

THE MEDIEVAL ACCOUNT BOOKS OF THE MERCERS OF LONDON

An Edition and Translation

Volumes I and II

LISA JEFFERSON

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OF THE MERCERS OF LONDON

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An Edition and Translation

Volume I

LISA JEFFERSON

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List of Abbreviations

AND	<i>Anglo-Norman Dictionary</i>
CCR	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
CEMCR	<i>Calendar of Early Mayors' Court Rolls</i>
CLB	<i>Calendar of Letter Books</i>
CNRS	Centre national de la recherche scientifique
CPMR	<i>Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls</i>
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DMLBS	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i>
HMSO	Her / His Majesty's Stationery Office
MED	<i>Medieval English Dictionary</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OUP	Oxford University Press
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury
p.p.	privately printed

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Introduction

The Mercers' Company of London, one of the 'Great Twelve' of the Livery Companies of the City of London, and indeed the premier in a ranking first established definitively in 1515 and still maintained,¹ was known in medieval times as the 'mercery', 'mercerie', or as the 'mistere del mercerye'. Its influence, its importance, and its wealth were enormous, and modern historians have examined, often in great detail, many aspects of the Company's history, from its early days and the links with the Hospital of St Thomas of Acon (Sir John Watney)² to the building of the modern Mercers' Hall (Jean Imray),³ and from the earliest accounts of the trading and business of mercers down to the modern nature of the Company (Ian Doolittle),⁴ remembering meanwhile its chapel and its contribution to religious life (Gordon Huelin).⁵ The interrelationships between the Mercers and the Merchant Adventurers of London have been a subject of especial fascination since E. M. Carus Wilson discovered that the Adventurers' early records were to be found in the records held at Mercers' Hall.⁶ The most recent historian of the Company, Anne Sutton, has studied the medieval and early modern period of the Company's fortunes for nearly thirty years, and has produced a formidable number of articles and most recently, in 2005, the excellent full study *The Mercery of London: Trade, Goods and People, 1130–1578*.⁷ It is not therefore the role of this introduction to present the mistery and its history to readers, but only to introduce them to the texts edited here, which date from 1344 to 1464, and show the way to some of the further riches not yet studied in detail, and which may lead historians to new considerations and new fields of enquiry.

The preservation of their medieval record books through the ages and until the present day was never guaranteed, many of the other City Livery Companies having lost their records, some during the Great Fire of London, some through other catastrophes, and some through the carelessness of past ages.⁸ Not all the Mercers' records have survived, and a most notable lack is that of 'la veile paper rouge', an old red paper record-book of the fourteenth century, the existence of which the copyist of 1390 uses as his excuse for copying no further records into the new account book, leaving us with a gap between 1348 and 1390 during which we are without information on the company's affairs.

The earliest surviving account book, started in about 1390 and containing the mistery's financial accounts of 1347–48 and then from 1390 up to the year 1464, is the main text presented in this edition. It has been studied before and an M.Phil. thesis was produced in 1976 containing an annotated transcript of its text, but this is, alas, very unreliable linguistically and was never

1 See Melling, *Discovering London's Guilds and Liveries*, pp. 25, 81–2.

2 *Some Account of the Hospital of St Thomas of Acon in the Cheap, London, and of the Plate of the Mercers' Company* (London, 1892; 2nd edn, 1906).

3 *The Mercers' Hall*, The London Topographical Society Publication no. 143 (London: The Mercers' Company, 1991).

4 *The Mercers' Company, 1579–1959* (London: The Mercers' Company, 1994).

5 *Think and Thank God. The Mercers' Company and its Contribution to the Church and Religious Life since the Reformation* (London: The Mercers' Company, 1994).

6 'The Origins and Early Development of the Merchant Adventurers' Organization in London as shown in their own Medieval Records', *Economic History Review* IV (1933): 147–76, and reprinted in Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, pp. 143–82.

7 The bibliography on pp. 1041–2 provides full details of Sutton's studies on this subject.

8 Fourteenth-century accounts survive of the Goldsmiths and the Grocers and to a lesser extent of the Merchant Taylors, and from the fifteenth century survive also accounts of the Drapers, Carpenters, Skinners, Cutlers, Founders, Pewterers and Pinners. See the Bibliography under Clode, Davies, Gadd, Heath, Herbert, Jefferson, Johnson, Kingdon, Reddaway, Unwin, Welch.

published.⁹ I have taken no note of this transcript and have prepared the present edition of the text directly from the original manuscript, but a number of the footnote references in this thesis were useful to me, pointing to other historical records or to modern histories where elucidation of some matter might be found. I have only used such references after checking myself but acknowledge here my debt to some of these notes. Studies previously published which use material from these accounts have usually cited references by paraphrase or in English translation, and this edition thus now makes available to scholars the original text in its full form.

As work on the edition proceeded, it became obvious that one could not present an accurate picture of the mystery's history from c. 1442 onwards without taking into consideration the other record book to survive from that period, the manuscript now known as the *Renter Wardens' Account Book, 1442 to 1500*. The separation of the accounts rendered by the four wardens of the mystery each year into 'Hall accounts'¹⁰ and 'property and estates accounts' resulted from the transfer into the hands of the mercers' mystery of the management of the estate of Richard Whittington. Other estates were bequeathed later, those of Sir William Eastfield and of John Abbot during our period, and the accounting for all these properties, and for those previously purchased or bequeathed and already belonging to the Mercers, was eventually done separately, and from Easter to Easter, rather than Midsummer to Midsummer as for the Hall accounts. In addition, the payments for the priest's salaries, and to almsmen, as also for the salary of the beadle (for some reason often listed as paid out under alms), were transferred to the estate accounts, no doubt because the original charter of the mystery allowing them to own property as a corporate body had specified that this was granted so that they might be able to support a chaplain and aid the poor of the mystery. This transfer of some of the items of income and expenditure did not all take place immediately, and there are both considerable delays evident in the writing up of some accounts (see below, pp. 17–18), and also a large number of items which may appear either in one account book or the other, and of cross references from one to the other. The decision was taken to include only the accounts from the Renter Wardens' book up to and including that for 1463–64, i.e. up until the same period covered in the main Wardens' Accounts.

For the period from 1453 onwards, some other material, or parallel, at times identical, material is found in the *Acts of Court*, an edition of which was published in 1936.¹¹ References to this in footnotes to the text here call attention to relevant passages. The same has been done for relevant entries in the mystery's *Book of Ordinances*, dating from the 1430s, and edited with a very good introduction by J. M. Parker as a London M. Phil. thesis in 1980.¹²

The *Wardens' Accounts* and the *Acts of Court* and the *Book of Ordinances* have all been studied by previous scholars, but the *Renter Wardens' Accounts* have not been so, and the material presented here now will be new to most people. The regular items are the income from each of the properties belonging to the Mercers, and the expenditure on these, or amounts paid out of the income each year, as well as details of increases or reductions in rents. From these a detailed picture can be composed of the Mercers' property estates and their running of these. Repairs to buildings are a regular item, often costing a great deal, and showing the mercers' concern to maintain their properties, and we are sometimes given precise details of these. One

9 H. J. Creaton, 'The Wardens' Accounts of the Mercers' Company of London, 1347, 1391–1464' (unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of London, 1976).

10 The word is used by the Mercers themselves at this period: see e.g. 'Item, þe said acomptaunt chargeth hym of mony resseyved oute of þe box, as hit apereth in þacompte of þe Halle, folio Ciiii^{xxvii} – liii li. xi s. v d.' [RW f. 28v].

11 Lyell and Watney, *Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company 1453–1527*.

12 J. M. Parker, 'The Ordinance Book of the Mercers' Company of London' (unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of London, 1980).

finds here for instance the accounts for the demolition and complete rebuilding of the Pye in 1449–50 (see RW f. 7v with further work and accounts the following year, RW f. 8r), and in several years we read of amounts paid to plumbers, carpenters, and other workmen, we learn the cost of a sawpit in 1458–59 (RW f. 24v), or the costs of transporting 15 loads of timber from Snodbean in Kent in 1453–54 (RW ff. 14v, 18v). Apart from these building matters, one finds the itemised account for the expenses on Whittington's obit in 1454 (RW f. 16r), the names of the priests and chaplains of the mystery, and of those paid alms, the amounts paid out to the wax-chandler regularly, and to legal advisors, regular and one-off payments to the almsmen not of the mystery but of Whittington College, noting for instance the purchase of 41 yards of russet cloth for them in 1458–59 (RW f. 25r), and we make the discovery of the illuminator William Abell as a tenant of the Mercers for a garden in Moor Lane.¹³ These accounts will repay study by historians in many different fields.

Two particular points may be brought out here. The first concerns a document not previously published and which yet potentially provides evidence otherwise lacking of the mystery's income from rental property during the fourteenth century. It is the very first item bound into the book and is dated 1344.¹⁴ It is edited and translated below, pp. 44–5. This document may have been copied later but the date is clear and one can see no reason to challenge it:

Le primer jour d'april l'an de grace mille trois centz cerant quatre.

[The first day of April of the year of grace one thousand three hundred forty four.]

What follows:

Ceux sunt les parcelles paieez chescun an pur quitrente de les tenementz apertenantz al mistier del mercerye en la Cité de Loundres.

[These are the amounts paid each year as quit-rent for the tenements belonging to the mercers' mystery in the City of London.]

is potentially of great interest since the tenements of the Pye and the Crown Seld were not thought to come into the ownership of the Mercers' Company until much later than 1344.¹⁵ Arguably, this document provides the evidence of earlier *de facto* ownership of both, even if *de jure* they were in the hands of individual mercers. The Crown is known to have been in mercer hands from the thirteenth century onwards,¹⁶ and it is not impossible that both it and the Pye were held in some manner that evaded the law of mortmain, or in a manner that needed later to be legally regularised, once their charter was obtained.¹⁷ The accounts before 1347 and those between 1348 and 1390 have not survived, and if a source of income needed to be disguised they might in any case not have contained any clearer information. Looking for unexplained monies, apart from the sum listed as received in 1348 from Thomas de Brandon, after it had been in the hands of Giles Spencer, without any indication of its nature [f. 4v] (which might have been many things), one does note the very large amount of money that had accumulated

¹³ See Appendix 1, p. 1024 and note 20.

¹⁴ Its existence was apparently not noted by Anne Sutton who makes no reference to it and indeed redates the account book omitting the reference provided on the binding.

¹⁵ The Pye in 1397 and the Crown in 1410–11.

¹⁶ Sutton, *The Mercery*, p. 59.

¹⁷ For further explication of this see Sutton, *The Mercery*, pp. 122–5; Sutton, *First Charter*, pp. 1–4; Imray, *The Charity*, pp. 16–31. Compare also the series of conveyance deeds proving the Goldsmiths' title to their Hall (Jefferson, *Wardens' Accounts*, pp. 50–63; Reddaway and Walker, *Early History*, pp. 68–73).

to the mistery by 1390–91, when the net balance for the year is £371 9s. 9¾d. of which they hand over £358 3s. 1¾d. into the safekeeping of William Parker [f. 5v] and eventually use to purchase in 1397, with full documentation, the Pye. Had the mercers really been able to accumulate this wealth merely from admission fees and fines, remembering that they had many expenses to meet out of these monies? Rental income seems a far more likely source. The list of quit-rents payable on the Crown and the Pye was copied out much later than the 1344 date that heads it, and perhaps one could interpret the text as meaning that these quit-rents have been payable at this rate since 1344 and that these tenements are now (at the time of writing) in the ownership of the mistery. But perhaps the canny business sense of the mercers had indeed led the mistery into investing communal funds in property and deriving rental income therefrom at a date around 1344.

The other point to raise is that of the dating of the earliest surviving ordinances of the mistery. The first ordinances entered into the Wardens' account book seem to be dated

l'an de grace Mⁱ CCCxlvii et l'an du regne nostre seignur le Roy Edward tierce xxii^e, Thomas Leggy, adonques Mayre, Adam Brabasoun et Richard de Basyngstoke, goldbeter, viscontz de Londres.

[In the year of grace 1347 and the 22nd year of the reign of our lord King Edward III, Thomas Leggy then being Mayor, and Adam Brabasoun and Richard de Basingstoke, goldbeater, sheriffs of London.]

The period from 25 January 1347 until 24 January 1348 was the 21st not 22nd year of Edward III's reign, and the Mayor and sheriffs named took office, for a year, in October 1347. The text goes on to say that a meeting took place on 20 June. If one takes the regnal year and the named Mayor and sheriffs as the year for the June meeting, then one arrives at the conclusion that 1347 is in error for 1348, and indeed Anne Sutton has redated these ordinances to this latter year. However, to do this promptly leads one into further difficulties with the following text. We are told that, by ordinance, four wardens are to be elected to serve for one year, and are then told that

A quele ordinaunce fait, furent esluz pur l'an avenyr pur le dit mister reuler en la manere avaunt dite ...

[This ordinance made, there were elected for the coming year to govern the said mistery in the manner aforesaid ...]

the names of the four men following. Their account for a year is then presented, after which we are told that

Les queux avantditz William de Tudenham, Simond de Worsted, William de la Panetrie, et Adam Fraunceys ount delyvré par endentures le xxii jour du mois de Juyn en l'an de grace Mⁱ CCC xlviij^{me} a Gylbert Curteys, Alayn d' Ailsham, William de Depham, et Hugh atte Boure, esluz mestres pur l'an avenir la somme avaunt dite etc.

[The aforesaid William de Tuddenham, Simon de Worstead, William de la Pantrie, and Adam Fraunceys on 22 June in the year of grace 1348 handed over the aforesaid sum by indentures to Gilbert Curteys, Aleyne de Aylsham, William de Depham, and Hugh atte Boure, elected wardens for the coming year.]

Anne Sutton has assumed that the first four named wardens handed over office to their successors 'a few days after the ordinances were made',¹⁸ but this is to ignore the preceding

¹⁸ Sutton, *The Mercery*, p. 89, n. 97.

statements. A better solution is surely to accept the year of 1347 as accurate for the year in which those ordinances were made, and to guess that the confusion between this and the regnal year, Mayor and sheriffs came from the way the text being copied (in 1390, over forty years later) was presented. The original text would have been written up in 1348, at the end of the year of office of the 1347–48 wardens, and at the top of the page, judging by later usage and that of other such accounts and records, there would have been a heading naming the regnal year and the City officials in office.¹⁹ To give the Anno Domini year of grace is much more unusual at this date, people were thus less familiar with these dates and an error in co-ordinating regnal and A.D. year when copying forty years later thus excusable. The date of 'l'an de grace Mⁱ CCCxlvii' was no doubt there in the red register, placed perhaps to the left-hand side of the ordinances, and the scribe of c. 1390 was well able to think for himself and not just copy blindly exact format and words.²⁰ The layout in f. 1r must be noted also: the short prayer of dedication first, then the heading, which I believe to be and to have been in the original old red register the heading for the start of the accounts as rendered in the year 1348, and then the start of the agreed ordinances giving the date on which the assembly was held to confirm these ordinances – 20 June. Anne Sutton does still, in her 'List of Wardens' on p. 555, list William de Tudenham and his fellow wardens²¹ as having been elected in 1347, but she throughout her book refers to 'the 1348 ordinances'. I would suggest that the previously accepted date of 1347 for these should be maintained. The heading on f. 1r should be understood as being that for the start of the accounts for 1347–48, the ordinances made on 20 June 1347 constituting the basis for the succeeding election of four wardens who held office for one whole year.

The above points are however minor and in no way cloud the remarkable achievements of Anne Sutton's work on the mercers and the merchant adventurers of the Middle Ages. All those who use and study the texts presented here must also turn to Anne Sutton's recent full-length study as also to her numerous articles. Where in the text here an entry is unclear on its own and needs further explication of its meaning in context, I have many times referred readers to relevant passages in either *The Mercery of London* or an article (as well of course as to other sources), but all must be aware that this edition of the texts and the earlier studies, both of Anne Sutton, of Jean Imray and others, must always be consulted together. As an example, the Name Index to the present work refers readers to all instances in these texts where a person is mentioned, but for many of the most important mercers, and others, much further biographical information will be found in the other books. Similarly for all matters relating to trade between England and the Low Countries, and to relations with the Burgundian rulers, and the role and activities of the Merchant Adventurers, one must consult Sutton's work.

However, there is also a very great deal of material in this edition not otherwise available in any previous study, and it is presented here in the expectation and hope of seeing further studies appear in the future which will use and benefit from this edition of these fascinating manuscripts of the Mercers' Company of London.

19 Perhaps also extra 'running heads' at the tops of pages; one may for instance compare the heading to the accounts for 1404–05 here, headed as 'Anno sexto RR Henr' and the accounts for 1414–15 where on f. 65v, at the top of the page, the name of 'Thomas Fawconor, maior' is written, who was Mayor in June 1415 when the accounts were presented.

20 See below, pp. 10–11.

21 Oddly mistaking Adam Fraunceys for Simon Fraunceys.

The Manuscripts*I. Wardens' Account Book, 1344, 1347 to 1464*²²

This is of parchment; with 223 folios, consisting of two additional gatherings bound in at the beginning at some later, not contemporary, date; the main bulk of the record book; several additional leaves brought into use by the scribe of the last section when the prepared book was finished; a bifolium with one page of an earlier record and the second page used in the fifteenth and sixteenth century to record further information; and a further single leaf of various notes (5 + 6 + 203 + 6 + 2 + 1). The quiring is not ascertainable with certainty due to the over-tight binding of 1936.²³ Each section is more fully described below.

The binding is of brown leather over strong boards, measuring 390 × 250 mm; a fair number of wear marks are seen on the leather especially on the edges and the spine; the covers have blind-tooled roll decoration inside fillets around the outer edges, and the front cover has lettering in gold: 'WARDENS ACCOUNT / 1344 / 1347 TO 1464 / REBOUND 1936 / B. W. A. WATNEY, ESQ. MASTER / F. B. WATHEN, ESQ. / MBE / J. C. LANE CLAYPON ESQ. / BRIGADIER H. CLEMENTI SMITH, D.S.O., / WARDENS²⁴ / COL. F. D. WATNEY, C.B.E., CLERK.' The spine is very well rounded, with grooves at each side as it joins the covers; 6 compartments, the 5 bands of sewing raised and with blind fillets; at the base of the spine are 2 blind double fillets enclosing 2 double fillets; gold lettering in the second and third compartments reads 'Wardens Account / 1344 – 1347 to 1464'. Inside, at each end, one old paper flyleaf of thick laid paper is found, the leaf at the back glued to the verso of the last parchment folio; 2 more modern white paper flyleaves have been inserted at each end, in each case one of them being backed on to marbled paper, chiefly brown with blue, yellow, and purple vein marbling, adorning the inside covers and the facing page. At both front and back a wide leather strip has been both sewn and glued down the central seam across the marbled paper which serves to strengthen and hold the covers to the book-block. Inside the front cover is glued the red morocco label that clearly has been cut from the previous binding of 1777; it measures 137 × 190 mm, has 3 gold fillets around the outer edges and inside these a gold-tooled roll decoration and a gold-tooled flower in each of the lower angles. The wording in gold lettering reads: 'WARDENS ACCOUNT / 1344 / 1347 TO 1464 / REBOUND ANNO 1777 / ROBERT LATHROPP ESQ^R MASTER / CHARLES NEWSHAM PIGOTT / JOSEPH CRICK / ISAAC BUXTON ESQ^R / WARDENS / ROBERT CAWNE CLERK'.²⁵

The preliminary pages Bound in at the beginning of the volume are two additional sections of parchment leaves, the first of 5 folios (1 + 4) and the second of 6 folios, both now measuring 375 × 247mm. Prickings are visible at the outer edges of the first quire. Modern foliation appears in the top right-hand corners of the recto sides only; I have assigned an extra indication in the edition to distinguish these folios from those of the main volume and have called them f. A1 etc. A fair amount of damage has happened to the leaves, which have obviously been kept unbound for some period of time and have suffered from discolouration, damp, from rubbing,

22 It may be noted that the copy of the 1685 inventory of Mercers' Company records (PRA Box 2.1) does not list this Wardens' Account Book, but the 1741 inventory (PRA Box 2.2), p. 19 lists: 'The first Book of Accounts from 1347 to 1464 / The second Book of Accounts from 1464 to 1499 / The Renter Wardens Accounts from 1501 to 1538'. The second book listed may be a now lost record book or may more probably be an erroneous reference to the *Renter Wardens' Account Book, 1442 to 1500*.

23 The tightness is such that the central pages when the book is opened to them have a great deal of their writing difficult to see in the central gutter formed by the book being opened.

24 This word is written to the side of the three previous names which are bracketed together.

25 The word 'Wardens' is written to the RH side of an ornate gold-tooled vertical design placed to indicate a bracketing of the three wardens.

from tears, and from rucking up of the parchment. A repair has been done with an extra small rectangle of parchment, 40 mm high and 80mm wide, folded over in half and sewn to a part of the edge of f. A3, and another patch is seen on f. A5. The majority of the writing is legible, but with some few parts illegible. A damp stain on the first leaf of the second quire matches the stain also affecting the leaves of the first quire and must therefore have occurred while they were together. The parchment of the two quires is clearly of a different quality but both must have been kept together at the time when the oaths were written on them, and kept together after that when the damp stain occurred.

This first section has been ruled for a writing space of c. 265 × 155mm. Three hands are distinguishable: one has written the opening section in French on f. A1r, and ff. A2r–A4r (this same hand is found in the main section, see below, pp. 10–11); another has written the oaths in English on ff. A1r, A1v, A2r, A3v, A4r, the sewn-on fragment, and A6r (this hand is the same as that of the ordinances written in the preliminary pages of the *Book of Ordinances*); a third hand has written ff. A4v–A5v, and this hand is again found in the main section, on ff. 84r–86v.

The first page, f. A1r, lists the quit-rents payable on the Pye and the Crown in 1344 (see pp. 44–5, and above p. 3); ff. A2r to A3v present the ordinances of 1376 which were copied up from the old red register book of the mistery in 1404, along with a relevant Guildhall ordinance (see pp. 58–63); f. A4r contains an ordinance of 1404–05 (see pp. 188–9); on ff. A4v to A5v are written out some ordinances of 1407–08 (see pp. 210–15).

The whole space was not used on each page initially, thus leaving blank areas which were later used to copy up a number of oaths to be sworn by various persons. A further part-folio, measuring 220 × 130mm and containing an oath, has been sewn, with greenish-blue thread, to f. 4, facing the recto side. At the foot of the first page of the second additional quire a further oath has been written in the same hand as those above. The oaths in English are clearly the last thing to have been written on these leaves, and one must assume that they were considered as loose paper that could be used thus. The clerk was perhaps making a preliminary rough draft, or perhaps keeping his record to hand of what needed to be sworn when whichever occasion arose. One may note also that although the references to saints in the *Book of Ordinances* were firmly deleted in the stern Protestant times of the sixteenth century, no changes have been made here, suggesting that these sheets had by now been relegated to some back shelf. (See Appendix 2 for the text of the oaths.)

The second quire consists of 6 folios making up a calendar, set out in the usual manner. These leaves are notably cleaner, apart from the outer side, f. 6r, which is somewhat discoloured, but the following pages are of pale cream colour and the ink very bright. A large damp stain however discolours all the outer corners, but the stain is far from the written area except for the extra oath on f. 6r. The calendar pages are ruled for a space of 250 × 165mm and with 33 lines. The first line always contains one verse concerning the 'Egyptian days', and one line per day below, some months having more than one blank line at the end. The initial 'KL' on each page is elaborately done in blue and set inside a red-ink decorative square, with red-ink pen-flourishing around and especially above. Blue ink is used for the two capital 'A's of each month. Red and black ink are used for the setting out of the calendar table and for the saints' days written in, in the usual fashion.

The verses at the top line of each month make up a 12-line Latin poem that lists the unlucky days (the 'Egyptian days') of each month. The days are counted from the first and the last days of the month, so that for January they are the 1st Jan. and the 7th from the end = 25 Jan; for February the 4th Feb. and the 3rd from the end = 26th, etc. Many calendars are found with this poem set out as here, the words often differing somewhat. In some calendars a second line

follows which narrows the unluckiness of the day to one specific hour of it.²⁶ The text of the Mercers' calendar is as follows:

Prima dies mensis et septima truncat ut ensis
 Quarta subit mortem prosternit tertia fortem
 Primus mandantem disrumpit quarta bibentem
 Denus et undenus est mortis vultie plenus
 Tercius occidit et septimus ora relidit
 Denus pallescit quindenus federa nescit
 Terdenus mactat iulii denus labefactat
 Prima necat fortem prosternit secunda cohortem
 Tercia septembris et denus fert mala membris
 Tercius et denus est sicut mors alicuius
 Scorpius est quintus et tercius est nece cinctus
 Septimus exanguis virosus denus ut anguis²⁷

The main part of the book The parchment leaves composing this were acquired in 1390 or a little later (see the scribe's reference on ff. 4v–5r), and although there is no record of its cost, we do know that 2s. 4d. was spent on a covering for it in 1393–94 (f. 13v), and that silk bookmarkers costing 4d. were bought for it in 1400–01 (f. 33v).²⁸ The leaves are now cropped to c. 380 × 253 mm. Of parchment with the usual variations in colouring, it must have been top-quality parchment and is still in very good condition with only the occasional tear, e.g. on f. 52, and a very few holes mended in medieval times, e.g. f. 21 and f. 61.²⁹ The outer lower edges of ff. 1–3 are stained by damp (but this far from the writing on the page which is not affected). The edges are all stained red, this now showing red still on the foredge and lower edge, but appearing black, due to dust, on the upper edge. Prickings are clearly visible on many pages; the ruling is clear but discreet and has been very carefully done; the page layout varies, each successive scribe apparently having done the ruling for the pages he was to use and choosing an appropriate layout for the material, which varies from scribe to scribe.

The leaves were foliated 1–203 in Roman numerals in medieval times at the top right-hand corner of recto sides only; the number 59 was omitted, in error it would seem as there is no sign of a missing leaf; two consecutive folios have both been given the number 78 (in this edition the second is termed *78 bis*); the extra folios bound in at the end (6 + 2 + 1) now bear no foliation but probably did in the fifteenth century since there are internal references to these pages assigning them the correct numbers that they now hold in the sequence.³⁰ The verso of f. 212 is blank and has had a thick flyleaf paper gummed to it. Although the leaves have been trimmed, this was kept to a minimum and wide margins subsist on all sides, thus that it is only

26 Further information on this poem and on the Egyptian days etc. can be found in Keil, 'Die verworfenen Tage'; Steele, 'Dies Aegyptiaci'; Loiseleur, 'Les jours égyptiens'; Mauch, 'Der frühneuhochdeutsche Traktat über die "verworfenen Tage"'; Wordsworth, *The Ancient Calendar*, pp. xxvii–xxxii, 189–92. An (incomplete) list of manuscripts containing the poem may be found in Walther, *Initia Carminum ac versuum medii aevi posterioris latinorum*, pp. 754–5.

27 This may be translated thus: The first day of the month and the seventh cuts like a sword / The fourth leads to death, the third overthrows the strong man / The first disrupts he who orders (or sends), the fourth he who drinks / The tenth and eleventh are full of the face of death / The third kills and the seventh strikes the coasts (or the earth) / The tenth turns one pale, the fifteenth is ignorant of treaties, alliances / The thirteenth of July immolates, the tenth shakes to ruin / The first kills the strong man, the second overthrows a company / The third of September and the tenth bring evil to limbs / The third and the tenth are as the death of someone / The fifth is Scorpius and the third is girt with slaughter / The seventh deprives the manly of blood, the tenth is as a serpent.

28 These no longer exist.

29 The careful neat mend on e.g. f. 21 can be seen to be contemporary and original since the writing avoids this area.

30 See e.g. f. 206v: 'First, þe said accomptauntz charge þem of mony resseyved ..., as apereth folio CCv^{to} – Cxli li. xiiii s. iii d.'

an occasional extra note which has been truncated at the sides, and at the top margin the upper parts of the letters of the wardens' names (see below) on a few pages.

The layout is always organised to make room for marginal sub-headings on the left-hand side, sums of money placed in columns at the right-hand side, sub-totals and totals placed either on a far right-hand side or below each section, as well as for the main headings to sections and the body of material. It is clear that the book was written up after the auditing ceremony and was done from other notes, to which internal reference is sometimes made; the material is always highly organised and it is very rare for an item of information to be misplaced.

From f. 20v onwards running heads are given to each page. At the top of the open spread of ff. 20v and 21r are written, in the scribe's hand, the regnal year ('R. xxj') and the names (initial and surname only) of the four wardens, two wardens to each page.³¹ This practice continues on – i.e. the regnal year and the four names of the four wardens (sometimes in full) were regularly written at the top of a double spread. From here on also we find elaborately decorated pen and ink initials to the main paragraphs, all of which are noted below. When an account begins on a recto side, or at any mid-point on the page (this being unusual and only occurring very occasionally, e.g. f. 34r) the year and wardens will all be written on the appropriate page together, or across the beginning of the mid-point start in those cases. These running heads have not been reproduced here (see further below, pp. 32–3).

The main text was written between c. 1390 and c. 1464 (the last part copied somewhat later than this), and a variety of hands, and of inks, appear, the latter being usually dark brown, but sometimes mid-brown; the writing is always neat and careful, and some scribes have gone to considerable trouble to add pen-flourishing, cadels, decorated initials, and other ornamentation, this always being done with pen only. Apart from the scribes listed below, one notes that a sixteenth-century hand has annotated some pages (the notes are given in footnotes to this edition), and this hand has been identified³² as that of Leverich Forster, underclerk to the company from 1541, whose handwriting is found in *The Acts of Court, 1527–60*.³³ One notes in addition a few pointing hands drawn in the margin, e.g. on ff. 16v, 42v, 78v, 95r, and a set of marginal marks throughout, in the form of a noughts and crosses board, or a large # mark, whose date seems impossible to determine (?seventeenth century?), and which were perhaps to note entries for someone writing up a history.³⁴ At some point in time, parchment markers were attached to the outer edge of the folio which held the start of a year's account, and the remains of these can be seen, e.g. on f. 46r (where a letter 'A' had been written), ff. 48, 80, 84, 178 and on other pages that were the beginning of an account where one sees discolouration marking the spot where these markers had formerly been.

*The scribes*³⁵ Unusually for such medieval records, the writing of several sections can be firmly attributed to named scribes. Others may yet be identifiable, by comparison with other texts written by them, and with their signatures as recorded in the Scriveners' Common Paper, and work on this is currently being undertaken by Linne Mooney. The evidence for many of

31 The pages have been cropped taking off a small amount of the tops of the high letters, and this has happened to a number of other pages also.

32 By Jean Imray and Heather Creaton.

33 A brief biography of this somewhat colourful character (eventually dismissed from the Company in disgrace and later imprisoned for debt) can be found in J. M. Parker, 'The Ordinance Book', pp. 188–9; and Sutton, *The Mercery*, pp. 495–6.

34 They are found on folios 27v, 33r, 37r, 55r, 86r, 87r, 89r, 90r, 91r, 94v, 95r, 96r, 100r, 101r, 103r, 103v, 104v, 105r, 105v, 109r, 110v, 111r, 111v, 113v, 114r, 114v, 116v, 118v, 119r, 120v, 121v, 122r, 122v, 123r, 123v, 124v, 125r, 125v, 126r, 127r, 129r, 130r, 131r, 133v, 134r, 135r, 136r, 136v, 138r, 139v, 140r, 141v, 142v, 143r, 144r, 146v, 148v, 149r, 153r and then one on f. 193v.

35 Apart from the scribes listed below, there are a few notes in other hands at odd points in the text. These are mentioned in footnotes to the text.

these writers being professional scribes comes from the trained competence of their work, and from the remark recorded in 1455–56 on f. 188v, when Richard Box claims a salary for his own work as scribe: ‘Et auxi divers estraunges skriuaners pur lez fesure et escripte de l’acompte des gardeins en cest livre soloient aver pur lour labour vi s. viii d.’ Named or anonymous, the various scribes wrote:

1. ff. A1r, A2r–A4r, ff. 1r–5v and 11r–64r, 67r–73v, and 87r–90v. The account for 1347–48 copied in c. 1390; the accounts of 1390–91, 1392–1414, 1415–16 up to 1417–18, 1424–25 and 1425–26; the 1344 list of quit-rents; and the 1376 ordinances copied in 1404. The writer is fully proficient in French and clearly knows Latin also (as well of course as English). A possible identification³⁶ of this writer as Martin Kelom comes from the entry on f. 39r where the scribe notes the payment for writing up the ordinances at the beginning of this book: ‘païé a M. Kelome pur escrire l’ordinance al commencement de cest livre’. If this were to refer to the ordinances of 1376 written on ff. A2r – A3v of the preliminary quire, as would make sense since those ordinances were, as it says, ordered to be copied up in this year, then identification of Martin Kelom as scribe is possible. However, firstly, this same scribe has written a great deal more than this and this is the only recorded payment to him, which is somewhat odd; secondly, other references occur in these accounts to writings which no longer exist,³⁷ and it would be possible for the preliminary quire to contain another copy made later or earlier, and not be the writing for which Kelom was paid; thirdly, he might have been paid as responsible for the work, but the actual writing might have been done by, say, a well-educated apprentice. We have no known other examples of his handwriting with which one might compare these pages of the Mercers’ records, and thus, while it may have been he who wrote such a great deal of the early accounts and records, it may be safer not to make the identification definite. Kelom was a well-educated man whose will lists a number of books left as bequests,³⁸ he was warden in 1413–14 and 1425–26, he took on several apprentices over the years (and was thus actively in business), and one must note that he was himself only an apprentice at the time when the first accounts were written up: his admission fee as an apprentice was paid in 1395–96, clearly as a late entry since his issue fee was paid in 1396–97. There is no real reason why he should not have written the accounts over such a long period, but equally no reason why he should. He was fourth-named warden in 1413–14 and third-named in 1425–26, and much later practice was for the third warden to be responsible for the accounts: in 1465 it was said to be ‘after the good olde rule’ that ‘the iijth Warden ... shall have in his charge the Rule & gouvernaunce as for the yere of his Wardenshipp all suche goodes, bokes, mynimientos as be withyn the Hall at seint Thomas, with all maner writynges and accomptes ... also for to entre the ordenances made in his tyme and other maters whiche must remean in the hous as mater of recorde ...’.³⁹ There is no evidence that this was so in the years when Kelom was warden (see below, pp. 39–41), and in any case being responsible does not mean doing the work oneself (indeed in 1465 we know that Richard Box was writing up the accounts, see below).

