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*SCRIPTURALITÉ* AND THE STUDY OF THE MANORIAL AND OBEDIENTIARY ACCOUNT ROLLS OF  
NORWICH CATHEDRAL PRIORY

**Abstract**

*This paper proposes a methodology for a seigniorial approach to the production of management documents at Norwich cathedral priory between 1255 and 1348 – the subject of my PhD – paying special attention to the material aspect of the parchment rolls, following the French-speaking trend of scripturalité. It gives an overview of my first results regarding the functioning of the roll as a support for accounts, then goes into detailing different steps of accounting in a context of centralized writing before proposing, with the example Henry of Lakenham, a broader view of the link between the priory's administration and written production.*

**Introduction**

I would like to begin this paper by saying that I am aware that part of what will be developed here might seem obvious to historians used to dealing with manorial accounts. Nevertheless, there hasn't been many specific studies on the production of seigniorial documents and it seems to me that a case study involving one of the best archives for manorial and obedientiary accounts together, as well as many other kinds of documents and notably a wide range of registers, can be useful to the understanding of medieval literacy.

*Scripturalité* is the French concept for a general tendency over the last three or four decades to reassess the place of writing and written culture in medieval history<sup>1</sup>. It is associated with the German- and English-speaking concepts of *Schriftlichkeit* and literacy, each historiography alternatively overlapping the others or following its own path<sup>2</sup>. Regarding the medieval manorial accounts produced by lay and ecclesiastical lordships, a certain number of remarks can be made. These documents have been abundantly used for economic history and some studies have developed different aspects of their organization and evolution. However, these studies involve only a few monastic houses and they consist only in articles. Moreover, the most recent of these studies

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1 Though the French name itself was proposed by J. Morsel at the 1991 conference on cartularies at the École des Chartes. See O. Guyotjeannin, L. Morelle, M. Parisse (ed.), *Les Cartulaires* (Paris, 1993).

2 For good summaries on these notions, see J. Morsel, 'Ce qu'écrire veut dire au Moyen Âge... Observations préliminaires à une étude de la scripturalité médiévale', *Memini. Travaux et documents de la Société d'études médiévales du Québec* 4 (2000), pp. 3-43 (<http://hal-paris1.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00291802/en/>) and F. Menant, 'Les transformations de l'écrit documentaire entre le XII<sup>e</sup> et le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in N. Coquery, F. Menant, F. Weber (ed.), *Ecrire, compter, mesurer* (Paris, 2006), pp.33-50.

is already 30 years old. Another case study would be complementary to what has been already done without being redundant, and would maybe prove an occasion to go further into details. Obedientary accounts, for their part, have been recently given a renewed attention by Barbara Harvey in her edition of Westminster rolls<sup>3</sup>, but overall, editions are scarce and other studies non-existing. The last criticism would be about the partitioning of these two fields of studies from a medieval point of view. Our medievalists' perception of medieval written production is governed by divisions that don't always match the reality of those times: thus, manorial documents are strongly segregated from other kinds of sources, most notably those labelled « household » as opposed to « estate ». It is revealing that obedientary accounts figure in neither category, though one might argue that this example is limited to the case of monasteries<sup>4</sup>.

This not only leaves place for a case study of the rolls of Norwich cathedral priory, but furthermore shows how necessary it is to engage in studies considering the logics of production of seigniorial documents as a whole, and not only manorial or obedientary accounts individually<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, the concept of *scripturalité* can bring new insight into these last two kinds of documents. Analysing them together, in the rich series of Norwich cathedral priory between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fourteenth century, may prove a first step towards this seigniorial point of view.

## I. What is *scripturalité* and how to use it ?

*Scripturalité* can't really be considered alone, as it is part of a relatively international movement which would embrace the three English-, French- and German-speaking concepts of literacy, *scripturalité* and *Schriftlichkeit*. Literacy seems more on the side of cultural history, studying the impact of written culture on medieval society. Michael Clanchy's *From Memory to Written Record* is of course a cornerstone reference, where he analyses the growing use of writing throughout the society in relation to the development of a centralized state<sup>6</sup>. Subsequent series of studies in the 1980's and 1990's have explored literacy in earlier times, while other historians like Brian Stock have developed the concept of intertextuality within the history of thought<sup>7</sup>. *Scripturalité* and *Schriftlichkeit*, on the other hand, seem to react maybe more directly against the

3 *The Obedientaries of Westminster Abbey and their Financial Records : c. 1275-1540*, ed. B. Harvey (Woodbridge : Rochester, 2002).

