

# RECORDS OF EARLY ENGLISH DRAMA

## Pre-publication Collections

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### ST MARY DE PRE PRIORY, Hertfordshire

1488 - 1495

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#### 1488-90

*Accounts of the Prioress of St. Mary de Pre Priory* TNA: S. C. 6/HEN VII/274  
mb. 2 (*Diverse Expenses*) (25 March 1487 - 25 Dec 1488)

...Item for harpers and players atte Christemas and *other* tymes--xiiij d...

mb. 2d

Thise ben the new dettys owyng to the said place by dyuers persones whos namys *with* there summes hereafter been specified that is to sey

...

Item lohn Slough ye harper oweth                      iijs vjd

Notes: The entry concerning harpers and players at Christmas occurs in the middle of the "Diverse Expenses" section, so it is likely that Christmas 1487 is meant. However, the entry may be a summary figure, from separate bills, and may cover the Christmases of both 1487 and 1488.

## 1492-95

***Accounts of the Prioress of St. Mary de Pre Priory*** TNA: S. C. 6/HEN VII/275  
mb. 3d (*Diverse Expenses*) (29 Sept 1490 - 29 Sept 1493)

...Item for the expensys of the seid lady Prioress and other with her in goyng to the manor of Beamond dyuers tymes--xvjd/ Item for ij pair of shoes for the Childe that helpth the prest to syng--vjd Item gevyn to dyuers Berewardes of the kynges the prynces and of other lordes--vjd Item for the expensys at seint lohns Crosse on Rogacion monday by iij tymes within this accompte--xd...

Notes: Surrounding entries give no sure indication of the timing of the bearwards' visits. In fact, the expenses at St. John's Cross have obviously been lumped for all three Rogation Mondays covered by the accounts. The amount given the bearwards is suspiciously even for multiple visits, nor do the accounts say "diverse times" as is normally done when payments occurred over a period and are summed. Might all these bearwards have travelled together and made a single visit to the priory? A letter of Archbishop Morton to the abbot of St. Albans, dated July 1490, condemns the then prioress of Pre as "a married woman who had left her husband for a lover," and further complains that "others of the convent were leading notoriously dissolute lives with some of the monks of St. Albans." (*VCH Herts.*, "Religious Houses," Minnie Reddan, vol. 4, p. 431)

## DOCUMENT DESCRIPTIONS

### *Prioresses' Accounts of St Mary de Pre Priory, St Albans*

The accounts include receipts of rents of priory lands and tithes; expenses for alms on feast days, for a feast on the day of Pre Fair, for repairs to the building and grounds, and diverse expenses. On the dorse is a list of new and ongoing debtors of the priory.

London, TNA: PRO, S.C. 6/HEN VII/274; 25 March 1487 - 25 Dec 1488; English; parchment; two mbs, joined serially; 494mm x 303mm, 525mm x 303mm. Modern label reads: 'MINISTERS' ACCOUNTS HENRY VII 274'. Headed: 'This is the Accompte of Dame Cristian Basset Pryoresse of the house of the pray besyde Seint Albons Aswell of her receptis as of her <....>nsis of the same hous that is to sey from the feest of the Annunciacion of our Lady in the Secunde yere of the Regne of Kyng henry the vij vnto the feest of the Natiuite of our lord In the ffourth yere of the regne of the same kyng that is to wethe by an hole yere and iij quarters of a yere'.

London, TNA: PRO, S.C. 6/HEN VII/275; 29 Sept 1490 - 29 Sept 1493; English; Parchment; 3 mbs. attached serially; 530mm x 303mm, 405mm x 303mm, 650mm x 303mm. Modern label reads: 'MINISTERS' ACCOUNTS HENRY VII 275'. Headed: 'This is the Accompte of Dame Amy Goden Prioress of the house of our Lady of Pray beside seint Albons of all the Recytes and Expensys concernyng the seid house from the feest of seint Miche<..> Tharchangell the vjth yere of the Reigne of kyng henry the vijth vnto the same feest of seint michell the ixth yere of the reigne of the same kyng that ys to wethe by iij hole yeres/'.