All in all, it would seem that the scribe of these pages was much more probably a professional scribe, scrivener or clerk.⁴⁰ Such a man would surely have been paid, yet no payments are listed in the accounts during these years for such work; any costs were thus not being borne by the company, but the obvious solution is that one or more of the wardens funded these costs

36 Taken as certain by for example Heather Creaton in her thesis and Anne Sutton, *The Mercery*, p. 168.

37 See e.g. f. 188v: ‘Item, païé a Richaert Box pur la colleccion ensemble et l’escriver dez veiles ordenances et nouvelles’, none of which survive.

38 See his and his wife’s wills, Commissary Court of London, 1426/?1431, register 3, f. 290 and year 1434, register 3, f. 395v.

39 *Acts of Court*, p. 282.

40 Thomas Lincoln did other work for the company during this period, and could be considered.

as part of his/their duties.⁴¹ The first recorded payment comes in 1427–28 (f. 97r, for William Piryman, see below), and thereafter they were allowed as an expense the company should bear. Once fees are paid, they are listed among the ‘foreyn expences’, i.e. extrinsic to those always due and necessary, needing authorisation from the auditors.

A second suggested identification is that Adam Pinkhurst (see scribe 2 below) was also the writer of these pages.⁴² It is difficult to make direct comparisons of the handwriting, since ff. 6r–10v are in a different script, in a different language, and are set out in a different format. Linne Mooney has picked out certain features of the hand found in both sets of pages, but remains uncertain of the identification, saying only that ‘it seems likely’ that Pinkhurst wrote these pages also.⁴³ One aspect of these pages not discussed by Mooney is that of the decoration of initials. Pen and ink only are used but at least four different styles can be found. On f. 15v there is a large initial ‘R’ which is not entirely dissimilar to the style of a series of initials between ff. 20v and 31v. A quite different style is found for those between ff. 34r and 42v, and again for those between ff. 44r and 50v, and those between ff. 55v and 66v (the last part of the text here being in the hand of another scribe). In addition one notes a large number of initials ‘C’ as the first letter of a new set of accounts which are left undone, a space being set out for this, a small ‘c’ written as guidance in the far left margin. (All decorated or enlarged initials worthy of comment have been noted in footnotes to the text below at the relevant point.) It seems clear that the scribe of the text was not himself responsible for the initials which were being done by several different people at different dates, and this is in contrast to other sections of this account book where the decoration seems to be allied to the hand, see for example scribes 7 and 8 discussed below.

Whoever the scribe of these pages of the account book may have been, he was familiar with the use of Arabic numerals, can be seen using them to add up totals (e.g. on f. 28v), and occasionally uses them in the main text at a point where a figure in Roman numerals would be expected, e.g. ‘Summa net ové dette et stuff – 138 li.’ [f. 64r]. These Arabic numerals have all been noted either in the text or in footnotes here if they occur in an additional sidenote in the book, and they are remarkable as not common at all at this period.⁴⁴ Others are found in sections not in the hand of this scribe, but one notes the frequency of them here and at this early date. They suggest a writer who regularly deals with business rather than literary texts.

2. ff. 6r–10v. The account for 1391–92.⁴⁵ This list of John Organ’s receipts and expenditure was written by a scribe whose hand has been identified by Linne Mooney as that of Adam Pinkhurst, the scrivener referred to by Chaucer as ‘Adam, his owne scriveyn’,⁴⁶ and the writer of the Hengwrt and Ellesmere manuscripts, as also of other documents relating to the mercers’ mystery.⁴⁷ Full details and a description of his hand, with photocopies, are given in the *Speculum*

41 Another possibility would be that the accounts were being written up by a mercer who was one of the almsmen, Robert Kemp could be considered, or Thomas Constable if one excluded ff. 87r–90v as being written not by this same scribe but another with a very similar hand. However, a professional scribe or scrivener seems more probable.

42 By Linne Mooney in her article cited below.

43 She assigns the pages between 73v and 79v to this writer whereas I see a different hand here. Her dates are inaccurate and can be verified by the year headings to each set of accounts.

44 See Durham, ‘The Introduction of Arabic Numerals’; Jack, ‘A Historical Defence’, p. 146; Sugden, ‘A History of the Abacus’; Brown, *History of Accounting*, p. 63; Wolff, *Commerces*, pp. 525–6. Roman numerals were in no way cumbersome (as might be thought today) to medieval accountants, and the use of Arabic numerals by this scribe at this period seems remarkable as they are not found with any frequency until the sixteenth century.

45 Mooney incorrectly says that there are two years of accounts in these pages. She makes a number of other erroneous statements about the accounts and the account book, for example that there were no accounts kept by the mercers before c. 1391–92 (the accounts between 1348 and 1390 may be lost but they were kept, see ff. 4v–5r).

46 *The Riverside Chaucer*, p. 650.

47 Mooney, ‘Chaucer’s Scribe’, *Speculum* 81 (2006), 97–138.

article. It is relevant to note here that he was a professional scrivener, no payment to him is recorded, and one presumes that his fees were paid by John Organ.

3. ff. 64v–66v. The account for 1414–15. A different hand. Unidentified.

4. ff. 73v–79v. The accounts from 1418–19 to 1421. The writer has been very careful about the appearance of the pages, for he has made his writing very similar to that of the previous hand, especially on the page where he takes over and the facing one, looking more clearly different on ff. 74v and 75r. Some changes are made to the layout (see note on p. 306). Thomas Rafton is named as the writer of other documents during this period, and might be the scribe of these pages, but he is also named for other writing work on f. 86r in a section written by quite a different hand to this one, and it might be more probable that he wrote the later section rather than this. A professional writer is probable here, given the care to make his hand conform to the previous one at the take-over point.

5. ff. 80r–81v. The account for 1421–22. A different hand. Unidentified.

6. ff. 82r–83v. The account for 1422–23. A different hand. Unidentified.

7. ff. 84r–86v. and ff. A4v–A5v of the preliminary pages. The account for 1423–24, and the ordinances of 1407–08 which were perhaps recopied *c.* 1424 (see note 145 p. 210). This hand is elegant and ornate, and rather angular. Elaborately decorated initials are used, with cadel flourishes, the style standing out clearly as different from any preceding decoration. For details of these, see the individual footnotes to the text. Some changes are made to the layout of the accounts, for example, from f. 85v onwards he places totals underneath a paragraph of entries, rather than at the right-hand side, and the whole layout of these pages is most elegant. Thomas Rafton was paid for some other writing work in this year, and it is possible that he might be the scribe of these pages (but see scribe no. 4 above).

8. ff. 91r–107v, and part of f. 108r. The accounts from 1426–27 until 1431. William Piryman can be certainly identified as the writer from the entry on f. 100r, among the extrinsic expenditure: 'Item, a Piryman pur escripre nostre acompte en le graunt lyvre, summa – iii s. iiii d.', and the similar entries on ff. 103v and 107r. The most noteworthy features of his pages are the elegant ornate leaf-shapes which he draws as exaggerated ascenders to letters, for instance for the list of wardens across the top of pages, for headings to sections, for the first line of a year's account, etc. Most of his 'key' initials have elaborate pen-flourishing, details of which are noted at the relevant points. His layout is again different at times from that used by previous writers, and one notes for instance his underlining of sums of money within a section, e.g. for salaries, alms, quit-rents, extrinsic expenditure, where the individual amounts that then make up a total are underlined. This underlining has not been reproduced in this edition (see below, p. 31). Piryman's handwriting and layout may be elegant, but the same cannot be said for his command of the Anglo-French language, which is noticeably poor. He is well able to copy formulaic phrases that occur each year and which could be found in earlier pages of the book (sometimes making errors nevertheless), but when it comes to new and specific material, he is lost. On f. 94v, for instance, the reasons for the fines listed are all written in English, except the last one, and except also the one fine noted at the foot of the previous page. On f. 102v similarly, he uses alternating French and English for the reasons given for the fines, those in French perhaps being more 'standard' types of fine, the others more individual, and thus without a precedent from which to copy. He makes grammatical errors also, and spelling errors beyond even the wide norms allowable, for which see footnotes to the text.

9. ff. 108r–10r. The account for 1431–32. A different hand. Unidentified.

10. ff. 110v–12r. The account for 1432–33. This hand is delicate and ornate, the scribe using a much finer nib than many others. His command of French is good, and one notes also his apparently unconscious shift to the use of Latin, e.g. on ff. 111r–v in the section giving the quit-

rents paid, where the dates are given in Latin form, perhaps because he is copying them from the acquittances in front of him from which he is working.

11. ff. 112v–15r. The account for 1433–34. The writer's linguistic abilities are not as good, and he reverts to English, e.g. on f. 114r. Unidentified.

12. ff. 115v–18r. The account for 1434–35. One notes the rather large number of corrections to the text, the very large script and layout on f. 118r, and that he has not written the account of the election, done by the next writer who takes over. Unidentified.

13. ff. 118r–26v. The report of the election of 1435 and the accounts of 1435–36 and 1436–37. A different hand. Unidentified.

14. ff. 127r–33v. The accounts for 1437–38 and 1438–39. William Rumbold is identified at the end of this section, on f. 133v:

Item, païé a William Rumbold pur colier del rent un quarter – summa – x s. x d.

Item, païé a William pur q'il a scripture le nostre accompte deux foiez – summa – iii s. iiiii d.

The payment is made for two years together, and it may well be that he wrote them both at the same time.

15. ff. 134r–40r. The accounts from 1439–40 until 1442. John Stodeley, a well-known scrivener,⁴⁸ is identified on f. 136r. He uses a fairly small script, with well-formed letters, slightly angular in the way some letters are formed of several strokes of the pen (e.g. 'a', 'g', sometimes 'e'); one notes also his use of small discreet decorative additions to the end-strokes of letters, and initial extra strokes or an extra loop to the first letter of a word, the whole producing a very pleasant look to the script. Good spacing is also noticeable and very careful layout, to which he makes a few minor changes, e.g. to use the regnal year date as a sub-heading to the start of the account, rather than place it as a running head with the names of the four wardens. His ink is light brown. His use of abbreviations is standard. One notes at once also his good command of the Anglo-French language and that he also brings in some forms replacing standard formulas of previous years, e.g. 'come devant est dit', 'quiterentes resolutz'. His hand can also be found in London, BL, Egerton MS 914, a letter of news dated 19 January 1454 n.s.⁴⁹

16. ff. 140v–61v. The accounts from 1442–43 until 1448–49. Robert Bale, another scrivener, admitted to the Scriveners' Company on 12 November 1440 and warden of that company in 1450.⁵⁰ He first names himself as scribe of these accounts on f. 146v and also names himself as having written other documents during this period. His hand is initially very similar to that of Stodeley, as one would expect from a trained scribe, and is often very small and neat, although he is found on f. 157v using a very large script. The pages written by him are notable for the use of pen-and-ink decoration using fine tracery lines in a style not seen before in this book. On the open spread of ff. 140v and 141r, the top line of each page has exaggerated ascenders with discreet flourishes to each letter, and in addition, with a very fine nib, delicate tracery lines make abstract patterns between all these letters. Many of the initials of the marginal sub-headings are flourished or decorated, and these are commented upon in footnotes below at the appropriate points. One notes his command of French as being less than that of Stodeley; it is competent but not quite so fluent and with a greater tendency to use English;⁵¹ however, he would have been competent to translate from this language and may have done so in 1444–45 when he was paid for translating 'un rolle dez libertees de Flaundres' [f. 148v] – or were

48 He was admitted to the Scriveners' mystery on 2 April 1433, and was a warden in 1446. See Steer, *Common Paper*, pp. 21–2.

49 Printed by James Gairdner in his edition of *The Paston Letters, 1422–1509 A.D.*, vol. I (London 1872), pp. 263–68.

50 See Steer, *Common Paper*, p. 22.

51 See e.g. f. 141r: 'Item, ressu de Johan Downe que fuit servant de Thomas Colard pur un fyn qe son apprenticehod ne fuit complet per un an – iiiii s. viiii d. / Item, ressu de William Gladman pur un fyn pur dishonest langage – iii s.'

these in Dutch? For the last year in which he writes the accounts he switches almost entirely to English (f. 157v onwards), adopting a different script and layout at this point (see note 543, p. 648).

17. ff. 162r–68v. The account of 1449–50, the list of brokerage rates, and the further expenditure recorded. The whole is written in English. The hand is a more rounded one, and while he ornaments initials, his style is much more restrained than that used by Bale. His use of the word ‘oure’, e.g. on f. 164r (‘Summa totalis of oure hole charge’) and f. 167r (‘oure dyscharge’) could imply that he was one of the wardens, but it is much more likely that this was just straight copying from rough notes in front of him (cf. Bale’s use of the word on f. 161r: ‘oure sutee’).

18. ff. 169r–75r. The accounts of 1450–51 and 1451–52. One notes in particular the large script used for headings, the different placing of ‘sub-headings’, centrally rather than to the left-hand side, and the use of exaggerated size for significant initials, with pen-flourishing whose style is individual but not perhaps of the most aesthetically pleasing.

19. f. 175v until the end of the accounts in this book (1452–53 until 1464), plus part of f. 211v, and also the Renter Wardens’ Account Book up to f. 59r and the end of the account there for 1469. The writer is Richard Box, beadle of the Mercers from 1452 until 1472. He was paid separately for his post as beadle (this, except for the first year, coming out of the alms funds) and for writing the accounts (see e.g. f. 181r: ‘Item, pur l’escriver d’icest acompte et de le lyveleode en lez livres – x s.’ and f. RW 35r: ‘Item, to Richaert Box for pengroseng of þis acompte – vi s. viii d.’ He also wrote other documents during these years, see e.g. f. 188v: ‘Item, païé a Richaert Box pur la colleccion ensemble et l’escriver dez veiles ordenances et nouvelles et divers autres billes ensealez par divers persones de la companie – xiii s. iiiii d.’ (none of these have survived).

His approach is very business-like, clear and careful. His handwriting is small, and he manages to include a large amount on each page, using double-column layout when possible, for instance for fines and for admissions to the livery. The occasional initial is written large, but he does not use ornate pen-flourishing. One notes also that he returns to the use of French for the wardens’ accounts, and was clearly proficient in this language. In 1458–59 a decision was taken (by Box or more probably by the wardens) to write the accounts in English, but it is not infrequent in subsequent pages to find him inadvertently using French, whole phrases or individual words, in a manner well-familiar to those who regularly switch between two languages.

The date at which he actually wrote all these accounts is very debatable. In 1454–55 payment is recorded for his writing up both books (f. 181v), giving an assignable date for the accounts of the wardens from 1452–53 until those up to June 1455 being written sometime after this (the accounts were never rendered until some time after the end of the accounting year, and the engrossing into the official record book was only done after the auditors had given full approval of a set of accounts, and was then written up from other paper notes). We know from much internal evidence that the Renter Wardens’ accounts were written up into the official book with very considerable delays, everything before 1449 being certainly a later copy as the book was not in existence until then. Cross-references to other pages of both account books, and indeed, more tellingly, transfers of money from one account to another, provide further evidence of the delay in dealing with the accounts during the 1450s and 1460s. The account for 1462–63 was only presented to the auditors on 14 November 1466 (RW f. 42v).

20. f. 210v, an anglicana, late-thirteenth or early fourteenth-century hand.

21. ff. 211–12. Various sixteenth-century hands.

22. The oaths in English on ff. A1r, A1v, A2r, A3v, A4r, the sewn-on fragment, and A6r. This hand is the same as that of the ordinances written in the preliminary pages of the *Book of Ordinances*.

II. *Renter Wardens' Account Book, 1442 to 1500*

This book, now in a modern binding, was initiated in 1449, when it was decided to have a separate book for the accounts relating to the properties belonging to the mystery. It cost the mystery 15s. 8d. at that time (RW f. 7v). In 1460 extra paper was added and the book was rebound:

Item, for makeng of acquytances, lecys, & writeng of divers acomptes in þis booke & paper ryaulle⁵² for þ^e same & byndeng agein þerof, as apereth by þ^e paper of þacompte – xxxii s. x d. [RW f. 31r]

Given the information that several sets of accounts were written up this year (but without specification of which), one cannot be sure whether the unusual make-up of the book dates from before 1460, but the present arrangement of folios must date from then. The book now consists of 257 folios, c. 275 mm in width × 380 mm (with variation, usually small, and mostly due to later cropping), of alternating parchment/vellum (V) and paper (P). This construction of the book is unusual and was clearly done, by a stationer, in a deliberate but not regular sequence: 4V +7P + 2V + 1P + 2V + 2P + 7V +3P + 4V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 3V + 3P + 1V + 2P + 2V + 2P + 1V + 3P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 3P + 1V stub + 1V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 2V + 4P + 3V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 4V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 3V + 4P + 1V + 1V stub + 4P + 2V + 3P + 2V + 3P + 4V. The binding is too tight for one to be able to determine quiring with any certainty, but the above method of listing paper and vellum leaves should no doubt be interpreted by assuming either that some of the sheets listed together here as for example '2V' may well consist of one leaf of parchment forming the last leaf of a quire and another forming the first leaf of the next quire; alternatively, they may be two parchment leaves folded between two other paper leaves, and it is the '4P' which must be interpreted as the first two leaves forming the last pages of one quire, the next two being the first pages of the next. Only by disbinding the volume could one ascertain for certain. The reasons for this alternating use of paper and vellum are not known, and it is an unusual make-up of a manuscript book. Paper cost less than parchment, and one might thus consider whether the mercers wished to save money, but this seems improbable in context and more likely is that this combination of the two materials controls the curling tendencies of the parchment sheets, held flat by the paper, while giving greater substance and firmness to the whole than had paper alone been used. Another possibility is that the parchment leaves were added to the paper text-block in order to prevent sewing 'tear-back' damage, and establishment of whether the centre folio of each quire is of paper or parchment would enable further consideration of the reasons for this make-up of the book.⁵³

52 'Paper of a size measuring 24 by 19 inches as used for writing and 25 by 20 for printing' (*OED*), but this refers to nineteenth-century paper. Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction*, p. 73, lists in much more detail the dimensions of royal paper of known origin and date. He has nothing for the fifteenth century but gives fourteenth-century paper from Italy as measuring 61.5 × 44.5 cm, and from sixteenth-century France at both 57 × 43.5 and 60 × 44 cm. (At this date the paper would have come from either Italy or France although it would not be long before John Tate, a mercer, set up his first paper mill in England, see his entry in the *ODNB*, vol. 53, pp. 808–9.) The paper sheets in this book now measure nearly 11 inches wide and c. 15 inches long (between 27 and 27.5 cm wide and between 34 and 38 cm long), which would seem to indicate a very small amount of cropping at the sides but somewhat more at the top and bottom of the pages.

53 I am most grateful to Christopher Clarkson for discussion of these issues.

The first four folios of parchment consist of two bifolia, present from the earliest days of the book but not included in the numeration of leaves done then. The main block of the book has contemporary foliation at the top right-hand corner of rectos in ink, in Roman numerals from i to CCliiii; one folio was missed, that between foliated Cx and Cxi, but this leaf was part of the original quiring and not an extra sheet. Very modern foliation in pencil has been added, starting with the preliminary pages, and making f. i of the main text block read as f. 4. The original foliation is used throughout in this edition (but given as Arabic numerals), because there are a large number of cross-references within the text to information given on other folios, which would become meaningless if one used the modern foliation.⁵⁴ The first few folios are given asterisked numbers here to differentiate them. Prickings are very often clearly visible on the parchment sheets. No watermark is found in the paper sheets. The layout of pages is variable according to how much material is being included and the practices of the various scribes, but spacing always allows for marginal sub-headings, separation of material into discrete lists, receipts always being listed before expenditure, and sum totals being carefully spaced and clearly visible. The first letter of each new account is extra large and sometimes decorated, and from f. 7v onwards the practice is to write the name of the renter-warden responsible at the top of each page of his account as a running head (for the first few years there are two men responsible and two names). The ink used is of a very dark brown, almost black, colour throughout the first section written by Box, with occasional use of lighter brown ink showing later additions or corrections, or the start of a new day's work, for instance on f. 38v, where all entries down from the line about John Ruddok, carpenter, are in a paler colour.

The language used throughout this book is English, apart from the Latin used in the preliminary pages, on f. 1r, and apart from some few odd and rather interesting phrases of French (see for example the date given to the auditing of an account: 'faite le xiiii^e jour de novembre l'an vi^e' [RW f. 42v]).

The binding was done in 1963 by E. E. Gray, bookbinder (a stamp with this name is found inside the back cover). It measures 283 × 390 × 70 mm, and is a quarter binding over hard boards with maroon spine and light brown sides. The spine is flat with six compartments formed by double blind fillets; in the top compartment is a Mercers' maiden, stamped in gold; gold lettering in the second, fourth, and sixth compartments reads: 'RENTER / WARDENS / ACCOUNT' '1442-1500' 'REBOUND 1963'. Two modern paper flyleaves are inserted at each end, on the second of which at the front has been pasted the old label from the previous binding. This is of red morocco with gold lettering, measures 144 mm in depth and 200 mm in width, has a triple gold fillet around the outer edges and a repeating oval pattern done with a roll just inside the fillets, and with a seven-petalled flower at each lower inside corner. The wording reads: 'RENTER WARDENS ACCOUNT / 1442 TO 1500 / REBOUND ANNO 1777 / ROBERT LATHROP ESQ^R MASTER / CHARLES NEWSHAM PIGOTT / JOSEPH CRICK / ISAAC BUXTON ESQ^R / WARDENS^{SS} / ROBERT CAWNE CLERK'.

The book contains a few items besides the Renter Wardens' accounts. On f. *1v we find the dedication of the book, giving the date of 1 November 1449 for when it was started (see the text on p. 686). This is written in very black ink, in a very formal bookhand, an archaising over-formal script which could be termed 'gothic' bookhand. The initial 'F' is given cadel flourishing and there are a few exaggerated ascenders to the top line. Below that starts the copy of the rental for the Whittington estate (see Appendix, pp. 1017-23), written in Richard

54 The book has been so little studied that there seems to be no risk of confusion with other published sources which might refer to it by the modern foliation numbers. Anne Sutton's recent book has a very few footnote references but scholars are unlikely to come to error in tracking these.

55 The word 'Wardens' is to the right hand side of the three bracketed names of Pigott, Crick and Buxton, the bracket consisting of an elongated and elaborate decorative shape.

Box's hand (see above, p. 14), this being followed by a rental for the mistery's own purchased properties and that of the Eastfield estate, continuing to the top of f. *3r, where the heading only for a rental for the Abbot estate is placed, the list never having been copied. Folios *3–*4 were clearly written separately and then inserted into the book, and they contain, from *3v – *4v, a calendar. Each page is ruled specially for the calendar, and into two columns. Four months appear on each page, ordered down the first column and then down the second. Each month takes up c. 78 mm in width and c. 120 mm in length, the space is carefully ruled, 32 lines per month with the usual divisions necessary for the layout of a calendar. Red ink is used for the heading to each month, the numerals, and the important feastdays, blue ink is used for the large 'KL' placed above each month, and brown ink for all else. No verse lines appear.

On the first folio as numbered in the fifteenth century, a much later hand has written out the City rulings on tenants' and landlords' rights over 'fixtures and fittings' and plants (see Appendix, p. 1025); ff. 1v–2r are blank and then, from f. 2v – 3r, follows a list of contents, written in the same hand as that of the last section of accounts in this book, these early pages clearly having been left blank from the start and ready for additional material if needed. The list gives the names of those responsible for each set of accounts (after the first few years, this is the renter-warden), and the folio number on which that set of accounts starts. Folios 3v – 4v are blank.

The accounts start on f. 5r, the first item entered being a rental drawn up by John Mortham at Christmas 1441 (see p. 578), while John Carpenter was still in charge of the Whittington estate. The first few years of accounts have certainly been written in here later, copied from whatever records were to hand, as we know the book was not in existence at all until late 1449, and the accounts start from the time of the handover from Carpenter to the mercers' mistery in 1441. It may well be that the majority of the accounts written by Box were copied up much later than the years to which they refer, this being almost certainly so for those of the late 1450s when some very 'creative accounting' was managed, transferring sums from various renter-wardens to another, as well as between the 'house' or 'Hall' accounts and the estate accounts. (see below pp. 22–3). Box, one notes, only became beadle in 1452 and it is improbable that he was writing anything here before then.

For the accounts between 1441 and 1454, several dating problems occur, each of which is signalled by notes to the text, but which may be summarised here. The first account rendered by John Mortham gives a date of Christmas 20 Henry VI (1441) but also gives the names of the current wardens of the mistery, which makes 21 the correct year. Box may well have been aware that the date was in question, as the 'xx' (20) has a space after it into which he may have been intending to write the correct year once he had checked it. The next few years accounts, up to September 1448, are rendered at Michaelmas each year. The next is dated for Midsummer 28 Henry VI (1450), and thus after the book was acquired, where one notes from the dedication that the intention at first had been to render the accounts at Midsummer each year (as was done for the Hall accounts). The men responsible here are Robert Baron and Thomas Muschamp, whose responsibilities continue for at least two and a half years. If they took over from Michaelmas 1448, then either a period of accounts is missing, or Midsummer is in error for Michaelmas, the latter being more likely as the next year is said to be for a year up to Michaelmas 'anno xx'. Box was clearly unsure and the paper notes from which he was copying did not give a clear date. Nor did they for the next set of accounts, dated merely 'Thacompte of þe forsaied Robert & Thomas for half a yeer' – which half year is not stated.⁵⁶ We only reach firm ground with the account for Michaelmas 1452 until Easter 1453, at which date

⁵⁶ The regnal year numbers as written look as if 'xx' had been written with a space left for the rest of the number to be fitted in when ascertained. One must also note that the sections on f. 7v, 8r, 8v which concern the period of responsibility of Baron

the whole set of four wardens had clearly realised they needed to take charge jointly of what had become a chaotic situation. They officially take on only the half year named, but one notes nevertheless that some amounts from outside the period are included in the reckoning. Some periods between 1448 and 1452 are not accounted for, but, unless further evidence is found, it is not certain which. The present edition has placed the accounts at what seems the most probable dates, with notes to draw attention to possible discrepancies.

After Easter 1453, the accounts follow in sequence, and were rendered up to Easter each year, but it is not until the account of Easter 1455 to Easter 1456 that we find the system in place for the renter warden in charge of the estate accounts to be the fourth named warden of the mistery. There seems to be clear evidence that not only were the accounts for the 1450s and 1460s written up later, but that they were only fully audited and authorised much later than the years for which the account was, eventually, rendered. Difficulties in obtaining rentmonies due from tenants led to these delays, the renter-warden in charge waiting to receive money from the rent-collector, which did not arrive, but was no doubt promised, and thus leaving the warden unable to produce the final account on his year, or to hand over correctly to his successor.⁵⁷ The evidence for this is examined below, pp. 22–3.

The Financial Accounting System

Accounting historians have termed the system used by the Mercers as the ‘charge and discharge system’, and its use, particularly in manorial and household accounts, has been previously documented in a number of articles and other studies.⁵⁸ What is perhaps surprising is that the Mercers continued to use this system up to the year 1714, and only then began to use the double-entry book-keeping system introduced into England by the fifteenth century and in standard use from the sixteenth century onwards. The Mercers were not however alone in keeping to this system, and it is still the system used by some small associations. The medieval charge-discharge system was used when a person or persons were entrusted by others with the receipt of money and/or goods and were also entrusted with disbursements. In the Middle Ages, as now, regular yearly audits were required of such agents acting on behalf of another or others. In the case of the Mercers, four wardens were elected each year to hold office for one year, at the end of which term they were required, by their own statutory ordinances, to render formal accounts for all monies received and disbursed on behalf of the company.⁵⁹ From the mid-fifteenth-century onwards, the accounts relating to their property holdings were rendered separately, and from 1455–56 the responsibility for these accounts was that of the fourth-named warden alone each year. The calculations, later recorded in writing, were done on an abacus or a chequer-board (as at the Exchequer).⁶⁰ During the accounting and audit ceremony, the various monies received by the wardens would be set out as counters upon one part of the board, and then afterwards counters representing the amounts they had

and Muschamp, have a pencil line drawn right through the middle vertically; its significance is unclear but seems to add to the impression of unreliability here.

57 Some idea of the scene on rent-collecting days may perhaps be gained from the, admittedly much later, painting by Pieter Breughel of 1618, entitled ‘The Rent Collectors’, and now hanging in the Castle Museum, Norwich.

58 See Woolgar, *Household Accounts*, ‘Introduction’; Jones, ‘Accounting in English Local Government’; P. D. A. Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham*, pp. 1–71; Baxter, ‘Early Accounting’; Oschinsky, ‘Medieval Treatises’; Boyd, ‘Early Forms of Accounts’; Boyd, ‘History of Auditing’. All these contain references to earlier work on the subject.

59 ‘Item, qe l’argent du dite mistere soyt en les mayns des quatre mestres eslus pur l’an presente, ... et q’ils facent seurté de bon acompte rendre al fyn de l’an solonc les usages du dite mistere’ [ff. 1v–2r].

60 This is a supposition based on what is known from elsewhere, and one notes a reference in 1454–55 to a small payment ‘pur foldyng de le conter’ [f. 181r], presumably for making the counting board foldable for easy storage when not in use.

paid out for various items would be placed on another part of the board. Sum totals for each were reckoned, one figure taken from the other and a balance arrived at. This balance then had to be handed over to the new wardens. Details of all receipts and expenditure, and of debts, were provided on paper sheets in a quire, or in a loosely bound record-book, and mention is quite often made that these details have been exhibited for confirmation and authorisation.⁶¹

The funds held by the wardens each year consisted of the balance passed on to them from the previous year, monies received from fees and fines, rent money received from tenements and selds owned by the Company, monies received from bequests or gifts (either of money or of objects), monies collected in from debts, plus any other monies received. From these, on behalf of the Company, they paid out salaries to the Company's priests and beadle, and later to the rent-gatherer and clerk, they gave alms to poor and needy members, they paid the costs (or part-costs) of communal participation in events such as the annual procession of the Mayor of London, the costs of repairs to property, the costs of any legal cases, and any other allowable costs or expenses that might occur.

Each new set of wardens, as they took up office, had handed to them all remaining funds of the Company, which became for the ensuing year their 'charge'. The etymology of this word, derived from the late Latin 'carrica', Romanic 'carga' = 'a load' or 'burden', indicates the underlying sense of the word when used in financial accounting: the officials (in our case the wardens) who received and held monies on behalf of others held them as their 'charge'; they were 'loaded' on to them and remained their 'burden' until they could 'discharge' or 'unburden' themselves of them.

All monies actually received and collected during the term of office of an official were his or their 'charge'. But equally, if monies were due to be paid in, it was the officials' responsibility to ensure payment, and the monies were thus also listed as part of their 'charge'; at the moment of rendering their account to the auditors, either they actually had the money (in which case no problem arose), or they would declare it as received and subsequently ensure it was, or they needed to declare and explain the deficit (which then had to be separately listed in the accounts, in the discharge section or separately under debts).

During their term of office, the Wardens 'discharged' ('unloaded', 'disburdened') themselves of various monies: salaries were paid, expenses met, quit-rents and other fees paid out. They also needed to list here amounts for which they wished themselves to be 'disburdened', that is, not held responsible for the cash amount. Thus if rents had not been paid, if a tenement had been vacant and thus no rent received,⁶² if fines had been declared due from offenders but they had not (yet) been paid,⁶³ then, if the auditors approved, these amounts could be subtracted. At the end of their term they 'discharged' themselves of the total of these, leaving a remainder or balance.

The monies listed in the 'discharge' section were, it is known, not always the exact sums spent out, but the sums authorised by the auditors. The two might be equivalent, but instances, though few, occur where the auditors' refusal to accept certain expenditures as valid is

61 One frequently finds a phrase such as 'as hit aperith in þe paper of þis acompte more playnly'.

62 E.g. 'Item, ils demandent allowance pur vacacion de dyverse mansiouns del rent del mistere deins le temps de l'acompte ...' [f. 77r]. They are asking allowance for vacancies in the letting of rooms in the tenements – the money had previously been entered under 'charge' as received and they now have to obtain permission [allowance] to set aside the shortfall caused by the periods of vacancy in the letting.

63 E.g. 'First, þe said acomptantz asken to be allowed of mony pardoned to Thomas Niche for a fyne of x li. of olde – v li.' [f. 208v]. Thomas Niche's fine of £10 had been entered under the charge i.e. receipts section, because although he had not paid up he was supposed to have done and the wardens have the burden of responsibility for collecting it. Now, however, they give the information that Thomas Niche has been let off £5 of the total, his fine remitted, and they beg to be allowed to remove this sum from their accounts.

recorded.⁶⁴ One may note also how year after year the same sum is paid out for a certain item (the rent-collector's petty expenses is one example⁶⁵) and one may deduce that this was a set figure allowed for in the accounts that may or may not have borne any exact relationship to the actual sum expended. The Mercers' accounts in fact show far fewer of these regular, standard, fixed sums than do the accounts of other livery companies such as the Merchant Taylors and the Goldsmiths. Whether standard and fixed or irregular, all payments out of communal funds needed approval and authorisation.