4 Neither general textbooks on manorial records such as those of Harvey, *Manorial Records*, or M. Bailey, *The English Manor c.1200-c.1500* (Manchester, 2002) deal with them, nor does for example C.M. Woolgar in his *Household Accounts in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1993).

5 This kind of approach has been called for by Alain Guerreau. A. Guerreau, *L'Avenir d'un passé incertain : Quelle histoire du Moyen Âge au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle ?* (Paris, 2001).

6 M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (Oxford, 1979).

7 R. Mc Kitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989) ; R. Mc Kitterick (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990) ; B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy. Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983).

fact that the material study of the documents was left to the specialists of *Hilfswissenschaften*. Diplomatists since Mabillon would use these criteria to establish the authenticity of documents and thus transform them into « sources »<sup>8</sup>. The idea of comparing sources to quarries of information without reflecting upon the function of writing in medieval societies has now been criticized for some decades. Instead, historians should bring back the sources at the centre of their work, as has been recently expressed by the rallying cry « *retour aux sources !* », which is the title of the *Festschrift* offered in 2004 to Michel Parisse<sup>9</sup>. It is also clearly the purpose of this conference.

Medieval accounts, and especially manorial accounts, have been much studied since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two points of view have dominated: economic history and royal and monastic administration. The important studies in monastic administration such as those of J.A. Raftis or R.A.L. Smith are however more interested in the financial institutions than in the production of written documents themselves<sup>10</sup>. Economic historians, for their part, have focused mainly on a certain type of accounts, namely manorial accounts, because these were their main source of information. Of all the studies that have described the structure, mechanisms and evolution of manorial accounts<sup>11</sup>, Paul Harvey seems to be the one who has given the most attention to the documents for their own sake rather than that of economic history. He has pioneered a much more material approach of these documents, analysing the phases of writing of the accounts, the different scribes, and questioning their rationality. With the example of Cuxham and Merton college he also suggested that manorial accounts shouldn't be studied alone but in relation to the other seignorial documents<sup>12</sup>. This is what I would like to do at Norwich cathedral priory, but on the scale of the lordship rather than that of the manor: to study the production of written documents as a whole, between 1255 and the Black Death. I will try to understand the logics of these documents of whom many work together as a system, and to do so by giving special attention to all the material details of these sources.

In order to do this, it seems that the first step of this work would be to describe the parchment roll and of its uses.

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8 O. Guyotjeannin, *Les Sources de l'histoire médiévale* (Paris, 1998).

9 S. Gougenheim (ed.), *Retour aux sources : Textes, études et documents d'histoire médiévale offerts à Michel Parisse* (Paris, 2004).

10 R.A.L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory. A Study in Monastic Administration* (Cambridge, 1943); J.A. Raftis, *The Estates of Ramsey Abbey* (Toronto, 1957).

11 F.B. Stitt, 'The Medieval Minister's Account', *Society of Local Archivists Bulletin* 11 (1953), pp. 2-8; J.S. Drew, 'Manorial Accounts of St Swithun's Priory, Winchester', *The English Historical Review* 62 (1947), pp. 20-41; P.D.A. Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, circa 1200-1359* (London, 1976); D. Postles, 'Manorial Accountancy of God's House, Southampton', *Archives* 28/77 (April 1987), pp. 37-41. There are also more general textbooks on manorial documents : P.D.A. Harvey, *Manorial Records*, London, 1984 ; *The English Manor c.1200-c.1500*, ed. M. Bailey, (Manchester, 2002).

12 Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham*, p.3 : 'There still seems a genuine need to publish in a single work a substantial corpus of all types of documentary evidence from a single manor, thus demonstrating the sort of information to be looked for from each source and the relationships between them'.



