

Another 'Custom' required of the Lord of the Manor was killing a bull at Christmas as a gift to the poor.

'Unto this Mr Cobb answered, that his Father & mother then indeed keeping open House att Christmase & unwilling to have them at home with him, & to give unto the Poore any meale of meat there, did rather think it convenient to send unto the Poore a peece of meat unto their houses for them & their Families, rather than entertaine them in his house. But this was not of right but Courtesy...

'Mr Cobb at this time gives them more viz. 2s. by the weeke delivered in Bread every Sabboth which amounteth unto £5.8s. per ann, & yet they are not content. ...he payeth this 2s.... not as a Customary burthen incumbent uppon the Rectorie, but meerly out of Courtesy, & or Charity...

'Mr Cobb desired the forbearance of keeping a Court at Adderbury about Aug 23.1659. His Father being lately dead the goods of the House disposed of to make Portions, & thereby unfurnished.'

By September 1662

'The Parsonage, Mr Cobb haveing nowe a Tenant there, is reasonably well in repaire. I was told... that if in Progresse I would lye at the Parsonage, it would bee suddenly better repaired... tell Mr Cobb that I will lye noe where else, & that hee provide for us at the Parsonage. For now, if it raine, wee are forced to give mony to the Coachman to carry us from one place to another.'

But in October 1663 it was no better, and it seems Woodward had to rely on the vicar, 'Mr Bew',⁸ and his vicarage for a place to keep court.

'In the outside of the Church towards the Rectory there are corners that are filled with filth etc by the poore people that live in a house belonging to the Coll. It was leased out to the Parishioners at 12d. per ann; Sir Th. Cobb [he had just been created a baronet] doth yearely pay it... [he] would have it & pay us our Rent to take down the House & lay it to his Orchard, if soe, the Church yard would bee the cleaner...

'... many are much out of repaire viz. 1. The Barne with a Porch adjoyning to the Gate, the corners of the said Porch are ready to fall, Sir Thom. doth thinke, hee said, to take the said Barne downe & to sett upp in the lower Gate by the Pigeon house, see whether done?

'...wee came to Sir Th. Cobb's house, & going to Dinner somewhat late, wee had not done untill almost night, & soe I forbade any Supper...'

⁸ See 'The Church Militant: William Bew, Vicar of Adderbury and Bishop of Llandaff', N. Allen, *C&CH* 14(6), Summer 1999, pp.134-155.