



WILLIAM PORLOND CLERK TO THE CRAFT AND FRATERNITY OF BREWERS OF LONDON, 1418–1440

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SUMMARY

As clerk to the Brewers of London, 1418–1440, William Porlond compiled his Account and Memoranda Book. The manuscript is an important early source for this craft, but it is also significant because Porlond chose to write the greater part of it in the English language and was possibly the first company clerk to keep such records in English. Evidence has been drawn from within Porlond's book and from his will to portray something of the man and his life. Porlond was a salaried clerk serving a less wealthy craft, yet he is representative of other London company clerks at a time when their role was growing in importance.

INTRODUCTION

William Porlond compiled his Account and Memoranda Book during his employment as clerk to the Company of Brewers of London, from 1418–40.¹ Some evidence about William Porlond can be drawn from within the pages of his own book, from a few chance references in civic records, and from the copy of his will enrolled in the Register of the Commissary Court.² In 1931, R W Chambers and Marjorie Daunt published excerpts from 50 folios of his book, taken from the years 1422–5, and described him as ‘a chatty man’ and ‘a good secretary’, but historians have not been greatly concerned with Porlond himself (Chambers & Daunt 1931, 138). The importance of Porlond's book lies in its wealth of detail, and the fact that he chose to write the greater part in English, rather than in the French or Latin usual for a London company at this time.

The possible identities and workplaces of late medieval English scribes have been investigated by Linne Mooney, who has suggested that leading Guildhall clerks in the early 15th century, such as John Marchaunt and Richard Osbarn, were involved in copying manuscripts of literary works written in English by Chaucer, Langland and others (Mooney & Stubbs 2013, 121; Davies 2011, 148). Simon Horobin found evidence of sharing, copying and dissemination of texts such as *Piers Plowman* among clerks of the London Guildhall and some London companies with halls nearby (Horobin 2010, 89). He considers an ornate hand in some of the early pages of Porlond's book to be the same as that of the compiler of the Oxford Bodleian Library Manuscript Digby 102, the C text of *Piers Plowman* (Horobin 2010, 89).³ Porlond referred in his will to books that he had made concerning the craft and fraternity of Brewers of London, and to his own missal and primer, but he did not refer to any literary works that he had collected or copied.⁴ By contrast, the will of John Brynchele, the first known clerk to the Tailors, shows that Brynchele owned literary works in English and Latin and includes the first recorded bequest of the ‘Tals of Caunterbury’ (Davies 2011, 148).⁵ However, it is significant that whilst Porlond was compiling his Brewers' records, a clerk writing occasional entries in that book until 1423–4, may also have been creating a copy of a *Piers Plowman* manuscript.⁶ Porlond's decision to write his book in English links

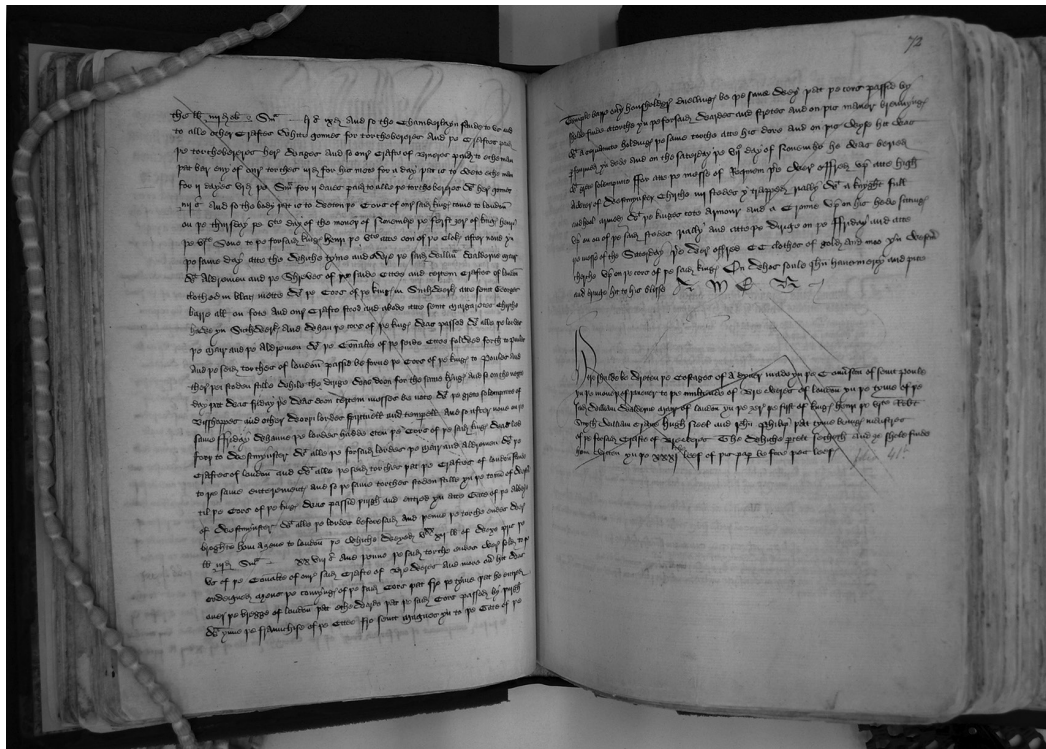


Fig 1. Porlond's account of the funeral of King Henry V, fols 71v–72 (By permission of the Brewers' Company)

him with this movement, and to the growing interest in English literary works in the early 15th century.

THE MANUSCRIPT

William Porlond's book, now in the Guildhall Library, was rescued from the Great Fire of 1666. The manuscript contains 328 folios, mounted and bound within a later cover. The foliation, in Arabic numerals, has also been added later. Porlond did not write the whole book, himself. Several different scribal hands are apparent. Frequent corrections throughout the book suggest that Porlond checked entries made by others and took pride in his book and in his role as clerk. There was a practice of crossing the pages from corner to corner, presumably after Porlond had presented the accounts to the masters. Entries for the years 1426–8 are lacking, after which this practice ceased. It is not clear whether this gap has any bearing upon Porlond's own life. Folios may have been lost subsequently, as have other

Brewers' books and documents to which Porlond referred, including a leather purse containing a roll of parchment, receipts and expenses, and a little black book belonging to John Fekenham, which was bought by the masters from his widow for five shillings.⁷ Porlond's book, despite its missing pages and erratic chronology caused by scribes filling blank pages out of date order, is a remarkable source. It contains a multitude of details about this craft and gives a vivid description of the funeral of Henry V, for which the 'Crafte of Breweres fande viij torches' costing a total of 51s 9d, and 'stood and abode atte seint Margaretes Chirche hawe yn Suthwerk', and 'folwed forth to [Saint] Paules' to commemorate the death of the King (Fig 1).⁸ Neither an earlier minute book, nor one compiled by Porlond's successor have been identified. Mia Ball, who wrote a history of the Brewers, was unable to identify another Brewers' clerk before John Bowgham in 1554 (Ball 1977, 126). We have thus a brief glimpse of aspects of the life of the Brewers of London for the 22 years covered by Porlond's book,

after which we must rely again upon the civic records for the history of this craft.

THE BREWERS OF LONDON, 1418–1440

Mia Ball found the earliest reference to the existence of an organised body of Brewers of London in 1292, in the City Letter Book (*Cal Lbk C*, 7). Ale-brewing is an ancient art, described by Tacitus after the Roman invasion of Britain (Ball 1977, 12). The importance of ale in the basic diet of English people is shown by mention of a standard ale measure in Magna Carta (Ball 1977, 15). However, the Brewers were not one of the companies known as the ‘Great Twelve’ by the 16th century and did not receive their charter of incorporation until 1438 (Unwin 1908, 106–7, 180–1, 194–5).⁹ The Brewers had a hall well before they gained this charter (Unwin 1908, 181). Brewers’ Hall, in the north-west of the City, was described by John Stow in his *Survey of London* of 1598 as ‘a fair house in Adelstrete’ (Stow 1603, I, 297). The land was rented from St Paul’s Cathedral from 1403 onwards, and the hall was evidently large and commodious enough to be hired out to other companies and fraternities who did not have their own hall (Ball 1977, 46).¹⁰ Within Porlond’s book, there is a list, compiled in 1421–2, of 111 crafts practised in London, then or of old, and the clerk hoped that this might ‘profit the Brewers’ company and hall’ through the hire of the hall.¹¹ Unwin transcribed and reproduced the list (Unwin 1908, 167, 370–1). Caroline Barron noted that the clerk ‘omitted well-organized crafts such as coopers, fusters, masons and bladesmiths’, whilst including crafts such as burlsters and basketmakers, which lacked any formal organisation (Barron 2004, 230). It is not clear why this was so: Porlond had already recorded the hire of the hall by the masons in 1418.¹²

