

**Durham Priory – Master of Wearmouth’s Accounts**  
**(performances are at Durham except where marked W)**

**Introduction**

1343-1534, but there is no relevant material before 1362; one membrane, length 273-804 mm., width 188-310 mm. Single-column, with undivided expenses; there is usually a separate line for each item, but in the 1420s there is a tendency to group pairs of items into a single line. Until 1486 the usual terminal date is the Monday after Ascension, with the following relevant exceptions:

1420 until 1425 – Michaelmas (29<sup>th</sup> September)

1425-6 – Michaelmas to Monday after Ascension

1446-7 – Purification of the Virgin (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1446) until Monday after Ascension 1447 – a single account preceded by a gap in the surviving accounts from Monday after Ascension 1439.

1466-7 – 8<sup>th</sup> December to Monday after Ascension (preceded by a gap in the surviving accounts from Monday after Ascension 1458).

From 1486 onwards the terminal date is Pentecost.

Like Holy Island and Jarrow, Wearmouth (now Monkwearmouth) combined a glorious Anglo-Saxon past with a rather undistinguished late medieval sequel. Founded by Benedict Biscop in 674, it had been Bede’s first monastery;<sup>1</sup> like all the other Northumbrian coastal monasteries, it succumbed to Viking attacks, though a fine Anglo-Saxon tower survives there. Along with Jarrow, it was re-founded ca. 1075 under the influence of Bede’s writings,<sup>2</sup> but its monks were transferred to Durham in 1083, and it is not known when monastic life was re-established there after that.<sup>3</sup> In the later Middle Ages it was a small and rather impoverished cell; its small but regular payments towards the Almonry Bishop at Durham and its one or two minstrel payments (see 1361-2 and 1362) are therefore much as one might have expected.

**Texts**

**1361-2** (10<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> May) (W)  
**Master of Wearmouth’s Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Item Petro Cruther ex curialitate ij.s.iiij.d.  
. . .

**1362** (30<sup>th</sup> May – 29<sup>th</sup> September) (W)  
**Master of Wearmouth’s Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Item diuersis ministrallis per tempus compoti ij.s.iiij.d.  
. . .

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<sup>1</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History* V, ch. 24 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors 566-67).

<sup>2</sup> Dom David Knowles, *Heads of Religious Houses 940-1216*, Cambridge, 1972, 92; Surtees Soc. 29, Preface, xii-xxxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Dobson, *Durham Priory* 311-12.

**1425-6** (29<sup>th</sup> September – 13<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .

Et in pane Vino & *servisia emptis* x s. vj d. Et *Episcopo Elemosinarie* xx d.

xij s. ij d.

. . .

**1426-7** (13<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

. . .

Et *domino Willelmo Hylton pro Agistamento animalium* ix s. Et *Episcopo Elemosinarie* xx d. x s. viij d.

. . .

**1427-8** (2<sup>nd</sup> June – 17<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .

Item *domino Willelmo hylton pro agistamento* xiiij s. et *episcopo elimosinarie* xx d. – xiiij s. viij d.

. . .

**1428-9** (17<sup>th</sup> May – 9<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

. . .

Item in *agistamento* – viij s. ij d. & *Episcopo elemosinarie* – xx d. - ix s. x d.

. . .

**1429-30** (9<sup>th</sup> May – ?29<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .

Item in *agistamentis animalium* xj s. viij d. Et *Episcopo elemosinarie* xx d.

xiiij iiij d.

. . .

**1430-1** (29<sup>th</sup> May – 14<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .

Item *episcopo elemosinarie* xx d.

. . .

**1432-3** (2<sup>nd</sup> June – 25<sup>th</sup> May)

**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Item in donis datis *episcopo* puerili de anno preterito & presento iij s. i<i>ij <d>.

**1433-4** (25<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
. . . Item in donis datis *episcopo* puerili xx d.  
Empcionis . . .

**1434-5** (10<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

. . .  
Item in donis datis *episcopo* puerili xx d.  
. . .

**1435-6** (30<sup>th</sup> May – 21<sup>st</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Item *Episcopo* puerili *Elemosinarie* xx d.  
. . .

**1436-7** (21<sup>st</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

*Superplusagia*: . . .  
Item *Episcopo* puerili *elemosinarie* xx d.  
. . .

**1446-7** (2<sup>nd</sup> February – 22<sup>nd</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Et *Episcopo* puerili *Elemosinarie* xx d.

**1447-8** (22<sup>nd</sup> May – 6<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
Et *episcopo* puerili *elemosinarie* xx d.  
. . .

