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978-1-108-01767-1 - The Paston Letters, A.D. 1422-1509, Volume 4

Edited by James Gairdner

Excerpt

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THE PASTON LETTERS

Edward IV

488

MARGARET PASTON TO JOHN PASTON¹*A Lettre to J. Paston, Armig., from his wife, shewing his imprisonment in the Fleete.*²

RYTH worchepfull husbond, I recomand me to yow. 1461
 Plesyt yow to wet that I receyvyd yowyr lettur NOV. 2
 that ye sent me by John Holme on Wednysday last
 past, and also I receyvvd a nothyr lettur on Fryday at nyt,

¹ [From Fenn, iv. 232.] This letter is ascribed by Fenn to the year 1465, in consequence of the allusion to John Paston's imprisonment in the Fleet. But there were more occasions than one on which he was confined there. Fenn himself knew of two. Paston was committed to the Fleet, as we know from William Worcester, on Saturday, the 3rd November 1464. He was also confined there in August and September 1465, and may very possibly have been released by the beginning of November. But I am inclined to think this letter refers to an imprisonment prior to either of these. For, in the first place, the news of it seems only to have been recent. It had become general subject of conversation at Norwich, 'on Saturday last,' whereas in 1465 it must have been known two months earlier. Secondly, Sir William Chamberlain, whose influence Sir Thomas Howes hopes will be of service, must have died in the spring of 1462. According to Blomefield (*Hist. of Norfolk*, i. 321), his will was dated the 3rd March 1461 (which would be in the modern computation 1462), and was proved on the 21st April 1462. It may be presumed, therefore, that on receiving the letter from his brother Clement (No. 484), written on the 11th October 1461, John Paston hastened up to London and was immediately thrown into prison. By this letter, however, we find that he was soon afterwards released, and his great enemy Howard sent to prison in his stead.

² There is no direction to the letter, but the words above inserted are written in an ancient hand upon the back of it.—F.

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1461
NOV. 2 that ye sent me by Nycolas Newmanys man, of the whyche lettys I thanc yow; for I schold ellys a' thowt that it had be wers with yow than it hathe be, or schal be, by the grace of Almyty God. And yet I kowd not be mery, sethyn I had the last lettyr tyll thys day that the Meyir sent to me, and sent me werd that he had knowlege for very trowthe that ye wer delyveryd owt of the Flet, and that Howard was comytyd to ward for dyvers gret compleyntys that wer mad to the Kyng of hym. It was talkyd in Norwyche and in dyvers othyr plasys in the contre on Saterdag last past, that ye wer comytyd to Flet, and in good feyth, as I herd sey, the pepyle was ryth sory ther of, bothe of Norwyche and in the contre. Ye ar ryth myche bownde to thank God, and all tho that love yow, that ye have so gret love of the pepyll as ye have. Ye ar myche behold to the Meyir¹ and to Gylberd,² and to dyvers othyr of the aldyrmen, for feythfully they owe yow good wyll to ther porys.

I have spoke with Syr Thomas Howys for swyche thyngys as ye wrot to me for, and he promysyd me that he schold labour it aftyr yowyr intent as fast as he kowd; and in good feyth, as my brodyr and Playter kan tell yow, as be hys seyng to us, he is and wole be feythfull to yow. And as for Wylliam Wyrcestyr, he hathe be set so up on the hone, what by the parson and by othyr, as my brodyr and Playter schall telle yow, that they hope he wole do well i now. The parson seydyth well and pleynly to hym. The parson tolde me that he had spook with Syr Wylliam Chambyrleyn,³ and with hys wyfe, and he thynkyth that they wole do well i now aftyr yowyr intent, so that they be plesantly intretyd. The parson tolde me that he wyst well that Syr Wylliam Chambyrleyn cowd do more ese in swyche matyers as ye wrot of, towchyng my Lord of Bedford,⁴ than ony man kowd do that leveyth at

¹ William Norwich was Mayor of Norwich in 1461.

² John Gilbert was Mayor in 1459 and in 1464. He died in 1472.

³ Sir William Chamberlain of Gedding, Suffolk, a Knight of the Garter, who had served under the Regent Bedford in the French wars. He married Anne, daughter and heir of Sir Robert de Herling, who, though she long survived him, and had two husbands after him, the second of whom was John, Lord Scrope of Bolton, was buried by her own desire beside her first husband, in the chancel of Herling Church

⁴ John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, died at Paris in 1435.—F.

