

## The Household Accounts of Kenninghall Palace in the year 1525,

COMMUNICATED BY

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IN Vol. VII. of the present series the Rev. C. R. Manning gave an account of the palace which Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, built at Kenninghall, "about the year 1525," and he stated that "the only remains on the spot consist of a farmhouse with some pointed windows in brick of the time of Henry VIII." Like Sheen and Nonsuch it has practically vanished; but some few relics from the house of so great a noble are sure to survive to later times, and Mr. Walter Rye has in his library, at St. Leonard's Priory, Norwich, a volume given by Robert Haskins to "Tho. Martin," the so-called "Honest Tom Martin," in which there exist, bound up with some other MSS. of somewhat earlier date, about thirteen leaves of paper, headed:—

Expencys of howshould chere begynnyng the Saturday  
the xxvj day of Auguste the xvij yere of Kyng Herre  
the viij<sup>th</sup>.

These leaves, which, according to a note in an eighteenth century hand, came from Framlingham Castle, were doubtless written by the comptroller, who occupied one of the specially-appropriated chambers in the Palace, and they furnish details of the cost of the Duke's hospitality

in 1525, when he was still enjoying the favour his public services had earned, and had not dreamed that some twenty-one years later his head would only be saved by the death of his royal master on the very day fixed for his own execution.

We have no direct statement in the present documents respecting the number of persons forming the Duke's suite, but Dr. Nott's information, quoted by Mr. Manning, shows that there were apartments reserved for the Earl and Countess of Surrey and their children, their children's tutor, the Duchess of Richmond, Lord Thomas Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Holland, Adrian Junius (the physician), Sir J. Colborne, the children of the chapel, the almoners, auditor, master of the horse, treasurer, huntsman, and comptroller. This list can scarcely include fewer than thirty persons of various ages, but the question is rather how many of these followed the Duke to London or elsewhere, for we learn from one entry that the accounts we are going to examine are not chiefly concerned with the food for the permanent domestic staff of the Palace, but rather with the special expenditure when the Duke was in residence at Kenninghall.

It will be convenient to give an extract including this entry, as it will help to give an idea of the document itself, and it will be observed that for five days the expenditure was *nil*, and that those were days during which the Duke and Duchess were absent.

Sonday iiij<sup>o</sup> die Septymbris.

Thys day my	Itm for ij peygys p'c . . .	xd.	
lordys grace	Itm for ij geyse p'c . . .	viijd.	
and myladys	Itm for iiij capons . . .	xixd.	
grace depart-	Itm for xxiiij chekons . . .	xxiiid.	ixs. ob. (sic)
yd from Ken-	Itm for xxj pegyns . . .	vd.	
nyngale after	Itm for butere . . .	iiijd.	
dinere.	Itm for ij doss. conese . . .	iijs.	
	Itm for iiij <sup>xx</sup> vj yegys . . .	iiijd. ob.	
Monday, Tuysday, Wednesday, Thursday, fryday			nl.

Saturday ix <sup>mo</sup> ( <i>sic</i> ) die Septymbris.	
Thysday my	Itm for cccc osters . . . viijd.
lordys grace	Itm for viij Salt feych . . . iijs. xd.
andmyladys	Itm for ij Schalt feych . . . viijd.
grace cam	Itm for a peyke . . . xxd.
hom to sopere.	Itm for ij Tenchys . . . ixd.
	Itm for xxx elys . . . vjd.
	Itm for butere for awl the
	weke . . . vjs. } xvjs. viijd.
	Itm for cclxviij yegys . . . xxd.
	Itm for yest ij days . . . ijd.
	Itm for otmele . . . iiijd.
	Itm for lxx frecherynge
	present . . . n <sup>l</sup> .
	Itm for the Caturys Costys . . . vd.

p<sup>a</sup> c Sm<sup>a</sup> c<sup>1</sup> xxvs. viijd. ob.

In this account *peygys* must, as I shall show, mean sucking-pigs. *Peyke*, *yegys*, *conese*, *Catur* are of course *pike*, *eggs*, *conies*, *caterer*.

The food for Fridays in the waning days of the ancient faith has an interest apart from the curious list of fish comprised in it.

Fryday p<sup>mo</sup> die Septymbris.

Itm for xiiij Salt feych . . . . .	vs. ijd.
Itm for iiij peykys . . . . .	ijs. xjd.
Itm for ij tenchys . . . . .	viijd.
Itm for a gret ele . . . . .	xiiijd. xjd. xvjd.
Itm for a gret ele . . . . .	iiij elys v <sup>xx</sup> smale yelys . . . iijs. vd.
Itm for xxvj perchys . . . . .	ijs. xd.
Itm for v <sup>xx</sup> rochys . . . . .	iijs.
Itm for a Samon trowt . . . . .	xxd.
Itm for xxv playce . . . . .	xijd.
Itm for butere . . . . .	iijs.
Itm for v <sup>xx</sup> yegys . . . . .	vijd.