Porlond referred to himself as clerk to both the craft and the fraternity of Brewers of London from the beginning of his book. The pre-Reformation Church in England underpinned a fraternity in the 15th century. In 1388–9, the Pouchmakers’ return to the national Guild Enquiry defined their fraternity’s functions as: ‘nourishing of love amonges hem’; ‘helthe of here soules by werkes of almesdede’; and ‘fyndyng of ligt’ in

honour of particular saints (Barron & Wright 1995, 140). Elspeth Veale explored the origins of guilds and fraternities in London from the 13th century and argued that fraternities connected with London companies developed mainly in the late 13th century, but that the course of their foundation and development varied greatly (Veale 1991, 237). The Goldsmiths, concentrated in west Cheap in the ‘aurifabria’, had a fraternity from at least 1273 (Veale 1991, 240, 245). The Skinners’ fraternity, ‘solidly based in the parish of Saint John Wallbrook’, took shape from 1311 onwards, possibly originating as a parish fraternity, whilst the Tailors were not concentrated in a particular area of the City, so their fraternity is unlikely to have grown from a local fraternity (Veale 1991, 247–8). Fishmongers lived mainly in four parishes close together, but were linked with several fraternities: St Michael Crooked Lane and St Peter Cornhill, where the statutes of a fraternity of 1403 specified that half of the wardens should be fishmongers and half parishioners (Veale 1991, 242, & n 28; Colson 2011, 52). In its mixed membership, this fraternity had something in common with the origins of the Brewers’ fraternity. The Brewers’ fraternity began as a small association of citizens, based at the church of All Hallows, London Wall. In the guild return of 1398–9, the four wardens claimed that their fraternity was established ‘six years before the great pestilence’ (Davies 2011, 147). In fact, a neighbourhood fraternity was founded in 1342 by seven Londoners, including John Enefeld, brewer, to repair a chapel and to fund a taper before the cross in that church to honour Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saints (Barron & Wright 1985; Westlake 1919, 27–8). When the pestilence killed all but Enefeld, he ‘assembled other good men’ of the Brewers of London and ‘persuaded them to maintain the light in the church’ (Barron & Wright 1985, 16). This became the fraternity of the Brewers’ craft, and the chance association with All Hallows was retained. Enefeld bequeathed a tenement in West Smithfield to this fraternity on his death, and the wardens purchased a rent in 1383, for paying a chaplain (Barron & Wright 1985, 16). Throughout Porlond’s book, the fraternity continued to pay a salary to its chaplain.¹³

The church of All Hallows, London Wall, lay on the north wall of the City, about half a mile east of Brewers' Hall. Porlond sometimes noted 'carriage of mass books, chalice, vestments and ornaments of ye awter' from All Hallows to Brewers' Hall.¹⁴ There may have been an occasional chapel within Brewers' Hall, as references to elm for a shelf in the 'chapel of the great chamber', with 'sconces', suggest.¹⁵ Gervase Rosser noted that by the 15th century, company halls could be like a chapel, decorated with candles and prayer texts (Rosser 1994, 435). During 1437–8, the fraternity transferred to the nearby parish church of St Mary Aldermanbury 'at the request of William Estfeld, then Mayor of London', because Estfeld 'said it was most convenient ... to have our priest there ... because our Hall standeth in the same parish'.¹⁶ Estfeld had contact with the Brewers because he owned a property at the west end of Brewers' Hall.¹⁷ The Brewers gained their charter of incorporation in 1437–8, preparations for which may have prompted their move to the church nearby. The Brewers' fraternity thus developed in an unusual way from a small neighbourhood fraternity in another parish, away from the one in which their hall stood. The move to its second church can be traced within Porlond's book.

When the Brewers' Guild received their first charter in 1310, they were called the Guild of Saint Mary and Saint Thomas the Martyr (Ball 1977, 19). By 1418, Porlond referred to the 'fraternity of the Holy Trinity', giving us the focus of the Brewers' devotional loyalty.¹⁸ Porlond's records show that the Brewers used both All Hallows and St Mary Aldermanbury churches regularly before their transfer. Payments to the priest of All Hallows of 2s for bread and wine, for quantities of wax used, and 12d to the parish clerk were noted.¹⁹ Payments were also made to the 'parson of Aldermanbury' for his offering for a year, to the parish clerk and for holy bread used there.²⁰ In 1437, when Porlond recorded the 'carriage of a great chest ... that serveth to keep in our mass book, chalices and vestments', from All Hallows to St Mary Aldermanbury, the connection between All Hallows and the Brewers' fraternity ceased and subsequent 'custamable payments' were made only to St Mary Aldermanbury.²¹

The craft of Brewers of London in the early 15th century was 'neither very rich nor very respected' (Bennett 1995, 188). Porlond's book provides some account of the Brewers' dealings with successive mayors and the civic government for the years 1418–40. Richard Whittington, mercer, and mayor three times, disliked the Brewers, and inflicted a £20 penalty upon them for apparently raising the price of malt, by riding into the country and buying up supplies, to enhance their own profits.²² On 30 July 1422, the four masters and another twelve brewers were summoned to the Guildhall and accused of selling ale at too high a price, whereupon the mayor, Robert Chichele, 'ordeigneth and comaundeth' that the masters 'sholde be kepte yn the warde of the Chamberlayn of the Gyldehall yn prisoun'.²³ When the mayor and aldermen went 'homward to hir mete', the masters asked the chamberlain and John Carpenter, the Common Clerk, what they should do.²⁴ Carpenter, subsequently Whittington's executor, told them to 'goon home' with 'nomore harme', for they 'wysten and knewen' that the judgement of the mayor and aldermen 'was not don ... bot for to plesse Richard Whityngton, for he was cause of alle the forsaid Juggement'.²⁵ Porlond's record of this dramatic event in the life of the Brewers' craft may be a verbatim account. Other mayors were more favourably disposed towards the Brewers: William Crowmer was 'a good man' and 'lovinge to the Craffte of Brewers', but the Brewers felt it necessary to give twelve swans, costing 3s 4d each, to William Estfeld.²⁶ These examples demonstrate Porlond's close involvement with the Brewers and the vicissitudes of their craft in this period.

Matthew Davies noted that in London in the later Middle Ages, 'few men from artisan crafts found their way into the city's top tiers of government' and that mercers, grocers, goldsmiths and drapers usually served as mayors, aldermen or members of Parliament, so that 'a distinction between the lesser and greater crafts was emerging' (Davies 2012, 252). Porlond therefore provides an interesting case study of a professional company clerk working for a poorer, artisan craft. Davies has also found that London companies at this time were increasingly employing professional, salaried clerks (Davies

2011, 145). Clerks were recorders of company practice, keeping details of membership, apprentices, trade regulations, the finances of the guild or fraternity, and its charitable works (Davies 2011, 147). The Goldsmiths reorganised their records in 1418, copying them into a book of 400 folios, in the same year that Porlond began keeping his book (Davies 2011, 149). Clerks were creators of company history and tradition, ‘responsible for the institutional memory of the guilds’, linking their customs to the past (Davies 2011, 150).

The craft and fraternity employing William Porlond was governed by four masters, usually elected annually, although during 1419–21 and 1423–9, the masters probably stood for two years. There appears to have been only one fraternity for all members, with no separate brotherhood of servants or yeomen, as the Tailors had for younger men newly free of apprenticeship (Barron 2004, 213–14). Porlond referred to the discontent of some of the younger men when the masters stood for two years at a time in 1429.²⁷ The Bakers had trouble with the servants of their craft in 1441, so the lack of opportunities for young men within the crafts was sometimes a problem (Barron 2004, 213). During preparations for the Brewers’ charter, Porlond noted charges for bread, cheese and ale for ‘the servaunts of brewers whanne they dede a peren yn the halle of breweres to swere upon a booke to keepe the same patrons’ and serve no other craft.²⁸ Although the servants of the Brewers’ craft were a distinct group on this occasion, there was no fraternity for them, as there was for the Skinners and Tailors (Barron 2004, 213).