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thys day. Also he tolde me that he felt by hem that they wold owe yow ryth good wyll, so that ye wold owe hem good wyll. The parson hopyth verily to make yow acordyd when he comyth to London.

1461
NOV. 2

Item, my brodyr and Playter wer with Calthorp¹ to inquer of the mater that ye wrot to me of. What answer he gave hem, they schall tell yow. I sent the Parson of Heylysdon² to Gurnay³ to spek to hym of the same mater, and he seyth feythefully ther was no swyche thyng desyiryd of hym, and thow it had be desyiryd, he wold nowthyr a' seyde nor done a yens yow. He seyde he had ever fownde you lovyng and feythfull to hym, and so he seyde he wold be to yow to hys power, and desyiryng me that I wold not thynk hym the contrary. As for John Gros, he is at Slole; ther for he myth not be spok with.

I pray yow that ye wole send me word whedyr ye wole that I schall remeve frome hens, for it begynyth to wax a cold abydyng her. Syr Thomas Howys and John Rus schall make an end of all thynngys aftyr yowyr intent, as myche as they can do ther in this wek, and he purposyth to come forward to yow on the Monday next aftyr Seynt Leonardys Day.

My brodyr and Playter schold a be with yow er thys tym, but that they wold a byd tyl thys day wer past, be cause of the schyer. I spok to my brodyr Wylliam as ye bad me, and he told me, so God hym help, that he hyryd ij. horse ij. dayis be for that ye redyn, that he myth a' ryde forthe with yow; and be cause that ye spak not to hym to ryde with yow, he seyde that he wend⁴ ye wold⁵ have had hym with yow.

Thomas Fastolfys modyr was her on the next day aftyr ye wer redyn, to have spoke with yow for hyr sone. Sche⁶

¹ *Query*, if Sir William Calthorpe, Knight, High Sheriff of Norfolk, etc., in 1464, and died very old in 1494.—F.

² Thomas Hert was instituted to the Rectory of Hellesdon in 1448.—F.

³ Thomas Gurney of Norwich, Esq., died in 1471.—F.

⁴ 'Woud' in Fenn in the original text, but this is evidently a misprint. The right-hand copy reads 'wend,' *i.e.* weened or thought, and the note immediately following shows that this was the reading intended.

⁵ The word 'not' seems here to have been omitted in the original letter.—F.

⁶ The word 'He' occurs in the text before 'Sche,' but is evidently a mistake.

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1461
NOV. 2 prayith yow, at the reverens of God, that ye wole be hys good mastyr, and to help hym in hys ryth, that he may have hom hys lyvelod owt of ther handys that have had it in hys nownage. Sche seyth that they wold mak hym a yer yonger than he is, but sche seyth that he is more thane xxj., and upon that sche dare take an othe.

And the Blyssyd Trynyte have yow in Hys kepyng, and send yow good sped in all yowyr matyrs, and send the vycтары of all yowyr enmyis.

Wretyn in hast, on Sowlemas Daye.¹

By yowyr,

M. P.

489

MARGARET PASTON TO JOHN PASTON²

To my ryth worchepfull [hus]bond, John Paston, be thys delyveryd in hast.

NOV. 20 **R**YTH worchepfull husbond, I recomand me to yow. Plesyt yow to wet that I receyvyd yowyr lettyr that ye sent by the gold smyth, as thys day in the mornyng. As for Syr Thomas, he sent me word he schold to yow ward as on Twysday last past; if he fayle ony thyng that ye sent word he schold bryng with hym, it is not for no lak of remembrans, for I sent to hym thryis or fowyr tymys ther for, and that he schold hast hym ther in. As for Rychard Call, he was not at home thys fortnyth. When he comyth I schall do yowir erendys to hym; and as for all yowyr odyr erendys I schall do hem as well as I can. I sent yow a byll yestyrday by old Taverham, and a byll of Jone Gaynys mater, the whyche bylle I pray yow may be delyveryd to Thomas Playter. I spak to hym of the same mater or he yed hens, and I pray yow, if it plese yow, to geve hym yowyr avyse what ye thynk is best to do ther in. Sche seyth sche is ryth

¹ All Souls', otherwise Soulmas Day, 2nd of November.—F.

² [From Paston Mss., B.M.] This letter seems to have been written in 1461, the year of John Paston's great dispute with Howard.