## II. A « codicology » of parchment rolls

Many historians have endorsed the fashionable expression of « archaeology of documents », but I have met as many interpretations of this concept as there are historians who use it<sup>13</sup>. Some insist on intertextuality, others on the making of the document. The best example of this interest is that of codicology, which aims since the 1990's to consider the materiality of the *codex* as an object of history<sup>14</sup>. Rolls are a very complex form of documents and are quite ubiquitous in England, but don't seem to have been much studied for themselves, as a support for writing<sup>15</sup>. In my work, I would like to list all the information that is relevant to describe the forms and uses of the parchment roll in general. But this takes a special turn in the case of manorial and obedientiary accounts, because there is a correlation between the form and the content of the document : one roll usually corresponds to one account for one officer or obedientiary and for one given period<sup>16</sup>. This means that all associations, groupings, reorganisations of the accounts not only have an archival meaning but also reflect the way the management of the priory was conceived. There are many clues that help us understand what has happened to these rolls :

- if the roll is single, it is usually rolled from bottom to top. The head of the dorse will have the archival note if there is one and be more dirty.
- if the roll is grouped in the Exchequer fashion, when different accounts are bound together by their head, it is usually rolled from top to bottom and the archival note and the dirt will be on the foot of the dorse of the last account<sup>17</sup>.
- if an individual roll is sealed at the foot, it will be rolled from top to bottom and have a different kind of archival note at the foot of the dorse. Identically, if a schedule is attached at the top, it will be rolled in the same way. Nevertheless, you can also have schedules at the bottom of the account as well as seals at the top of the dorse, which changes the way the roll is rolled. Identically, an individual account might be rolled from top to bottom if there is a memoranda written at its foot, and so on.

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13 P. Chastang, 'L'Archéologie du texte médiéval. Autour des travaux récents sur l'écrit au Moyen Âge', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 63/2 (March-April 2008), pp. 245-269 or P. Beck, *Archéologie d'un document d'archives. Approche codicologique et diplomatique des chartes des feux bourguignonnes (1285-1543)* (Paris, 2006) are examples of different uses of this concept.

14 C. Bozzolo, E. Ornato, *Pour une histoire du livre manuscrit au Moyen Âge : trois essais de codicologie quantitative* (Paris, 1980); O. Guyotjeannin, L. Morelle, M. Parisse (ed.), *Les Cartulaires*, Mémoires et documents de l'École des chartes, 39 (Paris, 1993); P. Chastang, *Lire, écrire, transcrire. Le Travail des rédacteurs de cartulaires en Bas-Languedoc (XI<sup>e</sup>-XIII<sup>e</sup>s.)* (Paris, 2002); Beck, *Archéologie d'un document d'archives*.

15 Except mostly in some introductions to editions.

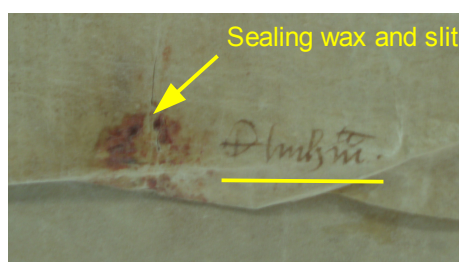
16 It would be more accurate to say that there is one roll per accounting unit.

17 There are exceptions, but not among the manorial and obedientiary accounts of the priory.

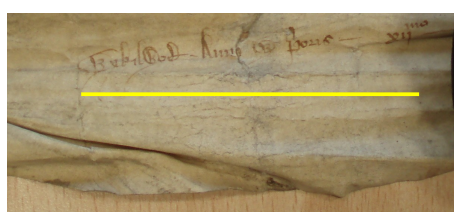
The location of different notes on the roll – whether head or foot, face or dorse – has thus consequences on the interpretation of this information. So does the aspect of these notes – by « notes », I mean all kind of annotations, memoranda, words or sums or signs that aren't part of the « original » text of the account but were added to the free spaces of the document. Indeed, different forms of notes may serve different purposes. Some of these notes are archival, others are not; some of them are temporary, and others are permanent. Some are contemporary of the roll, others result from later reorganisations of the archives. Illustrations 1, 2 and 3 are examples of their diversity. Small scribbled archival notes along the edge of the account (Ill. 1), often in the corners, usually correspond to temporary archiving of individual rolls, sometimes associated with the sealing of the account. This example gives only the name of the manor and not the date of the account, which is one of the clues that speak in favour of its being temporary. On the contrary, notes such as Ill. 2 look more like permanent archival notes for individual rolls, though it is not excluded that they would rather have served as dorse notes for grouped accounts. Ill. 3 gives an example of a very small archival note, not associated with sealing, most likely temporary. Indeed, the title at the foot of the face of the account (in the framed illustration) is a non-archival note for grouped accounts, showing that the account was intended to be archived – ultimately – in this fashion, whereas the note on the dorse is only for an individual account.

