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## Durham Priory Chamberlain's Accounts

### Introduction

1334-1533, but relevant material appears only between 1350 and 1528; one membrane, length between 474 and 1001 mm., width 199-355 mm. Single column; until 1352 expenses are undivided, but thereafter they are in subsections grouped according to subject matter, at first with a separate line for each item. From 1403-14 there is a tendency to group more than one item into a single line, and in the 1440's some accounts have continuous subsection paragraphs. From 1448 until 1499 there is again a separate line for each item, after which continuous paragraphs return until the end of the series.

Terminal dates are usually on the Monday after Ascension, with the following exceptions:

1414 – Monday after Ascension to St. Cuthbert in September (4<sup>th</sup> September)

1440-1 – Friday before Pentecost to Friday after Ascension

1441-2 – Friday after Ascension

1442-3 – Martinmas to Monday after Ascension

1527-8 – Pentecost.

The chief responsibility of the Chamberlain was for the provision of clothing.<sup>1</sup>

### Texts

1350-51 (10<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account**

DCD - Cham. acs

Expense: . . . Item in elemosina *per tempus compoti*. & *episcopo* Elemosinarie –  
iiij.s.x.d. . . .

Expenses: . . . Item, in alms for the period of the account, and to the Almonry Bishop – 4  
s. 10 d. . . .

1351-2 (30<sup>th</sup> May – 21<sup>st</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account**

DCD - Cham. acs

. . . In elemosina data *per tempus compoti* & *episcopo* elemosinarie iij s iiij d . . .

. . . In alms given during the period of the account, and to the Almonry Bishop – 3 s. 4 d. . . .

1363-4 (15<sup>th</sup> May – 6<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account**

DCD - Cham. acs

d

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<sup>1</sup> See Fowler, Surtees Soc. 103, Introduction xxxv-xxxviii; Dobson, *Durham Priory* 62; *The Rites of Durham*, Surtees Soc. 107, 100.

Dona: . . .  
Et *episcopo Elemosinarie* ij s  
...  
Gifts: . . .  
And to the Almonry Bishop 2 s.  
...

**1364-5** (6<sup>th</sup> May – 26<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: . . .  
Et *Episcopo Elemosinarie* iij s ii...  
...  
Gifts: . . .  
And to the Almonry Bishop 3 s. <?4 d.> . . .  
...

**1365-6** (26<sup>th</sup> May – 18<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: . . .  
Et *Episcopo Elemosinarie* ij s  
...  
Gifts: . . .  
And to the Almonry Bishop 2 s.  
...

**1366-7** (18<sup>th</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Dona: Et *episcopo Elemosinarie ex gratia*<sup>1</sup> ij s  
...  
Gifts: . . .  
And to the Almonry Bishop as a favour 2 s.  
...

**1367-8** (31<sup>st</sup> May – 22<sup>nd</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Dona: *Item dati Episcopo Elemosinarie* .ij s.  
...  
Gifts: *Item, given to the Almonry Bishop* 2 s.  
...

**1370-71** (27<sup>th</sup> May – 19<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

<D>ona: *Item Episcopo Elemosinarie ex dono Camerarii* ij s.  
...

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<sup>1</sup> A now omits the words 'ex gratia', but the line is faded, and it is not certain that A never included them.

<G>ifts: Item, to the Almonry Bishop as a gift from the Chamberlain 2 s.  
...

1372-3 (10<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: Item *Episcopo Elemosinarie ex dono Camerarii* ij s

Gifts: Item, to the Almonry Bishop as a gift from the Chamberlain 2 s.  
...

1374-5 (15<sup>th</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: ...  
Item *Willelmo<sup>rh</sup> Arpour ad ludum apud Beaurepaire* xij.d.

Gifts: ...  
Item, to William Harpour at the holiday at Bearpark 12 d.

1376-7 (?26<sup>th</sup> May – 11<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: ...  
*Episcopo Elemosinarie ex dono Camerarij* ij.s.

Gifts: ...  
To the Almonry Bishop as a gift from the Chamberlain 2 s.

1377-8 (11<sup>th</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona: ...  
*Episcopo Elemosinarie ex dono Camerarij* ij s

Gifts: ...  
To the Almonry Bishop as a gift from the Chamberlain 2 s.

