Accounts for the Rectory of Wainfleet St Mary for the Year 2 February 1475 to 1 February 1476

Dorothy Owen

This account of the Stixwold abbey rectory of Wainfleet survives among the records of Bethlem Hospital, where it was noted by my husband in 1588–89. It seems certain that the church, and two salterns were given to Stixwold by Ralf, son of Gilbert and his wife Constance, who were mesne tenants of the fee of Crevequer in Wainfleet in the period 1167 x 1178 when they were ‘alive and dead’. After the Reformation, when the population of Wainfleet, and especially of its southern end, had shrunk very noticeably, the parish was regarded as a Donative, with a stipend of no more than £6 13s. 4d. and a population of no more than fifty-three families, including many Quakers and Baptists.

Rectory of Wainfleet The account of Robert Skynner, proctor of the Lady Prior of Stixwold in that property for a single year from the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Mary the Virgin in the fourteenth year of the reign of King Edward IV to the same feast in the fifteenth year.

Arrears He acknowledges £15 11s. 5d. of arrears on his last account in the year preceding this, as is shown at the foot of the same account.

Sum total £15 11s. 5d.

Casualties [Chance, non-statutory] Of 6s. 6d. received on Sundays throughout the year for offerings of blessed bread according to a paper roll written in the accountant’s hand and examined with the account.

Of 26s. 8d. received from the offerings of the parishioners at the four principal feasts, together with certain moneys offered at Pentecost by the same.

Of 13s. 4d. received from offerings on the days of burial of the dead, and on the seventh, tenth and anniversaries, as shown in the same roll for this period.

Of 22½d. from the baptism of children in the font of this church at the rate of a halfpenny for each child. Of 3s. 2½d. for offerings at the churchings of women. Of 10s. coming from the pyx of St Edmund, there have been no offerings from this pyx for the last six years because it was broken into by thieves as is alleged. Of 3s. 6d. from the tithe of various sea fisheries operated by hand. Of nothing from the secret tithes of brewers of beer and bakers of bread. Of 2d. from the offerings of the parishioners at weddings of men and women. Of 6s. 8d. for the tithe of the fishery called Dukestreme and 2s. for the tithe of the fishery called Justiceland. Of 17s. 2d. for Peterspence and Cerage paid at Easter. Of 23s. 8d. for tithe of crows and calves. Of 12s. for tithe of geese and goslings. Of 23d. of tithe of piglets from the parishioners’ tithe. Of 14d. from the tithe of foals. Of 3s. 2½d. from the tithe of flax and hemp from the parishioners’ tithe. Of nothing from the tithe of turf and peatdug and sold to various persons. Of nothing for mortuaries or heriots from the deaths of various persons. Of 2s. of the tithe of pasture. Of 18s. for tithe reeds sold to various persons. Of 3s. from the price of tithe lambs unsuitable for driving, of lambs falling within the tenth month and therefore sold. And 20 stones of wool, by estimation or 54 lambs, of the parishioners’ tithe which were passed to the Lady’s flock or her wool store and not counting the price of an ewe and a lamb from Robert Coy’s mortuary, which were sent to the abbey.

Sum £6 16s. 9d.

Rent of land belonging to the Rectory Of £6 7s. 6d. of the rents of land, meadow and pasture let to various persons.

Sum £6 7s. 6d.

Lease of the tithe barn Of £8 13s. 4d. of the tithe of corn and hay coming from the parishioners’ tithe and let for a term of years to Robert Skynner this accountant and payable at Easter and Lamas, after the account is closed.

Sale of salt Of the price of 16 quarters of salt from the tithe of 8 salterns occupied in salt-making, nothing to the accountant because they are delivered to the abbey for the stock of the house.

Nothing Sum total of receipts and arrears £37 9s.

Payments and other various allowances He accounts for money paid to the abbey of Bury St Edmunds by the composition for the chapel of St Edmund in Wainfleet, 20s. In alms distributed to poor parishioners at Pentecost 13s. 4d. In bread and ale awarded to the clerks on Munday Thursday 8d. In mass bread for the Eucharist and wine for the communion of the faithful at Easter 2s. 2½d. For 9 lbs. of wax bought for and making it up into candles at Easter and Candlemas 6s. In the expenses of the chaplains and clerks of the choir on the vigil of St Edmund 8d. And in similar expenses of the chaplains and clerks of the choir on Easter Day and the vigils of the Ascension, All Saints and the Nativity of the Lord 7s. In money paid for the procurations of the church of Wainfleet to the Archdeacon 7s. 6d., in Peterspence 3s. 4d. and cerage and letare 2s. 4d. 13s. 2d. in all. In visitation expenses of the archdeacon nothing because paid by the vicar. And paid to the provost of the church for the maintenance of a lamp burning before the crucifix 8d. In wine bought for the host celebrating the divine mysteries 3s. 4d. Paid for paris candles bought for the use of the choir at matins in foggy weather 6d. For white straw for strewing the church in winter 9d. For incense to be expended throughout the choir at need, nothing.