The same diversity of notes can be found at the head of the dorse and the foot of the face. What is interesting is that most rolls possess many of these contradictory indications, meaning that they were alternatively kept in different fashions.

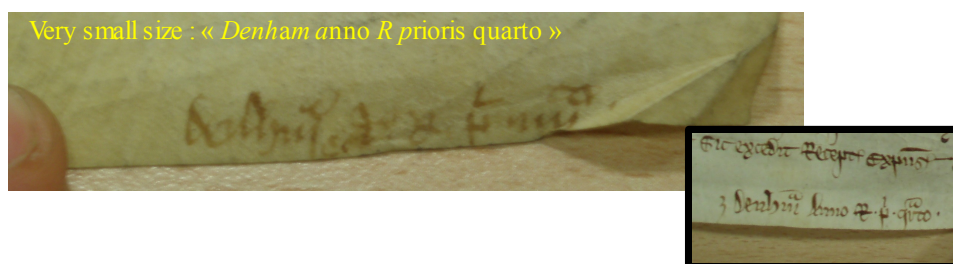
*Ill. 1 : Some notes are linked to the sealing of the account (Norfolk Record Office, DCN 62/2, foot of dorse)*



*Ill. 2 : Others seem to be standard archival notes for single account rolls (NRO, DCN 61/45. Wicklewood 1337-38, foot of dorse)*



Ill. 3 : Others seem temporary and are associated with a title at the foot of the face (NRO, DCN 60/7/6. Denham, 1313, foot of dorse)



Nowadays, nearly all the accounts of Norwich Cathedral Priory are archived individually because the grouped accounts seem to have been separated at some point between the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when archival notes show that part of them at least were still enrolled in the Exchequer fashion, and today. At the time when they were still preserved at the cathedral before being handed over to the Norfolk Record Office, Barbara Dodwell reorganized the Dean and Chapter archives. She elaborated her own catalogue where account rolls were numbered individually and sorted by manors which shows that the grouped accounts had already been separated by that time<sup>18</sup>. There often is evidence that the accounts have gone through various stages of grouping and degrouping in the course of centuries. This seems to have been a frequent practice in Britain down to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By establishing which accounts were grouped together and how, we can see the archival patterns vary under different priors, under different obedientiaries or from one kind of account to the other.

At Norwich cathedral priory, there are sixteen manors of the prior which come under the control of the master of the cellar. There are other manors which belong to the other obedientiaries. Some rare medieval archival notes show that the accounts of the manors of the prior were at least at some point planned to be grouped together<sup>19</sup>. A grouped account roll – here with fourteen accounts from twelve different manors (Ill. 4) – is quite an impressive document and not very easy to handle.

Ill. 4 : Grouped account roll for twelve manors for the year 1333-34 (NRO, DCN 62/2)



<sup>18</sup> It is unlikely that she was responsible herself for degrouping the rolls as it wouldn't make sense with the fact that she registered as such the handful of grouped manorial accounts that survive – including two pre-Black Death items. I am grateful to M. Frank Meeres for his information on this catalogue.

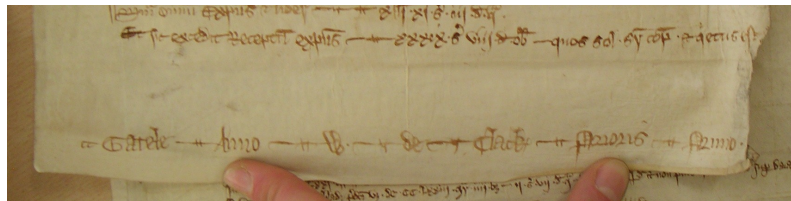
<sup>19</sup> Among others, a note at the foot of the dorse of the account of Sedgeford for the year 1325-26 (NRO, DCN 660/33/25) : « *Compotus maneriorum prioris Norwici anno R de Langele prioris XVIIimo* ».

