

# Medieval Bishop's Waltham

This depicts the lives of ordinary Bishop's Waltham folk.

The Pipe Rolls were written on parchment in Medieval Latin some of which have been translated.

Alice Speyring, John atte Water, Thomas Goudefelowe and Walter Corf were all residents of the town during Medieval times.

## Waltham and the Pipe Rolls

The Winchester Pipe Rolls are the most complete set of manorial accounts in the country, dating from 1208-9 to 1710-11. They depict, in minute detail, the income and expenditure across the Bishop of Winchester's estates, from Surrey to Somerset, the Isle of Wight to Oxfordshire: the richest episcopal estate in medieval England. The accounts were recorded on parchment in a shorthand form of Medieval Latin, by small groups of scribes based at Wolvesey Palace.

They were awarded a place on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register in 2011, because of their national cultural importance.

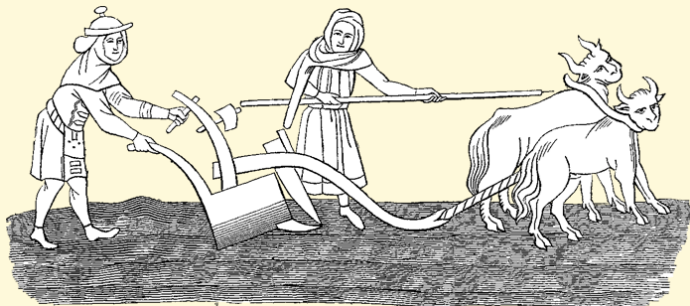
The Pipe Rolls are studied internationally, and probably because of importance of the Palace, Waltham is the manor most intensively researched by medieval scholars. Yet only a handful of years have been systematically translated into modern English, and we simply do not know what else this unique resource can tell us about Waltham life, that is currently hidden in the Latin original.

Thanks to a grant from the Bishop's Waltham Society, a small team from the Bishop's Waltham Museum Trust and the University of Winchester have been translating the Rolls for the manor of Waltham of 1413-14 and 1415-15. These translations will be publically available here at the Museum and at the Hampshire Record Office from the autumn, as a permanent reminder of Bishop's Waltham's Agincourt 600 exhibition

If you are interested and would like to help with future Pipe Rolls translations, please contact Trish Simpson-Davis.



# Alice Speyring



I lived in the manor of Bursledon in the hundred of Waltham for 12 summers with my husband Richard. I am about 25 years old and I have 4 children Richard, 11, Joan, 6, Thomas, 3, and Matilda.

Two months before Matilda was born at Easter tide last my husband fell from the roof of the barn. In a few days his wounds festered. He chewed willow stalks but I could not prevent death taking him away.

As is the custom I gave as heriot our best oxen to the Lord Bishop when Richard died. Then at the Tourn court at Martinmas I paid a fine of 2s to retain our land, a small messuage with  $\frac{1}{2}$  virgate (about 15 acres) of villein land It is fortunate that Waltham hundred allows women to inherit land.

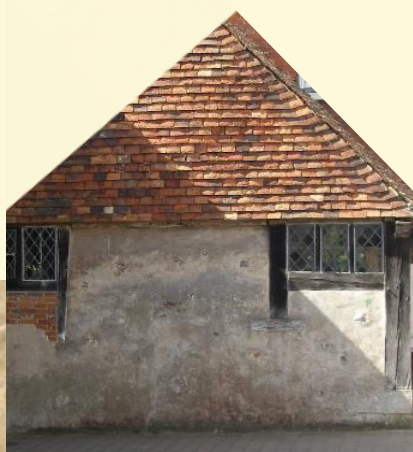


Et & 4<sup>to</sup> & abt quo fuit vx<sup>r</sup> Ric Speyryng & 1 m<sup>o</sup> & 2<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup> .  
in Bursledon quo fuer<sup>t</sup> p<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> cum v<sup>r</sup>o sin j<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup>

I have returned to Waltham where I was raised to marry John Lyghtfoot, a labourer in this manor.

Et & 4<sup>to</sup> & John Lyghtfoot & abt quo fuit  
vx<sup>r</sup> Ric Speyryng in n<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup> 1 m<sup>o</sup> & 2<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup> .  
n<sup>o</sup> in Bursledon h<sup>o</sup> n<sup>o</sup>

He paid the Lord for my land and me, a marriage fine of 24 pence at the Assize of the Nativity of St John the Baptist.



We live in Asheton tithing a small cott not 12 feet from end to end so we are all on one another there. I am content that my husband will take in my children. Richard and Alice are already grown enough to work for their pottage, but Thomas and Matilda can do nothing of help yet awhile. The aforesaid John is a steady man. I have known him from my girlhood, and he will make a good life for us all.

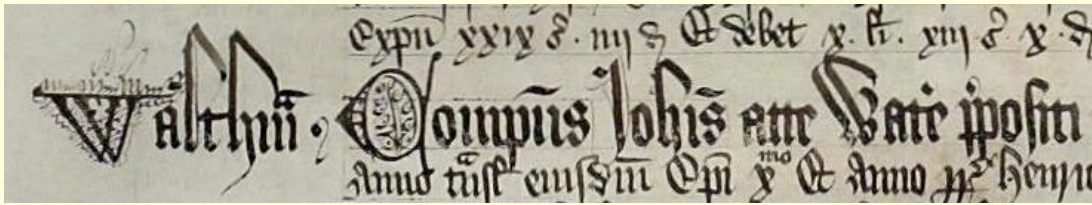


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## How do we know?

The Pipe Rolls of 1414-15 tell us that Alice Speyring of Bursledon fined to inherit her late husband's land and John Lyghfoot fined to marry Alice in the same year.

