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John Croyland alias Dyglyng	..	6	-	-
Richard Depyng alias Maundesley	..	6	-	-
John Ryall alias Phelype	..	6	-	-
Richard Glynton alias Hawe	..	6	-	-
John Lesyngham alias Sewell	..	6	13	4
Gryffyth Gloster alias Jones	..	6	-	-
Wylliam Clyffe alias Smyth	..	6	-	-
Richard Grantham	..	8	-	-
Summa		£139		
Summe of both parts		£526	13s.	4d.

by me Rhylyp Parys. Jo. Tregonwell. Jo. Hughes.

Master chancellor the king's pleasure is, as you know, that you shall yearly content and pay unto these persons whose names be above written for their yearly pensions all such sums of money quarterly by even portions as be set upon their names amounting in the whole yearly for every yeoman £6. and for every groom yearly £4. to be accompted from the first day of January last past in the thirty first year of the reign of his most noble reign unto such time his grace hath otherwise determined for them.

from Windsor, the twenty second day of November the thirty second year of his grace's reign

by your assured  
Antonie Browne.

[COUNTERPART OF A ROLL OF PENSIONS PAID IN THE SECOND AND THIRD  
YEARS OF PHILIP AND MARY 1555-6]  
PETERBOROUGH NUPER MONASTERIUM

	£	s.	d.
Fee for Francis earl of Bedford for his counsel for the year	-	100	-
Annuities of William lord St. John now Marquis of Winchester	-	60	-
do. Nicholas Clarke, per annum	-	40	-
do. Thomas Brudenell, per annum,	4	-	-
do. John Wagesstaff, per annum	-	53	4
do. Thomas Clement, per annum			
do. Emma Wakerley, per annum	4	-	-
do. Francis Russell, per annum,	4	-	-
do. Robert Tyrwhite, per annum,	-	40	-
do. John Ayleswothe, per annum,		66	8
do. Thomas Buttes, per annum,		100	-
do. Edward Montague, per annum	4	-	-
Pension Thomas Kethering alias Howlett, per annum	6	-	-
do. John Pomfret alias Colman, per annum	8	-	-
do. Humphrey Natures, per annum	6	-	-
do. Edward Wilkinson, per annum	10	-	-

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Pension.	Geoffrey Lynne alias Parys, per annum,	6	-	-
do.	Richard Glynton alias Hawe, per annum	6	-	-
do.	John Moreton alias Uvanhoe, per annum	6	-	-
do.	William Ramsey alias Thorpe, per annum	6	-	-
do.	Robert London alias Welles bone, per annum	6	-	-

(iii) *The monastery at Halesowen*

(*Collectans for a History of Staffordshire*, W. Salt Arch. Soc., vol. XII, (1892) 686)

This document provides a striking illustration of what was involved in the dissolution of the religious houses. What is happening here is the surrender of a religious house and its possessions to the king. The money payment mentioned is fictitious.

On the Quindene of Easter. 30 Hen. VIII.

And afterwards recorded on the Octaves of Holy Trinity. 30.H.VIII.

Between the Lord the King, complainant, and William Taylour, Abbot of the monastery of the Blessed Mary the Virgin, and St. John the Evangelist, of Halesowen, deforciant of the manors of Hales, Halesburg, Halesowen, and Hellegraunge, and of 1,000 messuages, 1,000 tofts, 1,000 cottages, 3,000 gardens, 4 dovecots, 3 water-mills, 3 wind-mills, 16,000 acres of land, 6,000 acres of meadow, 12,000 acres of pasture, 1,000 acres of wood, 2,000 acres of furze and heath, 2,000 acres of marsh, 1,000 acres of alders, 1,000 acres of fishery, and £100 of rent, and a rent of 100 quarters of wheat, 100 quarters of barley, 100 quarters of beans, 20 quarters of oats, 20 quarters of peas, 4 quarters of salt, 6 lbs. of pepper, and 4 lbs. of cumin in Hales, Halesburg, Halesowen, and Hellegraunge, and of the rectories of Warley, Hales, etc., in co. Salop, and of the manors of Horneburne, Smythwyke, Womeburn, Swyndon, Rowley, Weddesbury, Westbromewiche, Walsall, Pessalle, and Lichefyld, and 2,000 messuages, 1,000 tofts, 1,000 cottages, 3,000 gardens, 4 dovecots, 4 water-mills, 4 wind-mills, 20,000 acres of land, 10,000 acres of meadow, 20,000 acres of pasture, 1,000 acres of wood, 2,000 acres of furze and heath, 2,000 acres of moor, 1,000 acres of alderwood, 1,000 acres of fishery and £60 of rent, and of the rent of 100 quarters of wheat, 100 quarters of barley, 100 quarters of beans, 20 quarters of oats, 20 quarters of peas, 4 quarters of salt, 6 lbs. of pepper, and 4 lbs. of cumin in Horneburne, Smythwyke, Womeburne, Swyndon, Rowley, Weddesbury, Westbromewyche, Walsall, Pessal, and Lichefyld, and of the rectories of Clent, Wodderbury, Rowley, Walsall, Ludley, and Cradley, and of the advowsons of the churches of Clent, Wodderbury, Rowley, and Walsall, in co. Stafford, and of the manors of Warley, Chirchlenche, Cradley, Dodford, and of the priory of Dodford, etc., in co. Wygorn.