Ill. 5 : Non-archival titles for grouped accounts at the foot of the face

a. Manorial accounts, 1333-34 (NRO, DCN 62/2)



b. Foot of the account for Gateley, 1326-27 (NRO, DCN 62/1)



This is why nearly all the accounts of the manors of the prior have an additional title at the foot of the face of the account (Ill. 5). This title helps to identify the different components of a grouped roll and to open it at the right item<sup>20</sup>. On the contrary, the accounts of the obedientiaries' manors usually don't have a title at the foot of the face, but they often have a title at the foot of the dorse even when it is the same scribe who wrote both kinds of manorial accounts. Obedientiaries probably kept the accounts of their manors in their own fashion, either single or grouped<sup>21</sup>.

Once we have understood all these mechanisms, it is possible to recreate from the same kind of material clues all the steps that a single account has gone through, from the blank parchment to its present state in the archives.

<sup>20</sup> This has already been noted by N.R. Holt in his edition of *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester 1210-1211* (Manchester, 1964), p. x : 'when the sewn membranes were rolled from head to foot to form the "rotulus", the feet were left exposed, making reference to the account of any one manor both speedy and simple'.

<sup>21</sup> At this point of my research, the exact pattern of archiving of these rolls isn't clear yet.

### III. Accounts and « *chaîne d'écriture* »

This concept is called the « *chaîne d'écriture* ». It was adopted, among others, by Étienne Anheim in his work on the papal *Exitus* and *Introitus* rolls<sup>22</sup>. Every document is the result of a writing process that is made of different steps, at different rhythms. Identifying these different steps is a way of understanding how documents worked, how they were produced and what they were used for. Paul Harvey has already shown that the writing of the accounts can spread over many weeks before the end of the accounting year<sup>23</sup>. But this was in the context of professional clerks writing accounts on behalf of the manorial officers. At Norwich cathedral priory, we are in a different situation, a situation where the production of these documents was centralized – meaning that the accounts were produced by the lord and not by his manorial officer. Paul Harvey has underlined the differences between these two configurations and suggested that the latter was common in the earlier times of manorial accounting and might have remained the norm in lordships who were among the first to adopt this practice, such as the bishopric of Winchester<sup>24</sup>. Indeed, at Norwich, the clerks who wrote the accounts did so on behalf of the priory itself and not of the reeves or sergeants, so it is the monks who controlled every step of the accounting process. Thus, every detail reveals the monks' attitude towards accounting. As we will see, the making of the accounts can be quite complex.

#### *Temporary sums of paragraphs in right and left margins*

The usual phases of accounting may include a draft, then drawing the account in one or more steps, auditing it and archiving it after sometimes making copies of it. Here, the phases of redaction follow very variable patterns, being written either in one, two or more phases. Small sums were sometimes added in the right and left margins of the account, mainly under prior William of Claxton (1326-1344). These show how variable the overall chronology of the end of the accounting year could be because these sums, which are temporary sums of the paragraphs of the account, might correspond to very different stages of the redaction<sup>25</sup>. They were often added when the account was almost fully written, right before the audit, but sometimes they were added halfway through and differ widely from the definitive sums. The most logical explanation would be that these sums were calculated at some point when the monks wanted to have preview of the balance of

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22 E. Anheim, 'La normalisation des procédures d'enregistrement comptable sous Jean XXII et Benoît XII (1316-1342) : une approche philologique', *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 118/2 (2006), pp. 183-201.

23 Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham*.

24 B.M.S. Campbell, 'A Unique Estate and a Unique Source: the Winchester Pipe Rolls in Perspective', in R.H. Britnell (ed.), *The Winchester Pipe Rolls and Medieval English Society* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 21-43, at p. 31.

25 Depending on how many of the final items are included in the marginal sum.

the account. The difference between the stages at which these sums were calculated might result from the fact that all the manorial accounts – and especially under William of Claxton – were written by the same clerk. This represents a considerable amount of work and it would be normal not to expect all manorial accounts to be finished at the same time.

