

## THE EXPENSES OF JOHN PASTON I, 1457–1458

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BRITISH LIBRARY ADDITIONAL CHARTER 17246 is a badly stained and faded paper roll, about 46 inches long and five and three quarters of an inch wide, recording the personal expenses of John Paston I from Michaelmas 1457 to Michaelmas 1458. In form as well as substance it is a rare survivor from what must have been a vast quantity of the Paston family's estate and household papers (probably much greater in extent than that of their now famous letters) of which we catch no more than a momentary glimpse in the eighteenth century. The fate of the Paston family archive was effectively sealed during the fortnight in early May 1735 which the Rev. Francis Blomefield spent in the muniment room at Oxnead, 'among the old wrightings', as he put it. Most of the estate and household documents he found there he placed in boxes and trunks (some fifteen of them) for the attention of Major Weldon, who was disposing of the estate of his recently deceased and bankrupt father-in-law Sir William Paston, the last of the male line. Nothing has since been seen or heard of this mass of material. However, what Blomefield described as 'innumerable letters, of good consequence in history'—what we now know as the Paston Letters—he 'laid up in the corner of the room upon an heap', taking away with him a handful of items which he asserted were 'of no use but as antiquities'.<sup>1</sup> How the heap of letters and other documentary odds and ends in the corner of the room at Oxnead came into Blomefield's possession does not appear, and the house itself soon afterwards fell into ruin.<sup>2</sup> That Add. Ch. 17246 was probably part of the pile is suggested by the presence on the dorse of a characteristic mark (a small encircled cross) that he often inserted on documents that passed through his hands. Blomefield's historical manuscripts were in turn swallowed up into the voluminous Norfolk collections of his literary executor 'Honest' Tom Martin of Palgrave, whence they were subsequently dispersed piecemeal.<sup>3</sup> Most of the Paston Letters ended up in the possession of John Fenn, their first editor; but the relatively small number of Paston documents of other kinds were scattered, and are nowadays to be found in various repositories; occasionally they appear in the saleroom. The roll of expenses arrived at the British Museum during the nineteenth century as part of a group of miscellaneous Paston documents, distinct from the letters, now classed together amongst the Additional Charters.<sup>4</sup>

Successive editors of the Paston Letters have made relatively little use of the roll,<sup>5</sup> and while it has not been transcribed in full before, many individual entries were discussed by one of us in a recent study of the family's fortunes in the fifteenth century.<sup>6</sup> It is not a document that is easy to represent in print, and the following transcription is, in a number of places and for a variety of reasons, tentative. Not only is the roll in poor condition, but the accountant who compiled it wrote in an especially loose cursive hand which is often difficult to decipher with complete confidence; and not only did he use a great many abbreviations, but the entries themselves he often gave only in abbreviated form, as brief notes or jotted *aides mémoire* rather than as formal records. Moreover, it appears that the compiler could not read everything in the exemplars from which he was working (perhaps loose slips or *scedae*), since here and there entries are incomplete, spaces being left for personal names, which John Paston himself went on to fill in (rather faintly), along with other details, in his own hand when at some later stage he checked or audited his expenditure. The summings up at the end of each section were also added later, in the same paler ink, and appear likewise to be the work of Paston himself.

In the following transcription, abbreviated forms whose interpretation may be uncertain are followed by an apostrophe; otherwise, customary abbreviations are silently expanded. Capitals are supplied where necessary for proper names, but the capital letters which are occasionally written

arbitrarily at the beginnings of various ordinary words are ignored. Marginal insertions are given in square brackets preceding the entries to which they appear to refer. Interlineations are shown <sup>^</sup>thus<sup>^</sup>. Lost or damaged text is signified by suspension marks within angle brackets.<sup>7</sup>

Exspenc' proprie Johannis Paston inter Mich' XXXVI<sup>o</sup> et XXXVII<sup>o</sup> H. vj r. < . . . >

In pensione [caligis et sotolaribus *deleted*] vj s. v d.

Item pro xij verges de fryse pro liberat' yemaly vij s.

Item pro emendacione togarum et alium rerum ii s. vij d. obol.

