

THE WILL OF MARGARET PASTON,

Widow of John Paston, Esq.

COMMUNICATED

BY DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., V.P.

OUR worthy member, Mr. Henry Boulter, always alive to what may amuse, improve, or assist others, having permitted me to submit to the Society the following Will, I have felt that the importance of the instrument, no less than of the individual, required that it should not go forth unaccompanied by annotations. The testamentary disposition of the property of a Norfolk lady of wealth and station in the fifteenth century, could not but be a fit medium for illustrating the manners and customs of the times; as also for gathering together the scattered notices of one of the principal county families, long since swept off from the face of the earth, "their ruins ruined, and their place no more." The Will itself was known to Blomefield, who has quoted portions of it under the head of the parish of Mautby. It will here be found entire, from a copy that belonged to Martin, the historian of Thetford, and is headed, in his own handwriting, "A Transcript from two fair Rolls of Parchment, sewed together, which appear, from certain marks in the margin, to have been made use of by the Executors." "The original," he adds, "is preserved in *Registro Caston*."

Of John Paston, the husband of the testatrix, little more needs here be said—for the *Paston Letters* and the *Historical Sketch of Caister Castle* abound with details of him—than that he was the son of Sir William Paston, "the good judge," and studied law in the Inner Temple, and was one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf, and heir of his property at

Caister; the obtaining and holding possession of which was attended with painful difficulties, originating in the unfounded claims of a no less powerful rival than the Duke of Norfolk, who, "nunc prece, nunc pretio, nunc vi," strove to wrest it from him, and, backed by the King, made his life a continued scene of suffering and sorrow. He was thrown into the Fleet Prison, shortly before his death, in 1466; and he was buried with great pomp in Bromholm Priory!

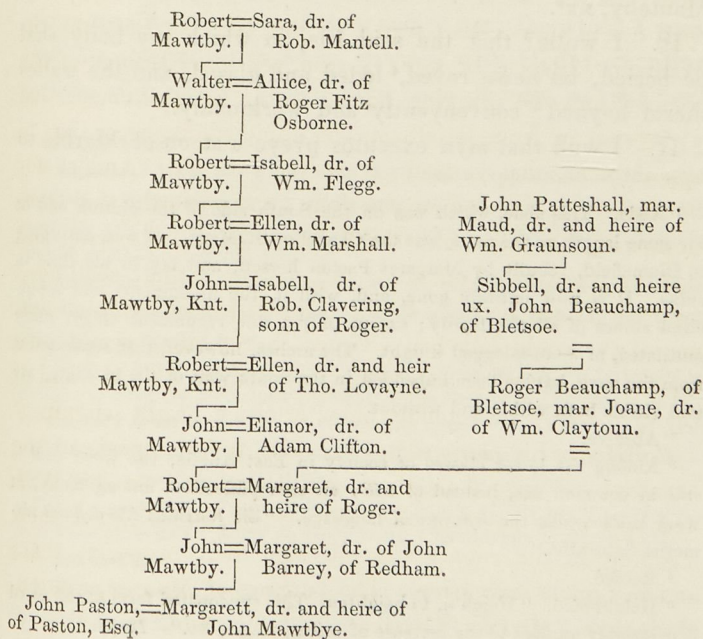
Of the testatrix herself the death must have taken place between February, 1481, when this Will was executed, and the latter part of 1484, when it was proved. She was the only child and heir of John Mautby, of Mautby, Esq., by Margaret, daughter of John Berney, Esq., of Reedham. Her father was the last of the line and of the name; so that, on her marriage, the whole of the Mautby property devolved to the Pastons. This marriage must have taken place about 1440; for, in the very first letter in the *Paston Correspondence*, her mother-in-law, Agnes Paston, tells her husband, Sir William, "Blessed be God, I send you good tidings of the coming, and the bringing home, of the Gentlewoman, that ye weeten of from Reedham, this same night, according to appointment, that ye made there for yourself. And as for the first acquaintance between John Paston and the said Gentlewoman, she made him Gentle cheer in Gentle wise, and said, he was verily your son; and so I hope there shall need no great Treaty between them. The Parson of Stockton told me, if ye would buy her a Gown, her mother would give thereto a goodly Fur: the Gown needeth to be had; and of colour it would be a goodly blew, or else a bright sanguine."

Collins, in his *Baronetage*, Vol. III., p. 321, speaks of the Mautbys as "a good family;" and it is clear from this Will, and still more so from the *History of Norfolk*, that their standing in the county was old, and their property, there and in Suffolk, extensive. The parishes of Mautby, Fritton, Basingham, Matlask, Gresham, and Sparham, as well as of

St. Peter of Hungate and St. Michael of Coslany, in Norwich, are here enumerated; but, for some reason not now perhaps to be understood, Winterton, with which we learn from Blomefield that they were no less connected, is altogether passed unnoticed; as in the Pedigree is the marriage of Sir Walter de Mautby with Christian, the eldest daughter of Sir Piers de Basingham. The latter omission may probably be owing to her being his second wife, and not the mother of his son. Of the Pedigree, which is preserved among the *Harleian MSS.* in the British Museum (No. 1552, fol. 173), I subjoin a copy, most glad to have in any manner brought to light the traces of an ancient extinct Norfolk family, before that I myself

“Discedam, explebo numerum, condarque tenebris.”

PEDIGREE OF MAUTBY.



THE WILL.

