few personal papers of any of the cathedral canons and none of vicars choral. Records of parishes within the diocese of Bath and Wells are held at the Somerset Heritage Centre, Taunton.

Further enquiries should be directed to the Archivist: [archives@wellscathedral.uk.net](mailto:archives@wellscathedral.uk.net)

It would be helpful if enquirers could cite the relevant reference to the records in which they are interested in the form: DC/CF/3

### **Records of the Dean and Chapter**

Dates listed are covering dates only and do not imply a complete run between the dates given.

#### **DC/CF      Cathedral Foundation**

1. Statutes, 15<sup>th</sup> cent. – 2000
2. Cartularies, c. 1240 – 15<sup>th</sup> cent.
3. Charters, 958 – 1812

4. Seals
5. Appointments of bishops, deans, chapter, prebendaries, officials, 1536 – 1994
6. Chapter Act Books, 1487 – 1975
7. Chapter Minutes, 1831 – to date
8. Services: preaching rotas and registers of regular services, 1832 – to date
9. Enthronements of bishops, 1894 - 2002, Installations of deans, 1911 – 2004, Special Services 1885 – 1995
10. Registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, 1664 – to date
11. Liturgical procedures, 1488 – 1980
12. Chapter and Vicars Choral, 1553 – 1936 see also Vicars own archive
13. Greater Chapter 1953 – 1985
14. Cathedral Council, 1993 – 2000

## **DC/ADM Administration**

1. Letters and Papers 1583 - 1981
2. Chapter Clerk's Office: Legal 1595 - 1965
3. Chapter Clerk's Office: Administration 1729 - 1990
4. Cathedral Secretary/Administrator 1979 - 2003
5. Prebends and Livings 1550 - 1955
6. Deans' Papers 1674, 1895 - 2000
7. Treasurers' papers, incl. Inventories 1846 - 1981
8. Chancellors' papers 1661 - 2005
9. Archdeacon of Wells 1760 - 1905
10. Virgers and Sacristy 1877 - 1997
11. Publicity: Services: Events etc 1937 – to date

**DC/FAB****Fabric**

*For Plans and drawings, see separate heading; see also Financial: Fabric)*

1. Fabric Letters and Papers; subjects include restorations, bells, organ, clock, glass, 1713 -2000
2. Fabric Record Books 1821-1917
3. Keepers of the Fabric: Papers of Canon Sherwin Bailey, Dean Patrick Mitchell re various aspects of the maintenance of the fabric, 1974-1989
4. Architects' Reports 1897-2004
5. Works Department: Specifications and Inspection Reports: specifications and inspection reports 1981-1999
6. Masons' Yard: accounts and record books 1935-1973
7. New Development Project 1995-2009

**DC/F****Financial**

1. Communar's accounts 1327-1894 (from 1730 incorporates Fabric and Escheator' accounts)
2. Fabric accounts 1390 – 1849
3. Escheator's accounts 1372-1822
4. Original Bills 1643-1900
5. Financial miscellanea 1496-1994
6. Fees and Regulations 1811-1935
7. Accounts Department 1917-2003

**DC/E****Estates**

1. Surveys of chapter manors, 1571-1864
2. Manorial Court Records, 1413-1713
3. Manorial Courts: draft copies of court rolls (vols.) 1620-1826
4. Copyhold Leases: stewards' proposal books, 1615-1866
5. Copyhold Leases: steward's notebooks (draft entries), 1588-1866
6. Proposals for Leases & Copies of Court Roll 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> cents.: entries for individual manors of Allerton, Bicknoller, Biddisham, Bishops Lydeard, Buckland Abbas, Burnham, Chard, Churchland (Wedmore), Combe St Nicholas, Congresbury, East Curry, East Lambrook, Kingsbury Episcopi, Knapfee, Newport Boro', North Curry, Pucklechurch, Shipham, Stogumber, West Hatch, West Meare, Whitchurch Canonorum, Winscombe, Wells or Canon Grange, Wrantage
7. Manorial Accounts and Rentals: rentals for various manors, 1523-1865; accounts ditto 1306-1865
8. Manorial Accounts: Arrears & Fines: 1590-1865
9. Ledger books: registers of leases: 1535-1813, 12 vols., indexed
10. Estate record books: successors to ledger books, 1837-1941; from 1872 these are general scrapbooks.
11. Renewals of leases: 1843-1866, annual bundles of proposals for leases, rentals, surrenders etc.
12. Estates: Miscellaneous papers, 1365-1870, arranged by manor
13. Parsonages and Farms: 17<sup>th</sup> cent. -1870, arranged by parsonage
14. Liberty of St Andrew: Deeds etc.: grants, leases, 1494 -1949, arranged by date
15. Liberty of St Andrew: Poor Rate books and registers of electors etc.: 1830-1926
16. Ecclesiastical Commissioners: papers relating to the transfer of chapter estates, 1832-1866