Debts and how to account for these caused a number of problems (and not just to the Mercers), and we find several methods used in these records. The simplest, and to modern eyes the most logical, is as in the case of John Colet, fined in 1455–56 for offences committed the large sum of 50 marks sterling. It is noted in the 'charge' section of the accounts that year that he has handed over in cash £13 6s. 8d. and that the remainder of £20 has been placed in two bonds obligatory [f. 183r]. Incidental expenses on the matter are recorded in the 'discharge' section [ff. 183v, 184r]. The following year, in the 'charge', the full further amount of £20 is listed as paid [f. 188r], and that is the end of the matter.

More complex was the debt owed by John Organ, who died in office and while in possession of some of the mystery's funds, repayment of which money, £22 8d., the wardens then pursued from Organ's executors in 1394 [f. 14r], and listed as due each year thereafter at the end of the account, and included at the beginning of the 'charge' section as part of the sum handed over to the new wardens each year. In 1398–99 this and other debts are listed not separately at the end of the account but among the items in the 'discharge' [f. 28r].⁶⁶ The debt continues to be listed as due in the 'charge' section, and as an allowed subtraction in the 'discharge' section, until 1402–03, the executors, for whatever reason, proving recalcitrant. However, a court case ensued, the result being that £1 was awarded as damages,⁶⁷ listed as received in their 'charge' for 1402–03 [f. 36r], and of the remainder just £10 10s. was obtained, and this in the form of 7 bonds obligatory in the name of Thomas Prudence, listed in the 'discharge' [f. 37r]. The following year all seven bonds and the full amount are listed as part of the wardens' 'charge' [f. 37v], but in the discharge five bonds are listed and a sum of £7 10s. as owed to the mystery [f. 39r]; these five bonds are now listed in the 'charge of the next year [f. 40v], and (though it is not stated) one only was paid this year as the 'discharge' lists four bonds and a sum of £6 as due from Prudence [f. 41v]. The next year, 1405–06, the amount due is not listed separately but included in the overall amount for which the new wardens are responsible, and in the 'discharge' the same £6 and four bonds are listed as a debt [f. 43v]. The same happens the next year. No mention however, explicit or implicit, is made of this amount in the following year's account, except that, at the very end of it [f. 47v] the scribe has added a small note in the left-hand margin:

M^d de fiebles dettes en le darrein acompt devant cest acompt escriptz.

[Memorandum about hopeless debts written into the account before this one.]

And that is the end of the matter.

64 See e.g. RW ff. 28v and 31v where a total of 38s. of the costs on Whittington's obit in two succeeding years are not authorised by the auditours.

65 E.g. 'Item, a luy pur en allouaunce pur petitz expenses pur colier del rent – summa – iiii s. iiii d.' [f. 117r].

66 At the end of this year's account some debts, not that of John Organ's executors, are written off as irrecoverable.

67 Their expenses had been 27s. listed under the 'discharge' that year [f. 36v].

Other debts also lead to quite convoluted accounting. To take as examples the cases of John Gase⁶⁸ and Isabelle Fleet: Gase is first listed as owing £5 in 1424–25, where his debt and that of Isabelle Fleet for 16s. 8d. are listed under the ‘discharge’ section. The next year, both these debts appear in the ‘charge’ section, as responsibility for collecting them has been handed on by the previous wardens; under the ‘discharge’ section, Gase’s debt is listed again, but not that of Isabelle Fleet, and we read that 5s. was discounted from her rent for the period during which her shop was being repaired (f. 90r]; we must assume, although it is not stated, that the balance on the 16s. 8d. was then paid. Gase’s debt continues, however, and the wardens have felt it necessary to signal two balances at the end of the year, one with Gase’s debt, one without, this one being the sum handed over to the new wardens. The account for the following year, 1426–27, again lists Gase’s debt under ‘charge’, again under ‘discharge’, but this time with the reason for the debt explained:

Item, ils demandent allowance pur dette deliveré a eux per lez gardeins del dit mistere esteant en l’an devant q’ils pernoient le charge, c’est assavoyr de Johan Gase, une de nostre tenantes a le Pye, le quele ils ne purront recoverere a cause qe le dit Gase, come il dit, ad païé pur divers reparaciones de le mesone per comandement de Thomas Austyn, pur lors coilour de lez rentes pur dit mistere, summa – v li. [f. 93r]

[Item, they ask for allowance for a debt handed on to them by the wardens of the said mistery for the year before they took up office, i.e. of John Gase, one of our tenants in the Pye, which they will not be able to recover because the said Gase, as he says, had paid for various repairs to the house on the orders of Thomas Austyn, then rent-collector of the said mistery, total – £5]

One might have expected this to be the end of the matter, but next year again the debt is listed in both ‘charge’ and ‘discharge’ sections and again among the end-balances, and again the following year, 1428–29, the wardens list the £5 under their ‘charge’ and ask for it to be allowed against them in their ‘discharge’; alas, also in their ‘discharge’ they have to ask for another £5 to be allowed:

Et auxi ils demaundent allowaunce pur le mesme Thomas Gaase d’une somme qe Piryman ne poet recoverer come il dit a cause de poverté de dit Gaase, mez il presente toutz jours sone corps a persone al volunté dez gardeinz de dit mistier – v li. [f. 100r]

[And they also ask for allowance for the same Thomas Gase for a sum which Piryman was unable to recover, as he says, on account of the said Gase’s poverty, but he puts his person at all times at the disposal of the said mistery’s wardens⁶⁹ – £5]

This sum of £10 now goes forward, is reckoned among the end-balances this year, appears for the next two years under ‘charge’, ‘discharge’ and the end-balances. In 1431–32 matters are tidied up a little, and this debt and others are listed not in any of the main sections of accounts but in a separate memo at the end, and this is done again the following year. Finally, in 1433–34, it was decided to release this year’s and all subsequent wardens of the burden of trying to achieve the impossible and collect this debt:

Et memorandum qe lez gardeinez del an passé nous ount chargé de lever qe est pardoné per tot le compaigne le iii jour de septembre anno xii^o
De Thomas Gase – x li. [f. 115r]⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Also called Thomas unless two men are involved, see Name Index.

⁶⁹ His offer here may well mean that he was saying that they could do with him as they liked (but he is pointing out that he really does not have the money, and thus that it might be useless to send him to prison).

⁷⁰ Other debts, one sees here, are still listed as due and follow on through subsequent years.

[Memorandum that last year's wardens charged us with collecting [a debt] which was written off by the whole company on 3 September of the year 12 [Henry VII] [1433]:
from Thomas Gase – £10]

A simpler way (perhaps), for a debt owed under very different circumstances, is just not to list an amount under 'charge' even though it was due:

Item, de Johan Brodesworthe pur soun entré per redempcion, non pas resseux en lour temps [f. 120v]

[Item, from John Brodsworth for his admission by redemption, not received during their term of office –]

One might have thought this sufficient but the 'discharge' then includes the mention that

Memorandum de Johan Brodisworthe quia ponitur extra computum ubi prius scribitur [f. 123v]

[Memorandum about John Brodsworth since [his fee] was excluded from the account where it was written in above.]

Clearly there were complications with this man for next year we are told:

Item, ils soy chargeount en argent resseux de Thomas Bataylle et de William Olyver pur le redempcion de Johan Brodysworthe pur estre de nostre lyverey et mistere per assent et consent des nous dites gardeynes et des toutes bones gentes del mistere de mercery – iiiii li. [f. 124r]

[Item, they declare money received from Thomas Bataille and William Olyver for the redemption of John Brodsworth, for him to be of our livery and our mystery, with the agreement and consent of us, the said wardens, and of all the goodmen of the mercers' mystery – £4]

When we look at the renter wardens' accounts for the 1450s and 1460s and how debts are handled there, we find matters approaching the fictional. We know already that these accounts were written into this book with some considerable delay at this period (further paper for the book was bought in 1460, when it was also rebound; since the foliation was done in the fifteenth century, is continuous, and internal reference is made in the accounts to information appearing on other folios, both previous and subsequent, one may well suppose that it was only after 1460 that many (if not all) of the previous accounts were written up). The problems over accumulated rent debts, only taken firmly in hand from 1459, may well have meant that no full accounting for the previous years was done until after that date.

At the end of the account for 1458–59 are listed the names of debtors and the amounts due from each between the years 1455 and 1459 (see pp. 864–77). They are listed by property and by the name of the renter-warden in charge for the year, many debtors having owed money for several successive years and a total being given for him or her. After this comes a list of 'desperate debts' and then further sums owed by the rent-collector, John Bleseby, and the beadle and writer of this list, Richard Box (but as tenant perhaps rather than in his official capacity). A total of debts to date is given as £157 2s. 10d. A new rent-collector has taken over during the term of office of John Marchall, but he too has been unable to collect money from some tenants, these debts being listed next [f. 27r], and they amount to £10 18s. 3d., plus 21s. 2d. for vacant premises, plus a further unexplained amount owed by Roos of £4 5s. 3d.

The £157 2s. 10d. is subdivided into amounts owed for separate years:

Is due þ^e tyme of Redeknape – iiiii^{to}iii li. iii s. i d.
 Item, þ^e tyme of Donne – xix li. xvi s. vii d.
 Item, þ^e tyme of Warde – xxxviii li. xvii s. iiiii d. ob.
 Item, þ^e tyme of Marchalle – xv li. v s. ix d. ob. [RW f. 26v]

Redeknape's £83 3s. 1d. can then be tracked back to f. 18v, the account supposedly rendered in 1456, where it is given as the final balance due to the mistery, is said to be handed over as a debt, and the correct folio number, 26, is given as to where this is further accounted for – in 1459, although the year is not stated. Moreover, we find also that reckoned here on the 1455–56 account is an amount of £20 said to be paid to John Marchall (in 1458–59) and a further sum of £13 11s. 5d. paid to John Barby (in 1459–60). These sums are indeed reckoned among the receipts in the two later years. Similarly, John Donne's £19 16s. 7d. can be traced on f. 20v, after the reckoned balance due, given as a debt owed to the mistery and as listed below on f. 26, and again, out of the balance, sums are listed as having been paid to John Marchall and John Barby, listed indeed among receipts for 1458–59 and 1459–60. Warde's £38 17s. 4½d. is listed, again with the correct cross-reference to f. 26, on f. 22v where his due balance is further rounded up by an amount said to be paid to John Barby, duly listed along with the other amounts on f. 28 in 1459–60. John Marchall's debt of £15 5s. 9½d. does not appear again in the Renter Wardens' account book, but, remarkably, it is listed as a sum to be deducted from the Hall accounts, along with other debts:

Item, þ^er is paid by þ^e boke of þ^e lyvelood more þan was resseyved, as apereth in þacompte of John Marchalle, folio xxv^{to} of þ^e same booke – lvi li. x s. xi d.
 Item, þ^e said John Marchalle hath delivered ovir in dettours as apereth in þ^e boke of lyvelood, folio xxvi^{to} þ^e tyme of John Bleseby, rentgaderer – xv li. v s. ix d. ob.
 Item, þ^e said John hath delivered ovir in dettours as apereth in his acompte in þ^e boke of lyvelood folio xxvii^o þ^e tyme of Roger Roos, rentgaderer – xvi li. iiiii s. viii d. [f. 194v]

This is not of course the end of the matter, and one may track these and other debts in and out of the later accounts. Bleseby's debt is finally written off and no longer included from 1463–64 onwards,⁷¹ and one finds also further transfers of money between both the Hall and the property accounts, and between succeeding renter-wardens.⁷² The charge and discharge system may be somewhat disparaged by modern accounting historians comparing it with the superior double-entry book-keeping system, but in the hands of experienced businessmen, able to think imaginatively when needing to balance the books, it was fully adequate. Further detailed study of the accounting procedures used by the Mercers will surely be done by historians of medieval financial systems and accounting.

The Languages used in these Accounts and the Vocabulary of Accounting

As is usual for records of this period, the language used is Anglo-French (known also as Anglo-Norman) for the majority of the ordinances, accounts, and other information noted during the fourteenth century and until well into the fifteenth century. Unusual only is that the Mercers continued to keep their records in French until 1458–59, although with some intervening use of English. Anglo-French, a form of French developed in England from the Norman Conquest onwards, and with many features differentiating it from continental French, was

71 'Item, of þarest of þ^e said acompte, ovir an Cxlvii li. vii s. iiiii d. ob. due þ^e tyme of John Bleseby, rentgaderer, never likly to be payd, as apereth tofore folio xlii^{do}' [RW f. 43r].

72 See e.g. f. 197v, and RW ff. 28v, 35v, 36r, 39r, 43v.

an official language of record used for instance by the clerks of each succeeding parliament (now preserved in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*), and whose use continued in the English legal system becoming known as 'Law French'. Latin is also found in the Mercers' record books, in particular the copies of their charter and of the letters patent of 1394, and the documents of 1291 concerning the small beam. It is also used by the scribe identified as Adam Pinkhurst to write the account of John Organ for 1391–92, this year's account standing out from all the others by this use of Latin, as well as by its different layout and script. Latin is also found used for a number of marginal sub-headings,⁷³ it crops up in odd phrases used probably when a scribe was copying from another document,⁷⁴ and in some other occasional places,⁷⁵ often demonstrating the scribe's familiarity with Latin and very probably unconscious use of it, for example in the abbreviated (or sometimes full) Latin forms of first names that occur in lists otherwise in French,⁷⁶ and in phrases such as 'Memorandum de Johan Brodisworthe quia ponitur extra computum ubi prius scribitur' [f. 123v]. English appears first in such phrases as 'al mistere de haberdasshers' [f. 27v], or 'pur un fyn pur entrer en Sylkwommannes craft' [f. 78v bis], where the nouns 'haberdassher' and 'sylkwomman' could be accounted as belonging to the Anglo-French language. Other purely English nouns may be signalled: 'avec bateux appellez "lighters"' [f. 81r]. The scribe of most of the years up to the mid-1420s had an excellent knowledge of French, but thereafter, with increasing frequency, we find scribes whose command of French was sufficient for standard regular entries (where earlier accounts could be used as a model from which to copy) but insufficient for new and unusual material:

Item, pur xii pater nosters bedes pur torcheholders – vi d. [f. 83r]

Item, païé pur repayryng de ii vestementes, stoles et fanonis – v s.

Item, païé pur ii newe aubis – vi s. viii d.

Item, païé a Sire William Ripyngale pur waschyng de abbis – xii d. [f. 86r]

The scribe of 1427–28 abandons French almost entirely for a list of fines (ff. 94v–95r), but then comes back to it when more standard items occur (f. 96r). If copying from other documents, a translation was not thought necessary, e.g. the ordinance of 1417 on f. 71v,⁷⁷ and perhaps the 1424 Chalton case on f. 84v. The scrivener Robert Bale, whose French has always had a distinctly English flavour, seems suddenly to decide not to make the effort any more and in the account for 1447–48 turns to use English alone [from f. 155v], then goes back to French for more standard entries, but then in the following year writes almost the whole account in English. His successor writes the 1449–50 account entirely in English, as does his successor in turn write those up to 1452, but when Richard Box takes over, he reverts to the use of French, a language in which he was clearly fully competent. However, in 1458–59 a decision was evidently taken that English should now be used, and the remainder of the Wardens' Account Book is written in this language. The whole of the Renter Wardens' Account Book is written in English, although in the part written by Richard Box one finds some notable lapses into French.⁷⁸

73 E.g. 'De exitibus apprenticiorum' [f. 14v], 'Fines de non bene intrantibus' [f. 15r], 'Causa quare nullum incrementum datur isto anno' [f. 17r].

74 E.g. 'pur un an entier usque crastinum Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptiste anno x^{mo} regis Henrici vi^{ti}' [f. 109v].

75 E.g. the notices of the death of Henry IV and the coronation of Henry V [f. 58r].

76 See e.g. f. 18v (De Johanne Wasshbourne / De Roberto Westoun / De Johan Bale) or f. 74r (De Thomas Chipenham / De Johanne Uske / De William Hardwyk / De Johan Wode).

77 One notes that the heading to this is given however in French: 'Cest ordinance fuist renovelez en temps des gardeins desuis escriptz'.

78 For example in giving a date 'faite le xiii^e jour de novembre l'an vi^e' [RW f. 42v], as a sub-heading 'Païé a R. Cobolt' [RW f. 42v], or as an odd word in a phrase, e.g. 'Geffray Boleyn, Rauff Verney, & autres custoses' [RW f. 16v].

Many others have written about the medieval languages of England, and about the ways they are found inter-relating.⁷⁹ One field of vocabulary has however not yet been fully explored and some guidance here for readers of these accounts may therefore be helpful. This vocabulary of accounting, found in the pages of both record books, is indeed of particular interest. Unlike the records of some other livery companies which have survived, the Mercers' books were intentionally formal and correct, were written up from other more temporary notes, and for this 'fair copy', intended for posterity, they insisted upon full sentences, careful headings, and verbal as well as numeral accounting. The formality and care with which these fair copies were written up allow us to follow in great detail not only the practical aspects of this system of accounting but also the technical terminology used to express this, and it is worth examining further here just a few of these words and phrases.

The terminology used in the earliest written accounts of the Mercers, and found in the vast majority of other surviving accounts also, is more straightforward, less technical: 'ils ount receu', 'ils rendent en acompt receu', 'lour recept', 'Païementz de cel an', 'ils ount doné a ...', 'De quele somme furent despenduz ...'.⁸⁰

From 1396 onwards, each year, after the listing of the names of the wardens and the stating of the accounting year, the heading 'Charge' is placed above the start of the income and receipts section (this being the word used in both the French and the English sections of the accounts), and if (as is usual) this carries on over several pages, the further sub-heading 'Unqore charge' ('Further charge'), is placed at the top of a page, or above a sub-section of listed receipts. Below this, each sub-section of these (the 'parcelles', 'parcels', i.e. items) is introduced by a phrase: 'Ils soy chargent de ...', 'Ils soy chargent ové ...', 'Ils soy chargent en ...', 'Ils soy chargent pur ...', 'Ils soy chargent qe ...' or 'Ils soy chargent receu de ...', these being synonymous variants, except that the following 'pur' appears to be used in some cases where the money has not actually been received, but they are taking upon themselves the burden for obtaining it.⁸¹ The English vocabulary is all taken from the French.⁸² In the English sections of these accounts we find for instance 'Summa totalis of their holle charge' [f. 159r]; 'Item, þey ben chargen of receipt ...' [f. 157v]; 'First we charge us the same day wyth the rest of a counte of Henry Frowyk, Thomas Style, John Kyraby, and John Locke in redy mony – C lxxvii li. x s.' [f. 162r].

During their term of office, the wardens 'discharged' ('unloaded', 'disburdened') themselves of various monies and the expenses section of the account is thus preceded by the heading 'Discharge' (in both French and English), the sub-heading 'Unqore discharge' (or 'Yet discharge', 'Further discharge') is placed at the top of succeeding pages or sub-sections of this, and each sub-section is introduced by a phrase 'Ils soy dischargent de ...', 'Ils soy dischargent en ...', 'Ils soy dischargent qe ...', 'Ils soy dischargent pur ...', 'Ils soy dischargent de ceo

79 See recently e.g. Trotter (ed.), *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain*; Rothwell (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, Second Edition, 'Preface', v–xx; Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin*; Price (ed.), *Languages of the British Isles*; Catto, 'Written English'; Ormrod, 'The Use of English'; Wright, *Sources of London English*; Trotter, 'L'anglo-normand'; Dean and Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature*, especially pp. 157–78 – and the further references found in each publication. Also indispensable still is Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*.

80 An occasional use is found of one of the later standard phrases, e.g. on f. 14v 'ils soy chargent ové les deniers en les mains William Parker ...'.

81 E.g. 'Item, ils soy chargent le xv jour de Maij en le Court de Saint Thomas d'Acres par tout la compaignie pur lever de tout sez persones qe achatent lez toil de Holand pur lour disobeisaunce en contour lez ordinaunce fait par la dit compaignie' [f. 105v].

82 The Latin terms used, which do not appear in these accounts but can be found elsewhere, are the same in meaning but different etymologically: e.g. 'lidem onerant se de lj s. et viij d.'; 'Oneretur prepositus de vj denariis pro ...'; 'Clericus compotum faciens semper habeat rotulos anni precedentis si potest, in quo habeat visum cuiuslibet rei qualiter in anno precedenti se oneravit et deoneravit ...'; 'Et in illa parte de natura est .i. panellus onerans et alius deonerans'; 'Tripliciter potest prepositus vel ballivus de genere bladorum onerari'. See Brown, *History of Accounting*, pp. 46, 48; Ratcliff et al., *Elton Manorial Records*, p. 31; Oschinsky, *Walter of Henley*, pp. 465–6.

ge ...'. 'Here begynnyth the dyscharge of this acounte / First, we discharge us of the selary of John Secheforth / ... We discharge us to Robert Baron & Muschamp to the lyflod of Richard Withengton – x li.' [f. 165r]; 'First ye said acomptantz discharge þem of mony paid to Clampard for ...' [f. 197r]

The reflexive verbs used ['we charge us', 'they discharge them'] convey the social and financial responsibility felt by the wardens: they 'charge themselves' or take upon themselves the burden of the monies received, and they 'discharge themselves', they unload certain monies when paying out sums on behalf of the Company. Occasionally, especially in the later years of the accounts, a passive of the transitive, not the reflexive verb, is used in the French and English: 'ils sont chargés pur ...', 'they ben charged of'. When an uncollected amount is passed from the responsibility of one set of wardens to the next, then this appears with the transitive verb, e.g. 'lez gardeins de l'an darrein passé nous chargent pur lever de Thomas Gaase, summa v li.' (f. 98v). And finally one notes also the adjective 'chargeable', meaning liable to be held responsible for:

Cause pur quoy les ditz mestres ne soi chargent ové le rent:

Et fait a savoir qe par comune assent de tout le mister Johan Cosham de sa bone volentee ad la charge pur lour temps del rent, et ent rent acompt soul, et par celle cause les ditz Johan, William, Richard, et Johan ne sont chargeables de rien d'icel. [f. 33r]

The role of the auditors ('auditours' in both French and English) is apparent in the use of the verb 'allower' and the noun 'allowance'.

Item, païé pur reparacioun del rent, dont fuist pur pavage – v marc3 i d., come piert par evidence moustré et allowé devant les auditours – viii li. xiii d.⁸³ [f. 25v]

Item, ils demandent allowance q'ils ont paie3 pur rep[ar]aciouns de les rentes del mistere par temps de l'acompt – iiiii li. v s. iiiii d.⁸⁴ [f. 77r]

The words 'allow' and 'allowance' can be used with the same ultimate meaning but notably different reference: the wardens may ask either for an expense already paid out to be allowed, authorised, accepted as valid: this as in the two examples above, or they may ask for monies due but not received to be 'written off':

Alowance: Item, ils demandent pur estre alowé d'argent deliveré a Thomas Wytelbery par Emond Redeknape pur son chaperon, le quele ne fuit deliveré a eux – xii s. iiiii d. [f. 177r]

Allowances: First, þe said acomptauntz asken to be allowed of mony pardoned to Thomas Niche for a fyne of x li. of olde – v li. [f. 208v]

Thomas Niche's fine of £10 had been entered under the charge, i.e. receipts section, because although he had not paid up he was supposed to have done and the wardens have the burden of responsibility for collecting it. Now, however, they give the information that Thomas Niche has been let off, his fine remitted, and they beg to be allowed to remove this sum from their accounts. Similarly,

83 'Item, paid for repairs to the tenement of which for paving 5 marks 1d. as appears in the evidence shown to and allowed by the auditors – £8 13d.'

84 'Item, they ask for allowance in that they have paid for repairs to the company's tenements during the period of their account – £4 5s. 4d.'

Item, ils demandent allowance pur vacacioun de dyverse mansiouns del rent del mistere deins le temps de l'acompte. [f. 77r]

they ask allowance for vacancies in the letting of rooms in the tenements – the money had previously been entered as received and they now have to obtain permission [allowance] to set aside the shortfall caused by the periods of vacancy in the letting. Here one must remember again the tabular, chequer-board process of accounting. The whole amount of the rent-money expected had previously been placed to their charge; now the amount lost from rooms left vacant and unlet for a period is allowed to be taken from this and placed on the discharge side. Presumably, if the auditors thought the wardens in some way responsible for the loss of income, the amount would not have been authorised/allowed. Retrospective allowance is also possible, and a sum may be ‘allowé arere’:

Item, deliveré a Thomas Lonmore, John Broun, Roger Hyde, et Herry Colet pur distrubuer entour lez bachelers queles chivacheront ovesque Geoffrey Feldyng quant il fuist Maier, pur ceo qe la summa de vi li. fuist coilé le mesme temps de eles, lez queles ne chivacheront, et fuist mys en la conte dez ditz Geoffrey et sez compaignes donques gardeins, et fuist allowé arere en une courte tient le xv^e jour d’ottobre l’an 36. – vi li. [f. 191r]⁸⁵

The verb ‘prover’ is also used to note the auditors approval:

Item, ils demandent allouance pur reparacions faitz en l’an suisdit sur les avantditz tenementz pertenantz al mercerie, come appiert pleinement per l’acompt du dit William Rumbold, prové per nous Johan Sturgeon, William Thornhille, et Thomas Stele – xlv s. i d. [f. 139v]

The account (‘l’acompt’/‘l’acompt’, ‘Thacompte’⁸⁶) may just be said to be made (‘fait’) or ‘rendered’: ‘[il] ent rent acompt’ [f. 33r]; ‘Et ils rendent sur mesme ceste acompte en encrees des avantditz deniers – v li.’ [f. 4v], ‘Item, ils rendent en acompt receu’ [f. 4v]; ‘le tarier de lour acompte rendre’ [f. 50r]. Those rendering an account are termed an ‘acomptaunt’: ‘Item, lez acomptans suisdites ount deliverez ...’ [f. 157r]; ‘First, þ^e said acomptaunt dischargeth hym of mony paid for divers costes ...’; ‘Summa of alle þ^e discharge of þe said acomptaunt’ [RW f. 20v]; ‘The charge of þe said acomptauntz’ [f. 200v]. The word is also used adjectivally: ‘Comence la discharge de les dites maistres accomptauns’ [f. 121v].

Various phrases are used for those who get into arrears (usually over rent): ‘Item, lez ditz gardeins demaundent auxi alowance pur le mesme Thomas Gase d’une somme aderere de sone rente’ [f. 104r]; ‘Item, qe Walter Strete est aderer et doit pur sa liveree de baldekyn ...’ [f. 12v]; ‘Item, Thomas Raftoun doit q’il est a derere de receipt del rent – xxv s. iii d.’ [f. 69r]. The noun used for ‘arrears’ is the same in both French and English: ‘pur arrerage de sa mesoun – xii s. ii d.’ [f. 64r]; ‘Item, ils ount receu des dettes et arrerages de certeyns persones’ [f. 5r]; ‘First, þei charge þem of mony resseyved of olde arrerages as apereth affir – Ciii li. xix s. xi d.’ [RW f. 7r]; ‘Item, we discharge us of þarerage of John Bleseby’ [RW f. 13r].

85 ‘Item, handed over to Thomas Lonmore, John Brown, Roger Hyde, and Harry Colet, to be distributed amongst the bachelors who rode in procession with Geoffrey Fielding when he was Mayor, because the sum of £6 was collected at that time from those who did not ride in the procession, and it was put into the account of the said Geoffrey and his fellow-wardens, and it was authorised at a court held on 15 October in the year 36 [Henry VI] – £6’.

86 One finds also the English word ‘reckoning’ very occasionally: ‘Item, païé a le mesme Robert pur scripture de cest acompt en paupir – iii s. iii d. Item, païé au dicte Robert pur entree de le reconynggis del an darrein passé en cest luyvre et pur entree de cest aune en le mesme luyvre – vi s. viii d.’ [f. 146v]; ‘Item, païé a Robert Bale, scryvener, pur scripture del reconyng’ [f. 148v].

Arrears of course lead to debts, and the most noteworthy point about the linguistic usage is that whereas we in modern times would say that we were handing over a debt, and this may be said:

Et outre ceo ils ont delyvrez de veille dette accru devant lour temps. [f. 73v]

by far the more common usage is to say that the person is handed over, the debtor:

Primerement, ils se chargent ové les deniers et dettours delivrez a eux par lour predecessours, come piert en lour acompte proscheyn devant escripte, c'est assavoir – lxxiii li. iii s. x d. [f. 26v];

Item, donerent outre en dettours qe devoient pur rent de lour temps [f. 26r];

La somme total de lour charge en argent sek et dettours amont net come piert [f. 41r];

Item, ils ount deliveré dettour Walter Strete, qi doit pur sa livréé [f. 14r];

Item, ils ount livrez dettours lez executours de Johan Organ [f. 14r];

or, in the slightly different phrasing:

Item, ils ont receu de Richard Hille, delyvré a eux pur un dettour entre autres, come piert en le darreyn accompte – ii s. iiiii d. [f. 46v]

The same wording appears in the English sections:

First, þe said acomptauntz charge þem of mony resseyved ... Item, of divers dettours goven up by þem ... – xiii li. vii s. ix d. [f. 200v];

Item, delivered in dettours, as apereth aftir – C ii li. vii s. x d. [f. 205v];

Item, in divers dettours þ^e tyme of John Bleseby, rentgaderer – Cxlvii li. vii s. iiiii d. ob. [RW f. 39r]

Debtors may be 'doné', 'goven up' or 'livrez', 'delyvré', 'delivered', and the interesting verb 'suisdoner' is also found:

Item, ils sont chargés en argent resseux de Johan Abbot qe fuiste a eux suisdoné pur un detoure per les suisdites veiles gardeynes – xxx s. [f. 118v]

En primez, ressu de John Colet, mercier, en plein payment de ii obligations duez par luy a la compagnie del mercerie, et par lez darrein wardeins William Cantelowe et sez companyes a nous suisdonez et delivrez, come apiert le Ciiii^{xx} iiiii ff. devant – xx li. [f. 188r]

The prefix has the sense of 'up' or 'over' and one might compare it to the verb 'suisrendre' (also spelt in Anglo-French as 'suisrendre', 'suzrendre', and 'surrendre') meaning 'to hand over' or 'surrender'.

At the end of the account a balance is arrived at, a remainder or 'remaynt' or more commonly a 'rest' or 'arest' (both in English and French) to be handed on to the new set of wardens, e.g. 'Rest dewe to the mercery ...' [f. 174v]; 'Item, of Roger Midelmore for th'arest of a condite gadered by ... – xxiiij s. x d.' [f. 201v]; in French one more often finds a verbal usage: 'Si rest en argent seek al dit mistier' [f. 107v]; 'Et ency reest par l'acompte en lour mains' [f. 39r]; 'Ensy rest en argent par cest acompte ... Ensy rest due a la mercery – xxii li. x s. xi d.' [f. 177v].

The sum given can then be termed as a 'net' figure, the adverbial usage being most common:

La somme total de lour charge en argent sek et dettours amont net come piert – [f. 41r]

Summa totalis de lour charge amont net come piert – Clxxviii li. xiii s. viii d. [f. 43r]

Et ainsi remainent net en lour mains – iiiii^{xx} v li. xvii s. vii d. ob. [f. 140r]

More commonly used is a form of ‘cler’:

Summa totalis receu en clere amont come piert – Ciiii^{xx} xviii li. ix s. viii d. ob. [f. 44v]

So þe resseit is clerely of þe lyvelood – CCxvi li. xiiii s. viii d. [RW f. 5r]

And so þere remayneth clere þe som of – Ciiii^{xx}vii li. x s. ix d. ob. [f. 161v]

La somme clerement receu [f. 4v]

Any potential monies not received and removed from the responsibility of the wardens may have a note against them to say ‘voide’, or a whole normally regular section may be declared ‘voide’, for example the second year of livery admission fees in 1400–01:

Pur l’an seconde, nichil:

Et fait a remembrier qe la receyt de l’an seconde est voide pur la cause expressé en l’acompt proschein devant. [f. 31v]

Debts also may be declared irrecoverable, and thus written off: ‘Dette perdu et voidé hors l’acompt par avys’ [f. 29r], where the word ‘hors’ ‘out of’ may be seen as implying removal not just from the books but from the chequer-board; one may compare the Latin used by a later scribe:

Memorandum de Johan Brodisworthe quia ponitur extra computum ubi prius scribitur [f. 123v]

Finally, one notes a word used in a technical sense throughout the accounts and in both French and English: ‘forein’ (in a variety of spellings). It may be attached to receipts: ‘forein receyt’ or more commonly to expenditure ‘Foreyn costages et expenses’, ‘Forein costes pur necessities’ and in the English sections: ‘Foreyne espenses’, ‘Summa of forein expenses – xxvii s. viii d. ob.’. Its sense is that of being outside the accepted internal ‘domestic’ expenses of the mistery (regular salaries, quit-rents, and alms-payments for instance), and such payments would always have needed individual approval from the auditors (whereas the latters’ task in regard to quit-rents and alms payments was to ensure they had been correctly paid, not to give approval that they should be paid at all).

Many other words and phrases used in the Mercers’ accounts will be of interest to linguists and to lexicographers. It is beyond the scope of this introduction to examine in full detail all the financial and accounting vocabulary found here, but the above notes may, it is hoped, serve to elucidate the more unusual words, many of which are not readily findable, in the senses in which they are used here, in even the best of dictionaries.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ It may be relevant to note that it was equally not easy to track journals dealing with accounting and its history, and they are absent from many major libraries, this being in particular true of foreign journals, even English language ones, e.g. Australian and American. I am most grateful for having been accorded access to the Library of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, through the good offices of John Lethbridge.