[*In margin*: Termino Hillar']

Item pro vna toga termino Hillar' noua lunata tam pro panno quam factur' et reparacione aliorum per Stodard xx s. ix d.

Item vnum deploido <sup>^</sup>v s.<sup>^</sup> ij par galligis et sotolaribus x s. vj d.

Item pro cariae [c *written over* g] togarum de lond xiiij d.

Item in penc' ij s.

Item Nicholo Colman carier vj<sup>o</sup> die mercij in plenam solucionem pro omnibus cariacionibus v s.

Item in ij camicis de Johan Herbard et panno ix d. <sup>^</sup>[*one word; hole in MS*]<sup>^</sup> iiij s. j d.

Item solut' Cobald pro faccione vnum cloke ij togis &c vij s. vj d.

Item solut' Baldewyn Sadeler vigillia Passh pro term' Hill' vj s. viij d.

Item elemosina xiiij d.

[*In margin* term Passh]

Item vnum hatt vnum paire sotolaribus ij s. vij d.

Item pro cambiacione selle apud Dancastre xx d.

Item pro emendacione bowgarum et ocriarum vj d.

[*In margin* Trinitat']

Item pro caligis punctis et sotolaribus ij s. x d.

Item pro toga lunater longa cum faccione per Stodard xvij s. vj d.

Item pro galigis de russhet xxij d.

Item in sotolaribus apud Norwich viij d.

Item in ij camicis iiij s. iiij d.

Item vane expenc' iiij s. vj d.

Item barbitons' v s. vj d.

Summa cxvj s. vij d. obol.

Liberat' hospicio lvij li. xvij s. vij d.

Item vxori et pueris domi viij li. xix s. j d.

Item puer Cantabrig' cum v mark' pro Weleyes cj s.

Item eisdem <sup>^</sup>ij s.<sup>^</sup> et sosijs [*sic, after sosijs deleted*] suis <sup>^</sup>ij s. ij d.<sup>^</sup> in regard' iiij s. ij d.

Item eisdem apud London [xxiv s. x d. *deleted*] et xl d. per T. Braniston xxvj s. viij d. et W. P. xl d. liij s. x d.

Summa lxxiiij li. xvj s. viij d.

Item Henr' Bolte capellano pro stipend' vsque Pasch xxxv<sup>o</sup> xiiij s. iiij d. et xvij die Julij pro ij quart' xxvj s. viij d. xl s.

Item pro fraternitatem Gilde de Boston pro indulgenc' vj s. viij d.

Item in elemosina pro meipso vltima l s. vj d. pro defunct' xx s.

Summa v mark

Exspenc' forinsece

[*Cross added in margin*]

Pro fine domino Reg' fact' quod Johannes Paston non sit miles [*no sum*]

Item petygre Wardyn trussyng cofer' Edward' &c et cultelle frat' iij s. x d.

Item xij cappis ij m' pynnys pro anni donis vj s. v d.

Item solut' pro reparacione aule Templi vj s. viij d.

[*In margin non habet quia vxor mea(?) and beneath Memorandum*]

Item indenisa vxoris Alyngton ad maritagium x s.

Item anulo dat' uxori vices x s.

Item expenc' cum Munford apud Thetford ij s. j d.

Item furatio de bag' ibidem vij s.

Item seruiet' Maior ^vij vij^ vices waytes ^vij^ ludentibus ^xx^ tregettores ^iij^ iij s.

In exemplacione ecclesie de Gresham M. Bulman iij s. viij d.

Item pro equis conduct' per Will' frater meo ij vices xxij d.

Item solut' Baldwyne Sadyller pro cell' Nicho' v s.

Item expenc' equorum Fastolff Norwic' ij vices et Alexand' apud Forncet iij s. j d.

Item presentacione angniellarum dat' Bardolyff xvij d.

Item cost' curacionis ^xvij d.^ Alby equi' expenc' puerorum Jernemuth ^vij d.^ et Alexand' ven' de

Cantabrig' ^xij d.^ [*car' vini ^ij s.^ et sumpettis ^xij d.^ deleted*] vj s. j d.