The Abbot acknowledged the right of the King, for which the King gave him £4,000.

(iv) *Examples of reports of commissioners for the dissolution*

(Wright, *Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*. C.S. 1843, 85)

John Ap Rice to Cromwell. 5 November [1535].

Please it your mastership, forasmuch as I suppose ye shall have suit made unto you touching Bury ere we return, I thought convenient to advertise you of our

proceedings there, and also of the compertes<sup>1</sup> of the same. As for the abbot, we found nothing suspect as touching his living, but it was detected that he lay much forth in his granges, that he delighted much in playing at dice and cards, and therein spent much money, and in building for his pleasure. He did not preach openly. Also that he converted divers farms into copyholds, whereof poor men doth complain. Also he seemeth to be addict to the maintaining of such superstitious ceremonies as hath been used heretofore.

As touching the convent, we could get little or no reports among them, although we did use much diligence in our examination, and thereby, with some other arguments gathered of their examinations, I firmly believe and suppose that they had confedered<sup>2</sup> and compacted before our coming that they should disclose nothing. And yet it is confessed and proved, that there was here such frequency of women coming and resorting to this monastery as to no place more. Amongst the relics we found much vanity and superstition, as the coals that Saint Laurence was toasted withal, the pareing of St. Edmund's nails, St. Thomas of Canterbury's penknife and his boots, and divers skulls for the headache; pieces of the holy cross able to make a whole cross of; other relics for rain and certain other superstitious usages, for avoiding of weeds growing in corn, with such other. Here depart of them that be under age upon an eight, and of them that be above age upon a five, would depart if they might, and they be of the best sort in the house and of best learning and judgment. The whole number of the convent before we came was 60; saving one, beside 3 that were at Oxford. Of Ely I have written to your mastership by my fellow Richard a Lee. And thus Almighty God have you in his tuition. From Bury, 5th November.

Your servant most bounden

John Ap Rice.

George Giffard to Cromwell. [19 June, 1536].

(*Ibid.* 136)

George Giffard was one of the commissioners for the dissolution of the smaller religious houses, and was at this time on his progress through Staffordshire and Leicestershire.

Right honourable sir, after mine humble recommendations, this shall be to advertise you that I have received your most comfortable letters, for the which in my right lowly wise I render unto you most hearty thanks; please it your mastership to be further advertised, that we have surveyed the house or priory of Brook, the certificate whereof I sent you by your farmer's son and my nephew Roger Carell this present, the 18th. day of June, the priory of Bradley, the abbey of Wolnoston, the priory of Kirby Bellers, the priory of Woolstrobe, and now be at the abbey of Garrendon. And, sir, forasmuch as of late my fellows and I did write unto Mr. Chancellor of the Augmentations in the favour of the abbey of Saint James and the nunnery of Catesby in Northamptonshire, which letter he shewed unto the King's highness in favour of these houses, where the King's highness was displeased, as he said to my servant Thomas Harper, saying that it was like that we had received rewards, which caused

<sup>1</sup> compertes: reports on the state of morals within the religious houses made by the commissioners. They must be distinguished from the reports given the same title, made at episcopal visitations of the monasteries.