Editorial Method

The basic text being edited here is the book of Wardens' Accounts containing the account for 1347–48, and then the accounts from 1390 to 1464, and which has a number of other copied texts inserted on separate leaves bound in at the front of the book and on some sheets included at the end of it. The text of the Renter Wardens' account book has only been taken up to the year 1464, since the reasons for including this were the impossibility of presenting an accurate picture of the Mercers' accounts without it, given that some classes of income and expenditure are moved entirely to the latter book (income from rental properties, expenditure on alms payments, some salaries and quit-rents) and that monies are transferred at times from one account to the other and cross-references are made in the texts. The approach is therefore chronological, and the renter wardens' accounts have been 'interleaved' with the Hall accounts at an appropriate corresponding point in time. The heading to each account gives not only the year date but also the precise period, Midsummer to Midsummer for the Hall accounts, and Easter to Easter for the majority of the Renter Wardens' accounts, although a few of the earlier accounts are dated as from one Michaelmas to the next. Since the accounting years do not correspond exactly, a decision had to be taken as to which account should be presented first, and here chronology plays a part but it has been thought usually more logical to place the Renter Warden's account after that of the main Hall account, certainly so from the period when the fourth-named warden each year takes on the post of Renter Warden.⁸⁸ As described above (pp. 17–18) the dates of a few of the early property accounts are uncertain to us today and were uncertain to the scribe writing them out in the fifteenth century. The most probable datings and placings have been chosen in this edition, all uncertainties have been signalled, and scholars using these texts should remember to beware and not base any arguments upon these dates without corroboration. Indeed, it is to be hoped that others may find evidence which would confirm or disprove the datings allocated here.

The additional early texts in the preliminary pages of the Hall account book have been inserted chronologically, and thus we start with the list of quit-rents for 1344.⁸⁹ The 1347 ordinances follow, then the account for 1347–48, and interleaved next are the ordinances of 1376 (copied in 1404). The 1404–05 ordinance found on f. A4r is presented at the end of the account for that year, and the 1407–08 ordinances written on ff. A4v–A5v are similarly inserted at the appropriate point. The oaths found in these preliminary pages are in a later hand, do not by their nature fit into a chronological sequence and they have thus been placed in a separate appendix. For the additional texts at the end of the book, on ff. 210v and 211r–212r, most though not all of which concern the small beam, consisting of relevant texts of 1291 and 1526, then a series of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century notes, the decision was taken to leave these where they are, that is to present them in the edition at the end of the accounts. Apart from the main material in the Renter Wardens' account book, the preliminary pages contain a highly interesting rental, which is dated, but it was nevertheless decided that the best place to present this was in a separate appendix again.

The conventions used for editing are as follows: The text is reproduced exactly except that, in accordance with standard modern editorial practice, 'u' and 'v', 'i' and 'j' have been differentiated according to pronunciation for the text in all three languages used – Anglo-French (Anglo-Norman), Latin, and Middle English. In the French text, the acute and the cedilla accents have been used in order to mark pronunciation differences. Occasional difficulties

⁸⁸ The writing-up of all these accounts at a time much later than the period to which they refer was also a factor borne in mind. See above, pp. 17–18.

⁸⁹ See above, pp. 3–4, for discussion of its importance.

arise over the use of an acute accent, and editorial decisions have been taken on the basis of comparable phrases if such exist, and in cases of doubt the accent has not been used. The use of capital letters at the beginning of words has been largely standardised to modern usage: the lack of capitals on for example surnames or the fairly frequent use of some capitals in positions not used today may be noted, and are typical of English manuscripts of this time (whether French, English, or Latin). Punctuation has been added of full stops, commas, colons, and the occasional semi-colon, as also of the apostrophe, in accordance with modern usage, and the dash has been used in a standard manner before a given sum of money, both in lists:

De Thomas Seccheford –	xii d.
De Richard Herry –	xii d.

and at the end of a descriptive phrase or sentence:

Item, ils soy chargent de une autre somme devisee par Johan More (qe dieux assoille) pur mesme la cause, vidz. – xl s.

and for totals:

Summa totalis de lour charge amont net – CC^lxvii li. vi s. vi d. ob.

The text itself varies, sometimes using a drawn line (a dash), sometimes leaving a gap in the line, sometimes putting a point, sometimes having no separation. Editorial consistency makes for a much clearer modern text, and neither adds nor subtracts anything from the meaning. Any editorial insertion or emendation is clearly indicated by the use of square brackets, and any words rejected as clearly erroneous are given in footnotes. Very few such emendations have been made, and only in cases where a scribal copying error seems certain. Any text deleted or scored out in the text but which seemed to be worth preserving has either been placed in round brackets, with an explanatory footnote, or has been placed directly in a footnote. The underlining of some sums of money used by William Piryman (see above, p. 12) has not been reproduced in this edition (but is noted), as it was thought too distracting to the eye in the very different context of a printed text, because it is not fully consistent, and because a lack of strict adherence to the manuscript's usage can in this case lead to no error.

Abbreviations in all three languages are expanded in accordance with the usual spelling of the scribe when the word is found in full; the expansions are indicated by italics; the expansions can differ, since there are over a long period of time a large number of scribes whose verbal practices differ; not infrequently it is impossible to find a full form of a word as written by a particular scribe, and thus general common practice of the time has been the guide followed. It is not however always easy to decide for instance whether to expand the 'p' with a line through it as 'par' or 'per', but the use of italics provides full information for linguists. In the French and Latin text, the abbreviated 'et' is rendered thus and placed in italics. In the English text, an ampersand ('&') is used. English scribes of the fourteenth and particularly the fifteenth centuries tend to use suspension lines as decoration as well as to indicate a missing letter or letters; at times it may not be easy to decide, but for most scribes examination of their writing leads one rather to think that if an expansion is possible then this was meant, and it is thus rendered, using italics as usual to indicate this; but one may note that for instance the two scribes writing ff. 112v–115r and 115v–118r both use extra small flourish lines on some last letters of a word that appear to be merely decorative. One often has a choice between 'oun/oun' and 'one'; general common practice must be the guide in cases where it is always found abbreviated, and I have tried to be consistent (even if the scribes might not have been!). In

Middle English one finds plural forms of nouns in '-es' and as often in '-is', scribes using both indiscriminately it may seem; when expanding abbreviated plurals (where a word ends in a suspension mark) it is not therefore always easy to choose between these. In a few cases a word has been left unexpanded, with an apostrophe to mark a contraction or suspension sign, e.g. 'London'', where it seems impossible to know whether the scribe would have written in full 'Londoniensis', 'Londoniarum', or a variety of other forms, and where it may even be thought uncertain whether the scribe himself would have been sure how to expand the word. Names in lists where the basic language is Anglo-French are nevertheless not infrequently written with the abbreviations for the Latin form of a name; lists may contain some names in French or English form, others in Latin form; some names are abbreviated to a form that might be either French or Latin (e.g. Joh') and these have been expanded according to the form of nearby names, although at times this is not easy because of the mixture of forms. In the French text, 'John' with a line through the 'h' is rendered as 'Johan', while in English it is rendered as 'John'.

A further minor point is that the lists of money received are very often in the text listed with the names of the men who have paid preceded by an ornate, formalised capital 'D' as a standard abbreviation for 'de' = 'from'. Very occasionally (e.g. once on f. 2v, once on f. 115r) a small 'e' follows, i.e. 'De' is written in full. One scribe, who wrote just the one year's account on ff. 108r–110r, has from f. 108v onwards misinterpreted the abbreviation as a paraph sign, and this has been ignored in the edition. For the entries of all other scribes who use this 'De', the edition of the text has preserved the capital with 'De' thus, but on the parallel translation side it has been considered that lower case 'f' for 'from' looks and reads better in the context of a translation into modern form.

Word divisions are, as usual, an occasional problem. When a scribe has either divided a word or combined two together in a way inconsistent with general usage these occurrences have been corrected silently.

The layout of the original has had to be modified, and this has been done while keeping clearly in mind that the edited text must present to the modern reader all the information given in a manner as close to the original as possible. Both account books are of large format and with sufficient width to the pages to allow a set of itemised sums to be bracketed together and a total for these given at the right-hand side. Sometimes the names of two, three, or more apprentices may be bracketed together to one master, the sum paid for all given at the side, and then beyond that a sum total for all the apprentices' fees in the whole list is placed even further to the right at some mid-point of the list. In the Renter Wardens' book, written in Box's careful and small script, the use of bracketed sub-totals and totals can be quite complex again. All the sums, the various sub-totals and totals, are preserved in the edition, but they have been placed underneath a list, with a tab indentation, and spaced in relation to other text so that their relationship is clear. Another modification that needed to be made was that of columns. Some but not all scribes present lists, for example of fines, where the list consists of just a name and an amount of money, in two parallel columns, the total sum for all being placed variously. Again, the pages of this modern edition are not wide enough to allow this to be reproduced and the list is just given in sequence, with a footnote if there is any aspect of the columnar setting that should be noted.

Two further particular points need to be made about how the layout of the original has been modified in this edition. The first concerns sub-headings which in the manuscript are very often placed in the left hand margin. In the edition, these have been placed just above the relevant paragraph, aligned to the left. The other concerns page headings. In the manuscript, on some pages, but by no means all, a sort of 'running head' is provided, giving the year of the account, or the names of the wardens that year, occasionally the name of the Mayor of

London that year, and, in one section of the book, an indication if this is a continuation of the 'Charge' or the 'Discharge' part of the account, or a continuation of some sub-section. These are finding aids that work in the manuscript but cannot be reproduced usefully here in that they do not in the modern edition fall at the top of pages. One needs only to look at the 1936 edition of the *Acts of Court 1453–1527*, which reproduces page headings of dates even if they then appear mid-text in the edition (see e.g. pp. 44, 83, 175, 399) and to consider the confusions about datings of entries there that have, at least in part, arisen due to misunderstandings from the printed text of the function of these dates (in addition to some being erroneous),⁹⁰ in order to appreciate that such page headings serve no useful function in a modern edition. There are also cases, e.g. at the top of f. 70r, where such a heading is erroneous (it reads 'Unqore de compaignouns de lour an seconde' whereas the sums listed on that page are for the first not the second year of admission fees). In all cases where extra information is conveyed in such a heading, this has been noted in a footnote. If the information they provide is simply a repetition of information already given in the text, then they have not been reproduced. They make sense in the manuscript as guides to readers to find their way, but since they do not, in this edition, occur at the tops of pages, they serve no purpose, give no new information, and indeed clutter the text in a potentially confusing way. Any heading that is relevant has been retained, either in the text or by a footnote. Anyone studying layout methods will need to consult the manuscript in any case, although I have tried to give as much information about this here as is possible.

The Translation

The facing-page parallel text translation of the text into modern English is provided for those whose knowledge of Anglo-French and Latin may be insufficient and for whom the Middle English text could also prove difficult to comprehend; the fifteenth-century language is indeed far removed from that of the twenty-first century. The aim has been to provide a text that reads fluently, is immediately comprehensible to a modern reader, which avoids the ambiguities inherent in any use of archaic language or literal transposition of words, and yet which keeps as closely as possible to the original, neither omitting any detail nor adding more than is in the text. The original is there on the facing page for all verification to be made by those who do understand the medieval languages, but the modern English text will surely make these records available to and usable by a very much wider range of historians and scholars, as well as to non-specialists in the field.

Ambiguities of meaning have been signalled by footnotes giving a possible alternative meaning, and footnotes have also been used to explain the fairly large number of words unlikely to be known by the general, non-specialist reader. Liturgical vestments such as 'fanons', materials such as 'murrey' or 'baudekin', wood for building called 'estrich board', the measure of the 'toise', all such as these have been given definitions, very often taken from the *OED* or *MED*. I have preferred to err on the side of providing too many definitions rather than too few, hoping to spare some of those who use this edition from possibly tedious recourse to specialist dictionaries.

Some standard decisions have been taken as follows:

DATES: while year dates may be given in Anno Domini figures, it is much more frequent to find regnal years used. These may appear as for instance 'l'an primere del regne le Roy Henry vi^e

⁹⁰ See Sutton and Hammond, 'The Problems of Dating'.

puis le conquest d'Engleterre', and it has not been thought necessary for the translation to mention the Conquest, the form 'the year 1 Henry VI' being sufficient. Fairly often the name of the reigning king is omitted, and one finds for example 'le xxvi^e jour d'aprilie l'an xxxvi^e', 'Paske l'an iiii^{te} suisdit', 'p^e xxx^{ti} daie of Juylle anno xxxvii^o', or 'at Ester anno iii^o'. Here the translation usually gives the King's name in brackets, thus 'the year 26 [Henry VI]', or 'at Easter in the year 3 [Edward IV]'. These dates could have been given as A.D. dates instead in the translation, but the decision was taken to keep to the usage of the original text but to use marginal headings and running heads at the tops of pages to allow modern readers to see the year dates at a glance.

NAMES: both first names and in particular surnames are found in a wide variety of spellings in the text. The translation gives all first names in a usually accepted modern form. All variations in the spelling of surnames in the text are noted in the Name Index, but one form only is used in the translation. This may be a more commonly found form, e.g. Piers Atherton rather than Althertoun; or may be the modern form of a place name, e.g. Clitheroe rather than Glyderowe, or Greenwich rather than Grenewych; or it may be the name by which some famous people are generally known today, e.g. Richard Whittington (not Whetyngtoun), Sir William Eastfield (not Estfeld) or John Fortescue (not Fortescu). Any form chosen as both headword in the Index and that used in the translation, and which is not found in that particular form in the text is placed in square brackets in the Name Index. Cross references are given only in cases where this was deemed necessary, e.g. from Givayn to Geveyn, from Stile to Steele, from Stokyn to Stockton, but not from Rauson to Rawson, nor from Holond to Holland.

For the VOCABULARY OF ACCOUNTING, fuller explanations are given above, pp. 18–20 and 23–9. Exact equivalents cannot be found in modern English for the terms used in medieval accounting, and the standard recurring words have been dealt with as follows:

'CHARGE' as the heading to the first section of an account has been rendered as 'Receipts' in the translation. This is not always an exact term, since some monies were not in fact received, but the use of 'charge' in modern English would have been open to misinterpretation by a casual user of this book, while also being totally defunct in the medieval sense.

'DISCHARGE' as the heading to the second section of an account has been rendered as 'Disbursements' as being a nearer equivalent than 'expenses' or 'expenditure' since again not all sums listed are those of actual cash paid out.

The reflexive verbs 'SE CHARGER' and 'SE DISCHARGER' have both been rendered as 'to declare', e.g. 'ils soy chargent d'une somme d'argent delyvré a eux' – 'they declare a sum of money handed over to them' [f. 67r]; 'ils soy dischargent q'ils out payé' – 'they declare that they have paid' [f. 41v]. Clearly one could not translate literally here ('they charge themselves') and while 'declare' is a long way linguistically from the original text it does convey in full the sense of what the wardens are saying.

'FOREIN' as in 'forein receipt' or 'forein expenses' has been rendered as 'extrinsic' rather than 'forinsec' or 'forinsecal', nearer perhaps linguistically but obsolete or almost so.

An 'ACCOUNTANT' in these texts is certainly not the modern 'accountant' but is the person or persons who are rendering an account. A rather long-winded phrase such as 'those rendering

this account' has at times been used, but at other times, when the context is fully clear and indeed repetitive, a simple 'he' or 'they' has been thought sufficient, e.g. 'First, þ^e said acomptaunt dischargeth hym of mony paied for divers fees, first to hymself – xx s.' – 'Firstly, he declares money paid for various fees, and firstly to himself – 20s.' [RW f. 39r]. At other times the bracketed use of a name has been chosen as the best option, e.g. 'Item, for mony paied to John Midelton, Thomas Steelle, Richaert Nedam, & þ^e said acomptaunt' – 'Item, money paid to John Middleton, Thomas Steelle, Richard Nedam, and [John Warde]' [RW f. 21v], or alternatively, if clear in context as 'himself', e.g. 'þat is to sey William Cantelowe, knyght, John Reyneken, Thomas Niche, & þ^e said acomptaunt' – 'i.e. to William Cantelowe, knight, John Rankyn, Thomas Nyche, and himself' [RW f. 39r].

'ARGENT SEK' has been rendered as 'ready money'. It is used most when declaring the monies handed from one set of wardens to the next, and often in contradistinction to debts, which are also handed over as a cash sum declared (but not in actual cash). It should be remembered that, in the early years at least, and until well into the fifteenth century, the accounting demanded the production of actual cash in hand, and was not just a book-keeping exercise: 'Summa totalis qe remaynt de cler – CCClxxi li. ix s. ix d. ob. q^a. La quele somme les gardeins avant nomez ount deliveré et mys sur une table devant touz les bones gentz de la mercerie a lour assemblee avantdite' – 'The which sum the abovenamed wardens produced and placed on a table before all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery at their aforesaid assembly' [f. 5]. The custom was further to divide the balance handed over into four equal parts: 'et par comune assent de la dite mercerie ount delivré a chescun d'eux – lxvi s. viii d. Summa – xiii li. vi s. viii d.' – 'and with the communal agreement of the said mistery they handed over to each of them – 66s. 8d. Total – £13 6s. 8d.' [f. 5v].⁹¹ However, in 1434 for example one must note that they declare as 'l'argent seek qe remaynt en lour mayns' the sum of £65 5d. which has just above been defined as in part consisting of debts which is cash they clearly do not have in hand.

Apart from the technical accounting vocabulary, a few other words occurring regularly need perhaps some comment on the way they have been translated:

'Le box del mercery', 'þe boxe' (found also spelt as 'buiste' etc.) could have been rendered as 'the box' or 'the common box' but this seems to have a distinctly archaic flavour and the choice was made to translate as 'the communal funds'.

'CONDUIT' (spelt also in these accounts as 'conduyt', 'condyt', 'condyte', 'condite', 'coundyght', 'condyght', 'condythe', 'condyth' and 'conduct', and also as 'cundith' in the *Acts of Court*) is a word that can be used to refer to a 'conduct' or convoy sailing with the ships carrying merchandise to and from the Netherlands (or elsewhere), to protect and safeguard them, and may also be used to refer to the levy made to pay for these. In these accounts, it is the latter use that is found, and it has been rendered in the translation as 'conduct-levy'. The earliest mention comes in the account for 1430–31:

Item, ils demaundent allowaunce d'une prest a Johan Waren a sone alier vers Brugges per avys de tout la compaignie, summa x li.
Et cest sera païé a le proschein condyt per avys del compaignie. [f. 107r]

⁹¹ One may note further here how it is the English 'mark' which is being used as the unit, even if the sums are expressed differently.

[Item, they ask for allowance for an advance made to John Wareyn when he left for Bruges, in consultation with the whole company, total – £10
And this will be paid at the next conduct-levy, by the decision of the company.]

The phrasing makes it clear that this is not a new departure, as does the reference in the next year's account:

Item, ils soy chargent q'ils ount ressu de William Dautre xxiiii septembre anno x^o Regis Henr[i]cy viⁱ de ce qe le dit Dautre ad reçu de Johan Rothe de conduyt du temps passé – v li. [f. 108v]

[Item, they declare receipt from William Dawtre on 24 September 10 Henry VI [1431], from what the said Dawtre had received from John Rothe from a conduct-levy of some time ago – £5]

(It is very likely that it was in his capacity as warden (1429–30) that Dawtre was in receipt of this money.) It is most commonly found here as a remainder or balance left over on a levy, e.g.

ils ount ressu per restez de diverses condites [f. 113v]

un arrest d'un condythe [f. 141v]

parest of a condite [f. 201v]

and we find also 'Item, receyved in money of conductes – viii li.' [f. 157v]. There were 'wardens' of the conduct-levies:

Item, lez acomptans suisdictees ount deliverez a lez gardeins de la rest de conduytes come appiert per l'acompt de lez gardeins de lez ditz conduytes, summa – viii li. ii d. [f. 157r]

and 'gatherers' or 'collectors' of them:

Be it remembred for as moch as that grete dysacord & varyans fell bytwene the gaderers of the condythis of the mercery and the wardeyns of the fysschemongers ... [f. 167r]

The Acts of Court provide us with a great deal of further information about the convoys, the levies made to pay for them, the men appointed to collect the monies, the auditing of the latters' receipts, and also the vocabulary associated. Here we find the word used to refer both to the actual conduct or convoy:

Also where as certen parsones appoynters be gon to Gravesende to se that the Shippes haue theire complement and also furnysshed with men, with vitaill, takkle & ablementes of Warre, lyke & accordyng to the Charter partie. Where & yf the said appoynters by reason of any parfitt knowlege or understandyng of Ennemyes now beying or like for to be in the waye ieopardous for oure shippes & that they shall nede to haue a Conduit ... [p. 195]

They consydering for the defence and sure conduct of oure shippes from this present Pasche Marte [p. 542]

for Cundyth to be had for oure Seeland flete sauely to be conveyde unto the Ryver of Temmes [p. 553]

the charge for Cundith of the Shippes [p. 644]⁹²

92 Note also the verbal usage in e.g. 'that the same parsones shall appoynte to my lorde admyrall suche a rewarde as they shall seme best, aswell for suche pleasure as he hath done to us in conductyng of oure shippes from and to the martes in tymes past, as for lyke pleasure, whiche he may do to this said Compney in tyme to com' [*Acts of Court*, p. 419].

and to the charges levied to pay for this, e.g. '... unto that the Conduit be sett & men appoynted to receyve it' [p. 202]. Often though this is called 'conduit mony', e.g.

for setting and paying of Conduit mony. [p. 204]

for reformation & cessyng of rates of Conduit mony. [p. 206]

The men appointed to collect the money were termed 'cundutours', 'cunduitors', 'cunduitours': 'Also for thappoyntment of Shippes, for Conduitours ...' [p. 199],⁹³ and their duties of setting the rates, collecting the monies, keeping and rendering accounts, keeping records of debtors, liaising with the customs officials and with the King's highest advisors can be tracked through these records, many references indicating the considerable degree of responsibility involved:

Also agreed that the Cunduitours shall se & understond whether the shippes appoynted haue convenyent ladyng or not, to thentent yf recompens therfore shulde be made, if defaute of suche resonable ladyng be founde after the discrecion of the said apoynters. For the whiche it is ordeyned that they shall desyre my lorde Tresorer not to suffer any goodes be entred & taken up oute of any Crayour or other shippe oute of thapoyntment unto that the Conduit be sett & men appoynted to receyue it. And that the said Cunduitours shall also shew unto my lorde Tresorer the grete charges of Costes in Conduit and otherwise nowe at this tyme had, requyryng hym to shewe it unto the Kynges grace, And to praye that we may haue the same or parte therof allowed of oure Custume &c. [p. 202]

The auditors had also a great responsibility and we hear of their being appointed in October 1489:

Where as the parsones of & for this last pasche & Synkson marte Cundutours haue brought yn their bokes of rekonyng for the Cunduit mony by them here receyued &c. And for thoursight of the said bokes as Auditours be nowe named & appoynted theis v parsones next ensuyng' [p. 194]⁹⁴

Those interested further in the historical importance of these 'conduits' for ensuring safe transport of merchandise will find the subject examined and described by Anne Sutton in her recent book.⁹⁵

'DETTOUR': as noted above, p. 28, the text not infrequently refers to the handing over of 'debtors', the specific persons sometimes named. In some contexts no problem arises from a straight translation of 'dettour' as 'debtor' but at others the result sounds decidedly odd to modern ears and for instance 'Item, þe said John Marchalle hath delivered ovir in detours ... – xv li. v s. ix d. ob.' has been translated as 'Item, the said John Marchall has handed over in debts ... – £15 5s. 9½d.' [f. 194v].

'FIN/FYNE': this word can either mean a 'fine', that is a sum paid out as a penalty, or a 'fee', that is a charge made for example for admission to the freedom or livery, or for an exemption in advance. It will therefore be found translated sometimes as 'fee' and sometimes as 'fine' and in cases where insufficient information is available, e.g. 'Fyns faitz' or 'Item, ils ont receu de Johan Prynce pur un fyn', then the two alternatives are given as e.g. 'Fines and fees' or 'for a fine/fee'.

⁹³ It may be noted that the 'appointers' of ships were those in charge of the equipping of ships, and that occasionally they were placed also in charge of these levies: 'that all suche parsones as than for the said shippes ordeyned & assigned for apoynters shuld be also Cunduitors' [*Acts of Court*, p. 199].

⁹⁴ See also the very explicit directions on p. 208.

⁹⁵ Sutton, *The Mercery*, pp. 307–10 and further *via* her Index under 'Adventurers'.

‘FRATERNITY’: the mercers do use this word to refer to themselves, and also the equivalent word ‘brotherhood’:

Item, pur le dirige et messe de requiem pur le fraternyté del mercerie – x s. [f. 188r]

[Item, for the Office of the Dead and the requiem mass for the mercers’ fraternity – 10s.]

Item, paid to the Master of Seynt Thomas of Acres for the dirige of the brotherhed of the mercerye – x s. [f. 170v]

The translation therefore of an entry such as: ‘Item, for þ^e dirige of þ^e brederen of þ^e mercerie holde at S. Thomas of Acres – x s.’ [RW f. 18r] can be phrased as ‘Item, for the Office of the Dead of the mercers’ fraternity held at St Thomas of Acon – 10s.’. The souls of women, it may be noted, were prayed for equally as ‘sisters’ of the mercers’ mistery:

Payed to the Mayster of Saint Thomas and his bretheryn the v day of July for dyrige of the brothered and systers of the mercery – x s. [f. 166v]

The ‘LYVELOOD’ or ‘LIVELIHOOD’ of the mistery: the word is used in the sense of ‘property yielding an income’ (see *MED* and *OED*) and has had to be translated in two ways because of the modern usage of the Mercers’ Company itself. One can and does refer to ‘the Whittington estate’ or ‘the Eastfield estate’ but one does not refer to ‘the Mercers’ Company estate’ or ‘mercery estate’ and thus here we refer to ‘the mistery’s properties’ or to ‘property purchased by the mercers’ mistery’, whereas elsewhere we refer to ‘the estate granted and given by Richard Whittington’ or ‘the estate donated by Sir William Eastfield’.

‘La MERCERIE’: in modern English the word ‘MERCERY’ can still be found, often used attributively as ‘mercery-wares’ to mean the goods sold by mercers, and in historical terms it can be used to refer to the area of the City of London which in the Middle Ages was where a very large number of mercers lived, worked, and carried on their trade.⁹⁶ In medieval times ‘la mercerie’ or ‘the mercery’ was used also to refer to what we would now call ‘the Mercers’ Company’ and it is often found in phrases such as ‘mestres de la mercerye’ or ‘gardeins del mistier del mercery’. Anne Sutton has used the word both in the title to her recent book, *The Mercery of London: Trade, Goods and People, 1130–1578*, and throughout the book at various times in each of the possible meanings, but for the translation of this edition of the text it was decided to avoid this and to render it as ‘mercery’ if goods or wares are being referred to, but as ‘the mercers’ mistery’ or just as ‘the mistery’ if clear in context and in repetitive usage in a section.

‘MESTRES’ – ‘masters’ is used in the 1347–48 and the 1376 records to denote the four wardens ‘les quatre mestres’, and then for a few years from 1390–91 onwards interchangeably with ‘gardeins’ in this meaning. It can of course also have the meaning of ‘master’ as in the master of an apprentice or as one ‘who is qualified by training and experience to teach apprentices and to carry on his trade on his own account’ (*OED*), but in the early years it is found clearly referring to the four wardens, and it is hard to see any difference in usage in a sentence such as ‘les avantditz veiles mestres choiserent gardeyns pur l’an avenir’ [f. 26r].⁹⁷ It must be stressed that what is not found in these texts is any use of the word ‘mestre’ to denote a ‘Master’ or ‘Prime Warden’ of the Mercers. All four of the wardens can be named ‘masters’ and in the

⁹⁶ See Sutton, *The Mercery*, pp. 16–18 and further, *via* her Index.

⁹⁷ Later, we find also the word ‘custoses’ in regular use in the English section to denote the ‘wardens’.

early years responsibility was shared entirely equally between them, and although a ranking system does develop, at no point during this period is there any talk of a 'Master' having superior status to the other wardens.

We may take a short excursus here to examine a little further two developments that took place gradually before being enshrined in both regular practice and defined rulings. It is not until far into the fifteenth century that 'the most senior warden was usually an alderman'⁹⁸ and this did not apply at all earlier, and for many years only irregularly and as if by chance (the status of alderman conferring seniority in itself and thus leading to that warden being both listed first and seen as the senior). The first mention of a warden being an alderman occurs on f. 138v, where 'Henry Frowyk, alderman' is listed as first warden for 1441–42. For the next few years, 1442–43 – 1445–46, the first named warden is each time stated to be an alderman (and from the information available it seems none of the other wardens were during their period of office). There is then no mention until 1458–59, where Ralph Verney, first named warden, is stated to be an alderman, and after that there is again no mention until 1462–63, John Stockton, alderman, being first-named warden. The first-named warden for the following year, 1463–64, was an alderman, but the text does not give this information. It is not until the later ordinance written up on f. 16 of the *Book of Ordinances* that any ruling is found about this matter. One may note in passing that 'alderman' could at this date be used to mean 'the headman, ruler, governor, or warden of a guild' (see *OED*) and one must beware of attributing the later ruling to any earlier date.⁹⁹

Similarly, the duties of second, third, and fourth wardens are demonstrably not clearly defined until later in the fifteenth century, and for the latter two we find the rulings first in the *Book of Ordinances*:

Also, it is ordeyned and stablissid that hereaftir, for þe goode polletike rule and welefare of the Mercerie, that aftir the oolde custome of þe eleccion of the custoses for the yere, that the persone chosen and named for the iii^{de} custose shall have þe charge, the rule, and oversyght of alle suche goodis, mynumentis and bokes as be withynne þe halle of the mistere of þe mercere, with alle maner of writinges and acomptes longyng to þe hole bodie of the same ...

And þe iiij^{the} custose soo chosen shalle have in his charge and rule the gydeng, rekenyng, and oversichte of þe lyveloode. And to receyve of þe rentegaderer the money by hym receyved of þe tenauntis. And also to oversee the reparaciouns, vacaciouns, and þe werkemen of þe same, togedre with þe paymente. And also wekely to paye þe pore menne of þe colage at þeire halle. ... [ff. 2r–2v]

and then under a date of 1465 in the *Acts of Court* where the 'writings' for which the third warden is responsible are further defined:

... alle maner writynges and acomptes, aswell tho[s] that longen to the hole body of the felishipp as thoos that be and shalbe brought yn by the rule of the Wardens or the felyshipp for the weall of any membre of the same, also for to entre the ordenances made in his tyme and other maters which must remean in the house as mater of recorde, with all other charges & attendauce to hym belongyng of tyme passed accustomed. [p. 282]

while for the fourth warden the additional note is made that the rent-collector should bring in money 'wekely', and that monies for works and workmen are also to be paid weekly. No

⁹⁸ Sutton, *The Mercery*, p. 172.

⁹⁹ See e.g. Imray, 'Les bones gentes', p. 178; Sutton, *The Mercery*, p. 172. Sutton, *The Mercery*, pp. 561–4, prints the text of the 1560s rulings on the elections of the Master and other three wardens.

mention is made of any specific duties of the first and second wardens, but a ranking order is clearly in place, even if the word 'Master' is never used.

It is not easy to know at what point the third warden's responsibilities were regularly taken on as defined here, but for the fourth warden we have proof that it was not until 1455–56. We can trace matters, though with great gaps, from an entry in 1405–06:

Item, ils ont receu de Laurence Hampton et ses compaignouns des profites de le rente del mistere levee en lour temps – x li. vi s. ix d. [f. 42v]

Hampton was fourth-named warden the previous year, and thus one might think the system in place, while noting that, nevertheless, his financial responsibility is accounted as one shared with the other wardens of that year. However, in 1437–38 the rent-collector's account has been presented to the second-named warden, Thomas Onehand:

come appert per l'acompte de William Haxay resseu et prové per moy Thomas Onhande, gardian pur l'an del dite mercery, le xxix jour de juille [f. 130r]

and the same occurs the following year:

Item, ils demaundout [allouaunce] pur les reparacions faites en le mesme an suer les tenementes pertenautes a le mercery del Pye come appert playnement per le accompte de William Rumbold prové per moy Hugh Wyche le xxx jour de julle – summa – vii li. xx d. ob. [f. 133v]

and again the next:

come appiert pleinement per l'accompt du dit William Rumbold prové per moy Thomas Dounton les jour et an suisditz [f. 135v]

where Wyche and Dounton are each the second-named warden. However, in 1440–41 it is the third-named warden who has taken on the responsibilities for the rents from and repairs to properties:

come appiert per l'accompt de William Rumbold, prové per moy Johan Goodson le darrein jour de juylle l'an xix^{me} avant escript [f. 137v]

and in 1441–42:

Item, ils demandent allouance pur reparacions faitz en l'an suisdit sur les avantditz tenementz pertenantz al mercerie, come appiert pleinement per l'accompt du dit William Rumbold, prové per nous Johan Sturgeon, William Thornhille, et Thomas Steele – xlv s. i d. [f. 139v]

it is the second, third, and fourth wardens who have acted jointly.