In the name of God, Amen. I, Margaret Paston, Widow, late the Wiff of John Paston, Squier, Dought⁹ and heire to John Mauteby, Squier, hole of spirit and mynde, with pfete avisement and good delibacon, the iiijth day of ffebruary, in thee yer of our Lord God a m'cccclxxxj, make my testament and last Wille in this fourme folowyng :

ffirst, I betake my sowle to God Almyghty and to our lady, his blissed moder, Saint Michael, Saint John baptist, and to alle Saintes ; and my body to be beried in the Ele¹ of the Cherch of Mauteby, byfore the Ymage of our lady there. In which Ele reste the bodies of divs of myn aunceſes, whos sowles God assoile.²

Iſ. I bequethe to the high awter of the seid Cherche of Mauteby, xx^s.

Iſ. I wulle³ that the seid Ele, in which my body shal be beried, be newe roved,⁴ leded and glased, and the walles therof heyned⁵ convenyently and workmanly.

Iſ. I wull that myn executōs pŕeye a stoon of Marble to

¹ Aisle. This aisle, which was on the South side of the church and of the same length as the nave, was the Chapel of St. Mary. It was, according to Blomefield, rebuilt by Margaret Paston herself, and lay in his time in ruins. It is now entirely gone, and, with it, the monuments and sepulchral stones of all the family ; except only a fine recumbent effigy, sadly mutilated, of a cross-legged knight. The arches, however, that separated it from the nave, having been imbedded in the South wall of the building, are still visible both within and without.

² Absolve.

³ Among the lower classes of society in East Anglia, the word *wull* is still in common use, instead of *will* ; an exemplification, among many, of what Horace calls the *defluence* of language. "*Sic horridus ille defluxit numerus Saturnius.*"

⁴ Roofed.

⁵ Heightened. "Heigh'n, to heighten. This syncopated form of the word is invariably applied to the increase of prices, wages, &c."—*Forby*.

be leyde alofte upon my grave within a yer next aft^r my decese; and upon that stoon I wulle have iiij scochens⁶ sett at the iiij corners; wherof I wulle that the first scochen shal be of my Husbonde's armes and myn, depted;⁷ the ij^{de} of Mauteby's armes and Berney's of Redham,⁸ depted; the iiij^{de} of Mauteby's armes and the lord loveyn,⁹ depted; the iiij^{te} of Mauteby's Armes and Sir Roger Beauchamp,¹⁰ depted; and, in the myddys of the seid stoon, I wulle have a scochen sett of Mauteby's Armes allone; and under the same thise wordes wretyn—"In God is my trust." With a Scripture¹¹ wretyn in the verges therof, rehersyng thise wordes—"Here lieth Margaret Paston, late the Wyff of John Paston, Dought and Heire of John Mauteby, Squier;" and, forth in the same Scripture rehersed, the day of the Moneth and the yer that I shaft decese; and, "On whos Sowle God have m^{er}cy."

I^l. I wull that myn executōs shaft p^rveye xij pore meen of my tenaūtes, or other if they suffice not; the which I wulle shall be apparailled in white gownes, with Hodes according, to hold xij torches¹² abowte myn herse or bere, at such tyme

⁶ Escutcheons.

⁷ Impaled. I am not aware that this peculiar application of the word, *departed*, is to be found in any dictionary; but our early writers commonly used the verb *depart*, in an active sense, to part or divide; and it is so employed by Shakspeare and Spencer.

⁸ It will be seen, by the annexed pedigree, that the mother of the testatrix was the daughter of John Berney of Redeham; as also that she herself was fourth in descent from

⁹ Thos. de Lovaine, frequently called Lord Lovaine, as were his descendants; though, as observed by Nicolas (*Synopsis of the Peerage of England*, I., p. 391) he was only summoned to be at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 11 Edward II., and never to Parliament; and one single writ of summons, viz. 22 Edward I., was issued to the family of Lovaine.

¹⁰ Here again Mrs. Paston refers to the family of her mother, who was grand-daughter to Sir Roger de Beauchamp, Chamberlain to Edward III.

¹¹ Inscription.

¹² Upon the use of Torches or Tapers at funerals, much curious matter will be found in Brand's *Popular Antiquities* (2nd edit., Vol. II., p. 181). Strutt,

as I shal be beried, during the exequies and Masse of my beryng; Which xij torches I wille remayne in the seid Chersch of Mauteby whil they may last, for my yerday.¹³

Which yerday I wille myn heire kepe in the same Chersch for me, my seid Husbond, and myn Auncetes, yerly, during the tyme of xii yeres next aft my decese; and I wull that ich of the seid xij pore meen the day of my beriing have iiij^d: also I wull that iche pste, being at my beryng and masse, have viij^d; and ich Clerk in surplys,¹⁴ iij^d: also I wull that the prest which shall berie me have vj^s. viij^d.; so that he say ov me, at the tyme of my beryng, aft the hole 3vice that to the beryng belongeth.

Also I wull, that from the day and tyme that I am beried, unto the end of vij yeres than next folowyng, be ordeyned a Taper of Waxe of a lb., to brenne upon my grave ich Sonday and Halliday at aft divine 3vice, to be seid or sung in the seid Chersch, and dailly at the Masse of that Preest that shall singe there in the seid Ele for my Sowle.

