A JOINT STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE OF

THE PASTON LETTERS

Preliminary Survey
—Its Scope and Select Material—

Michio Masui

INTRODUCTORY

The present paper by members of THE ENGLISH RESEARCH GROUP AT HIROSHIMA UNIVERSITY is an interim report of a preliminary survey which, though inevitably limited in scope and material, attempts at presenting, with statistics if necessary, characteristic materials for a further description and interpretation of the language of the Paston Letters. The members’ study on the language of the Paston Letters has for the past three years been steadily pursued under the direction of the present writer with the aid of a Scientific Research Grant by the Ministry of Education.

The group research has been initiated with an aim of studying the language of the Paston Letters as a stepping stone to a more comprehensive and thorough investigation of the English language of the fifteenth century—the so-called transitional period in the history of the English language.

Since recent publication of articles on the language of the Paston Letters or on fifteenth century English by Professor Norman Davis, Professor Karl Brunner and others,\(^1\) the significance of the study of the language of the transitional period has been remarkably increased. Though in the Paston Letters there may be little or nothing entirely new in point of phonology and morphology as illustrations of the essential features of fifteenth century English, yet from the viewpoint of the continuity of English prose or from that of the rise of the Modern Standard Language

\(^1\) See Select Bibliography.
there may be expected anew something fresh which has hitherto remained unproved, especially with regard to the colloquial syntax and the formal or informal sentence-structure of the language of Norfolk in which these letters were written. Our tentative conclusion after the close and careful reading of the *Paston Letters* edited by Norman Davis (Oxford, 1958) may suggest that the real character of the language, though seemingly uncouth and quaint from the impression of its spellings and inflections, does resemble that of Modern English in many ways—its logicality or straightforwardness, its colloquial tone or its plain or complex pattern of sentence-structure. As Professor Norman Davis aptly states in the Introduction to his Edition, "It (this kind of writing) certainly does not derive from the kind of prose that Chaucer wrote, or yet from the cadenced prose of the celebrated devotional treatises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It comes so easily to so many people that it must have been common far longer than surviving documents allow us to observe." (*Ibid.*, Introduction xiv-v). Such being the case, the chief concern of the ENGLISH RESEARCH GROUP here has been directed toward the syntax—or more particularly the colloquial prose syntax of the English of the *Paston Letters*, though the morphological, lexical and stylistic or psychological aspects of the language has never been ignored as they reveal not only the linguistic state and condition, but also the events and manners of a family life which may be reflected in the *Paston Letters*.

The individual members of the ENGLISH RESEARCH GROUP who have taken part in this research and their allotted fields of survey are as follows:

1. Morphology (Spellings and Inflections) .......... Tamotsu Kurose
2. Syntax ............................................ Michio Masui, Hisashi Takahashi, Akira Wada, Masahiko Kanno, Masayoshi Matsuura
3. Vocabulary and Idioms ........................... Norihisa Matsumoto
4. Style .............................................. Michio Masui, Haruo Harada, Kiichiro Nakatani
English, and other dialects

Shun'ichi Noguchi

Select Bibliography

It is needless to say in this connection that, though the work of collecting materials has been carried out by each member of the group in his respective field, discussion has been continued by all the members as to the difficult passages or the materials to be selected in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions and overlappings.

The text used is PASTON LETTERS, Selected and Edited with an Introduction, Notes and Glossary by Norman Davis (Oxford, 1958, abbreviated PL). Since Professor Norman Davis's complete Edition of The Paston Letters which will be included as one of the series of E. E. T. S. has not yet come out our Research Group has made a tentative survey by using the selected letters of the Pastons mentioned above. Apart from its exhaustiveness, Professor Davis's Text of the selected letters (94 letters and 1 memorandum in all) covers the period of about sixty years from 1427 to 1484, nearly the three-fourths of the whole period of the Paston Letters, and is based on 'a new transcript' due to British Museum Additional Manuscripts, so that we may hope for the text to be employed as a reliable one for linguistic researches of this kind. The point of departure for our study is among other articles Professor Norman Davis's excellent article: The Language of the Pastons (Oxford, 1954, abbreviated LP).

Though the results obtained are not yet complete, a comparison of them with, especially, R.W. Chambers's Book of London English 1364-1425 may be interesting in that they may provide evidence for an intimate mutual relation between London English and the language of Norfolk on the one hand, whereas on the other they may suggest an important part that London English may have played in the shaping of a regional language. The point of such comparison, important as it is, will not be made in the present paper, except for suggesting in the last chapter some features of morphological relation between the language of the Paston Letters and London English.

In the following pages, however, limited space did not allow us to
present all the items or examples we have collected, which will be left
to our future publication.

I. MORPHOLOGY (SPELLINGS AND INFLECTIONS)

As Professor Norman Davis suggests in an article contributed to Mélanges de Linguistique et de Philologie (Mossé in Memoriam) 1959, though spellings and forms 'tended to greater uniformity and stability' as the fifteenth century progressed, still 'the persistence of distinctly regional usages' can be seen in the latter part of the century. Our attempt here will be first to give a list of such spellings as may show a great variety of form from the viewpoint of Modern English pronunciations to their corresponding variety of spellings in PL; second, to give a description of the forms of nouns and pronouns with reference to the earlier forms and inflections which may represent the transitional state of the language.

A. Spellings

1. Spellings of long vowels and diphthongs.

(1) Long vowels: [a:], [i:], [o:], [u:].

MnE [a:]-sound is spelt as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ar</th>
<th>cargeyt (charged) 4.8. /charl 7.22./large7.31./marks 11.1./parson 3.11.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

hartyest (heartiest) 18.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-er.</th>
<th>fer (far) 14.42. fare 68.26./ferdyng (farthing) 7.59./fermor 46.31. fermour 46.23. (farmer)/yerd (yard) 11.55./merveyl (marvel) 11.51.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

herte (heart) 1.4. 2.16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-yr.</th>
<th>styrt (start) 7.65.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-or.</th>
<th>morkyn (marked) 89.8.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| -a,  -al,  -an, -au, -aum,  -auns, -aunt, &c. | ladr 6.7.  ladyr 4.5 (father)/Palme Sunday 1. 36./answeryd 27.14.  answer 19.21.  awswe are 43. 45./exaumple (example) 33.43./faudere (father) 70. 23./gaunte (grant) 2.17.  gauwt (grant) 10.42. |

1) Number refers to letter 4. line 8. The same is the case with other numbers.
A Joint Study of The Language of *The Paston Letters* (Masui) — 227 —

MnE [iː]-sound is spelt as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ea.</th>
<th>ease 7.48. / meane (mean) 67.39, 82.13. / peas (peace) / please 19.20. please 54.45. / seal 2.15, seal 40.40. / season 34.23.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-e.</td>
<td>be 3.1. / me 1.4. / we 7.35.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>beskewing (beseeching) 22.4. / between (between) 7.9, betwene 21.12, betwen 3.7. / in dede (indeed) 1.12. / grene (green) 4.11. / grete (great), gretit (greats, 3rd Person Sing, Pres.) 5.36. / kepyng (keeping) 4.32, kepyn 5.33. / kne (knee) 8.16. / neate (neat) 3.10. / proceded (proceeded) 1.12. / Qwen (queen) 26.14. / slepe (sleep) 4.37. / se (see) 1.36. / seke (seek) 18.25. / semyt (seemed) 11.53. / shep (sheep) 33.80. / speke (spoke) 8.27. / strete (street) 7.8. / thre (three) 12.29. / wekys (weeks) 4.22. /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-es.</td>
<td>beyvr (beaver) 20.16. / chepe (cheap) 8.22. / klene (clean) 27.50. / dede (deed) 50.34. / dysse (disease) 5.5. / es (case) 5.7, esse (case) 5.15, sy (easy) 82.22. / etc (eat) 11.46. / fest (feast) 50.12. / dede (lead) 43.26, ledythe (leads) 69.39. / lenyld (leaned) 17.12. / leve (leave) 18.13, leyng 82.18. / leys (leaves) 81.25. / mute (moot) 5.30, 62.23. / PLESE (please) 9.3. / resonabyl (reasonable) 10.19. / se (sea) 21.37. / sellys (seals) 11.35. / sesun (season) 18.24, sesyn 5.13. / speke (speak) 5.29, 14.17. / stele (stall) 11.10. / trete (treaty) 3.10. / white (wheat) 94.11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ee.</td>
<td>peyle (people) 29.16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ee.</td>
<td>feele (feel) 69.4, feel 73.12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ee.</td>
<td>esce (case) 39.12. / ecte (cat) 53.35. / meen (mean) 38.3, meene (mean) 69.24. / pees (peace) 9.12. / reede (read) 14.43. / seys syde (seaside) 56.18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ie.</td>
<td>chief 1.10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y.</td>
<td>gryte (great) 45.3. / hyde (head) 45.13. / slype (sleep) 46.15. / sykyng (seeking) 9.20. / spye (speed) 33.74. / wyke (week) 1.37. / chyff (chief) 43.23. / fryse (frieze) 8.25. / rescyve (receive) 22.23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y.</td>
<td>consynt (conceit) 13.14. / consyve (conceive) 2.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ey.</td>
<td>weyke (weak) 38.20, weykid (weaked) 23.10. / weykenesse (weakness) 73.8. / besyn (been) 50.26. / seyne (seen) 5.20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ay.</td>
<td>consaythe (conceit) 24.40.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### MnE [ə:]-sound is spelt as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ye</th>
<th>betweyen (between) 69.7, 72.8.</th>
<th>Qwyn (queen) 61.27.</th>
<th>sky (see) 50.20.</th>
<th>Cf. thye (these) 89.8.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>cryature (creature) 43.5.</td>
<td>fiche (each) 95.21, 59.9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-al(l)</th>
<th>alle (all) 1.25, al 1.29.</th>
<th>falle (falle) 2.11.</th>
<th>fals (false) 11.46.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ar</td>
<td>awarde (award) 18.4.</td>
<td>warnyng (warning) 11.21.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-or</td>
<td>ordere (order) 2.6.</td>
<td>acordyng (according) 3.6.</td>
<td>hors (horse) 5.23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ow(r)</td>
<td>fourtennythe (fortnight) 11.19.</td>
<td>dowghther (daughter) 21.16.</td>
<td>dowtyr 39.34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er, -are, -ere</td>
<td>are (or) 24.25.</td>
<td>are (or) 57.27f.</td>
<td>er 57.40.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Absence of gh.**

dowtyr (daughter) 39.34, dowter 12.9. | awte (ought) 12.39. |

**-oo(r).**

broode (broad) 6.8. | moonyd (mourned) 61.23. | coort (court) 49.4, 64.47. |

**Miscellaneous**

sword (sword) 7.25. | churtly (shortly) 17.26. |

### MnE [u:]-sound is spelt as follows:

| -oo | noon 7.3. | shoot 56.19. |
| -o | do 3.15. | gentlywomman (gentlewoman) 3.5. | ho (whom) 10.28. | hossoever (whosoever) 6.5. | therto (thereto) 3.12. |

| -ou. | truth (truth) 4.26. trowthe (truth) 5.6, trowght (truth) 43.39. / yow (you) 1.4, 2.3. |
| -ow. | blew (blue) 3.13. / rewle (rule) 12.38, rewyll (rule) 20.9. / trew(true) 49.16. |
| -e. | cheser (chooser) 47.15. / lesse (lose) 17.21. / mevying (moving) 15.4. / prefe (proof) 6.24. / remewe (remove) 42.23. / schete (shoot) 8.5. |

Miscellaneous

| Redundant gh. | trowght (truth) 43.39. |
| -oy. | troy (true) 20.19. |
| -ey. | leys (lose) 56.45. |
| -a. | wham (whom) 2.28. |

how for who.

howsomever (whosoever) 36.34. Cf. The position of w is changed.

(2) Diphthongs: [ai], [au], [ei], [ou].

MnE [ai]-sound is spelt as follows:—

PL variant y for MnE spelling i is common.

-y: fyve 8.17, gyde (guide) 9.27, kynde 1.8, gyse (guise) 18.14, kynde 22.12, lyke 2.11, lyvys endyn (life's ending) 27.63, myle 2.7, etc.

-i: guided 33.17, licyt (likely) 40.48, pris (price) 11.55, side 7.8, title 1.18, whil (while) 7.36, etc.

| | -ychhht. |
| | -ygh. ryght (right) 10.1, 10.11. / myght (might) 10.56. |
| | -yghth. ryght (right) 5.1. myght (might) 26.18. |
| | -yghgh. rythgh (right) 27.1. hythghnes (highness) 27.27. |
| Absence of gh. | ryth(right) 4.1, 4.33 lythe(light) 24.33. mythe(might) 5.20, myth 5.21. / nyth (night) 4.37. / fowrtenythe (fortnight) 11.19. ryf (right) 8.2. ryfe (right) 23.3. myf (might) 10.54. / nyf (night) 29.5. |


Redundant *gh.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MnE Standard</th>
<th>PL Variant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wrighte (write) 12.46, wrythghtyng (writing) 27.8.</td>
<td>-y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y.</td>
<td>be (buy) 4.8. / dese (desired) 4.29. / desye (desire) 49.16. / he (high) 8.16, 23.9. / keynd (kind) 65.49. / weyse (wise) 8.13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ye.</td>
<td>lyrk (like) 49.24, 50.42. / bye (buy) 64.11. / wryet (write) 53.5, 53.21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iee (eye) 68.26. / ie (eye) 75.21.</td>
<td>-y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by (inf. of 'buy') 3.11, byen (inf. of 'buy') 3.15.</td>
<td>be (by) 4.9. / gyde (guide) / gyse (guise) 18.14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by (prep.) 1.17.</td>
<td>-e.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be (by) 1.23, 4.23. / freys (friers) 5.11. / leke (like) 7.66, 24.38. / mend (mind) 65.20. / nether (neither) 8.21. / strede (stride) 7.13. / wrte (write) 55. 84.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-o., -ow -ow, -ow.</td>
<td>nether (neither) 10.56. / nether (neither) 54. 43. / nouthery (neither) 30.43, 54.6. / outher (either) 60.16, 63.18. / outher (either) 82.14.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MnE [au]-sound is spelt as follows:—

| -ou. | aboute (about) 21.28. / counseyle (counsel) 6.4. / foule (foul) 1.28. / ground 1.19. / hous (house) 2.8. / mouthe (mouth) 7.44. / outhe (out) 4.8. |
| deu (down) 7.39, 16.5. / goune (gown) 4.5. / hou/how (how) 51.8. / toune (town) 7.5. |
| -ow. | bowe (bow) 8.5. / how 55.32, howe 27.55, quowe (how) 5.19. / goone (gown) 11.53. / now 4.19, nowe 6.9. / poure (power) 2.5. |
| abowe (about) 14.46, 21.13. / bounde (bound) 29.17. / cownseyle (counsel) 18.11. / kawnsell 11.20. / dawthe (doubt) 24.36. / owre (hour) 11.16, owyry 46.17. / houws (house) 42.50, houwe 9.21. / houwsold (household) 11. 28. / mouwe (mouse) 40.79. / mouthe (mouth) 7.32. / houre (our) 32.34. / proudly (proudly) 17.16. / ouw (out) 7.13, 8.5, outhe (out) 24.9. / wythowt (without) 2.10. |
A Joint Study of The Language of The Paston Letters (Masui) — 231 —

| -w         | gwynys (gowns) 8.22. / hw (how) 7.63, 10.37. / huise (house) 8.12, huiseis 8.4. / huesold (household) 11.27. / twen (town) 8.23. |
| -oo        | weond (wound) 64.44. |
| -u         | abut. (about) 57.23. / fund (found) 24.5. |
| -ey        | toyll (foul) 43.10. |