Porlond recorded income and expenditure for the fraternity and aspects of the craft. Brewers who became freemen of the craft and citizens of London paid an entry fee of 26s 8d.²⁹ There was another entry fee of 6s 8d for joining the Brewers’ fraternity. Members sometimes paid both fees in instalments, which Porlond recorded carefully.³⁰ He recorded quarterage payments from members, and those who had not paid, sometimes because of poverty.³¹ A husband and wife paid 2s quarterly; a bachelor, widower, widow or single woman paid 12d (Bennett 1995, 181–232).³² The fraternity,

and occasionally the freedom too, included brewers and men with other trades: in 1423–4 thirteen men entered both the freedom and the fraternity, whilst nine entered as freemen only, one of whom was John Sprotley, vintner at the King’s Head in Wood Street.³³ Perhaps the admission of men with a different trade to the freedom was a way of generating further income, or establishing trading contacts. Men with other professions who joined this fraternity included William Calston, ‘plomer’, who effectively paid his entry fee in new lead, after working on the Brewers’ almshouse, and John Hatfeld, smith, who became a resident almsman.³⁴ Johanna Ambele, ‘almswoman be many a yere of owr crafte’, was the widow of John, a skinner, so she may have been a brewer herself.³⁵ The fraternity included men such as John Riche, tailor, John Gedney, draper, and James Mogon, poulter, all of whom may have supplied services or goods to the Brewers, but also William Covele, goldsmith and Robert Calowe, shearman, whose link with the Brewers is less obvious, unless their wives were brewers.³⁶ Other fraternities admitted men of other crafts, most notably the Tailors, who from the early 15th century, due to ‘the perceived social and spiritual benefits of affiliation’ acquired a large non-tailor membership, which included John Chirchman, who had been a grocer, but whose bequest to the Tailors was used for building their almshouse, from 1413 (Davies 1995, 166–7; Barron 2004, 206, 298).³⁷ In addition to membership payments, Porlond recorded four other sources of income. There were occasional bequests to the fraternity, such as the £3 18s ‘by the testament’ of brewer’s widow Felise Mason.³⁸ The Chamberlain of the Guildhall returned a proportion of the fines paid by the Brewers for selling foreign ale or using unsealed vessels. In 1424–5, the amount returned was 9s 1½d, which the Brewers agreed to use for almshouse repairs.³⁹ Porlond wrote inventories of the goods of three deceased almsmen.⁴⁰ Their possessions were valued by Santon, the Upholder in Cornhill, then sold to other almsfolk, at prices listed by Porlond, generating sums of 47s 1½d, 16s 10d, and 5s for the fraternity.⁴¹ Lastly, the hire of Brewers’ Hall to other associations produced income. Porlond recorded the hire of the hall by the

fraternity of Master Clerks of London and the mysteries of Glovers, Coopers, Masons and Pointmakers of London, in 1418, which brought in 9s 10d that year, and he noted similar payments throughout his book.⁴²

The Brewers owned properties in some London parishes from 1382, including a rent purchased by the wardens to pay for a chaplain, but Porlond did not discuss these in his book (Keene & Harding 1985, 14; Barron & Wright 1985, 16). Brewers' Hall was rented from St Paul's Cathedral from 1403 onwards (Ball 1977, 46); the Brewers paid 1d annually for a rose garland for 'quit rent' of the hall.⁴³ The tenement near the great gate of Brewers' Hall was inhabited by tenants paying rent to the Brewers until 1422–3, when rents totalled 23s 4d, after which the tenement was empty for one term, before being 'made and ordeyned to been an almshouse for ye powre bretheren and sustren' of the Brewers' craft and fraternity.⁴⁴ Some almsfolk then paid low rents to the Brewers, including John Turvey, almsman, who paid 12d, and there was some rental income from tenants who were not almsfolk, including another John Turvey, vestment-maker, whose rent was delivered by his almsman namesake, suggesting that they were related.⁴⁵ It is not clear from Porlond's book whether the Brewers themselves owned or rented this tenement. No benefactor was specified during the foundation of the almshouse, although Robert Smyth, one of the masters, contributed £26 8s 9½d, whilst only 2s 6d came from the common box.⁴⁶ Robert Smyth's will has not been identified, so we do not know if he gave lands or property to the company to support the almshouse, but Porlond's book does not subsequently contain references to such an endowment, even after the Brewers received their Royal charter in 1438 and became incorporated.

As clerk, Porlond was involved in the Brewers' property transactions. In 1422, he was described as 'clerk of London', when he and Robert Smyth and John Mason, brewers, were recipients of a demise by Richard Gretham and others, of a tenement in Ware, Hertfordshire.⁴⁷ In 1432 Porlond, the four masters and John Mason's widow were involved in transactions concerning the 'Faucon on the Hoop' brewhouse, which eventually passed into the possession of the

Brewers' fraternity (Basing 1982, 118–20, 122–4).⁴⁸ Porlond worked at the centre of the Brewers' property transactions. The Brewers acquired several properties at this time, but were not nearly as wealthy as the fraternities of the Mercers or Tailors.

The examination of Brewers' wills enrolled in the Commissary Court has yet to provide instances of properties left to the Brewers for the maintenance of chantries. Hugo Neel, a master from 1422–3, was one of the wealthier Brewers. He bequeathed 12d, for a marble monument in the church of St Peter Cornhill, money to friars, prisoners, lepers, and to the poor in alms of the Brewers' craft, but made no provision for a chantry.⁴⁹

Porlond recorded annual expenses for the craft and fraternity, including his own salary, and £6 13s 4d for the fraternity's chaplain.⁵⁰ Sir Robert Steynton, chaplain, entered the fraternity in 1418, and was listed just above William Porlond.⁵¹ Sir William Giles, the chaplain from 1429, was last recorded receiving the same salary in 1439–40.⁵² The Brewers paid for other services at their fraternity church of All Hallows, London Wall, and at their parish church of St Mary Aldermanbury until 1437–8, and thereafter only to St Mary Aldermanbury.⁵³ Brewers' Hall was the setting for the Brewers' annual feast, for which Porlond recorded the costs of ingredients used, dishes served, payments to cooks and 'tornebroches', as well as which fraternity members attended.⁵⁴ There were occasional taxes and levies for which Porlond noted all who contributed.⁵⁵ Between 1435 and 1436, he noted small contributions from over two hundred members of the fraternity, which produced £13 17s 8d 'to help wage sowdyrs' to protect Calais against the Duke of Burgundy.⁵⁶ Matthew Davies noted details of the amounts paid towards the same cause by other companies: the Tailors contributed £28 6s 7d, and the Grocers £14 1s 8d, which indicates their greater wealth, but shows the Brewers playing their part (Davies 1998, 141).

From 1418, fraternity members usually purchased new livery gowns annually, though not in 1421, after burdensome charges imposed on the company by Richard Whittington.⁵⁷ In 1429 it was agreed that as new livery each year was 'a grete charge', the Brewers would purchase new livery thereafter every two

years only.⁵⁸ The Brewers gave livery gowns to the four masters, to their clerk and chaplain, to a few outsiders such as John Pekker, carpenter, whilst he was working on their hall, and to some deserving cases: Porlond noted that help was given with the costs of livery to Robert Lynford, almsman, in 1422, and a livery hood was later provided for John Dunche, a resident in the almshouse.⁵⁹ Both almsmen had purchased their own livery in earlier years.⁶⁰ These are the only two almsmen recorded receiving items of livery from the fraternity.

The greatest expenses recorded by Porlond were for building and repairs. Extensive repairs to the hall, which might 'haue falle down yn defawte of reparacion' took place in 1423 and included a bay window, with a greyhound in the glass and 'heartis hornes and the owl'.⁶¹ Creation of the Brewers' almshouse began in May 1423. It was much more modest than the purpose-built almshouses of the wealthier Tailors or Mercers, and more like the rooms adjoining their hall provided by the Cutlers for their almsfolk (Imray 1968, 17–19; Davies 1995, 161–92; Sasai 2009, 39–40). During construction of the Brewers' almshouse, Porlond recorded 12d, spent on 'ragstone to pave with', whereas the Tailors paid a stonemason over £8 for paving the alley and yard 'ove hewen ragge' (Davies 1995, 184).⁶² The chamber over the gate, where the Brewers' almshouse cook lived, was borne up by a post, so this almshouse was much more haphazard than those of the wealthier companies.⁶³ The Brewers' Hall and almshouse were linked by a 'cloister' and repairs to both were carried out by the same workmen.⁶⁴ Porlond probably recorded this recurring expense for the next 17 years, but details for 1426–28 are missing (Metcalf 2012, appendix 6).