It. I wulle that vj tapers, ich of iiij lb., brenne abowte

in his *Manners and Customs*, Vol. II., p. 108, tells us that the burning of them on those occasions was accounted very honourable; and that to have a great many was a special mark of esteem in the person who made the funeral to the deceased. In the present instance, Mrs. Paston orders that mark of respect to herself; and so in the will of William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, executed April 29th, 1397, it is provided that twenty-four poor people, dressed in black gowns and red hoods, should attend the funeral, each carrying a lighted torch of eight pounds weight. The difference of the colour of the dress of the attendants in the two cases is remarkable.

¹³ "An anniversary day, the day on which prayers were said for the dead."
—Halliwell.

¹⁴ By Clerk in surplice, appears to be intended every person in clerical orders below the rank of priest; as ostiary, reader, exorcist, acolyte, sub-deacon, and deacon. And so accurately were these several degrees distinguished, that we read in Wilkins, that, if an ostiary was murdered, one pound was to be paid, over and above the weregild; and so on, according to the degree of the clerk, till it came to the priest, for whom seven pounds were to be paid, over and above the weregild.

my herse the day of my beryng, of which I wuff that iiij yerly be kept to brenne abowte myn Herse whan my yerday shall be kept, as long as they may honestly ȝve.

Iȝ. I wulle have an honest seculer prest to synge and pray in the seid Ele for my sowle, the sowles of my father and Mother, the sowle of the seid John Paston, late my husbond, and for the sowlys of his auncetes and myn, during the tyme of vij yeres next aftȝ my decesse.

Iȝ. I wuff that myn executours pȝeye a compleet legende¹⁵ in oon book, and an Antiphoner¹⁶ in an other book; which bookes I wull be given to abide ther in the seid Cherch, to the Wersship of God as longe as they may endure.

Iȝ. I wulle that evȝ houshold⁹ in Mauteby, as hastily as it may be convenyently, doo aftȝ my decesse have xij^d.

Iȝ. to the emendyng of the Cherch of ffreton¹⁷ in Suff. I

¹⁵ "The Legend contained a table of the Lessons to be read for Morning Service throughout the year, with the Lives of the Saints, and extracts from the works of the fathers and doctors of the Church."—*Lyndewode*.

¹⁶ "An Anthem or Choral Service Book, so called from the alternate repetitions and responses."—*Lyndewode*.

¹⁷ The connection of the testatrix with Fritton (or Freton) is best shown by the following extract from the Rev. A. Suckling's *History of Suffolk*, Vol. I., p. 353: "In the reign of Edward III., Sir Robert de Mauteby was lord and patron; and he was succeeded by John de Mauteby. In 1374, Sir John de Mauteby, son of Sir John de Mauteby, Knt., by his last will, dated at Fritton, leaves his body to be buried in the Church of St. Edmund at Fritton, before the altar of the blessed Virgin Mary. He bequeathed to Richard Galyerd, parson of the Church there, whom he appoints one of his executors, forty pence, to be expended in masses for the good of his soul. Sir John's will was proved on the first of October in that year. In 1413, Robert Mauteby, Esq. enfeoffed Sir Simon Felbrigge, Sir Miles Stapleton, and Sir William Argentein, in divers manors and rents in Norfolk, and in Fritton manor in Suffolk, to fulfil his will. John Mauteby, his son and heir, married Margaret, daughter of John Berney, of Reedham, Esq., by whom he had Margaret, his only daughter and heiress, who, marrying John Paston, Esq., son and heir of Sir William Paston, the Judge, brought the manor and advowson of Fritton, inter alia, into her husband's family, where they continued nearly a century and a half."

bequethe a chesiple¹⁸ and an awbe.¹⁹ And I wull that ich household⁹, being my tenaunt there, have vj^d.

And I bequethe to the emendement of the Cherch of Basyngham²⁰ a chesiple and an awbe.

And I wull that evy household⁹ there have viij^d.

It. I bequeth to the emendyng of the Cherch of Matelask²¹ a chesiple and an awbe.

And I wull that evy pore household⁹ that be my tenaunte there have viij^d.

It. I bequethe to the emendyng of the Cherch of Gresham²² a chesiple and an awbe.

¹⁸ Chasubles, or chesibles, the priest's ordinary outer garment used at mass, now always called the vestment.

¹⁹ A surplice, or white linen vestment, properly called the albe. The word, *emend*, in this and the following bequests, is employed in a sense in which I do not recollect to have seen it elsewhere. It appears to signify *enrich*; and as its etymological meaning is, to remove a fault or defect, can it, therefore, be intended to imply that these several churches wanted what they ought to have had, and were thus to be supplied?

²⁰ The family of Mautby became connected with Basingham through the marriage of Sir Walter de Mautby with Christian, the eldest daughter of Sir Piers de Basingham. In the 24th of Henry III., Robert de Mautby held half a fee of Roger Fitz Osbert. In the 6th of Edward I., William le Flight or Flegg, released to Walter de Mautby all his right and title in this manor, and in those of West Beckham and Matlask. In the 9th of Edward II., John de Mautby was lord. Sir John de Mautby presented to this church in 1326, Sir Robert de Mautby in 1347, and Sir John Mautby in 1369 and 1397: then, as with Fritton and Matlask, the marriage of the present testatrix with John Paston vested it in that family.—*Blomefield*, VIII., p. 84.

²¹ Of the connection of the Mautbys with Matlask, Blomefield says nothing more than that John de Mautby was lord in the 9th of Edward II., Sir Robert in 1347, and Sir John in 1369 and 1397; the fate of Matlask having in this respect gone hand in hand with that of Basingham, in conjunction with which it passed to the Pastons.