Absence of gh.  
Redundant gh.  

| plowe (plough) 35.9.  
| abowght (about) 34.21. / dought (doubt) 27.7, 40.14.  
| dowght (doubt) 31.16. / howght (how) 30.25. / hough (how) 33.40. / withought (without) 19.12, wythought 42.6. |

MnE [ei]-sound is spelt as follows:—

| -au        | cas (case) 7.23. / gat (gate) 62.21. / hast(haste) 3.18. / kam (came) 11.16. / mak (make) 4.16. / tak (take) 4.17. / wechesf (vouchsafe) 4.9. |
| -aw        | Caumberege (Cambridge) 20.7. / chaunge (change) 17.13. / lawboryd (laboured) 27.18. |

| -ay        | may 1.24. / pray 5.11. |
| -ay        | puruyll (purveyed) 11.27, purway (purvey) 11.54. |


<p>| -ai        | daic (day) 6.4. 6.27. |
| -ei        | thei (they) 9.19. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-e.</th>
<th>breko (break) 78.6. / brewe (brave) 25.17. / complent (complaint) 18.12. / feth (faith) 45.35. / gret (great) 1.4. 4.33. / grete 9.7. 3.10. / mete (mate) 23.27. / neigbour(e) (neighbour) 70. 26. / pre (pray) 4.9. 4.17. / Sent (Saint) 5.12. / the (they) 29. 20. 40. 81. / greit (great) 19.12. / greete 93.14.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ee.</td>
<td>weytte (weight) 5.9. / heyght (hay) 33.78. / wyght (weight) 20.19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of gh.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundant gh.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Mut (may) e.g. Mut it plese your fatherhol to remembre……31.5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MnE [ou]-sound is spelt as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-o</th>
<th>mesto (most) 21.3. / pole 14.38. / ston (stone) 7.18. / strok (strove) 7.42. / cold 81.36. / folkys (folks) 13.11. / holde (hold) 14. 21. / hol (whole) 5.16. / hom 4.7.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-oo.</td>
<td>boote (boat) 14.14. / lothe (loath) 9.21. / otys (oats) 62.23. / other (oath) 89.15. / thogeth (thought) 43.55.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ou.</td>
<td>louly (lowly) 22.3. / cupinly (openly) 36.45. Cf. opynly 24.33.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ow.</td>
<td>sole (soul) 19.6. / vouchesave (vouchsafe) 8.19. 11. 49. / awlder (older) 70.15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-au</td>
<td>aught (ought) 75.15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-aw.</td>
<td>awne (own) 24.9. / fauw (fault) 90.18. / fclawe (fellow) 9.7. / slawe (slow) 37.34. / slawly (slowly) 32.35. / aught (ought) 31.10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-u.</td>
<td>borowyd (borrowed) 27.52. / shulder (shoulder) 30.44.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-w</td>
<td>barwe (barrow) 4.24. / folowyd (fallowe) 7.18. folowed (fallowed) 26.16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-a. -e.</td>
<td>felachep (fellowship) 33.36.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-o</td>
<td>Felachep (fellowship) 8.10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wechesafe (vouchsafe) 4.9. 4.18.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>felesshep (fellowship) 56.3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wechesafe (vouchsafe) 5.31.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oy.</td>
<td>thows (those) 27.24.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oi.</td>
<td>thois (those) 57.15.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Spellings of Consonants: [w], -gh-, [θ], [ð], [ʃ], [tʃ] & [dʒ].

MnE [hw]-sound is spelt as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MnE Standard gh</th>
<th>thought (thought) 14.30, 30.8.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelt as -tgh.</td>
<td>owtgh (ought) 10.38.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-thg.</td>
<td>owthg (ought) 27.32.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ge.</td>
<td>thowge (though) 30.18.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spelling variants of gh(t):


Cf. Redundant h

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>w-</td>
<td>wat (what) 16.18, wathe (what) 18.11. / wanne (when) 4.7, 4.24. / wery (whereby) 46.4. / wic (which) 6.16, wyche (which) 30.4. / wythe (white) 64.15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h-</td>
<td>hoo (who) 55.27. / hol (whole) 5.16, hool (whole) 22.25, holly (whole) 24.28, hooly (whole) 37.38. / ho (whom) 10.28. / hosoweuer (whoseover) 6.5, hoso (whose) 6.8, howsomever (whoseover) 36.34, hos (whose) 39.34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qh-</td>
<td>qhat (what) 10.39, 10.55, 11.42. / Qhom (whom) 44.17. / qhan (when) 10.6, 11.43. / qhyche (which) 10.29, 11.6 (qhiche), 11.7. / qhil (while) 11.40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qwih-</td>
<td>Qwhan (when) 7.56. / qwhych (which) 90.1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cf. Redundant h

<p>| whas (was) 42.2. / where (were) 55.2. / betwen (between). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PL Variant ghgh</th>
<th>noughght (nought) 44.14.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ght</td>
<td>Allmyghthy (almighty) 27.61. / knyght (knight) 39.42. / myght (might) 26.18. / nought (nought) 27.36. / ryght (right) 5.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ghht</td>
<td>byght (ight) 6.12. / ryght 6.23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tgh</td>
<td>myght (might) 10.56. / owght (ought) 10.38. / rytgh 10.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-thg</td>
<td>hyghtnes (highness) 27.27. / owthg (ought) 27.32. / rythg 27.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ge</td>
<td>thowge (though) 30.18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL Variant ff</td>
<td>throff (though) 70.33.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundant gh</td>
<td>devowghtest (devoutest) 66.22. / heycgh (hay) 33.78. / hough (how) 33.40. / hovygh 30.25. / perflyght (perfect) 66.23. / perflyghtly 73.26. / proflyghtys (profits) 37.40. / proflyght (profit) 71.26. / nough (nought) 54.5. / owght (out) 62.20. / trowght (truth) 43.39. / withought (without) 19.12. / wythought 42.6. / wryghte (write) 12.46. / 51.6. / wryghting (writing) 27.8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MnE [θ] and [ð]-sounds are spelt as follows:—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-th</td>
<td>brothir 12.32. / forther (further) 7.12. / n(o)ther (neither) 8.24. / thene (than) 54.25. / that 1.12. / this 1.12. / though 1.12. / whither 1.30. / with 1.4. / worthy 1.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.t (θ)</td>
<td>auforite (authority) 2.19. / auforyte 42.6. / Elyzabet (Elizabeth) 20.21. / Sext (Sixth) 20.2. / Trusday (Thursday) 18.7. / wit (with) 18.25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-it (θ)</td>
<td>dott (doth) 5.19.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| -d (θ) | anodyr 5.9, fadyr 4.5, fadris (father's) 6.4, fa-
|   | dure 79.11, fandure 70.23, gader (gather) 60.33, ga-
|   | deryng (gathering) 24.8, hedyr (hither) 4.23, modyr 4.5, modor 5.6, MOODRI: 57.2, nowder (neither) 55.12, odyr (other) 4.29, oder 24.39, dan (than) 5.22, thedyr (thither) 46.30, dys (this) 5.20, toge-
|   | ders (together) 19.9, wordy (worthy) 88.24. |
| -dd(θ) | hedder (hither) 11.17, hyddyre 38.25, hyddre 71.12, hidderward 10.11, hiderwardys 11.23. |
| Cl. | at (that) 86.19. |

MnE[ʃ]-sound is spelt as follows:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| -sh | lordshepe 2.23, shal 3.10, worshepefull 1.3, wor-
|   | shipfull 19.1. |
| -ssh | bysshop 1.15, byshopriche 1.16, Englissehe 14.46. |
| -ssch | belasch 20.6. |
| -ch | dyche (dish) 28.15, che (she) 20.21, short (short) 20.13, chartly 17.26, chull (shall) 41.26, 17.21, challe 34.31, chull 17.19, child (should) 17.23, shoulde 41.5, fych (dish) 86.9, measterschep 86.7, wurcyph 18.19, worshipful 5.1, worshipful 8.2, wurcylyph 24.27. |
| -ss | Gressam (Gresham) 13.4. |
| -c | facyon (fashioned) 20.20. |
| -x | xal (shall) 5.15, 5.29, xul 5.25, 10.7, xold (should) 85.11, xulld 4.23, xulld 17.18, xuld 28.22. |
| -xh | hall (shall) 25.20. |
### Table: Graphemes and Phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grapheme</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>cher (cheer) 1.10, cheche (church) 1.31, charite 2.18, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)ch</td>
<td>fecche (fetch) 75.32, weeche (watch) 52.12, wacchid (watchful) 51.27, fech (fetch) 11.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>cargoyt (charged) 4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>sharge (charge) 30.12, Frenshe (French) 14.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sch</td>
<td>baschylere (bachelor) 90.19, schanselere (chancellor) 55.28, schwanselere 55.48, schargyd (charged) 55.10, schastysyd (chastisled) 32.31, schere (chier) 85.25, schese (choose) 55.23, schoryle (churl) 64.32, mysch (much) 90.13, towscheyng (touching) 55.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MnE [dʒ]-sound is spelt as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-dg</td>
<td>lodgyng 69.8, pledged 68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-g</td>
<td>Camberag (Cambridge) 70.20, jugled (judged) 86.17, loged (lodged) 86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-j</td>
<td>imajynasyon (imagination) 65.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ch</td>
<td>knowleche 10.12, knowlych 43.63, knownlach 14.13, knowlach 65.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Inflections of Nouns and Pronouns

1. **Nouns**

   (1) Forms of plural ending may be summarized with frequency of occurrence in the following paradigm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1. -ys.</td>
<td>dorys 8.13, thyngys 52.37</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2. -ys.</td>
<td>hand gunnyss 8.15</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3. -is.</td>
<td>shippis 14.11, letteris 89.9</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4. -es.</td>
<td>dayes 95.9, cartes 93.15</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5. -ese.</td>
<td>towneeze 63.36</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6. -s.</td>
<td>lettres 14.8, tydyingss 10.46</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 7. -ez.</td>
<td>inconvenientez 2.11</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 8.</td>
<td>-x.</td>
<td>perlix 7.45.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 9. Mutation pl.</td>
<td>fete, etc.</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 10. Plural form in -n. etc.</td>
<td>childern 12.10. chylder 36.15. childer 8.23. brethren 44.10.</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 11. Unchanged Plural</td>
<td>mark(e), marc, myle, hors(e), ton, yere. Cf. yeris.</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B.

It is noteworthy that in the *Paston Letters* ‘-ys’ ending is by far the most frequent.

Here are treated some of the specific cases of plural:

1. French Plural Form:

In address:

A mez tres honnures meistres William Worstede,.....1.1.

Law term:

by certeins notables and resonables causes,.....2.12f.

2. As for *folk*, its plural form generally means 'family people or people in near relation', while the singular form means 'people in general':

all your *folkys* and my well-wyllers, 50,71.

all *folk* that cam wyth my Lady of Burgoyne owt of Inglond 50, 47.

Cf.

*Folkys* ben rytgh sore aferd that they wol don moche harm this somer, 13,20.

Sche haith othere wateris to make *folkis* to browke. 70,48.

3. The word *thing* in singular form is often used in plural senses in Chaucer:

in all thyng 24.5. all thyng were wele 42,40, any othyr thyn(g) 67,42, ony othere thyng 70,37, all erthely thing 79,23.

Cf. all thyng standyth in good wey. 46,4.
Plural form is also used:
all odyr t(h)yngeys 32,33, other thynes 33,4, such thynes 33,7.
The frequency of the singular form and that of the plural are as follows: thing 26%, things 74%.

4. Latin and Old French plural form letters is used at times instead of the singular form:
by yowre worthy lettres 2,18, of the whych letrys I thanc yow 29, 6, the seid lettres 56,39 (legal expression), thank you hertyly of youre letteris 70,2.
The use of the plural form including the case where the word letters is preceded by numerals is 18 times, while that of the singular form counts 67.

5. The use of other in plural sense is as follows:
among other 2,5./ to dyvers othy 29,20./ to you and to odyr 32, 17./ I and odyr 32,33./ wyth othere of my Lord of Suffolkys men 37,3./ amonge all other 54,52.
Plural form others is not in evidence in my survey.

(2) Forms of Genitive Case will be manifested in the following paradigm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type 1.</th>
<th>-ys.</th>
<th>Godlys blyssyng 5.36. in hertys es 5.7.</th>
<th>53.6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 2.</td>
<td>-is.</td>
<td>Goddis blyssyng 6.25. to your gracious hertis desyre. 21.7.</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3.</td>
<td>-es.</td>
<td>Goddes ryghtwysenes 9.10. to your hertes desire. 9.28.</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4.</td>
<td>-s.</td>
<td>Wymondams gate 7.6. brodyrs maters 76.13.</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5.</td>
<td>Separated gen.</td>
<td>God ys blyssyng and myn 45.3. for hard ys hese 55.91. (for heart's case) Seynt Barnaby is Day 84.33.</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6.</td>
<td>Proper N.+his</td>
<td>John Norwode his man 7.7. Thomas Hawys his othirman 7.8.</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
N.B.

1. The genitive of lifeless things:
   at the wekys end 25, 18, / wythin iii or v dayes jorney of Brugys 50, 52, / by the seesys syde 56, 18, / yowre lyuys endyn 27, 63, / in hertys es 5, 7, / whales bon 47, 14.

2. Before sake the s-form is frequent while the s-less form is rare:
   for Goddes sake 63, 46. See moreover 55, 17; 63, 41; 63, 46; 65, 48; 68, 28; 76, 14.
   for Godsake 70, 40, (maybe coalesced?)

3. Group genitive:
   a. The s is appended to a group of words as in Present-Day English:
      the Duke of Suffolkys auncestres 34, 10, my Lorde of Suffolkys men 37, 4.
   b. ME idiom (e.g. Chaucer's 'the kyng Priamus sone of Troye') is preserved:
      the Kyngys sustyr of Scotlon. 66, 21 William Smythes carte of Brabdon 93, 10.
   c. The genitive of the two words connected by 'and' takes the following forms:
      A's...and B's:
      his avysse and Doctour Aleynes 42, 43.
      myn Goddis blessyng and myn 6, 26.
      yowre wele-willerys and myn 11, 6.
      A and B's......:
      the Seynt Symon and Jude ys Evyn 43, 68.

As for the s-less form in group genitive see the above paradigm Type 7.

4. The use of the double genitive:
   The Paston Letters show two forms in the use of the double genitive.
One is the type of 'of + Absolute Possessive Pronoun' and the other is the type of 'of + Possessive Case.' Of course the former is used more frequently than the latter.

Type of 'of + Possessive Pronoun':

- a yonger doghtur of myn 82,20.
- a good lover of myn 85,26.
- some other frend of yours 40,44.
- sum othere good kuntery man of owyrs 65,43.

Type of 'of + Possessive Case'
- frendys of your 95,32.

Cf. the schere howse of yow 18,12.