<sup>1</sup> These contractions probably mean—(1) *probatur comptus*, the writing being in different ink, and no doubt the work of the *auditor* mentioned by Dr. Nott; and (2) *summa compoti*, 25s. 8½d., the latter being in the handwriting of the comptroller. The auditor has made several corrections in the account in other places.

Itm for yeste . . . . .	ij <i>d.</i>	} xxviij <i>s.</i> <i>vd.</i>
Itm for xv wytynge . . . . .	iiij <i>d.</i>	
Itm for xxx playce . . . . .	xij <i>d.</i>	
Itm for ij solys . . . . .	vii <i>d.</i>	
Itm for a m <sup>a</sup> 3 osters . . . . .	xx <i>d.</i>	
Itm for a Cod . . . . .	iiij <i>d.</i>	

The singular orthographical scale, *ele*, *elys*, *yelys*, occurring in the same entry will show the reader that the deciphering of the worthy comptroller's very bad writing is not assisted by uniformity of spelling.

From an entry under Saturday, 2nd Sept., it appears that the caterer spent 11*d.* in getting these and a few more fish from Norwich and Scole. They were supplemented by *c frecherynge present from ermath* (Yarmouth).

I have compared these, and, in fact, all the entries in the account, with Professor Thorold Rogers' monumental *History of Agriculture and Prices in England*, and it is noteworthy that, at least as far as 1582, the Professor had discovered no mention of soles or crawfish in the ample lists he had consulted. There is a fish called a "bryt," sometimes "great bryt," which I learn from Mr. Southwell's *Natural History of Norfolk by Sir Thos. Browne*, to be "bret," the old name for the "brill."

I will now give an analysis of the items and prices, contrasted, whenever possible, with Professor Rogers' results; but it has of course not been feasible to give many Norfolk instances, though Hickling occurs a few times, or to keep quite strictly to entries relating to the year 1525. Another flaw in the comparison occurs with regard to the time of year. Our Kenninghall prices are for August and September, and grain prices in those months are scarcely fair specimens, while sea-fish prices at Oxford furnish uncertain comparisons with those at a village which could draw on Norwich, then practically a

<sup>2</sup> *Sic for mille.*

seaport.<sup>3</sup> Still, with all these uncertainties and the further uncertainty as to the sizes of fish and other things, I believe that what follows is not unworthy of attention from the modern economists, who are following in the path marked out by Dr. W. Cunningham of Cambridge.

Professor Rogers' prices are dated, and the places at which they ruled are furnished.

## MEAT.

Oxen, each 15/-, 16/-, 14/4.	Middlesex, 1525-6, 13/4 to 29/5.
Calves ,, 3/- to 3/4.	Cambridge, 1524-5, 2/4 to 2/8.
Sheep ,, 1/8 and 1/9.	Ditto, ditto, 1/11, in Sept. 1/1.
Pigs ,, 4 <i>d.</i> to 5 <i>d.</i> (These prices show that sucking pigs are referred to).	Middlesex, 1525, Porkers, 2/- to 3/- Wilts, 1527, "piggins," 4 <i>d.</i> to 8 <i>d.</i>
Rabbits (conies), each 1½ <i>d.</i>	Hickling, 1519-20, 5 for 1/-

## POULTRY, &amp;c.

Capons, 4 <i>d.</i> to 6 <i>d.</i>	London, 1521-2, <i>fat</i> capons, 2/- ; coarse capons, 4 <i>d.</i>
Chickens, 1 <i>d.</i>	Wilts, 1527-8, 1 <i>d.</i> each.
Geese, 4 <i>d.</i>	Hickling, 1518-19, 2 <i>d.</i> ; next year 2½ <i>d.</i> and 3 <i>d.</i>
Mallards, 2 <i>d.</i>	Hickling, 1518-19, 1½ <i>d.</i> and 2 <i>d.</i>
Pigeons, 10 for 4 <i>d.</i>	
Swans, Bittern, Crane, Pheasants, Partridges, Teal, Lapwing, Snipe, Godwits ( <i>Limosa</i> ), Knots ( <i>Tringa canutus</i> ).	No prices, as they were presented.

## FISH.

Salt fish, 4½ <i>d.</i> to 5½ <i>d.</i>	Hickling, 1519, 26/- per 100.
Cod, 4 <i>d.</i>	London, 1526, 4¼ <i>d.</i>
Ling, 8 <i>d.</i> to 1/8.	Cambridge, 1525, 1/1.
Soles, 4 <i>d.</i> each ; 8 for 1/6.	No entry in Rogers' lists.
Plaice, 30 for 1/- ; 20 for 1/2.	
Whiting, ¼ <i>d.</i> each.	Oxford, 1549, 17 for 3/4.