²² The name of Mautby does not appear in Blomefield in his account of Gresham, which was altogether Paston property, and can only have been mentioned in this will in consequence of the marriage of the testatrix. With the Pastons, too, it was then a late acquisition; a moiety of the manor having been first granted by fine by Thomas Chaucer, Esq., son of the poet, in the 7th of Henry VI., to Sir William, the Judge, into whose family the other

And I wull that ich pore houshold⁹ that be my tenaüte there have vj^d.

It. I wull that ich pore houshold⁹ late my tenaüte at Sparham²³ have vj^d.

It. to the repacon of the Cherch of Redham,²⁴ there as I was borne, I bequeth v m̃res and a chesiple of silk, with an awbe, with myn armes therupon, to the emendement of the same Cherch.

It. to ich of the iiij Houshes of ffreres in Norwich²⁵ xx^s.

It. to ich of the iiij Houshes of ffreres in Yermouth and at the Southtown,²⁶ to pray for my sowle, I bequeth xx^s.

moiety also came. In the *Paston Letters* (2nd edit., Vol. II., Letter 316) Sir John Paston, Knt. enters circumstantially into particulars of their embattled mansion here, and gives a rough drawing of its ground plan, and requests to be furnished with exact measurements of the building.

²³ It cannot but appear a little remarkable, that the Church of Sparham should be without any legacy; considering that there was in the parish a lordship called Mautby's Hall, a name even retained in the time of Blomefield, who mentions the existence of this lordship before the Conquest; and adds, "Avelina de Mautby was returned to be lady of it in the 9th of Edward II., and Robert de Mautby was found to hold one fee here, of the Earl of Pembroke, in the 35th of Edward III." Again, Peter Mautby, Esq. by his will, dated October 4th, 1438, requires to be buried in the Church of Sparham St. Mary; and in the 20th of Henry VI., Sir Simon Felbrig and others, trustees of Robert Mautby, Esq., settled this lordship on John Paston, Esq., who had married our testatrix, his daughter. And thus the property at Sparham, as in other places, passed from the Mautbys to the Pastons.

²⁴ At Redeham, the Mautbys had no possessions: their only connection with it arose from the marriage above mentioned; and the present legacy was but a tribute of affection to the memory of a mother and to a birth-place.

²⁵ The Black Friars, or Dominicans, or Preachers; the Gray Friars, or Franciscans; the White Friars, or Carmelites; and the Austin Friars.

²⁶ Neither Tanner in his *Notitia Monastica*, nor Taylor in his *Index Monasticus Norfolciensis*, enumerates more than the first three orders just mentioned, in Yarmouth; but the Austin Friars certainly had a house here; for the name, corrupted to *Ostend*, still remains, attached to two *roues*; and a small portion of the building is also left. The monastery at Southtown, now wholly gone, and its situation only known by a small piece of ground being traditionally called the site of St. Mary's Church, was also an establishment of Austin Friars.

It. to the ankeres,²⁷ at the ffreres p̄chours in Norwich, I bequeth iij^s. iiij^d.

And to the ankeres in Conesford I bequeth iij^s. iiij^d.

Itm. to the anker at the White ffreres in Norwich I bequeth iij^s. iiij^d.

It. to ich hole and half suster at Normans²⁸ in Norwich, viij^d.

It. to the Deen and his bretheren of the Chepell of ffeld,²⁹ to the use of the same place, to seye a dirige and a masse for my sowle, xx^s.

It. to the HospitaH of Seint Giles³⁰ in Norwich, also for a dirige³¹ and a Masse for my sowle, xx^s.

It. to ich of the iiij pore meen and to either of the Susters of the seid HospitaH, ij^d.

It. to the Mother Chorch of Norwich for a dirige and Masse, xx^s.

²⁷ This must have been Mrs. Catharine Mann, who, according to Blomefield (Vol. II., p. 729, note, 1st edit.) "had a pension of 20s. per annum for life, paid by the city, for her resignation of the house, 1480." The same author enters at length, p. 546, into the subject of the Ankers and Ankeresses, male and female Anchorites, at Norwich, of whom Kirkpatrick says, more briefly, p. 2, that they were "a sort of monks, who, being become perfect by a monastical conversation, shut themselves up in cells, far remote from the sight of men, giving access to no man, but living only in divine contemplation."

²⁸ The hospital of St. Paul, commonly called Norman's, from the name of its first master, was devoted to the lodging, comfort, and relief of poor strangers, vagrants, and sick and impotent persons. It was from 1429 consigned to the exclusive care of fourteen women; seven of them, "whole sisters," who eat, drank, and lodged in the house; and seven, "half sisters," who attended divine service with them, but were not lodged or clothed in the hospital.

²⁹ What is now called Chapel Field derives its name from the Chapel of St. Mary here referred to, which adjoined its East side.

³⁰ Commonly called the Old Man's Hospital, a long account of which is given by Blomefield.

³¹ "A solemn hymn in the Romish Church, commencing *Dirige gressus meos*: it was part of the Burial Service."—Halliwell.

It. to iche lepre man and Woman at the v gates³² in Norwich, iij^d.

And to ich forgoer at evy of the seid gates, ij^d.

It. to ich leper w^tout the North gates at Yarmouth,³³ iij^d. and to the forgoer ther, ij^d.

It. that ich Houshold⁹ of the pariss^h of seint Peter of Hungate³⁴ in Norwich, that wull receyve almes, have iijj^d.

