

Some Expenses of Richard Duke of Gloucester, 1475-7

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The Account

AMONG THE ESTATES granted to Richard Duke of Gloucester by Edward IV were the former de Vere estates lying mainly in East Anglia. In the 1470s these were grouped for administrative purposes with Gloucester's other land in the area, including part of the Warwick inheritance, and with scattered manors in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and the Home Counties. The Duke's Receiver for this collection of lands was Richard Pole of Coates (Gloucs.), whose connection with Gloucester's East Anglian estates helps to explain his choice as Richard's sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1484. One of Pole's accounts, that for 1476/7, has survived. As well as listing the income from each of the manors for which Pole was Receiver, the account, as was customary, lists the payments made from the money received. Out of an income of £399.11.2½, £75 went on annual fees and wages and some £296 was used to settle a range of ducal expenses, predominantly purchases of cloth and fur. This section of the account, expenses paid by warrant, is abstracted below. The entries have been translated from Latin and, except for the first, abbreviated slightly. Where a date is given this refers to the ducal signet warrant authorizing payment rather than to the date of the original transaction.

PRO. DUCHY OF LANCASTER ACCOUNTS, DL 29/637/10360A

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John Pykeryng of London, mercer, paid by the said lord duke for cloth of Areys and other things bought from him, by letters of the said lord duke under his signet and sign manual 16 June 1475, that is, in part payment of £60 over £26 allowed in the previous year
(£34) [deleted] £26 because no more paid

John Hertington of London, saddler, for saddles and other stuff supplied to the use of the said lord duke, over £16.0.5 allowed in the previous year, that is in part payment of £30, 19 June 1475
(£13.9.7) [deleted] 110s because no more paid

Thomas Burgoyne esq in part payment of £20, over 10m paid to him in 1475 and 5m in the previous year, 12 January 1475
(£10) [deleted] £6.13.4 because no more paid

John Grene, Stamford 28 July 1476 66s 8d

John Lee of London, tailor, for certain cloth for the use of the said duke, Sheriff Hutton 21 September 1476 £20.7.0

William Orell of London, mercer, for 9 yds of tawny velvet and 5 yds of chamlet, London 25 November 1476 £6.0.2

Richard Golees of London, mercer, for certain silk cloth, London 28 November 1476 £50.16.0

John Lee of London, tailor, for certain cloth, London 3 December 1476 £16.12.10

the same, for certain cloth bought for the use of the most dear consort of the said duke, London 3 December 1476 £10.8.4

Thomas Cole of London, skinner, for certain furs delivered by command of the said duke to his most dearly beloved consort, London 4 December 1476 £19.7.11

the same, mercer, for certain furs and the furring of robes for the said lord duke, London 4 December 1476 £7.19.11

John Knotte of London, mercer, for silk cloth and other things delivered to the aforesaid consort, London 6 December 1476 £20.12.11

Charles Smalwode for three horses and hay bought of him for the use of the said duke, and for making a ditch round the lodge of the park of the said duke at Hanslap, Stony Stratford 11 January 1477 £11.4.3

Thornton of London, brewer, Westminster 8 March 1477 40s

Paid to the said duke in ready money, London 9 January 1477 £77.4.10

Henry Ivy for the furring of various garments for the use of the said dear consort 54s 8d

Remaining money delivered to the duke by warrant, 1 January 1478 £9.0.11

The London Suppliers: Notes

In this account, the first discovered, showing some purchases and expenses of Richard III while still Duke of Gloucester, suppliers of luxury goods from London predominate, in particular mercers and merchant adventurers: John Pickering, Thomas Burgoyne, William Orell, Richard Gowler (Golees in the account) and John Knotte. They are supplying arras, velvet, silks and camlet. John Pickering was an ideal choice as a purveyor of arras at the great markets of the Low Countries for by 1475 he was governor of the Fellowship of English merchants abroad, centred at Bruges, succeeding William Caxton. He was at the centre of many negotiations over trade, the customs, English coinage in the Duke of Burgundy's lands, and all matters of concern to the Mercers' and Merchant Adventurers' Companies under the Yorkist Kings and Henry VII till his death in 1498, travelling constantly between the two countries. He was governor for most of that time, despite a furious quarrel in 1483 with his fellows of the Mercery at the end of which he had to go down on his knees and beg forgiveness. He was first elected to parliament for the City for the session of November 1483 (not held) and then for those of 1484, 1485, 1487 and 1489. While Richard III was King Pickering supplied him with over £1000 of mercery.¹

