

## The Prior's Manor-Houses by David Yaxley.

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The attention of members should be drawn to an attractive and useful booklet by David Yaxley, detailed above. The publication offers a translation, historical notes and a commentary on inventories of eleven manor houses of the Prior of Norwich made in 1352, together with a glossary and drawings showing imaginary interiors containing domestic items and husbandry gear listed in the documents. Although much domestic paraphernalia is recorded furniture is sparse: tables 'with trestles', 'dormant' 'great' or 'small' and benches were common; few chairs or stools occur but there are interesting references to utility objects such as '1 chest for bread'; 'a bench with feet for resting casks on'; 'trough for pastry'; '1 table for drying cheese'; '2 hanging tables'; '1 press', etc..

The 'board for cups with trestles' was presumably a primitive sideboard for displaying precious vessels. Clearly no man at this period was judged by the quality of his furniture. Prized possessions, symbols of wealth and status, such as silver plate and luxurious taxtiles only made an appearance on grand occasions and were normally stowed away in a safe place.

This little book has been carefully researched and is pleasantly written. Anyone wishing to add to their library an anthology of inventories dating from the period of the Black Death would be well advised to acquire a copy.

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