

## LADY ELIZABETH FELTON AND HER DAUGHTERS.

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A notice of the Feltons of Playford contributed to the fourth volume of the Society's Transactions, pp. 14-41, by Lord Arthur Hervey, the erudite bishop of Bath and Wells (1869-94), can be supplemented from the Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Among the various and numerous scraps of paper collected by the Antiquarian are notes that illuminate the characters and adventures of Lady Elizabeth Felton, her daughters and her sons-in-law who lived amid the domestic disquietudes and tensions attendant upon the Great Rebellion and the Restoration of Charles II.

By way of introduction Tanner notes "that the family (were) derived of the very ancient nobility of England, one branch of which was planted in Coddendam & layd down the name of ffelton & were called Mercator or Chapman." (*Tanner MSS.*: 257, f. 472). Upon the death of Thomas Felton in 1578, his eldest son Antony inherited the estates of the house and serving the office of High Sheriff of Suffolk in 1597 was knighted by king James 24 July, 1603. (*Shaw*). He married Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Grey, of Pyrge, Essex, and Enville, co. Stafford, son and heir of Lord John Grey, cr. Baron Grey of Groby, co. Leicester, 21 Jan., 1603. (*G.E.C. Complete Peerage*). Dying in 1613 Sir Antony<sup>1</sup> was buried in Playford Church, and by will proved in the following year (P.C.C. 38 Lawe) bequeathed *inter alia* £1,000 to each of his daughters on attaining the age of 21 or upon contracting marriage when 17 or more. Lady Elizabeth Felton, a woman of strong intelligence and character, long survived her husband, and when her son Sir Henry<sup>(2)</sup> Felton died she appears from the following statement to have acquired joint wardship of her grandson from Sir Lionel<sup>(3)</sup> Tallemarche, the first guardian appointed by the Court of Wards and Liveries. It runs:—

"The accompt of Dame Elizabeth Felton, one of the committee to Sr Thomas Felton Barronett his Ma'ties warde. A scrool of all hir receipts as alsoe all hir paiments & disbursements since hir last accompt. Imprimis, the s<sup>d</sup> Accomptant charges hirsselfe wyth the receipt of these moneys following (*vizt*).

Rents received at our Lady 1633.

Item, received of Henry Rowning gent. for the moyetie of his last yeares rent for the Mill due at our Lady day 1633 .. X<sup>li</sup>

Item received of Mr. Cornwallis for the moyetie etc. at Sprouton half due at our Lady .. .. . xxvij<sup>li</sup> x<sup>s</sup> xxxvij<sup>li</sup> x<sup>s</sup>. The totall sum of the receipts whereof the Accomptant chargeth hirsself to have received.

The Accomptant prayeth allowance for this paymente following.

Imprimis for a rule in the Counsell Chamber 16 May, anno pred.	ij <sup>s</sup>
Item for the Order therupon .. ..	iiij <sup>s</sup>
„ Mr. Attorney's hands to the same .. ..	x <sup>s</sup>
„ entrie of the coppie & hande .. ..	iiij <sup>s</sup>
„ filing the 2 affidavits .. ..	iv <sup>d</sup>
„ copie of Mr. Brooks affidavits ... ..	iiij <sup>s</sup>

(*Tanner MSS. Vol. XCVIII, F. 21*).

Ten years later, this formidable old lady, in a mood not unlike that of the mother-in-law depicted by Victorian humourists, indicted a reproachful letter to the husband of her daughter Mary, which reminds us that the men and women of the seventeenth century lived in the same dusty workaday world as our own, not a whit more ideal, but not a whit less interesting and exciting.

“ Son Hobart ” (she began)

“ Hearing nothing from you a long time or at least nothing that can give me content : I can for bear no longer to write, tho' you have so lost yourselfe that I know not where to find you. But what shall I begin my letter with a complaint of your forgetfulness of me, why should I soe do when you forget yourselfe, your wyfe & children : all which are or ought to be more deare unto you that if you procede in this desperate course wherein you have begun, both you & they & myself are all undone in that extraordinary trust committed to you. Wherefor should you forsake us thus ? I was much mistaken in my judgment of you. I littel thought you had benee Master of such wanderings & slippery resolutions. Remember yourselfe : Be your own man ; Pity your family : Forget not me, y<sup>t</sup> so often & soe sadly remember not without greefe . . . Good Son, I know you are wise, so are many others that run your way & are given over to strong delusions as a judgment of God. I know you are quick-sighted, but I fere you shutt your eyes & will not notice. I conceive that your conscience moves you y<sup>t</sup> way : but take heed of an erring conscience. You know I am no Schollar & therefore cannot dispute the case with you. I suppose the great matter you stumble at is that Armes are taken up against the King. It is a riddle to me that a Parliament & those that adhere unto them should be enemies to his Majestie, assure yourself they esteem his Person Sacred & pray heartily for his life & desyr & seke his Honour & preservation. But who knows not that the King is abused when he hearkens to the Counsell of Traitors & ill-affected to our Religion & the State & such as would delight to see Protestant blood as plentifully shed in England as it hathe bene in Ireland. I pray let me add this also. I have read & heard at least, how in former times the Nobility have attempted the like upon like occasions & posterity not blaming them for soe doing : whose Acts have bene ratified by following Parliaments & never repealed to this day. And if ever there was cause it is now as you must better know than myself. Besides I cannot but be swayed by the authority of those that are contrary to you in this point : besides that the Parlia-