17. Estate Management (post 1860) of property in the Liberty, 1874-1997; tenancy agreements, correspondence etc.

## **DC/MUS**

### **Music**

1. Service books and music: 12<sup>th</sup> cent. onwards.
2. Letters & Papers: Music, 15<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> cents.
3. Appointments: Priest vicars, organist 1858-1961
4. Choristers: 1969-2008, minutes, papers, calendars
5. Vicars Choral: papers, personal files, 1969-2004
6. Organists, Organ Scholars: 1871-1994, appointments, correspondence, papers
7. Services: programmes for special services including enthronements, 1977-1993
8. Concerts: given by the choir and visiting choirs in the cathedral, programmes, papers, 1971-1995
9. Choir Tours: 1983-1994
10. Choir Broadcasts: papers 1971-1999
11. Choir Finance: Dean Plumtre's Choristers Fund, accounts & papers, 1891-1909; Music Endowment Fund, minutes, accounts, papers 1977-2001
12. Photographs, both formal and informal of choir 1930s-1970s and organ restoration 1973/4
13. Printed material: programmes, press cuttings, choir calendars, 1902-2000
14. Papers of Masters of Choristers: Denis Pouncey, 1942-1999; Anthony Crossland 1971-1996; Malcolm Archer, 1996-2004
15. Miscellaneous choir papers, 1975-1987
16. Wells Orchestral Society: minutes, papers, accounts 1904-1930
17. Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society: programmes, papers etc. 1948-2003
18. Friends of Cathedral Music: correspondence 1995-2009

**DC/SCH Cathedral School**

Cathedral Grammar School: papers 1548-1950; accounts 1884-1909

**DC/FWC Friends of Wells Cathedral**

Reports 1952 to date; minutes 1935-1979, accounts and financial papers 1956-85

**DC/COM Committees and other Cathedral Organisations**

1. Guild of Needleworkers: minutes 1938-1946
2. Dean Malden Memorial Committee: minutes 1952
3. Confraternity of St Andrew: minutes 1951-1982
4. Wells Publications Ltd: minutes and financial records, 1971-1990
5. Works Progress Committee: minutes 1979- to date
6. Catering Committee: minutes and accounts 1982-1999
7. Wells Cathedral Enterprises: minutes of AGM 1985-1996
8. Wells Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee: minutes 1987-1998
9. Wells Cathedral Festival 800, 1982: minutes, programmes, services, publicity, balance sheet
10. Wells Cathedral Festival, 1992: minutes, financial statements programmes, brochures etc.
11. Cathedral Council: minutes and papers, 1983-1988

**DC/PUB Published Material**

1. Cathedral Guides: c. 1903-2000
2. Guides to specific aspects of Cathedral: 1948-2006
3. Wells Cathedral Publications Ltd: 1997-1998

**Non-Dean & Chapter Material**

1. Wells Theological College: ephemera, 1896-1971; the College archive is held at the Somerset Heritage Centre

2. Diocesan records: Miscellaneous 1818-2000; the main archive is held at the Somerset Heritage Centre
3. Personal papers of canons: 1871, 1971-1995
4. Personal papers of officials: 1833-1990