The fraternity gave alms payments to deserving members. Before the almshouse was built, Porlond recorded payments of 20s a year to Robert Lynford and to 'Old Stephen', and listed small payments to Old Stephen for helping with building and cleaning tasks.⁶⁵ As John Schofield noted, almsfolk might serve as cleaners and gardeners for company halls (Schofield 1984, 118). There were probably five almshouse chambers at first because five chimneys 'yn

diverse chambers of the almshouse' were built.⁶⁶ Porlond's last list of alms payments contains nine names, all receiving multiples of 3s 4d, except for Philpot Carpenter, the porter, who received weekly wages of 14d.⁶⁷ Last among the expenses are costs related to brewing. Porlond recorded very little about the practicalities of brewing, apart from occasional expenses for vats, 'tubbes' and brooms.⁶⁸

WILLIAM PORLOND'S CAREER AS CLERK

On the first page of his book, in November 1418, Porlond wrote, in Norman French, that 'the said William ordained this book to have cognizance of all things done in the Mistery and Fraternity'.⁶⁹ The book was Porlond's method of recording 'the accretion of custom and past practice' for the Brewers (Davies 2011, 146). Porlond stated that he was appointed clerk to the Brewers of London on 14 February 1418, following the death of his predecessor, John Morey, on 10 February.⁷⁰ What Porlond was doing before this is not known, nor how he secured this position. Porlond's own entry into the Brewers' fraternity is noted in 1418, so he was evidently not a fraternity member before taking up this post.⁷¹ He then served the Brewers faithfully until his death in spring 1440.

Aspects of his role as clerk were similar to that of the clerk of the Puy in the late 13th century, a merchant fraternity concerned with cultural pursuits, whose articles required that 'a clerk was to be appointed to keep the records' and keep track of members (Veale 1991, 261). Porlond noted costs for making a board for the hall with names of members inscribed upon it in 1418, then a replacement or additional board in 1423, when a 'text writer' earned 6d, for writing names of 'brethren and sustren yn a table' and a 'lomynour' 2d, for illuminating the letters.⁷² Other companies had a tabulated board with names of members, living and deceased: the Carpenters paid 2s for 'the making of a table for the brethren and sistyrs' in 1484 and a further 13s 4d for painting and gilding; the Skinners spent 7s 4d having their old Bede Roll copied into book fashion and 'for limning of it' in 1509–

10 (Davies 2011, 152). Porlond recorded the deaths of fraternity members in his book, including Margaret Hylton, and 2s 6d spent by the Brewers upon a trental of masses for Robert Hylton and Dionysia Barthorpe.⁷³ Porlond once noted a 'Mass of Requiem' for departed members of the fraternity, and listed costs for 'the beryng of pore men deyying yn owre Almesse' when almsmen John Turvey and Baldewyne Hoper died in the same week in May 1436.⁷⁴ Costs included 3s 3d for winding cloths; 12d for each pit and knell; 2s 10d for tapers and candles, with 14d for torch bearers; and 15d for a 'Dirige of 5 persons with the clerks of our church'.⁷⁵ The fraternity took great care over the funerals of its almsmen.

PORLOND'S USE OF ENGLISH IN HIS BOOK

It is a distinctive aspect of Porlond's character that he decided to write his book in English. He used French and Latin interchangeably at first, recording quarterage payments 'pour lui et sa femme' but using Latin for records of 'elemosinaria' (alms) payments and for copying some official documents. On folio 69v, he explained, in Latin, that King Henry V used '*lingua materna*' (the mother tongue) '*ob meliorem plebis suis intelligentiam*' (for the better understanding of his people) and that the Brewers would follow suit, because although many of the craft had knowledge of reading and writing in the English idiom, they did not understand French or Latin.⁷⁶ The rest of the book was written mostly in English, with one scribe using Latin in 1424–5, just before the missing pages. The use of English for records was unusual among the guilds. The older, more prestigious companies of Mercers and Goldsmiths continued to write their records in Law French or Latin (Jefferson 2003, xvi; 2008, 10). Some of the Guild returns of 1388 were written in English, but Porlond was possibly the first company clerk to maintain official records in English (Barron & Wright 1985, 110).

Like other company clerks, William Porlond 'had a public role, coordinating much of the communication with the City government, Parliament and the Crown' (Davies 2011, 147). He wrote to 'diverse persons of the Parliament for to hanne vij bushels of

clene malt' for 1¼d, and noted payment of 40s to 'Harold, Clerk of [Mayor] Crowmer at parlement chamber dore for to hanne good friendshep of the same Harold as in spedynge of his werke'.⁷⁷ Porlond drafted petitions to the King using such phrases as 'Unto his most Sovereyne lord the Kyng and to his ful noble and wyse counsell'.⁷⁸ One payment: 'to draw iij billes out of Latin into Englissh', suggests that the Brewers needed further legal and scribal help, especially during 1437–8, at the time of their incorporation.⁷⁹ This may explain payments to William Glenn for 'iij copies of owre charter', to Fitz Robert, 'man of law' 'to hanne good comfort', to Robert Catton, clerk and to Thomas Clerk, scrivener, 'for I deed and I demyse of lande yn to the crafte'.⁸⁰ The sense that these experts were guests is given by expenses for 'bread, marmosyne, red wyne and coles to make a fyre' during this work.⁸¹ Porlond, as the scribe himself, or the recorder of the Brewers' payments to scribes and men of law, bridged the gap between official documents and his fraternity members.

Where Porlond lived from 1418 to 1420 is not known. After two years as the Brewers' clerk, he was granted 'free and quiet dwelling in the hall of the Company, commonly called Brewers' Hall, with the use of the chamber and of other utensils and necessaries' belonging to the hall, for himself, his wife, children and servants, by unanimous consent, at the company breakfast on 13 February 1420.⁸² Porlond's presence within Brewers' Hall underlies his detailed lists of materials used and craftsmen employed in building work and activities within Brewers' Hall. He referred to ½d spent on good ale, after removal of leaves eaten by caterpillars from a tree in the yard, and payments to a man to take snow out of the gutters of the buildings, 'for it melted into dyverse houses of our place'.⁸³ Later, Porlond may have lived outside Brewers' Hall, because 'carriage of a great chest from Brewers' Hall to the house of William Porlond for our treasure' was noted, during the time of the fraternity's transfer to the church of St Mary Aldermanbury.⁸⁴ This entry might suggest that Porlond lived away from Brewers' Hall by then, but examination of the Husting Rolls has not revealed details of a house purchased by Porlond for his own use. If he left the hall, the house must

have been within the same parish, since he was described as a parishioner of St Mary Aldermanbury in his will.⁸⁵

We know most about Porlond's career within the Brewers' Company. He earned 40s annually for five years, then his salary was doubled. The masters, 'by a common assent', granted Porlond another 40s a year, 'more than any other clerk had before in the same time, of the said craft'.⁸⁶ Robert Cokat, his successor, received just 30s for three quarters of the year in 1440, the year of Porlond's death, so Cokat evidently began by earning £2 a year.⁸⁷ We do not know if Cokat subsequently earned £4 a year, as this information has not survived. Apart from deeds, Brewers' Company records have not survived from 1440 until the Wardens' account books, which begin in 1501, and the Court minute books, which start in 1531.⁸⁸ Caroline Barron noted that the Tailors employed three clerks between the 1450s and 1512, one of whom, Henry Mayour, earned £5 a year (Barron 2004, 224). This makes Porlond's pay increase significant, putting his salary closer to the level of the Tailors' clerk.