Sum 68s. 4½d.

Accountant’s fee 26s. 8d.

Salary of the Vicar Paid to John Beke vicar there for a whole year’s salary £10.

Repairs: chancel To Peter Plumber aiding in the glazing of the chancel window(s) for 7 days at 6d. a day 3s. 6d. In solder bought for the same work 2s. 6d. 6s. in all. Houses Money 18d. paid to William Burtoft for mending the barn doors, 6d. for nails for the same work, 2 locks 6d., 1 hope 6d., and 1 plate 3s. in all. Dykes To a man digging a way or path near the sea bank, for 3 days 12d. To a cart taking mud to the same work 8d. and John Lowson dyeing 36 rods 4s. 6d., about 55 acres giving 1½d. per rod, amounts to 6s. 2d.

Sum total 15s. 2d.

Forinsuc payments Paid to Thomes Gunby of Horncastle auditor of part of 33s. 4d. of a certain assignment made to him by the Lady Alice Paynell in her lifetime for all his fees due for various years ending at Michaelmas in the 14th year, besides 6s.
8d. paid to him in the previous year and 3s. 8d. still owing at
two occasions. 23s. in all.

Payments made. Money paid to John Taillour chaplain for the
price of 100 salt fish, 60s., bought from William Tetmey and 4s.
10d. for more salt fish, 53s. 4d. for 20 quarters of malt bought
from Thomas Hode, 33s. 4d. in money by the hands of John
Bade and 6s. 8d. to said recipient in accordance with his own
bond on the account. £7 18s. 2d.

To the same John Taillour for part of rent of tithe sheaves and
hay, for both bonds, 20s.

In all £8 18s. 2d.

R. John Taillour rec.

Sum of all allowances and payment £25 11s. 3½d. And he
owes £11 17s. 8½d. of which 3s. 3½d. of the money paid for 8
salters at Lammes and Michueldmas and 23d. in expenses about
the salters. And in the expenses of the accountant and other
servants of the abbey being there at the time of tithe wool
collection and lambs, and with their boat charges across the fen
2s. 10d. And he owes £11 11s. 7½d.

In addition John Beke vicar there and former farmer of tithe
sheaves and tithe hay of part of £6 18s. 7d. of arrears from 5
years before above 50s., allowed for his salary in the fourth year
and 20s. in this year with 53s. 4d. claimed by him for his fee as
proctor for 2 years, 26s. 8d. for each year.

Sum 68s. 8d.

The same accountant claims 26s. 8d. for part of the rent of
tithe sheaves and hay this year and last amounting to £8 13s. 4d.
Of this £8 per annum rests, with £6 6s. 8d. on Thomas Hode
and John Godfrey, farmers there this year to be paid at the
Easter and Lammes next following the close of this account and
9s. 8½d. of his own clear arrears, with 3s. 8d. to be paid by him
to Thomas Gunby in the clearing of his assignment.

£8 3s. 0½d.

NOTES
1. Bethlehem Hospital Archives 47/II. The property is described by him in
"The Barshams of Wainfleet", Lincolnshire Historian, 2, 8 (1961),
p.1-9. There is a fuller treatment by him in "St Edmund in
Lincolnshire: the abbey lands at Wainfleet and Wrangle", Journal
British Archaeological Association, forthcoming.
3. Speculum Diocesanos Lincolnensis... A.D. 1705-1721, edited by R. E.
4. Blessed bread for distribution to the laity after communion by the
clerks at the Eucharist. The bread was provided from a rate assessed
on the parish.
5. The week's mind, month's mind and year's mind, of a funeral.
6. The pyx in the chapel of St Edmund at Suiholme.
7. Peter's Pence payable to the Papacy each year.
8. Cercage or wax-coc payable by parishioners, usually at Candlemas (2
February) to provide lights for the church.
9. Leture is mid-Lent Sunday.
11. Lady Alice Paynell, perhaps one of the prioresses of Stixwold.