<sup>2</sup> confederated.

to write as we did, which might put me in fear to write, notwithstanding the sure knowledge that I have had always in your indifference giveth me boldness to write to you in the favour of the house of Woolstrobe, the governor whereof is a very good husband for the house, and well beloved of all the inhabitants thereunto adjoining a right honest man, having 8 religious persons being priests of right good conversation and living religiously, having such qualities of virtue as we have not found the like in no place; for there is not one religious person there but that can and doth use either embroidering, writing books with very fair hand, making their own garments, carving, painting or grafting.<sup>1</sup> The house without any slander or evil fame, and stands in a waste ground very solitary, keeping such hospitality that except by singular good provision it could not be maintained with half so much lands more as they may spend, such a number of the poor inhabitants nigh thereunto daily relieved, that we have not seen the like, having no more lands than they have. God be even my judge, as I do write unto you the truth, and none otherwise to my knowledge, which very pity alone causeth me to write. The premises whereof considered, in most humble wise I beseech you to be a mean unto the King's majesty for the standing of the said Woolstrobe, whereby his grace shall do a much gracious and a meritorious act for the relief of his poor subjects there, and ye shall be sure not only to have the continual prayer of those religious persons there, but also the hearty prayer of all the inhabitants within 4. or 5. mile about that house. And this for lack of wit I am bold to write unto you the plainness of my heart, as unto him that of all living creatures I have most assured and faithful trust in, so knoweth our lord God, who have you in his most merciful tuition.

The commissioners to Cromwell. 28 July [1536]

(*Ibid.* 139)

After our duties of humble recommendation unto your good lordship had, it may please the same to be advertised that we have surveyed the monastery or nunnery of Pollesworth in the county of Warwick, wherein is an abbess named dame Alice Fitzherbert, of the age of 60. years, a very sad, discreet, and religious woman, and hath been head and governor there 27. years, and in the same house under her rule are 12. virtuous and religious nuns, and of good conversation as far as we can hear or perceive, as well by our examinations as by the open fame and report of all the country, and never one of the nuns there will leave nor forsake their habit and religion. Wherefore in our opinions, if it might so stand with your lordship's pleasure ye might do a right good and meritorious deed to be a mediator to the King's highness for the said house to stand and remain unsuppressed, for, as we think, ye shall not speak in the preferment of a better nunnery nor of better women. And in the town of Pollesworth are 44. tenements, and never a plough but one, the residue be artificers, labourers, and victuallers, and live in effect by the said house, and the repair and resort there is made to the gentlemen's children and sojourners that there do live to the number sometime of 30, and sometime 40 and more, that there be right virtuously brought up. And the town and nunnery standeth in a hard soil and barren ground, and to our estimations,

<sup>1</sup> engraving.

if the nunnery be suppressed, the town will shortly after fall to ruin and decay, and the people therein to the number of 6. or 7. score persons are not unlike to wander and to seek for their living, as our Lord God best knoweth, who preserve your lordship in good life and long, with increase of honour. Written at Maxtock beside Coventry the 28th. day of July.

Sir Arthur Darcy to Cromwell. 8 June 1537.

(J. W. Clay, *Yorks. Monasteries Suppression Papers*, 51-52)

It shall like your honourable lordship to be advertised that I was with my lord Lieutenant at the suppression of Jervaulx, which house within the gate is covered wholly with lead, and there is one of the fairest churches that I have seen, fair meadows, and the river running by it, and a great demesne. The king's highness is at great charge with his studs of mares at Thornbury and other places, which are fine grounds, and I think that at Jervaulx and in the granges incident, with the help of their great large commons, the king's highness by good overseers should have there the most best pasture that should be in England, hard and sound of kind; for surely the breed of Jervaulx for horses was the tried breed in the north, the stallions and mares well assorted. I think in no realm should be found the likes to them, for there is large and high grounds for the summer, and in winter woods and low grounds to serve them. My lord, by my lord lieutenant I have restitution of a great part of my goods at Coverham. From Jervaulx I went to Sallay, where I inquired out a chalice that was bribed from the king before the suppression of the house, and also I have found a book of debts belonging to the house, and there is a barkhouse stored with leather. I require your lordship to send to me your pleasure what I shall do therein.