Porlond's involvement with the community at Brewers' Hall is apparent in an entry naming John Bryton as his guest at the company dinner.⁸⁹ Bryton became the almshouse cook, and later lived in the almshouse, paying rent but not receiving alms, so perhaps Porlond introduced him to the Brewers.⁹⁰ Porlond once sold whole and broken tiles, generating 20d towards the cost of torches provided by the Brewers for the funeral of King Henry V.⁹¹ Porlond recorded 3s 4d spent by the Brewers upon tiles from the executors of John Mason, of whom Porlond was one.⁹² It seems characteristic of Porlond to help Mason's widow and son by arranging for the Brewers to acquire these tiles, which could be used for the almshouse. During construction of the almshouse, Porlond helped to sweep the yard and kitchen cloister, then shared ale with 'an woman' and almsman Robert Lynford.⁹³ These examples show Porlond helping the community at Brewers' Hall in several ways. Porlond noted payments to craftsmen employed to adapt the tenement by the great gate into the Brewers' almshouse. These included John Croxton (the master mason then building

the new Guildhall nearby), who was given 20d for overseeing the works.⁹⁴ Porlond thus had dealings with London craftsmen through this building work, and subsequent repairs. Within the last surviving pages of Porlond's book, he recorded damage to one end of the hall caused by a storm, and listed almsfolk who helped with repairs, including John Dunche, John Lyme and their wives, showing his continuing involvement with this community at Brewers' Hall.⁹⁵

CONTACT WITH PRIESTS AND FRIARS OF LONDON

As Brewers' clerk, Porlond had contact with a number of clergy and friars. The fraternity chaplains, Robert Steynton 1419–29, then William Giles, were sometimes guests at the feasts, paid quarterage, and were given a salary and livery.⁹⁶ Adam Dalton, Rector of All Hallows, London Wall (1417–30) and a member of the fraternity, was three times a guest at feasts, and received livery from the Brewers in 1425 (Hennessy 1898, 82).⁹⁷ Dalton's successor, Richard Woodhouse, referred to in the book only as 'the Parson of All Hallows' was also a guest (Hennessy 1898, 82).⁹⁸ Augustinian canons at the Hospital of St Mary within Cripplegate (Elsyngspital) included John Fuller and Ralph Mympe, who served as successive curates to St Mary Aldermanbury (Bowtell 2010, 111, 119, 264). Porlond once listed 'Sir Raaf Mympe chanon' as one of the guests at the feast, together with the Prior of Elsyngspital, Sir Robert of Woolchurch, Friar Berkyng and Sir William Giles.⁹⁹ The will of William Giles reveals that he was a priest at St John Zachary, who bequeathed 12d to 'a canon called Raaf' at Elsyngspital (probably Ralph Mympe), and money to the poor in alms of the Brewers' craft, and wished the priests of St Mary Aldermanbury to be present at his exequies.¹⁰⁰ This will illustrates the Brewers' links with St Mary Aldermanbury and Elsyngspital.

The Brewers had contact with the Austin friars, one of whom, John Berkyng, was listed from 1423 onwards as a fraternity member.¹⁰¹ Porlond's guest lists reveal links with another friar, Richard Donyngton, who has not previously been identified as the prior of the Austin friars (Barron

& Davies 2007, 136). Donyngton joined the Brewers' fraternity with Friar Berking, paid quarterage, was a guest at feasts, and gave 3s 4d towards the repair of Brewers' Hall.¹⁰² In 1424–5 the Brewers entertained a prestigious guest, the Provincial, or head of the Order of Austin friars in England, with Prior Donyngton and Friar Berkyng.¹⁰³ The link between the Augustinian friars and the Brewers was maintained, at least by Friar Berkyng, when the fraternity moved to St Mary Aldermanbury church.

Clergy from other parishes were sometimes recorded as guests at feasts, including three priests invited by Henry Trebolans, a master.¹⁰⁴ The Brewers did not all live close to their hall during Porlond's time. When Dionysia Barthorpe, a brewer's widow and fraternity member, died in 1425, the Brewers paid for carriage of a torch to the fraternity church of All Hallows from her house in St Mary Woolchurch, and the parson of her parish church, Robert Benham, was a guest at the annual feast.¹⁰⁵ John Holmhegg, the parson of 'Seynt Anne Aldrichigate' 1427–41, was also a guest at a Brewers' feast (Hennessy 1898, 95).¹⁰⁶ Sir William Goodeswayne, the rector of St Mary Woolnoth, 1417–28, was another guest at feasts and a fraternity member (Hennessy 1898, 314–15).¹⁰⁷ Porlond's book provides an interesting insight into the social interactions between laymen and the clergy, both regulars and seculars.

These social and religious connections between the Brewers, Elsyngspital and the Austin friars may have something in common with the confraternal links between the Tailors and nine religious houses in London, established between 1350 and 1450, and listed by their clerk, Henry Mayour, in 1507 (Davies 2011, 157). The Saddlers had links with the canons of St Martin le Grand, who made the Saddlers confratres of the canons in a charter, offering prayers for living and dead confratres: in return the Saddlers agreed to attend masses, especially upon their feast day of St Martin, and to remember the canons in their wills (Barron 2004, 201). The Brewers' links with Elsyngspital and the Austin friars seem less formal and without Porlond's book, it would be harder to identify them.

WILLIAM PORLOND'S HOUSEHOLD

Porlond was married to Dionysia. We do not know whether he was already married in 1418.¹⁰⁸ Dionysia first appeared in the quarterage lists for 1420–1, where the entry for William Porlond and Dionysia appears darker than others, as if a later hand has enhanced the entry, perhaps when the folio numbers were added (Fig 2).¹⁰⁹ They were married for at least 20 years, from 1420 until William died in spring 1440, when the Brewers paid a 40 shilling 'pensyoune' to his widow.¹¹⁰ Probate was granted for Porlond's will in May 1440. He made Dionysia his executrix, and asked for the distribution of his gowns and hoods amongst the poor of the Brewers' craft of London, or other needy people, as she thought most expedient.¹¹¹

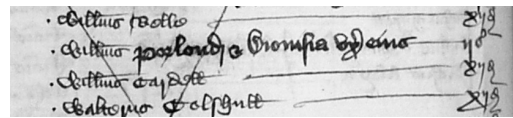


Fig 2. The entry of Dionysia Porlond into the fraternity, fol. 48v (By kind permission of the Brewers' Company)

Porlond bequeathed half of the rest of his moveable goods and chattels to Dionysia for her dower and half for distribution for the benefit of his soul, as she would want him to do for her in like case.¹¹² This implies that Dionysia understood his wishes and could fulfil them. She was listed regularly with Porlond in the quarterage lists, and once earned 6d for 'wasshyge of dyverse naprye', before the feast, whilst her husband supplied the pewter vessels.¹¹³ This suggests that they were a practical couple. Porlond made no provision for children in his will, so either there were none, or none survived. Porlond had a servant, Rose, in his household, who collected 4d towards the costs of John Pekker, Carpenter.¹¹⁴ Another woman, 'Alson servant of William Porlond', earned a reward 'for hir business and travail' during a dinner.¹¹⁵ Alison may have been in addition to Rose, or her successor. Porlond received a livery gown from the masters in 1422, and regularly thereafter (Ball 1977, 54).¹¹⁶ Judith Bennett noted that normally only men of this fraternity wore livery, although

some women took material for a livery hood, as Dionysia did when the cloth was given by the masters in 1437 (Bennett 1995, 214, n 48). That year, Porlond received his livery material from the masters without charge, but paid 11s 6d for cloth for a gown for his wife (Bennett 1995, 214).¹¹⁷ Porlond's servant, Rose, paid 5s for livery material, probably for a hood, in 1422–3.¹¹⁸ Porlond, his wife and their servant clearly took pride in wearing the Brewers' livery. There are no other references to Porlond's own servants in his book, nor in his will, but these details give a glimpse of his household.

WILLIAM PORLOND'S RELIGIOUS DEVOTION

Porlond's will gives us an impression of his own religious devotion. We do not know if he was born in London. His name is spelt in a number of ways as 'Purlang', 'Porlang' and 'Purlonde' in surviving documents, but this does not indicate his origins (Basing 1982, 118–25; James 2004, 34). He requested burial in London, but wherever God disposed of him if he died outside London, which suggests that he sometimes left the City.¹¹⁹ Porlond's parentage is unknown, but his bequests to four London churches may hold clues. As a parishioner of St Mary Aldermanbury, he bequeathed 20d to the high altar for forgotten tithes and oblations, 3s 4d to the fabric of the church; and he pardoned the sum of 6s 8d which that church owed him, leaving it for church use.¹²⁰ This church was, of course, part of the background to Porlond's working life, particularly after it became the fraternity church.¹²¹

Porlond did not, however, request burial at his parish church. He specified burial in the cloister of the nearby Augustinian hospital of St Mary, Elsyngspital, opposite the door of their Chapter House.¹²² The choice of burial away from his parish church and the site of Elsyngspital are significant. Anne Sutton has noted that 'it required a deliberate decision to desert one's parish and select an alternative place of burial' so those who did must 'have had a particular tie to the house or its master' (Sutton 2008, 209). The choice of Elsyngspital is distinctive: Ann Bowtell found records of requests for only 30 lay burials there in the hospital's life of about