1402-3 (8<sup>th</sup> May – 28<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: ...  
°Item *episcopo elemosinarie ex curialitate*<sup>1</sup> ij s vj d°

Gifts and Presents: ...  
Item, to the Almonry Bishop as a gratuity 2 s. 6 d.

1403-4 (28<sup>th</sup> May – 12<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: ...  
Et *Episcopo Elemosinarie* ij s

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<sup>1</sup> B omits 'ex curialitate'.

...  
 Gifts and Presents: ...  
     And to the Almonry Bishop 2 s.  
 ...

**1404-5** (12<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona:  
 <& exennia ...  
 Et in – vno dono Iohanni Arr .v s. [~~Episcopo Elemosinarie ij s~~]  
 Cantoribus a<d> n.....

Gifts:  
 <and> Presents ...  
 And as – a gift to John Arr, 5 s. [~~To the Almonry Bishop 2 s.~~] To the  
 Singers at <Christmas?> ...  
 ...

**1407-8** (9<sup>th</sup> May – 28<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: ...  
 °Item episcopo Elemosinarie ij s°

Gifts and presents: ...  
 Item, to the Almonry Bishop 3 s.

**1411-12** (25<sup>th</sup> May – 16<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: ...  
 & Episcopo Elemosinarie ij s vj d

Gifts and presents: ...  
 And to the Almonry Bishop 2 s. 6 d.  
 ...

**1412-13** (16<sup>th</sup> May – 5<sup>th</sup> June)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: ...  
 Et Episcopo Elemosinarie ij s vj d.

Gifts and presents: ...  
 And to the Almonry Bishop 2 s. 6 d.  
 ...

**1413-14** (5<sup>th</sup> June – 21<sup>st</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

D<o>n<a> & Exennia: ...  
 Et episcopo elemosinarie ij s.<sup>1</sup>  
 ...

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<sup>1</sup> B 'ij s vj d.', but this seems to be mechanical copying of the entry from the previous year's account.

Gifts and Presents: . . .  
And to the Almonry Bishop 3 s.  
. . .

1414 (21<sup>st</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> September)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exhennia: . . . *Item episcopo Elemosinarie* ij s. vj.d. . . .  
Gifts and presents: . . . *Item, to the Almonry Bishop* 2 s. 6 d. . . .

1440-41 (13<sup>th</sup> May – 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense *necessarie*: . . .  
Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s<sup>o</sup>

Necessary Expenses: . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.  
. . .

1441-2 (25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May – 11<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Expense *necessarie*: . . .  
Et *Episcopo puerili elemosinarie* xx d

Necessary Expenses: . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 20 d.  
. . .

1442-3 (11<sup>th</sup> November – 3<sup>rd</sup> June)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Dona & exennia: . . .  
Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s

Gifts and Presents: . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.

1443-4 (3<sup>rd</sup> June – 25<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

.xp.se *necessarie*: . . .  
Et *Episcopo pu.... Elemosinarie* ij s

Necessary Expenses: . . .  
And to the Almonry B<oy> Bishop 2 s.

1444-5 (25<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Expense *necessarie*: . . .  
Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s

Necessary Expenses: . . .

And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.

1447-8 (22<sup>nd</sup> May – 6<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs  
d

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

Necessary expenses: . . . And to the Almonry Boy Bishop – 20 d. . . .

1448-9 (6<sup>th</sup> May – 26<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

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

Necessary:  
expenses . . . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 20 d.

1449-50 (26<sup>th</sup> May – 18<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs  
d

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

Necessary expenses: . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 20 d.

1450-1 (18<sup>th</sup> May – 7<sup>th</sup> June)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs  
d

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

Necessary:  
expenses . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 20 d.

1452-3 (22<sup>nd</sup> May – 14<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs  
d

Expense:  
*necessarie* . . .  
Et *episcopo Puerili Elemosinarie ex consuetudine* xx d.

Necessary:  
expenses . . .  
And to the Almonry Boy Bishop according to custom 20 d.