My good lord, I require you to get me licences for 14 days to come up to dispatch me of debts that I owe. Of my faith I never brake so much credence as I have lately done. I have desired Mr. Jolyment to remember your lordship for my causes. Of truth, my lord, I do waste the king's money here at Pontefract; for of a truth the countries in the north was never in a more dreadful and true obedience.

My lord, I beseech you be good lord to me; it is shewed to me that the king's highness would again survey my lands, and that further Mr. Chancellor did send to me that it was thought that I had deceived the king. My lord, ye know that I might have had saint Leonards, which is better by 300 marks than my lands in the first survey. I did refuse that, and on my faith I never knew what Salley was, till it was granted. M. Fermer and M. Montague would have given six hundred marks yearly for Grenesorton; and in consideration thereof, and with my wife in marriage, the king's highness gave me my lands unsurveyed. If it be the king's pleasure to have my rentals, upon my life I shall not lie, but bring them myself, and his grace shall have all things at his conscience and pleasure, as knoweth God, who ever preserve you with much honour.

Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 14 June 1537.

(*Ibid.* 53-54)

Pleaseth it your good lordship to be advertised that my lord of Norfolk had been at Bridlington before my coming into these parts, and there he had all the jewels of the

church, the vestments, the plate, oxen and a great part of the sheep, so that at my coming thither there was but little stuff remaining. But notwithstanding I have gotten much more silver and some gold in the Church which I have sent to my lord of Norfolk's grace to the intent that it may be sent to London with the residue that my lord of Norfolk hath. And such sheep, cattle, corn, and household stuff as did remain at Bridlington at my coming thither I have sold by the advice of Sir Marmaduke Constable the elder and Richard Bellasis, the which stuff I assure you was the worst that ever I saw in any house of reputation as it shall appear by my books, and a great part thereof was stolen by the poor people before my coming thither. And as for the church and the lands of the church and houses I have done nothing therewith as yet until I know what the king's grace's pleasure shall be done therein for that it standeth within half a mile of the sea. But I assure you the house and church is far in decay, the most profit thereof is to be made of the leads for there was offered to me for the leads of a barn five hundred marks over and besides the residue of the houses and church there the which will amount to a great sum of money. And there remaineth much glass as yet for I have sold no part thereof nor the bells for I can have no merchant for the same. And as concerning the demesnes I have offered the same unto the inhabitants of the town between this and Michaelmas and right so the corn in the field but they offer nothing like for the same. Wherefore as yet I have set no part thereof. And herewith I have sent to your good lordship a book whereby ye may perceive the description of the church and late monastery. I assure your lordship I never saw so needy people in my life as are in these parts, for they have made there before my coming great spoil and robbery. And to the intent your lordship shall perceive my doing in survey I have therefore also sent you herewith a survey that I have made of the manor of Bulmer, sometime the inheritance of Sir John Bulmer, to the intent that if it is not well and according to your mind, that then it will please your lordship to send me your pleasure. And to my power I shall do accordingly. I assure you your servant Mr. Lentall taketh great pains and doth the king's majesty right good true and diligent service, as it shall appear at our return signifying your lordship that the country as far as I have laboured be in good obedience to our sovereign lord the king, and be right glad that they be the king's grace's tenants. . . . And as far as I have surveyed yet there shall be due to the king's majesty at Michaelmas one whole year's rent, and so is like to be in all Yorkshire, but they have not used to pay until Saint Martin's day then next following.

Dr. London to Cromwell. 18 Sep. 1538

(Wright, *Suppression*, 225)