<sup>3</sup> See (when published) Mr. Rye's remarks on this point in his section of the new County History (Victorian Series).

Great Eels, 10 <i>d.</i> to 1/2 each	}	Cambridge, 1525, <i>Salt</i> eels, 4½ <i>d.</i> ea.
Eels, 2 <i>d.</i>		
Small Eels, 10 for 2 <i>d.</i> ; 100 for 1/4	}	Ditto, 12/6 the barrel (1200), probably salted.
Herrings (fresh), 100 for 2/6; 20 for 4 <i>d.</i>		
Salmon Trout, 1/8.		Hunstanton, 1527, <i>a salmon</i> , 1/8.
Pike, 9 <i>d.</i> to 1/8.		Durham, 1530, 3/6.
Perch, 26 for 1/10.		
Roach, 100 for 3/-		
Tench, 4 <i>d.</i> to 8 <i>d.</i>		Cambridge, 1535, 1/6 each.
Crawfish, 3 <i>d.</i>		No entry.
Oysters, 2 <i>d.</i> per 100.		Hickling, 1518, 6 <i>d.</i> per 100.
Sturgeon, conger, porpoise, flounders, pickerel, bream, brill	}	Quantities or prices not stated.

## FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

"Raisin currants," 3 <i>d.</i> per lb.	1524, 1½ <i>d.</i> per lb.
Currants, 3 <i>d.</i> per lb.	1524, 2 <i>d.</i> per lb.
Walnuts, 1 <i>d.</i> per 100	1532, 3/4 per bushel.
Pears, apples, quinces, grapes, damsons, filberts, nuts, onions, herbs	} No quantities stated.

## BEER, MINOR PROVISIONS, SPICES, CONDIMENTS.

Beer (two qualities), 2/6 and 4/- per barrel.	London, 1528, 4/-
Eggs, 12 to 14 for 1 <i>d.</i>	Hickling, 1519, 6 <i>d.</i> per 100.
Butter, cream, curds, "pettitoes" (quantities not stated).	
Sugar, 7 <i>d.</i> to 7½ <i>d.</i> per lb.	Cambridge, 1524, 5½ <i>d.</i> per lb.
Salt (white), 11 <i>d.</i> to 1/- per bushel	Ditto, 5/4 to 9/4 per bushel. <sup>4</sup>
Mustard, 4 <i>d.</i> to 5 <i>d.</i> per gallon.	
Pepper, 1/10 to 2/- per lb.	Cambridge, 1524, 1/10 per lb.
Cloves and mace, 7 <i>d.</i> per ounce.	
Vinegar, 4 <i>d.</i> to 4½ <i>d.</i> per gallon.	
Alegar and Beregar, 2 <i>d.</i> per gal.	
Honey, 6 <i>d.</i> per quart.	Middlesex, 1526, 11 <i>d.</i> per gallon.
Verjuice, ginger, yeast (quantities not stated).	

<sup>4</sup> I cannot explain this discrepancy in prices. Both are for *white* salt, and the Kenninghall prices are stated to be per bushel.

## BREAD AND GRAIN.

Manchet, Trencher, and Household Bread, 1 <i>d.</i> per loaf.	
Flour, 1/4 per bushel.	
Oatmeal (quantity not stated).	
Horsebread, 1 <i>d.</i> per loaf.	
Oats, 4 <i>d.</i> per bushel.	Cambridge, 1524-5, 3 <i>d.</i>
Barley, 7 <i>d.</i> per bushel.	Ditto, 4 <i>d.</i>

## MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Caviare, "a roe of sturgeon" (no price).	
Hippocras, Wafers (no price).	
Wax, in "quarries," 8 <i>d.</i> per lb.	Oxford, 1525, 8 <i>d.</i>
Soap, 1 1/2 <i>d.</i> per lb.	Hunstanton, 1520, white soap 2 1/2 <i>d.</i> per lb.
Candles, 1/3 per dozen.	
Horseshoes, 2 <i>d.</i> each.	
Pair of hose, 1/10.	
Shirt, 1/.	
Carriage of a letter to London, 6/8.	
Riding on messages, 32 miles, 2/4.	
47 sheep fells, sold at 2 1/2 <i>d.</i> each.	
11 steer hides, sold at 2/8 each.	

There is a curious list of "rewards" paid to the servants who brought presents from local magnates:—

the bayly of hermoth ( <i>Yarmouth</i> ) from hym a porpese reward . . . . .	ijs.
lowesterre ( <i>Lowestoft</i> ) from hym a porpese reward . . . . .	ijs.
the abot of langley from hym iij swanys reward . . . . .	ijs.
Sir Thomas Benefeyld from hym ij swanys x telys vij laipwyngs a crane and a betore <sup>5</sup> reward . . . . .	nil.