[*In margin Termino Hill*]

Equitac' ferr' et forinsec' expenc' pro Alexand' Cok an' quadrag' xxj d.

Item dat' vxori Willelmo ^Calthorp^ [*name inserted in Paston's hand in a gap left by scribe*] sex cocliar' deauratur ponder vij ownse xxxiiij s.

Item dat' Umfrid' Stardye vnum bonet xx d.

Item pro cariacione nigr' equi vsque London et redeund' xij d.

Item Nicholo Ovy pro portacione relaxcion' Marg' Wederby cum burs' vij s. viij d.

[*In margin Memorandum*]

Item solut' Thom' Camrose subber' magn' clausis de Mautby diuersis vices hoc anno inter Pasch et Mich. xxxvij c s.

Item cosis Fastolff et Thom' Boon v s.

Item vnum canvas bagge ^vij d.^ parcam' carpentar' Howes et dise (?) &c ij s. j d.

Item in equitacione T. Boon ij vices ^vj d.^ term' Pasch [vj d. *deleted*]

[*In margin Pasch*]

Item ij li. datis et pvmgarnettis pro vxore xxxij d.

Item solut' ad reparac' noue aule iij s. iiij d.

Item vnum blak cors dat' matr' mee iij s. ij d.

Item pro arestacione Henrici Barker carier et deliveracione ferdell' ij s. iiij d.

Item expenc' Alexand' apud Jernemuth ^et Mautby^ [*added in Paston's hand*] tempore vendic' ordij xx d. obol.

Item dat' T. Boon pro expenc' suis in infirmitat' equitand' de com' Ebray' [*? for Eborum*] versus Norwic' iij s. j d.

Item in coltellis apud Dancaster dat' seruietis Fastolff et meis iij s. iiij d.

[*Cross added in margin*]

Item solut' pro glasiacione capelli Mauteby Martino Glaser x s.

[*In margin Trinitat'*]

Item expenc' super Wederton et < p . . r . . s [*one word illegible*] > Norff' xx d.

Item dat' Thom' Fastolff xx d.

[*In margin Equs*]

Item equo empto apud Berkwey xix s.

Item pro costodia vnum hoby apud Wychilham xx d.

Item expenc' apud Brumholm nocte Laur' [*encij?*] xvij d.

Item dat' Coke de Matelask pro portacione littere ad Castre viij d.

Item dat' Bardolff [*inserted by Paston in gap left by scribe*] vices Norwic' pro matera Ledham [*last word added by Paston*] vj s. viii d.

Item pro arrestacione Carrole Nowell apud Bury septimana Math' iij s. viij d.

Item expenc' equi' Calle apud Berkwey pro vj septimanas x s.

Item expenc' mee versus Snaylwelle et reddiunde de Bury v s. iiii d.

Item expenc' Norwic' ad sess' hospic' existent' apud Heylysd' xvij d.

Item vnum capellum dat' Ricardo Charlys xij d.

Item expenc' meis apud Sweynsthorp viij d.

Item dat' Thom' Bone vj s. viij d.

Item expenc' Alexand' Cok versus Snaylewelle et reddiunde xvj d.

Item pro noua reparacione de le Barge xvj s. viij d.

Item pro canuas pro saxsell xx d.

Summa xvj li. viij s. iij d. obol. vlt' fin' pro milit' no[n] faciend'

Exspenc' apud London

[*In margin* Termino M']

Exspenc' versus London ix s. Item communalibus meus et Boon septimana Omnium Sanctorum et iij septimanas sequens cum repast' xix s. vij d. Item communalibus Nichole pro idem tempus v s. x d. Item in communalibus Johannis de Stabulo ^cum Alan Berchardson (?)^ apud Suthwerk vj s. Item in provend' equorum et farracione ibidem vij s. viij d. Item in expenc' forinsec' ibidem x s. vij d. Item in expenc' versus Norff' per Exsex vj s.

lxiiiij s. vij d.