1453-4 (14<sup>th</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs  
d

Expense:  
*necessarie* . . .  
Et *Episcopo Puerili Elimosinarie ex consuetudine* xx d

Necessary: ...  
expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop according to custom 20 d.  
...

1454-5 (3<sup>rd</sup> June – 19<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense: ...  
necessarie Et *Episcopo* puerili *Elimosinarie* ex consuetudine xx d.

Necessary: ...  
expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop according to custom 20 d.  
...

1455-6 (19<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Expense: ...  
necessarie Et *Episcopo* puerili *Elimosinarie* ex consuetudine xx d.

Necessary: ...  
expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop according to custom 20 d.  
...

1456-7 (10<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

d  
Expense: ...  
necessarie Et *Episcopo* puerili *Elimosinarie* ex consuetudine xx d.

Necessary: ...  
expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop according to custom 20 d.  
...

1457-8 (30<sup>th</sup> May - ?15<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

...  
... <sinarie> ex <con>suetudine xx d.

...  
... <of the Almonry> according to <cus>tom 20 d.  
...

1478-9 (?4<sup>th</sup> May – ?24<sup>th</sup> May)

**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

<Ex>pense: ...

<nec>essarie

d

...  
Et *Episcopo* puerili *pro hoc anno & Anno proximo precedente per annum = ij s. =* iiij s.

...  
 <Nec>essary: ...  
 <ex>enses And to the Boy Bishop for this year and the immediately preceding year, 2 s.  
 per year = 4 s.  
 ...

**1480-81** (?15<sup>th</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense: ...  
*necessarie* Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s  
 Necessary: ...  
 expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.

**1481-2** (4<sup>th</sup> June – 20<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense: ...  
*necessarie* Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s  
 Necessary: ...  
 expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.

**1486-7** (8<sup>th</sup> May – 28<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense: ...  
*necessarie*  
 d  
 ...  
 Et *Episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* ij s  
 ...  
 Necessary: ...  
 expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop 2 s.  
 ...

**1494-5** (12<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense *necessarie*: ...  
 d  
 Et *episcopo puerili Elemosinarie*  
 ...  
 Necessary: ...  
 expenses And to the Almonry Boy Bishop  
 ...

**1498-9** (ca. 28<sup>th</sup> May – ca. 13<sup>th</sup> May)  
**Durham Priory Chamberlain's Account** DCD - Cham. acs

Expense *necessarie*: ...  
 Et *episcopo puerili Elemosinarie* hoc anno ij s  
 ...





In some years, the Chamberlain's accounts are without headings, so that years and terminal dates have to be identified from other evidence, which is specified for each relevant year in the list below. In some years, they survive in more than one copy; wherever possible, I have preferred to use drafts rather than fair copies. Details for Chamberlain's accounts are as follows:

- 1351-2: Heading damaged; the opening date is established from the opening balance, which agrees with the closing balance of the account ending 30<sup>th</sup> May 1351.
- 1363-4: Heading damaged; opening date established from the opening balance, which agrees with the closing balance of the account ending 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1363; closing date from the arrears taken up in the following account.
- 1364-5: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) is substantially identical. The sum for this item is damaged in both A and B. Heading lost from B and damaged in A, but year and terminal dates are legible.
- 1365-6: From B (draft without balance); A (fair copy with balance) is damaged, but substantially identical except that the sum is missing.
- 1366-7: From B, but the paragraph heading, lost from B, is from A (duplicate fair copy); for possible variant, see Textual Note.
- 1376-7: Heading lost; closing date established from the closing balance, which equals the opening balance of the account beginning on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1377. Details of Waste ('Vasta') cover two terms (= one year), and the opening date is assumed to be the Monday after Ascension, as is usual in these accounts.
- 1402-3: From A; for variant in B (duplicate fair copy) see Textual Note. In both copies, this item and the preceding one are added at the end of the paragraph in a different hand, possibly that of the Chamberlain, John Barton, but the total for the subsection includes them.
- 1403-4: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical. Throughout this section, items are grouped in pairs within each line and added together at the right-hand side, but the grouping of items appears to be random.
- 1404-5: Items are grouped in pairs, as in the preceding year; for the cancellation of the Boy Bishop payment, see End Note and Hostillar's account 1405-6. Heading damaged; opening date from the close of the preceding account, whose balance is taken up at the beginning of this one.
- 1407-8: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical. In both copies, this item is added at the end of the paragraph in a different contemporary hand, but is included in the subsection total.
- 1411-12: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1412-13: From B; A (duplicate fair copy) is damaged, but substantially identical so far as it is legible.
- 1413-14: From D (revised draft); A (fair copy) substantially identical; C (duplicate fair copy) is damaged and lacks this section; the sum of 2 s. 6 d. in B (first draft, see Textual Note) seems to result from mechanical copying of the item from the account for the previous year.
- 1414: From C (draft on paper); A and B (duplicate fair copies on parchment) substantially identical, but group this item with others (soulsilver for 15 weeks and boots and slippers for William Gray) which seem to have no connection with the Boy Bishop.
- 1440-41: From B (draft, with inventory), where this item has been added in a different hand between two of the lines of the paragraph; A (fair copy) incorporates it on a line of its own in the same hand as the rest of the account. In both A and B, the heading gives the closing date as 'Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May', but 25<sup>th</sup> May 1441