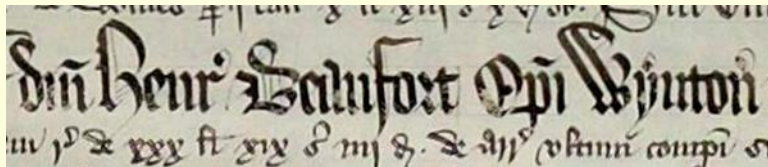




# John atte Water



I have served Henry Beaufort, Lord Bishop of Winchester as reeve for the manor of Waltham these past two summers, since the first year of the reign of our sovereign lord Henry V.



Each quarter, the tenants pay their rental. No-one slides past me. I collect the payments and deliver the coins to John Arnold, the Receiver, at Wolvesey, where the manorial accounts are recorded and audited. I answer for the expenses of the buildings, fishponds and park. I account for his Lordship's income from tenants, sheep, pigs, cows, oxen and horses and the grain grown on the manor.

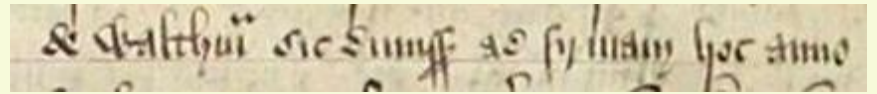
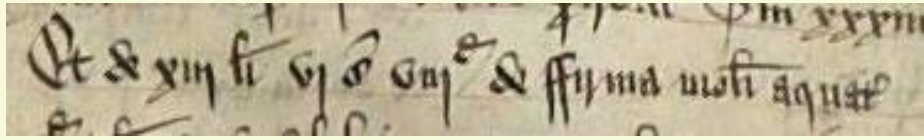
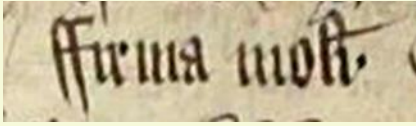
My father, grandfather and his father before him were carters. My brother Stephen and I employ six carts and ten men to carry stone from Botley Quay, timber from the Park, flints from the fields at Ashton and lime for mortar from the lyme kilns at the Gar field, all for the Lord's building works.



I have built a dwelling house at Northbroke. I hold 5 acres of enclosed land near the Wythgenfield, 30 acres of farm land close by Krykklesmede, of which four acres are meadow; 30 acres on the Froggesmylle road in the tithing of Curdridge. The rent to my Lord is but 6s, and I grow richer each passing year.

**How do we know?**  
The Pipe Rolls of 1413-4 and 1414-5 tell us about John, his work and land holdings.





My brother John and I took over the fulling mill in the tithing of Durley 5 years ago. Now ours is not a corn mill, mind, where the grain is ground to make your bread and pottage. And no, it's not a malt house either, where barley is fermented and dried to turn it into malt ready for brewing ale.

This year the Est water mill at the Chase paid £13 6s 8d and Frogges mille at Curdridge paid 8s to the Lord. Alas the mill at Mattocksford is pulled down and Caldecote has fallen down. The tenant John Wodelock relinquished the building and refused to hold it any more.

## Thomas Goudfelowe



John and I are in the sheep business as you might say, because a fulling mill is where the woven material made from sheep's wool is processed, ready to turn into clothes. Once the sheep are shorn, the fleece is teased and then spun into a long thin skein.

Fulling is a good trade. This year we earned 16s for the Lord.

There are fulling mills all over England, especially round here, where thousands of sheep are bred on the chalk downs. Most tenants keep a sheep or two on their curtilage.

His Lordship sheared 510 sheep this summer. I know, because I was a shearer, and I was bone-weary at the end of it, I can tell you. The Lord's fleeces go up to Wolvesey by cart, and that's the last we see of them.

Next the wool is woven into cloth on a loom, and then the cloth arrives at the fulling mill. We steep the cloth in piss and batter it with water-powered hammers to make it strong and proof from wind and rain. Finally, strong new clothes are made.

### How do we know?

Each year the income and expenditure of each of the 6 or 7 mills in the manor is listed in the Pipe Rolls. John and Thomas Goudfelowe took on the fulling mill in 1409 after a period of inactivity.

It's not like the good old days of our much beloved Lord William of Wykeham.



A fulling mill from Bockler's *Theatrum Machinarum Novum*, 1661

Ryeland Sheep in Reepham Road – geograph.org.uk - 1521309" by Adrian Cable. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons.

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# Walter Corf

I have a stall in the Market square, next to my cottage in Broke Strete and it's handy, being near the gate to the Palace. The stall is open every day except Sunday. Well, I have to tell you, business is booming, especially now with the army mustering all round here.

I've just got permission from his Lordship the Bishop to erect 3 more stalls, 22 feet in longitude and 6 feet in latitude, to expand my business. It cost me 12d and the rental will be 1d a year. With my wife Isabel and 2 boy-children working with me, I'm making 9s a year.



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I sell belts and straps woven by widows in the town; I buy in local willow baskets, broom and tool handles, cords, pan pipes and even the odd willow toy. In the season I bring in fruit and vegetables from my own land near the road to the Est Mylle.



When the carter takes a load to Southampton, he brings back other goods for me to sell: saffron and sandalwood, cumin and pepper, salt and smoked fish, bacon and beeswax.

Now I've got the new stalls, I'm going to expand into cauldrons and pottery. The town is really bustling right now, and I've been asked three times this week for a cauldron.

Willow photographs courtesy of Roy Yondale, basketmaker of Bristol [www.willowbaskets.biz](http://www.willowbaskets.biz). Photographs of Winchester Cathedral precinct suggest a gate to the Palace and contemporary building.

**How do we know?** The Pipe Rolls tell us that Walter Corf was granted 3 new stalls in 1415. We have no other details so his wares come from general sources such as Medieval cookery books.

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