[*In margin* Termino Hill']

Exspenc' versus London per Cotton x s. viij d. Item in communalibus meis et clerici septimana Andr' vlt' termino et septimana Purificacionis et Vadast' hoc termino xj s. iiii d. Item communalibus Baldwyn et Nicholi per iij septimanas vj s. viij d. Exspenc' forinsec' hoc termino x s. Item in communalibus Johannis de Stabulo cum Christophoro iij s. Item in provend' et schoyng equorum iiii s. iiii d. Item Christophoro pro ij repast' mei et famulorum in aduentu et recessu ij s. Item in expenc' versus Norff' viij s. obol.

lvj s. obol.

[*In margin* Termino Pasch]

Exspenc' versus London xj s. j d. obol. Item in communalibus meis septimana Carniperuij [*last two words deleted*] Item in communalibus septimana Carniperuij et prima septimana Quadragesima vlt' termino et septimana Philipi et Jacobi ac Assencionis hoc termino xij s. j d. Item Alexand' et Baldwyn' iij s. xj d. Pro equis nulla quod pro Christophorum. Item expenc' hoc termino forinc' viij s. xj d. Equitacione versus Norff' nulla quia versus Eborum

xxxviiij s. obol.

[*In margin* Termino Trinit']

Exspenc' versus London per Exsex' viij s. Item in communalibus meis et valett' septimana Dunstani vlt' termino et septimana Petri et Thom' hoc termino vij s. vj d. Item pro Baldwyn et <. . .eler> v s. ij d. Item schoyng equorum xj d. Forinc' expenc' vj s. j d. Expenc' versus Norff' vij s. x d. lauend' xij d.

xxxvj s. v d.

Summa ix li. xv s. j d.

Placit' et soll' pro communie

[*In margin ter' Mich'*]

Solut' Ricardo Bothe vices [eius *deleted*] pro exitibus pro matre et me ferisfact' ^per manus Mersh'^ xxvj s. iiij d.

Item in regard' et expenc' pro stat' et secur' faciend' de manerio de Hvntyngfeld Halle vlt' regard'

Rog' Pygot et pro J. Gresham [*last seven words deleted*] iij li.

Item scrutinia pro Ey et parlm' Merkhham clericus Powtrell et alijs vj s. vj d.

Item Jacobo Gresham pro feod' ^ad^ Natal' domini xx s.

Item eidem Jacobo in plenam solucionem pro termino Mich' vlt' r' de plege Chyrche ii s. viij d.

Memorandum solutem ei pro Bevyse et Payn vlt' predict' ix s. iiij d. [*sum deleted*] vltimo prest' < . . . quit> [*partially legible addition in Paston's hand*]

Item Will' Caly clerico domini burss'(?) vij s. viij d.

[*In margin termino Hill'*]

Item pro irrotulacione breuium locat' feod' patris xij d.

Item dat' Thom' Newhovs de Walcote in recompensionem puniriij sibi fact' pro prior' de Brvmholm caus' cambij vj s. viij d.

Item pro parcamino pro rentalibus Bakton cum expenc' xx d.

[*In margin Pasche Trinitat'*]

Item dat' Rogero Pygot consanguinio Galfrid' Pygot pro conclusiacione securitat' manerij de Hvntyngfeld Halle habend' xx s.

[*Cross in margin*]

Item seruo Will' Wyrcester equitant' super negoc' maritag' soror' [*last two words added by Paston*] x s.

Summa viij li. ij s. vj d.

Prest' et soluciones pro alijs

[*In margin ter. Mich.*]

Prest' Johanni Crane vj s. viij d.

Item in vino et spesiebus cum Fortiscu et Wenteworth xxij d.

[*In margin sall(?)*]

Item solut' pro saluacione vtlegar' Nicholo Bevyse per J. Gresham vj s.

Item solut' pro protexione Thom' Payn per manus Gresham iij s. iiij d.

[*In margin Termino Hill'*]

Item prest' Jacobo Arblastar apud London termino Hill' xl s.

[*In margin Pasch*]

Item exequis Edmundi Paston ij s. iiij d.

Item prest' Henr' Selby ad reparacione noue aule iij s. iiij d.

