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(*b.* Hachforth, Yorkshire, England, 1474; *d.* London, England, 18 November 1559)

theology, diplomacy, mathematics.

Tunstall was the natural son of Thomas Tunstall and a daughter of Sir John Conyers, and he was later legitimated (in [canon law](#)) by their marriage. He attended Oxford (*ca.* 1491) and Cambridge (*ca.* 1496) but removed to Padua in 1499, where he remained for about six years and became doctor of both canon and civil (Roman) laws. He was appointed bishop of London (1522) and later bishop of Durham (1530, deprived 1552, restored 1553, deprived 1559). Although of strong religious convictions, he was humane and moderate, and was respected even by his opponents in matters of religion. While remaining faithful to Roman Catholic dogma, he was aware that reform was needed. He would protest decisions of [Henry VIII](#) (who often kept him away from London when unpopular decisions were to be made), but once they had been made, he would submit. Under Mary he refrained from persecuting Protestants. An outstanding classical scholar, Tunstall was a close friend of [Sir Thomas More](#), to whom his arithmetic was dedicated, and of Erasmus, whom he assisted in the preparation of the second edition of his Greek [New Testament](#).

Tunstall's Latin arithmetic, *De arte supputandi* (1522), was published as a farewell to secular writings just before he was consecrated bishop of London. The work made no claim to originality of material but had been compiled over the years from all available works in Latin or other languages that Tunstall understood. As master of the rolls (1516–1522), and on diplomatic missions to the Continent, he had felt the need to refresh his memory of arithmetic to protect himself in monetary transactions. From the material he had collected he determined to write such a clear treatise that no one who knew Latin would lack an instructor in the art of reckoning. The work seems not to have been popular in England. It has never been translated into English, and all editions but the first were printed on the Continent, where it was greatly admired. For example, Simon Grynaeus dedicated the first Greek text of Euclid's *Elements* (Basel, 1533) to Tunstall, since he had explained the calculating of numbers in so excellent a manner. England had lagged behind the rest of Europe in mathematics. Only a chapter on "Arsemetrike and Whereof It Proceedeth," in Caxton's *The Mirroure of the World* (1481), had preceded Tunstall's *De arte supputandi*; and it was not until 1537 that an arithmetic appeared in English.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the London eds. of *De arte supputandi* (1522), there were Paris eds. (1529, 1535, 1538) and Strasbourg eds. (1543, 1544, 1548, 1551). For Tunstall's ecclesiastical writings, see Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal* ([New York](#), 1938), which also contains a chapter on the arithmetic. For Erasmian humanism and religious developments in England during Tunstall's lifetime, see L. B. Smith, *Tudor Prelates and Politics, 1536-1558* (Princeton, 1953) and J. K. McConica, *English humanists and Reformation Politics* (Oxford, 1965).

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