This is the year when management of the Whittington estate came over to the Mercers, and the Renter Wardens' account book provides clearly the names of those taking charge of the mystery's rental properties and rendering account for all receipts and expenditure on these. For 1441–42 it is John Mortham, who had been rent-collector under John Carpenter and who, after the latter's death, is now responsible to the mercers' wardens. For 1443–44 and 1444–45 the man acting is William Olyver, third warden in 1443–44. For the three years following, up to 1447–48, the accounts are rendered by William Thornhill, not a warden at all in this period (although he had been earlier in 1441–42). A certain amount of uncertainty prevails over the exact datings of the next few accounts (see above, pp. 17–18) but the men in charge during this period between Michaelmas 1448 and Michaelmas 1452 are jointly Robert

Baron and Thomas Muschamp. Muschamp was third warden in 1449–50 and Baron fourth but in 1446–47. After this, for half a year up to Easter 1453, all four wardens together take joint responsibility and render account for the estates, after which follow two years when these estates are in the hands of two joint renter wardens: from Easter 1453 until Easter 1454 they are John Littleton (third warden from Midsummer 1453–54) and Robert Scrayingham (third warden from Midsummer 1454–55); and from Easter 1454 to Easter 1455 they are John Shipton (fourth warden for Midsummer 1454–55) and William Redeknape (fourth for Midsummer 1455–56). Redeknape now continues however, he renders account on his own for the estates for the period from Easter 1455–56, and from that year forward it is the fourth-named warden for the Hall accounts who each year takes charge of the estates.

‘MISTERE’, ‘mystere’ or ‘mistier (del mercerye)’: for the translation the word ‘mystery’ has been adhered to rather than ‘company’, both because the latter is perhaps anachronistic as conveying too much the idea of a modern corporate body and because it is necessary to distinguish the use that is made of the word ‘compagnie’ as for instance in ‘par avys et assent del compaignye’ [f. 17r], ‘une defaute ajuggé par le company’ [f. 70r], ‘al congregacioun del compaignye’ [f. 71r], or ‘mes il vient parmy tout la companye’ [f. 183r], where what is meant is the assembled body of ‘companions’ – ‘compaignons’, the persons who belong to the ‘fellowship’. The word ‘mystery’ means ‘trade’ or ‘craft’ or ‘art’ or ‘profession’ and is derived from the Latin word ‘ministerium’ and is not the same as, though it can be confused with, the word ‘mystery’ derived from the Latin ‘mysterium’, Greek ‘musterion’, ‘a secret thing or ceremony’.¹⁰⁰ The spellings with ‘i’ and ‘y’ are interchangeable in medieval texts, but in modern usage ‘mystery’ is generally the spelling to denote the meaning of a medieval craft or craft company.

‘ORNAMENTS’: in some contexts there is no problem over the translation of this word but when we find ‘Item, pur laver dez ornamentz del chapelle par tout l’an – xx d.’ [f. 190v] then if this were translated as ‘the chapel ornaments’ then a modern English reader would probably not think of the objects which are being washed, which are the albs, amices, and other liturgical vestments, altar cloths etc., mentioned clearly at other times, e.g.

Item, païé a Sire William Repyngale pur lavendrie de auter drapus – viii d. [f. 83r]

Item, païé a Sire William Ripyngale pur waschyng de abbis – xii d. [f. 86r]

Item, pur laver lez awbes et amytes [f. 93r]

Item, pur laver lynges del chapel [f. 90r]

Instead of ‘ornaments’ therefore, in these cases the word ‘accoutrements’ has been used, which is not ideal, but at least alerts the reader. All objects and accessories to worship in the chapel could be termed ‘ornaments’, not just the linen cloths and vestments, but when washing is being paid for, then this is the reference.

‘TEMPS’ or ‘TYME’ in such phrases as ‘en le temps de’ or ‘en lour temps’ has been translated as ‘during the term of office of X’, ‘during their term of office’.

A number of other words which occur only once and where the translation is not simple have been given footnoted explication to the text.

¹⁰⁰ See the OED and also *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford, 1966).

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The Wardens' Accounts Books

1344, Le primer jour d'april le l'an¹ de grace mille trois centz cerant quatre.²
 (copied later)
 f. A1r Ceux sunt les parcelles paieez chescun an pur quitrente de les tenementz apertenantz
 al mistier del mercerye en la Cité de Loundres:

Primes, païé pur les tenementz en Bisshopgatestrete voc' le Pye cum pertinenciis a
 Westmynstre par an – xx s.

Item, pur le dicte rente a Seynt Gyles par an – vi s. viii d.

Summa – xxvi s. viii d.

Item, païé pur le Croune selde, primes a Haliwelle par an – xiii s. iiiii d.

Item, païé a Seynt Eleyns par an – xviii s.

Item, a Cristcherche par an – xix s.

Item, païé a Saynt Marye Overee par an – xiii s. iiiii d.

Summa – iii li. iii s. viii d.

1347 (copied after 1390) En le honour de dieux et de sa douce miere et de toutz ces seyntz, Amen.

f. 1r L'an de grace Mⁱ CCCxlvii et l'an du regne nostre seignur le Roy Edward tierce xxii^e,³
 Thomas Leggy, adonqes Mayre, Adam Brabasoun et Richard de Basyngstoke,⁴
 goldbeter, viscontz de Londres:

Le xx^{me} jour du moys de Juyn, une assemblee ce fyst de toutz les bones gentz de
 la mercerye de Londres, issynt qe par lour comune assent acordé fuist pur unitee
 et bon amour entre eux norir, et pur comune profit de le mystere, soyent esluz
 quatre persones de la dite mistere un foith l'ane pur reuler et gouverner la dite
 mistere. Et qe toutz ceux du dite mistere soyent obeysantz a eux et a lour bone
 governance. Et sy ascun de eux soit trové disobeyant, qe nul achate ne vende
 ovesqe luy ne luy face compaignye, n'eyt la liverree, tanqe il ce voille redresser
 devers le dit mistere.

Item, acordé est qe chescun qe serra de la dite compaignye payera xx s., c'est assavoir
 vi s. viii d. a son entree del primer an et vi s. viii d. en l'an seconde et vi s. viii d. en
 l'an tierce, et si ascun y voet plus doner, le mistiere luy serra le plus tenuz.

1 MS: lan d de grace.

2 For the significance of this date to the following entries see 'Introduction', pp. 3–4.

3 See Introduction, pp. 4–5, for a discussion of the queries over this date.

4 He was also twice warden of the Goldsmiths' mistery; see Jefferson, *Wardens' Accounts*, p. 551.

The first day of April in the year of grace 1344:

1344,
(copied later)
f. A1r

These are the amounts paid each year as quit-rent for the tenements belonging to the mercers' mistery in the City of London.

First, paid for the tenements in Bishopsgate called the Pye, with its appurtenances, to Westminster [Abbey] per annum – 20s.

Item, for the said property, [paid] to St Giles¹ per annum – 6s. 8d.

Total: 26s. 8d.

Item, paid for the Crown Seld, first to Haliwell [Priory]² per annum – 13s. 4d.

Item, paid to St Helen's³ per annum – 18s.

Item, to Christchurch⁴ per annum – 19s.

Item, paid to St Mary Overy⁵ per annum – 13s. 4d.

Total: £3 3s. 8d.

In the honour of God, and of his sweet mother, and of all his saints, amen.

1347 (copied
after 1390)
f. 1r

In the year of grace 1347 and the 22nd year of the reign of our lord King Edward III, Thomas Leggy then being Mayor, and Adam Brabasoun and Richard de Basingstoke, goldbeater, sheriffs of London.

An assembly was held on 20 June of all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery of London, and with their common assent it was agreed that, in order to nurture unity and friendship between them and for the communal advantage of the mistery, four persons of the said mistery should be elected once a year to rule and govern the said mistery. And that everyone who is of that said mistery should be obedient to them and to their good governance. And if anyone should be found guilty of disobedience, then no one should buy from him or sell to him or associate with him, and he should not have the livery, until he is willing to make amends and be reconciled with the said mistery.

Item, it is agreed that each person who shall belong to the said company shall pay 20s., that is to say, 6s. 8d. on his admission for the first year, 6s. 8d. the second year, and 6s. 8d. the third year, and if anyone should wish to give more, the mistery will be the more beholden to him.

1 The Hospital of St Giles in the Fields, Holborn, a leper hospital. See *VCH Middlesex*, I, pp. 206–10, and Parton, *Some Account*.

2 See *VCH Middlesex*, I, pp. 174–8; Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, IV, pp. 390–97.

3 The Benedictine nunnery of St Helen's Bishopsgate, see *VCH London*, I, pp. 457–61.

4 The Priory of Holy Trinity, or Christchurch, Aldgate, a house of Austin canons, see *VCH London*, I, pp. 465–75; and Schofield and Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory*.

5 St Mary Overy, the priory of Southwark, a house of Austin canons; see *VCH London*, I, pp. 480–84.

Item, *qe* chescun *qe* prendra *apprentys* payera a le dite mistere ii s. al commencement del terme du dit *apprentys*, et l'*apprentys* payera ii s. al dite mistere al issue de soun terme. Et *qe* nul du dite mistere prendra *apprentys* *qe* eyt apporté packes en paijs appellés pedders; ne fitz de vileyn.

f. 1v Item, *qe* nulluy du dite mistere ne face ne soit aydant a faire nul forein frank deins la dite mistere de la mercerye sanz la *comune* assent de la dite mistere.

Item, si nule debate, contracte ou querele de quel condicion q'il soyt sourde entre ascunes du dite mistere, *qe* nul face pleynte al leye tanqe il soyt moustré as mestres del mistere *qe* pur le temps serront et ent eyt responce.

Item, *qe* chescun *qe* prendra *apprentys* a quele terme q'il soit ne vendra mye le terme de sa *apprenticialtee* ne fra nulle mitigacioun du dite terme deins vii ans, *par* quel prejudice ou damage *purra* avenyr a la Citee ou a la dite mistere.

Item, *qe* toutz ceux du dite mistere soyent vestuz d'une suyte un foith l'an, al feste de Paskes, *et* *qe* nule robe ne soyt doné hors du dite mistere dedeins les deux ans *proscheinz* ensuyantz, et *qe* nule charge soyt mys sur la dite vesture outre le primere achat fors tantsoulment le *prestre* *et* le *comune* servant.

Item, *qe* toutes les bones gentz de la mercerye mangent ensemble un foith l'ane al ordynance des quatre mestres du dite mistere, c'est assavoir le dysmenge *proschain* devant le feste de Seynt Johan le Baptistre, s'ils purront a tel jour la dyte maungerye bonement tener; et *qe* chescun *qe* soyt de la lyveree, soyt il present ou absent, quel part q'il soyt, paye *pur* luy memes ii s. *et* *pur* son vallet xii d., s'il soyt present al dite feste.

f. 2r Item, *qe* l'argent du dite mistere soyt en les mayns des quatre mestres eslus *pur* l'an presente, de ent marchander *et* profiter, *et* q'ils facent seurté de bon acompte rendre al fyn || de l'an solonc les usages du dite mistere.

Item, that each person who takes on an apprentice shall pay to the said mistery 2s. at the start of the said apprentice's terms, and the apprentice shall pay 2s. to the said mistery at his issue from terms. And that no one of the said mistery shall take on an apprentice who has carried packs around the country and been one of those called peddlars, nor one who is the son of a villein.⁶

Item, that no one of the said mistery shall make any 'foreigner'⁷ free of the said mistery of mercers, nor help in so doing, without the communal agreement of the said mistery.

f. 1v

Item if any dispute, contract problem,⁸ or cause for contention of any kind at all should arise between any members of the said mistery, then no recourse should be had to any court of law until the matter has been brought before the current wardens of the mistery and that they shall have responded to it.

Item, that anyone who takes on an apprentice, for whatever term it may be, must not sell the terms of the apprenticeship, nor mitigate the length of the said term within seven years, which could result in detriment or harm to the City or to the said mistery.

Item, that all who are of the said mistery shall be clothed in livery of the same cloth once a year, at the feast of Easter, and that no gown shall be given away to anyone outside the mistery within the two next following years, and that no charge should be set for the said clothing apart from the first purchase, excepting only the priest and the beadle.

Item, that all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery shall dine together once a year, the arrangements to be made by the four wardens of the said mistery, that is to say on the Sunday preceding the feastday of Saint John the Baptist, if they can conveniently hold the feast on that day, and that each one who is of the livery, whether he be present or absent, wherever he may be, shall pay 2s. for himself, and for his servant, if he be present at the said feast, 12d.

Item, that the money of the said mistery shall be in the hands of the four wardens elected for the current year, for them to make profitable and efficient trade and use of, and that they should provide guarantees that they will render good account at the end || of [their] year [of office], according to the customs of the said mistery.

f. 2r

6 Or 'bondsman'. On City regulations over this, see Riley, *Liber Albus*, p. 452.

7 The word 'forein' is very often used to designate one who comes from outside the City of London, from another part of England, as against an 'estrange' who comes from abroad. Here it should be taken to refer to all 'foreigners', anyone who is not of the City.

8 The text only says 'contracte' but in this context it must mean problems arising from a contract (very often these might be matters of debt).

Item, si ascun de la dit mistere soyt anientiz torcenousement ou *par aventure* de miere ou *perd* des dettours ou *par* fieblesse du corps, q'il ne *purroit* soy mesmes sustener, q'il soit aydé del almoigne du dite mistiere *par comune* assent de la dite mercerie.

Item, acordé est *par comune* assent *qe* chescuns de la dite mistere soyent prestes de venir devant les quatre mestres *qe pur* le temps serront, a quele heure q'ils soyent resonablement garnys, sur peyne de payer a chescun temps q'ils faillont iiij d., et *qe* les mestres *qe pur* le temps serront ent respoignent *sur lour* acomptes.

Item, *qe* un *comune* servant de dite mistere soit ordeigné a servir touz les bons gentz du dite mistere quele heure q'ils eynt a faire en ceo *qe* appartient a soun office.

Item, a la feste ou a la congregacioun ou la eleccioun de les mestres *pur* gouverner la mistere *pur* l'an ensuyant serra fait, ceux *qe* serrount esluz mestres prendront *lour* charge *et* chescun de eux, soit il present ou absent, quel part q'il soit, et *qe* nul de eux issynt esluz occupiera l'office *par* cele eleccioun plus *qe* un an.

Item, *qe* nul q'ad esté mestre ou governour du dite mistere ne serra esluz a gouverner le dite office deins les v ans adonques proscheins ensuyantz.

f. 2v

Item, *qe* chescun de dite mistere *qe* prendra apprentys presentera le dit apprentys a les mestres *qe pur* le temps serront, de moustrier *qe* il ne soit prys encontre les usages avantditz, *et* *qe* nul de dite mistiere eyt en sa compaignye *pur* marchander ou ent meller ascune persone de quel condicioun q'il soit, s'il ne soit apprentys ou eyt en la dite mistiere *servy* soun terme de *apprenticialtee* duement.

1347–48

Anno xxii^{do} Regis E. tercii

(copied in 1390)

A quele ordinaunce fait, furent esluz *pur* l'an avenyr *pur* le dit mister reuler en la manere avauntдите:⁵

William de Tudenham

Symond de Worsted

William de la Panetrie

Adam Fraunceys⁶

Les queux ount resceu de dyverses personnes del dit mister l'argent *après* escript:

5 A sixteenth-century hand has written in the LH margin beside the four names below: 'Thes be the names of þe fyrste Wardens of our Companye, anno 1347'.

6 Very full biographical information on Adam Fraunceys can be found in the introduction to O'Connor (ed.), *A Calendar of the Cartularies of John Pyel and Adam Fraunceys*.

Item, if anyone of the said mistery should be ruined through wrongdoing [of others], or due to an accident at sea, or loss from debtors, or through bodily weakness, so that he cannot support himself by his own means, he shall be given help from the alms of the said mistery, with the communal agreement of the said mercers' mistery.

Item, it is agreed by communal assent that everyone of the said mistery shall be ready and willing to come before the four wardens of the time at whatever time they may reasonably be summoned, on penalty of paying for each time they are missing 4d., and the wardens of the time shall be responsible for entering this in their accounts.

Item, that a beadle⁹ of the said mistery shall be appointed to serve all the goodmen of the said mistery at whatever time they may have need of him in that which pertains to his office.

Item, at the feast or assembly at which the election shall be made of the wardens to govern the mistery for the following year, those who are elected wardens shall take on their burden of office,¹⁰ each one of them [individually] whether he be present or absent and wherever he may be, and that none of those so elected shall remain in office by virtue of this election for more than one year.

Item, that no one who has been a warden or governor of the said mistery shall be elected to hold the same office within the next five years following.

Item, that each person of the said mistery who takes on an apprentice shall present the said apprentice to the current wardens, to show that he has not been taken on in contravention of the aforesaid customs, and that no one of the said mistery shall have in his company for trading or being involved in such any person of whatever status he may be, unless he be an apprentice or have duly served his terms of apprenticeship within the said mistery.

f. 2v

22 Edward III

1347–48

This ordinance made, there were elected for the coming year to govern the said mistery in the manner aforesaid: *(copied in 1390)*

William de Tuddenham

Simon de Worstead

William de la Pantrie

Adam Fraunceys

who have received from various persons of the said mistery the money written out below:

⁹ Literally, here and above and later, he is termed a 'common servant' or 'communal servant', an appellation used generally at this time by various misteries.

¹⁰ The 'charge' or 'burden of office' certainly includes the financial burdens or responsibilities, which from this day forward are in their hands (not always literally, see Introduction, pp. 25 and 34).

De Symond Fraunceys –	<i>dimi</i> ⁷ marc
De Richard Lacer –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Geffrey de Wychyngham –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan de Caustoun –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De William Aylleward –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan Cavendissh de Cressaltoun –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan de Fakenham –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan Stable –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Walter Hemenhale –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Thomas Aldeburgh –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Roger de Burtoun –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan de Burtoun –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Johan Pentyng –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Richard Elsyng –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Gilbert Curteys –	<i>dimi</i> marc
De Hugh atte Boure –	<i>dimi</i> marc
– v li. vi s. viii d.	

f. 3r	De Robert de Strode –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Herwardstok –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De William Bradefeld –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Bradefeld –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Underwode –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Geffrey de Chadeleshunt –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Roger Wenloc –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Colwell –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Thomas Colwell –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Raulyn Foundour –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Tydewall –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Roger Vyne –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Rothyng –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De William Raven –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Nichol Elsyng –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Thomas de Langetoun –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Jordan de Elsyng –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Gyles Spencer –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De William Graunsden –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Petit –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Raynald de Burgh –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Nichol de Grenewych –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan de Depham –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Richard de Burgh –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Richard de Kelshull –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Johan Pentrye –	<i>dimi</i> marc
	De Richard Loveye –	<i>dimi</i> marc

⁷ This word is almost always abbreviated and is not found written in full (as ‘*dimi*’) in these accounts before the year 1435–36. An alternative expanded form is ‘*demi*’, but ‘*dimi*’ has been chosen throughout.

from Simon Fraunceys –	half a mark ¹¹
from Richard Lacer –	half a mark
from Geoffrey de Witchingham –	half a mark
from John de Causton –	half a mark
from William Aylleward –	half a mark
from John Cavendish of Cressalton –	half a mark
from John de Fakenham –	half a mark
from John Stable –	half a mark
from Walter Hemenhale –	half a mark
from Thomas Aldeburgh –	half a mark
from Roger de Burton –	half a mark
from John de Burton –	half a mark
from John Pentying –	half a mark
from Richard Elsyng –	half a mark
from Gilbert Curteys –	half a mark
from Hugh atte Boure –	half a mark
– £5 6s. 8d.	

from Robert de Strode –	half a mark
from John Herwardstok –	half a mark
from William Bradfield –	half a mark
from John Bradfield –	half a mark
from John Underwood –	half a mark
from Geoffrey de Chadshunt –	half a mark
from Roger Wenlock –	half a mark
from John Colwell –	half a mark
from Thomas Colwell –	half a mark
from Raulyn Foundour –	half a mark
from John Tydewall –	half a mark
from Roger Vyne –	half a mark
from John Rothyng –	half a mark
from William Raven –	half a mark
from Nicholas Elsyng –	half a mark
from Thomas de Langton –	half a mark
from Jordan de Elsyng –	half a mark
from Giles Spencer –	half a mark
from William Graunsden –	half a mark
from John Petit –	half a mark
from Raynald de Burgh –	half a mark
from Nicholas de Greenwich –	half a mark
from John de Depham –	half a mark
from Richard de Burgh –	half a mark
from Richard de Kelshull –	half a mark
from John Pentrye –	half a mark
from Richard Loveye –	half a mark

f. 3r

11 i.e. 6s. 8d.

De Adam Fraunceys –	dimi marc
De Thomas de Brandoun –	dimi marc
De Symond de Gartoun –	dimi marc
De Hugh Tablet –	dimi marc
De Richard de Caustoun –	dimi marc
De Elys Fraunceys –	dimi marc
De Thomas Fraunceys –	dimi marc
De William de Caustoun –	dimi marc
De Johan de Chichestre –	dimi marc
De Robert Court –	dimi marc
De William de Beauchamp –	dimi marc
De William de Gartoun –	dimi marc
De Johan de Polayn –	dimi marc
De Michel de Caustoun –	dimi marc
De William Cornwaylles –	x s.
– xiiii li. iiii s. iiii d.	

f. 3v	De Johan Fyfithede –	dimi marc
	De Raulyn de Depham –	dimi marc
	De Richard Notynggham –	dimi marc
	De Thomas Cornerth –	dimi marc
	De Nichol de Notynggham –	dimi marc
	De William Pomfreyt –	dimi marc
	De William de Strattoun –	dimi marc
	De Aleyn de Aylesham –	dimi marc
	De Johan de Worstede –	dimi marc
	De Roger de Madour –	dimi marc
	De Symond de Worstede –	dimi marc
	De William de Caustoun –	dimi marc
	De Edmond de Hemenhale –	dimi marc
	De William Panetrie –	dimi marc
	De William de Depham –	dimi marc
	De Robert de Elsyng –	dimi marc
	De Roberd Couce –	dimi marc
	De Thomas Cheyner –	dimi marc
	De Henri Cove –	dimi marc
	De Henri de Caustoun –	dimi marc
	De Johan de Cavendissh –	dimi marc
	De Johan de Gartoun –	dimi marc
	De Theobald de Caustoun –	dimi marc
	De William Mareschall –	dimi marc
	De Richard Childemyll –	dimi marc
	De William Cove –	dimi marc
	De Walter Cavendissh –	dimi marc
	De Thomas Scarcolf –	dimi marc
	De Stephen Cavendyssh –	dimi marc
	De Johan Dallyng –	dimi marc
	De Nichol de Caustoun –	dimi marc

from Adam Fraunceys –	half a mark
from Thomas de Brandon –	half a mark
from Simon de Garton –	half a mark
from Hugh Tablet –	half a mark
from Richard de Causton –	half a mark
from Elys Fraunceys –	half a mark
from Thomas Fraunceys –	half a mark
from William de Causton –	half a mark
from John de Chichester –	half a mark
from Robert Court –	half a mark
from William de Beauchamp –	half a mark
from William de Garton –	half a mark
from John de Polayn –	half a mark
from Michael de Causton –	half a mark
from William Cornwaylles –	10s.
– £14 3s. 4d.	

from John Fifehead –	half a mark
from Raulyn de Depham –	half a mark
from Richard Nottingham –	half a mark
from Thomas Cornerth –	half a mark
from Nicholas de Nottingham –	half a mark
from William Pomfreyt –	half a mark
from William de Stratton –	half a mark
from Alan de Aylsham –	half a mark
from John de Worstead –	half a mark
from Roger de Madour –	half a mark
from Simon de Worstead –	half a mark
from William de Causton –	half a mark
from Edmund de Hemenhale –	half a mark
from William Pantrie –	half a mark
from William de Depham –	half a mark
from Robert de Elsyng –	half a mark
from Robert Couce –	half a mark
from Thomas Cheyner –	half a mark
from Henry Cove –	half a mark
from Henry de Causton –	half a mark
from John de Cavendish –	half a mark
from John de Garton –	half a mark
from Theobald de Causton –	half a mark
from William Mareschall –	half a mark
from Richard Childemyll –	half a mark
from William Cove –	half a mark
from Walter Cavendish –	half a mark
from Thomas Scarcolf –	half a mark
from Stephen Cavendish –	half a mark
from John Dallyng –	half a mark
from Nicholas de Causton –	half a mark

f. 3v

De Nichol de Bedyngtoun –	dimi marc
De Roger Pycot –	dimi marc
De Thomas Meel –	dimi marc
De Roberd de Thame –	dimi marc
De Gilbert de Merourer –	dimi marc
De Thomas de Rysyng –	dimi marc
De Robert de Heyngham –	dimi marc
De Adam Chamberleyn –	dimi marc
De Roger de Caustoun –	dimi marc
De Richard de Worsted –	dimi marc
– xiii li. xiii s. iiii d.	

f. 4r De Richard Creek –	dimi marc
De William de Tudenham –	dimi marc
De Symond Chamberleyn –	dimi marc
De Robert Pycot –	dimi marc
– xxvi s. viii d.	

Summa totalis – xxxiiii li. x s.

Item, les avantditz William Tudenham, Symond de Worsted, William de la Pantrie, et Adam Fraunceys rendent lour acompte des aprentiz receux en la mystere en lour temps.

Adam Stable	} apprentices Johan Stable	
Alayn Eilard		
Laurence Spence – aprentis Raulyn Foundur		
Johan Walpol – aprentis Johan Tydwall		
Esmon atte Hull – aprentis Geffrey Chateleshunt		
Richard Charletoun – aprentis William Raven		
Robert Lytport – aprentis William Cornewailleys		
Johan Tok	} apprentices William Caustoun	
Nichol Cray		
Johan Essex – aprentis William de Depham –		païé ii s.
Johan Whitewell – aprentis Robert de Elsyng		
Thomas Cantebrug – aprentis Henri atte Mersh		
Thomas Sagor – aprentis Janyn de Gartoun		
Johan Douy – aprentis Thomas Cheyner		
William Holenden – aprentis Thebaud de Caustoun		
Roger de Cantebrug	} apprentices Nichol de Bedyngtoun –	payé – iiii s.
Johan de Lyndesey		
Thomas Pycot – aprentis Roger Pycot –		païé – ii s.
William Beteley – aprentis Roger Madour –		païé – ii s.
– x s. ⁸		

⁸ This total confirms that only those for whom a sum of money paid is listed did pay, and that the absence of noting a sum for the others is not a scribal error.

from Nicholas de Beddington –	half a mark
from Roger Picot –	half a mark
from Thomas Meel –	half a mark
from Robert de Thame –	half a mark
from Gilbert de Merourer –	half a mark
from Thomas de Rising –	half a mark
from Robert de Heyngham –	half a mark
from Adam Chamberleyn –	half a mark
from Roger de Causton –	half a mark
from Richard de Worstead –	half a mark
– £14 13s. 4d.	

from Richard Creek –	half a mark
from William de Tuddenham –	half a mark
from Simon Chamberleyn –	half a mark
from Robert Picot –	half a mark
– 26s. 8d.	

f. 4r

Sum total: £34 10s.

Item, the aforesaid William Tuddenham, Simon de Worstead, William de la Pantrie, and Adam Fraunceys render their account for the apprentices admitted to the mistery during their term of office:

Adam Stable	} apprentices of John Stable	
Alan Eilard		
Laurence Spence, apprentice of Raulyn Foundour		
John Walpole, apprentice of John Tydewall		
Edmund atte Hill, apprentice of Geoffrey Chadshunt		
Richard Charleton, apprentice of William Raven		
Robert Lytport, apprentice of William Cornewaylles		
John Tok	} apprentices of William Causton	
Nicholas Cray		
John Essex, apprentice of William de Depham –		paid 2s.
John Whitewell, apprentice of Robert de Elsyng		
Thomas Cambridge, apprentice of Henry atte Marsh		
Thomas Sagor, apprentice of Janyn de Garton		
John Douy, apprentice of Thomas Cheyner		
William Holenden, apprentice of Theobald de Causton		
Roger de Cambridge	} apprentices of Nicholas de Beddington –	paid 4s.
John de Lyndesey		
Thomas Picot, apprentice of Roger Picot –		paid 2s.
William Beteley, apprentice of Roger Madour –		paid 2s.
– 10s.		

f. 4v Simond de Worsted
 William de Tudenham
 William de la Pantrie
 Adam Fraunceys } xxxv li.

Et ils rendent *sur* mesme ceste acompte en encrees des avantditz deniers – v li.
 – xl li.

De quele somme ils ount doné a Johan Elsyng, *lour comune servant*, *pur soun*
travaille de l'an passé – xx s.

Item, ils rendent en acompt receu de Thomas de Brandoun *pur* ix li. vii s. iii d.,
 les queux il receust del argent *qe* fuist baillé en la garde Giles Spencer en temps
 passé, quel argent ad esté en la garde du dit Thomas *par* ii ans et doit de sa bone
 volentee en encrees de dit argent *et* de encresser *nostre* somme – xv li.

La somme clerement receu – liiii li.⁹

1348 Les queux avantditz William de Tudenham, Simond de Worsted, William de la
 (copied later) Panetrie, *et* Adam Fraunceys ount delyvré *par* endentures le xxii jour du moys
 de Juyn en l'an de grace Mⁱ CCC xlviii^{me} a Gylbert Curteys, Alayn d'Ailsham,
 William de Depham, *et* Hugh atte Boure, esluz mestres *pur* l'an avenir, la somme
 avauntдите etc.

1390 Et *pur* ceo *qe* toutz les acomptz, receytes, fines *et* amercimentz, costages *et*
 despenses ovesqe tout plein des autres casueles matyres avenuz *et* faitz en les
 temps de toutz les mestres de la mercerye *qe* ount esté depuis l'an de grace
 Mⁱ CCC xlvii *et* l'an du regne le Roy Edward tiercz xxi^e,¹⁰ *qe* regna L ans *et* xxi
 sepmaines (*qe* dieux assoille) tanqe al an du regne le Roi Richard seconde xiiii^e
 sont entrez *et* engrossez en la veile paper rouge de dite mercerye come illoeqes
 pleynement apiert, quel paper demura toutdys en la garde de les mestres de la
 dite mercerie *qe* *pur* le temps serront *pur* moustrer a chescun de la mistier qant il
 enbusoignera,¹¹ les queles materes engrosser en cest lyvre serroit trop de *travaille*
 f. 5r *et* || labour *et* nulle avantage ne profit a dite mistier. Si est acordé *par* comune
 assent de la dite mercerie de cesser en cest livre tanqe al an xiiii du regne le
 Roi Richard seconde avantdit, en quel an estoient mestres de la dite mercerie
 Johan Loveye, Johan Wodcok, Thomas Neuentoun, *et* Johan Leengge, les queux
 mestres rendont *lour* acompt come *pert* en cest livre après escript.¹²

9 The same sixteenth century hand as above on f. 2v has drawn a hand pointing to this line and has written in the LH margin here: 'The nette and Clere Reste of the forenamyd wardenis acompte in anno 1347 was'.

10 MS: xxii^{de}.

11 This book would appear to have been lost sometime between 1390 and 1528, in which year John Coke started to draw up the Register of Freemen of the company. He lists no names at all between 1347 and 1391, whereas the above statement about 'la veile paper rouge' makes it clear that such names would have been included there and thus available to him had it survived. See also Imray, 'Les bones gentes', pp. 155–6.

12 The 1390–91 account follows immediately in the original, but in this edition we have inserted below at this point the only other extract from the old red paper register to survive.

Simon de Worstead
 William de Tuddenham
 William de la Pantrie
 Adam Fraunceys

} £35

f. 4v

and they render an increment on the aforesaid money on this same account – £5
 – £40

Out of which sum they have given to John Elsyng, their beadle, for his work during the past year – 20s.

Item, they render account as received from Thomas de Brandon: £9 7s. 3d., which he received from the money which was placed in the keeping of Giles Spencer in time past, the which money has been in the keeping of the said Thomas for two years, and he has voluntarily given as an increment on the said money to increase our total: £15.

Net total received – £54

The aforesaid William de Tuddenham, Simon de Worstead, William de la Pantrie, and Adam Fraunceys on 22 June in the year of grace 1348 handed over the aforesaid sum by indentures to Gilbert Curteys, Aleyn de Aylsham, William de Depham, and Hugh atte Boure, elected wardens for the coming year.

1348

(copied later)

And since all the accounts, receipts, fees and fines, costs and expenses, together with a great number of other incidental matters that have arisen and been dealt with during the terms of office of all the wardens of the mercers' mystery that there have been since the year of grace 1347 and the 21st year of the reign of King Edward III, who reigned for 50 years and 21 weeks (may God absolve him!) up until the 14th year of the reign of King Richard II have been written up and engrossed in the old red paper register of the said mercers' mystery, as fully appears there, the which register will always remain in the keeping of the current wardens of the said mystery to be shown to any person of the mystery whenever there shall be need, and to engross these matters in this book would be too much work and || toil and would be of no advantage or benefit to the said mystery.¹² Thus it is agreed with the communal assent of the said mercers' mystery to leave out in this book all up until the aforesaid year 14 Richard II [1390–91], in which year the wardens of the said mercers' mystery were John Loveye, John Woodcock, Thomas Newenton, and John Leengge, the which wardens render their account as appears written below in this book:

1390

f. 5r

¹² How wrong the scribe was here! If only he had copied the whole into this present account book, for then it would have survived!

1404 Anno quinto Regis Henrici quarti:

f. A2r¹³

L'ordinance en après escripte estoit hors treite del paper rouge par Johan Shadeworth, Thomas Aleyn, Alein Everard *et* Thomas Hawe, gardeins del mistere del mercerye, par [comun]¹⁴ assent de touz les bones gentz del mistier, confermé pur bone *et* profitable en une congregacioun fait a Seint Thomas le venderdy le xx^{me} jour de Juyn l'an du regne le Roy Henry le quarte puis le conquete quint.