5. The use of adverbial genitive:

-times: betymes 40,31; bytimes 40,55./ oftentymys 27,13. Cf. oftyn tyme 12,40. (Adverbial Accusative) / othyre tymys 27,23./ eftsones 33,40./ now a dayes 12,23.

-wards: hiderwardys 11,23./ latewardes 84,9. Cf. hereafterward 92,27. (Adverbial Accusative)

Miscellaneous: onis 6,4./ onys 12,27./ twyse 12,28./ onethes (scarcely) 14,4./ togedyrs 92,12. Cf. togedyr 21,26./ needys 89,38./

Olde genitive: alther (of all) best 52,41.

2. Pronouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>1st Person Sing.</th>
<th>2nd Person Sing.</th>
<th>3rd Person Sing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominate</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>che</td>
<td>yu thow</td>
<td>he she it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sche itt yt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yit hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>myn</td>
<td>your</td>
<td>his here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>myne</td>
<td></td>
<td>youre</td>
<td>hise hir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yowr</td>
<td>hys hyr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yowre</td>
<td>hes hyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yowyr</td>
<td>hese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>me</td>
<td></td>
<td>you the</td>
<td>him here it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yow</td>
<td>hym herre yt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yowe</td>
<td>hyme hir yte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yw</td>
<td>hire yth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hyr hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hyre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Joint Study of The Language of The Paston Letters (Masui) — 241 —

N.B.

1. Some scribes use *my* before consonants and *myn(e)* before vowels, but others use both forms indiscriminately. *Myne*, however, seems to be the usual form before vowels in the latter case.

Letter 1 (William Paston I’s autograph) observes the grammar:

*my* seyd adversarie 1.17. // *Myn* adversarie 1.15.

Letter 19 (hand of John Bokkyng) does not observe the grammar:


In Letter 5, *myn* is used before *h*: *Myn* hert 5.15.

2. The results of my survey show the non-use of 2nd Person Singular Nominative *you*. *Ye* is the usual polite form for the person to whom letters are written in *Paston Letters*. The use of *thow* and *the* is scarce and *thy* does not appear according to my survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>1st Person Plural</th>
<th>2nd Person Plural</th>
<th>3rd Person Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>we</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>they</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>wee</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>thei</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>thay</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>our</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>theyre</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>oure</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ther</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>owr</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>there</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>owre</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>her</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>owyr</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>here</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ouwyr</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>howre</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>us</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>them</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>uus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>themm</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ous</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>thaym</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>theym</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>hem</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B.

1. The second persons plural *ye*, *your*, and *you* seem not to be used so far as the present textbook is concerned.

2. The uses of *hem* and *them*:

   In the accusative:

   *bryng hem* to the next preson 46.48. / put *hem* in grett destresse
Ye schall fynde them gentylmanly 52.24./ thys he lettes thaym knowe 86.36./ let hym comand theym to pay 92.31.
In the Dative:
and hathe gen hem day tyll Candyllmas to pay 46.21./ I had schargyd hem alle 55.68./ informe hem as I ha writte to yo[w] with 36.44.
to purvey them some. 52.21./ Ther dar no pore man dy(s)plese theym 46.38.
After Prepositions:
he shall not have it from hem esily. 9.25./ nere hem 10.31./ the sellys of hem 11.35./ all the felawsh pep of hem 46.25./ I sayd to hem 10.52.
schete owt at them 8.17./ to purvey for them 52.23./ Ther be ii systers of them 88.20.
Thus the difference of use between them and hem can not be found in the Paston Letters.
The frequency of hem and them in the first and last 15 letters (total: 30 letters) is as follows: them 52.6%, hem 47.4%. Nevertheless, in the first 15 letters hem is more frequent and in the latter them counts a larger number. As for the chronological distribution of hem, them/ her, ther, see Norman Davis. LP, p. 117.

II. SYNTAX

The following points of syntax are selected with typical examples in the present survey:
A. Elements and Structure of the Sentence
1. Comparison
2. Infinitive with (for) to
3. Gerund
4. Participle
5. Shall and Will with Statistics
6. Negation
7. Word-Order
8. Emphasis
9. Colloquial Elements
10. Remnants of Earlier English

B. Structure of Clauses
   1. Coordination
   2. Subordination
   3. Correlation

A. Elements and Structure of the Sentence

1. Comparison

Despite some irregularities in word form (e.g. *sewrlyer* vs. *most suer*) and in pattern (e.g. *on the lyghitest*), the general patterns of comparison are closely followed by Modern English.

(1) Positive. The pattern 'as...as...' is particularly frequent.
   a. 'As...', 'as...as one can', etc.: Hawys...kést a ston *as meche as a fortynge lot* (?), 1) the wyll...was *as veryly Syr Fastolffys wyll* as it was trew that he shold onys deye (49), (ho) is *as besy as he can* (22), he schowld do therine *as largely as he owt to do* (41).
   b. 'Not so...as...': the schanselere was *not so gylty as I weend he had ben* (55), sche was never in *so gret sorow as sche is now a dayes* (12).
   c. 'As good', etc., with a relative clause wanting: It is *as good* that ye rede... (72), it shall cost a m¹ escutys, and *as moche aste tres* (57).

(2) Comparative. Such a pattern as 'x tymes worse...than...' is already found. The earliest quotation of the similar pattern in OED is dated 1551.

   a. General pattern: ther was never no man that played Herrod in Corpus Crysty play *better* and *more agreable* to hys pageaunt then he dud (86), to hundred yere *elder than...* (11), x tymes *worse tydyngys...than...* any letter ye wrot to me (57), on word of a woman shuld do *more than* the wordys of xx men (94), it shal be *lesse cost to yow to*  

---
1) Number in the parentheses refers to Letter Number as in PL.
be at Norwyche...then to mete at Langely wher everythyng is dere (81). I had lever ye lost the lyffelode than there lyfes (56), in lesse than an howre (77), offer than onys (83).

b. With ‘the’, also in correlation ‘the...the...’: ye hare nevere the nerer a wysse man for hym (25), the soner the better in eschewyng of worse(84).

N.B. ‘had lever~than’ is idiomatic, a construction prevalent in the fifteenth century. See Baldwin, ISMD.

(3) Superlative. One rare instance of the earlier form ‘on(=one) the lyghtest’ is found, though ‘one of (superlative)’ is the commoner one.

He is on the lyghtest, deleyoest, best spokyn, fayrest archer, devoughtest, most perfyght, and trewest to hys lady of all the knyghtys (66), oon of the lewdeste of the shippe (14), the uttermest pryse (52).

Also in such phrases as at the forthest (57), at the lest (89).

2. **Infinitive with (for) to**

(1) Both for to and to are joined with the infinitive, not necessarily with notion of purpose, but the former is less frequent. Occasionally the two forms occur in succession.

the seyd Master Brakley owt for to be in gret consyens (49) [cf. ye dede as ye ought to do of very right (54)], it comyth to you in mynd for to meve me wyth thyss mater (49), on Wensday last passyd Dabene, Nauntoun, Wykys, and John Love werre at Drayton for to speke wyth youre tenauntys there, to put hem in confort and for to aske money of hem also (35).

(2) Passive infinitive

It bids fair to be on the increase in the Letters.

Every pore man that hath browt up his chylder to the age of xii yer waythyth than to be holp and profitid be his childer (36), thei be thret to be slayn or presoned (42), iff I had nede to be quyknyd wyth a letter...(57).

(3) Perfect infinitive occurs fairly frequently, signifying that something ought to have been done but was not.

it was yowre fadris laste wille to have do ryght wel to that plase (6),
twenty comb Hew Awstyns man had don cartyd, redy for to have led it to Yermowth (46), Sche was browthe ageyn to my place fore to a be resyved (55).

(4) The pattern 'it... (for...) to...'
I told hym it was no curtese to medyll hym in a mater (17), me thynke it were best to porvaye one atte Camberag (70), if it lay in here powrys to do owth for me... (10), it were best fore hym to tak his leve (28), it is worship for you to confort yourw tenantes (36).

The last two examples may be construed as accusative with infinitive. Compare also 'datival phrase' (to me) preceding the infinitive, and also retroactive 'which wey... to take'.

Yt is a deth to me to thynk upon yt (65), it is to me a deethe to her that... (54), whych wey were harde for me to take (57).

(5) The pattern 'too... to...'
I will not be to hasty to take it uppon me (45), wythe mor whyche wer to longe to wryet to you (53).

(6) Adjectives with infinitive

This use is a continuation of the use of infinitives in the 14th century. he sholde have been able to have redyn a myle (77), I am aferde to write to you (54), I am now bond to thank yow for it (95), I xall be sayn to lend it him (28), he is glad to scheew yow hem (12), I am hevy and sory to remembre ther disposition (54), thei be like to lesë bothe there lyfes and the place (56), she were loth to suffre that (9), I was redy to ryden (11), I ham wery to wer yt (4), he was not wyllyng to meve the Kyng therein (27), as he was wont to custome to do (7), my lady was worthy to have a lordys soon in hyre belye (69).

(7) The absolute construction: 'nominative with infinitive'
the gat be shet, and he to be chasyd aftyr watyr wythin your plase (62), ye may se be his evyndences that his childern and hire may enheryten, and sche to have resonable joyniture (12), he is lord there, and well be, and shall be, and ye not to have it (9).

(8) Miscellaneous uses of infinitives which may show a wide range of their application in sentence-structure.
The cause...ys to have an awnswere in haste from you (35), yef ye purposed to falle hastely in my Lady Anne P. lappe...(47), I consayll yow not to contenu long as ye do (18). I wot not what to do wyth hym (30), how to do (65), wher to fynd yow (76), I have no wyt nor remembrans to wryte to yow halfe the worcep that is her (50), prey yow to gete som crosse bowis, and wyndacys to bynd them wyth (8), they han made wyketys on every quarter of the hwse to schete oute atte (8), on Monday next comyng, that is to sey, the fyrst Monday of Clene Lente (88), And as fore to labore thois letteris and the rescu togedre (57). But as to sey that they schall be rescuyd (57).

N.B. It is interesting to note that the new infinitival construction with preposition at end crops up in the PL as in 'to bynd them wyth'. Chaucer's construction is the order with the preposition immediately after the verb as in 'to shorte with owre weye' (Prol 791). See Robinson, The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd ed. p.668.

3. Gerund

(1) What is called 'gerund' was a noun originally. But in PL the development of the gerund as verbal noun is far advanced; particularly its flexible gerundial uses are noteworthy.

a. As object of verb:
I xall late you have wetyng qhan ye com hom (11). He seyth he hath not usyd to geve rekenyng nothyle of bred nor alle tyll at the wekys end (25).

b. With prepositions and possessive pronouns (or/genitives)
I took it upon my sowle at my dying that that wyll that...(49), after your departyng (40), in Daubeneys kepyng (30), of Howardys gydyng (28), knowyng of ther comyng (37), knowlich of the Dukes comyng (14), syn your departyng (30), to your departyng (30).
In the above examples the gerund after prepositions has characteristics of a verb.

c. With adverbs:
I pray you that the caws of my komyng away may ben kownsell tyl I speke wyth yow (11), takyn away (93), your being here (76), the comyng and the bryngyn hoom of the gentyl womman (3).

d. With adverbial phrases (place):

It is worth noticing that this use appears especially after verbs of motion (come, go, etc.).

Whyche I truste to tell you at your comyng to Norwych (81), befor the Kyngys comyng into the said cite (26), as for my comyng from Eton (88), for comynge on ther lordes ground (86), after myn departynge fromme you (41), at my departynge frome your meastershepe (86), syn youre departynge out of thys contre (31), of my going to Caleys (68), as he his seyng to us (29).

e. With an object:

as a drane amonges bees whech labour for gaderyn hony in the feldes (33). I nevir coude fele ner understand hym poletyk ner diligent in helpynghymself (33).

f. The pattern ‘an adjective+of+gerund’:

and bydde hym that he be not to hasty of takynge of orderes that schuld bynd hym (70), to be woll ware off hys delynge (61), wery of bidyng (33).

4. Participle

The development of present and past participles in PL is conspicuous in parallel with that of the gerund. The following are a list of the typical uses of participles:

(1) Additional modifying participle

and ther ar ii other personees provided to the same bysshoprichie yet lywng (1), a lyttlyl hert brenyn[ng] to you (11), monkes clad and unprofessyd (2), his trustid men (14).

The present participle is used after the construction ‘have+noun’, almost forming a pattern like ‘have+n.+−ing’:

and hath his men ayen waytyng upon hym (13), hath speciall evidens longynge (40), had a plowe goyng (35), have non herneyse comyn (52).
(2) Participial construction
we, knowyng of ther comyng, had purveyd so for hem that we were stronge inough (37), I, rememberyng hym of the same mater (27), And proudly goyn forthe wyth me in the cherche, he seyd (49), accordyng to (25), konsyderyng (27), sawyn (27).

(3) The absolute construction
and that doone she woll delyver them, and ellys nott (89), And thys done, I warant your lyvelod that my lord delys not wyth shall be gadyrd pcybylly (46), But, all thyngys rekynyd, it shal be lesse cost to yow to be at Norwyche (81).

(4) 'With'-construction
And with hym mette a shippe callyd Nicolas of the Towre, with othere shippis waytyng on hym (14), for fayne she wold be redde of it, wyth hyr onowre sawyd (94), wyth as many personys defensabylly arayd as they myte (32).

(5) The periphrastic form
Though the periphrastic forms are used in PL some of them may have the character of an adjective rather than of a verb.
She is not abydyng the sche ys now, hyr dwellyng is in London (88), Myn uncle was comyng to have offered (91) [cf. I understonde ther is comyn an heyre determyner to enquire of all ryottys (37)], they be not in noon place wher that sykenesse is regnyng (63), Ser Jamys is evyr choppynge at me when my modyr is present (68).

N.B. The use of the pres. part. in the last example seems emotional.

5. SHALL and WILL

Our chief concern here is to count all the occurrences of the four auxiliaries — shall, will, shold and wold.

In the principal clauses 'shall' is more often used than 'will', except in the third person, whereas 'wold' is more often used than 'shold' except in the second person.

These auxiliaries are more in evidence in the subordinate clauses. This
is especially the case with 'shold'. 'Shold' occurs 29 times in the principal clauses, as against 195 times in the subordinate clauses.

The following tables show the results obtained on the frequency of occurrence of the above auxiliaries in their respective clauses.

**Frequency of Occurrence**

**Table No. 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL CLAUSE</th>
<th>SUBORDINATE NOUN CLAUSE (1)</th>
<th>ADVERBIAL &amp; ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHALL</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I + III</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILL</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOLD</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II + III</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLD</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I + III</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Noun Clauses are divided into A and B:

Noun Clause A

Noun Clauses A are subdivided into 1 and 2.
1. The subject of the principal and noun clauses are identical with each other. E.g. I seyd pleyly that I wootd bryng here nore sende here (55), your yonger sone seith he wold have do it (40).
2. The subject of the principal clause is identical with one of the composing members of the plural or double subject of the noun clause. E.g. I hope that I and odyre schal do howre part (32), I fer me that we shall have... (74).

Noun Clause B

The subjects of the principal and noun clauses are not identical with each other. E.g. he seyth my lady shal come on pylingrenage (94).