ment are a select company of grave, wise, judicious, pious men: I think I may truly say that the most religious & conscientious men amongst the Nobility Clergy & Commonalty generally take that way. I condemne not all on the other syde: but take from them all Papists & Delinquents, nay Bishops & their Prelatical faction: men of decayed fortunes or such as hope to rise to preferment by subtle insinuations into the King's favour, and then judge what number will be left.

I know that the Company which men kepe; that friends & kinsfolk prevail with some. I pray give me no occasion to suspect or be jealous of you, time was when you gave me better hopes & promises, butt I believe that the hatred that some bear to good men do sway the greater part of those that oppose the Parliament's proceedings. But I am out of my Element. Son, a rumour is brought unto me lately of your desyr to be reconciled to the Parliament: God grant that it be: & these are to tell you that my cozen Bloys will do you the greatest kindnesse in it that he can.

God make me so happy as to know it done & then I shall desyr you to come to live with me at Playford where I thank God I enjoy much peace & quiet without molestation only helping to bear the common burthen if herein you shall yeild to my earnest desyr you will rejoice the heart of me.

Your loving but much Disconsolate Mother-in-law

ELIZABETH FELTON.

from Playford Nov. 27. 1643."

(*Tanner MSS.*, vol. 69, 108).

The letter is of value in giving the view-point of a devout woman of definite presbyterian sympathies at the time. It likewise illustrates the futilities of the moderates in the presence of a revolutionary movement. "Cozen Bloys" would be William Blois, who matriculated a Fellow-Commoner from Pembroke College, Cambridge, Easter, 1617, son and heir of William of Ipswich dec., B.A. 1619, admitted Grays Inn 15 Nov., 1619: commanded a regiment at the siege of Colchester, M.P. for Suffolk 1654, 1656, for Ipswich 1661: mar. Elizabeth dau. of Sir Thmas Willfield of Letheringham (*Harl. Pub. LXI*). He died 13 Nov. 1673.

Among the charters conserved in the Bodleian Library is the

WILL OF LADY ELIZABETH FELTON.

(8 July, 1639. 15 Car. 1).

"In the Name of God, Amen. . . to be buried in a decent manner in the church of Playford neare the bodie of my dear husband. . . To the poor people of the said parish £3 to be distributed at the time of my funeral. I give one gilt silver cup standing with a cover and the armes of my late husband upon the same, to the said parish to be used at the tyme of ye communion of ye Bodie & Blood of our Saviour & not otherwise being bought for that purpose alone. To my loving sister Mrs. Mary Steward<sup>(5)</sup> my silver-hooped tankard wherein I doe