1376

(copied in 1404)

Fait a savoir qe le vi^{me} jour de Juillet l'an du regne le Roy Edward tierce puis le conquete L^{me}, lé suisescrypt Johan Shadeworth, Richard Betelee, Johan Feraunt, *et* Jankyn More esteantz mestres, ordeigné fuist *et* en comune assentuz par touz les bones gentz del mistere del mercerye: Qe desoreenavant nul compaignon du dite mistere hauntera nule feire ne marcheé dehors la Citee de Loundres pur vendre illoeqes ascune manere de marchandise par luy mesmes ne par aucun autre mesné. Ne nulles darrees maundera ne maunder ferra a ascune persone pur vendre hors de la Citee sinon qe mesmes les darrees furent devant cel outrément venduz *et* achatez deyns la Citee sans fraude ou mal engyn as mesmes ceux persones ou lours verroies attornees as queux eles serroient issint maundez. Et qe nul de la compaignye en pryvee ne apert soit parsoner del gayn de tiels darrez, ne eyt parte du peril de perde d'ycelles si aucun aviegne en chemyn ou aillours. Et pur ceo qe cest ordenance soit pur touz jours le pluis ferme tenuz,¹⁵ ordeignee est par toute la compaignye fraunchement de comune assent qe si aucun de eux après ces heures soit trové faisant la contrairye de cest ordinance en apert ou mucette par ascune manere de queyntise ou subtil circumvenciou (qe dieu defende), il forferra la lyvree del mistere pur touz jours, s'il ne soit restitut a ycel par grace de toute la mystere, faisant fyn al mistier solonc la quantitee de son trespasse par agarde de toute la compaignye ou au meinz la greindre partie. Et auxint acordé est qe nul de la compaignye ovesqe tiel trespasour ne entrecomunera en manger ne boire, vent ne achat, barterye ne eschaunge, ne nule manere marchandise ovesqe luy eskippera en Flaundres ne aillours s'il soi puisse par autre voie eiser, ne nul bargayne ferra ne compaignye tiendra ovesqe luy de cea la mere ne par dela, tanqe il soy voille confourmer al mistere en manere avantdicte. Et ceo sur mesme la peyne a courer si avant sur l'entrecomunant come sur le chief trespasour.

f. A2v

Et courra cest peyne sur chescun de la compaignie qe ne voet porter les comunes chargies qe avendront d'estre en comune assentez pur profit ou honour del mistere, s'ils ne soient excusables par nonpoair. Et autrement il ferra fyn par discrecioun des mestres ¹⁶[et a]utres prodhomes del mistier si myster soit selonc la quantitee del charge [re]fusee, issint toutfoith qe le meindre amerciment en cel cas serra vi s. viii d.

13 The handwriting is that of the same scribe; see 'Introduction', p. 10.

14 A tear in the parchment has destroyed the first part of this word.

15 A (rubbed and unclear) note in the RH margin at this point: 'soluitur hac ordinacione'.

16 A tear in the parchment has destroyed some letters here and on the line below.

5 Henry IV

1404

f. A2r

The ordinance written out below was extracted from the red paper register by John Shadworth, Thomas Aleyn, Aleyn Everard, and Thomas Hawe, wardens of the mercers' mistery, by the communal agreement of all the goodmen of the mistery, and confirmed as good and advantageous at a meeting held at St Thomas [of Acon] on Friday 20 June of the year 5 Henry IV [1404].

Memorandum that on 6 July of the year 50 Edward III [1376] the undersigned John Shadworth, Richard Betelee, John Feraunt, and Jankyn More being wardens, it was ordained and communally agreed by all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery: that from henceforth no companion of the said mistery shall attend any fair or market outside the City of London for the purpose of selling any manner of merchandise either by himself or by any other household. Nor shall he send any goods or have any goods sent by any other person to be sold outside the City unless those same goods have been previously sold and bought in their entirety within the City by the very same persons or their true attorneys to whom they are thus being sent, without any fraud or deceptive ruse. And that no member of the company should either privately or publicly participate in any gains from such goods, nor be liable for any part of the risk of the loss of such, if any such loss occurred in transit or elsewhere. And to ensure that this ordinance shall always be most firmly held to,¹³ it is ordained by the whole company, freely and with communal agreement, that if anyone after this time should be found acting in contravention of this ordinance, either openly or secretly, by any cunning trickery or subtle circumvention (which may God forbid), then he shall forfeit the livery of the mistery for ever, unless he be restored to it again by the grace and favour of the whole mistery, paying a fine to the mistery in accordance with the severity of his offence, the amount to be agreed by the whole company or at least the majority. And it is also agreed that no member of the company shall consort with such an offender, neither in eating and drinking, nor in buying and selling, nor in bartering and exchange, nor shall anyone ship any kind of merchandise with him to Flanders or elsewhere if he can find any other means of doing this, nor shall he enter into any agreements with him or associate with him either in this country or beyond the seas, until such time as he [the offender] shall have been willing to comply with the mistery in the aforesaid manner. And anyone who associates in such a way shall incur the same penalty as that laid down above for the main offender.

1376

(copied in 1404)

And this penalty shall be incurred by any member of the company who refuses to bear [his share of] the communal expenses which may arise and be agreed communally for the advantage or honour of the mistery, unless they may be excusable through inability [to pay]. And otherwise he shall pay a fine at the discretion of the wardens and other goodmen of the mistery if such need be according to the amount of the charge refused, provided always that the lowest fine in such a case shall be 6s. 8d.

f. A2v

¹³ The note draws attention and means 'it is to be paid by this ordinance'.

Item, mesme le *jour* fui ordeigné *et* fermement estably par *comune* assent de toute la compaignie *qe* as toutz temps *qe* avendra *qe* les mestres *qe* pur le temps serront ferront somoundre le mistier par le bedel *qe* pur le temps serra pur estre assemblez en certains lieu *et* heure pur *qecomqe* busoigne, honour ou profit del mistier; *qe* chescun *qe* serra issynt garny par somounce, c'est assavoir le noet devant, s'il ne vient prestement as ditz lieu *et* heure payera xii d. s'il faille a toute la journee, et s'il vient illeokes mes trop tarder, adonques il paiera vi d., s'il n'eyt verroy *et* resonable essoyne; mes s'il ne soit garny ou somounee fors mesme le *jour* *qe* l'assemblee soy prendra, come poet avenyr pur hastyf busoigne, adonques s'il faille de venyr en manere avantdite il ne payera fors la meyttee del peyne.

Item, fait a savoyr *qe* quant avient *qe* ascun del compaignie moerge *et* ascuns des vivantz faille après q'il soit duement garny del bedel en manere suisdite d'estre present al dirige en la veille *et* matyn a la messe, q'adonques il payera xl d., toutdys sauvee resonable excusacioun.

Et si ascun des mestres trespassent encontre ascunes des ordynances suisditz lour fyn serra double as autres trespassours.

f. A3r Item, fui a cel temps en *comune* assentuz *et* ordeyneee *qe* chescun *qe* voudra parler *et* moustrier sa reson en tiels assemblees, q'il preigne primerement congié des mestres *et* adonques dye sobrement ceo *qe* luy plerra. Et *qe* nul de la compaignie luy destourbe tanqe il eyt fini sa reson. Et adonques parlera un autre *qe* aura issint congié *et* nemye autrement. Et pur ceo *qe* plusours foith devant ces heures en tielles assemblees ount les journees passez en veyn ne ne poent les necessaries busoignes du mester prendre fyn pur *grauntz* jangeleryes *qe* ascunes personnes ont fait al heure, les uns par ignorance *et* les autres pur defaute de nuture, ordeigné est auxint *qe* un des mestres || avera une maillet *qe* est a present purview pur cele cause, ové quel il devera ferir sur table ou autre chose *qe* purra bien estre oy, as toutz temps *qe* ascun parle en destourbance de celluy q'avera congié de parler, come desuis est dit, et s'il ne cesse qant le mestre aura feru deux foith al meyns il paiera un denier, et si avant pur chescun deux foith un denier tanqe il soy tiegne en pees, sans pardoun ou relese.

Et si ascun del compaignie par hautesse de coer voille par tout rebeller les ordynances faitz par les mestres *et* les bones gentz del mistier (*qe* dieu defende), adonques les mestres *qe* pur le temps serront ovesqe autres bones gentz del mistier pursuyeron al Maire *et* Aldermans au fyn *qe* tiel disobeisant soit chastié solonc l'ordynance faite en la Guyhalle sur cele matire. De quele ordynance le copie ensuyt.

Item, on the same day it was ordained and firmly laid down with the communal agreement of the whole company that on every occasion when it shall happen that the current wardens shall have the mistery summoned by the current beadle to be assembled in a certain place at a certain time for whatever need, honour or advantage of the mistery, that each person who shall be so informed of the summons, that is to say by the night before, if he does not come promptly to the said place at the said time shall pay 12d. if he is absent for the whole day, and if he comes but at too late a time, then he shall pay 6d. unless he has a true and reasonable excuse; but if he be informed or summoned only on the day itself at which the assembly is to take place, which can happen in case of sudden need, then if he fails to attend as stated above he shall pay only half the penalty.

Item, it shall be made known that when it happens that a member of the company dies and any of the living should fail, after being duly summoned by the beadle in the aforesaid manner, to be present at the evening dirge and morning mass, that he shall then pay 40d., except always if there be reasonable excuse.

And if any of the wardens transgress against any of the aforesaid ordinances then their fine shall be double that of other offenders.

Item, it was at that time agreed communally and ordained that each person who shall wish to speak and give his opinion in such assemblies, that he should first ask leave of the wardens and then say what he wishes to say in sober manner. And no one of the company should disturb him until he has finished speaking. And then another shall speak who has also had permission, and not otherwise. And because before now it has several times happened at such assemblies that the days have gone by in vain and the necessary business of the mistery could not be finalised due to the great noisy talk of some people at the time, some of them out of ignorance and others because of lack of education, it is ordained that one of the wardens || shall have a mallet which is at present provided for such a cause, with which he shall bang on the table or on some other thing that can be clearly heard, on every occasion when someone speaks in disruption of him who has leave to speak, as it is stated above, and if he does not desist when the warden has banged twice at least, then he shall pay one penny, and a further penny for each two times [the mallet is struck] until he shall keep quiet, and this without any pardon or remission.

f. A3r

And if any member of the company should wish from overweening pride to rebel outright against the ordinances made by the wardens and goodmen of the mistery (which may God forbid), then the current wardens shall with other goodmen of the mistery take the matter to the jurisdiction of the Mayor and Aldermen so that such a disobedient person shall be punished in accordance with the Guildhall ordinance relating to this matter. Of which ordinance a copy here follows:

La copie del ordinance del Guyhall de Loundres:¹⁷

Pur la pees nostre Sire le Roi *et* la citee garder, quele chose homme covient avoir a qeor devant toutes autres, soient toutz les mistiers entre eux mesmes reulez *et* gouvernez chescun en sa nature en dewe manere issint *qe* nule fauxyne en bargayn n'en overaignes ne autre deceyte, ne *comune* contekkours ne meffesours ne soient trovez en ascune manere deyns les misteres, en salvacioun de *leur* honour *et* de *comune* profit auxint. A quele chose loialment *surveier et* ruler soient eluz singulerement *par* chescun mistier iiii ou vi ou pluis ou meins solonc ceo *qe* le mistier semblera busoignable, *et* jurez devant Maire *et* Aldermans. Les queux issint esluz *et* jurez averont plein poair del Maire de bien *et* loialment reuler les misters dont ils sont eslieux, *et* auxint q'ils puissent *par comune* assent del mistier faire ordinances entre eux acordantz a reson *et* *comune* profit, *et* chastier les rebelles *par* punyissementz entre eux de *comune* assent ordeignez. Et s'ils trovont entre eux ascuns disobeysantz *qe* ne volent estre menez *par* eux ne *par* autres bones gentz de leurs mistiers, *qe* adonke mesmes les reulours ové autres bones gentz du mistere notifiant al Maire *et* Aldermans les nouns des disobeisauntz, queux soient mayntenant arrestuz *par* leur corps *et* mys a respounce, *et* s'ils soient *sur* ycel convyctz, soient al *primere* foith x jours en prison *et* paieront x s. a la chambre, *et* a la *seconde* foith soient xx jours en prison *et* paient xx s. a la chambre, *et* a la tierce foith soient xxx jours en prison *et* paient xxx s. a la chambre, *et* a la quarte foith || soient xl jours en prison *et* paient xl s. a la chambre, *et* a la quynte foith perdont la fraunchise de la Citee.

f. A3v

Et fait a savoir *qe*, *par comune* assent de toute la compaignye mesme l'an *et* jour, touz les servantz *et* lowys del mister coment q'ils soient de la liveree serront excusez de venir as assemblees faitz *par* generale somons s'ils ne soient especialment garnyz de venyr illeoques *pur* ascune certeine matire touchant leurs propres *persones*, ou *comune* honour del mistier. Sauvant toutfoith q'ils ne forsacent encontre l'ordynance des feirs ne ascunes autres, les queux chescun sibien les meyndres du mistier come les greyndres covient a fyn force de garder sur la peyne *sur* ceo desuis.

Item, est assentuz mesme le jour *par* toute la compaignye *qe* toutes les peynes pecuniers soient levez sanz delay ou desport faire, en maniere q'ensuyt, c'est assavoir: ceux *qe* sont encurruz *parentre* les festes del Nativitee Seint Johan Baptist *et* Seint Michel soient levez a mesme la feste Seint Michel; *et* en mesme la manere *et* fourme ils serront levez as festes de Nowel, Pasch *et* la Nativitee Seint Johan Baptist; *et* ceo *sur* peyne del double si ascun face tariance del paiement outre celles festes en manere avantdite, *et* si ascun soit si rebelle (*qe* dieux defende) q'il ne voille paier *pur* cest peyne, ordeignee est *et* assentuz q'il soit forsbarree de la lyveree du mistere al Pasch proschein *après* tanqe il voille reconceiller a la compaignye.¹⁸

17 The same ordinance, but worded slightly differently, is found in Riley, *Liber Albus*, p. 494; see also CLB, 'G', p. 174.

18 This is the end of the extract in the preliminary pages.

The copy of the ordinance of the Guildhall of London:

In order to keep the King's peace and that of the City, a matter which must be dearer to the heart of each man than any other, all the misteries shall be ruled and governed by themselves, each according to its nature in due manner, in such a way that no fraudulent business deal or workmanship should be found or any other deceit, nor should any common troublemakers or miscreants be found within the misteries in any manner, this for the maintaining of their honour and for their communal advantage also. And to oversee and control these matters lawfully, four men or six or more or less according to what seems necessary to the mystery, shall be elected by each mystery, each for itself, and shall be sworn before the Mayor and Aldermen. Which men so elected and sworn shall have full power from the Mayor to govern well and lawfully the misteries by which they are elected. and they shall also be able with the communal agreement of the mystery to make ordinances [applicable] among themselves in accordance with reason and communal advantage and be able to punish recalcitrants with punishments ordained by communal agreement among them. And if they find among their number any who are disobedient and refuse to be guided by them or by other goodmen of their mystery, then these same men who govern the mystery with other goodmen of the same should notify the Mayor and Aldermen of the names of such disobedient men so that they may at once be arrested physically and brought to answer, and if they should be found guilty, then at the first offence they should be sent to prison for 10 days and shall pay 10s. to the [Guildhall] chamber, and at the second offence they should have 20 days in prison and pay 20s. to the chamber, and at the third offence they should have 30 days in prison and pay 30s. to the chamber, and at the fourth offence || they should have 40 days in prison and should pay 40s. to the chamber, and at the fifth offence they shall lose the freedom of the City.

f. A3v

And it shall be made known that, by communal agreement of the whole company on the same day of the same year, all servants and serving-men of the mystery, even if they are of the livery, shall be excused from coming to assemblies called by a general summons, unless they are specifically notified to attend for any special matter concerning themselves or for the communal honour of the mystery. Providing however that they do not transgress against the ordinance concerning fairs nor any other, the which all members of the mystery, whether they be of the lowest or the highest rank, must of all necessity keep to upon pain of the penalty aforesaid.

Item, it was agreed on the same day by the whole company that all monetary fines should be levied without delay or exemption, in the following manner, i.e. that those incurred between the feasts of the Nativity of St John the Baptist [24 June] and Michaelmas [29 September] shall be levied at that same feast of Michaelmas, and in the same manner and form they shall be levied at the feasts of Christmas, Easter, and the Nativity of St John the Baptist, and this on pain of paying double if anyone should delay paying until after these feasts in the manner stated above, and if anyone should be so recalcitrant (which may God forbid) that he refuse to pay this penalty, it is ordained and agreed that he should be excluded from the livery of the mystery at the next following Easter until such time as he shall be willing to be reconciled with the company.

1390–91
f. 5r (cont.) Et fait a remembrier *qe* le lundy *proscheyn* devant le feste de Seynt Johan le Baptistre l'an du regne *nostre Sire* le Roi Richard seconde *xiiii^{me}* a une congregacioun en la sale de Seynt Thomas d'Acres, ou toutz les bons gentz de la mercerie estoient assemblez, Johan Loveye, Johan Wodcok, Thomas Neuentoun et Johan Leengge esteantz en cel an gardeynes de la dite mercerie, rendont *leur* acompt devant toutz les bons gentz avantditz de Clxxvi li. viii s. demurantz en *leur* meyns de ceo q'ils avoient receux de *leur* *predecessours*, outre touz les costages *et* despenses faites a le parlement de Canteburgh¹⁹ *et* aillours *par comune* assent de dite mercerie come en la veille *paper rouge* pleynement apiert, *et* ount doné a la dite mercerie *pur* l'encrees de cel an – xiii li. vi s. viii d.

Item, ils ount receu des dettes *et* arrerages de certeyns personnes q'estoient gardeyns de la dite mercerie devant *leur* temps come piert en le veille *paper rouge* avantdit:

Summa – Clxv li. xv s. i d. ob. q^a.

Item, ils ount receu de William Parker, executour de testament de Robert Warbyltoun²⁰ (*qe* dieux assoille *pur* sa pité) – *Summa* – xx li.
les queux le dit Robert devysa *par* son testament al dite mercerie *pur* sustener l'almoigne de ycele

Summa totalis – CCCLxxv li. ix s. ix d. ob. q^a

De quele somme furent despenduz *par comune* assent de la dite mercerie a une solemneté de l'entree de May en l'an suisdit – iiii li.

Summa totalis qe remaynt de cler – CCCLxxi li. ix s. ix d. ob. q^a

f. 5v La quele somme les gardeins avant nomez ount deliveré *et* mys *sur* une table devant touz les bones gentz de la mercerie a *leur* assemblee avantdite, *et* a mesme l'assemblee *par comune* assent de toute la mercerie *pur* certaines causes notables *et* profitables furent delyvrez de la somme a William Parker en gard –
– CCCLviii li. iii s. i d. ob. q^a

1391 ²¹Item, a mesme l'assemblee les gardeyns avantditz eslirent iiii personnes de la mercerie gardeyns *pur* l'an ensuyant, c'est assavoir Johan Loveye eslit Johan Organ, Johan Wodecok eslit William Shiryngham, Thomas Neuentoun eslit Johan Sybile, Johan Leengge eslit Laurence Andrewe, *et par comune* assent de la dite mercerie ount delivré a chescun d'eux – lxvi s. viii d.

Summa – xiii li. vi s. viii d.

19 Parliament met at Barnwell Priory, near Cambridge, from 10 September until 18 October 1388.

20 Robert Warbylton or Warbulton was an alderman (see Beaven, I, p. 394) and died in 1387, his will is dated 11 June 1387 (see Sharpe, *Calendar of Wills*, II, p. 262); the few years delay in settlement of the provisions of his will is not unusual.

21 In the LH margin at this point, the same sixteenth-century hand has drawn a hand pointing to the paragraph and has written: 'Anno 1391: At this tyme the manner and custom was that one Warden chose his fellow Wardein *pat* sholde nexte succede hym in place'.

Memorandum that on the Monday preceding the feastday of St John the Baptist in the year 14 Richard II [19 June 1391], at an assembly in the hall of St Thomas of Acon at which all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery were gathered together, John Loveye, John Woodcock, Thomas Newenton, and John Leengge, being wardens for that year of the said mercers' mistery, rendered their account before all the aforesaid goodmen for £176 8s. remaining in their hands from that which they had received from their predecessors, over and above all the costs and expenses incurred at the parliament in Cambridge and elsewhere, this with the communal agreement of the said mercers' mistery as is fully set out in the old red paper register, and they have given to the said mistery as this year's increment – £13 6s. 8d.

1390–91
f. 5r (cont.)

Item, they have received from debts and arrears of certain persons who were previously wardens of the said mercers' mistery, as is set out in the aforesaid old red paper register:

Total – £165 15s. 1¾d.

Item, they have received from William Parker, executor of the will of Robert Warbulton (may God in his mercy absolve him!) – total – £20 which money the said Robert left in his will to the said mercers' mistery for the upkeep of its alms funds.

Sum total – £375 9s. 9¾d.

Out of which sum was spent with the communal agreement of the said mercers' mistery at a ceremony to mark the beginning of the month of May in the aforesaid year – £4

Sum total net remaining – £371 9s. 9¾d.

The which sum the abovenamed wardens produced and placed on a table before all the goodmen of the mercers' mistery at their aforesaid assembly, and at that same assembly, with the communal agreement of the whole mistery, for certain notable and advantageous reasons was handed over from this sum to William Parker for his safekeeping:

f. 5v

£358 3s. 1¾d.

Item, at the same assembly the aforesaid wardens elected four persons of the mistery to be wardens for the following year, i.e. John Loveye elected John Organ, John Woodcock elected William Sheringham, Thomas Newenton elected John Sybille, John Leengge elected Laurence Andrew, and with the communal agreement of the said mistery they handed over to each of them – 66s. 8d.

1391

Total – £13 6s. 8d.

Item, ils ount deliverez a eux une obligacioun de Johan Worstede *par* quele il est obligé a la dite mercerie en – lxvi s. viii d.

1391–92 Recepcio denariorum de introitu apprenticiorum mercerie anno quinto decimo
f. 6r²² Regis Ricardi Secundi per Johannem Organ, videlicet:²³

Pro Roberto Domynyk	}	apprenticiis Johannis Shadworth – vi s. ²⁴
Nicholao Bacoun		
Willelmo Belgrave		

Roberto Speek	}	apprenticiis Thome Austyn – xvi s.
Hugone Clerk		
Thoma Aleyn		
Johanne White		
Roberto Berkway		
Johanne Skyteby		
Ricardo Setryngtoun		
Johanne Boteler		

Willelmo Walderne	}	apprenticiis Johannis Fresshe – viii s.
Waltero Cottoun		
Thoma Grene		
Thoma Welle		

Henrico Bramptoun	}	apprenticiis Johannis Loveye – xii s.
Johanne Elys		
Nicholao Cokerelle		
Ricardo Herry		
Johanne Gowselle		
Johanne Rowghheed		

f. 6v	Henrico Carletoun	}	apprenticiis Johannis Organ – viii s.
	Ricardo Frisyngfeld		
	Johanne Thorp		
	Johanne Graunger		

22 A new hand starts here and continues to f. 10v Linne Mooney has identified the writer as Adam Pinkhurst, a scrivener, see Introduction, pp. 11–12.

23 To the LH side of this paragraph the same sixteenth-century hand has written: ‘1392, ann° 15 RR Richardi ij^{di}.

24 The same hand has written to the LH side: ‘nota every apprentyce at this tyme paid ii s. for there entrye.’

Item, they handed over to them a bond obligatory from John Worstead by which he is bound to the said mistery in the sum of – 66s. 8d.

Receipt of money, by John Organ, from the admission of apprentices to the mercers' mistery in the year 15 Richard II, i.e. 1391–92
f. 6r

For	
Robert Domenyk	} apprentices of John Shadworth – 6s.
Nicholas Bacon	
William Belgrave	

Robert Speke	} apprentices of Thomas Austyn – 16s.
Hugh Clerk	
Thomas Aleyn	
John White	
Robert Berkway	
John Skyteby	
Richard Settrington	
John Butler	

William Walderne	} apprentices of John Fresshe – 8s.
Walter Cotton	
Thomas Grene	
Thomas Welle	

Henry Brampton	} apprentices of John Loveye – 12s.
John Elys	
Nicholas Cokerelle	
Richard Harry	
John Gowselle	
John Rowghheed	

f. 6v

Henry Carleton	} apprentices of John Organ – 8s.
Richard Frisingfeld	
John Thorp	
John Graunger	

	Thoma Appelby Johanne Cholsey Johanne Freman Thoma Lydyard Johanne Melchebourne Thoma Berwyk Bartholomeo Denys Ricardo Twyford Thoma Gartoun	} apprentices Roberti Haryngeye – xviii s.
	Thoma Brangwayn Thoma Wiltshire Willelmo Butte Petro Belgrave Ricardo Ede	} apprentices Thome Vyvent ²⁵ – x s.
	Willelmo Roos Johanne Aleyn Alano Walsham Thoma Koce	} apprentices Johannis Otteley – viii s.
	Roberto Lyncoln Herberd Estfeld	} apprentices Thome Aleyn – iiiii s.
	Johanne Wolpyt Willelmo Jolyf	} apprentices Roberti Guphey – iiiii s.
f. 7r	Johanne Lardynere Willelmo Chashulle Johanne Godstoun	} apprentices Thome Newentoun – vi s.
	Johanne Wrytele Johanne Wellys Johanne Prytelwelle Thoma Boxstede	} apprentices Roberti Sherwynd – viii s.
	Thoma Berard – apprentices Thome Brangwayn – ii s.	
	Johanne Drask – apprentices Johannis Bele – ii s.	
	Ricardo Ryngstede Edmundo Walsyngham	} apprentices Nicholai Walsyngham – iiiii s.

25 Some other printed and edited sources give this man's name as 'Vynent' but the third letter here is a clearly formed 'v'. Confusion between 'u' (for 'v') and 'n' is of course common. He appears for instance in Sharpe, *Calendar of Wills*, II, pp. 307–8; *CPMR 1381–1412* (see Index); Beaven (see Index); *Letter Book 'H'* (usually as 'Vyvent', see *CLB*, 'H', Index).

Thomas Appleby	}	apprentices of Robert Haringey – 18s.
John Cholsey		
John Freman		
Thomas Lydyard		
John Melchebourne		
Thomas Berwick		
Bartholomew Denys		
Richard Twyford		
Thomas Garton		

Thomas Brangwayn	}	apprentices of Thomas Vyvent – 10s.
Thomas Wiltshire		
William Butte		
Peter Belgrave		
Richard Ede		

William Roos	}	apprentices of John Otley – 8s.
John Aleyn		
Alan Walsham		
Thomas Koce		

Robert Lincoln	}	apprentices of Thomas Aleyn – 4s.
Herbert Eastfield		

John Wolpyt	}	apprentices of Robert Guppey – 4s.
William Jolyf		

John Lardynner	}	apprentices of Thomas Newenton – 6s.
William Chashulle		
John Godston		

f. 7r

John Wrytele	}	apprentices of Robert Shirwynd – 8s.
John Welles		
John Prittlewell		
Thomas Boxsted		

Thomas Berard – apprentice of Thomas Brangwayn – 2s.

John Drask – apprentice of John Bele – 2s.

Richard Ringstead	}	apprentices of Nicholas Walsingham – 4s.
Edmund Walsingham		

	Johanne Chipynhale Thoma Raftoun	} apprenticiis Willelmi Marcheford – iii s.
	Thoma Cosham Thoma Estoun	} apprenticiis Roberti Speek — iii s.
	Henrico Daubeney Johanne Raland Johanne Farnham	} apprenticiis Willelmi Bartelot – vi s.
	Johanne Chaudy Johanne Carletoun	} apprenticiis Johannis Lane – iii s.
	Johanne Bageys Thoma Levres	} apprenticiis Johannis Sybille – iii s.
	Thoma Cresse Johanne Eytoun	} apprenticiis Willelmi Parker – iii s.
f. 7v	Thoma Gentil Roberto de la Mare	} apprenticiis Willelmi Audeby – iii s.
	Johanne Sykylbrys Johanne Holand Willelmo Herford	} apprenticiis Roberti Betelee – vi s.
	Thoma Gedeneye Roberto Trees Willelmo Reynold Johanne Knottyngelee Johanne Sturmyn	} apprenticiis Salamonis Salman – x s.
	Johanne Middeltoun Willelmo Wayke	} apprenticiis Johannis Kestevane – iii s.
	Henrico Hille Ricardo Cotne/Cotue Thoma Helperby	} apprenticiis Johannis Secheford – vi s.
	Johanne Somery – <i>apprenticio</i> Thome Middelmoor – ii s.	
	Willelmo Symeon – <i>apprenticio</i> Rogeri Stapulhurst – ii s.	
	Willelmo Parker Thoma Thorpe Thoma Dystere Johanne Perlee	} apprenticiis Roberti Warbultoun – viii s.

John Chippenhale } apprentices of William Marcheford – 4s.
Thomas Rafton }

Thomas Cosham } apprentices of Robert Speke – 4s.
Thomas Easton }

Henry Daubeney } apprentices of William Bartelot – 6s.
John Raland }
John Farnham }

John Chaudy } apprentices of John Lane – 4s.
John Carleton }

John Bageys } apprentices of John Sybille – 4s.
Thomas Levres }

Thomas Cressy } apprentices of William Parker – 4s.
John Eton }

Thomas Gentil } apprentices of William Audeby – 4s.
Robert de la Mare }

f. 7v

John Sikilbryce } apprentices of Robert Betelee – 6s.
John Holland }
William Herford }

Thomas Gedeney } apprentices of Solomon Salman – 10s.
Robert Trees }
William Reynold }
John Knottynghley }
John Sturmyn }

John Middleton } apprentices of John Kesteven – 4s.
William Wayke }

Henry Hille } apprentices of John Sedgford – 6s.
Richard Cotne/Cotue }
Thomas Helperby }

John Somery – apprentice of Thomas Middlemore – 2s.

William Symeon – apprentice of Roger Staplehurst – 2s.

William Parker } apprentices of Robert Warbulton – 8s.
Thomas Thorpe }
Thomas Dyster }
John Perlee }

	Willelmo Marcheford Johanne Bele Nicholao Walsyngham Thoma Whyte	} apprentices Johannis Maymond – viii s.
f. 8r	Ricardo Bures Willelmo Chamberleyne	} apprentices Johannis Waltoun – iii s.
	Willelmo Sonyngwell Ricardo Guy Johanne Feraunt Johanne Pomeray	} apprentices Johannis Feraunt – viii s.
	Thoma Somerford Johanne Bertoun Thoma Hawe Ricardo Ouchale Johanne Walsham Ricardo Thurstoun	} apprentices Willelmi Hawe – xii s.
	Ricardo Roos Johanne Derewyn	} apprentices Johannis Wodecok – iii s.
	Laurencio Hamptoun Johanne Langham Rogero Hawkedene	} apprentices Thome Hawe – vi s.
	Johanne Manfeld Willelmo Pencriche	} apprentices Alani Everard – iii s.
	Johanne Derham Ricardo Erys	} apprentices Radulphi Elsyng – iii s.
	Johanne Falyate Roberto Wilkyn Willelmo Brayl	} apprentices Willelmi Erntoun – vi s.
	Radulpho Middeltoun Thoma Reed Johanne Fauntleroy	} apprentices Thome Secheford – vi s.
f. 8v	Thoma Depdene	– apprentices Willelmi Sonyngwelle – ii s.
	Waltero Keteshawe Johanne Benet Willelmo Keteshawe	} apprentices Thoma Erl – vi s.

William Marcheford	}	apprentices of John Maymond – 8s.
John Bele		
Nicholas Walsingham		
Thomas White		

Richard Bures	}	apprentices of John Walton – 4s.
William Chamberleyne		

f. 8r

William Sunningwell	}	apprentices of John Feraunt – 8s.
Richard Guy		
John Feraunt		
John Pomeray		

Thomas Somerford	}	apprentices of William Hawe – 12 s.
John Barton		
Thomas Hawe		
Richard Outshale		
John Walsham		
Richard Thurston		

Richard Roos	}	apprentices of John Woodcock – 4s.
John Derwent		

Laurence Hampton	}	apprentices of Thomas Hawe – 6s.
John Langham		
Roger Hawkedene		

John Manfield	}	apprentices of Alan Everard – 4s.
William Penkridge		

John Derham	}	apprentices of Ralph Elsyng – 4s.
Richard Erys		

John Falyate	}	apprentices of William Erntoun – 6s.
Robert Wilkyn		
William Brayl		

Ralph Middleton	}	apprentices of Thomas Sedgford – 6s.
Thomas Reed		
John Fauntleroy		

Thomas Depdene – apprentice of William Sunningwell – 2s.

f. 8v

Walter Keteshawe	}	apprentices of Thomas Erl – 6s.
John Benet		
William Keteshawe		

Ricardo Sandoun
Johanne Borham } *apprenticiis Stephani Spelman* – iii s.

Johanne Hake
Johanne Godstone } *apprenticiis Thome Prudence* – iii s.

Edmundo Peytoun
Johanne Pychard
Thoma Roos
Johanne Westoun
Nicholao Lemyng } *apprenticiis Ricardi Whityngtoun* – x s.

Thoma Symoun – *apprenticio Henrici Byrtoun* – ii s.

Ricardo Everard
Thoma Turnour
Roberto Middeltoun } *apprenticiis Johannis Leenge* – vi s.