In my most humble manner I have me commended unto your good lordship, with my assured prayer and service. I have sent up to your lordship the surrender of the Grey Friars of Reading, with their plate, such as it is. I have inwardly defaced the church and dorter; the residue of the house I have left whole till I know your further pleasure, and clearly despatched all the friars out of the doors in their secular apparel, and have given to every one of them money in their purses, and have clearly paid their debts. This is a town of much poor people, and they fell to stealing so fast

in every corner of the house, that I have been fain to tarry a whole week here to set everything in due order, and have and shall receive to the King's grace's use I trust above £40. The mansion wholly reserved. I have sent up the principal relic of idolatry within this realm, an angel with one wing that brought to Caversham the spear head that pierced our Saviour's side upon the cross. It was conveyed home to Notley, but I sent my servant purposely for it. I have sent also 3 coats of the image, with such things as I found upon them, with the dagger that they say slew King Henry the VI. and the knife that killed Saint Edward, with many other like holy things. I have defaced that chapel inward, and have sent home the canon to his master to Notley. I have required of my lord abbot the relics of his house, which he shewed unto me with good will. I have taken an inventory of them, and have locked them up behind their high altar and have the key in my keeping, and they be always ready at your lordship's commandment. They have a good lecture in scripture daily read in their chapter house, both in English and Latin, to the which is good resort, and the abbot is at it himself. In any other thing I can do your lordship service I am and always shall be ready, God willing, who with increase of much honour, long preserve your good lordship.

At Reading, 18 Septembris [1538]

Your most bounden orator and servant  
John London.

The Inventory of the Relics of the House of Reading.

Inprimis, two pieces of the holy cross.

Item, saint James' hand.

Item, saint Philip's stole.

Item, a bone of Mary Magdalene, with other more

Item, saint Anastasius's hand, with other more.

Item, a piece of saint Pancrate's arm.

Item, a bone of saint Quintin's arm.

Item, a bone of saint David's arm.

Item, a bone of Mary Salome's arm.

Item, a bone of saint Edward the Martyr's arm.

Item, a bone of saint Hierome, with other more

Item, bones of saint Stephen, with other more

Item, a bone of Saint Blase, with other more . . . .

There be a multitude of small bones, laces, stones, and arms, which would occupy four sheets of paper to make particularly an inventory of every part thereof. They be all at your lordships commandment.

Richard Bellasys to Cromwell, 14 November [1537]

(*Ibid.* 164)

Pleaseth your good lordship to be advertised, I have taken down all the lead of Jervaux, and made it in pieces of half fadders, which lead amounteth to the number of eighteen score and five fadders, with thirty and four fadders and a half that were there before; and the said lead cannot be conveyed nor carried unto the next summer,

for the ways in that country are so foul and deep that no carriage can pass in winter. And as concerning the rasing and taking down the house, if it be your lordships' pleasure, I am minded to let it stand to the spring of the year, by reason the days are now so short, it would be double charges to do it now. And as concerning the selling of the bells, I cannot sell them above 15.s. the hundred, wherein I would gladly know your lordship's pleasure whether I should sell them after that price, or send them up to London; and if they be sent up, surely the carriage will be costly from that place to the water. And as for Bridlington, I have done nothing there as yet, but spareth it to March next, because the days now are so short; and from such time as I begin, I trust shortly to dispatch it, after such fashion, that when all is finished, I trust your lordship shall think that I have been no evil husband in all such things as your lordship hath appointed me to do. And thus the Holy Ghost ever preserve your lordship in honour.

At York, this 14th. day of November, by your most bounden beadman  
Richard Bellasys

The Commissioners to Cromwell, 2 December 1538

(*Ibid.* 231)

Our humble duties observed unto your good lordship, it may like the same to be advertised that we have taken the surrender of the late priory of Christ's Church, Twynham, where we found the prior a very honest conformable person, and the house well furnished with jewels and plate, whereof some be meet for the King's majesty's use, as a little chalice of gold, a goodly large cross, double gilt, with the foot garnished with stone and pearl, two goodly basins, double gilt, having the King's arms well enamelled, a goodly great pyx for the sacrament, double gilt; and there be also other things of silver right honest and of good value, as well for the church use as for the table, reserved and kept to the King's use. In this church we found a chapel and monument curiously made of Caen stone, prepared by the late mother of Raynold Pole for her burial, which we have caused to be defaced and all the arms and badges clearly to be deleted. The surveying of the demesne of this house, which be large and barren, and some part thereof twenty miles from the monastery, which we also do survey and measure, hath caused us to make longer abode at this place than we intended. And now we be in journey toward Amesbury, where we shall use like diligence for the accomplishing of the King's highness' commission, and as soon as we have done there we shall farther certify your lordships of our doings. And thus we beseech almighty Jesus long to preserve your good lordship with increase of much honour.