N.B. In the material collected the auxiliaries do not occur in the interrogative sentence except a single instance of 'shall' in the following:

'Covere thy heed!' And Gloys seid ageyn, 'So I shall for the.' And whanne Gloys was forther passed by the space of iii or iii strede, Wymondham drew owt his dagger and seid, 'Shalt thow so, knave?' (7)

Illustrations of 'shall' and 'will' with frequency are given in the following:

(1) In the Principal Clause

a. 1st Person

_Shall:_ I shall be yours while I lyve (51), _Will:_ I am your man and evere _Will_ be (2), _Schold:_ I schold wryght much more to yow but for lak of leysere (38), _Wolde:_ Followed _be glad or sorry_ (11 examples)

Iff it be weel, I wolde be glad (83).

With 'in feythe, by my trouthe, by god', etc.

_Shall, Schold_ (No example), _Will_ (4 examples), _Wold_ (4 examples).

anb iff any off them be claymyd hereafftre, _in feythe I wyll_ restoore it (73).

b. 2nd Person

_Shall:_ Ye _schall_ have knowlyche aftryward howe he hathe demenyd hym here wyth me (27), But ye _schall_ understond that it was after none
A Joint Study of The Language of The Paston Letters (Masui) — 251 —

(86); Will: ye woll remembr I have sent yow all manylettirs (33).

c. 3rd Person

Shall: Pecocke challe telle you be mothe of more thyngys than I may
write to you at this tyme (34); Will: he hath obeyed hym to yow
and wolde do at all tymis (34).
The Subject referring to other than persons.
Frequency: Shall 22, Will 7, Shold 9, Wold 3.

Stablysshe yowre selfe uppon a good grownde, and grace shall folowe
(83), and that shalle cause your fader to be better fader to you (30),
myn empty hed wyll not let me remember it (92).
Followed by ‘needys’: Frequency: Will 1, Wold 1.
she woll needys take advise off Londonerys (89).
‘Wold sayn’ (+ examples).
Your grandam wold sayne her sum tydyngys from yow (30).
d. Negation in the Principal Clause
Frequency of occurrence.

Table No. 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHALL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOLD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLD</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples: I fynde noon other cause, and as I trust to Jesu never
shall (22), and more will I not tell in thses mater if I be desyred or
compellid (39). And thys I promysse yow, ye shall not be so longe ayen
wythought a byll fro me (66), ye will not leffe me therfor (79), he
schalle never do yow profyte nere worchyp (27), the mane that ye lefte
wyth me woll not take upon hym to breve dayly as ye commandyt (25).
(2) In the Subordinate Clause

a. Noun Clause

The total number of Noun Clause B is far more frequent than that of Noun Clause A in each auxiliary, as the Table No. 1 shows. In case we compare the examples of B whose subjects of principal and noun clauses are the third person, we get the following result as shown in the Table No. 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOUN CLAUSE</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B (In Principal and Subordinate Clauses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSON</td>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHALL</td>
<td>4 (22%)</td>
<td>14 (78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILL</td>
<td>14 (74%)</td>
<td>5 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOLD</td>
<td>12 (23%)</td>
<td>41 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLD</td>
<td>26 (81%)</td>
<td>9 (19%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With will and wold class A is more frequent. This fact is typically represented by the noun clauses governed by the verb ‘say’. Its frequency is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOUN CLAUSE</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governing Verb</td>
<td>Say</td>
<td>Say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHALL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILL</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOLD</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLD</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. she sayth she wyl be there thys somer and repayre housyng ther (35).
B. and thanne Wymondham called Gloyys thef and seid he [=Gloyys] shuld dye (7).

6. Negation

(1) Periphrastic do is not found yet.
Spare not this to be don in hast (56), Your fader knowythe not wher it is (30).
Cf. The interrogative pattern: Alas, what meane they? (54).

(2) Double (sometimes triple) negative is quite common.
He is not takyn as non of that howse, fore the cokys be not charged to serve hym, nore the sewere to gyve hym no dyche; fore the sewere wyll not tak no men no dischys till they be comawndyd by the cownterrollere (28).

(3) Negatives used are such pronouns as non, nobody, nothing (a), such adjectives as no, non (b), such adverbs as litell, never, no, none, not, nothyng, nought, seld (c), and conjunctions such as nother...ner, ne...ne, ner...ner (d).

a. sche knewe it furst of me and non other (54).
b. tyll that tyme kan I take non dyreccion (57).
c. full litell remembre they what they doo (54), I herde newyre syn that tyme any worde owt off Norffolk (63), I sente to yowe none erste no wrythgyng (27), he mythe not, nore woold, no lengare belay yt (55), I was nothyng purposyd to abyde here (35), if he hathe nought do well, nor wyll nought amend... (20), if ye loke hem lightly and see hem seld thei shall sone be forgete (40).
d. sche may not spoke with no man, hossoever come, ne not may se ne spoke with my man, ne with servauntes of hir moderys (12).

(4) Irregularities in word-order

a. Negative object is sometimes transposed before the verb: S—v—O—V. Especially frequent in case of non.
I can non send yow (50), I kowd no rest have in myn hert (11).
b. Adjective non is separated and placed after the noun it qualifies in the following.
Othere tydyngys know I non att this tym (13), Othyr tydyngys have we non her (50).

7. Word-Order

Roughly speaking, the word-order is normal. Such an inverted order as follows is usual in Modern English too.

(1) When a sentence or a clause opens with an object, sometimes the inversion occurs: O—V—S, O—v—S—V.

many a gret chalaunge make thay to Mester John (86), and so woll he do to othere (43).
Occasionally the emphatic front-position of an object is found without inversion, the object usually referring to what immediately precedes in the context.

thys ye kannot do wythowt som comfort of hyre in no wyse (48),
and if any thei cowde fynde...(42). Whethere he wol com ferthere hyddyrward ore not I wot not yet (38).

'No more I wrighte to yow...(12)' is a stereotyped phrase, which occurs often in an elliptic pattern: 'No moore to yowe at thys tyme (69),'

(2) When an adverb or an adverbial phrase opens a sentence or a clause, inversion takes place: adv.—V—S, adv.—v—S—V.

and then come they and aborded the schippe (21), Yet hath he left you a pyke or ii (86), in his stede is kom anothere (10), syns Saterdaye slepyd he not iii howrys (77).

A sentence beginning with unstressed there shows the same word-order. This pattern is particularly frequent, often with a passive verb, ther is comyn an heyre determyner to enquire of all ryottys (37), Ther dar no pore man dy[s]plese theym (46), there xuld be fownd othere thynggys ageyns hym (55).
Irregularities

a. Pronouns show some irregularities: all them (85), the other hyr susters (82), lend it him (28) [cf. give it me (POD)], ye commaund me so for to do (94) [cf. a comamend of the Duck to do so (43)].

b. Adverbs and adverbial phrases also show some irregularities in word-order: yow and hym bothe (7) [cf. both wyth yowre hert and mynde (48)]. I pray God long to contynew to hys plesore (88). I hope hastily to see yow (61), pray yow as hastily as ye may send me ayen v mark (28) [cf. I pray yow send me it as hastily as ye may (28)]. I wolde ye toke of men of the contre but few (52). I had lever thene all the goodes in the worlde I myght be wyth you (54).

Irregularities in word-order of some negatives are already dealt with above. See Negation (4).

8. Emphasis

(1) With intensive force these adverbs are used: all, clene, full, never so (in conditional clauses), passyng, right, so, sore, to, verrry, wele, of which right is most frequent. It is about the middle of the fifteenth century that very comes to be used as an adverb, as in verrry mery (71). he schall be all holl wythin ryght schort tyme (61), clene hole of all my hurttys (62), full sorowefull (54). Thow thei speke never so fayr to you...(11), passyng sekke (65). MY right especiall good mayster (47), ye suffre them to be so longe in so gret joparte (56), sore aferyd (8), be natt to hevy nor to mery (57), verrry kunnyng (53), wele worth (11).

Also in phrases such as goodely and wele (57), ryth well and pleyly (29).

(2) See Colloquial Elements (2) for emphatic tag-clauses (e.g. dought ye nat), and (11) for asseveration (e.g. God knowith). For the periphrastic construction ‘it is...that...’ see B. Subordination (3) d.

9. Colloquial Elements

The Letters are, as might be supposed, full of elements of colloquial
nature. Here is a good example:

And as for the mater, so they overcome yow not with fors ne bosting I shall have the maner sevrlyer to me and myn than the Dewk shall have Cossey, dows ye not. And in cas I come not hom within thre wekis, I pray yow come to me; and Wykes hath promisid to kepe the plase in your absens. Nevertheles, whan ye come set it in sech rewe as ye some best and most suer, bothe for Castre and Heylisdon, if the werre hold. In cas ye have pees send me word (39).

The following might be the typical of colloquial elements.

(1) Frequent use of verbs or verbal phrases of feeling, reporting, etc., such as I am glad, I hope.

Mastres, I am aferde to write to you, for I undrestond ye have schewyd my letters (54), I am ryght glad (49), I am hevy and sory (54), I hope (75), I wold ye shuld send me word howghe ye doo (30), I here sey thei xul abyd here (10).

(2) Tag-clauses such as dought ye nat (40), I ensure yow (45), I promise yow (53), I wote wele (51), etc. either at front-position or at end-position.

I promise yow it shall do yow ease (53), I will not be to hasty to take it uppon me, I ensure you (45).

(3) Insertion of me thynkythe, as nede is, I thought, that ys to say, etc. they wol as nede is kepe wecche and warde (52), my brodyr is beryed in the Whyght Fryers at London, whych I thought shold not have ben (92).

Also note such insertion as follows.

Mastress Broom send me hedyr iii lange gownys...owt of my cofyr —Ser Jamys hathe the key—as I sent hyr word befor thys (62), my brodyr Thomas Jermyn...tellyth me that the causey, or ye can come to Bokenham fery, is so over flowyn that ther is no man that may anethe passe it (81).

(4) Besides such elliptic phrases as if ye may (39), or els not (35), I trow not (88), never shall (22), note also the ellipsis in the following. The brackets show the place where ellipsis occurs.
He was at Wyndham..., and ther restyd hym an howre, and to horse ageyne and was heere in lesse than an howre and on halffe (77), he seyth my lady shal come on pylgremage into this towne, but he knowyth not wheder [ ] afore Cristmes or aftyr (94). I wolde be as gladde that one gaffe yow a maner off xx li. by yeere as [ ] iff he gave it to my selfe (83). No more [ ] to yowe at this tyme (79).

(5) Apposition outside the sentence or clause proper, either at front-position or at end-position. This may be the so-called 'extra-position'. such as ye can not sped at this tyme, let hem be sped as sone as ye may (33), many pagentys wer pleyd in hyr wey in Bryggys to hyr welcomyng, the best that ever I sye (50).

(6) Redundancy, usually after an insertion on of them...whyche is as goode a man as gothe on the erthe, savyng a lytyl he woll, as I understand, be a lytel copschotyn (52), he wyst wyl that and the wall were pud doun, thou he were an hond-ryd myle fro Paston he wyste well that I wolde sey he ded yt (16).

(7) Change of construction or semantic change
I pray you hertely send me word how ye do and how ye spyde in youre maters in haste, and that I may have knowlych how your sonmys doth (43). I were ryght lothe to bestowe so mech uppon on doghtur that the other hyr susters schuld fare the wars (82), yt was the next day after that I was maad bachylere ore than the letter cam (90).

(8) The pattern 'grette maters and weyghty (53)' is extended. Sometimes additional emphasis may be felt as in the following:
I woold ye xuld send your brothere woord, and sum othere that ye truste, to see to your owyn lyvelod (60). I shall be yours while I lyve, and at your comaundement (51). The Duke hath be more fervently set therupon, and more cruel (56).

(9) The use of the impersonal it as in 'it is long since...' might be colloquial.
 yt xale be long here yt be recumpensyd ageyn (60), remembre yow
it hathe be a long season syn he had owt of you to helpe hym wyth (34).

The first citation in OED of the similar expression is dated as late as 1749.

Vocatives such as cosyn, madam, Modyr, Mastres, ser, Volentyne. 
Modyr, I besche yow...(81). Item, ser, on Saturday last past I spacke wyth my cosyn Gornay (94), good, trewe, and lovyng Volentyne, that ye take no such labure uppon yowe as to com more for that mater (80).

N.B. As for 'Volentyne' sec IV. STYLE.

Asseveration
for Goddes sake (63), Fore Goddys love (65), by God (83), blissed be God (93), fore serten Daubeney is dede, God asoyle hys soule (60), So God help me (53), I have nought trespassed ageyn noon of these iii. God knowith (1). In faythe (68), so mot I they (=thrive) (45).

10. Remnants of Earlier English

One may be impressed by the fact that the language of the Paston Letters and Modern English have much in common, but naturally not without earlier elements, some of which follow.

(1) The use of compound adverbs such as therfro, therfor, heroff, theroff, thereto, herwyth, therwith and therwythyle.

John Clement, berer heroff (=of this letter), can tell yow...(92). I tolde her also that but iffe she pleasyd yow that she wer never lyke to have peny theroff, for she canne nott dystreyne therfor, and as for yow, ye never receyvyd peny theroff (89), the prioure sent for Wymondham, and therwhyle we yede hom ageyn (7).

(2) 'An abundance of impersonal verbs is a mark of an early stage in a language (E. A. Abbott, A Shakespearian Grammar').

a. Withous it: Jon Hobbys tellith me that ye be seekly, whiche me lekith not to her (39), hym lyst (61), plesyth yow to weet...(49), hapede me (21), me semyth (10), me thynkithe (28), Me thynkys (68), me
A Joint Study of The Language of *The Paston Letters* (Masui) — 259 —

thynk (76), me thowt (10).

b. With it: *It liketh me evill to here*...(33), *it lusteth hym to do soo* (22), *Plesse it your good maistershep* to knowe...(9), *it fylle* in hys brayne to come to Norwyche (77). So *it fortuned that*...(88).

(3) Occasionally *that* is added to relatives, conjunctions and to an adverb *how*, with a conjunctival force.

the letture *whech that* ye sende me (80), *were that* I may be goten I schal dye (37), *after that* I herd these tydyingys...(11), *because that* he had not the keyes (30), *lesse that* he hathe ben ondoone (89), ye know *how that* I have putte myn trust in yow (19).

Pleonastic *as* once occurs after a relative *where*.

Wryten at Castere..., *where as* I wold not be at thyss tyme but for youre sake (45).

(4) Periphrastic construction: *'it is soo that'*, etc.

*it is soo that* my brothere is onpurveyed off monye (61), *iff it be soo that* ye be mysse-servyd there, I besech yowe...(75), as for hyr bewte, juge yow that when ye see hyr, *yf so be that* ye take the laubore (88).

As in the last example provisional *it* may be omitted.

(5) The earlier forms of Superlative (*on the lyghetest*) and Infinitive (*for to do* ; supposyng *to have dyeyd*) are already dealt with above.

B. **Structure of Clauses**

A simple sentence seldom occurs in the *Letters*. Sentences are made up of two or more clauses either in coordination, subordination or in correlation. Many of them are mixed or complex-compound sentences. Two passages are selected for analysis to show the ramified relation of the clauses. For this, compare further IV. STYLE.
Principal Cl. | Substantive Cl. | Adverbial & Attributive Cl.
--- | --- | ---
Also, modyr, I beseche yow | and (=if) my horse that was at leche-craft at the Hoft be not takyn up for the Kyngys hawkys.
that he may be had hom and kept in your plase. not to go owght to watyr nor no whedyr cllys.
but that the gat be shet. and he to be chasyd aftyr watyr wythin your plase.
and that he have as myche met as he may ete (62).