An associate of Pickering, living in the same ward of Cordwainer Street, was Thomas Burgoyne who served on several of the same trade negotiations in the 1470s. Eminent in the Mercers' Company, he served as warden 1474, 1480, 1487 and 1497. In June 1483 he was one of the merchant adventurers tidying up the 'matter' of the subsidy (whether custom dues were payable after the death of Edward IV or not) following the settlement made before the Protector on 3 June at the Tower of London.² William Orell, like Pickering and Burgoyne, was prosperous, worth over £10 a year or £100 in goods by 1475 (a multiple of 100 gives a crude 1980s valuation) when they all were expected to contribute to the benevolence for Edward IV's French campaign. He supplied Edward IV with blue and purple velvet and russet and black damask in 1480.³

Richard Gowler, originally from Suffolk where he may have developed an association with the Tyrells of Gipping, was to be a regular supplier of mercery to Richard III including most of the fine linens used for his coronation. He lived in a house in St. Mary le Bow parish that had once been William Shore's, the divorced husband of Edward IV's mistress and his shop was in the Crown on Cheapside, near St. Mary le Bow.⁴ In comparison to the wealth of detail about Gowler, little can be said about John Knotte who was on the threshold of his career when he made this sale to the Duke of Gloucester. He had been an apprentice of the same William Shore and was admitted to the Mercers' Company in 1475.⁵

Thomas Cole, citizen and skinner of London, who supplied furs for Anne, Duchess of Gloucester, in this account, was to become the King's Skinner in 1484, succeeding John Cole, probably a relative. By this date the office carried with it no particularly onerous duties but gave the recipient an income of 12d. a day and a livery. Thomas was a man of wealth supplying quantities of furs for the coronation of Richard III and involved in financial transactions with John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, as well as Italian merchants. He died in January 1485 leaving a 'table' of alabaster to his parish church of St. Antonin.⁶

The tailors in this account were undoubtedly supplying the Duke with woollen cloths; the Company of Merchant Taylors were becoming one of the main merchant companies dealing in wool cloth at this date. The most significant reference here is to the little known Henry Ivy or Ive, a tailor in the 'sewing' sense of the word, who is here found doing what would be, strictly speaking, the skinner's work of furring the Duchess' gowns. He was to become the Queen's Tailor for Anne Neville's brief reign.⁷

Lastly, the saddler, John Hertyngton, was a prominent member of the London Company of Saddlers. He too supplied Richard as King, being the main purveyor of saddlery for his coronation, including work on the Queen's litter, the King's own saddle, beside a steel saddle for his nephew, while Edward V, and a saddle for Edward of Middleham, Prince of Wales. He is also known to have worked for William Catesby.⁸

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. L. Lyell and F. Watney (eds.), *The Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company 1453-1527* (Cambridge 1936), *passim* and pp. 148-151 for quarrel. A. B. Beaven, *The Aldermen of the City of London*, 2 vols. (London 1908 and 1913), vol. 1, pp. 273, 288. Mercers' Company: Biographical Index Cards, generally for references to admission, livery and company offices for all the mercers in these notes. R. E. Horrox and P. W. Hammond (eds.), *BL. Harleian MS. 433*, vol. 2 (Gloucester 1980), pp. 115-116.
2. *Acts of Court*, pp. 78, 92, 100, 153 and *passim*.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 84, Public Record Office: Exchequer Warrants for Issue, E404/77/1/45; I am indebted to R. C. and P. B. Hairsine for this reference.
4. For all references see Anne F. Sutton and P. W. Hammond, *The Coronation of Richard III*, Gloucester 1983, biographical index: Gowler.
5. Mercers' Company: Biographical Index Cards.
6. *The Coronation of Richard III*, biographical index: Cole, and see section on office of King's Skinner.
7. *Ibid.*, biographical index: Ive.
8. *Ibid.* It is hoped to publish a more detailed essay on Hertyngton in the future.