### *Sealing*

Another action that has to be fitted in this « *chaîne d'écriture* » is the sealing of some of the accounts. Indeed, some documents have a vertical slit at their foot, which might or not be associated with marks of wax. Others have marks of wax at the head of the dorse. The logic of the sealing isn't yet clear as for the same year, only certain manorial accounts might have such characteristics<sup>26</sup>.

### *Small sums of receipts and expenses at head and foot of the account*

Small sums and various *memoranda* can be found along the top or bottom edges of the accounts. Some of these notes have partly disappeared at some point in the accounting process when the top or bottom edges of the manorial accounts were cut. The reason for cutting these informations out of the roll isn't clear either. All these different steps – sealing, cutting, calculating in the margins, adding *memoranda* – show how accounts at their different stages were used by the monks for management purposes. Among these *memoranda*, I would like to stress one particular kind that presents itself as sums of receipts and expenses.

Small isolated sums of receipts and expenses found on the very edges of the rolls are among the most interesting features of these manorial accounts (Ill. 6). They appear either at the top and bottom, head or dorse, and some of them can only be guessed after having been partially cut off, as we have already mentioned. They all have in common to be legible from a closed roll without having to open it, wherever their location. Some are written vertically on the head of the dorse, which might have made them visible even from an archival bag. Others are written in the corners of the face and can be seen by looking under the loose corners of the closed roll. The rolls were probably stored individually at the priory while they were being written and until the audit, as the titles at the foot of the face are usually added after the audit<sup>27</sup>. These sums are of two kinds : they are either the totals of the receipts and expenses of the last view of account or the totals of the current annual account before the audit<sup>28</sup>. Because they were read from a closed roll, I would tend to think that these sums were used before the audit, while the accounts were probably kept

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26 And some sealing marks might have disappeared when some accounts were trimmed.

27 This can be seen when the hand of the audit is different from that of the redaction, or when the note at the foot of the face is explicitly added after the auditing of the account.

28 A partial account for Monks' Grange in the grouped account NRO, DCN 62/2 for 1326-27 presents such sums explicitly as sums of the view of account. They are often equivalent to roughly two-thirds of the final annual amounts.



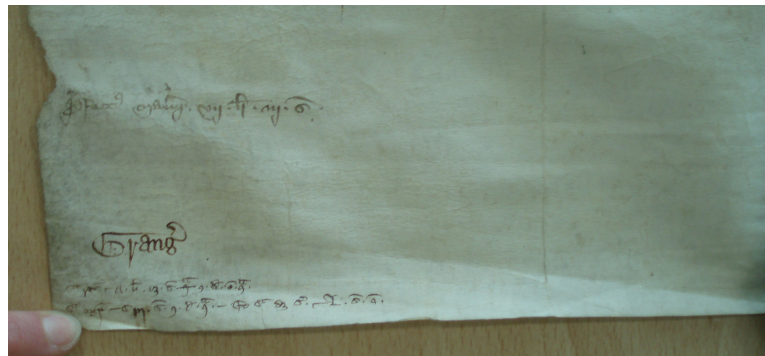
individually at the priory, sometimes sealed. One explanation to the need for such information would be to estimate and demand in advance of the audit money owed by the manorial officer ; another would be to assess the financial situation of a manor or even of the whole demesne. The monks would thus have been able to plan a reaction to this financial situation by deciding to charge more or less the officers in charge of the manors.

*Ill. 6 : Marginal notes of receipts and expenses*

a. Monks' Grange, 1335 (NRO, DCN 60/26/25)

« *Summa rec' II li' 13 s' 9 d' o' q'*  
*Summa exp' Ciii s' 9 d' q' – Et sic debet*  
*serviens L s' o' »*

➤ Totals and balance of the account before audit at the foot of the recto



b. Martham, 1326 (NRO, DCN 60/23/21)

« *Recept' xxxvii li' iiii s' vii d'*  
*Expen' xxviii li' xiiii s' »*

➤ Totals of the last view of account, at the head of the dorse



c. Hindringham, 1328 (NRO, DCN 60/20/23)

« *r' ... Exp' ... »*

➤ Totals of the last view of account, at the head of the recto, cut off



It is also worth noting that these two kinds of notes don't appear in the same periods between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fourteenth centuries, so they might tell us more about the different priors' attitudes towards accounting. These notes may count as an additional accounting practice

that can be put in series with other accounting or management practices to describe more precisely the evolution of the calculations made by the monks.