200 years (Bowtell 2010, 200). Porlond did not make a particularly substantial bequest to Elsyngspital, but there were evidently strong ties between Porlond and Elsyngspital, which stood close to Brewers' Hall. After the church of St Mary Aldermanbury was appropriated to the hospital of Elsyngspital in 1331, St Paul's Cathedral required Elsyngspital to provide one of their canons as the curate for that church, whilst the rectory could be rented out to provide income for the hospital (Bowtell 2010, 111). Porlond noted repairs to the chimney of this neighbouring property, and the wall between it and the Brewers' almshouse.¹²³ The Prior of Elsyngspital, John Belle, was a guest at the company feast in the year of his election, 1438–9.¹²⁴ According to Porlond's will, made in November 1439, Prior Belle owed Porlond £9, of which £3 was to be used by Elsyngspital for Porlond's burial, upon condition that the Prior and Convent repaid the remaining £6 to Porlond's executors.¹²⁵ Under Henry Hoddesdon (prior 1427–38), Elsyngspital had run into debt, and John Belle (prior 1438–46) worked to reduce this (Bowtell 2010, 294). Perhaps Porlond's sizeable loan of £9 was part of Belle's efforts. The debt was probably repaid to Porlond's executors, who were his wife, Dionysia, and John Neel, master of the Hospital of St Thomas Acre, since their names do not occur among the hospital's list of debtors, drawn up in 1448 (Bowtell 2010, 121). Even if Porlond's wife had died by then, John Neel, the other executor, lived until 1463, so a debt owed to him would have been recorded (Sutton 2008, 228). Porlond had been involved with Elsyngspital in an administrative capacity, had lent money to the prior, and wished to be buried there, near where he had lived and worked, because of his loyalty either to Prior Belle, or to the Augustinian house itself. This was the second church nominated in his will for bequests.

Porlond also left money to the churches of St Mary Colechurch and St Mary Fenchurch. He left 3s 4d to the fabric of St Mary Colechurch, which lay south of Brewers' Hall, near the Hospital of St Thomas Acre, which held the advowson. John Neel was a 'charismatic master' of the hospital from 1420 to 1463, who demonstrated a 'close involvement' with the outside world

(Sutton 2008, 199). Porlond, involved in the administration of the Brewers' almshouse, probably valued his collaboration with the master of a hospital. Anne Sutton noted that Neel, 'showed determination to act for and help all laymen' and 'worked unremittingly as executor and feoffee, even for quite lowly persons' (Sutton 2008, 216). Neel's desire to help his fellow men may explain why this prestigious man acted as an executor for a company clerk: this link may explain the small bequest to the fabric of St Mary Colechurch.

Two other bequests in Porlond's will concern the parish church of St Mary Fenchurch: 3s 4d for the fabric of this church, and an 'antiquam' missal containing the Apostles and Gospels.¹²⁶ This would have been a valued book, which would enhance worship at this church. The gift of Porlond's own missal might indicate a family connection: perhaps this was the parish church of his parents, or where Porlond lived before being appointed by the Brewers, or there could be other reasons for his gift to a parish church which lay further east in the City and had no obvious connection with the Brewers. Porlond's religious devotion focused upon four London churches, all dedicated to the Virgin, at the hospital of Elsyngspital, at Fenchurch, Colechurch and Aldermanbury. Porlond's will thus suggests something of the pattern of his devotion as clerk and parishioner.

ASSOCIATES AND FRIENDS

Of Porlond's activities outside the Brewers' craft, we know very little. He was a member of the Fraternity of St Nicholas, the brotherhood of Parish Clerks of the City of London and was listed on their Bede Roll (James 2004, 34). He might have served as a parish clerk before working for the Brewers, or this may have been the fraternity that best served his interests as a company clerk. He bequeathed 20s to this fraternity, conditional upon the wardens keeping four torches and four candles burning around his body before his burial, paying wages to the torch-bearers and having two small torches burning continuously until his burial.¹²⁷ The fact that his name was still on the Bede Roll in 1448 suggests that his wishes

were fulfilled after his death, and that the fraternity continued to remember Porlond (James 2004, 34). Interaction between this fraternity, the Brewers, and their clerk is shown when Porlond recorded the hire of Brewers' Hall by the Parish Clerks twice.¹²⁸ Two of Porlond's circle of priests and friars were members of this fraternity: Canon John Fuller from Elsyngspital, who acted as parish priest for St Mary Aldermanbury in the 1430s, and Sir William Goodeswayne, member of the Brewers' fraternity and rector of St Mary Woolnoth (James 2004, 1, 8, 22 n 146, 34).¹²⁹ A number of the Brewers' fraternity were also listed on the Bede Roll of the Fraternity of St Nicholas, including Hugo Neel and William Ferrou, who were both masters of the Brewers, Ferrou's wife, Agnes, and Elizabeth Trebolans, wife of another master, so there was some overlap in the two fraternities to which Porlond belonged (James 2004, 3, 4, 9, 10).¹³⁰ Ferrou and Hugo Neel may reflect the sort of 'middle ranking Londoners who aspired to a more elaborate funeral than could be provided through membership of the average fraternity' (James 2004, xxviii). Although the two Brewers' wives were listed as members of the fraternity of St Nicholas, Dionysia Porlond, William's wife, was not. The editors of the Bede Roll of St Nicholas point out that wives of ordinary laymen might be admitted with their husbands, but that 'the privilege was not normally extended to the clerks' wives, perhaps because as widows, they might have proved too great a drain on the available alms and accommodation' of the craft's charitable funds (James 2004, xxix). Membership of the fraternity of St Nicholas was part of Porlond's professional life and did not confer any benefits upon his wife, yet it was also the fraternity to whom he entrusted the arrangements for his body after his death. This gives us some impression of Porlond's circle of acquaintances, in his role as Brewers' clerk.

We know something of William Porlond's friends and associates. He was appointed as an executor to John Mason, with Mason's wife, Felise, and John Broke, brewer. Broke and Porlond were each to receive 40s, Broke for execution of the will, Porlond 'for his counsel only', and both were to have five yards of black material costing 4s a yard.¹³¹ Porlond was clearly a trusted colleague, to be

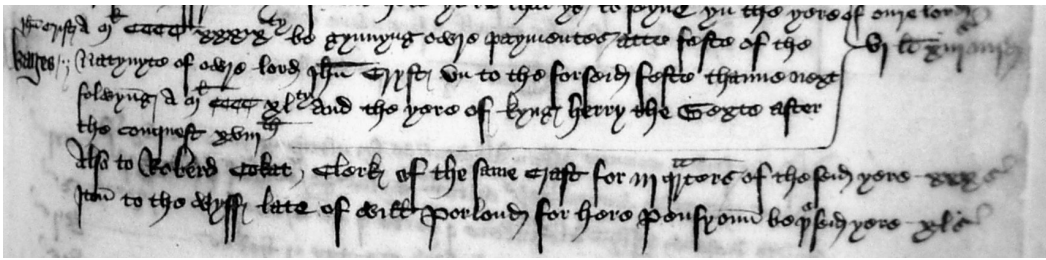


Fig 3. Cokat's salary, and the payment of a pension to Porlond's widow, fol. 324 (By permission of the Brewers' Company)

rewarded for acting as an executor. Robert Cokat, Porlond's successor, was mentioned four times in Porlond's book and twice in his will. Porlond bequeathed to Cokat his books and a furred red cloak with a hood of 'musterdevillers'.¹³² A furred gown in bright colours suggests its quality and, perhaps, a good relationship between them. Cokat's annual salary was first recorded in 1440, just above payment to the 'the wyff late of William Porlond for her pensyon by the said year, forty shillings' (Fig 3).¹³³ The handwriting is not different from that of preceding pages, however, and the pages are still headed with Porlond's initials. Perhaps there was a period when Porlond was the clerk and Cokat was his assistant, for a few pages before, 'Robert Cokat, clerk' was given 'a little new key to the wicket of the great gate' in 1437–8 and was paid 4d, to ride to meet Stephen Broun, Mayor of London in 1438–9.¹³⁴ There is no record of accommodation within Brewers' Hall for Robert Cokat, clerk, and no book compiled by Cokat has survived, so it is not known if he took over Porlond's rooms and Dionysia Porlond then had to find new accommodation.

