



Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards
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As you know History is not an exact science, so it is natural that not all guides have the same narrative, especially when it comes to Magna Carta. I would like to draw attention to two aspects that have recently come to light. Firstly the 'fact' that there were originally 40 copies - mentioned twice in the Chapter House display. This figure is highly unlikely given that King John got the Pope to annul MC after two months. 'Received wisdom' is that there were probably around 13 produced and as it did not become law there was little point in keeping it - hence the survival of only four copies.

The second aspect is that Magna Carta was most likely written in Wilton. I have no idea where this info came from but it is an exceedingly unlikely hypothesis as Wilton was a Benedictine convent not a monastery. I asked John Elliott if he could clarify the position and he referred me to the following link:

<https://www.historytoday.com/elaine-treharne-and-andrew-prescott/scribes-salisbury-magna-carta>

This draws on the latest research which points to Old Sarum as the most likely source for our document. Just because it was not produced in the Chancery in London does not mean that ours is a later copy. No one has yet unravelled the sequence of events in distributing Royal documents and it could be that scriptoria were sometimes given the job which then had to be sealed.

What lurks behind this mystery is the intriguing figure of Elias of Derham who became a Canon at both Old and New Sarum. As you know his residence was the *Leadenhall* canonry. The strange thing is that in the Chapter minutes it is mostly referred to as *Leydenhall*. Occasionally it becomes *Ledynhall* before finally arriving at *Leadenhall*. Does this mean that its origin might have nothing to do with lead?

Another change of spelling is that of the *Quire* which is only ever referred to as the *Choir*. Could it be that our current spelling is a deliberate archaism? An unexpected one is that of referring to *Southamptonshire*; my research shows that this status was in use until 1959! Another 'funny' is that the Letters Patent always refer to the monarch as also being *King of France* and Ireland. Apparently George III decided to finally face the facts although William IV was using the title in 1837.

Spelling was often highly variable especially with place names: so the vicarage of *Avington* was also written *Avelington* or *West Allington*. In January 1842 the Chapter Clerk writes: *The house of late William Hussey in Minster Street otherwise High Street*. Consulting an 1800 street map it shows the modern High Street named correctly

followed in brackets by its Medieval name, Minster Street. It could be that the rental records had not been updated to reflect the changes. Just to confuse matters further, the map shows that Castle Street was also originally Minster Street, and Endless Street / Queen Street / Catherine Street were the High Street! Other geographic questions: *lease of a stable in St. Mary's Abbey late Whitchurch's*. Also Fisherton late Shorts. *Minster Street otherwise called Poultry Street*. I have not yet researched the authenticity of this map but it does at least accord with the minutes.

Timber was an important resource for the Dean and Chapter. Firstly for use in the upkeep of the Cathedral and secondly for keeping their stock of property in good condition. In extremis it could also be sold to raise money.

The Cathedral owned extensive holdings of woodland: *A speedy application to the Warden of His Majesty's forest called New Forest and to his Lord High treasurer of Great Britain inferring that pursuant to a charter made by King Henry the First confirmed by several succeeding kings of England timber growing in the said forest may be assigned to the said Dean and Chapter for making necessary repairs of the Cathedral Church of Sarum* (1711).

As landlord, timber was given to tenants rather than money for repairs: *It was allowed and ordered that four hundred and eighty-six feet of timber be cut down and assigned for copyholders at Pitton and Farley* (1774 and 1776).

Dr Dodwell having reported to the Chapter that he had received fifteen pounds arising from the sale of trees the Dean and Chapter desired that Dr Dodwell to keep the said sum in in order to its being employed and laid out in the repairs of the chancel of St. Martin's Church when and as occasion shall require (1765).

Resolved that the present composition [paid] for underwood or sylva cadua [under-age coppice wood] at Clarendon Park received of General Bathurst be no longer accepted and that notice thereof be given accordingly to him (1793).

Application having been made by the lessee of Hurot Cum Molendino [empty / entire with millhouse] for timber for the requisite repairs of the mill leave was at this Chapter given to the lessee to cut four trees for the purpose to be hereafter marked (1837).

Further references to punishment: *Ordered that the Revd. Mr Broughton prebendary of the prebend of Bedminster and be fined in the sum of five pounds according to statute for omitting to supply his turn of preaching at the Cathedral on the fifth Sunday after Trinity* (1752).

Absent Canons pronounced contumacious [wilful disobedience] and in penalty of their contumacies (1809). In 1737 they were fined 2/-.