

## A FIFTEENTH CENTURY ALT CAR INVENTORY

*Contributed by R. Sharpe France, F.R. Hist. S.*

ON 30 June, 1429, John Rugeley, the abbot, and the chapter of the Cistercian Abbey of Merevale in Warwickshire, made a lease of the manor and mills of Altcar to Edmund, Lord Ferrers, Thomas Mollesley and William Donyngton. The annual rent was to be 50 marks, and the lessees were to be responsible for the repairs and upkeep of houses, walls, etc., as well as to provide for a monk—appointed by the abbot—to celebrate divine service in the manor chapel of St. Mary. There was also a provision that if Robert Molyneux, Roger Wyrley and Richard Lowe were to die during the lifetime of the abbot, then he might re-enter the premises.

Although this lease is of interest to the student of the history of Altcar manor, it is not in itself of an uncommon type; but of outstanding interest is an attached schedule of goods and utensils which were part of the property leased. The inventory reads as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Inventarium de Altcar. In primis in capella habent unum missale, duo vestimenta, unum de nigro satyn, alterum de nigro cum coronis: una calix precii xx solidorum: una crux cum baculo et banario cum duobus portiforiis: unus liber vocatur krystnyng boók, alter liber vocatur burying boók, cum uno vaso eneo pro aqua sanctificata: due cathedre.

Item, in aula due trestell, una tabula, et due tabule dormanutus: unus pelvis cum lavacro: unum dosir.

Item, in butrye iij meteclothes et iij towaylles et iiij stondes pro servicia: una pipa pro pane.

Item, in lardario una cista pro sale, cum duobus saltyng-troughs: una cista pro brasio.

Item, in camera unum covirlyt cum uno tapet precii vj solidorum viij denariorum: unum par de lynthiaminum: unum matrace precii ij solidorum, cum ij blankettes: unum cofre ferro ligatum.

Item, in coquina iiij olle enee: unum caudronum precii xxiiij solidorum: tres patelle enee cum uno veru de ferro precii xviiij denariorum: unum aundryrun cum ij bandes: j cobarde precii vj solidorum viij denariorum, et uno caudelpanne precii vj denariorum, et medietes duodene vasorum

<sup>1</sup> This inventory is referred to in footnote 8 of page 223 of the *Victoria History of Lancashire*, Vol. III, but neither completely nor accurately.

de pewtre precii vj solidorum et viij denariorum : unum mortar de petra : duo barels pro verdius : unum par de iruntonges : duo rynges et a nyssyn : unum plumbum in furnace, iiij plumba in trapito precii xxiiij solidorum : unum mashefat : a yeilyngfat et unum bulyngfat precii xiiij solidorum iiij denariorum : a knedyngtrowgh et una moldyngbord : una cista stans : unum cornquernum et unum mustard quernum precii iij solidorum iiij denariorum : xij vacce cum xij vitulis et cum uno tauro precii iiij librarum x solidorum : xvj twinters precii iiij librarum, et xx stirkes precii quinque marcarum : octo boves precii iiij librarum : et c oves precii v librarum x solidorum : iiij equi una equa precii xl solidorum : ij worthyngwaynes, una carecta, et iiij viga precii xvj denariorum. et ij aratra cum ij paribus de ploueruns precii ij solidorum, et sex cocliaria argentea precii vj solidorum et viij denariorum : unum boket de ferro cum chatena precii ij solidorum : ij sue cum ix porcellis precii viij solidorum : blada diversi generis precii viij marcarum, iiij sayleclothes for the mylne precii x solidorum, at ij milnestones at unum reyne precii x solidorum, and atte the other mylne ij stones and a ryne precii vj solidorum viij denariorum : xj billes precii iij solidorum.

This may be translated as follows :

Inventory of Altcar. Firstly, in the chapel they have a missal, two vestments, one of black satin, the other of black with crowns thereon, a chalice worth 20s. : a cross and a staff and a banner with two breviaries : a book called christening book, another book called burying book, with a bronze vessel for holy water : two chairs.

Also, in the hall two trestles, a table, and two fixed tables : a basin with laver : a dosser.<sup>1</sup>

Also, in the buttery three meatcloths, and three towels and four stands for ale : a large cask for bread.

Also, in the larder a chest for salt, with two salting-troughs : a chest for malt.

Also in the chamber a coverlet with a tapet<sup>2</sup> worth 6s. 8d. : a pair of linen sheets, a mattress worth 2s., with two blankets : an iron-bound chest.

Also, in the kitchen four bronze vessels, a cauldron worth 24s. : three pans of bronze with a spit of iron worth 18d. : an andiron with two bands, a cupboard worth 6s. 8d., and a caudlepan<sup>3</sup> worth 6d., and half a dozen vessels of pewter worth 6s. 8d. : a stone mortar, two barrels for verjuice, a pair of iron tongs, two rings and an eshin,<sup>4</sup> a leaden vessel in the furnace, and four leaden vessels in the oilmill worth 24d. : a mashvat,

<sup>1</sup> Dosser : ornamental cloth to cover the back of a seat, or used as a hanging for the wall of a hall.

<sup>2</sup> tapet : a piece of figured cloth used as a hanging, tablecover, carpet, or the like.

<sup>3</sup> caudle : a warm drink consisting of thin gruel, mixed with wine and ale, sweetened and spiced.

<sup>4</sup> eshin : a wooden pail or shallow tub.

an aleing-vat and a bolting-vat<sup>1</sup> worth 13s. 4d. : a kneading trough and a moulding-board,<sup>2</sup> a standing chest, a corn quern and a mustard quern worth 3s. 4d. : twelve cows with twelve calves and a bull worth £4 10s. : sixteen twinters<sup>3</sup> worth £4 and twenty stirks<sup>4</sup> worth five marks : eight oxen worth £4, and a hundred sheep worth £5 10s. : four horses and a mare worth 40s. : two worthing-wains,<sup>5</sup> a cart, and four yokes worth 16d. : and two ploughs with two pairs of plough-irons<sup>6</sup> worth 2s. : and six silver spoons worth 6s. 8d. : an iron bucket with a chain worth 2s. : two sows with nine piglets worth 8s. : grain of divers kinds worth eight marks : four sailcloths for the mill worth 10s. : and two millstones and a millrind worth 1s. : and at the other mill two stones and millrind worth 6s. 8d. : nine bills worth 3s.

Thanks are due to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Sefton for permission to print this document, which is DDM 19/16 among the Croxteth Muniments now in the Lancashire County Record Office.

<sup>1</sup> bolting : sifting.

<sup>2</sup> moulding-board : for bread making.

<sup>3</sup> Twinter : two-year old cattle or sheep.

<sup>4</sup> Stirk : young bullock or heifer.

<sup>5</sup> worthing-wains : dung-carts.

<sup>6</sup> plough-irons : colters.