Principal Cl. | Attributive & Adverbial Cl.
--- | ---
And the grettest defaut etithy is mony, and som fren dys and neyborys to helpe; wherfore I beseche yow to sende me comfort, what money ye coude fynde the menys to get ore chevysche uppon suerte sufficient, ere uppon lylled to be in morgage ere yit solde, by lyklyod, yowre frenys and myn, kowde make uppon a schort warnyng;
and what peple and to sende me the hast worde in all as it is nedfull (57).

In the second example what money and what peple are in apposition to comfort, and the second infinitive object to sende is separated from its verb beseche by long subordinate clauses in between.

1. Coordination

(1) Clauses of a sentence are connected by conjunctions, and, but, for, or, either...or, neither...nor, and occasionally by such adverbs as nevertheless, (and) so. Sometimes the same connective occurs in succession.

your brothere and his felesshep stond in grete joparte at Cayster, and lakke vetayll; and Dawbeney and Berney be dedde, and diverse othere gretly hurt, and thei fayll gonnpowder and arrowes, and the
place sore brokyn wyth gônnes of the toder parte (56), I conceyve veryly he hath made prômys to do hese part that they shul be a-quytte; but I suppose he hath made non other promys ayens yow for the lyvelode, but he lokyth aftyre a gret brybe. But it is not for to trust hym veryly... (15), outhor ye gader shrewdly or ellis ye spend lewdly (33), I prayed hyre to se them, and soo at the laste she grauntyd me to see them, and so yisterdaye I sawe them (89).

(2) Coordination without connectives sometimes occurs. Emphasis is felt in some cases, while in other cases cause or reason is often suggested in one of the coordinated clauses.

he truste hym not, he wold not delyver hym noon (54), I dare not put yt in joparte, there be so many theves stereng (65). Sche is not abydyng ther sche ys now, hyr dwellyng is in London (88).

2. **Subordination**

Sub-clauses are divided into attributive, adverbial and substantive clauses.

(1) Attributive clauses are introduced by relative pronouns and relative adverbs, restrictive and continuative.

a. *That* is used most frequently of all the relatives, closely followed by *which*, in frequency.

he wull graunte them that be in the place here lyfes and ther goodes (56), that is the grettest helpe that ye may have (5), they begyn to fayle now in my gretest ned that evyr I was in (62).

For *that which*, etc., *that that* is used.

he was rytgh sory of *that that* was don (10), as for *that that* was left... (15).

Sometimes the antecedent of *that* is omitted.

God gyf me grase to do *that* may plese yow (41); ye may ver-ely know, by *that* youre unkel Will sayd (45).

*That*-clause may be continuative.

God send grase that he may do yow good servyse, *that* be ex-
tymacion is not lykelye (27), there is a man in Truntche hyght Palmere to, that hadde of yowre fadre certein londe (6).
b. Which refers to persons as well as to things. The Which also occurs, but less frequently.
suych othere fals shrewys the which wuld have thes materere born ought for there owyn plesere (42), send it me be my seyd ser-
vaunt, and myn herneys wyth it whyche I lefte at Llundun (27), everythyng the wych I was charged wyth (86).
Which may introduce continuative clauses.
the seyd furst Mychell was sone to on William Pool of Hull, whiche was a wurchepfull man (39), I undyrstand that he cannot, nere may, make no purvyans fore the e mark, the wyche caus-
ythe me to be rythgh hemy (65).
Which may be used attributively.
I receyved a letter from yow, in the wyche letter was viii d. wyth the whyche I schulde bye a peyer of slyppers (88).
c. Whos, whose and whom occur much less frequently. They usually in-
troduce clauses of additional statements. The nominative who occurs only in more or less stereotyped closing phrases.
evvere gremercy God and ye, who evere have yow and me in his gracious govenaunce (1), by the grace of God, whom (misused for who) have yow in hys kepyn (87), the seyd maner des-
sendid to Alise his dowtyr, hos estat I have (39), as to my Lady Pool, wyth hom I soynoned, that ye wil be...(22).
Who and whom are also used in general or indefinite sense.
who that doethe it I wyll paye (62), he is glad to schewe yow hem, or whom ye wol askynge with yow (12), Qhom God vysyteth, him he lovyth (44).
Compound relatives whoever, hoso, hosoever also occur.
therfor whoever sendys yow word that ..., they must geve yow anothyr reknyng (53), Telle yte here hoso wyll (16).
In the first example above, the pronominal correlative (they) occurs.
d. What and whatsoever are sporadic.
they tak distresys owt of menys howsys, horse or catell or what they wyll (46), they...do whatsoever they wyll in the con-
tre (46).

What is also used attributively.
I besche yow to sende me comfort, what money ye coude fynde to get...and what peple...yowre frendys and myn, kowde make uppon a schort warnyng (57).

e. Remarks
The antecedent is doubly restricted in the following.
my white wine, or ony of my wateris, or ony othere thyng that I have that is in youre awarde (70), on of them whyche is ballyd and callyd Wylliam Peny, whych is as goode a man as gothe on the erthe (52).
The absence of a relative in nominative is often observed after 'there is...' and once after 'he has...'
there was a thryfti woman come forby the watterye (16).
He hathe a chort grene gowne, and a chort musterdvelerys gowne, were never reysyd; and a chort bleu gowne that was reysyd (20).

In the second example above, both the absence and the presence of the relative are observed.
The absence of a relative as an object is also seen, but not so frequent as in Modern English.
ther was no woman in the world he lovyd so welle (30), the wysest I coude fynde here (1).
The relatives in the following may be pleonastic.
she knowyt not what ryght ne titell that ye have therin (35),
the bysschop...put here in rememberawns how sche was born,
wat kyn and freendys that sche had, and suld have mo (55).
f. As occurs frequently in the pattern 'as (so)...as', 'such...as' and also in 'such as' with an antecedent understood.
ye challe have as fyne as maye be made (41), ye have so Gret
love of the pepyll as ye have (29), in thys contre is no syche
stuffle as I sent to yow for (53), such as ye can not spede at
this tyme, let hem be sped as sone as ye may (33).

g. Relative adverbs used are when, there, where, and wheresoever. They
are used with or without antecedents.

the Sunday, when the seyd Brakley wend to have deyid (49).
Sche is not abydyng ther sche ys now (88), ye are a felaw in
Grays In, were I to was a felaw (18), wheresoever they may
gete them they schold dye (38).

Such compound relative adverbs as wherby, wherfor, wherein, whereof,
wherto are also used.

ye have sent me word but late, wherfor ye may have non an-
swer yet (36), my joyntore, wherto he is ibounde (22).

That is used after an antecedent denoting time, though it may be
omitted. When an antecedent is modified by such, as replaces that.

the day that Paston men wold not a sofferyd that (16). tomo-
or are the nextt day ye schall have anoder letter (24), tylle
suche tyme of yere as he was put owt therof (34).

Cf. that was the cause men wolde not axe hym the rentte (6).

(2) Adverbial clauses are introduced by conjunctions and conjunctonal
phrases. In accordance with the meaning expressed, they are divided
as follows. Pleonastic that, as in after that, because that, is already dealt
with. See Remnants of Earlier English (3).

a. Clauses of time are introduced by after (that), as, as soon as, er, ore
than, since (that), till (that), what time that, when (that), while (that).

I was maad bachylere ore than the letter cam (90), I schold
send yow word what tym that I schold procede (90). The seyd
Barow sayd to me if he com to London quil ye were there he
wold drynk wyth you (11).

b. Clauses of cause or reason are introduced by as, because (that), for
(that), for because, forasmuch as, inasmuch as, insomuch (as), now, that,
lesse.

he dar not ben avowyd for he is sore thret (42), for because
it was nye to the jentylman whýche weddyd hyr dowtyr
(88). he was rytgh sory hidderward, inasmeche as he had knowlche of yw before (10), how wel he hath ocupiid his tym now he hath had leyser (36), he wyl take a dysplesure wyth me that I send hym no mony (64). I am rytgh glad that my wyff is enythyng your favore or trust (95).

After the verb or verbal phrases of fearing, that and occasionally lesse occur.

I was in fere that it wold not have bene doo so hastyly withoute dangere (70), I fere lesse he wyl take a dysplesure wyth me (64).

c. Clauses of purpose are introduced by so as, so...that, so that, so, that: with simple subjunctive or with may.

telle hir how hit is with me, so as I may ben excused for thys tyme (19), beware that ye be so purveyd for that ye take no cold (81). I praye yow fynd the menys that my lord may have some resonable meane proyrd so that he and my lady may understand that... (53), so they overcome yow not with fors ne bosting... (39). I prey yow brenne this letter, that youre men ne non other man se it (12).

d. Clauses of result are introduced by in so much that, so that, so...that, so, such...that, that.

my lady wold be rytgh glad to have yow abought hyr at hyr labore, in so myche that she hathe axyd the questyon of dyvers gentyliwomen whedyr they thought that ye wold awayte on hyr...or nought (76), I ageynwarde have hadde so lytell leysere that I have not spedde bot fewe of yowre erendys (48), he hath sent for all his tenaunte from every place, and othere..., that there is than like to be the grettest multitude of pepill that came ther yet (56).

e. Clauses of condition are introduced by and, and if, as long as, but (that), but if, if (that), if...then, if...yet, in case, lesse than, save (that), saving that, so that, without (that): with subjunctive or indicative.

I had levere, and it pleasyd you, to be captenesse here than at
Castere (35), beolde hyr handys, for and if it be as it is tolde me, sche is dysposyd to be thyke (88), he wulle no more gad-yre yt but ye comand hym (60), In cas ye have pees send me word (39), it were best to porvaye one (=a horse) atte Camberag, lesse than ye canne gytte ony carceours from thens to Oxynforth (70). I wolde be most glad of any creature on lyve so that the mater myght growe to effect (80). This is a peyneful lyfe that we lede; I con not leve thus wythoute it be a gret displesure to Godde (54).

f. Clauses of concession or contrast are introduced by how, notwithstanding, though, what (somever), when (soever), where (soever), whereas, whether...or, whosomever; with subjunctive or indicative.

how corse so ever it be it makyth no matyr (87), notwithstanding Hew Awstyn and hys men hathe crakyd many a gret woord (46). what casse some ever hap (24). I thynke notte a mater happy, nore weell handelyd, nore poelykly dalte with, when it can never be fynysshyd wythowte an inconvenyence (83), whereas they wryet that they have my good wyll therin. savyng your reverence they falsly lye of it (53), whethyre I had goode tydyngys er ill, I take Gode to witnesse that I have don my devoyre as I wolde be don fore in case lyke (57).

g. Clauses of comparison are introduced by as...as, as...as though, than.

they wol not beleve me as weele as they woll do you (54), thow ye ben at London ye xul ben met wyth there as wele as thow ye were here (10), ye must seke som other remedy than ye do (37).

For other examples see Comparison (1) and (2).

h. Clauses of manner or degree are introduced by after, as.

ote rsuch of my frendes and servauntes as can avise yow aftir the mater requirith (33), I wol do as ye advyse me to (38), ye leid up mony in my cofirs every yere, as ye knowe (33).

(3) Substantive clauses are divided into object clauses, apposition clauses, predicate clauses and subject clauses.
a. Object clauses are introduced by *that*, *if* or *whether*, and interrogatives. The use of *that* is particularly frequent.

I desyir yow *that* [ye] wyll report aftyr my dethe *that* I took it upon my sowle at my dyng *that* that wyll that John Paston put in to be provyd was Syr John Fastolfys wyll (49), I dowte nott but *thatt* he shall do weell (77), I...often tymes inquryed of hym and he had mevyd the Kyng in these materys (27), I avyse you to enquere wysely *yf* ye canne gyte any more (45), I wol certyfye yow *how* I fryste felie in qweynants wyth hyr (88), ye shuld inquere *what* bribes or rewardes Edmond Clere toke of outlawed men (40), thei wost *ho* (misused for 'whom') I ment (10).

Object clauses occur after *think best* or *think strange*.

I *thynke best* that they be styll wyth yow (75), she *thynkyth* ryght *strange* *that* she may not have the profectys of Clyre ys place (35).

Cf. me thynke *it* were best to porvaye...(70), I took *it* upon my sowle at my dyng *that* that wyll that John Paston put in to be provyd was Syr John Fastolfys wyll (49).

A sentence in mixed construction is occasionally found.

Ye schall fynde them gentylmanly, comfortable felawes, and *that* they wol and dare abyde be there takelyng (52), I praye yow feele my Lady of Norffolkys dysposicion to me wardys, and *whether* she toke any dyspleasure at my langage...(69).

b. Apposition clauses are introduced by the same words as object clauses.

there is gret langage *that* it is lyke to be (48), it plese you for to send me worde *yf* my fadyr were at Norwiche...or no, and *how* the matyr dothe..., and *yf* ye sopose that it schall be brought abowte or no; and *how* ye fele my fadyr, *yf* he be wele wylyng therto or no (21), *where* or in *whom* the defawte of the breche ys. I can have no parfyte knowlage (84).
c. Predicate clauses are introduced by *that* and once *for that*.

my wyll is *that* ye sholde have youre holl xx li. ageyn (75). he askith myn avyse; whiche is *that* ye conforte my tennauntes and help hem til I come hom (36). The cheff cause that I wryght to you for at thys season is *for that* I undyrstand that my lady wold be ryght glad to have yow abought hyr at hyr labore (76).

d. Subject clauses occur in the pattern 'it is...that...' with a provisiona1 subject *it*.

*It* is myn Lord Chancelere full inthenthe *that* ye schuld do so (24). *It* were welle do *that* ye sent a letter to hyr howe ye do (30).

Periphrastic construction for emphasis also occurs.

*It* is but a sympill oke *that* is cut down at the firste stroke (78), *it* be not on *that* see *that* they ask the dwte for (46).

The pattern 'it is...that...' occurs also in the quasi-impersonal construction: 'it is said that...', 'it is talked how...', etc.

*It is seyd that* he schold com hyddyre (38), *it is noyced here that* my Lord of Norfolk hathe taken partye in thes mater (37). *It is talkyd here howe that* ye and Howard schuld a strevyn to-gyddyre (27).

Cf. And whanne he come, the mastere badde hym, 'Welcom. traitour', as *men say* (14), *they sey* ye are a good gille (40).

e. Remarks

Occasionally two substantive clauses occur in apposition.

I pray you send me word *how* ye wull that I be démened, *wheder* ye wull that [I] abide at Caystere or come to you to London (42). I avyse you for to be ware *that* ye kepe wysly youre wrytyngys that ben of charge, *that* it com not in here handys that may hurt you heraftere (45).

When two substantive clauses are connected by *and* or *but*, conjunction *that* is usually repeated, though the first *that* may be omitted (as in the last example).
I pray yow *that* ye wyl vowchesave to don bye for me... and *that* ye wille do byen... (8). I know well *that* I may not askape but *that* I must dye in hast (49), telle Richard Calle he sent me viii nobills in goold for v mark, and *that*...I had nevir so moch gold of hym at onys (33).