It. I wull have a dirige and a Masse for my sowle at the pariss^h Cherch of seint Michael of Coslany³⁵ in Norwich; and that evy p^{re}ste ther havyn^g his Stipend, being therat, have iijj^d.; and ich Clerk in Surplys of the same pariss^h, than ther being, have ij^d.; and the pariss^h Clerk, vj^d.; and the Curat³⁶ that sha^{ll} seye high Masse, have xx^d.; and I bequeth to the repacon of the bellys of the same Cherch, vj^s. viij^d., and to the sexteyn there to ryng^e at the seid dirige and Masse, xx^d.

It. I wull that myn executōs sha^{ll} geve to the Sustentacon

³² The five gates here alluded to were St. Stephen's, St. Giles', St. Bennet's, St. Austin's, and St. Mary Magdalen's. At each of these was a Leper or Lazar-house, governed by a master, who, before the Dissolution, was a Religious, and officiated daily in the Chapel. Each had also a *forgoer*, whose duty it was to beg daily for them.—*Blomefield*.

³³ This Leper-house was at but a short distance from the town, on the left-hand side of the road to Norwich. It was standing in the memory of individuals not above forty years old, and was commonly called the *pocky-house*.

³⁴ The advowson of this Church was, in 1458, conveyed by the Dean and Chapter of the College of St. Mary in the Field to the husband of the testatrix and herself and their heirs for ever. Several of the family were buried here; and it appears by the roll of the funeral expenses of John Paston, that his body rested for a day in the church, on its way from London to Broomholm for interment.

³⁵ I do not find that Blomefield mentions the name either of Paston or Mautby in conjunction with this parish; nor can I trace the connection between them from any other source; and yet, looking to the legacy, it cannot be doubted that some such connection existed.

³⁶ The word Curate is here used, like Curé in French, for the incumbent: the other priests were chantry priests, who officiated at minor altars.

of the parson or p̄ste that shall for the tyme mynystre the Sacramentez and divine ſvice in the Cherch of Seint Petre of Hungate in Norwich, xx lb of lawfull money, which xx lb I wult it be putt in the rule and disposicon of the Cherch Reves of the same Cherch for the tyme being, by the oʋsight of the substanciall psones of the said Parisshe; to this intent, that the seid Cherch Reves, by the oʋsight, as is beforseid, shall yerly geve, if it so be that the p̄fite of the seid Cherch suffice not to finde a prest aft̄ their discrecions, pt of the seid xx lb to the seid pson or p̄ste, untill the seid xx lb be expended.

It̄. I bequeth to Edmund Paston,³⁷ my sone, a standing pece,³⁸ White, cov̄ed with a White garleek heed upon the knoppe;³⁹ and a gilt pece cov̄ed with an Unicorne; a ffetherbedde and a traunsom⁴⁰ at Norwich, and the Cofters⁴¹ of Worsted that he hath of me.

It̄. I bequeth to Kat̄ine his Wiff, a purpill girdill h̄neised⁴² w^t silver and gilt; and my bygge bras Chafour, a brasen mortar w^t an Iron Pestell, and a stoon mortar of cragge.

It̄. I geve and ḡaũte to Rob^t., son of the seid Edmund, all my Swannes, merken with a merke called Dawbeney's

³⁷ Edmund was Mrs. Paston's youngest son, and was designed for the law. But his disposition was not studious; for we find (*Paston Letters*, Vol. II., p. 24) John Paston writing from Caister to Sir John Paston, "I pray you, purvey what Inn (of Court) my brother, Edmund, shall be in; for he loseth sore his time here, I promise you." Edmund became a soldier, and was in the garrison at Calais in 1473. He was twice married: first, to Katherine, the young widow of William Clippesby, of Oby, by whom he had one son, the Robert here mentioned.

³⁸ "A drinking cup."—*Palsgrave*.

³⁹ Knob, or handle for the covering.

⁴⁰ Bolster: from the French word, *traversin*.

⁴¹ My daughter, Mrs. Gunn, tells me that, in her part of Norfolk, a coverlet passes among the poor by the name of *coveter*, of which *coster* is an obvious corruption, as *coveter* itself is of *coverture*.

⁴² Nares gives no other meaning to *harnessed* than dressed in arms; but it here evidently implies, simply, ornamented.

merk,⁴³ and with the merke late Robt. Cutler, Clerk;⁴⁴ to have, hold, and enjoye the seid Swannes with the seid merkes to the seid Robt. and his heires for evmore.

¶ I bequeth to Anne,⁴⁵ my dought, Wiff of William Yelverton, my grene hangyng in my plour at Mauteby, a standing cuppe, with a cov gilt, with a flatte knoppe, and a flatte pece with a cov, gilt withoute; xij spones, a powder boxe, with a foot and a knoppe, enamelled blewe; my best corse girdill blewe, hernised w^t silver and gilt; my p^rmer,⁴⁶ my bedes of silver enamelled.