usually drink : to my daughter Lady Everard my silver chaffyng-dish : to my daughter Elizabeth Rich my dosin of silver trencher plates : to my daughter Mary Hobart my silver warming-pan : unto my son (in-law) Rich my silver tankard : to my son (in-law) Hobart my golde chayne & those my fortie peeces of gold whereof nine & thirty are double ducketts & the other a silver angel : to my Cosin Cutler<sup>(6)</sup> my diamond ring with three diamonds & a little playne golde ring which I wear. To my neice Magdalen<sup>(7)</sup> Bernard I give my little silver skillet<sup>(8)</sup> with the ladle of silver : to cosin Henry<sup>(9)</sup> Wakeman my gimmel<sup>(10)</sup> ring of golde set with three rubys and four diamonds. To my grandchild John Hobart my best silver bason and ewer and my great silver (blank) and one dosen of my best spoons : to my grandchild Robert Hobart a silver flagon : to my grandchild Antony Hobart my other silver flagon and my set of silver casting<sup>(11)</sup> counters : to grandchild Elizabeth Hobart my two Jewels sett with rubys and diamonds : to grandchild Barbara Hobart my wedding-ringe. To my nephew Robert<sup>(12)</sup> Barnes my blew saphire and I desyr him that he would let such of my daughters have the said saphire as shall desyr it of him for a full and valuable consideration. To my gentlewoman which shall survive me my best gowne and pettycot and some of my best wearing lynen, as my executors shall think fitt. To Elizabeth Bridges (widow) if still in my service, the bedd she now lyeth on with all the furniture now used with the same and one half yere's wages above that which shall be due unto hir : to my chambermaid who shall serve me at the tyme of my death all the rest of my apparel and wearing lynen, not before bequeathed and half a yere's wages above what shall be due. To my old servant Thomas Browne my coach and two of my best coach horses and half a yere's wages. To my cosin Francis<sup>(13)</sup> Fowkes, Minister of Sproughton 40<sup>s</sup> to make him a ringe in my remembrance. To him that shall be Minister at Playford at the tyme of my death the sum of three pounds above what then shall be due unto him. To Ursula Homerton, late wyfe of John Homerton, the sum of £3 to buy a mourning gowne. And I do appoint my saide grandchild John Hobart and my said nephew Robert Bernard myn executors, and do hereby direct that all the rest of my plate, lynnyn and household stuff not hereby bequeathed shall be sold for payment of my debts and legacies and after payment of my debts, I will that £200 be paid my executor Robert Bernard to performe a trust in hym reposed, and my desyr is that £20 be layd out upon a monument to be made in the chancel of Playford church for me : the residue of my moneys and chattels to be equally divided between myn executors. . . This my last will and testament contained on two sheets of paper. Laus Deo. . .

ELIZABETH FELTON.

Mem. Subscribed by the said Lady Felton in the presence of us

William Woodroffe.

John ffiney<sup>(13)</sup>.

(Transcribed from *Bodleian Charters* No. 1369).

The testator's usual common-sense was surely lacking when she appointed a minor to be an executor of the will, that is if exactitude

can be assumed for an inscription on the tomb in Weybread church of the boy's father. It reads

"Hic etiam humata ossa Johannis Hobart, generosi  
Fili primogeniti Johannis predicti . . ."

Quae Soror sua amantissima, Barbara Astley

Magna cum cura et honore ab ecclesie S<sup>ti</sup> Egidiii

Norvic post annos hic transposuit

Natus August MDCXXIX : obiit Nov. 1 XLIX. Transpositus,  
jun 4<sup>o</sup>. LXXXIII.<sup>11</sup>

(*Bodleian Lib. Top. Suffolk, d. 6*).

As a matter of fact, Sancroft's letter to a father, somewhat negligent in paying college dues for his son, shews that the boy was an undergraduate in Emmanuel College, Cambridge some years later than the date of the will.

"Sir,

Just as I was addressing myself to write I receiv'd a wound in the palm of my right hand, w<sup>ch</sup> almost disables me from writing without danger of unclosing y<sup>e</sup> wound. I shall therefore crave pardon for this abruptness having only this much to say without circumstance y<sup>t</sup> I would desire you would send y<sup>r</sup> sonne's quatridge as soon as it will suit yo<sup>r</sup> convenience & y<sup>t</sup> I shall order y<sup>r</sup> sonne to observe you in y<sup>t</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> injunction which cocerns him.

Yo<sup>r</sup> most obliged serv<sup>t</sup>

W. Sandcroft. Aug. 31 (16)48.

(*Bod. Lib. Tanner MSS., CXV, f. 61*).

The placing of the other executor and legatee of the will is obscure, and ascription of nephewhood is not helpful. He may have been the eldest son of Francis Bernard (or Barnard) of Kingsthorpe, Northants, 2nd son of Francis of Abington and so nephew of the Magdalen Bernard mentioned in the will. Robert, a lawyer of some distinction, was admitted the Middle Temple 13 November, 1615 : called 23 November, 1621 : appointed to preside at the Reader's feast July, 1641 : Bencher 11 February, 1647 : Sergeant-at-law 1648 (*Ingpen. "Middle Temple Bench Book"*). Cr. Baronet 1 July, 1662 : died 1666, buried at Abington. Will proved 1666, P.C.C.

Passing to the daughters of Sir Antony and Lady Elizabeth Felton, who lived in an age when no career was open to women save that of marriage, and for which they doubtless were trained to become, as it was hoped, obedient wives and wise mothers.