Conjunction *that* is occasionally omitted after reporting verbs (e.g. *say, tell*), *hope*-verbs (e.g. *pray, wold*), *know*-verbs (e.g. *see, understand*), *think*-verbs (e.g. *suppose, trust*), etc. This is especially frequent after *say*. When these verbs occur in succession in such a way as 'the bysschop sayd *that* he supposyd *that*... (55)', the first *that* tends to be dropped.

he seid he wuld *that* all thyng were wele (42). I promyse yow your folk thynk *that* ye have forgetyn hem (49).

Occasionally both *that's* are omitted.

I suppose they deeme we be not ensuryd together (54). I told hym I wost wele he sett never therupon...(10).

When a subordinate-substantive clause contains an *if*-clause, within, some confusion occurs as regards *that*. It may deserve some notice, however, that the *if*-clause always precedes.

I prey you *if* ye tary longe at London *that* it wil plese you to sende for me (93) [cf. sche proyfryd me, if ye wold, *that* I xuld abydyn in this town (11)], Thomas Elys of Norwych...seyd... *that* *yf* my Lord of Suffolk nede a c men he wold purvey hym therof (35), he lete hem playnly wyte *that* *yf* ye...toke any dystresse in Drayton, they wold..., *and* *yf* thay cannot take the valew therof there, *that then* they wyll do breke youre tenauntys howsys (35).

Conjunction *that* which introduces apposition and subject clauses are usually retained, but not without some exceptions.

I sent yow word ye shuld inquere...(40). It was told me ye sent hym a letter (30). It is god a lord take sad cowncell (39).

*That* in the following would be redundant.
sende me worde wat mony and men ye thynke that I am lyke
to get (57), suche a deed as he supposyd that wold don ease
in prevyng of the tytyll (34).

That is occasionally used as a substitute instead of repeating the
previous conjunction or conjunctive adverb.

yf my Lord of Norffolk wolld take uppon hym for you, and
that he may have a comyssyon for to enquere of such ryottys
.... that then all the contray wyll...(43). if this myght...put
hym in remembrauns...hough he hath leved in idelnes, and that
he could for this eschewe to do so heraftir, it myght fortune
for his best (33).

3. Correlation

Examples of correlation such as so...so, that...how that, which are
common in earlier English, do not occur in the Paston Letters. A single
unique case of correlation is the pattern this...that (how), this serving
as a provisional for that- or how-clauses. That may be omitted (as in
the last example).

thys I ensure yow, that they that be wythin have no worse reste
than I have (57), yowr answere may be thys, how the Kyng
hathe seyd (52), thys I promyssse yow, ye schall not be so longe
ayen withought a byll (66).

Cf. This with to-infinitive: thys I thynk to do when I com to
London, to spek wyth my Lord Chamberlyen (92).

For the...the, see Comparison (2). For either...or, neither...nor, see
Coordination (1). and for whoever...they, so...that, if...then (yet), whether
...or, see Subordination (1) and (2).

III. VOCABULARY AND IDIOMS

"Rightly interpreted," writes H. C. Wyld, "language is a mirror of
the minds and manners of those who speak it." The language of the-
Paston Letters may endorse this statement in that it consists of those words and idioms which may in the letters reflect a legal, manorial and family life and thought centring around a fifteenth century rising landowner in Norfolk.

The following are those which may at the same time be characteristic of general fifteenth century English vocabulary and idioms, the distribution of which, as Professor Norman Davis says, is “very imperfectly known”.

A. Words and Idioms — Daily, Social, Religious, Legal, etc.

1. Daily Life

(1) Clothing and Ornaments

a. Cloth: chamlett (=camlet) 62, 64. frese (=frieze: a kind of coarse woollen cloth) 8. hose cloth (=hose-cloth) 64, 87. carsey (=kersey) 64. lyere (=lyre: originally, the name of a town now Lire or Liere; certain kinds of cloth) 4. mustyrdevyllers (a kind of mixed grey woolen cloth much used in the 14th and the 15th cent.) 4, 20. puke (a superior kind of woollen cloth) 64. scarlette (a kind of rich cloth) 5.

b. Dresses and Ornaments: bonet 62, 64. doblet 40. gyrdyl 4, 5. stomechere (=stomacher: a kind of waistcoat worn by men) 87. tepet (=tipet: a kind of garment) 40, 64. gold (gold thread) 3. perle 50. ryban (riband) 64.

c. Others: bage 90. bare (threadbare) 20 (1483) cf. Chaucer Prol. 260 thredbare. beseyn (=p. p.; dressed) 50. boredyre (=to border; to broider) 64 (1585). happe (=to hap: to cover for warmth) 40. lacy (a string.) 64. male (=mail: a bag, pack, or wallet) 40. murry (=murrey: a colour like that of mulberry) 20, 62, 64. patcyns (=patten) 64. [pypys] (=pipes: a tube or roll on which thread was wound) 3. poynntys (=points: tagged laces for attaching

1) The Language of the Pastons, p. 132.
2) The word in italics is the first citation in the OED.
3) The number in the parentheses indicates the year of the first citation in the OED.
4) The word shown in the brackets indicates the sole citation in the OED.
hose) 64. reysyd [(< to raise; to bring (the nap of cloth))] 20. russette (of a reddish-brown colour; in the 15th and the 16th cent. usually of cloth) 14. syde (long) 20. trossing (=trussing) 46. worsted (from the name of a parish in Norfolk, now written Worstead) 40, 63. cf. worsted man 63.

(2) Food and Drinking

a. Food: almandys 8. barly 46, 74. malt 33, 74. mestlyon (=maslin: mixed grain, esp. rye mixed with wheat) 94. sugyre 8.

b. Drinking: cop-schotyn (=cup-shotted: intoxicated) 52. malmesey (a strong sweet wine) 64. tounne (=to tun; to put into or store in a tun) 81.

c. Others: botell 73. kasket 62. fyggyys (=figs) 88. flakons (=flagons: a large bottle) 74 (1470—85). junkerys (a banquet or feast) 9. pewtere 43. pyke (=pike) 86. rowndlet 63. runlet 64. sponys (=spoons) 20. stewes (=stews: a pond or tank in which fish are kept) 3, 86 cf. Chaucer Prol. 350 many a luce in stuwe.

(3) Building and Furniture

a. Building: bakhous 46. botry (=buttery) 25. inventory 74. logge (=lodge) 42, 43. placys of wurschip (a good house) 25.

b. Furniture: cofirs 33, 62. fether beddes 42. moveabell godys (=mov-able goods) 45.

(4) Disease and Medicine


b. Medicine: millefolle (=milfoil) 70. mint 70. salve 72. triacle (=treacle: a kind of salve) 89.

c. Others: browke (=to brook: to digest) 70. (1598 OED last). dressid [(< to dress: to treat (a wounded man or his wounds) with remedies] 61. lechecrafte (=leechcraft: the art of healing; medical science) 62. potecarie (=pothecary) 89.
(5) Horse
carte (to work with a cart) 30. ferrore (=farrier: a shoeing-smith) 30. to horse (to horseback) 77. horse litter (=horse-litter) 77. plowe ware (=plough-ware: beasts employed in ploughing) 35. [splayyed] (< to splay: to injury in the shoulder muscles) 30.

(6) Recreation: hunting, tournament, pageant, game, etc.
dysgysynggys (=disguisings: a mask or masquerade) 25 (1481—90). dysportys 25. goshawk 68. hawke 69. jostys of pese (=joust of peace) 50. jostyd (<to joust) 50. pagentys (=pageants)50. sports 25. pleyng at the tabyllys (=tables: formerly the ordinary name of Backgammon. Obs. since c1750. Chiefly in phr. to play at (the) tables) 25. terssel (=tiercel) 68. tornay (=tourney) 49. torney (=to tourney) 50.

(7) Miscellaneous
bequeth (=to bequeath) 95. beset (to bestow or give in marriage) 12. browt up (<to bring up: to rear from childhood) 36 (1483). cartyd (<to cart) 46. systern (=cistern)46. comouns (=commons: provisions provided for a community or company in common) 87. cred (=to crowd: to push in a wheel-barrow or hand-cart) 4. journay (=journey: particular task) 21. matramony 55. pedgre 39. purvey (=to purvey: to provide) 11, 30, 52, 78. quykyng (<to quicken: of a female, to reach the stage of pregnancy) 66 (1530). watteryng (a place where horses and cattle are taken to drink) 16 (1578 OED sole quotation).

2. Social Life

(1) Patronage and Manor
a. Patronage: lorchepe (=lordship: the protection given by a lord) 34, 41. maystyreschepe (=mastership) 60.
b. Manor: fermour (=farmer: one who undertakes the collection of taxes, revenues, rent, etc.) 46, 93. feepees (=feoffees: the person to whom a freehold estate in land is conveyed by a feoffment) 34 (1542—3). rentte 6.
(2) Persons

The *Paston Letters* reveal the Pastons in a great variety of relations, friendly or hostile, with their neighbours and officials. The following are appellations of those persons.


b. Blood-relations and Intimate friends: babees (=babes: a young child) 93. broderhood 28. faderhood 27. felaschep 8, 38. gille (=gill) 40. godewyf (=goodwife) 11. kyn and frenddys 55. ken and servantis 36. kynysman 18. lytyll man (child) 50. lover (friend) 85. moder-hode 22, 85. Voluntyn (=valentine: a sweet-heart, lover) 79, 80 Margery Brews's letters. weell-wyller (one who bears good will or wishes well, very frequently used from 1450 to 1700, since then largely superseded by Well-wisher) 9, 63.

c. Professional persons: [brasere] (=braser, *-zier*: one who works in brass) 42. *creansyr* (=creancer: a guardian, tutor: esp. at school or college) 87, 88. constablys 42. counterrollere (=controller: a household officer) 28. man of the lawe 6. myller 93. sewere (an attendant at a meal who superintended the arrangement of the table) 28. taylore 92.

d. Contemptible or Inferior persons: brawlere (a quarrelsome wrangling fellow) 52. brethele (a worthless fellow, good-for-nothing) 55 (1469 OED last). brothell 10. charl (=churl: base fellow) 7, 64. doggeboltes (=dogbolts: contemptible fellow) 42. *robbere of the cherech* 43. *sanz deners* (=sans deners: a penniless person) 59.

(3) Business

a. Money: arreragys (=arrearages: an amount overdue, an outstanding or unpaid sum) 89. cheysaunce (=chevisance: raising of money by some expedient, esp. on some surety or pledge) 27, 47. chevyche (=to chevise: to raise money, borrow) 57. comyth...in (=to come in: to come into hand as revenue or receipts) 32 (1558). docaty (=ducats) 72. escutys (=escus: older form of écu = a French silver coin = the English 'crown') 57 (1663). marc (=mark) 20, 71. nobelys (a former English gold coin) 5, 87. owthe of detys 64. parcelles (a small portion, instalment of a sum of money) 51. pesis (a piece of money) 40 (1575). plate (a silver coin) 88. riall (a gold coin formerly current in England, first issued by Edward IV in 1465) 71 (1473). sette...to morgage (=to set to morgage) 60. sylver (money) 22, 23. wagys 49, 59. wage (=to wage) 33.

b. Unit: boshel 62. comb (a dry measure of capacity, equal to four bushels) 46. elne (=ell: a measure of length) 40, 64. nayle (a measure of length for cloth) 40. ton 21. troy weight (the standard system of weights used for the precious metals and stones) 20.

c. Negotiation: to wham...gyve...credenye (=to give credence to) 2, 22. to wham...gyve feith (=to give faith cf. L. fidem dare) 2 (1558). make your word god [=to make one's word good: to fulfil, perform (a promise, etc.)] 39 (1536). thorwe (=thorough: after the vb. to be, indicating settlement) 6 (1467).

d. Others: breve [to enter in books of account; make up (accounts)] 25 (OED last). bowth and sold (<to buy and sell) 36. coutirvale (= to countervail: to be equivalent to in value) 51. ferdying wurth 7. ryotesly (extravagantly) 28 (1540). valew of on grote (a type of expressing worthless) 36. cf. the value of a grote. Langland 1362.

(4) Social Uneasiness and Disturbance

a. Quarrel and Assault: asaut and affray 7. choppyng (<to chop: to bandy words, to answer back) 68 (1581). entren...upon (=to enter on. upon; to begin an attack upon) 8 (1490). face (to confront with assurance or impudence) 37. fray (to make an attack upon) 37.
calkestokke (=kale-stock: the stout stem of a kale-plant, used as an abusive word) 64. to make a faze 33. obloquy (abuse or detraction as it affects the person spoken against) 58. pyked many quarrellys to (<to pick a quarrel with, to: to seek and find an occasion of a quarrel) 63, 67.

b. Uneasiness: noyse (rumour) 1,42. noyced (<to noise) 37. noysyngly
1. qwesye (=queasy; troublous) 61. trowblews (=troubious) 19, 56.

(5) Miscellaneous
causey (a raised way formed on a mound, across a hollow, esp. low wet ground) 81. colored under (<to colour under: to exhibit in a false light) 33. conventicles (a meeting) 56.

3. Religious Life

(1) Church
ile (=aisle) 67. closett (a pew in the chapel) 17. college (a community or corporation of clergy living together on a foundation for religious service) 45. the court of Rome (the papal Curia) 1. Holy Cherche 1. parklos (=parclose: a screen or railing in a church) 17. seintwarye (=sanctuary) 51.

(2) Rite and Festival
eveson (=evensong) 9, 17. howsyllyd (<to housel: to administer the Communion or Eucharist to) 49. levacion (the lifting up of the Host for the adoration of the people) 7. sakering (the consecrated elements) 7.

(3) Life and Death
wham God assole (=God assoil: an ejaculatory prayer for the departed. cf. OF. que Dieu assoille ! L. quem Deus absolvat !) 45, 91. God have hys sowle 75. passyd to God (<to pass to God: to die) 91.

(4) Miscellaneous
4. Legal Life

(1) Lawcourts and Justices
   aquitell (=acquittal; release) 15. adnulled (<to annul; to render void in law) 1. arreyned (<to arraign; to charge with fault) 14. assysis (=assizes) 38. dystreyned (<to restrain) 46. 89. hundred (court) 35. endyted (<to indict) 37, 45. inditements 15. keptid on day (<to keep a day; to hold a manor court) 36. kepe the coort 37, 41. cesciouns (=sessions) 38. withsette (=to withset; to seize in compensation for a debt) 6.

(2) Officers and Persons concerning the law
   bayly (bailiff) 35, 93. schanselere 55. coronere 45. eschetore 24. executryse (executrix) 89. shereff (=sheriff) 15, 41. suertees (=sureties; a bail) 22. undere sheve (=under-sheriff) 14, 41.

(3) Documents
   comune seal (=common seal) 2. corte rolle (the roll or record kept in connexion with a manorial court) 27. instrument (a formal legal document whereby a right is created or confirmed) 1, 2. (1483) heyre determyner (=oyer and determiner; a commission formerly directed to the king's Judges, Serjeants, etc.) 37. supplicacyon (a written or formal petition) 23.

(4) Guilt and Penalty
   a. Guilt: dissesyd (<to disseise, -ize; to put out of actual seisin or possession) 10. rensockyd 43. tresspassid 1.
   b. Penalty: exe (=ax, axe; the headsman's ax) 14. to bryng ...to... preson 46. comytyd to Flet 29. deleyved owt of the Flet 29. heyd (<to head) 63. in payne of there lyvys 58. take and arest 42.