¶ I bequeth to the seid Anne, my ffetherbedde, w^t pillow, curteyns, and tester, in my plo^r at Mauteby, with a white covyng, a peir blankett, ij peir of my fynest shetes, ich of ij Webbes, a fine Hedshete⁴⁷ of ij Webbes, my best garnyssh⁴⁸

⁴³ John Daubeney, Esq., was of a good family in the county, and was commonly called by the Pastons "our cousin." He assisted with much spirit and zeal in the defence of Caister Castle, when besieged by the Duke of Norfolk, in September, 1469, and lost his life on the occasion. In the *Paston Letters* (Vol. II., p. 34) Mrs. Paston writes in sore distress to her son, Sir John, "I greet you well, letting you weet that your brother and his fellowship stand in great jeopardy at Caister, and lack victuals; and Daubeney and Berney be dead, and divers others greatly hurt, and they fail gunpowder and arrows; and the place is sore broken with guns of the other party." Her report was true as regarded Daubeney, but not so as to Berney (Osbert or Osborn Berney, subsequently mentioned in this will); for he survived several years, and was buried in Bradiston Church, Norfolk, where a brass plate, undated, still preserves his name.

⁴⁴ Of the Rev. Robert Cutler I have found nothing further than that he was Vicar of Caister St. Edmund from 1453 to 1466, and translated in 1465 to Mautby, which he held till 1480, when he was succeeded by Thomas Heveningham—so says Blomefield.

⁴⁵ Anne, the eldest of the two daughters of the testatrix, married William Yelverton, son of Sir William Yelverton, of Rougham, Norfolk, Justice of the King's Bench and Knight of the Bath.

⁴⁶ "Primer, a small prayer-book for church service, or office of the Virgin Mary."—*Webster*.

⁴⁷ "A sheet which was placed at the top of the bed."—*Holme*.

⁴⁸ "A service which commonly consisted of sets of twelve dishes, saucers, &c."—*Hallivell*.

of pewter vessel,⁴⁹ ij basyns with ij Ewres, iij Candlesteke of oon sorte, ij bras pottes, ij bras pannes, a bras Chafour to sett by the fyre, and a Chafour for Coles.

It. I require my executours to paie to the seid William Yelverton and Anne, the Money that I shaft owe them of ther mariage money, the day of my decesse; of such money as shaft be receyved of such londes as I have putte in feffement to accomplish my Wille.

It. I bequeth to William Paston,⁵⁰ my sonne, my standing cuppe, chased, pcell⁵¹ gilt with a cov with my armes in the botom, and a flatte pece with a traift⁵² upon the cov; xij silver spones; ij silver saltes, wherof oon is coved; the hole bedde of borde alisaundre,⁵³ as it hangeth on the gret chaum-

⁴⁹ Here used in the sense of the French *vaisselle*, table-utensils.

⁵⁰ This, the third son, was born in 1459, and was at Eton in 1478. His letters thence to his brother, preserved in the *Paston Correspondence*, contain an amusing mixture of school-boy learning, with attention directed to those objects most likely to attract a young man of high birth, just entering the world. In one of them he describes "a young gentlewoman," whom he desires to marry, and says, "as for money and plate, it is ready whensoever she were wedded." In another, he proposes to his brother to "come and sport him at London," where the lady, Mistress Margaret Alborow, resided, and begs to have "a hose-cloth for the holidays of some colour, and a stomacher, and two shirts, and a pair of slippers." The intended union, however, did not take place; nor was he more fortunate in his second aim at an alliance with the widow of a wealthy worsted-merchant, of the village of that name in Norfolk; nor was a ward bought him for a wife with the hundred marks bequeathed him by this will, for he died a bachelor.

⁵¹ Partly.

⁵² "In architecture, ornaments of leaves, &c."—*Hallivell*. Can this be the meaning here?

⁵³ I have not been able to satisfy myself as to the meaning of these words, which do not occur in any glossary within my reach. At the same time, I must suppose the term to be well known, as my friend, Mr. Harrod, has given me the five following examples of its use in a manuscript of the 15th century regarding Norfolk Churches. Bilney possessed "unum vestimentum simplex de Borde Alysaundre, blodii and albi coloris." In Reynham St. Mary, was "un. vest. virid. de Boord Alysavndrys." Horningtoft had a cope "de floure Alysaundre, with cygnets of gold;" Wissonsett, "a vestment de

ber at Mauteby, with the ffetherbedde, bolster, blankette, and covyng to the same; ij peir shetes; ij pilwes, and my best palet; a basyn, an ewre, and a litel White bedde that hangeth ov̄ the gresynggs⁵⁴ in the litell chaumber at Mauteby, for a trussyng bedde.⁵⁵

It. I bequeth c m̄res in money, to be paied and bestowed to the use and byhoff of the seid William Paston, aft̄ this foʒme folowyng: that is to sey, in pchasyng of as moch lond to him and to his heire as may be had with the same money; or ellys to bye a Warde⁵⁶ to be maried to him, if

borde Alysaundre, and a chasuble and two dalmatics *de bourt de alisandre*;" and Pentney, "a vestment *de Burde Alisaundre*, of a seagreen colour." In four of the above cases, the names of the donors are added, which seems to mark the article as highly prized. The word, *bordé*, being explained by Cotgrave *embroidered*, Mr. Harrod inclines to believe that *de bord d'alysaundre* means embroidered with a representation of the Great Parsley, the *Smyrnum Olus-atrum*, formerly called Alexanders; and I can offer no better suggestion. Strutt, in his *Dress and Habits of England*, speaks on more than one occasion (as Vol. II., pp. 165 and 213) of *Alexandrian work*; in the former instance, of "a mantle of Alexandrian work elegantly fashioned with bandages of gold;" and he quotes an old French Romance for *paille Alexandrin* used in the same sense; so that the mind would naturally turn in that direction, but that the spelling and the *floure Alysaundre* seem to forbid it.