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sory, and if hyr old mastyr demene hym not well to yow sche prayith yow that ye wole be hyr good mastyr, and I that sche fare never the werse for hys defawtys. And also I pray yow that ye wele be John Lysterys good mastyr in hys mater. He spak to Playter ther of, and Playter seyde he hopyd to fynd a mene aftyr that he had spook with yow, that schold ese hym ther in. I thank yow hertly for yowyr lettyr, for it was to me gret comfort to her fro yow. God knowyth my modyr and I thowt ryth longe tyll we herd tydyngys fro yow. And the blyssyd Trinite have yow in Hys kepyng. Wretyn in hast on Seynt Edmundys Day the Kyng.

1461
NOV. 20

By yowyr M. P.

The pepyll was nevyr bettyr dysposyd to yow than they be at this owyr. The byll that Howard hathe mad a yens yow and odyr hathe set the pepyll in thys contre a rore. God yeve grace it be no werse than it is yet.

490

ROGER TAVERHAM TO JOHN PASTON¹

To my reverent and most be trusted maister, John Paston, Esquier, duelling in the Inner Temple, be this delyvered.

RYGHTE reverent and most be trusted maister, I recommaunde me in the most lowly wise un to your good and prevyd maysterchep, and desiring many days to here of your welfare, whiche I be seche God encrease un to his plesauns and un to the prosperite and welfare of your person, and of all youres. And I be seche you of the good contynuaunce of your maysterchep at diverses tymes befor this writing shewed un to me ; and, sir, ther is non man a lvyte that I trust more to than I doo un to you, and I am your bedman, and so shall

Year
uncertain

¹ [From Fenn, iv. 252.] This letter and the next are placed here merely for convenience. The two are evidently some years apart in point of date, and nothing is quite clear about the date of either, except that the latter must have been written in the reign of Edward IV., and of course before the death of John Paston in 1466. This, which is several years earlier than the other, was almost certainly written in the reign of Henry VI. The writer was probably the 'old Taverham' mentioned by Margaret Paston in the last letter.

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Year
uncer-
tain

remayn be the grace of God all the days of myn liff. And, sir, I suppose I shall never see you no more, nor non of myn frendes, whiche is to me the grettest lamentacion that myght come un to myn herte ; for, sir, by the grace of God, I shall go to Rome and in to oder holy places, to spende myn dayes of this present liff in the servise of God. For I hadde lever liffe in gret tribulacion in the service of God in this present liff, than for to folowe the wretchednesse of this worlde.

And, syr, of on thing I be seche specially your good maysterchep that ye wolle shew your good maistershep un to my fader in tyme of his nede, and that ye wolle recomaunde me in the most lowly wise with all reverence un to his good faderhode, be sechyng hym that he wole yeff me every day, during the dayes of his liff, his paternall blissing. And I have marvayle san that I have writen so many letters un to hym be for this tyme, that I hadde never non letter ageyn, whiche is to me the grettest lamentacion that ever come to my hert ; and nowe knowing that I shall never see hym more, nor you, nor non other of my frendes, marvayle ye not thow sorowe is impreuded in myn hert.

But, reverent maister, myn singuler trust remayneth nowe in your person, for, sir, and it please you, I most nedes write un to your good maisterchep, in the whiche my most trust remayneth. For, syr, and it please you, as for myn inheritauce and other things whiche shulde come to me after the deth of my fader, whoes liff God preserve to his long plesauns, knowing that I shall never com ther, I hadde lever that by your good a vise that ye wolde take it unto you, for I hadde lever that ye hadde it rather than any person in the worlde during my liff, with all the profites ther of ; and if that ye wole make as good evidences for you in that partye as ye can, and I shall a seale hem. And as you semeth best, and in the most secret wise, rewle you in this mater.

And, sir, I be seche you to recomaunde me in the most lowly wise to myn reverent Maister William Lumnour, seyeng hym that I am and shall be his perpetuall bedman, and as ye think best, ye may telle hym of all these maters. And, syr, I be seche you to recomaunde me with all reverence un to my

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masteras your wiff, and to all other maysters and frendes ther. Year
And, sir, that ye wolle thank the bringer of this letter, whiche uncer-
hathe ben in my gret tribulacion my good frende; and, sir, tain
whan ye speke with my fader, recomaunde me un to hym with
all reverence, and sey un to hym I shall send hym a letter in all
hast possible.

