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978-1-108-01765-7 - The Paston Letters, A.D. 1422-1509, Volume 2

Edited by James Gairdner

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The Paston Letters, A.D. 1422–1509

Archivist and historian James Gairdner, C.B. (1828-1912) began his career in the Public Record Office at 18 and retired as assistant keeper forty-seven years later. The author of numerous historical works, Gairdner is best-known for his archival and editorial work, which forms his most significant contributions to historical scholarship. He oversaw almost entirely the publication of *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*; *The Paston Letters* represent a similarly important work. The *Letters* reveal the fortunes of the Norfolk Paston family and of their tumultuous time. Beginning in the reign of Henry VI and continuing through the reigns of Edward IV, Richard III, and Henry VII, the *Letters* are of great interest to early modern historians and literary critics. In Volume Two (1424-1454), Gairdner includes some documents from the reign of Henry V before turning to letters written during Henry VI's reign.

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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108017657

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2010

This edition first published 1904

This digitally printed version 2010

ISBN 978-1-108-01765-7 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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VOLUME II

LONDON
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EXETER
JAMES G. COMMINS

1904

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Edinburgh: T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to His Majesty

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Early Documents

BEFORE entering upon the correspondence of the Paston family, in the reign of Henry VI., we have thought it well to give the reader a brief note of such deeds and charters of an earlier date as appear either to have been preserved in the family, or to have any bearing on its history. The following is a list of those we have been able to meet with either in the originals or in other quarters, such as Blomefield's *History of Norfolk*, where notices are given of several documents, which appear now to have got into unknown hands. The documents seen by Blomefield, and those from the Paston and Dawson-Turner collections, now in the British Museum, were probably all at one time part of the Paston family muniments. The three Harleian charters seem to have been derived from a different source.

A Deed is cited by Blomefield (*Hist. Norf.* vi. 480), by which Anselm, Abbot of St. Benet's, Hulme, and the Convent there, gave to Osbern, the priest (said by Blomefield to have been a son of Griffin de Thwait, the founder of the Paston family), the land of St. Benet's of Paston (*terram Sancti Benedicti de Paston*), in fee, for half the farm of one *caruca*, as his ancestors used to pay for the same.

Also a Deed of William the Abbot (who lived in King Stephen's reign), granting to Richer de Pastun, son of Osbern, son of Griffin de Thwete, all the land that the Convent held in Pastun, with their men, and other pertinencies.

Also a Deed of Covenant between Richer de Paston and Reginald the Abbot, and Convent of St. Benet's, Holme, that when peace should be settled in England, and pleas held in the Court of our Lord the King, the said Richer would, at the request and at the expense of the Abbot, give him every security in Court to release the lands in Pastun.

'Ralph de Paston was son, as I take it' (says Blomefield) 'of this Richer, and appears to have had two sons, Richard and Nicholas.

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‘Richard, son of Ralph de Paston, by his deed, *sans* date, granted to Geoffrey, son of Roger de Tweyt, lands in this town (Oxnead), paying 9d. per ann. for his homage and service, 40s. for a fine (*in gersumam*), and paying to him and his heirs on the feasts of St. Andrew, Candlemas, Pentecost, and St. Michael, on each feast, 2s. *ob.* He sealed with one *lis.* Laurence de Reppes, William and John, his brother, William de Bradfield, &c., were witnesses.’—Blomefield, vi. 480-1.

‘There was also another branch of this family, of which was Wystan, or Wolstan, de Paston, which I take to be the lineal ancestor of Sir William Paston, the Judge, and the Earls of Yarmouth. This Wolstan lived in the reign of Henry II. and Richard I., and married, as is probable, a daughter of the Glanvilles, as appeared from an impalement of Paston and Glanville in the windows of Paston Hall in Paston. His son and heir styled himself Robert de Wyston and Robert de Paston; who, dying in or about 1242, was buried at Bromholm, and left Edmund de Paston. To this Edmund, son of Robert, son of Wolstan de Paston, Sir Richard de Paston gave the land in Paston which Robert, his father, held of him and Nicholas, his brother, by deed *sans* date.’—Blomefield, vi. 481.

Undated Deed of Nicholas filius Radulfi Diaconi de Paston, granting to Robert, son of Wistan de Paston, two parcels of lands—one of them abutting on the lands of Eudo de Paston. Witnesses—Richard de Trunch; Will. Esprygy; Ralph de Reppes; Roger de Reppes; Richard, s. of Ralph de Baketon; John de Reppes; Roger, s. of Warin de Paston; Hugh, s. of Will. de Paston, &c.—Add. Charter 17,217, B.M. (Paston mss.).

Undated Deed of Richard, son of Ralph de Pastune, granting to Edmund, son of Robert Wistan de Pastune, lands in Pastune, &c.—(*Seal attached, in fine condition.*)—Add. Charter 17,218, B.M. (Paston mss.).

Blomefield also mentions (vi. 481) that Nicholas, son of Ralph de Paston, gave lands to Robert, son of Wystan de Paston, by deed *sans* date. Witness, Roger de Repps.

Undated Deed Poll, by which Richard, the son of Ralph, Deacon of Paston, grants to Edmund, the son of Robert Wiston of Paston, certain lands at Paston.—Add. Charter 14,810, B.M. (D. Turner’s Collection of Deeds relating to Norfolk).

Richard, son of Ralph de Paston, according to Blomefield (xi. 24), gave 12d. a year rent in Paston to the Priory of Bromholm. This gift is also mentioned by Richard Taylor in his *Index Monasticus* of the Diocese of Norwich, p. 15, where the purpose of the endowment is said to be ‘to keep their books in repair.’