- was a Thursday; but as the account also opens on a Friday, the terminal date here should probably be May 26<sup>th</sup>.
- 1441-2: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical, but with damaged paragraph heading; the opening date is given as 'Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May', but see note for previous year.
- 1442-3: From B; A (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1443-4: Heading damaged; opening date taken from closing date of the preceding account.
- 1444-5: From B; A (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical but with damaged paragraph heading.
- 1447-8: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1448-9: From B; A (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical but less legible.
- 1449-50: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1450-51: From B (copy without *status*); A and C (fair copies with *status*) substantially identical, but paragraph heading damaged in A.
- 1453-4: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1454-5: From A; B (duplicate fair copy) substantially identical.
- 1455-6: From B; A (duplicate fair copy) has lost its paragraph heading, but is otherwise substantially identical.
- 1456-7: Heading damaged; closing date taken from opening of the following account.
- 1457-8: Heading and text damaged, but opening date is legible, and closing date is 'Monday after ....', assumed to be Ascension, as usual in these accounts. The paragraph heading and much of the item itself are lost, but the sum, surviving wording and place in the paragraph suggest a routine Boy Bishop payment.
- 1478-9: Heading damaged, but opening year legible, and the account is for a single year; closing date partially legible as 'Monday...'; terminal dates are assumed to be Monday after the Ascension, as usual in these accounts.
- 1480-81: Heading damaged, but opening year legible; the account begins '... after Ascension' and is said to end at 'the same feast'; but this is shown to be a loose usage for 'the same day' by the account for 1481-2, which begins on the Monday after Ascension, as usual. The same usage appears in the headings of a number of subsequent accounts (e.g. 1504-5 etc).
- 1498-9: Heading damaged, but opening and closing years are legible, and Ascension is named in connection with the opening date; terminal dates are assumed to be Monday after Ascension, as usual.
- 1527-8: The top left-hand corner of the dorse is missing, and the paragraph heading has therefore been lost.

### End Notes

- 1374-5: It cannot be certain that William Harpour was a performer, but the small sum and the association with the *ludus* make it probable that he was, and virtually rule out the possibility that he might have been an otherwise unknown member of the Durham family of carpenters of that name. He may be identical with William Harpour of Wolviston (see Bursar's accounts between 1358-9 and 1371-3), or possibly with William Blyndharpour of Newcastle (see Bursar's accounts between 1357-8 and 1363).
- 1404-5: The reason for the cancellation of the Boy Bishop payment here is provided by the Hostillar's account for 1405-6 (qv), which explains that there was no Boy Bishop in 1405 'because of the wars at that time' (i.e. Archbishop Scrope's rebellion in May 1405).

- 1494-5: This item is one of two in the paragraph where the sum spent has not been entered, and they cannot be calculated, because the paragraph total is correct without them.
- 1525-6: The inclusion of a Boy Bishop payment under 'Repairs' seems odd, but the same is done in the Jarrow accounts between 1454 and 1457; the translation 'Reparations' (i.e. payments due to someone else, though not necessarily as compensation for a wrong done to them) may be preferable here.