And, syr, as for this mater, demene you as ye wolle, and I
shall doo your plesauns as moche as in me is. And, reverent
maister, remitte me summe letter by the bringer her of of all
thes maters, for he duellith with my Lorde, and he is ryght
moche be trusted, for I knowe wele he wole yef a tendauce un
to you for to have summe letter from you; for, syr, it shall
not be longe or that I go to Rome, by the grace of God. And
as sone as I have a letter from you at this tyme, I shall send
you a noder ageyn.

No more at this tyme, but the Holy Trinite have you in
His blisshed keping. Wreten at Sarum, the Monday aftyr
Mydsomer Day. And lete these maters be kept secrete by
your best a vise.

Be youre poure servaunt, ROGER TAVERHAM.

491

ROGER TAVERHAM TO JOHN PASTON¹

*To my right wourshipful maister, John Paston,
Esquier, be this letter delyvered.*

RIGHT wourshipful maister, I recommaunde me un to 1461(?)
your maistership, and I thank your maistership that
hit pleased your maistership to sende me wourde a yen
of my letter that I sende you by the brynger herof. Sir, as I
am enfourmed, ye sent me wourde how that my fader was dede
long tyme passed, and also ye desired to knowe my titylle of
ryght. Sir, I am very heyre, by the disceas of my fader, to a

¹ [From Fenn, iv. 258.] The mention of Lord Wenlock in this letter proves that it cannot be earlier than 1461; but if the writer be, as we have surmised, the 'old Taverham' mentioned by Margaret Paston in No. 489, it is most probably of that year.

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1461(?) place called Keswyk, in Taverham, with all the apportenauncez, and that comyth by enherytaunce and discente to me, for I am the helder and heyre ; and though my Lorde Cromwell¹ hath taken Thomas Taverham, my yonger brother, as warde for the same enheritaunce, that maketh no mater to me, in so moche I am helder brother. Wher for I besече you to sende me a letter of attournay made to you in my name in the strengest wise that ye can, for to entre in to the same lyvelode, and I shall asseal that, and than I shall do my service and feaute to the seid Lorde Cromwell in all thing as by the tenure of the same lyvelode of olde tyme aught to be done. And herin I kno well the King shal cause my Lorde Cromwel to do me bothe lawe and right ; and also my Lorde Chaunceler, with oder Lordes diverse, shall do the same. And, sir, I besече your maistership to do and to take possession in the saide place with the apportenaunce in short tyme, for losyng of the rent this yer passed.

And, sir, as for the place of Attylbrigge that my moder in lawe now duellith in, sir, your maistershep shal right not [*naught*] attempte ther now in ; for my Lorde of Warwik² hath seen how the same place was yeven me by testament by Sir Roger Dallyng after the disease of my fader, whiche is redy to be shewed. And therupon my Lorde of Warwik hath comaunded certeyn gentilmen to entre in the same place, and your maistership hadde be moved ther in or this, but for cause that ye love wel Lumpnour,³ and that my moder in lawe is his sister ; but I knowe wel hit woul cost CCC*li*., but that she shal be dispossedd of that place in short tyme. And, maister, how ye woul be rewled in the seid place of Keswyk, I be seche you to sende me wourde, as my sengler trust is in you ; for and ye woulde not take possession in the saide place, my Lorde Wenlok⁴ woulde have that ful fayne, for all the

¹ Humphrey Bouchier, Lord Cromwell, so created in 1461.

² Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

³ William Lumner, of Mannington, in Norfolk.—F.

⁴ John Wenlock was created Baron Wenlock in 1461 by Edward IV. ; but he afterwards left the York party, and joined that of Lancaster. He was cleft down with a battle-axe by the Duke of Somerset for not coming up in time at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, whereby that battle was lost.—F.

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contray knowith while that while I leve, I am heyr and non 1461(?)
 other. And therfor I beseche you in all hast sende me wourde
 by the bryngger herof in hast, quia mora trahit periculum.
 And, sir, I would come speke with you. I am seke, and may
 not goo; but telle the bryngger heroff all your entent. For
 my liff duryng I hadde lever that ye hadde that place for *jd.*
 than a nother man, thow he woulde yeff me meche mony, for
 your maistership ther shewed to me in my yong age. And
 God kepe you, &c.