(5) Estates
   aportynantys (=appurtenances) 24. attornment (the transference of his homage and service by a tenant to a new feudal lord) 92 (15-31). intytill [=to entitle; to furnish (a person) with a 'title' to an estate] 24 (1468). entre (=entry; the actual taking possession of lands) 10 (1491). in fee symple (in absolute possession) 83. joynture
12. relees (the act of conveying an estate to another) 34. tayle
(the limitation of a freehold estate to a person) 12.

(6) Miscellaneous
entre into (=to enter in: to take possession) 13. 36 (1523).
erroneous (faulty in law) 14 (1495). ententures (=indentures: a deed
between two or more parties with mutual covenants) 12. 70.
insurrections (the action of rising in arms or open resistance) 56.

5. Military and Nautical

(1) Weapons
bombardys (the earliest kind of cannon) 46. chaseveleyns (a kind
of weapon) 47. crosse bowis 8. 52. gleves (=glaves: a lance) 93. hand
 Gunnys 8. ordinance (engines for discharging missiles) 8. 56. polle-axis
(=pole-axes, poleaxes: a battle-ax) 8. qwarellys (=quarrels) 53.
58. takelyng (weapons) 52 (1529). wyfeles (a spear) 9 (c1460
OED last). wyndace (=windasses: a winch-like contrivance used for
bending a cross-bow) 8.

(2) Nautical
barge 71. 88. capteyn 14. carvellis (the ordinary name, from the
15th to the 17th c., of a somewhat small, light, and fast ship) 21
(1462). gale 64. grete shippe (a ship-of-war) 14. 21. maister
(the captain of a merchant vessel) 14. sayle (sailing-vessels) 21.
spynner (=earliest form of pinnace) 14.

(3) Miscellaneous
assege (a siege) 57. bolwerkys (=bulwar ks) 52. captenesse 35. defensible
(defensive) 9 (1545). defensabylly 32 (1465). horse (horse
soldiers) 21 (1548). jack (padded or plated leather jacket) 8. 46.
legge harneyse 14. lye in awayte (=to lie in await) 37. mayled
(armed with mail) 14 (1596). manned [<to man: to furnish (a fort.
ship, etc) with a force to serve or defend it] 21. wacche and ward
56. wonne the feld (=to win the field) 26.
B. Idiomatic Words and Expressions

1. Rhetorical Expressions

All members of the Pastons from time to time use rhetorical expressions in their letters. Especially Margaret often shows a command of metaphors and proverbs. On the other hand, Agnes is inclined to employ didactic injunctions which she seems to have heard at church.

(1) Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions

Agnes: In lityl bysynes lyeth myche reste. 44.
Margaret: Ye xall have best chepe and best choyse of Hayis wyf. 8.
Oftyn rape rewth. 70.
Jonn III: I ecte lyek an horse of purpose to ecte yow owte at the dorys. 53. fere ice, fer fro hert. 68.
Edmond II: Poverte partys feleschep. 64.
J. Damme: There con they do best, and best chep.
E. Brews: It is but a sympill oke that [is] cut down at the first stroke. 78.

(2) Rhetorical and Figurative Expressions

Agnes: This world is but a thoroughfare, and ful of woo. 44. Qhom God vysyteth, him he lovyth. 44.
John I: As a drane amonges bees whech labour for gaderyng hony in the feldes. 33.
John II: Wylliam Peny, whiche is as good a man as gothe on the erthe. 52 Idelnesse ledythe yowre reyne. 69. As weell as Bernard knewe hys sheeld. 72.
John III: I shold wryght how ofte the wynd changyth. 66. I prey yow send me some tydyingys howgh the wold gothe. 68.
Th. Daverse: My Lady Anne P. lappc, as white as whales bon. 47.

(3) Books and Literature

John II: Good malt ale, ho ho ! 46. the Byble. 52. I am as he that scythe, 'Come hyddre, John my men'. 71.
Th. Davarse: Ovyde De Arte Amandi 47. Ovide De Remedio ibid.
E. Brews: Uppon Fryday is Sent Volentynes Day, and every brydde
chesyth hym a make. 78.
J. Whetley: playd Herrod in Corpus Crysty play 86.

(4) Dialectal words

a doo (=ado: to do) 33. and (than) 30. askape (to escape) 33, 61.
doolis (=dools, doles; a boundary or landmark) 6. mykyle (much) 60.
owle (to acquire, collect) 17 (1542 OED first, but does not record
this meaning). plawnchere (a floor) 8. rippled (<to ripple: to scratch
slightly) 7. spere (=to spear: to put a question or questions; to
ask) 53.

C. Peculiar Phrases

1. Noun-Idioms

feith and credence 2. by hummys and by hays 53. empty hed 92 cf.
empty headed OED first 1650. hey tyme (=high time) 23. ever on
man (=one man; the same, constant man) 23. scherewd turne (a
mischievous act) 18.

2. Adjective-Idioms

evvyll dysposyd 67. evyll payd(displeased) 30. well dysposyd 24, 76.

3. Verb-Idioms

to attend upon 7 (1591). [fery over] (=to ferry over: to pass
over) 81. wherupon...harpyd (=to harp on or upon: to dwell weari-
somely upon in speech or writing) 77 (1562). see for (to provide for)
33 (1548). se over (to peruse) 33 (1490). see to (to take special care
about) 33 (1478). waytyng upon (<to wait upon) 13 (1509-10). cast
...calvys (=to cast calves: seems to be simply a jocular expression
for 'to lose parts') 53. daunce attendaunce [to wait (upon a person)
with assiduous attention and ready obsequiousness] 75 (1522). have
...myster (to be in straits or in necessity) 51 (1567 OED last). ledde
uss a dawnce (=to lead a person a dance: to lead him in a wearyng,
perplexing course) 77 (a 1529; see Norman Davis, LP, p.136.) make...
awaunte (=to make avaunt: to boast) 37. It makyth no matyr (It
is of no consequence or importance.) 87 (1478). toke...my crommys (=to take one's crumbs: to 'pick up' or recover strength or health) 73 (1588). bereth hire an hand (=to bear on hand: to accuse, blame) 12, 54. fond...no bony in (=to find bones in: to make difficulty) 23. set...upon the hone [to sharpen (a person) up] 29.

4. Adverb-Idioms

now last (recently) 33. [hys unwarys] (=his unwares: without his knowledge) 52. wel and discreetly 39.

5. Preposition-Idioms

at the clokke 21. of the clok 24, 77. on...last passed (last past, also Sc. last by past, last was=last) 7, 39, 94. on...last was 4, 57. by colour of (under the mask or alleged authority of) 9. in cownsayle 8, 45. of custome 7. to ther porys (=to one's power) 29, 83.

IV. STYLE

Though the Paston letters are based on the traditional epistolary frame, especially in beginning and end, it is remarkable that "most of the writers [of the letters] now and again show a real sense of style, and can turn a graceful or a telling phrase,"¹ and what is more remarkable, "the language is manifestly the speech of the time, plain and direct, only organized and sometimes heightened a little for the written page."² In close connection with the preceding chapter on vocabulary and idioms, Professor Norman Davis's above statement must now be borne in mind. It is the aspect of the epistolary style of the Pastons that first strikes us, but the close and interested reading of the letters may reveal that there are stylistic varieties among the writers which show differences of personal temperaments in accordance with the varying situations and also stylistic characteristics of the prose used, not to mention the change of tones according to the situation and the social status of the persons.

¹) The Language of the Pastons, p. 136.
²) Ibid., p. 137.
to whom the letters are written. In the following pages we are going to
treat in brief some aspects of the style, centering around (1) epistolary
formulas, (2) characteristics of prose, and (3) personal styles:

1. Epistolary formulas

A. The forms of address are by and large traditional; however, there
are observed slight differences from writer to writer, especially in
letters from wife to husband, from father to son, or vice versa.

(1) From wife to husband: (courteous)

'Rygth worshipfull husband, I recomaund me to yow'...(7)

'Right reverent and worshipfull ser, in my moste humble wice I rec-
omaunde me unto yow as lowly as I can...'...(93)

(2) From husband to wife: (blunt without respectful address)

I recomand me to yow...(39)

Compare, however: 'Myn owne dere sovrecyn lady, I recomaund me
to yow....(40) [John Paston I to Margaret Paston
--humorous]

(3) From son to father: (extremely courteous)

'Most reverent and worcheseful fadyre, I rekomaund me hertylye,
and submytt me lowely to yowre good faderhood, besechyng yow
for cheryte of yowre dayly blyssyng.' (27)

(4) From brother: (friendly)

'Rythe willbelovyd broder, I recomand me to yow...' (24)

Remarks:

1) John Paston III always uses courteous address and words for
his mother, whereas John Paston II, whose informal temperament
may be reflected in his letters, employs informal expressions like
'Modre' (57) , entering directly into the gist of the letter.

2) Formulas between friends or acquaintances make little or no
difference, except the forms of address, which when used for
superiors are 'lord', while, between equals, 'mayster' or 'cosyn'.

B. Complimentary closes:

(1) Simple forms: (generally)

'Your Jon Paston' (39) ; 'By yowyrs M.P.' (29)
(2) From son to parent: (courteous)

'Be you're servaunt and eldere sone, John Paston' (27)
'Your sone and humbyll servaunt, J. Paston the yonger' (50)

(3) From Margery Brews to her lover:

'Be your own M.B.' (79); 'Be your Voluntyne, Mergery Brews' (80)

Remarks: Margery Brews's letter to her lover John Paston III
begins with such a smilingly respectful address as:

'Ryght wurschypffull and welebelowyd Volentyne, in my moste
umble wyse I recomande me unto yowe, &' (80)

N. B. For 'Volentyne' see III. Vocabulary and Idioms.

2. Characteristics of prose

A. General characteristics

Professor Norman Davis winds up his article: The Language of the
Pastons by stating: "We need not look to devotional treatises for the
models of all competent narrative or lucid exposition, or of the sim-
ple, moving expression of true feeling, when men and women of no
extraordinary talents could so skilfully command 'the comyn termes
that be dayli vsed.' So is Margaret Paston when she writes to John
Paston II her sone: '...me thynke be the letter that ye sent me be
Robeyn that ye thynke that I xuld wryte to yow fabyls and ymag-
nacyons. But I do not soo; I have wrytyn as yt have be enformed
me, and wulle do.' (60). This admonitory statement of Margaret's
may well show the nature and character of the prose of the Paston
letters, plain, direct and matter-of-fact, in a word, practical. Margaret
Paston's letter which follows may exemplify the prose of "the sim-
ple, moving expression of true feeling":

And whanne Gloys was ayenst Wymondham, he seid thus: 'Covere
thy heed!' And Gloys seid ageyn, 'So I shall for the.' And Whanne
Gloys was forther passed by the space of iii or iiiii strede,
Wymondham drew owt his dagger and seid, 'Shalt thow so, knave?' And
therwith Gloys turned hym, and drewe owt his dagger and
defendet hym, fleyng into my moderis place; and Wymondham and
his man Hawys kest stonys and dreve Gloys into my moderis place.
and Hawys folwyd into my moderis place and kest a ston as meche as a forthyng lof into the halle after Gloyys, and than ran owt of the place ageyn. And Gloyys folwyd owt and stod wythowt the gate, and thanne Wymondham called Gloyys thef and seid he shuld dye, and Gloyys seid he lyed and called hym charl, and bad hym come hym self or ell the best man he hadde, and Gloyys wold answere hym on for on. And thanne Haweys ran into Wymondhams place and feched a sperre and a swerd, and toke his maister his swerd. And wyth the noise of this asaut and affray my modir and I come owt of the chirche from the sakeryng, and I bad Gloyys go into my moderys place ageyn, and so he dede. And thanne Wymondham called my, moder and me strong hores, and seid the Pastons and alle her kyn were /.../ seid he lyed, knave and charl as he was. And he had meche large langage, as ye shall knowe herafter by mowthe. (7)

A point of linguistic interest here is the use of parataxical construction by means of 'and' which serves to pile up fact on fact almost endlessly. This kind of construction is one of the most salient features of the language of the Paston letters due to dictation, which, however, often tends to degenerate into a slipshod style as may be the case with women writers of the letters.

Another point is the use of spoken language, which may be detected in the following:

I praye you see to the god governaunce of my housold and guydyng of other thynge touchyng my profite, and that ye, with Daubeney and Richard Calle, and with other such of my frendes and servauntas as can avise yow aftir the mater requirith, wekely take a sad comunicacion of such thynge as be for to do, or oftenner and nede be; takyng avise of the master and of the viker and Ser Jamis in that is for to say, as well for provision of stuffe for myn howsold as for the gaderyng of the revenue of my livelode or greynes, or for settyng a werk of my servauntes and for the more poletik meane of sellyng and cariing of my
malt, and for all other thynges necessari for to be do; so that whanne I come home I have not an excuse, seying that ye spoke to my servauntes and that Daubeney and Calle exkuse hem that thei were so besy thei myght not attende; for I woll have my mater so guided that if on man may not attende, another shall be comand-id to do it, and if my servauntes faile I had lever wage some other man for a jorny or a season thanne my mater shuld be onsped. (33)

An analysis of the above construction which is shown in the following diagram may help to understand the kind of prose often met with in the Letters:

```
Principal clause
  N. Phrase
  N. Clause
  Adv. Phr.
      Adv. Phr.
      Adv. Cl.
        Adj. Phr.
        N. Cl.
        Adv. Cl.
          Adv. Cl.
          Adv. Cl.
```

This kind of structure is just the reverse of the so-called 'periodic sentence' which is arranged in stately rhetorical formal discourse; instead, as shown roughly in the above diagram, the passage illustrated above reveals striking features of ramification which may suggest a more or less logical development of ideas as they occur to the letter-writers when writing, with the result that a fragmentary idea or notion may be implemented successively by another fragmentary phrase or clause without having recourse to what the sentence first begins with. Such ramified sentences often crop up in John Paston I and II's
letters. This sort of movement of the prose may reflect that of the spoken language. Though general characteristics of the prose may fairly clearly be observed, they are not as strong as to enable us to discriminate the personal syntax of letter-writers.

B. Statistics and survey of the whole words used in the Paston Letters with special reference to their French or Latin origin.

We obtained the following tables 1—8 by making a statistical observation of the words of Latin and French origin against the whole words which appeared in the Letters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NAMES / LET. NOS / WHOLE WORDS / Fr. &amp; L. WORDS / %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John I</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John II</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John II</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John II</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John III</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Joint Study of The Language of *The Paston Letters* (Masui) — 287 —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>John III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agnes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Margaret</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remarks:

1) Table 1 shows statistics and ratio of all the words against French and Latin words in origin in four letters of John Paston I. Accordingly, four letters are selected from the rest of the letter-writers.

2) Tables 2 and 5 show letters from son to mother.

3) Table 3 shows letters from son to father.

4) Tables 4 and 6 show letters from brother to brother.