⁵⁴ Mr. Forby's invaluable glossary tells us that stairs are still in Norfolk called *grissens*, "a corruption or mispronunciation of *gressings*, q.d. steppings; from old French *gré*, *grieces*, and *griece*, collectively for a flight of steps, which occur in different old English authors and glossaries."

⁵⁵ "A travelling bed."—*Palsgrave*.

⁵⁶ This custom of buying and selling young ladies, without their consent, to be wives to men they never saw,

"Was nought unfrequent nor held strange
In the old English day,"

but does sound altogether unaccountable in ours. A more clear account of it can hardly be found than in the following extract from a very interesting article by Sir Francis Palgrave, headed "Records and Registrations," in the *Quarterly Review*, for Jan. 1829, p. 59: "If an Heir was a minor, he and his land remained in wardship until he could sue out his writ *de ætate probandâ*, under which process witnesses were examined; and, their depositions being returned into Chancery, he was released from wardship; but, during the

eny such may be goten ; or ellys to be paied to him assone as it may be conveyently gadered and receyved of such londes as by me are put in feffment, as is beforseid, aft^r the Ele in Mauteby Cherch be fynsshed and pfōmed, as is beforseid ; and aft^r the Stipend of the p³ste lymyted to singe for me be yerly levied, as well as the money be dispended upon the keping of my yerly obite.⁵⁷

And if the seid William dye or he come to the age of xxj yer, than the seid c^h n^{rs}cs to be disposed for the Wele of my Sowle by myn exectours.

It. I bequeth to John Paston,⁵⁸ my sone, a gilt cuppe standynge, with a cov^{er} and a knoppe lick a Garleek heed ; vj gobelette of silver, with oon cov^{er}.

bondage, a yoke of another description had usually been imposed upon him, which was not to be thrown off with equal facility. The *sale* of the marriage of an Heir, whether male or female, was a most valuable perquisite ; and the price brought by the ' Gentle Bachelor,' or the ' blooming Damsel,' was regulated by the bargains of the contracting parties ; that is to say, the King or his grantee, who sold the bride or bridegroom, and the parent, who bought the match for the benefit of his offspring."

⁵⁷ A funeral celebration, or office for the dead.

⁵⁸ The John Paston, here mentioned, was the second son of the testatrix. His elder brother, who bore the same name, but is generally known as Sir John Paston, had died unmarried, in 1479, in his fortieth year. This latter was the second of the family that was lord of Caister, into the possession of which he had entered in 1466, under a warrant from Edward IV. A gallant soldier, he had fought at Barnet and Tewkesbury, and long in France, where he spent the greater part of his life. A courtier, he stood high in the royal favour, and was even selected to escort the sister of his monarch into Belgium. A melancholy instance of the vicissitudes of fortune, he died a victim to the pestilence then raging, and, like his father, "in the worst inn's worst room," without a relative or friend to close his eyes ; and with the further humiliation, that he had been compelled "to pledge his velvet gown" to buy his daily bread. He was succeeded by his brother, the object of the present bequest and executor to his mother, who now became the owner of Caister, the walls of which he had bravely defended ten years previously. *He* likewise was a soldier, and fought in France. Subsequently, in 1487, he so distinguished himself at the battle of Stoke, that the honour of knighthood and banneretcy was conferred upon him in the field. Nor did he lack

¶ I bequeth to Margery Paston,⁵⁹ the wife of the seid John, my pixt⁶⁰ of silver with ij silver cruette, and my Massebook, with aff myn awterclothes.

¶ I bequeth to William Paston,⁶¹ sone of the seid John Paston, and Elizabeth⁶² his Suster, c m̄res when they come to lawfull age, to be takē and receyved of the londē beforseid; and if either of them die or they come to the seid age, than I wuff that the pt of him or hir so deyng remaine to the Survvyver of them at lawfull age; and if they bothe dye or⁶³ they come to the seid age, than I wuff that the seid c m̄res be disposed for the helth of my Sowle, by thavise of myn executours.

¶ I bequeth to Custaunce,⁶⁴ bastard dought of John

civic distinctions; for he was High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, and represented the city of Norwich in many parliaments; was one of the esquires of the body to Henry VII.; was Vice-Admiral of Norfolk, and was one of the knights appointed to receive the Princess Katherine on her landing at Plymouth in 1501. Two years subsequently, he died.

⁵⁹ She was daughter to Sir Thos. Brews, of Stinton Hall, in the parish of Toperoft, in Norfolk. Very interesting particulars respecting her will be found in the *Paston Correspondence*, and in the *Historical Sketch of Caister Castle*.

⁶⁰ Commonly spelled Pix: the box or shrine that contained the consecrated wafers.

⁶¹ This, the only son of the last John Paston, succeeded his father when not more than twenty-three years old. He was, like him, knighted by his sovereign. Like him, too, he was more than once High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk. What was a far higher honour, he was in the suite of Henry VIII. at the Champ du drap d'or; nor will it be accounted less honourable in the eyes of the wise and good, that, in the pursuit of the law, his profession, he trod in the footsteps of his ancestor and namesake, *the good Judge*. He died in 1554; leaving a numerous family by his wife, Bridget, daughter of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorpe.

⁶² This was not the only daughter of the testatrix: she had two others, Dorothy and Philippa. All the three afterwards married.

⁶³ Ere, before.

⁶⁴ It appears by a note, appended to Letter 406 (*Paston Correspondence*, II., p. 123), that the Custaunce, or Constance, here provided for, resided with John Paston, the younger, and was sought in marriage by John Clippesby, Esq., of Oby, Norfolk.