The park at Kenninghall was about 700 acres in extent, and it is said to have been stocked with deer. Beef, mutton, and veal had to be bought; but probably a few bucks were consumed in addition to those sent as presents. No cheese is mentioned, doubtless it was made on the

<sup>5</sup> Bittour or bittern.

estate. Wine, of course, must have been sent down from London. The produce of the kitchen garden seems to have sufficed, as only a few herbs and onions appear in the list; but there can scarcely have been a considerable orchard, for pears and apples were constantly bought, and there was apparently a degree of simplicity in the midst of lavish expenditure, for many of the more delicate kinds of food are absent from the list. The curious entries, too, as to beregar or alegar, which, of course, was the parallel to vinegar made from beer or ale, tend to show that the cooking for the lower establishment was possibly of a rough order.

The wonderful mass of very solid food, eaten in the twenty-six days covered by the account, would render it probable that, in spite of the five days noted above, during which there was no expenditure, the servants must have been fed by the beef, bread, and beer that was so abundant.

We credit the mediæval Englishmen with great capacity for shin of beef—and, with apologies to modern historians, I venture to view the year 1525 as a distinctly mediæval epoch—but, I think, that the subjoined list of provisions for twenty-six days must indicate a large number of retainers as well as guests.

FOOD CONSUMED IN TWENTY-SIX DAYS AT KENNINGHALL.

Oxen, 12; calves, 12; sheep, 47.<sup>6</sup>

Bucks, 3.

Sucking pigs, 44.

Rabbits, 263.

Swans, 18; geese, 22; capons, 106; chicken, 403.

Pigeons, mallards, godwits, snipe, pheasants, partridges,  
lapwings, 416.

Crane, 1; Bittern, 1.

Porpoise, 2; sturgeon, 1; conger, 1.

<sup>6</sup> As there is a subsequent entry of the sale of 11 steer hides and 47 sheep fells it is certain that the animals were bought for immediate consumption.



"Salt fish," 85.

Soles, 27.

Salmon trout, 1.

Cod, ling, plaice, whiting, flounders, fresh herring, brill,  
and other sea fish, 840.

Pike and pickerel, 27; tench, 20; perch and roach, 493.

Oysters, 3200.

Eels—great, ordinary, and small, 1449.

Eggs, 2370.

Bread, 134 dozen loaves.

Beer, 58 barrels.

Fortunately there exists a record which enables us to make a tolerable guess at the size of the Duke of Norfolk's retinue at Kenninghall. This is the household book of Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, for the year 1508.

On the 6th of January of that year the Duke entertained 459 persons at dinner and supper, and these capacious guests consumed the following mass of provisions:—

	Duke of Buckingham's Feast.	Approximate Daily Consumption at Kenninghall.
Beef . . . . .	36 rounds.	$\frac{1}{2}$ ox.
Calves . . . . .	2 carcasses.	$\frac{1}{2}$ calf.
Sheep . . . . .	12 ,,	2 sheep.
Lamb . . . . .	1 ,,	—
Pigs . . . . .	4 ,,	—
Rabbits . . . . .	22	10
Swans . . . . .	3	$\frac{3}{4}$
Geese . . . . .	6	1
Capons . . . . .	10	4
Chickens . . . . .	18	16
Peacocks (2), herons (2), wood- cock, mallards, widgeon, teal, snipe, and other birds . . . . .	309	16

The column which gives, perhaps rather awkwardly, the approximate consumption of corresponding items at Kenninghall, takes no account of the large amount of fish eaten on Fridays, but a consideration of the two lists,

allowing for the fasts, and especially noting the veal and mutton entries, will probably lead the reader to estimate the Kenninghall household at about one-fifth of the total of the Duke of Buckingham's guests. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong in saying that the Duke of Norfolk's household and guests numbered, on the average, about ninety persons.

The total cash expenditure was £202. 2s. 7½*d.* for the twenty-six days; but the money of 1525 is harder to comprehend than the food. It is, however, the opinion of economists that it had about that date twelve times the purchasing power it now possesses. A sum of £2425 for a short month is indeed a goodly outlay, and, as it did not include clothes, wages, or the hundred other things on which a magnate is bound to spend his money, it betokens wealth of a princely character.

Those, of course, were the days of the great cardinal's splendour, when Hampton Court Palace was a storehouse of silver plate, and when a duke could wear a gown worth at least £15,000 of modern money, so we are prepared to find a lavish outlay in the house of so great a man as Thomas Howard. But Kenninghall was not the Duke's only mansion, and there were concurrent expenditures at Framlingham and elsewhere, which can neither be traced nor guessed at.