Willelmo Soleyn – *apprenticio Thome Provendre* – ii s.

Simone Casteleyn
Johanne Plat
Thoma Hawkeden
Johanne Holbeche } *apprenticiis Petri Elsynham* – viii s.

f. 9r Roberto Roos
Radulpho Elsyng
Johanne Lordyng
Ricardo Maynard
Johanne Shirbourne
Johanne Subdoun
Johanne Hoghtoun
Thoma Neuelyn
Ricardo Orwelle
Thoma Heley } *apprenticiis Nicholai Benyngtoun* – xx s.

Johanne Hithyngham
Johanne Moryce } *apprenticiis Petri Morice* – iii s.

Thoma Estoun
Willelmo Denot } *apprenticiis Roberti Buxtoun* – iii s.

Roberto Dane
Jacobo Suredene
Willelmo Foucher
Johanne Gaynour
Johanne Botoner } *apprenticiis Johannis More* – x s.

Richard Sandon
John Boreham } apprentices of Stephen Speleman – 6s.

John Hake
John Godstone } apprentices of Thomas Prudence – 4s.

Edmund Peyton
John Pichard
Thomas Roos
John Weston
Nicholas Lemyng } apprentices of Richard Whittington – 10s.

Thomas Symond – apprentice of Henry Byrton – 2s.

Richard Everard
Thomas Turnour
Robert Middleton } apprentices of John Leengge – 6s.

William Soleyn – apprentice of Thomas Provendre – 2s.

Simon Casteleyn
John Plat
Thomas Hawkedene
John Holbeach } apprentices of Peter Elsynham – 8s.

Robert Roos
Ralph Elsyng
John Lordyng
Richard Maynard
John Sherborne
John Subdoun
John Hoghton
Thomas Neuelyn
Richard Orwell
Thomas Heley } apprentices of Nicholas Benyngton – 20s.

f. 9r

John Hithyngham
John Morice } apprentices of Peter Morice – 4s.

Thomas Easton
William Denot } apprentices of Robert Buxton – 4s.

Robert Dane
James Surendene
William Foucher
John Gaynour
John Botoner } apprentices of John More – 10s.

Adami Cove
Henrico Dymmok } *apprenticiis Ricardi Guy* – iii s.

Ricardo Wonere
Johanne Rothewelle } *apprenticiis Thome Mordoun* – iii s.

Johanne Barbour – *apprenticio Roberti Webbe* – ii s.

Johanne Alboun – *apprenticio Willelmi de Bury* – ii s.

f. 9v Johanne Herdewyk
Ricardo Tipup } *apprenticiis Hugonis Clerk* – iii s.

Ricardo Hathewyk
Thoma Welcome²⁶ } *apprenticiis Thome Fauconer* – iii s.

Thoma Pychard – *apprenticio Ricardi Ouchale* – ii s.

Johanne Brutoun
Johanne Coventre } *apprenticiis Johannis Cosham* – iii s.

Johanne Edmond – *apprenticio Johannis Middeltoun* – ii s.

Johanne Michel – *apprenticio Willelmi Rose* – ii s.

Edmundo Thelfetham – *apprenticio Edmundi Thelfetham* – ii s.

Numerus apprenticiorum – Ciiii^{xx}

Summa – xviii li.

Pro anno ii^o:

De Hugone Clerk – vi s. viii d.

De Willelmo Scoti – vi s. viii d.

De Thoma Lucas – vi s. viii d.

De Thoma Fauconer – vi s. viii d.

De Ricardo Ouchale – vi s. viii d.

De Johanne Subdoun – vi s. viii d.

De Johanne Cosham²⁷ – vi s. viii d.

Summa – xlvi s. viii d.

²⁶ The letter 'c' of this name is clear, but may be a scribal copying error as he later appears as 'Weltoun'.

²⁷ On this man, who had formerly been a haberdasher, see Imray, 'Les bones gentes', pp. 164–5.

Adam Cove
Henry Dymmok } apprentices of Richard Guy – 4s.

Richard Wonere
John Rothwell } apprentices of Thomas Mordon – 4s.

John Barbour – apprentice of Robert Webbe – 2s.

John Albon – apprentice of William de Bury – 2s.

John Hardwick
Richard Tipup } apprentices of Hugh Clerk – 4s.

f. 9v

Richard Hathewyk
Thomas Welton } apprentices of Thomas Fauconer – 4s.

Thomas Pichard – apprentice of Richard Outshale – 2s.

John Bruton
John Coventry } apprentices of John Cosham – 4s.

John Edmund – apprentice of John Middleton – 2s.

John Michel – apprentice of William Roos – 2s.

Edmund Thelfetham – apprentice of Edmund Thelfetham – 2s.

Number of apprentices – 180

Sum – £18

For their second year:

from Hugh Clerk – 6s. 8d.

from William Scot – 6s. 8d.

from Thomas Lucas – 6s. 8d.

from Thomas Fauconer – 6s. 8d.

from Richard Outshale – 6s. 8d.

from John Subdown – 6s. 8d.

from John Cosham – 6s. 8d.

– total – 46s. 8d.

f. 10r

Pro anno primo:

De Johanne atte Mille –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Perlys –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Middeltoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Michel –	vi s. viii d.
De Simone Bertelot –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Herry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne White –	vi s. viii d.
De Willelmo Rose –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Walsham –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Barry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Grene –	vi s. viii d.
De Rogero Wryngesworth –	vi s. viii d.
De Johanne Lardynere –	vi s. viii d.
De Willelmo Goodman –	vi s. viii d.

Summa – iii li. xiii s. iii d.

Exitus apprenticiorum:

Item, de predicto Johanne atte Mille –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Perlys –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Middeltoun –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Michel –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Simone Bertelot –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Herry –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Whyte –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Willelmo Rose –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Walsham –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Barry –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Grene –	ii s.
Item, de predicto [Rogero] ²⁸ Wryngesworth –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Johanne Lardynere –	ii s.
Item, de predicto Willelmo Goodman –	ii s.
Et de Ricardo Wonere –	ii s.

Summa – xxx s.

f. 10v

De non bene intrantibus:

De Johanne atte Mille – xx s.

De Simone Bartelot – lxvi s. vii d.

Summa – iii li. vi s. viii d.

De denariis mercerie – lxvi s. viii d.

Et dat de incremento – xiii s. iii d.

Summa – iii li.

Summa totalis recepta – xxxiiii li. xvi s. viii d.

28 MS: *Johanne*. See above and Name Index.

For their first year:

f. 10r

from John atte Mille –	6s. 8d.
from John Perlee –	6s. 8d.
from John Middleton –	6s. 8d.
from John Michel –	6s. 8d.
from Simon Bartelot –	6s. 8d.
from John Harry –	6s. 8d.
from John White –	6s. 8d.
from William Roos –	6s. 8d.
from John Walsham –	6s. 8d.
from John Barry –	6s. 8d.
from John Grene –	6s. 8d.
from Roger Wryngesworth –	6s. 8d.
from John Lardynner –	6s. 8d.
from William Goodman –	6s. 8d.
– total –	£4 13s. 4d.

Issue of apprentices:

Item, from the aforesaid John atte Mille –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Perlee –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Middleton –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Michel –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid Simon Bartelot –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Harry –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John White –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid William Roos –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Walsham –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Barry –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Grene –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid [Roger] Wryngesworth –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid John Lardynner –	2s.
Item, from the aforesaid William Goodman –	2s.
And from Richard Wonere –	2s.
– total –	30s.

From those whose admission was incorrect:¹⁴

f. 10v

from John atte Mille – 20s.
 from Simon Bartelot – 66s. 7d.
 total – £4 6s. 8d.

Of the mercers' money – 66s. 8d.
 And he gives as increment – 13s. 4d.

Total – £4

Total sum received – £34 16s. 8d.

¹⁴ Literally 'those not entering well'. Neither of these men is recorded as having been admitted as an apprentice, but this may simply be due to the lack of records before this date. A probable reason for these fees is that they had not served a full term of apprenticeship. See also below, f. 15r.

Inde solut' domino Willelmo Hedyngdoun, capellano nostro, pro salario unius anni – vi li. xiii s. iiii d.

Item, pro furrura sua – vi s. viii d.

Summa – vii li.

Item, Johanni Bostoun de elemosina – lii s.

Item, Roberto Hengham de elemosina – xii s.

Item, Willelmo Willesdoun pro labore suo²⁹ – lii s.

Summa – Cxvi s.

Summa totalis soluta – xii li. xvi s.

Et sic reman' – xxii li. viii d.

1392
f. 11r³⁰

Fait a remembrer qe coment qe Johan Organ, William Shiryngham, Johan Sibyle, et Laurence Andrewe furent esluz mestres de la mercerie le lundy proscheyn devant le feste de Seint Johan le Baptistre l'an du regne le roi Richard seconde xiiii^e, pur gouverner la dite mistere solonc lours ordenances pur l'an ensuyant, et nientmeyns le dit Johan Organ de sa frank volentee pryst sur soy mesmes tout l'occupacioun de cel an et singulièrement ent ad fait soun accompt come piert cy devant.

1392–94

Les causes pur quey les mestres demorerent nient chaungez par trois ans:³¹

Et pur taunt qe devant le lundy proscheyn devant le feste de Seint Johan Baptistre l'an du regne le Roi Richard xv^e, le Maire, Aldermans et viscountes ovesqe xxiiii de les pluis vaillantz communers de Loundres furent chargez d'appierer devant le Roi en le chastel de Notyngham l'endemayn de ycel feste de Seint Johan suisdit, et tost après a Wyndesore, pur certaines grosses materes moevetz encontre la dite Citee de Loundres,³² les bones gentz del dite mistere ne pooient a ycel jour covenablement tener lour congregacioun ne chaunger lours mestres solonc lours ordenances et custumes, si qe les avantditz Johan Organ, William Shiryngham, Johan Sibyle et Laurence Andrewe demorerent mestres pur l'an ensuyant. En le quel an le dit Johan Organ devya (qe dieux l'assoille) et le dit Johan Sibyle unqes ne se mella, ne al fyn de cel an c'est assavoir le lundy proschein devant le feste de Seint Johan Baptistre l'an de nostre dit seignur le roi xvi^e n'apparust en la congregacioun adonqes fait pur faire son devoir touchant le eleccioun de par luy a faire.³³ Et coment qe les ditz William et Laurence y furent adonqes prestes pur accompter et faire ceo qe a eux mesmes appartenoit a faire, nient pur tant par causes del absence du dit Johan Sibyle, et altercacioun par qi serroit fait le eleccioun de par Johan Organ, refuserent les bones gentz del mistere l'accompt des ditz William et Laurence pur ycel temps et eux chargerent de rechief mestres pur l'an ensuyant.

29 See the similar entry below, p. 84, where it is clear that the payment is being made out of the alms funds. One must presume William Willesdon to have been the beadle.

30 This is again from here in the same hand as wrote ff. 1r–5v.

31 This note is written in the right-hand column.

32 On all these events, see Sutton, *First Charter*. The writ summoning the Londoners was issued on 29 May 1392. The mercers who had to attend included the wardens William Sheringham and John Sibille.

33 He was in fact imprisoned in the Tower at this time, see Sutton, *First Charter*, p. 9.

From which paid to Sir William Hedyngton, our chaplain, for one year's salary – £6 13s. 4d.

Item, for his fur – 6s. 8d.

Total – £7

Item, John Boston as alms – 52s.

Item, Robert Hengham as alms – 12s.

Item, William Willesdon for his work – 52s.

Total – 116s.

Sum total paid – £12 16s.

And thus there remains – £22 8d.

Memorandum that whereas John Organ, William Sheringham, John Sybille, and Laurence Andrew were elected wardens of the mercers' mistery on the Monday preceding the feastday of St John the Baptist in the year 14 Richard II [19 June 1391], to govern the said mistery for the year next following in accordance with its ordinances, nevertheless the said John Organ of his own free will took upon himself all the responsibilities of that year and made his account individually as appears above.

1392
f. 11r

The reasons for which the wardens remained unchanged for three years:

1392–94

Since before the Monday preceding the feastday of St John the Baptist in the year 15 Richard II [17 June 1392] the Mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs together with 24 of the most worthy commoners of London were commanded to appear before the King at Nottingham Castle on the day after that said feastday of St John [25 June 1392] and shortly thereafter at Windsor, for certain important business concerning the said City of London, the goodmen of the said mistery could not hold their assembly in proper manner on that day nor change their wardens in accordance with their ordinances and customs, and thus the aforesaid John Organ, William Sheringham, John Sybille, and Laurence Andrew remained as wardens for the following year. During the which year the said John Organ died (may God absolve him) and the said John Sybille never took any part in anything, nor at the end of the year, i.e. on the Monday preceding the feastday of St John the Baptist in the year [17] Richard II [23 June 1393]¹⁵ did he appear at the assembly held then in order to carry out his duty concerning the election that was for him to make. And although the said William and Laurence were at that time prepared to present accounts and do all that pertained to themselves to do, yet nevertheless, because both of the absence of John Sybille and of disagreements about who should make the election in place of John Organ, the goodmen of the mistery refused to accept the accounts of the said William and Laurence for that time and charged them once again to act as wardens for the following year.

¹⁵ The text has a clear 'xvi' for the regnal year, but year 16 in fact finished on 21 June 1393; however, the logical sequence of events must mean year 17 and this date, although one can see how the error arose.

1394 C'est l'acompt de William Shirynggham *et* Laurence Andrew, mestres de la
f. 11v mercerye, fait al feste de Seint Johan Baptistre l'an du regne nostre *seignur* le Roy
Richard seconde xviii^e comenceant *pur* deux ans proscheins devant passez, c'est
assavoir les ans xvi^e *et* xvii^e *pur* quel temps ils ount ew soulement la charge, come
piert.

1392–93

Les Receptz

Pur lour tierce an:

De Hugh Clerk –	vi s. viii d.
De William Scot –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Lucas –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Fauconer –	vi s. viii d.
De Richard Outshale –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Cosham –	vi s. viii d.
<i>Summa</i> –	xl s.

Pur lour seconde an:

De Johan atte Melle –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Parles –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Middeltoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Michel –	vi s. viii d.
De Symond Bertelot –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Herry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan White –	vi s. viii d.
De William Rose –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Walsham –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Barry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Grene –	vi s. viii d.
De Roger Wryngesworth –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Lardyner –	vi s. viii d.
De William Goodman –	vi s. viii d.
<i>Summa</i> –	iiii li. xiii s. iii d.

f. 12r

Pur lour primer an:

De Walter Kete[s]hawe ³⁴ –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Welles –	vi s. viii d.
De Bartholomeu Bosane –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Gedeney –	vi s. viii d.
<i>Summa</i> –	xxvi s. viii d.

³⁴ MS: Kete hawe.

This is the account of William Sheringham and Laurence Andrew, wardens of the mercers' mistery, made up to the feastday¹⁶ of St John the Baptist in the year 18 Richard II [24 June 1394], starting with [accounts] for the two previous years, i.e. 16 [Richard II] and 17 [Richard II], during which time they alone have been responsible,¹⁷ as appears:

1394
f. 11v

Receipts

1392–93

For their third year:

from Hugh Clerk –	6s. 8d.
from William Scot –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Lucas –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Fauconer –	6s. 8d.
from Richard Outshale –	6s. 8d.
from John Cosham –	6s. 8d.
total –	40s.

For their second year:

from John atte Mille –	6s. 8d.
from John Parles –	6s. 8d.
from John Middleton –	6s. 8d.
from John Michel –	6s. 8d.
from Simon Bartelot –	6s. 8d.
from John Harry –	6s. 8d.
from John White –	6s. 8d.
from William Roos –	6s. 8d.
from John Walsham –	6s. 8d.
from John Barry –	6s. 8d.
from John Grene –	6s. 8d.
from Roger Wryngesworth –	6s. 8d.
from John Lardynner –	6s. 8d.
from William Goodman –	6s. 8d.
total –	£4 13s. 4d.

For their first year:

from Walter Keteshawe –	6s. 8d.
from John Welles –	6s. 8d.
from Bartholomew Bosan ¹⁸ –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Gedeney –	6s. 8d.
total –	26s. 8d.

f. 12r

16 In this and subsequent accounts, the preliminary note that the account is 'fait al feste de' could mean it was rendered on that feast day (as indeed by ordinance it should have been at about that date, see above, f. 2r). However, the verb 'rendre' is not used in this context although it is in others, and, more tellingly, the information is given in 1409 (see below, f. 50r) that for some time past the accounts had been rendered very late on in the year of office, and a new ordinance lays down a rule for them to be rendered between the day of election of the new wardens and 1 August each year.

17 'La charge' in this context should be understood as relating very much to their financial responsibilities but also to all responsibilities of office.

18 He was a native of Lucca; see his entry in the *ODNB*, vol. 6, pp. 687–8.

Des issues de apprentices:

De Walter Keteshawe –	ii s.
De Johan Welles –	ii s.
De Bertholomeu Bosane –	ii s.
De Thomas Gedeney –	ii s.
Summa –	viii s.

Deneres del mercerie:

Item, ils ount receu de Johan Sybyle, del argent deliverré a luy a son eleccioun, v marc. Item, qe chescun des ditz William et Laurence receust a son eleccioun v marc –

Summa – x li.

Item, q'ils ount receu de William Parker des deners del mercerie pur dyverses busoignes touchant le mercerie – xl li.

La somme total de lour recept amount net – lviii li. viii s.

Paie mentz de cel an, vidz. xvi^e:

Prestre:

Primes, a Sire William Hedyngdoun, prestre, pur son salarye – vi li. xiii s. iiiii d.

Item, pur son forrure a sa liveré devers Paske – vi s. viiii d. – Somme – vii li.

Almoigne:

Item, paie en almoigne a Johan Bostoun pur cel an – lii s.

Item, a William Willesdoun pur salarye pur cel an³⁵ – lii s.
– v li. iiiii s.

Item, paie par comune assent del mercerye a v persones del dite mercerie pur lour costages a un mommyng ovesqe le Roi a Eltham, a chescun xii s. – Somme – iii li.

Item, paie pur mynstralles a lour chivalcher ovesqe le viscounte Johan Shadworth – xl s.

f. 12v

Item, qe Walter Strete est aderer et doit pur sa liverree de baldekyn vers la venewe del Roi³⁶ ordeigné – xiiii s. viii d.

La somme total paie amount – xvii li. xviii s. iiiii d.

35 William Willesdon is presumably the beadle (see above, p. 80). For some reason his salary is being paid out of the alms funds, as is the case later also for some, but not all, salaries paid to the successive beadles.

36 See Sutton, *First Charter*, pp. 6–7.

From issues of apprentices:

from Walter Keteshawe –	2s.
from John Welles –	2s.
from Bartholomew Bosan –	2s.
from Thomas Gedeney –	2s.
total –	8s.

Money belonging to the mercers' mistery:

Item, they received from John Sybille, of the money handed over to him at his election, five marks. Item, each of the said William and Laurence received at his election five marks:

Total – £10

Item, they received from William Parker out of monies belonging to the mercers' mistery, for various needs relating to the mistery – £40

Sum total of their receipts amounts net to – £58 8s.

Payments made this year, i.e. 16 [Richard II]:

The priest:

Firstly, to Sir William Hedyngton, priest, for his salary – £6 13s. 4d. Item, for the fur¹⁹ for his livery clothing at Easter time – 6s. 8d. – total – £7

Alms:

Item, paid as alms to John Boston for this year – 52s.

Item, to William Willesdon for his salary for this year – 52s.
– £5 4s.

Item, paid with the communal agreement of the mercers' mistery to five persons of the said mistery for their expenses at a mummers' play in the presence of the King at Eltham Palace,²⁰ to each one 12s. Total – £3

Item, paid for musicians at their riding in procession²¹ with the sheriff John Shadworth – 40s.

Item, that Walter Street is in arrears and owes for his livery of baudekin²² ordered for the occasion of the arrival of the King – 14s. 8d.

f. 12v

Sum total paid out amounts to – £17 18s. 4d.

¹⁹ Or 'fur lining'.

²⁰ On the Christmas 1392 festivities at Eltham see Barron, 'The quarrel', p. 195.

²¹ The word used here and often (in various spellings) in subsequent years is 'chivalcher' 'chyvalché' for which the equivalent word in English at the time was 'riding', i.e. a procession on horseback.

²² 'A rich embroidered stuff, originally made with warp of gold thread and woof of silk; later, with wider application, rich brocade, rich shot silk' (*OED*).

La reest del an xvi^e:

Remaynt en lour mayns de deners del mercerie – xl li. ix s. viii d.

1393–94 C'est l'acompt des avantditz William et Laurence, mestres de la mercerie, pur l'an xvii^e suisdit:

Primes, ils ount receu del remaynt del darrein an, come piert desuis – xl li. ix s. viii d.

Pur lour tiercz an:

De Johan atte Melle –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Parles –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Middeltoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Michel –	vi s. viii d.
De Symond Bartelot –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Herry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan White –	vi s. viii d.
De William Rose –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Walsham –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Barry –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Grene –	vi s. viii d.
De Roger Wryngesworth –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Lardynner –	vi s. viii d.
De William Goodman –	vi s. viii d.
Somme –	iiii li. xiii s. iiiii d.

f. 13r

Pur lour seconde an:

De Walter Keteshawe –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Welles –	vi s. viii d.
De Bertholomeu Bosane –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Gedeney –	vi s. viii d.
–	xxvi s. viii d.

Pur lour primere an:

De Thomas Dyster –	vi s. viii d.
De Nicholas Bacoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Picchard –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Wylteshire –	vi s. viii d.
De William Butte –	vi s. viii d.
De Adam Cove –	vi s. viii d.
De Richard Forester –	vi s. viii d.
–	xlvi s. viii d.

Balance for the year 16 [Richard II]:

There remains in their hands of the monies of the mercers' mistery – £40 9s. 8d.

This is the account of the aforesaid William and Laurence, wardens of the
mercers' mistery, for the aforesaid year 17 [Richard II]: 1393–94

Firstly, they received the balance of the last year, as appears above – £40 9s. 8d.

For their third year:

from John atte Mille –	6s. 8d.
from John Parles –	6s. 8d.
from John Middleton –	6s. 8d.
from John Michel –	6s. 8d.
from Simon Bartelot –	6s. 8d.
from John Harry –	6s. 8d.
from John White –	6s. 8d.
from William Roos –	6s. 8d.
from John Walsham –	6s. 8d.
from John Barry –	6s. 8d.
from John Grene –	6s. 8d.
from Roger Wryngesworth –	6s. 8d.
from John Lardynner –	6s. 8d.
from William Goodman –	6s. 8d.
total –	£4 13s. 4d.

For their second year:

f. 13r

from Walter Keteshawe –	6s. 8d.
from John Welles –	6s. 8d.
from Bartholomew Bosan –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Gedeney –	6s. 8d.
–	26s. 8d.

For their first year:

from Thomas Dyster –	6s. 8d.
from Nicholas Bacon –	6s. 8d.
from John Pichard –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Wiltshire –	6s. 8d.
from William Butte –	6s. 8d.
from Adam Cove –	6s. 8d.
from Richard Forester –	6s. 8d.
–	46s. 8d.

Issues d'appren[tic]es:

De Thomas Dyster – ii s.
 De Nicholas Bacoun – ii s.
 De Johan Picchard – ii s.
 De Thomas Wiltshire – ii s.
 De William Butte – ii s.
 De Adam Cove – ii s.
 De Richard Forester – ii s.
 – xiiii s.

Amorcimentz:

Item, ils ount receu de dyverses gentz del mercerie *pur* amercimentz – xiii s.

La somme total receu amont – L li. iii s. iiii d.

Payementz de cel an, vidz xvii^{me}:

Almoigne:

Primes, a Johan Enmede *pur* almoigne – xiii s.
 Item, a Roger Caustoun *pur* almoigne – xvi s. viii d.
 Item, a Johan Bostoun *pur* almoigne – lii s.
 – iiii li. xx d.

Salarie:

Item, a William Willesdoun *pur* sa salarie³⁷ – lii s.
 Item, a Sire William Hedyngdoun *pur* sa salarie – ix marcz
et pur furrure de soun liverree a Pasch – vi s. viii d. } vii li.
 – ix li. xii s.

f. 13v

Costages:

Item, ils ount païé *pur* ministrels al chivacher ovesqe Richard Whityngtoun, viscounte – xx s.
 Item, as ministrels a le chivacher ovesqe le Meyr Johan Haddele – xxvi s. viii d.
 Item, ils ount païés *par comune* assent del mercerie a Johan Haddele, meyr de Loundres en le dit an, *pur* certeyns bosoignes touchantz la fraunchise de la cité,³⁸ c'est assavoir le v. jour de Juyn l'an xvii^e – x li.
 Item, ils ount paiez *pur* coverer d'yceste mesme livre del mercerie – ii s. iiii d.
Summa totalis païé – xxvi li. ii s. viii d.

37 One notes that the entry for this payment is now under salary payments rather than as previously under alms (see above, pp. 80 and 84).

38 On this whole matter, see Barron, 'The Quarrel'. This payment went to Richard II, as part of the huge fine he exacted for restitution of the City's civil liberties after his taking of the City into his own hands in 1392. See also below, f. 15v.

Issues of apprentices:

from Thomas Dyster –	2s.
from Nicholas Bacon –	2s.
from John Pichard –	2s.
from Thomas Wiltshire –	2s.
from William Butte –	2s.
from Adam Cove –	2s.
from Richard Forester –	2s.
– 14s.	

Fines:

Item, they received from various members of the mercers' mistery as fines – 13s.

Sum total received amounts to – £50 3s. 4d.

Payments made this year, i.e. 17 [Richard II]:

Alms:

First, to John Enmede as alms –	13s.
Item, to Roger Causton as alms –	16s. 8d.
Item, to John Boston as alms –	52s.
£4 20d.	

Salary:

Item, to William Willesdon for his salary – 52s.

Item, to Sir William Hedyngton for his salary – 9 marks and for the fur of his livery clothing at Easter – 6s. 8d. £9 12s.	}	£7
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Expenditure:

f. 13v

Item, they paid for musicians at the procession with Richard Whittington, sheriff²³ – 20s.

Item, to the musicians at the procession with the Mayor John Hadley²⁴ – 26s. 8d.

Item, they paid by communal agreement of the mercers' mistery to John Hadley, Mayor of London in the said year, for certain needs concerning the City liberties, i.e. on 5 June 17 Richard II [1394] – £10

Item, they paid for the covering of this same [register]-book of the mercers' mistery²⁵ – 2s. 4d.

Sum total paid – £26 2s. 8d.

23 The sheriffs were elected each year on 21 September and took their oaths at the Guildhall on 28 September, then rode in procession to Westminster to be presented and sworn before the barons of the Exchequer on 29 September; see Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 159. See CLB, 'H', pp. 347–8, for an ordinance of 13 October 1389 restraining the misteries from excessive expenses on these processions; see also Riley, *Memorials*, pp. 515–16.

24 On the Mayor's procession from the Guildhall to Westminster, on 29 October each year (the day after the feast of St Simon and St Jude), see Riley, *Liber Albus*, pp. 24–7, Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 152.

25 It is probable that for this price the 'covering' would have consisted of boards covered with hide, a practical cover without any decoration.

La rest del aan xvii^e:

Ency *qe* remaynt en lez mayns des ditz William *et* Laurens des deners del mercerie – xxiiii li. viii d.

- 1394 Et fait assavoir *qe* a ycele mesme fest de Seint Johan le Baptistre devantdit, a un congregacioun de lez bones gentz del mister en la sale de Seint Thomas, furent eslutz *par* lour comune avissement iiii mestres del dit mister *pur* l'an proschein ensuyant, c'est assavoir William Parker, Johan More, William Sonyngwelle *et* William Marcheford, as *queux* iiii mestres lez ditz William Shiryngham *et* Laurens Andrew ount deliverez ceo *qe* remaint en *lour* mains – xxiiii li. viii d.³⁹

⁴⁰Item, ils ount donez *pur* l'encrés dez liverez *et* vestures del mercerie *par* eaux faitz en lez ditz ii ans, vz. xvi^e *et* xvii^e, dount ils rendount acounpte outre ceo q'ils ount acounptee – xiii li. vi s. viii d.

Summa totalis de cestez ii *parcelles* liverez *et* donez – xxxvii li. vii s. iiii d.

Item, ils ount deliverez a eux un obligacioun de Jankyn Worstede, la *quele* ils ount receu en *lour* primer charge, de – iii li. vi s. viii d.⁴¹

- f. 14r Item, ils ount liverez dettours lez executours de Johan Organ *pur* la rest *qe* remaint en la main du dit Johan a temps de sa mort (*qe* dieux ly assoille), come piert en iceste mesme livere cy derere al fin de soun acounpte – xxii li. viii d.

Item, ils ount deliveré dettour Walter Strete, qi doit *pur* sa livré de baldek come piert en *nostre* acounpte del an xvi^e – xiiii s. viii d.

Sy *qe* la somme de ceo *qe* nous avoms deliveré a eux en argent comptant *et* dettours amounte net – lxiii li. ix s. iiii d.

Et M^d *qe* toute foith remaint en main de William Parker de la somme *qe* ly fust baillé en garde au temps qant nous furoms eslitz, c'est assavoir CCClviii li. iii s. i d., ob. q^a, rebatus lez xl li. *par* nous de luy receuz, dount nous avoms meynenant pleynement acounpté –

– CCCxviii li. iii s. i d. ob. q^a

39 A note in the LH margin against the last two lines of this entry reads 'Cessent lez veils mestres'.

40 A note in the LH margin against the beginning of this entry reads 'Comencent les novellez mestres'. However, below f. 14r, the account is put in the words of the old wardens still: 'nostre acounpte', 'nous avoms ...'.

41 See above, p. 66.

The balance for the year 17 [Richard II]:

Thus there remains in the hands of the said William and Laurence, of the monies of the mercers' mistery – £24 8d.

Memorandum that at that same feast of St John the Baptist aforesaid, at an assembly of the goodmen of the mistery in the hall at St Thomas's, there were elected by their communal consultation four wardens of the said mistery for the coming year, i.e. William Parker, John More, William Sunningwell, and William Marcheford, to the which four wardens the said William Sheringham and Laurence Andrew handed over what remained in their hands – £24 8d.²⁶

1394

²⁷Item, they gave as profit on the livery and clothing of the mercers' mistery arranged²⁸ by them during the two years, i.e. 16 and 17 [Richard II], for which they render account over and above what has been accounted – £13 6s. 8d.

Sum total of these two separate amounts handed over and given – £37 7s. 4d.

Item, they handed over to them a bond obligatory from Jankyn [John] Worstead, which they received among their first receipts,²⁹ for – £3 6s. 8d.

Item, they handed over as debtors the executors of John Organ for the balance which the said John had in his hands at the time of his death (may God absolve him), as appears above in this same register-book at the end of his account – £22 8d.

f. 14r

Item, they handed over as a debtor Walter Street, who owes for his livery of baudekin, as appears in our account for the year 16 [Richard II] – 14s. 8d.

Thus the total which we have handed over to them in ready money and in debts amounts net to – £63 9s. 4d.

Memorandum also that there still remains in the hands of William Parker, out of the sum which was placed in his keeping at the time of our election, i.e. £358 3s. 1¾d., having deducted the £40 received from him by us, for which we have now made full account –

£318 3s. 1¾d.

26 The LH margin note says that 'the old wardens retire'.

27 The LH margin note says that 'the new wardens start', i.e. they take up their responsibilities from this moment.

28 Literally the text just says 'made' or 'done by them'; this will have involved both the ordering of the cloth and the distribution, plus all accounting connected with the operation.

29 An alternative translation here would be 'when they first took up office'.

1394–95 C'est l'acompte de William Parker, Johan More, William Sonyngwell, *et* William Marcheford, mestres de la mercerye, faite en l'endemain del feste de Seynt Johan Baptistre l'an du regne nostre *Seignur* le Roy Richard *seconde* xix^{me}, comenceant pur un an proscheyn devant passé, c'est asavoir l'an xviii^e, pur quel an ils furent mestres.

Receptes

f. 14v Primerement, ils ont receu de lour *predecessours* en deniers *et* dettours, come piert devant par l'acompte des ditz William Shirynggham *et* Laurence – lxiii li. ix s. iiiii d.

Item, ils soy chargent ové les deniers en les mains William Parker *qe* luy furent baillez a garder come piert devant – CCCxviii li. iii s. i d. ob. q^a

Pur lour iii^e an:

De Walter Ketsawe –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Welles –	vi s. viii d.
De Bette Bosane –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Gedeney –	vi s. viii d.
– xxvi s. viii d.	

Pur lour *seconde* an:

De Thomas Dystar –	vi s. viii d.
De Nichol Bacoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Pichard –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Wiltshire –	vi s. viii d.
De William But –	vi s. viii d.
De Adam Cove –	vi s. viii d.
De Richard Forester –	vi s. viii d.
– xlvi s. viii d.	

Pur lour *primere* an:

De Thomas Dentoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Richard Everard –	vi s. viii d.
De Henri Carletoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Herksted –	vi s. viii d.
De Henri Trenche –	vi s. viii d.
De Johan Walsham le puisné –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Hadstoke –	vi s. viii d.
De Rauf Middeltoun –	vi s. viii d.
De Esmon Man –	vi s. viii d.
De Nichol Cokerell –	vi s. viii d.
De Thomas Grene –	vi s. viii d.
– iii li. xiii s. iiiii d.	

This is the account of William Parker, John More, William Sunningwell, and William Marcheford, wardens of the mercers' mistery, rendered³⁰ the day after the feast of St John the Baptist in the year 19 Richard II [25 June 1395], starting from one year immediately preceding that, i.e. 18 Richard II, for the which year they were wardens.