#### IV. Introducing standards of writing and accounting practices

After having seen how to decompose a single account, I would like to give an example of what can be done on a larger scale by putting these different elements into perspective. This example is that of Henry of Lakenham, who was sacrist under William of Kirkby between 1272 and 1289 and was his successor as a prior between 1289 and 1310. As a prior, Henry of Lakenham had an innovating role concerning economic documents<sup>29</sup> and it would be interesting to find out if this already appeared when he was the sacrist. This happened at the same time that these two men, Henry of Lakenham and William of Kirkby, took an active part in the foundation of the college of Gloucester for the Benedictine monks in Oxford and the correlation between management practices and the intellectual context of the Benedictine monks should be taken into account<sup>30</sup>. The Norwich monks have from an early date calculated what is usually called the profit of their manors<sup>31</sup>. These profit calculations have been listed in specific rolls from the time of Henry as a sacrist<sup>32</sup>. Palaeographical identifications are tricky, but I have tried to build links between the clerks who dealt with profit calculations and the other clerks in the priory. So far it hasn't given much results, as it is quite complex. It does show, though, a continuity between the profit rolls of William Kirby and the register under Henry of Lakenham. It is also likely that the clerk who made substantial additions to the calendar in the sacrist's register is the same as the one who wrote the sacrist's account of 1273, the first year of Henry in that office, which would set a *terminus post quem* for this *codex*. Moreover, these comparisons pointed out that the tasks of the different clerks employed at the priory seemed more loosely defined under William of Kirkby than later under Henry of Lakenham. Indeed, some time after 1300, there seems to be one clerk writing many of the manorial accounts of the priory, and this clerk is also writing the accounts of the master of the cellar and the register of profits. This shows an important centralization of the writing process within the priory that was maintained under the successors of Henry and even maybe pushed further by William of Claxton.

As a prior, it is already known that he began to reorganize the charters of the priory<sup>33</sup>. By

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29 E. Stone, 'Profit-and-Loss Accountancy at Norwich Cathedral Priory', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 12 (1962), pp. 25-48, at p.33 *et seq.*; B.M.S. Campbell, *Seigniorial agriculture*; B.M.S. Campbell, 'Arable Productivity in Medieval England : Some Evidence from Norfolk', *Journal of Economic History* 43/2 (June 1983) pp. 379-404, at p.397.

30 See for example M.T. Clanchy, 'Moderni in Education and Government in England', *Speculum* 50/4 (Oct. 1975), pp. 671-88 and D. Knowles, 'Some Developments in English Monastic Life, 1216-1336', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4<sup>th</sup> ser., 26 (1944), pp. 37-52.

31 A full article on this subject is that of Stone, 'Profit-and-Loss Accountancy'.

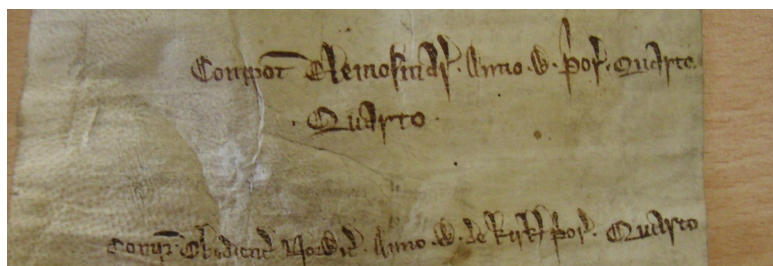
32 The 10<sup>th</sup> year of William of Kirkby, 1281-82, is the earliest for which survives a profit roll.

33 B. Dodwell, 'The Muniments and the Library', in I. Atherton *et alii* (ed.), *Norwich Cathedral : Church, City and Diocese, 1096-1996* (London, 1996), pp. 325-38.

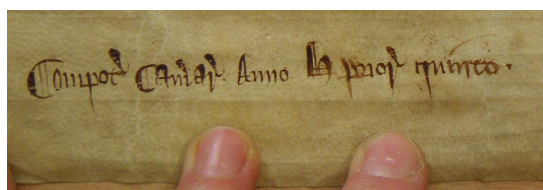


studying the archival notes on the obedientiaries' accounts, we might suppose that these accounts could also have been reorganized under his priorate. The archival note in illustration 7.a has been added by a different scribe to an account of the time of William of Kirkby. The scribe was actually the clerk of the chamberlain under Henry of Lakenham 17 years later (ill. 7.b).

