

## Old Poor Laws 1790s

Under the old Poor Laws every parish had to support its own paupers. This was one of the responsibilities of the Vestry, a regular meeting of parish rate-payers, automatically chaired by the incumbent, which was responsible for both ecclesiastical matters and the administration of local government. Its secular responsibilities were transferred to parish councils in 1894, and its ecclesiastical duties to parochial church councils in 1921.

The administration of the Poor Laws was commonly 'farmed-out' by the Vestry to a contractor, whose function was to find employment for the destitute (e.g. day work on local farms or in the stone pits, spinning) and to house the paupers in a parish workhouse. In Deddington the workhouse comprised 5 cottages, one for the master, in New Street, now Quinque House.<sup>(1)</sup>

Advertisements seeking to contract out the management and employment of the poor in the Parish appeared in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* in 1779, 1793, 1794 and 1797. Samuel Churchill (attorney) was named as Vestry Clerk in the 1793 and 1794 notices.

### **Extract from the Parochial Report on Deddington dated July 1795 from 'The State of the Poor' by Sir Frederick Eden, 1797, pp.589-591.**

The Poor are farmed, in the parifh work-houfe, for £1000. year. The parifh, however, defrays all expences arifing from baftardy, fmall-pox, broken bones, diflocations, and law concerns. The number of perfons in the houfe, at prefent, is 18. Out-penfioners receive about £7. [sic] a week; befides which, the rounds-men, (or labourers who cannot get employment,) are often chargeable, and fupported by the parifh. In winter, their number is fometimes 40, or 50; the parifh employs them in the ftone-quarries in the neighbourhood. No regular bill of fare is obferved in the work-houfe. The Poor were not all farmed till the prefent year; but were chiefly fupported by weekly penfions. In general, however, about 20 perfons have been maintained in the worh-houfe, under a contractor, who was allowed 2s. 6d. a head for their weekly maintenance.

<http://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/thepoorindeddington/thestateofthepoor-1797>

**27 November 1779**

**Advertisement for farming (sub-contracting) the management and employment of the poor of the Parish.**

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Deddington's Workhouse' by Mary Robinson:  
[http://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/3210/QHforDOL.pdf](http://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/3210/QHforDOL.pdf)

POOR to FARM.

WANTED, - A Perfon to undertake the Management and Employment of the Poor of the Parifh of Deddington, in the county of Oxford, at an annual Sum, from St. Thomas-Day next. - Enquire of the Church-Wardens and Overfeers of Deddington. - There is a Work-Houfe large enough to contain the Poor.

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000073/17791127/015/0003>

**7 December 1793**

**Advertisement for letting the employment and maintenance of the poor of the Parish. Mr. Samuel Churchill, Vestry Clerk.**

TO be LETT, for one Year, on Monday next the Ninth Day of December Infant, at the publick Veftry Room, in Deddington, in the County of Oxford, - The EMPLOY and MAINTENANCE of the Poor of the faid Parifh.

For Particulars apply to the Church-wardens and Overfeers of Deddington; or to Mr. Samuel Churchill, of the fame Place, Veftry Clerk.

*December 5, 1793.*

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000073/17931207/006/0002>

**22 November 1794**

**Advertisement for letting the employment and maintenance of the poor of the Parish. Mr. Samuel Churchill, Vestry Clerk.**

TO be LETT for one Year on Wednefday the 26th Day of November Infant, at the publick Veftry Room, in Deddington, in the County of Oxford, the Employ and Maintenance of the Poor of the faid Parifh.

For Particulars apply to the Church Wardens and Overfeers of Deddington aforefaid; or to Mr. Samuel Churchill of the fame Place, Veftry Clerk.

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000073/17941122/005/0002?browse=true>

18 November 1797

**Advertisement for letting the management of the poor of the Parish.**

TO be LETT,

*On Wednefday the 29th of November Inftant,*

The whole Management of the POOR of the Parifh of Deddington, in the County of Oxford.

For further Particulars and to treat for the fame, apply to the Church Wardens and Overfeers of the faid Parifh.

Repeated 25 November 1797.

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000073/17971118/005/0003>