ANNE, the eldest, wedded a widower in the person of Antony, eldest son of Richard Everard, of Langley in Much Waltham, Essex, admitted a student of the Middle Temple, 1578, and knighted 23 July, 1603, in the garden of Whitehall before the coronation of James I. (*Shaw's*

*Knights*). By predeceasing his father (d. 19 Dec. 1609. Will pr. 1615 P.C.C. 6 Rudd) he never inherited the family estates. With a first wife Anne, by whom he had issue, daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston<sup>(14)</sup> of Ketton, Sir Antony Everard is commemorated by an inscribed monument in the north aisle of Great Waltham church. His widow apparently returned to the maternal roof (Lay Elizabeth Felton held Playford manor in jointure) and dying at Playford was buried in the church 23 July, 1672. (*Register*).

## WILL OF LADY ANNE EVERARD.

“ In the Name of God, Amen.

I, Dame Anne Everard, widow, late the wife of Sir Antony Everard, dec., being in reasonable good health and sound of mind and memorie prasyd be God, but knowing the certainty of death and the uncertainty of the time thereof do this in the yere of our Lord 1653, my last will in writing in manner and forme following. Fyrst and princypallie I commit my soule to God. . believing for the meritorious death of Christ . . to have a glorious resurrection : monet, the first my bodie to be buried in Playford church as near the place where Sir Antony and his Lady my dear father and mother were buryed as conveniently may be and desyr it to be done without other solemnities but decently laid in a grave with some of my friends and servientes to see it done and I appoint that a fayre stone be laid over the grave and the like over the grave of my dear father and mother, if it be not, as I fear it is not done, with our armes and such inscription as myn executors shall think fit. I give to the poor of Playford five pounds: to my cosin Henry Gray £10 to by him a ringe out of remembrance to me, to my cozen his wyfe my picture sett in gould: to my cozen Thomas Gray their son I gyff our Great-Grandfather the Lord John Gray his picture with another sett with it. . . To everie servant that shall be with me at my death £10 and wages that shall be due unto them: to my Gentlewoman and maidservants my wearing lynen: to my brother Mr. John Hobart £5 to by him a ringe, to my brother Aldridge as much to wear for my sake. I ordain my deare and loving sister Elizabeth wyfe to Mr. John Aldrich and Martha wyfe to Mr. John Holbrooke myn executors and to such as they shall think fit I gyff mourning . . and desyr all my plate, readie monie, lynen, household debts owing to me, goods and chattels whatsoever to my sisters Elizabeth Aldrich and Mary Hobart equally to be divided between them not doubting that their husbands will joyne with them in seeing faithfully performed this my last will and testament made in my house to which I have sett my hande and seale the fourth daie of March in the yere above written.” (*Bodleian MSS. Rawl. D. 1481, f. 104*).

According to the custom of the age wills were usually made when a person either was or was believed to be sick unto death. In this instance, however, the testator recovered and a lengthening of her days enabled her to place a mural tablet on the north wall of the church, inscribed

“ To the P’etual Memorie of my Dearest deceased Parents I, Dame Anne Everard, y<sup>e</sup> Relict of S<sup>r</sup> Anty Everard of Much Waltham in Essex Kn<sup>t</sup> Daught<sup>r</sup> to S<sup>r</sup> Anty Felton of Playford in y<sup>e</sup> County of Suffolke K<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Bath & Eli<sup>z</sup> His Wife daugh<sup>tr</sup> to y<sup>e</sup> L<sup>d</sup> Gray of Grooby in y<sup>e</sup> Coun<sup>ty</sup> of Leicester. They being Bury<sup>d</sup> in This Church: Desirous to be layd here w<sup>th</sup> My Parents, have erected this Memorial, As well for them as for Myself.

A<sup>o</sup>. D<sup>mi</sup> 1657.

(*Bodleian Lib. MS. Top Suffolk*, d. 7, vol. IV, f. 725).

For the burial of “ Anne the Lady Everard ” the church bell tolled 23 July 1672. (Church Register).

Before holding the Archdeaconry of Norwich (1721) Thomas Tanner, who died on Christmas Eve two hundred years ago this year, had held the Chancellorship of Norwich, the office of Commissary in the archdeaconry of Sudbury, with the rectory of Thorpe, near Norwich: during his tenure of these appointments, he no doubt devoted much of his leisure time to the formation of collections relevant to Suffolk, from which the foregoing has been collated.

#### NOTES.

(1) A “ tassell-jentle,” i.e. a Tercel-gentle, the male of any kind of hawk, especially the peregrine falcon. (*N.E.D.*) The bird Sir Antony Felton lost at Orford was cried by the Crier, 27 Jan. 1606. (*Orford Corp. Records. Hist. MSS. Com. Various Colls.* Vol. IV, 267).