Paston, Knyght, whan she is xx yer of age, x ñrcs; and if she die before the seid age, than I wuff that the seid x ñrcs be disposed of by myn executours.

Iⁿ. I bequeth to John Calle, sone of Margery,⁶⁵ my doughtⁿ, xx ðb whan he cometh to the age of xxiiij yer; and if the seid John dye or he cometh to the same age, than I wuffe that the seid xx ðb evenly be divided attween William and Richard, sones of the seid Margery, whan they come to the age of xxiiij yer; and if either of the seid William and Richard dye or he come to the seid age, than I wuff that the part of him so dying remayne to the survyver; and if bothe the seid William and Richard dye or they come to the seid age, than I wuff that the seid xx ðb be disposed of by the good advys of myⁿ executours for me and my frendes.

Iⁿ. I bequeth to Marie Tendaff, my goddaughter, my peir bedys of Calcidenys, gaudied⁶⁶ with silver and gilt.

⁶⁵ The marriage of this lady, Mrs. Paston's second daughter, with Richard Calle, of Edingthorpe, had sorely displeased the family. It is clear, from the *Paston Correspondence*, that he had lived on terms of intimacy with them, and been trusted by them in matters of business. But he was their inferior in station; and his courting the alliance was therefore an unpardonable offence. On receiving the news that their sister had pledged her faith to him, they could not contain their indignation. Accordingly, John Paston, the younger, writes to his brother, the knight of Caister, at Whitsuntide in 1469, "I conceive ye have heard of Rich^d Calle's labour, which he maketh with our ungracious sister. * * * If my father, whom God assoil, were alive and had consented thereto, and my mother, and ye both, he should never have my good will for to make my sister sell candle and mustard at Framlingham." Calle likewise was severely persecuted; but the lovers persevered, and finally were brought by the mother, grandmother, and second brother of the young lady, before Walter Lyhert, Bishop of Norwich, that he might dissolve their troth by the authority of the Church. But blandishment and threats, severity and the cross, were equally unavailing: the same fate betided the Pastons and their retainers that befel Charlemagne and his Paladins in the field of Roncesvalles—"Contrarj ai voti poi furo i successi;" and the end of the whole was, that, as we read in the last new novel, the fond couple married, and lived happy ever after.

⁶⁶ Adorned.—*Shakspeare*.

Iſ. I wuſt that ich of myn other Godchilder be rewarded by thavyſe of John Paſtone, my ſone.

Iſ. I bequeth to Agnes Swan, my ſvānt, my muſt⁶⁷ develys gown, furred with Black, and a girdell of black, h²neised w^t ſilver gilt and enamelled, and xx^s. in money.

Iſ. to Simon Gerard, my ſilver Gobelet cured,⁶⁸ and a flatt pece w^t verges gilt, and myn hole litel White bedde in my Chapeſt Chaumber at Mauteby, with the ffetherbedde, lick as it is nowe in the ſeid Chapeſt, with a peir blankette, a peir shete, and a Pilwe of down.

Iſ. to John Heythe, a maſas w^t a traunſom, a peir shete, a peir blankette, and a covlight.

Iſ. I wuſt that myn houſhold be kept aft⁹ my deceſſe by half a yer, and that my ſvante wage be truly paid at ther deptyng, and alſo that evy pſone, being my ſvnt the day of my deceſſe, have a quarter wages beſide that they at her deptyng have don ſvice fore.

Iſ. I wuſt that all ſuch maners, londes, and tenētes, rentes, and ſvices, which are deſcended unto me by weye of inheritaunce, immediatly aft⁹ my deceſſe remayne unto myn heire, accordingly to the laſt Wille of Robt Mauteby, ſquier, my G²antfader, Except ſuch londes as I have putte in ffefment to accompliſh therof my laſt Wille; and except v nīres of annuyte, which I have g²anted out of the maner of ffreton in Suff., to Edmund Paſton, my ſone, Katine, his wiff, and Robt, ther ſon, for t²me of ther lyves.

Iſ. I bequeth to Anne, my dought⁹, x lb to hir ppre uſe.

And to Osborn Berney, x nīres of the money comyng of the londes by me put in ffefment, as is beforſeid.

Iſ. I wuſt that the reſidewe of the ſtuff of myn houſhold

⁶⁷ A corruption of *moitié de velours*, half velvet,—a material reſembling velvet. Halliwell, who writes the word *Mustredeவில்리ars*, explains it as a kind of mixed grey woollen cloth, which continued in uſe up to Elizabeth's reign.

⁶⁸ *Quære*, if not an error of the tranſcriber's for *cov'd* (covered.)

unbiquothen, be divided equall̃y between Edmund and William, my sones, and Anne, my dought^o.

The residewe of all my godes and Cattaff, and dettes to me owing, I geve and co^mitte to the good disposicon of my executours to p^forme this my testament and last Wille, and in other deed^e of m^yce for my sowle, myn auncet^ez sowles, and alle cristen sowles, to the most pleaser of God, and pfit to my sowle. Of this my testament I make and ordeyne the seid John Paston, Squier, my sone, Thomas Drentall, Clerk, Simon Gerard, and Walter lymyngton myn executours.

And I bequeth to the seid John Paston, for his labo^o, x lb; and to ich of myn other executours, for their labo^o, v m^rcs.

In Witnesse wherof, to this my p^sent testament, I have putte my Seal; gevyn Day and yer biforseid.