[*In margin Trinitat'. Next two items bracketed to left*]

Item missus a frater meo vsque London ^vj^ et solut' pro eo prior' sancti Olai ^iiij^ pro firma termini Pasch vlt. xx s. in resol' per Osbern xlvj s. viij d.

Item eidem Will' frater meo per manus Ricardi Wotton vlt' iij s. iiij d. per ipsum W. tradit' filijs meis x s.

[*In margin before each of next two entries sall(?)*]

Item prest' Will Smyth de Basyngham vsque Natal' domini xl s.

Item vxore Dobylday vsque Pasch xx s.

Item pro T. Bartylmewe ne vtlegat' ij s. x d.

Item expenc' ^super^ Simond Crane eundo versus London ij s. iij d.

Summa ix li. v s. iiij d.

[*In margin Mich' Hillar' in Paston's hand*]

Elemosina apud Brvmholme iij s. iiij d.

Item diuersis pauperibus Norwic' in releuacionem oneris eorum circa reparacione murorum ville Norwic' vij s.

Item adiuuament' materie Walsingham [*last word added by Paston*] xx s. viij d.

Item couent' de Brvmholm post Pasch cum oblacione iiij s.

Item ecclesie de Paston et pauperibus ad Pasch iij s. iiij d.

Item dat' Ricardo Baxter executor Johannis Kyrteylng ^daunat' per reginem^ [*inserted by Paston*] vj s. viij d.

[*In margin Pasch Trinitat'*]

Item cuidam pauperi ix d.

Item rector' sancti Petri de Hundgate [*last word added by Paston*] vj s. viij d.

Item dat' prior' sancti Olai ad reparacionem Pontis per A. P. iij s. iiij d.

Item elemosina denariat' vlt' elemosina pro me ipso ^cum . . .> d. J. Crane^ [*inserted by Paston*] l s. vij d.

Summa cvj s. iiij d.

Summa omnium expensarum vj<sup>ss</sup> xij li. xvij s. vj d.

Et prodit xiiij s. iiij d. queretur

[*Dorse*]

At the top, a much rubbed and faded note of the contents of the roll, apparently repeating the heading, and Blomefield's mark.

## NOTES

- 1 Stoker, ed., 1992, pp. 84-6.
- 2 By 1738 Blomefield believed he had 'got all the originals [of] . . . above a hundred letters of Sir John Fastolfs own hand,' and in 1749 (no doubt after closer inspection of the same) wrote that 'I have many letters of his herald, William Botoner;' Stoker, ed., 1992, letters respectively to Francis Peck and William Oldys. He refers to the collection of Pastolf papers now in BL Add. MS 39848, many of which are in the hand of William Worcester (Botoner).
- 3 Stoker 1995, 114-16.
- 4 Listed in the manuscript Catalogue of the Additional Charters held in the Manuscripts Reading Room, British Library.
- 5 Gairdner, ed., iii. 134-5, noticed the roll briefly, and quoted a few entries; Davis, ed., p. 85, referred to it in order to date one of John Paston I's letters.
- 6 Richmond 1996, 13-27, where many of the persons mentioned in the accounts are identified and otherwise documented. The picture of the roll's contents given there will now be seen to require a few adjustments in the light of the full transcription given here. For example, on p. 15 (n. 23), an entry said to concern the expenses of John Paston I's third son, Edmond II, does in fact refer—as Gairdner thought—to the 'exequiis' of his brother Edmond I, who had died in 1449 (the payment must have been for a 'year's mind'); on p. 17 it was not 18d. worth of eels that were given to Bardolf, but of lambs ('agniellarum'); and on p. 25, John Paston made payments not only to waits and players, but to 'tregettores', illusionists or conjurors, rather specialised performers otherwise mentioned in courtly contexts, and perhaps more likely to be found in London (for an entertainment at the Inner Temple?), rather than in Norwich.
- 7 We are grateful to Dr Claire Breay of the British Library for practical assistance in dealing with this difficult document, and to Dr Daniel Wakelin for helpful suggestions about certain readings.

## REFERENCES

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