Two other men were beneficiaries of Porlond's will, Nicholas Fuller and John Dunche, both members of the Brewers' fraternity. Porlond described Fuller, a lorimer, as 'my friend', who was to be forgiven any money that he owed to Porlond and who was to have Porlond's collection of armour and weapons.¹³⁵ Nicholas Fuller had supplied stirrups of iron when the almshouse was built, for 3d.¹³⁶ As a lorimer, working with small metal items, Fuller might have been skilled in making weapons, too. Nicholas Fuller featured regularly in Porlond's book,

paying quarterage to the fraternity, until he started receiving alms from the Brewers.¹³⁷ No will for Nicholas Fuller survives. He and his wife, Alice, paid quarterage in 1421–2, but Alice was not recorded after 1423.¹³⁸ In 1424, Nicholas Fuller and his wife Jonet were listed as lorimer members of the Fraternity of St Eloy, a religious fraternity composed of blacksmiths, lorimers and farriers (Megson 2010, 203). Jonet does not feature in Porlond's quarterage lists, but Nicholas Fuller, who 'lately dwelt at lede porch', received 3s 4d in alms from the Brewers at Christmas 1438, then 13s 4d for the next year, when he became a resident almsman.¹³⁹ Porlond clearly cared about Fuller and forgave debts owed by a man who had fallen on hard times.

Porlond also bequeathed a furred red cloak to John Dunche, who first appeared in Porlond's book in 1420, in a list of new brethren not yet entered in the table of fraternity members.¹⁴⁰ Dunche's trade was not specified. He became a company almsman in 1437–8, when he received 10s from the Brewers, and Porlond noted repairs to the house of a former almsman 'against the coming of John Dunche, almsman'.¹⁴¹ Dunche was an active almsman, who shared 'good ale' with carters and workmen in 1439, after helping with repairs, so he was possibly the almshouse steward and thus would have had frequent contact with Porlond.¹⁴² An almsman would have appreciated a furred red cloak and it may have indicated Dunche's elevated status as the steward.

Porlond made bequests to Thomas Clerk of 6s 8d, and 'my primer, not bound but in quires', so long as Thomas proved helpful and diligent in matters concerning Porlond's

will.¹⁴³ This is the second book mentioned in Porlond's will, other than Brewers' books. There are two references within Porlond's book to a Thomas Clerk, scrivener, paid 3s 4d, then 20d, for 'writing of bills', who could have been this beneficiary.¹⁴⁴ The bequest of Porlond's own mass book is evidence of his friendships beyond Brewers' Hall.

Finally, Porlond bequeathed a gown of medley, furred with black budge, to a Nicholas Barbour, but it has not been possible to identify him. Barbour's name is not in the quarterage lists, nor did he receive any of the alms payments recorded in Porlond's book, so he may not have been a member of the Brewers' fraternity. There are records of a Nicholas Barbour, archer, in the muster rolls, so Barbour could have been one of Porlond's acquaintances with military experience ('The Medieval Soldier Database').

WILLIAM PORLOND'S WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

One of the most striking aspects of Porlond's will is the significant collection of weapons and armour which he bequeathed to Nicholas Fuller: his better sword, better lance, a palette for the head, a pair of plates or civottes, a pair of arm braces, a knife, and his longer basilard, ornamented with silver and gold.¹⁴⁵ This is an interesting collection of weapons and armour for a London citizen. Caroline Barron found that the Tailors' Clerk, John Brynchele, also bequeathed some weapons: his best hauberk, his best bow, his second best bow, a pair of knives decorated with silver, and his baselard, decorated with silver.¹⁴⁶ Perhaps the two clerks spent time jousting, or enjoyed collecting weapons. Two of Porlond's circle of acquaintances, who both appointed him as their executor, referred to weapons in their wills: John Mason, brewer, bequeathed two daggers and a short sword, both set with silver, to his son, and William Rushton, a parishioner of St Mary Aldermanbury, bequeathed a pole axe to his son.¹⁴⁷ So a brewer, a fellow parishioner, and Porlond, the clerk, all owned weapons.¹⁴⁸ Porlond could, perhaps, have been a soldier, before his appointment as clerk in 1418, but there are no entries for William Porlond on the muster rolls for those serving in France. ('The Medieval Soldier Database').

CONCLUSION

Porlond considered the books that he had compiled to be important to the company. In the last clause of his will, he referred to 'all and those singular books by me made in whatever manner, concerning the ordinances and government of the Brewers of London'.¹⁴⁹ This confirms that Porlond had compiled other books, now lost. He bequeathed them to Robert Cokat with the specific proviso that after Robert's death, the books were to remain always with the Brewers' craft.¹⁵⁰ Although a salaried clerk, he considered these books to be his own property, to bequeath to the Brewers' company, with the wish and expectation that they would be preserved indefinitely by the Brewers. This was the very last clause in his will, written after the appointment of executors, and after making provision for his burial and the disposal of his other goods.

Porlond was clearly a good clerk, appreciated and well-rewarded by the masters of the company, and appointed as an executor by at least two other men. He was a man of business, with connections to other institutions. He was able to lend money to Prior Belle and to Nicholas Fuller. When his salary was doubled, he noted that the Brewers considered him 'profitable and besy to do ye comon profite' of the craft and fraternity of Brewers of London.¹⁵¹ The surviving evidence supports this judgement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Worshipful Company of Brewers of London for allowing me to study their manuscript and for their kind permission to use photographs of some of the pages. I am indebted to Professor Caroline Barron for all her assistance, enthusiasm and encouragement for the writing of this article.

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NOTES

The Brewers' Company records are held at the Guildhall Library. Other documents are held at the London Metropolitan Archives, except where otherwise noted.

¹ 'William Porlond's Minute Book', being an Account and Memoranda Book compiled by William Porland, clerk to the Brewers'

Company, 1418–40, Guildhall Library, CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440. The clerk's surname is spelt as 'Porlond' throughout the manuscript, but the Guildhall Library catalogue used 'Porland', as do some modern writers.

² London Metropolitan Archives, hereafter LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.

³ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440. The first entry within the Brewers' Book written in this hand is on fol 11v; the last entry is on fol 81v, dated Year 2 of the reign of Henry VI (1423–4).

⁴ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.

⁵ LMA, DL/C/B/004/MS09171/003, fol 64v: will of John Brynchele, 1420. I am grateful to Professor Caroline Barron for sharing information from John Brynchele's will with me.

⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102.

⁷ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 89v; 256.

⁸ *ibid*, fols 70v–72.

⁹ CLC/L/BF/A/001/MS05425: Charter of Incorporation granted to the Worshipful Company of Brewers, 22 February, 1438.

¹⁰ CLC/L/BF/G/143/MS05503: deeds relating to the site of Brewers' Hall, 1292–1640.

¹¹ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 11v.

¹² *ibid*, fol 2 (1418).

¹³ *ibid*, fols 1v; 162v; 304.

¹⁴ *ibid*, fol 163.

¹⁵ *ibid*, fol 255 (1434–5).

¹⁶ *ibid*, fols 290v (1437–8); 305 (1438–9).

¹⁷ *ibid*, fols 292; 290 (1437–8).

¹⁸ *ibid*, fol 60.

¹⁹ *ibid*, for payments to All Hallows see fols 104; 146v; 163; 289v; 18; 61.

²⁰ *ibid*, for payments to St Mary Aldermanbury see fols 61 (1421); 155 (1424–5); 162v (1429–30); 188v (1431); 203 (1431–2); 225 (1433); 254 (1435); 269 (1436); 289v (1437–8).

²¹ *ibid*, fols 304v; 305; 324v.

²² *ibid*, fol 69v.

²³ *ibid*, fol 69v.

²⁴ *ibid*, fol 69v.

²⁵ *ibid*, fol 70.

²⁶ *ibid*, fol 113; fol 290 (1437–8).

²⁷ *ibid*, fols 157–157v.

²⁸ *ibid*, fol 292v.

²⁹ *ibid*, fol 162.

³⁰ *ibid*, fol 1v.

³¹ *ibid*, fol 64v: Margaret Lynford and Constance Hosard could not pay because of poverty.

³² *ibid*, fol 14v.

³³ *ibid*, fol 149 (1423–4).

³⁴ *ibid*, fol 100v (1423); fols 3; 304; 10v and 231.

³⁵ *ibid*, fols 82v; 224v.

³⁶ *ibid*, fols 14v; 150v; 86v.

³⁷ The Tailors were reincorporated as the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1503.

³⁸ *ibid*, fol 224v (1433–4).

³⁹ *ibid*, fol 121.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, fol 188: Robert Lynford (1430–1); fol 268: Baldewyne Hoper and John Turvey (1435–6).

⁴¹ *ibid*, fol 269v.

⁴² *ibid*, fol 2 (1418).

⁴³ *ibid*, fol 61 (1420–1).

⁴⁴ *ibid*, fols 2v (1418); 83v (1422–3); 90v (1423).

⁴⁵ *ibid*, fol 195 (1431–2).

⁴⁶ *ibid*, fol 83v (1423).

