

Churchwarden's Accounts, Worksop, 1601

Anno d[omi]ni 1601

Churchwardens Oliver Cooper } { Collectors for ye poore { James Woodhouse
 John Donston } { Guilbert Clayton
 Overseers for ye poore { Christopher Champion Will[jia]m Roland
 John Fentyman Thomas Hancke

Layde out by the Churchwardens about the church
 busines[s] as followeth

First at ye visitations holden at Retforth Aprill 24 th for ye booke of Articles	xij d
It[em] for Southwell money	iiij s iiij d
for examininge the articles	viiij d
for putting in of the p[re]sentment	vj d
for our dinners & our horsmeat	iiij s xj d
for drinke & other charges	xij d
for the apparitors fees	xij d
to John Dalton for goinge into Yorkshire to Oldfeld yt [that] should have bene o[u]r vicar }	xviiiij d
to Thomas Hardwicke for bords & nayles to ye church yates & mendinge the[m]	xiiiij d
to Mr Kellom for mending ye clocke	xvj d
for iij bellropes	ix s
for ringinge on the coronation daye	ix s vj d
for pavinge in the church	xij d
for shiftinge of ye stalles & making of new stalles & nayles to them	viiij s xj d
for bordes for stalles	iiij s iiij d
for bords for ye pulpit & for nayles hookes & bands & other yron stufte for ye bells }	xxj d
for breade & wine at Christmas	v s
for bread & wine at Easter	xiiiij s
for takinge up of Mr Bolles stall to John Chester	iiij d
for ij foxe heades to Will[jia]m Brand	ij d
for Mr Rodes dinner & his mans to Henrie Cottingham	x d
for putting in of the register for parchment and writing of it for the yeare before }	iiij s iiij d
for Lattice to a windowe	viiij d
for grease & candles on ye coronation daye	ix d
for a preachers victualls to Roger Atkinson	ij s
for washing ye church clothes	xij d
for putting in of the register for parchment & writinge of it for this yeare }	iiij s vj d
	Some disbursed 4 li - 2 s - 3 d

Receipts by the sayde churchwardens

First in ye sesment ['assessment'] booke as by ye same maye appeare	iiij li x s iiij d
It[em] for ye seatinge of men for ye stalles new removed	vi s ij d
It[em] for Rob[er]t Bacon his grave in ye church	xj s viij d
	Some rec[eived] 4 li - 2 s - 2 d

Notes

1. The list of names at the top of the accounts shows who held which office at the time. Oliver Cooper and John Donston were churchwardens at the time, James Woodhouse and Gilbert Clayton were collectors of monies for the poor, and Christopher Champion, William Roland, John Fentyman and Thomas Hancke were the overseers of the poor.
2. The accounts are divided into two parts: the first relate to expenditure (the sum 'disbursed') and the second to income (the sum received). The accounts are listed with the item on the left and the amount on the right. Occasionally entries begin with the word 'item', but most just list what the money is for. Figures are given in Roman numerals, with the final 'i' being written as 'j'. The symbol 'li' indicates pounds (Latin 'libra'), 's' is shillings and 'd' is pence (Latin 'denarii').
3. The first entry in most churchwarden's accounts relates to money spent by the churchwardens when they went to see the ecclesiastical superior (an archdeacon or bishop, called an 'ordinary'), sworn in to office. This event took place at one of the ordinary's 'visitations'. Here it took place in Retford on 24 April. Many words are spelt here with an additional 'e' on the end, e.g. 'booke'. Other spellings are unusual, such as 'Aprill'.
4. The Southwell money may have been payments made for the upkeep of the minster at Southwell.
5. Twice a year the churchwardens had to attend the visitation of the ordinary to 'present' to him whatever was amiss or irregular in their parish, which might include schism, adultery, whoredom, incest, drunkenness and swearing. The statements of fact, made on oath, which the churchwardens made before the ordinary were called 'presentments', and this fourth line in the accounts covers the expenses for this.
6. Food and drink may appear in the accounts; including here food for the churchwardens' horses ('horsmeat').
7. The apparitor was the official messenger of the archdeacon's court, and line 7 relates to fees payable to him.
8. One of the main tasks of the churchwardens was to maintain the fabric and decoration of the church. Many of the entries in the accounts above reflect this:
 - Boards and nails for mending the church gates
 - Mending the clock
 - Paving in the church
 - Boards and nails for new church stalls and removal of the old ones
9. The church bells were rung to mark many joyful occasions, including saints' eves, Saturdays (the vigil before Sunday), matins and nones (morning and afternoon prayer, which are also part of the Catholic canonical hours), and many festivals. Other events were often marked in this way and here the church bells were rung on the anniversary of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth I. There is also an entry for bell ropes.
10. An entry relates to boards, nails and hooks for the pulpit, along with other iron 'stuff' for the bells. Pulpits generally increased in height and size during the seventeenth century; some were even mounted on wheels to move around the congregation.
11. Churchwardens were required to furnish the bread and wine for Communion, as well as cloths, vessels and ornaments for services. Accounts over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries show a considerable amount of communion wine being purchased. Here, bread and wine is purchased specially for communion at Christmas and Easter.
12. In 1566 an act was passed which said that the churchwardens, along with six parishioners, should assess holders of land in the parish for the destruction of vermin. The heads of the animals should be presented to the wardens and then destroyed, for which a payment to the individual would be made. In these accounts, Mr Brand would have received such a payment for the two fox heads he presented.

13. The accounts include two sets of parchment purchased for the parish register, where baptisms, marriages and burials were written. The first set probably relates to the contemporary copy of the register sent each year to the Bishop, called Bishops' Transcripts. The second set would be for the coming year's register.
14. Some of the heaviest expenses in earlier accounts relate to light, with much being spent on candles, beeswax and tallow (tallow being used for lighting, rather than ceremonial purposes). Here additional grease and candles were purchased for the celebration of the anniversary of the coronation.
15. Churchwardens needed to make sure that curates were properly licensed and approved, and that 'strange preachers' were only admitted to the church for preaching if they had evidence of their ordination. The accounts here provide for the food or victuals of preacher Roger Atkinson, so presumably he was able to show his preaching credentials.
16. Entries relating to washing vestments and cloths are common, such as the one here. Other common entries not featured here relate to surplices, fonts and holy water.