NOTES


2 The Hickling register resembles those of Thetford Priory and Mettingham College, recently discussed elsewhere by the present writer (Theatre Notebook, 32, (1978), 4-11; idem 33 (1979), 125-31). It is a large paper volume (13 inches by 8½ inches), and the priory accounts occupy folios 1-145 in the early but post-medieval foliation. Thereafter are family accounts and memoranda of persons to whom Hickling passed after the Dissolution; see Hackman, *loc cit*.

3 J.E. Thorold Rogers noticed the MS in *Notes and Queries*, 5th Series, 10, (1878), 494, mentioning the reference to the king's waits in 1517-18; he used it in compiling his *History of Agriculture and Prices* (1888).


6 The system of accounting used in registers of this type is explained (in the case of the Thetford example) by J.T. Harvey in *Norfolk Archaeology*, 27 (1938-40), 4-6.

7 Beccles, Suffolk.

8 So in MS, and of uncertain meaning. ? 'Christmastime.'

9 Norwich.

10 Northrepps, near Cromer, Norfolk. The word 'ludo' is repeated after 'hoc' in this entry, but deleted.

11 Evidently a lay servant of the priory. He is often mentioned in the accounts.

12 Charles Brandon, ninth Duke of Suffolk.

13 John De Vere, fourteenth Earl of Oxford.

14 Robert Brune, prior of Holy Trinity (the cathedral priory), Norwich, 1504-29.

JOHN WASSON

Records from the Abbey of St Benet of Hulme, Norfolk

A few account rolls containing early references to entertainment in Norfolk have recently been examined, though too late for inclusion in the forthcoming Malone Society Collections of the dramatic records of Norfolk and Suffolk (1980). One of the entries is of particular interest, as it contains a very early reference (1373) to a village play.

The abbey of St Benet of Hulme once stood in the Norfolk marshes, near the bank of the Ant a mile south of Ludham. Every trace of Hulme and of the abbey
church has disappeared; only a portion of the great south gate still stands, its central arch having later served as the main supporting beam of a windmill, itself now derelict. Despite its remote and marshy location, St Benet's was a rich abbey, its church half as large as Norwich cathedral. The parishioners of Worstead, whose manor and advowson were once among St Benet's many possessions, still hold an annual service at the abbey gate on the first Sunday in August.

Like the physical remains, the written records of St Benet's are disappointingly meagre. The few extant account rolls are at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. They are not in the Tanner collection, where one would expect to find them, nor are they listed in Cox's Catalogue of the MSS in the College Libraries at Oxford. They are listed, however, in the Index to Rolls. Altogether, ten rolls are extant, shelf-marked simply 'Norfolk Rolls, 71-80.' Of these, three are cellarer's accounts, three are sacrist's accounts, two are chamberlains' rolls, one is an account of the prior as pietancier, and one is a precentor's roll. Their dates range from 1373 to 1536, and only two contain any certain reference to entertainment. This shortage of references may be misleading: of the ten rolls, only the earliest, a cellarer's account for 1372-3, is both appropriate and detailed. The cellarer's account for 1510-11 is a paper draft, and many of the entries are merely summarized. The other account, for 1516-17, while a parchment roll, is even briefer and does not list any of the gifts at all.

What we can tell about dramatic and musical entertainment at St Benet's, then, depends almost entirely on the single cellarer's account of 1372-3. Even it is incomplete, although it extends to four membranes, 250 x 600mm, two with additional double columns of entries on their dorse — a total of 4800mm of entries in rather small writing. Fortunately, the gratuities are preserved on mb 1d, though as the outside membrane this is the most badly faded and least legible. But for such an early date, and considering the remoteness of the abbey (perhaps accessible only by boat), the account roll contains a surprising number of pertinent entries. One can only conjecture how much a complete series of such cellarer's rolls would reveal. We are left, however, with only the tantalizing glimpse of entertainment at St Benet's afforded by the following entries.

Cellarer's Account, Norfolk Rolls 71 (1372-3)
mb 1d, col 1

Dona data Magnatibus & hominibus (de premita)

... Item ij trompourers in ludo de hornycyes
xij d

mb 1d, col 2

vni ursori Regis
viij d

... Duobus trumphporus & j pyper in die natalis domini
xij d

20
garconi Roberti Wayte precepto abbis
   vj d
ij pipers cum domino Rogero de Mortimer
   xx d
ij pipers in die epiphanie
   xx d
Vni aghneri3 & iij pipers cum duce lancastrie
   vj s viij d
vni sitarator
   xij d
ij pypers
   xviij d
ij pipers Regis
   x s
ij pypers comitis suthfolchie
   vj s viij d
ij trumpoters cum domino de cantabrigie
   iij s iiiij d
ij pyppers de noruycie
   xx d
Datis Ministrallis Norwici tempore Stallationis episcopi
   iij s

Account of Cellarer,4 Norfolk Rolls 72 (1510-11)
mb 3

Pensiones et redditus
resoluti ac
Soluaciones
ex precepto
abdiss

... Et soluto Ministrall Norwici die sancti Benedicti in
quadragesima
   iij s iiiij d ...

Account of the Sacrist,5 Norfolk Rolls 79 (1516-17)
mb 2

Expense Sacriste ...

Et soluto pro portacione draconis diebus rogacionum
   iij d
Et soluto pro portacione scabell & lanterne dictis diebus
   iij d rogacionum

NOTES

1 Horning, about 5 miles west of the Abbey.
2 There is a payment here of 18d to 'Nicholo Cycolet' or 'Cytoler.'
3 Possibly 'aryneri' or 'acryneri.'
4 This account is on a paper roll of 5 membranes, 1 5, 300 x 400mm. There is no section of
   'Dona data,' and the one item transcribed here is not among gratuities but among expenses for
   the annual dedication day. We must not assume, therefore, that there were no other entertainers
   at the abbey this year.
5 This account is on a parchment roll of 3 membranes, 1 3, 300 x 650mm. The reference may be
   merely to the usual dragon-banner of rogation Sunday, though a payment for that seems suspi-
   cious, and one might expect 'vexilli.'