(2) Henry, s. & h. of Sir Antony Felton, matriculated Fellow-Commoner from Trinity College, Cambridge, Easter, 1607 (*Venn*): adm. Grays Inn 3 Nov. 1609 (*Register*): Had a discharge for payment of £1000 on being cr. a Baronet 12 July 1620 (*Patent Roll*): mentioned as D.L. for Suffolk (*ibid.* 1 Jan. 1625): D. 18 Sept. 1624: s. & h. aged 5 yrs. 9 months 9 days.

(3) Lionel Tollemache, b. 1 and bapt. 15 Aug. 1591 at Helmingham: suc. to baronetcy before 1621: M.P. for Orford 1621-22, and 1628-29: Vice-Admiral of Suffolk 7 Aug. 1626 (*Orford Corp. Records*). P.C. tempo Jas. 1 and Car. 1, d. 6 Sept. 1640. Admon. 2 Nov. 1640 (*G.E.C. “ Complete Baronetage ”*).

(4) A court first instituted in the reign of Henry VIII, and afterwards augmented by him with the office of Liveries,” wherefore it was styled the court of Wards and Liveries, now discharged by 12 Car. 11” (*Jacob’s “ Law Dict.,” 6th ed., Lond. 1750*).

(5) Mary, dau. of Henry lord Grey of Groby, married first William, s. & h. of Sir Edward Sulyard of Flemings (*Collins “ Peerage,”* vol. 111) by Anne 2nd dau. of Thomas Eden of Sudbury, clerk of the Star Chamber. From his father’s will (dated 1 June 1610, P.C.C. 72 Wingfield) he had died previously s.p. Her second husband Thomas, 2nd s. of William Steward of Golthorp Hall, Swardstone (*Venn “ Alumni Cantab ”*) by his 2nd wife Griseld, dau. of Thomas Eden of Sudbury, marr. settlement 1575 (*Harleian Pub. XXXII, 269*) Thomas Steward matric pensioner from Christ’s Coll., Cambridge, c. 1593 (*Venn*) and was admitted Lincoln’s Inn 9 Oct. 1596 (register), tentatively identified with the Master of the Revels 1607-08 (*Lincoln’s Inn Black Book*). In 1608 William and Griseld Steward settled reversion of their Swardstone estate upon Thomas and his wife (*Bloomfield V, 31*). Thomas died 1637 and his widow 5 Sept. 1650, and both were buried in St. Stephen’s Church, Norwich.

(6) Presumably a Cutler of Bosse Hall, Sproughton, in the Hundred of Santford, but absence of a christian name discourages an attempt to identify the beneficiary.

(7) Magdalen Bernard, 5th dau. of Francis Bernard of Abington, Northants, by Alice, dau. of John Haslewood of Maidwell. She married Thomas 2nd s. of George Danvers of Colthorpe, Oxon, and had issue George eldest s. & h. (*Visit of Oxfordshire, Harl. Pub. V, 172*).

(8) Skillet, a cooking utensil of brass or other metal, usually having 3 or 4 feet and a long handle, used for boiling liquids, meat, etc. In Suffolk the term described a thin brass perforated implement for skimming or fletting the cream off milk. (*N.E.D.*)

(9) Henry, s. of Richard Wakeman, of Kelsall, co. Suffolk, by Eleanor, dau. of Walter Windsor (*Misc. Gen. Her. N.S. 11, 183*), admitted Inner Temple Nov. 1621 (*Reg.*).

(10) A finger-ring so constructed as to admit division into two (sometimes three) rings. (*N.E.D.*)

(11) Counters used in reckonings or calculations, made by means of the abacus or counting-board.

(12) Ship Money. To the levy "Francis Fowke, rector of Playford (paid) £1 6s. 0d." and Lady Felton, despite her political proclivities, £2 13s. 0d., 26 March, 1640. (*Suffolk Inst. of Archaeology*).

(13) A notice of the Finney family that appeared in the "*Gentlemons' Magazine*," vol. 51, pp. 172, 261, 365, evoked an acid controversy.

(14) For the Barnardistons of Ketton, see *Suffolk Inst. of Arch.*, vol. IV, 123-182.

(15) Henry, Baron Grey of Groby, mar. Ann, 3rd dau. of William Cecil, 2nd Earl of Exeter and with her acquired the manor and borough of Stamford: cr. Earl of Stamford 1628: an active parliamentarian: d. 21 Aug. 1673. (*G.E.C. "Complete Peerage"*).

(16) Thomas, s. & h. of the above, born 1623: zealous republican: Regicide signed the death warrant of Charles I; a fifth monarchy man imprisoned 1655: d. of gout v.p. 1657, aged 34 (*ibid.*).