1394–95

Receipts:

Firstly, they received from their predecessors in money and in debts, as appears above in the account of the said William Sheringham and Laurence – £63 9s. 4d.

f. 14v

Item, they declare the money in the hands of William Parker which was placed in his keeping, as appears above – £318 3s. 1¾d.

For their third year:

from Walter Keteshawe –	6s. 8d.
from John Welles –	6s. 8d.
from Bartholomew Bosan –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Gedeney –	6s. 8d.
– 26s. 8d.	

For their second year:

from Thomas Dyster –	6s. 8d.
from Nicholas Bacon –	6s. 8d.
from John Pichard –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Wiltshire –	6s. 8d.
from William Butte –	6s. 8d.
from Adam Cove –	6s. 8d.
from Richard Forester –	6s. 8d.
– 46s. 8d.	

For their first year:

from Thomas Denton –	6s. 8d.
from Richard Everard –	6s. 8d.
from Henry Carleton –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Harkstead –	6s. 8d.
from Henry Trenche –	6s. 8d.
from John Walsham the younger –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Hadstoke –	6s. 8d.
from Ralph Middleton –	6s. 8d.
from Edmund Man –	6s. 8d.
from Nicholas Cokerelle –	6s. 8d.
from Thomas Grene –	6s. 8d.
– £3 13s. 4d.	

³⁰ The phrasing in this case suggests that the account was actually rendered on that day. Literally it says: 'made on the day after the feastday ...'.

De exitibus *apprenticiorum*:

Item, de chescun des xi *persones* *proschein* devant escriptz del issue de *apprenticialté* – ii s.

Summa – xxii s.

Item, receu de ceux *qe* ne ont servy lour termes solonc les ordina[n]ces del mister, vidz:

f. 15r

Fines de non *bene intrantibus*:

De Johan Hake – iii li. vi s. viii d.

De Johan Herry – xl s.

De Thomas Grene – xl s.

De Johan Everard – xx s.

– viii li. vi s. viii d.

Fynes de ceux *qe* aloient as feires encontre l'ordina[n]ce:

De William But – xx s.

De Aleyn Everard – xl s.

De Thomas Wiltshire – xiii s. iiiii d.

De Laurence Andrew – xiii s. iiiii d.

– iiiii li. vi s. viii d.

Fynes de ceux *qe* furent absent a i chivalchee ordeigné:

De Johan Everard – vi s. viii d.

De Nichol Walsyngham – vi s. viii d.

De Thomas Brangewayn – vi s. viii d.

De William Hawe – vi s. viii d.

– xxvi s. viii d.

Item, receu de diverses gentz *qe* furent absentez as congregacions – xi s. viii d.

Item, receu de l'encrees de la lyvree del mistere de cel an – xxxvii s. ii d.

Item, receu de William Parker de don – x li.

Item, receu de diverses gentz si bien executours come autres de lour bone volentee *par* mocioun des ditz mestres *pur* ayder *et* encresser le comune profit dont les mestres ont soulement counissantz – vi li. iiiii s. i d.

Summa totalis receu en toutes choses come piert devant amount net
CCCCxxii li. xiiii s. i d. ob. q^a.

From issues of apprentices:

Item, from each of the 11 persons [whose names] are written just above here, for their issue from apprenticeship – 2s.

Total – 22s.

Item, received from those who had not served out their terms according to the ordinances of the mistery, i.e.

Fees from those who were not admitted in proper manner:³¹

f. 15r

from John Hake – £3 6s. 8d.

from John Harry – 40s.

from Thomas Grene – 40s.

from John Everard – 20s.

£8 6s. 8d.

Fines from those who went to fairs in contravention of the ordinance:

from William Butte – 20s.

from Alan Everard – 40s.

from Thomas Wiltshire – 13s. 4d.

from Laurence Andrew – 13s. 4d.

– £4 6s. 8d.

Fines from those who were absent from a procession that had been prescribed:

from John Everard – 6s. 8d.

from Nicholas Walsingham – 6s. 8d.

from Thomas Brangwayn – 6s. 8d.

from William Hawe – 6s. 8d.

– 26s. 8d.

Item, received from various people who were absent from assemblies – 11s. 8d.

Item, received from the profit on the mistery's livery this year – 37s. 2d.

Item, received as a gift from William Parker – £10

Item, received from various people, who are known to the wardens alone, both executors and others of their own goodwill at the prompting of the wardens, in order to help and increase the communal profit – £6 4s. 1d.

Sum total received from all things as appears above, amounts net to
£422 14s. 1¾d.

31 See the Name Index for all these, who indeed do not appear to have followed the straight career path laid down in the ordinances. For John Hake, e.g. see also below, f. 32r.

f. 15v

Discharge

Salarie:

Primerement, ils ont païé a Sire William Hedyngdoun, *lour* chapeleyn, *pur* salarie – vi li. xiii s. iiii d. *Item*, *pur* son furrure – vi s. viii d. *Item*, païé a William Willesdoun *pur* sa salarie – lii s.

Some – ix li. xii s.

Almoigne:

Item, païé a Johan Bostoun en almoigne – lii s.

Item, a Roger Caustoun en almoigne – lii s.
v li. iiii s.

Minstralles:

Item, païé minstralles al venu del Roi d'Irland – iii li. viii s. viii d.

Item, païé *pur* i bille touchant le franchise al Gyldhall⁴² – vi s. viii d.

1392–94

La manere de l'ordinance a faire *pursuite et pur* quelle cause *etc.*⁴³

Et fait a savoir *qe* durant le temps *qe* les avantditz William Shirynggham et Laurence Andrew furent mestres, en une generale congregacioun faite de touz les bones gentz de le mistere, *par* sage *et* bone avyse de eux touz *pur* honour, profit *et* eyse del mistere en temps avenir, acordé fuist *qe* certaines gentz, c'est assavoir v *persones*, ferroient suite en noun de toute la compaignye devers nostre tresredouté *Seignur* le Roi, *pur* avoir graunt d'avoir comenalité especiale de eux mesmes, et q'ils purroient eslire de *lour* mesmes iiii gardeins chescun an a surveire, ruler *et* gouverner *lour* mistere *et* les busoignes d'ysel. Et d'avoir licence auxi de purchacer terres *et* tenementz a la value de xx li. *par* an, *pur* un chapeleyn *et* l'almoigne del mistere sustener al honour de dieu *et* relevacioun des povres anientyz del mistere. Les queux v *persones* purchacerent graunt de nostre dit *seignur* le Roi de *lour* peticioun. Et puis furent deux *persones* de les ditz v esluz *et* ordeignez de parfaire le *pursuit*, *par* queux ii *persones* furent purchacez lettres patentes desoutz le grande seal nostre *seignur* le Roi en ces paroles:⁴⁴

1394 n.s.

Ricardus⁴⁵ dei gracia Rex Anglie et Francie et dominus Hibernie omnibus ad quos presentes littere pervenerint – Salutem. Sciatis quod cum plures homines de mistera mercerie civitatis nostre London' sepius per infortunium maris ac alia infortunia casuaria ad tantam deveniant paupertatem et inopiam quod parum vel nichil

42 See Barron, 'The Quarrel', p. 198: 'In parliament in 1394 the Londoners petitioned the King for full and permanent restitution of their liberties' (the 1392 restitution had been uncertain). It was not until 12 June 1397 that Richard II agreed, see below, f. 23v.

43 On this whole matter of the first charter of the Mercers' Company see Sutton, *First Charter*.

44 The text of the following document is edited and printed in *The Charters, Ordinances and Byelaws of the Mercers Company* (London, privately printed, 1881), and *CPR 1391–96*, pp. 425–6 also gives a résumé of these letters of 13 January 1394 n.s. and notes (as is noted here) that 100 marks were paid into the hanaper.

45 The initial 'R' of this word is very large, taking up the length of the full six lines on this page and more, and being equally broad; pen-flourishing adds to its ornateness.

Disbursements

f. 15v

Salary:

Firstly, they paid Sir William Hedyngton, their chaplain, as salary – £6 13s. 4d.

Item, for his fur – 6s. 8d. Item, paid to William Willesdon for his salary – 52s.

Total – £9 12s.

Alms:

Item, paid to John Boston as alms – 52s.

Item, to Roger Caustoun as alms – 52s.

– £5 4s.

Musicians:

Item, paid to musicians at the return of the King from Ireland³² – £3 8s. 8d.

Item, paid for a petition concerning the City's liberties at the Guildhall – 6s. 8d.

About the instructions for bringing an action in court and for what reason etc.

1392–94

Memorandum that during the time when the aforesaid William Sheringham and Laurence Andrew were wardens, at a general assembly of all the goodmen of the mistery, it was agreed by the wise and good advice of them all that, for the honour, advantage and convenience of the mistery in future times, certain people, i.e. five persons, should bring a lawsuit in the name of the whole company before our most dread lord the King, to procure a grant to obtain special commonalty of themselves, and that they should be able to elect from among themselves each year four wardens to oversee, rule and govern their mistery and its needs. And to obtain also the licence to purchase lands and tenements to the value of £20 per annum,³³ for the support of a chaplain and of the alms of the mistery, to the honour of God and the relief of poor people of the mistery who have been brought to ruin. The which five persons obtained the granting of their petition from our said lord the King. And then two of the said five persons were chosen and appointed to carry the suit to a full completion, and through these two persons letters patent were obtained under the King's great seal, in these words:

Richard by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland, to all those whom these letters may reach – Greetings. Let it be known that, since many men of the mercers' mistery of our city of London have fairly often through accidental misadventures at sea or other misfortunes arising been reduced to

1394 n.s.

³² Richard II led an expedition to Ireland to suppress a rebellion in the summer of 1394.

³³ i.e. that can yield this amount in rent each year.

f. 16r⁴⁶

habeant unde vivere valeant || nisi de elemosina aliorum Christi fidelium eis condolencium et subveniencium intuitu caritatis, eoque pretextu dilecti ligei nostri homines dicte mistere civitatis nostre predictae voluntatem habeant et propositum ordinandi aliquam certitudinem [tam pro sustentacione]⁴⁷ talium pauperum quam unius capellani divina pro statu nostro et pro hominibus mistere predictae imperpetuum celebraturi, ut accepimus. Nos ad hoc consideracionem habentes de gracia nostra speciali et pro centum marcis, quas homines mistere predictae nobis solverunt in hanaperio nostro, concessimus et licenciam dedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris, quantum in nobis est, dictis ligeis nostris hominibus mistere predictae in civitate nostra predicta quod ipsi de cetero unam communitatem perpetuam de se ipsis habeant et quod eadem communitas singulis annis eligere possint et facere quatuor custodes de hominibus dictarum communitatis et mistere ad supervidendum, regendum et gubernandum misteram et communitatem predictas ac omnes homines personas et negocia earundem in perpetuum. Et ulterius ex uberiori gracia nostra concessimus et licenciam dedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris, quantum in nobis est, eisdem custodibus et communitati quod ipsi et successores sui terras, tenementa et redditus cum pertinenciis ad valorem viginti librarum per annum tam in civitate nostra predicta quam in suburbiis eiusdem adquirere possint, habenda et tenenda eisdem custodibus et communitati et successoribus suis in auxilium sustentationis tam pauperum hominum huiusmodi dictarum communitatis et mistere quam unius capellani divina pro salubri statu nostro et carissime consortis nostre regine dum vixerimus et pro animabus nostris cum ab hac luce migraverimus ac animabus carissimi domini patris nostri ac carissime domine matris nostre necnon pro statu et animabus omnium hominum dictarum communitatis et mistere ac animabus omnium fidelium defunctorum celebraturi in perpetuum iuxta ordinacionem dictorum custodum et communitatis⁴⁸ et successorum suorum in hac parte faciendam, statuto de terris et tenementis ad manum mortuam non ponendis edito aut statuto facto in parlamento nostro tento apud Westmonasterium anno regni nostri quintodecimo, seu eo quod dicta terre, tenementa et redditus in civitate nostra predicta et suburbiis eiusdem sic adquirenda de nobis teneantur in liberum burgagium sicut tota civitas London' non obstantibus, dum tamen per inquisitiones inde capiendas et in cancellariam nostram vel heredum nostrorum rite retornandas compertum sit quod dicta adquisicio terrarum, tenementorum et reddituum predictorum fieri poterit absque dampno et prejudicio nostri et heredum nostrorum ac aliorum quorumcumque. In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste me ipso apud Westmonasterium terciodecimo die Januarii anno regni nostri decimo septimo.⁴⁹ Scarle

46 Two notes are written in the RH margin by the scribe himself: 'C'est la chartre par quele nous avoms licence d'avoir communaltee de nous mesmes'; and below: 'et avoms auxy licence par ycestes a purchacer terres et tenementz a la value de xx li. par an.'

47 The editor of *The Charters*, who was working from the actual original charter, then held by the Company but destroyed during the Second World War, includes these words 'tam pro sustentacione' at this point; they are necessary for the sense, appear in a later inspeximus (also in this edition), and their omission here is a scribal error only. For a later inspeximus, including earlier reconfirmations, see also Herbert, *Twelve Great*, I, pp. 294–6.

48 The preceding two words, 'et communitatis', do not appear in the edition.

49 Below this on the last ruled line of the page the scribe has written, in smaller letters: 'per breve de privato sigillo'.

such poverty and destitution that they have little or nothing to live on || except for the alms of other Christian people who for the sake of charity bring to them pity and assistance, and for this reason our well-beloved lieges, the men of the said mistery of our aforesaid city wish and intend to ordain some certainty both for the support of such poor people and for a chaplain to celebrate in perpetuity divine service for our estate and for the men of the aforesaid mistery, as we have heard. We, taking consideration of these matters, out of our special grace and for a hundred marks which the men of the aforesaid mistery have paid into our hanaper to us, have granted and given licence for us and our heirs, as far as in us lies, to our said lieges the men of the aforesaid mistery in our aforesaid city that they may henceforth have a perpetual commonalty of themselves and that that same commonalty may each year choose and appoint four wardens from among the men of the said commonalty and mistery to oversee, rule and govern the aforesaid mistery and commonalty and all men, persons and business matters of the same in perpetuity. And further out of our more abundant grace we have granted and given licence for us and our heirs, as far as in us lies, to those same wardens and commonalty that they and their successors may purchase lands, tenements and rents with appurtenances up to the value of twenty pounds per year, both in our aforesaid city and in its suburbs, to have and to hold in the hands of these same wardens and commonalty and their successors for aid towards the support both of such poor men of the aforesaid commonalty and mistery and also of a chaplain to celebrate in perpetuity divine service for our healthy estate and that of our dearest consort the queen while we are alive and for our souls when we have passed over out of this light, and for the souls of our dearest lord our father and dearest lady our mother, and also for the estate and the souls of all men of the said commonalty and mistery and the souls of all the faithful departed, according to the ordinance of the said wardens and commonalty and their successors to be made concerning this, notwithstanding the statute edicted about not placing lands and tenements in mortmain, or the statute made in our Parliament held at Westminster in the fifteenth year of our reign, or that the said lands, tenements and rents in our aforesaid city and its suburbs which are thus to be purchased be held by us in free burgage, as is the whole city of London, provided however that it be found through inquiries made into this and in due manner returned to our chancery or that of our heirs that the said purchase of the aforesaid lands, tenements and rents can be made without damage or prejudice to us or our heirs or any other persons. In witness of which we have had these our letters patent made. Witnessed by myself at Westminster on 13 January of the 17th year of our reign [1394 n.s.]³⁵ Scarle³⁶

f. 16r³⁴

34 The notes in the RH margin of this page say: 'This is the charter by which we have licence to have a commonalty of ourselves'; 'and we also have licence by these letters to purchase lands and tenements to the value of £20 per annum'.

35 The scribe's note says that the letters are under the privy seal.

36 John de Scarle was clerk of the Chancery from 1382, one of the receivers of petitions in Parliament, clerk of the parliament, then Keeper of the Rolls from 1394 until 1397, and also acted as keeper of the Great Seal during those last years. He was Chancellor from 1399 to 1401, then archdeacon of Lincoln until his death in 1403. See Foss, *Judges*, IV, pp. 176–8; Foss, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 589–90.

- 1394–95 Costes faitz sur le patent:⁵⁰
 f. 16v Item, païé *pur* le fyn del dit patent – lxvi li. xiii s. iiii d.
 Item, païé *pur* le seal del mesme patent – viii li. ix s.
 Item, *pur* conseile de gentz de la ley as diverses foith, come a Penros, Scarle *et* autres – v li. xii s. ob.
 Item, as viscountes de Loundres *pur* la dueté la Reigne *pur* le disme parte del dit fyn – x marc. z.
 – iiii^{xxvii} li. vii s. viii d. ob.
- 1395 L'eleccioun des mestres:
 Et fait a savoir *qe* a ycel mesme feste de Sein[t] Johan le Baptistre *proschein* devant escript, a un congregacioun des bones gentz del mistere en la sale de Seint Thomas furent esluz les nouvelles mestres *pur* l'an avenir, vidz: William Parker eslit Richard Whityngtoun, Johan More eslit Johan Otle, William Sonyngwell eslit Thomas Aleyn, *et* William Marcheford eslit Thomas Prudence, as queux nouvelles mestres les veilles mestres ont deliv[er]é ceo *qe* remaint en leur mayns, vidz: – CCiiii^{xxxi} li. iiii d. q^a.
- Dettours veilles:
 Item, ils ont delivré en dettours q'ils receivoient de leur *predecessours*:
 Les executours Johan Organ – xxii li. viii d.
 Item, i obligacioun de Johan Worsted – iii li. vi s. viii d.
 Richard Forester *pur* son seconde an – vi s. viii d.
 William Shiryngham *et* Laurence Andrewe doivent de la reest de la livree del mistere – viii d.
 – xxv li. xiiii s. viii d.
- Summa totalis* païé *et* delivré en argent *et* dettours come piert – CCCCxxii li. xiiii s. ob. q^a.
- f. 17r Nouvelle Dette:
 Item, ils ont delivré as ditz nouvelles mestres en nouveaux dettours de leur temps come piert après:
 Les executours Johan Boseham – xl li.
 Bertholomeu Bosan – x li.
 Nichol Walsyngham – xx s.
 Item, en fynes nient levez de ceux *qe* furent absenz al chivalchee qant le Roi revenoit d'Irland, come piert *par* i cedula a eux delivré – xvi s.

50 These costs have been compared to those of other misteries: four London companies obtained charters at about this time: the Goldsmiths on 6 February 1393; the Skinners on 25 April 1393; the Mercers on 13 January 1394; and the Saddlers on 20 March 1394. See Sutton, *First Charter*, pp. 8–9; Reddaway and Walker, *Early History*, pp. 68–71, and esp. n. 11 and n. 12, pp. 86–7.

Costs incurred on the letters patent:

Item, paid for the fee of the said letters patent – £66 13s. 4d.

Item, paid for the seal of the same letters patent – £8 9s.

Item, for counsel from lawyers on various occasions, such as Penrose,³⁷ Scarle and others – £5 12s. ½d.

Item, to the sheriffs of London for the queen's duty of a tenth part of the said fee³⁸ – 10 marks

– £87 7s. 8½d.

1394–95

f. 16v

The election of wardens:

Memorandum that at that same feast of St John the Baptist written above, at an assembly of the goodmen of the mistery in the hall of St Thomas's, the new wardens for the coming year were elected, i.e. William Parker elected Richard Whittington, John More elected John Otley, William Sunningwell elected Thomas Aleyn, and William Marcheford elected Thomas Prudence, to the which new wardens the old wardens handed over that which remained in their hands, i.e. £291 4¼d.

1395

Debtors of old:

Item, they handed over as debts which they had taken over from their predecessors:

The executors of John Organ – £22 8d.

Item, a bond obligatory from John Worstead – £3 6s. 8d.

Richard Forester for his second year – 6s. 8d.

William Sheringham and Laurence Andrew owe from the balance on the mistery's livery – 8d.

– £25 14s. 8d.

Sum total paid and handed over in money and in debts, as appears – £422 14s. ¾d.

New debts:

Item, they handed over to the said new wardens as new debts from their term of office, as appears below:

The executors of John Bosham – £40

Bartholomew Bosan – £10

Nicholas Walsingham – 20s.

Item, from fines not levied from those who were absent from the procession on the King's return from Ireland, as appears in a document handed over to them – 16s.

f. 17r

37 John Penros was a judge first in Ireland then in England, and from 1391 a justice of the king's bench, and trier of parliamentary petitions in 1393–94; see Foss, *Judges*, IV, p. 66; Foss, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 510.

38 Also known as 'the queen's gold', 'aurum Regine': 'a percentage of one mark of gold per every 100 marks of silver, paid by the City to the King' (CEMCR, p. 152); 'a sum of money paid to the Queen Consort by the King's tenants *in capite* on every fine made to the King, [it] was in the proportion of one-tenth of each fine' (R.R. Sharpe in his introduction, pp. xxi–xxii, to the *CLB*, 'F').

Item, en secré promesses de certeynes gentz de lour volentee *pur* ayder a faire le purchace *purposee*, come piert *par* evidence secré entre les veilles mestres *et* les nouvelles – viii li. ix s. ii d.

– lx li. v s. ii d.

Si qe le somme q'ils ont delivré as nouvelles mestres amont net en deniers *et* dettours al oeps de mistere – CCclxxvii li. ii d. q^a.

Causa quare nullum incrementum datur isto anno:

Et coment qe les ditz quatre veilles mestres soi chargent de CCCxviii li. iii s. i d. ob. q^a, qe furent en les mains William Parker en manere come ad esté acustumé de receyvre les deniers del mercerye de cea en arrere *paront* *lour* predecessours soleyent doner encrees a *lour* acomptes, voirs fuist q'ils n'avoient unques denier d'ysel en lour mayns durant lour temps sinon une somme d'entour xli li. qe *lour* failly des costes del dit patent, le quele somme estoit païé auxy tost come ils l'avoient receu. Et le remenant demoroit toutdys nient occupié en les mayns del dit William Parker *par* avys *et* assent del compaignye *pur* attendre tiele chose come fuist *purposé* de fair d'ysel. Issynt qe les ditz veilles mestres sont dischargez *par* le compaignye d'ascune encrees rendre de lour temps.

1395–96
f. 17v

C'est l'acompte Richard Whityngtoun, Johan Otle, Thomas Aleyn, *et* Thomas Prodance, mestres de la mercerye, faite l'endemayn Seint Johan Baptistre l'an du regne nostre seigneur le Roy Richard seconde vyntisme, comenceant *pur* l'an *proscheyn* devant passé, c'est assavoir l'an xix^{me}, *pur* quel an ils furent mestres.

Charge

Primerement, ils ont receu en argent xiii li. xvii s. ii d. ob., *et* outre ils soi chargent de une somme qe fuist es mains William Parker, delivré a eux *pur* seulement garder sans occuper, c'est assavoir CCclxxvii li. iii s. i d. ob. q^a *summa*, come piert en le discharge de *lour* predecessours.

– CCiiii^{xxxi} li. iiiii d. q^a.

Item, ils soi chargent ové dettours, come piert devant:

Les executours Johan Organ – xxii li. viii d.

Bertholomeu Bosan – x li.

Richard Forester *pur* soun an – vi s. viii d.

Item, une obligacioun de Johan Worsted – iii li. vi s. viii d.

William Shirleyngam *et* Laurence Andrew – viii d.

Les executours Johan Boseham – xl li.

Nichol Walsyngham – xx s.

Item, en promesses graunté de diverses gentz⁵¹ de lour bone volentee – viii li. ix s. ii d.

51 MS: 'gentz del de'. Rather than deleting the 'del' one could edit to 'del [mercerie]'.

Item, as confidential promises from certain people of their own freewill, to help in making the proposed purchase, as appears in confidential evidence [shared] between the old wardens and the new – £8 9s. 2d.

– £60 5s. 2d.

So that the total handed over to the new wardens amounts net in money and debts, for the mistery's uses – £377 2¼d.

The reason why no increment has been given this year:

And although the four old wardens account in their receipts for £318 3s. 1¼d. which was in the hands of William Parker according to the manner customary for some time of holding money, whereby their predecessors have been accustomed to donate a sum of increment on this in their accounts, yet it is the truth that they have never had any of this money in their hands during their term of office apart from a sum of about £40 which they were short of on the costs of the aforesaid letters patent, which sum was paid out immediately upon their receipt of it. And the remainder has stayed the whole time uninvested in the keeping of the said William Parker, this by the advice and with the agreement of the company, awaiting a matter for which it has been the intention to use it. And thus the said old wardens are discharged by the company from [any obligation] to render any increment for their term of office.

This is the account of Richard Whittington, John Otley, Thomas Aleyn, and Thomas Prudence, wardens of the mercers' mistery, rendered on the day after that of St John the Baptist in the year 20 Richard II [25 June 1396], starting from the immediately preceding year, i.e. 19 [Richard II], for the which year they were wardens.

1395–96
f. 17v

Receipts

Firstly, they received in money £13 17s. 2½d., and besides they declare a sum that has been in the hands of William Parker, handed over to them to hold without investing it, i.e. £277 3s. 1¾d. in total, as appears in the disbursements section of their predecessors' account.

– £291 4¼d.

Item, they declare responsibility for debts, as appears above:

The executors of John Organ – £22 8d.

Bartholomew Bosan – £10

Richard Forester for his year – 6s. 8d.

Item, a bond obligatory from John Worstead – £3 6s. 8d.

William Sheringham and Laurence Andrew – 8d.

The executors of John Bosham – £40

Nicholas Walsingham – 20s.

Item, in promises granted by various people³⁹ of their goodwill – £8 9s. 2d.

³⁹ There might be a word missing, to say 'people/men of the mercers' mistery'.

Item, de certeyns gentz qe furent absentz al venu nostre seignur le Roi de Irland
– xvi s.

– iii^{xxv} li. xix s. x d.

De lour iii^e an:

De Thomas Dyster – vi s. viii d.

De Nicoll Bacoun – vi s. viii d.

De Johan Pichard – vi s. viii d.

De William Butte – vi s. viii d.

De Adam Cove – vi s. viii d.

De Richard Forster – vi s. viii d.

– xl s.

f. 18r

Pur lour seconde an:

De Thomas Dentoun – vi s. viii d.

De Richard Everard – vi s. viii d.

De Thomas Herkested – vi s. viii d.

De Henri Trenche – vi s. viii d.

De Johan Walsham – vi s. viii d.

De Thomas Hadstoke – vi s. viii d.

De Rauf Middeltoun – vi s. viii d.

De Edmond Man – vi s. viii d.

De Nicholl Cokerell – vi s. viii d.

– iii li.

Pur lour primere an:

De William Walderne – vi s. viii d.

De Walter Cottoun – vi s. viii d.

De Johan Aleyn – vi s. viii d.

De Piers Belgrave – vi s. viii d.

De Johan Sikulbryce – vi s. viii d.

De William Roos – vi s. viii d.

– xl s.

Des issues des apprentices:

Item, de les avantditz vi homes proschein devant escriptz pur l'issue de lour⁵²
apprenticialté, de chescun ii s. Summa – xii s.

Item, ils ont receu des absentz a congre[ga]ciouns⁵³ en lour temps, de peyne sur
ceo mys – x s.

De introitu apprenticiorum:

De Johan Benyngtoun apprentice Johan Frosshe – ii s.

De Johan Empynggham } apprentices Richard Whityngtoun – iii s.

De Edmond Brigge }

De Johan Philippot apprentice William Parker – ii s.

⁵² MS: de lour de lour.

⁵³ MS: congreociouns.

Item, from certain people who were absent at the arrival from Ireland of our lord the King – 16s.

– £85 19s. 10d.

For their third year:

from Thomas Dyster – 6s. 8d.

from Nicholas Bacon – 6s. 8d.

from John Pichard – 6s. 8d.

from William Butte – 6s. 8d.

from Adam Cove – 6s. 8d.

from Richard Forester – 6s. 8d.

– 40s.

For their second year:

f. 18r

from Thomas Denton – 6s. 8d.

from Richard Everard – 6s. 8d.

from Thomas Harkstead – 6s. 8d.

from Henry Trenche – 6s. 8d.

from John Walsham – 6s. 8d.

from Thomas Hadstoke – 6s. 8d.

from Ralph Middleton – 6s. 8d.

from Edmund Man – 6s. 8d.

from Nicholas Cokerelle – 6s. 8d.

– £3

For their first year:

from William Walderne – 6s. 8d.

from Walter Cotton – 6s. 8d.

from John Aleyn – 6s. 8d.

from Piers Belgrave – 6s. 8d.

from John Sikilbryce – 6s. 8d.

from William Roos – 6s. 8d.

– 40s.

From issues of apprentices:

Item, from the aforesaid six men written just above, for issue from their apprenticeship, from each 2s. Total – 12s.

Item, they received from those absent from assemblies during their term of office, as fines set for this – 10s.

From admission of apprentices:

from John Benyngton apprentice of John Fresshe – 2s.

from John Empyngnam } apprentices of Richard Whittington – 4s.

from Edmund Brigge }

from John Philipot apprentice of William Parker – 2s.

De William Marshall	}	apprentices William Sonyngwell –	iiii s.
De Roger Russell			
De Everard Flete apprentice William Marcheford –			ii s.
De Thomas Austyn	}	apprentices Johan Otlee –	iiii s.
De Walter Bertoun			
De William Astoun apprentice Stephen Speleman –			ii s.
De Thomas Est	}	apprentices William Hawe –	iiii s.
De Thomas Osborn			
Somme des nouns de entree d'apprentices de cest part – xii.			
Summa d'argent – xxiiii s.			

f. 18v	De Willam Jolyf apprentice Thomas Prodance –		ii s.
	De Johanne Wasshbourne	} apprentices Johan Liengge –	iiii s.
	De Roberto Westoun		
	De Johan Bale apprentice Johan Lane –		ii s.
	De Walter Prodance	} apprentices Laurence Andrewe –	x s.
	De Richard Harpour		
	De Richard Aylmer		
	De Johan Moryell		
	De William Wy	} apprentices Aleyn Everard –	iiii s.
	De William Brygge		
	De Walter Lyndeseye		
	De Johan Somnour apprentice Thomas Aleyn –		ii s.
	De Thomas Chaltoun	} apprentices Robert Shirewynd –	iiii s.
	De William Colchestre		
	De Johan Enmede	} apprentices Johan Burre –	viii s.
	De Richard Southam		
	De Johan Estmond		
	De Richard Skete		
	De William Tikelwardyne apprentice Johan Bele –		ii s.
	De Richard Sprot apprentice Nicholl Walsyngham –		ii s.
	De Johan Balle apprentice Robert Speke –		ii s.
	De Thomas Marcheford apprentice William Audeby –		ii s.
	De Thomas Estoun apprentice Robert Betelee –		ii s.
	De Johan filtz Richard apprentice Johan Kestevene –		ii s.
	De Thomas Herkested	} apprentices Johan Vyne –	iiii s.
	De Thomas Gladman		
	De William Melrith	} apprentices William Foucher –	iiii s.
	De Johan Plomere		
	De Thomas Danyell apprentice James Surendene –		ii s.
	De William Acombe apprentice Johan Waltoun –		ii s.
	De William Bridleep	} apprentices Nichol Hamme –	vi s.
	De Adam Feraunt		
	De Thomas Devene		
	De Johan Crowe apprentice Johan Everard –		ii s.
	De Richard Parker apprentice Thomas Hawe –		ii s.
	De Johan Took	} apprentices William Erntoun –	iiii s.
	De Richard Bilby		

from William Marschall	}	apprentices of William Sunningwell –	4s.
from Roger Russell			
from Everard Fleet		apprentice of William Marcheford –	2s.
from Thomas Austyn	}	apprentices of John Otley –	4s.
from Walter Barton			
from William Aston		apprentice of Stephen Speleman –	2s.
from Thomas East	}	apprentices of William Hawe –	4s.
from Thomas Osbarne			
Total of names for admission of apprentices in this section – 12.			
Total of money – 24s.			

from William Jolyf apprentice of Thomas Prudence –	2s.	f. 18v	
from John Washbourne	} apprentices of John Leengge –		4s.
from Robert Weston			
from John Bale apprentice of John Lane –	2s.		
from Walter Prudence	} apprentices of Laurence Andrew –	10s.	
from Richard Harpour			
from Richard Aylmere			
from John Morielle			
from William Wye	} apprentices of Alan Everard –	4s.	
from William Brigge			
from Walter Lyndesey			
from John Somnour apprentice of Thomas Aleyn –	2s.		
from Thomas Chalton	} apprentices of Robert Shirwynd –	4s.	
from William Colchester			
from John Enmede	} apprentices of John Burre –	8s.	
from Richard Southam			
from John Eastmond			
from Richard Skete			
from William Tikelwardyne apprentice of John Bele –	2s.		
from Richard Sprot apprentice of Nicholas Walsingham –	2s.		
from John Bally apprentice of Robert Speke –	2s.		
from Thomas Marcheford apprentice of William Audeby –	2s.		
from Thomas Easton apprentice of Robert Betelee –	2s.		
from John FitzRichard apprentice of John Kesteven –	2s.		
from Thomas Harkstead	} apprentices of John Vyne –	4s.	
from Thomas Gladman			
from William Meldreth	} apprentices of William Foucher	4s.	
from John Plomere			
from Thomas Danyel apprentice of James Surendene –	2s.		
from William Acombe apprentice of John Walton –	2s.		
from William Birdlip	} apprentices of Nicholas Hamme –	6s.	
from Adam Feraunt			
from Thomas Devene			
from John Crowe apprentice of John Everard –	2s.		
from Richard Parker apprentice of Thomas Hawe –	2s.		
from John Took	} apprentices of William Erntoun –	4s.	
from Richard Bilby			