**1448-9** (6<sup>th</sup> May – 26<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Master of Wearmouth's Account** DUL

Expense: . . .  
d  
. . .

<Et> <i>Episcopo</i> puerili elemosinarie	xx d.
...	
<b>1449-50</b> (26 <sup>th</sup> May – 18 <sup>th</sup> May)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	
d	
...	
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili Elemosinarie	xx d.
...	
<b>1450-1</b> (18 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> June)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	
d	
...	
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili Elemosinarie	xx d.
...	
<b>1452-3</b> (22 <sup>nd</sup> May – 14 <sup>th</sup> May)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	
d	
...	
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili Elemosinarie <i>hoc anno</i>	xx d.
...	
<b>1453-4</b> (14 <sup>th</sup> May – 3 <sup>rd</sup> June)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	
Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili elimosinarie <i>hoc anno</i>	xx d.
...	
<b>1454-5</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> June – 19 <sup>th</sup> May)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	
d	
...	
Et <i>Episcopo</i> pu<eri>li e<****>sinarie	xx d.
...	
<b>1457-8</b> (30 <sup>th</sup> May – 15 <sup>th</sup> May)	
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL
Expense: ...	

d

...		
Et Episcopo puerili <i>Elemosinarie</i>		xx d.
<b>1466-7</b> (8 <sup>th</sup> December – 11 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili <i>elemosinarie</i>		xx d.
<b>1467-8</b> (11 <sup>th</sup> May – 30 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et Episcopo puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1468-9</b> (30 <sup>th</sup> May – 15 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et Episcopo puerili		xx.d.
...		
<b>1469-70</b> (15 <sup>th</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et Episcopo puerili		xx.d.
...		
<b>1469-70</b> (15 <sup>th</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili		xx d. <sup>4</sup>
<b>1471-2</b> (27 <sup>th</sup> May – 11 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et Episcopo puerili		xx.d.
...		
<b>1472-3</b> (11 <sup>th</sup> May – 31 <sup>st</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et Episcopo puerili.		xx.d. <sup>5</sup>
...		
<b>1473-4</b> (31 <sup>st</sup> May – 23 <sup>rd</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	

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<sup>4</sup> This item has been added as an afterthought, in a different ink but the same hand, squeezed in between the rest of the subsection and its total.

<sup>5</sup> This sum has been added over an erasure, in a different ink.

Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx.d.
. . .		
<b>1474-5</b> (23 <sup>rd</sup> May – 8 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1479-80</b> (24 <sup>th</sup> May – 15 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
°Et <i>episcopo puerili</i>		xx d. <sup>o6</sup>
<b>1480-1</b> (15 <sup>th</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
<b>1482-3</b> (20 <sup>th</sup> May – 12 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
d		
. . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1483-4</b> (12 <sup>th</sup> May – 31 <sup>st</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1484-5</b> (31 <sup>st</sup> May – 16 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1485-6</b> (16 <sup>th</sup> May – 8 <sup>th</sup> May)		

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<sup>6</sup> This item has been added, probably in a different hand, between the last line of the subsection paragraph and its total.

<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
...		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
...		
<b>1486-7</b> (14 <sup>th</sup> May – 3 <sup>rd</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense <i>necessarie</i> : ...		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
...		
<b>1487-8</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> June – 25 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
...		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
...		
<b>1488-9</b> (25 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense <i>necessarie</i> : ...		
Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		x... <sup>7</sup>
...		
<b>1491-2</b> (22 <sup>nd</sup> May – 10 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>episcopo Puerili</i>		xx d.
...		
<b>1492-3</b> (10 <sup>th</sup> June – 26 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
<i>necessarie</i> Et <i>Episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
...		
<b>1493-4</b> (26 <sup>th</sup> May – 18 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>episcopo puerili</i>		xx d.
<b>1494-5</b> (18 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> June)		

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<sup>7</sup> The right side of this roll is badly damaged, and the rest of the sum is lost.

<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
<i>Necessarie</i> Et <i>Episcopo</i> Puerili		xx d.
<b>1495-6</b> (?7 <sup>th</sup> June – ?22 <sup>nd</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
<i>necessarie</i> Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
<b>1497-8</b> (14 <sup>th</sup> May – 3 <sup>rd</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1499-1500</b> (19 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1500-1</b> (7 <sup>th</sup> June – 30 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1501-2</b> (30 <sup>th</sup> May – 15 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1502-3</b> (15 <sup>th</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		
Et <i>soluti</i> <i>Episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
. . .		
<b>1503-4</b> (4 <sup>th</sup> June – 26 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: . . .		

Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1505-6</b> (11 <sup>th</sup> May – 31 <sup>st</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1514-5</b> (4 <sup>th</sup> June – 27 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense Necessarie: ...		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> Puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1517-8</b> (31 <sup>st</sup> May – 23 <sup>rd</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> Puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1526-7</b> (20 <sup>th</sup> May – 9 <sup>th</sup> June)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>episcopo</i> puerili		xx d.
...		
<b>1533-4</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> June – 24 <sup>th</sup> May)		
<b>Master of Wearmouth's Account</b>	DUL	
Expense: ...		
Et <i>Episcopo</i> puerili <sup>'xx d.'</sup> Et cantoribus <sup>'xx'</sup> ad ludum suum		iiij s. iiij d.
...		

### Textual Notes

- 1361-2: Text from B; A omits the last two words.  
1425-6: Text from B, the clearer of two substantially identical fair copies.  
1426-7: Subsection headings lost.  
1427-8: Text from A; B substantially identical.  
1428-9: Text from B; A is faded but substantially identical. Neither copy seems ever to have had any subsection headings.  
1429-30: heading slightly damaged, and the day of the week on which this account closes is lost; it is probably, as usual, the Monday after Ascension, when the account for the following year begins.

- 1433-4: Text from A; B substantially identical but without subsection headings.
- 1434-5: This account has no subsection headings.
- 1435-6: Text from B, without the surplus recorded from the previous year; A (fair copy with surplus) is here substantially identical, but has no subsection headings.
- 1436-7: Text from B, which takes up the uncorrected deficit from 1435-6 (B); A (corrected fair copy) is here substantially identical, but has no subsection headings.
- 1446-7: The heading of this account dates it to 1446-7; since it is normal practice in the Durham Priory accounts to count the numerical year as ending on 25<sup>th</sup> March of the year following, this would lead us to expect an account covering about four months. However, the heading also says that the account is for a full year and sixteen weeks, so the Master must be counting the year as ending on 31<sup>st</sup> December, and this account runs from Candlemas 1446 to the Monday after Ascension 1447.
- 1447-8: Text from B, which has one correction; A (corrected fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1448-9: text from A, the clearer of two damaged fair copies; B substantially identical where legible, and confirms the letters damaged in A.
- 1452-3: Text from A; B substantially identical.
- 1453-4: Text from A; B substantially identical.
- 1484-5: Text from A; B substantially identical.
- 1485-6: This account has no subsection headings.
- 1487-8: Subsection heading lost. Heading slightly damaged, and closing year legible only as '148\*', but the account is clearly for one year.
- 1491-2: Text from A; B substantially identical.
- 1495-6: Heading slightly damaged; the year is visible but the opening feast day is lost, and the closing date is 'to the same feast'. Extra expenses carried over into this account match the deficit at the end of the account for 1494-5, and the opening and closing dates are probably Pentecost, as usual in this period.
- 1501-2: The heading gives the opening year as 1401, but the closing year as 1502 – but this Master of Wearmouth, Henry Dalton, also renders the accounts for the period 1502-6.
- 1503-4: Text from A; B substantially identical for this item, but has the subsection heading 'Superplusagia'.
- 1514-5: Text from A; B substantially identical.
- 1526-7: This roll is scappily written and heavily abbreviated; it looks like a draft.
- 1533-4: The sums for the individual items are placed directly above the words 'puerili' and 'cantoribus'.

### End Notes

- 1361-2:** Peter Cruder, Cruther or Crowder also appears in the Bursar's accounts 1358-60 and the Hostillar's account for 1361-2 (see End Note on the last of these). It seems likely that he was a player of the *crwth* (a stringed instrument like a lyre, but played with a bow), but 'Cruther' could possibly be simply a surname.
- 1473-4:** Despite this entry, it seems likely that there was no Boy Bishop ceremony in 1474; the Jarrow account for the same year cancels its Boy Bishop payment

(qv, with End Note), and the other five surviving relevant accounts all omit it. It seems probable that the Master of Wearmouth simply omitted to cancel the item. Possibly significantly, 1475 is the first year in which a payment to the Feretrar's office for the Boy Bishop is recorded (see the Prior of Finchale's account), and this probably implies a reorganisation. Similarly, in 1405 the Pror of Finchale's account records a payment although the Hostillar's account explains that there was no Almonry Bishop ceremony in that year 'because of the wars at that time'.

**1480-1:** This payment is confirmed by the list of receipts for the Boy Bishop in the Feretrar's account for 1480-1.