⁴⁷ The National Archive (TNA) E 40/5207: demise of a tenement in Ware.

⁴⁸ Husting Court Rolls of Deeds and Wills, Roll 162/75.

⁴⁹ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/003, fol 200v: will of Hugo Neel (1428)

⁵⁰ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440 fols 18; 61.

⁵¹ *ibid*, fol 1v.

⁵² *ibid*, fols 162v; 324.

⁵³ *ibid*, fols 104 (1423–4); 304v; 324v.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, fols 12 (1418); 15v–16; 41v–42; 46 (1421–2);

51; 57v; 72; 79v–81v (1422–3); 105–106v (1423–4); 134–7 (1424–5); 170–172v (1430); 180–181v;

183 (1431–2); 193–194v (1432–3); 207–207v;

216–218 (1433–4); 227–27v (1434–5); 236 (1435–6);

257–258v (1436–7); 280–282 (1437–8); 295–297

(1438–9); 314v–316v (1438–9).

⁵⁵ *ibid*, fol 25.

⁵⁶ *ibid*, fols 265v–267 (1435).

⁵⁷ *ibid*, fol 50.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, fol 157.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, fols 56; 79; 324v.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, fol 7v: Robert Lynford; fol 53v: John Dunche.

⁶¹ *ibid*, fols 146v (1425); 326v (1438–9); 95v; 97 (1423).

⁶² *ibid*, fol 305v (1438).

⁶³ *ibid*, fol 204v (1432–3).

⁶⁴ *ibid*, fol 93.

⁶⁵ *ibid*, fol 59v (1419–21).

⁶⁶ *ibid*, fol 143 (1424–5).

⁶⁷ *ibid*, fol 324 (1439–40).

⁶⁸ *ibid*, fols 103v–104 (1423).

⁶⁹ *ibid*, fol 1, translated by Mia Ball (Ball 1977, 38).

⁷⁰ *ibid*, fol 1.

⁷¹ *ibid*, fol 1v.

⁷² *ibid*, fols 17v; 102v.

⁷³ *ibid*, fols 69 (1421); 156v (1425).

⁷⁴ *ibid*, fols 306; 342v; 269v.

⁷⁵ *ibid*, fol 269v.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, fol 69v.

⁷⁷ *ibid*, fols 226v; 206v (1434).

⁷⁸ *ibid*, fols 77v–78; 236v.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, fol 226v.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, fols 204; 206v; 304v.

⁸¹ *ibid*, fol 226v.

⁸² *ibid*, fol 15v.

⁸³ *ibid*, fols 327v (1438); 225 (1432).

⁸⁴ *ibid*, fol 291 (1437–8).

- ⁸⁵ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40: will of William Porlond (1440).
- ⁸⁶ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 105v–106 (1423).
- ⁸⁷ *ibid*, fol 324.
- ⁸⁸ CLC/L/BF/D/001/MS05442/001: Brewers' Company Wardens' Account Books, 1501–8; CLC/BF/B/001/MS05445/001: Brewers' Company Court Minute Book, 1531–54.
- ⁸⁹ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 59v (1420–1).
- ⁹⁰ *ibid*, fols 59; 158; 191; 192; 224v; 230v; 249v; 262; 285; 298v.
- ⁹¹ *ibid*, fol 88 (1422).
- ⁹² *ibid*, fol 225v.
- ⁹³ *ibid*, fol 93v (1423).
- ⁹⁴ *ibid*, fol 100 (1423).
- ⁹⁵ *ibid*, fol 325v (1438).
- ⁹⁶ *ibid*, fols 15; 42; 50; 52; 59; 81v; 106; 115; 64; 67v; 68; 82; 115; 116; 131; 184v; 88; 76; 123: Robert Steynton; fols 183; 220v; 318v, 184v; 186; 195v; 221v; 223; 232v; 264v; 286v; 301; 192v; 225; 277v; 293; 324v: William Giles. LMA DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 119: will of William Giles (1443).
- ⁹⁷ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 59; 81v; 52v; 82; 116; 131; 123.
- ⁹⁸ *ibid*, fol 229v (1433–4).
- ⁹⁹ *ibid*, fol 318v (1438–9).
- ¹⁰⁰ LMA, DL/C/B/004/MS09171/004, fol 119: will of William Giles (1443).
- ¹⁰¹ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 86v (1421–3); 81v (1420–1); 116 (1422–3); 131 (1423–4); 158 (1429); 184v (1430–1); 195v (1431–2); 221v (1433–4); 231 (1434–5); 262v (1436–7); 299 (1437–8); 320v (1438–9).
- ¹⁰² *ibid*, fol 86v (1422–3). Richard Donyngton was described as 'late prior' in this entry, but as 'prior' in subsequent entries: fols 106 (1423–4); 132v (1424–5); 139; (1424–5).
- ¹⁰³ *ibid*, fol 139 (1424–5).
- ¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, fol 220v (1433–4).
- ¹⁰⁵ *ibid*, fols 146; 139 (1424–5).
- ¹⁰⁶ *ibid*, fol 229v (1434–5).
- ¹⁰⁷ *ibid*, fols 81v; 139; 116; 131.
- ¹⁰⁸ *ibid*, fol 1v.
- ¹⁰⁹ *ibid*, fol 48v.
- ¹¹⁰ *ibid*, fol 324.
- ¹¹¹ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹¹² *ibid*.
- ¹¹³ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 246v (1434–5).
- ¹¹⁴ *ibid*, fol 97v (1423).
- ¹¹⁵ *ibid*, fol 218v (1433–4).
- ¹¹⁶ *ibid*, fol 56v.
- ¹¹⁷ *ibid*, fol 277v.
- ¹¹⁸ *ibid*, fol 76 (1422–3).
- ¹¹⁹ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹²⁰ *ibid*.
- ¹²¹ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 290v.
- ¹²² LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹²³ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 147v; 148 (1424–5). Porlond referred to a neighbouring building as 'the rente of Elyngspital formerly the parsonage'. Timber was purchased by the Brewers to put under the chimney of the former parsonage and for the wall between this building and the almshouse.
- ¹²⁴ *ibid*, fol 318v.
- ¹²⁵ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹²⁶ *ibid*. I am grateful to Dr Jenny Stratford for discussing this bequest with me.
- ¹²⁷ *ibid*.
- ¹²⁸ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 60, 84.
- ¹²⁹ *ibid*, fol 131.
- ¹³⁰ LMA, DL/C/B/004/MS09171/003, fol 200v, (1428): will of Hugo Neel (1428). Neel, citizen and brewer, parishioner of St Peter Cornhill, and master (1422–3) of the Brewers' fraternity, bequeathed 6s 8d to the poor receiving alms in the Brewers' craft, and left his largest cooking pot for use in the Brewers' kitchen, showing concern for the community at Brewers' Hall.
- ¹³¹ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/003, fol 296v.
- ¹³² LMA DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹³³ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 324.
- ¹³⁴ *ibid*, fols 293 (1437–8); 326v (1438–9). On fol 269, a record of 'Robert, clerk' earning 4d at the burials of two almsmen (1435–6), may also be a reference to Cokat.
- ¹³⁵ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹³⁶ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 90v (1423).
- ¹³⁷ *ibid*, fols 3 (1418); 324v (1438).
- ¹³⁸ *ibid*, fols 64 (1421–2); 132 (1423). I am grateful to Professor Caroline Barron for the suggestion that Fuller's first wife, Alice, might have been a brewer.
- ¹³⁹ *ibid*, fols 304; 324v.
- ¹⁴⁰ *ibid*, fol 11.
- ¹⁴¹ *ibid*, fols 289v; 291v.
- ¹⁴² *ibid*, fol 326.
- ¹⁴³ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹⁴⁴ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 256; 304v.
- ¹⁴⁵ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹⁴⁶ LMA, DL/C/B/004/MS09171/003, fol 64v. I am grateful to Professor Caroline Barron for this information.
- ¹⁴⁷ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/003, fol 296v: will of John Mason (1432). LMA DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 21a: will of William Rushton (1439). Rushton bequeathed to Porlond 40s and a silver gilt pot.
- ¹⁴⁸ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fol 146. The Brewers purchased two boards from the mother of the late 'Vevyan the armourer' which provides another example of Porlond's dealings with arms and armour and evidence of a connection outside Brewers' Hall.
- ¹⁴⁹ LMA, DL/C/B/003/MS09171/004, fol 40.
- ¹⁵⁰ *ibid*.
- ¹⁵¹ CLC/L/BF/A/021/MS05440, fols 105v–6 (1423).

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