Your chapeleyn, ROGER TAVERHAM.

492

ABSTRACT¹

RICHARD CALLE TO JOHN PASTON.

Since I left you I have received at Cotton £4 : 2s., with which I have made 1461
 purchases of linen shirts, &c. for you. Shall have more money before Christmas. NOV. 20
 Debenham, Jenney, nor none of his men 'come not there sen' that I was there.'
 A letter of attorney is made for Nakton in your name to Sir John Heveningham,
 and a rental and fermal sent him. We kept a court this week at Calcotte but
 could get little money, not so much as I paid my Lady of Suffolk's officers.
 Farmers will not occupy there till appointment be made between Paston and
 Debenham; nor Risyng till he hear from Paston. Can get no day for Mautby.
 They will not give a noble, nor even 6 shillings, for a cow. Dey occupyes your
 lands there till you come home. Risyng would take them and the closes at
 Caste if he is not to have Calcotte. The prests shall be paid as soon as we get
 money, I hope this week. Wheat 12*d.* a comb, barley 8*d.*, malt 9*d.* and 10*d.*
 No good price for malt, 'saving, as we understand, it is good Flanders.' John
 Russe and Robert Glover are sending a ship with corn over, and we have
 ventured with them 100 comb malt. You should make some bargain with your
 beer brewers. Can get no money from Aleynes, farmer of Gresham, since ye
 rode, but 40*s.* Has laid in sufficient beef for Paston's household till 'Faste-
 gang' (Lent). Sir Thomas Howys advyses my mistress not to send Edmund
 Paston to Cambridge or elsewhere till after Christmas. Please ask Clement,
 your brother, to get a writ against Geoffrey Clerk of West Somerton for the
 20*s.* that Belys gave him to pay Clement. Remember the letter I sent you last
 week.

Caister, St. Edmund's Day.

[From what is here said of the levying of rents at Cotton, and from the mention
 of Debenham and Jenney in connection with it, we may presume this letter was written
 in 1461. With this supposition agrees the reference to John Paston's brother, Clement,
 who, as we see by No. 484, was in London in October.]

¹ [From Paston MSS., B.M.]

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AGNES PASTON TO JOHN PASTON¹*To John Paston, at London, be this delyverd in bast.*

I 461 I grete you welle, and lete you wete that this day Berth' Elys of Paston
DEC. I come to Norwych to me, and shewet me a rentall for the terme of Seynt Mich.,
the yer of Kyng H. vj. xxxix^o; and in the ende of the seyd rentall, of Waryn
Kynge's hand is wretyn 'Agnes Paston vj*d. ob.* [7½*d.*]. Item, the same Agnes
for v. acre lond x*d.*' Item, Aleyn Bayfeld askyth the same rent for the yer
last past at Mich. Item, I have knowlech be a trew man that whan Sharpe
the resevvor was at Gemyngham last, Waryn Herman was dyvers dayes with
hym, and put hym in mynde that the mercymnt for makyng of the walle
chuld be askyd ageyn and be distreynyd ther for. Item, I sent you be Doctor
Aleyns man the restew [*residue*] of Waryn Herman, and seche names as
Cullynge and Sammys putt in of her owyn fre wyll befor John Northales,
shereve of Norwyche,² under her selis. God be with you and send you
His blyssyng and myn. Wretyn at Norwych the Tuisday next after Seynt
Andrew.

Item, the seyd Berth' Elis seyth that the seyd resevver wold not alowe
the rent in 'Trunche nor the mercymnts for my sute to the curt. Gonnor
wold suffyr no man to answer for me.

Be your moder, AGNES PASTON.

494

SIR JOHN HEVENYNGHAM TO JOHN PASTON,
SENIOR³*To myn ryght worchippfull cosyn, John Paston the elder, Esquyer,
be this letter delivered in bast.*

DEC. 12 Ryght worchippfull cosyn, I recomaunde me to you in as hertely wyse I
can, desyryng ever to here off your welfare, whiche I beseche our Lord Jesu

¹ [From Paston mss., B.M.] The year in which this letter was written is determined by the mention of John Northale as Sheriff of Norwich.

² He was Sheriff of Norwich in the first year of Edward IV.

³ [From Paston mss., B.M.] This letter is evidently of the same year as No. 492. The contents, moreover, seem to show that the date cannot be far distant from that of Richard Calle's letter of the 1st of February following.