Ill. 7 : a. Almoner's account for 1275-76 (DCN 1/6/1). The hand of the note is different from the hand of the account :  
 « *Compotus elemosinarii anno W. prioris quarto / Quarto / Compotus obedienciarorum Norwici anno W. de Kirkeby prioris quarto* »



b. Chamberlain's account for 1292-93 (DCN 1/5/1). The hand of the note is identical to the hand of the account :  
 « *Compot camerarii anno H. prioris quinto* »



To summarize, Henry, as well as developing different stages of profit calculations, has reorganized the older obedientiaries' accounts and the writing of the manorial accounts (giving also special care to the aesthetic value of these documents). If I can add one last thing to this, it is how his personality has gone as far as to influence the presentation of the obedientiaries' accounts. Let's consider how the titles of the accounts are phrased – to see whether the obedientiary is expressly named, for example, or how the account is dated. Under William of Kirkby, many obedientiary accounts are anonymous, like for example that of the almoner for 1275-76 : « *Receptum elemosinarii Norwici anno domini m<sup>o</sup> cc lxx<sup>o</sup> sexto* »<sup>34</sup>. Throughout Kirkby's priorate, Henry, as the sacrist, stands out with only two or three others as men who had themselves named in the title : « *Compotus fratris H de Lakenham de anno suo primo* » in 1272-73 ; « *Compotus fratris Henri de anno suo quartodecimo* » in 1285-86<sup>35</sup>. The most usual way of dating accounts – though is is not always regularly followed in the earliest accounts – is by the year of the prior, but as you can see Henry goes further by dating his account solely after himself, *de anno suo*, which is highly unusual

34 NRO, DCN 1/6/1.

35 NRO, DCN 1/4/1, 6.

and would indicate a strong personality. On the contrary, when he becomes prior, the personality of his own obedientiaries seems erased from the titles of their accounts. The example of the refectorer is quite striking : the first year of Henry still follows the previous habit of naming the refectorer in the title<sup>36</sup>, but throughout the rest of his priorate the refectorer's accounts don't even have a title at the head of the roll. The only title is at the foot of the account and is most impersonal<sup>37</sup>. Very strikingly, under the next prior, Robert of Langley, after 1310, nearly all the accounts bear in first position the name of the obedientiary and it is also the case of the refectorer<sup>38</sup>. This gives the impression of a stronger role and a better representation of the person of the prior over the other obedientiaries under the priorate of Henry of Lakenham.

## Conclusion

This is only one example, but there are others and it seems to me that to study accounts in this way may give new insight in the relationships between the monks, their organisation, personality and conflicts. In the course of my study, I also aim to catalogue, compare and describe the various economic logics of the Norwich documentation – though much has been done already concerning the profit-and-loss calculations<sup>39</sup> – considering not only the accounts, but the whole system of economic documents : registers, profit calculations, estimations of the granges, etc. This seigniorial approach of the problem might help to understand why these documents were produced and what purpose they were used for, as well as the organisation behind the centralized writing of such an amount of information. I hope, by doing this, to synthesize the work that has been done on obedientiary and manorial accounts and to go beyond the traditional fracture between the notions of « estate » and « household ».

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36 « *Compotus fratris Reyner' refectorarii anno prioris H primo* », at the head of the roll (NRO, DCN 1/8/1).

37 « *Compotus refectorarii anno H prioris undecimo* » in 1298-99 (NRO, DCN 1/8/11) ; « *Compotus refectorarii anno H prioris xii<sup>o</sup>* » in 1299-1300 (NRO, DCN 1/8/12); « *Compotus refectorarii anno H prioris xxi<sup>o</sup>* » in 1308-9 (NRO, DCN 1/8/20).

38 « *Compotus fratris G de Wroxham de refectorarie anno Roberti prioris secundo* » in 1310-11, at the head of the roll again (NRO, DCN 1/8/21).

39 Stone, ' Profit-and-Loss Accountancy'.