Deed, cited by Blomefield (vi. 481), by Richard, son of John, son of Richard de Paston, granting to Richer Alunday and his heirs his native Alan de Tilney, with all his family, &c. (*cum tota sequela*), and 7 acres of land in Paston and Knapton, with messuages, &c., for 4 marks of silver *in gersumam*, and a rent of 22d. a year.

Undated Deed Poll, whereby William, the son of Robert Barrett, grants to Edmund, the son of Robert Whiston of Paston, certain lands in the Common Field of Paston.—Add. Charter 14,813, B.M. (D. Turner’s Coll.).

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EARLY DOCUMENTS

Undated Indenture between Clement Parcerit of Gimtingham, and Cecil, his wife, and Edmund, the son of Robert de Paston, concerning lands in Paston Field.—Add. Charter 14,814, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).

Undated Deed Poll, by which Richard de Lessingham grants to William, son of Robert de Paston, certain lands in the Common Field of Paston.—Add. Charter 14,812 (D. Turner's Coll.).

Ancient Deed of Nich. Chancehose of Baketun granting to Edmund, fil. Roberti Wistan de Pastun, and his heirs, for 30s., a *tresroda* of land in Pastun.—Add. Charter 17,219, B.M. (Paston mss.).

Undated Deed Poll, by which Richard, son of John de Paston, grants to Roger, his brother, certain lands in Paston Field.—Add. Charter 14,811, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).

Undated Deed Poll, whereby Hugh, son of William de Pastun, grants to Walter, son of Edmund de Pastun, and his heirs, a *tresroda* of land in the fields of Pastun, 'inter terram quæ fuit Osberti Salr. (?), ex parte Austri, et terram quæ fuit Ricardi Champeneys ex parte Aquilonis, et abuttat super forreram quæ fuit Roberti Carpentar' versus Orientem, et super liberam et terram ecclesiæ de Past' versus Occidentem.'—Add. Charter 2004, B.M.

A.D. 1313, 16 Oct. 'William de Paston obtains a pardon as an adherent of the Earl of Lancaster for his participation in the death of Gaveston, and the disturbances occasioned thereby.' 16 Oct., 7 Edw. II.—Palgrave's Parliamentary Writs, vol. ii. div. iii. p. 1262.

A.D. 1324, 22 Jan. Deed Poll, dated on Sunday after the Feast of St. Agnes, 17 Edward II., whereby Henry de Mundham, parson of Oxnead, and another, grant to William Hautayne and Alice, his wife, a certain messuage and premises in Oxnead.—Add. Charter 14,804, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).

A.D. 1324, 19 Feb. Quit-Claim by Edmund, son of Robert de Neketone, to Robert de Paston, Tabernarius, of lands in the fields without the West Gate of Bury St. Edmund's. Sunday after St. Valentine's Day, 17 Edw. II. Seal attached.—Harl. Charter 54 A. 31, B.M.

A.D. 1329, 24 Dec. Deed Poll of Margery, daughter of Robert de Neketon, granting to Robert de Paston lands in the fields of St. Edmund's. St. Edmund's Bury, Sunday, Christmas Eve, 3 Edw. III.—Harl. Charter 54 A. 32, B.M.

A.D. 1330. Petition to Parliament 4 Edw. III. of John de Claveryng, complaining that John Payne of Dunwich, Constantine de Paston, Austin Fitzwilliam, and others of Dunwich, took by force and arms five ships and a boat belonging to him, at Wallerswyke, and goods to the value of £300, after having beat, shipwrecked, and imprisoned (*baterent, naufrerent, et enprisonerent*) the said John's servants. The king's answer: 'Eyt en Chauncellerie oyer et terminer pur le horibilite du trespas, devant covenables justices.'—Rolls of Parl. ii. 33.

A.D. 1333, 29 April. Deed Poll, dated Thursday next before the Feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, 7 Edward III., whereby Alice, widow of William Hautayne, grants to Henry de Colby and others a messuage, with the appurtenances in Oxnead.—Add. Charter 14,805, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).

A.D. 1341, 28 Aug. Deed Poll of Robert de Paston granting to William

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de Bradeleghe and William Child, Chaplains, lands in the fields of St. Edmund's Bury, without the West Gate at Stanywerp, &c. St. Edmund's Bury, Tuesday after St. Bartholomew, 15 Edw. III.—Harl. Charter 54 F. 37, B.M.

A.D. 1341. Indenture of 15 Edw. III. between John de Knapeton, rector of Freugges, and Clement de Paston and Will. his son.—Add. Charter 17,221, B.M. (Paston mss.).

A.D. 1361. Charter of Sir Rob. de Mauteby to the Prior of St. Olave's, Herlyngflet, 35 Edw. III.—Add. Charter 17,222 (Paston mss.), B.M.

Notes of Proceedings in Outlawry of the time of Edward III. Judgment by Sir John Hody, mentioned in a more modern hand.—Paston mss., B.M.

A.D. 1382, 5 Oct. Deed Poll, dated on Sunday next after the Feast of St. Michael, 6 Richard II., by which Robert de Paston grants to John Gant certain lands in Paston field.—Add. Charter 14,817, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).

A.D. 1404, 1 Oct. Deed by which Mary, Lady Mortimer, mother of Sir John Fastolf, grants to her said son her manors of Caister and Caister Hall, together with her manor of Repps and the advowson of the free Chapel of St. John, within the said manor of Caister, to hold to him and his heirs for ever. 1 Oct., 6 Henry IV.—Add. Charter 14,597, B.M. (D. Turner's Coll.).