A glance at the above tables shows that men-writers employ words of French and Latin origin more frequently than women-writers, i.e. more than 10%, whereas women-writers use these loan words less than 10%, with a single exception of Agnes (Let. 3: 14.2%). This is very interesting in that a fondness of native words may be seen on the part of women whose vista of life is conservative and seldom extends beyond their native province, while on the other hand a general predilection for words of French or Latin origin which will often express abstract ideas may be perceived on the part of men-writers.
3. **Personal styles**

Nothing is so personal or private as letters, whether they are of information, business, observation, impression or feeling. This private character of letters may also be true of the Paston Letters. As indeed Professor Davis says in the Introduction to his Edition, "the prevailing tone is that of good speech," so we may through reading catch the inflexions of the living voice, its rhythms and tones, arising out of the context. "Men cut large thongs here out of other men's leather...we beat the bushes and other men have the birds...Haste reweth...which is to my heart a very spear." This is the unmistakable voice of Margaret Paston. "This worlde is but a thoroughfare, and ful of woo; and whan we departe therfro, righth noughtgh bere wyth us but oure dedys and ylle. And ther knoweth no man how soon Good woll clepe hym, and therfor it is good for every creature to be redy". This is a religious echo of Agnes Paston who must often have heard such admonition from the pulpit. Every person has his own voice. Most impressive in this respect may be the letters of John Paston I, all of which are written to his wife Margaret. They may reveal his exact and fastidious and yet somewhat reserved nature which sounds even rigorous on some occasion: To take an example:

It liketh me evill to here that my prestes and pore men be onpaiid, and that no mony sent to me more thanne x mark be Berney of alle this season. And yet therof telle Richard Calle he sent me viii nobills in goold for v mark, and that as long as gold was bettir payment thanne silver I had nevir so much gold of hym at onys; and telle hym that I woll nat that he shall kepe that use, for I trowe my tenauntes have but litell gold to pay.  

(33)

His reserved tone towards his son John Paston II's loose life is sometimes tinged with a touch of bitterness as in the following letter to Margaret:

Item, where ye desire me that I shuld take your sone to grase I woll for your sake do the bettir, and will ye knowe that he shall not be so oute of my favour that I will suffir hym to mischefe
without be eftsones his owne defaut...Nevirthelesse, as for your house and myne, I purpose not he shall come there, ner be my will non other, but if he can do more thane loke foorth and make a fase and countenauns... (33)

However, it is worth noticing that John Paston I, though bitter and uncompromising in some cases, has a humane disposition which shows him not without a sense of humour and a consciousness of language.

1) (tone of praise to his wife):

...and in god feyth ye aqytyt yow ryght wel and discretly, and hertyly to yowr wurchef and myn and to the shame of your adversariis. (39)

2) (jocund temperament, word-play, and doggerel rhyme):

Item, I pray yow remembir and rede often my bille of erandes and this lettir till it be don, and all such maters or articles as ye spede herof, crosse hem that ye may knowe hem from tho that be not sped; and send me answere of your good speed.... Though I write right certeynly, if ye loke hem lightly and see hem seld thei shall sone be forgete.

Item, I shall telle yow a tale:
Pampyng and I have piked your male,
and taken out pesis v,
for upon trust of Calles promise we sone onthryve.

............................................................ (40)

3) (broad humour):

Myn owne dere sovereyn lady, I recomaund me to yow, and thank yow of the gret chere that ye mad me here, to my gret cost and charge and labour. (ibid.)

4) (tenderness for his wife)

Jon Hobbys tellith me that ye be seekly, whech me lekith not to here; praying yow hartyly that ye take what may do yowre eese and spare not, and in any wyse take no thowth ne to mocch labor for thes materes, ne set it not so to yowr hert that ye fare the wers for it. (39)
Next come the representative women writers of the letters in the Pastons, that is, Agnes Paston and Margaret Paston. Our concern now is with their character and style.

1) Agnes Paston:

It is somewhat remarkable to notice a change of tone in her letter to Edmond after the death of her husband, William I, since we know she looks happy when she informs William about the future marriage of John I and Margery Brews:

"I sendde yow not this lettre to make yow wery of Paston, for I leve in hoope, and ye wolde lerne that they schulle be made werye of here werke; fore in good feyth I dare wel seyne it was yowre fadris laste wilt to have do ryghht wel to that plase..." (6)

The following extract almost sounds harsh and haughty:

...and he askyd why I had stoppyd in the Kyngys wey. And I seyd to hym I stoppyd no wey butt myn owyn, and askyd hym why he had sold my lond to John Ball; and he sore he was nevyr accordyd wyth your fadyr. And I told hym if hys fadyr had do as he dede, he wold a be achemyed to a seyd as he seyd.

(17)

On the other hand, her religious: "This worlde is but a thoroughfare, and ful of woo" may reveal a pulpit echo which may have been common to the spiritual climate of the fifteenth century.

2) Margaret Paston:

"In a remarkable series of letters to John", writes H. S. Bennett, "Margaret portrays for us what it meant to be the wife of a property-owner in the middle years of the fifteenth century, and what burdens and responsibilities she carried, both as a mother and as housewife."

She was indeed such a vigorous and energetic woman.

As John Paston was much in London, many duties, domestic and manorial, were left to Margaret Paston, who "received her husband's instructions, carried them out, reported action taken and warned him of

his enemies' moves with great efficiency, and at the same time was not slow in taking things into her own hands when necessary. 1) Even so, one of her letters to her husband John in London is impressive in showing her affection and tenderness to him and at the same time a loneliness of a married woman who misses her husband:

I pre yow that ye wyl were the reyng wyth the emage of Seynt Margarete that I sent yow for a rememrau(n)se tyl ye come hom. Ye have lefte me sweche a rememrau(n)se that makyth me to thynke uppe on yow bothe day and nyth wanne I wold sclepe.

Another letter of hers which was written nineteen years after her marriage does not even lose the tender tone which is hers:

I am sory that ye xall not at hom be for Crystemes. I pray you that ye woll come as sone as ye may; I xhall thynke my selfe halfe a wedowe because ye xal not be at home, &c. 25

Many another letter or Margaret's will show how she lived in a turbulent age, how she worried over her children and their marriage, how courageous she was over the legal and manorial affairs, etc., of which we will treat later. For the present it may be sufficient for us to note that though the tone of some letters of Margaret may sound harsh, it is rather the spirit of medieval, feudal age, but not the heart of Margaret, that seems harsh and rigorous to us.

V. NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE PASTON LETTERS
—in relation with London English and other dialects—

Here we may select a few salient points of spelling which seem to be important for the mutual relation between London English and Norfolk English with due consideration as to the letter-writers and their idiosyncrasies.

1) H. S. Bennett, ibid., p. 111.
1. a before -nd

'hand': 19 exx. all in a-form.
'land': 24 exx., of which only one is a-form.
'England': always in o-form (14 exx.), e.g. Inglond.
'stand': 4 exx. 2 for each form.
'undersstand': 52 exx. a-form (30), o-form (22) respectively.

It is observed that in 'hand' the Northern a-form is exclusively used while in 'land' o-form is by far the more prevalent. Morsbach remarks that in 14th century London English the ratios of o : a in 'land' and 'hand' are 24 : 11 (London documents), 20 : 26 (State d.), 18 : 31 (Parliament d.). 1) In the 15th century, according to Kihlbom, in London Correspondents a-form is more frequent than o-form both in 'hand' and 'land'. Moreover, as to Middle English a before nasals and consonants in general, she finds a comparatively great number of a-forms in PL (stand) and in the letters of Edmond de la Pole, which in many details agree with the usage in the letters from the East, and says that this fact suggests a possible route along which these Northern a-forms filtered into the language of London. 2)

As to this possibility we find an interesting fact with regard to the word 'understand'. As we have shown in our materials, a is more frequent than o, and it is after 1464 (No. 31) that o-forms are used. This may probably indicate the backward movement—the flow of o-forms from the south. But more important than this is the fact that, while John Paston III always uses a (8 times), John Paston II uses 4 o-forms beside 10 a-forms.

The two brothers belong to the same generation, but lived in different circumstances—John Paston II was often in London and died there, while John Paston III, his two-year younger brother, seems to have remained around his native place throughout his life. 3) The letters of the two are all in

1) L. Morsbach, Ueber den Ursprung der neuenglischen Schriftsprache (Heilbronn, 1888) pp. 61ff., 166.
autograph and they also reveal a few interesting linguistic differences in some other respects as we shall see later.

2. 'such', 'much' and 'church'

The words contain Old English *u*, which sound is important to the problem of dialect boundary in Middle English. Roughly speaking, *u* is a South-West and West-Midland form, *e* a South-East (Kent), *i* an East-Midland and North form. But there was probably no definite boundary, each form 'radiating from centers, crossing each other, and mixing, in the intermediate areas.'

(1) 'such' 97 exx. in all.

swiche, swych(e): 4 exx. (WP I 1, Mgt 3)

swych(e): (Mgt 2, JP I 1 'swhech')

sech(e): (Mgt 10, JP I 2)

sch(e): 17 (exclusively by JP III)

such(e): 57 (Fast 1, JJ 1, Eliz P 1, WP II 2, Mgt 19, JP I 7, RC 5 ThD 1, JP II 12, Eliz Br 2, M Br 1, ThB 2, Wr P 2, EP II 1)

soch(e): 4 (EP II 1, Mgt 3)

The supremacy of the normal Western form 'such(e)' over other dialectal forms agrees with exclusive use of 'such(e)' in official London documents and private letters of the 15th century. Even earlier London documents show the same tendency.

The *u*-form begins to appear in 1456 (No. 19). Here again the two brothers show a sharp contrast. John Paston exclusively uses *syche* — a form not used by any other writer, while John Paston II always uses *such(e)*. This fact, too, seems to indicate the possible linguistic influence of the


3) Cf. the distribution of the forms in P. W. Chamber and M. Daunt, *A Book of London English* (Oxford, 1931): *such(e)* appears in 21, *swich(e)* in 4 documents: *soch(e), soche, sych, shuch(e)*, each in one d.

4) Davis mentions two cases of *such(e)* against the usual *swyche, syche, sich(e)* and remarks that *syche*, earlier rare, becomes normal after 1462. The year JP III’s own letters begin. Cf. his *The Language of the Pastons* (London, 1954) p. 126.

The minor differences are caused by the extent of the letters treated.
Metropolis on the elder brother.

In and after 1469 (No. 56) always *such(e)*, *soche* except for John Paston III’s *syche*. Variety in this as in other points in Margaret’s letters seems to be due to the change of hand.

(2) ‘much’ 68 exx. in all

myche: 21 exx. (Mgt 8, Ag P 3, JP III 9, Wr P 1 ‘mych’)
mech(e): (WP I 1, Mgt 9, Elis Cl, J Osb, JP I, JP II, 1 each, M Br 2, Th B 1)
much (e): (Mgt, W Eb 1 each)
moch (e): 28 (Mgt 11, Wom 1, JP I 3, Th E 1, JP II 10, RC 2)

Contrary to *such*, in case of *much* the dialectal forms are dominant. In official London and State documents of 15th century *moche*, *much(e)* are exclusively used, while in London letters *much(e)*, *moche*, *mych(e)* are found. This shows that the official language of London has already decided the adoption of *o*-forms, while the colloquial speech of the metropolis are more conservative in retaining the other forms. In the Paston Letters *myche* generally predominates, though ‘careful writers’ such as John paston II and Richard Calle uses *moche* generally.\(^1\) Even in earlier London documents *o* - and *u*-forms are dominant.\(^2\)

*Moch(e)* appears after 1448 (No. 7). It is still later, i.e. after 1465, that *much(e)* is found.

We may find another difference of usage of the two brothers. John Paston III always uses *myche* (9 times), while John Paston II prefers by far the London form *moch(e)* to *meche* (only once in No. 52).

(3) ‘church’ 12 exx. in all.

chirche, chyrche: 3 exx. (Mgt 2, JP III 1)
cherch(e): 7 (WP I 3, Ag P 3, Mgt 1)
church: 2 (Mgt No. 43)

We notice the considerable number of *e*-forms which are not found in

---


contemporary official documents. 1) The modern u-forms which are already found in London documents of 14th century 2) appear only in No. 43, written in 1465. The form seems probably to be a result of influence from London.

3. 'sister' 18 exx. in all

Before 1469 (No. 53) only the OE forms appear (sustyrs, sustyr, etc. 6 times), and after that date 8 exx. of Scandinavian forms with y are found against 4 exx. of OE forms. John Paston III gives us 9 exx., and before 1469 he uses OE forms only (4 times), but after that he adopts the Scandinavian forms (4 times) using the OE form once (No. 66).

As to the currency of the forms in 15th century Kihlbom says that the Scandinavian form is used chiefly in the letters from the East, which indicates 'the route along which this northern form penetrated into London speech'. 3) In this connection John Paston III's change of the form in his later letters is interesting, and may suggest the northern origin of this route.

4. 'fro' : 'from' 93 exx. in all

fro: 31 exx. (WP I I, Ag P 5, Mgt 9, J Osb l, JP II 6, JP III 8, M Br 1)

from: 62 (Mgt 26, J Dm 2, WP II 1, JP I 6, RC 3, JP III 2, W Eb 1, JP II 11, Th B 1, J Wh 2, WP III 4, MP 3)

The English form 'from' is twice as frequent as 'fro' which derives from Old Norse. 'Fro' appears in 24 letters (of which 6 letters have more than two exx.), and 'from' in 38 letters (of which 15 have more than two exx.). It is rather rare that the two forms are used side by side in the same letter (6 letters, Nos. 56, 63, 72, 76, 77, 94). John Paston II fluctuates, especially in his later letters, while John Paston III prefers fro (8) to from (2 exx.). In the earlier century 'fro' surpasses in London

2) In A Book of London English, chirch(e), chyrch(e) are found in 12 dd, cherch(e) in 4, church(e) in 6, dd. The first form appears chiefly in earlier dd. while the last u-forms appears chiefly in later ones, especially in the Wills.
and Parliament documents, while State documents mostly uses 'from'.

5. Verb, 3rd person singular.

(1) 'have'

We have 151 exx. (hath 75, hathe 72, hat 3, haith 1), but no instance of 'has' which Chaucer's Reeve uses.

(2) other verbs (except substantive and anomalous verbs)

We have 283 exx. in all, of which only 19 are the Northern forms with -s. Let us examine by whom or in what letter these forms are used.

JP III: (9 exx.) clemys, delys, thynkys (No. 46), sendys (No. 53), waytys (No. 66), thynkys (3 times No. 68)

W Eb. (2) knowis, spekes (No. 51)

EP II: (3) recummaryndys, prays, gretys (No. 64)

M Br.: (2) byddyhs, wottyhs (No. 69)

Th B: (1) specyfyes (No. 82)

J Wh.: (2) lettys, delys (No. 86)

It is noteworthy that, while no instance is found of John Paston II, John Paston III uses the form in several letters, and indeed half of the examples are occupied by him. But even he uses this form much less frequently than the southern form with -th (57 examples).

The northern form first appears in 1467 in John Paston III's letter (No. 46). Morsbach quotes only one instance 'kepes' found in London documents of all the three kinds of the documents he treats, and even in 15th century London English Lekebusch quotes extremely rare in-

---

1) Cf. Morsbach, op. cit. p. 81

2) Beside the two forms we meet with such rare cases as 'he pray' (No. 64), which we have excluded from the table. For the dialectal influence on this form, cf. R. Huchon, *Histoire de la Langue Anglaise* Tome II (Paris, 1930), p. 348.

3) As to John Paston II, our result differs from Davis's statement. But he also admits that John Paston II uses -ys 'only five times beside the immeasurable commoner -yth.' As to the younger brother, he says that he 'extends the -s ending in the present indicative somewhat beyond his brother's use' (John Paston III's 15 exx. against John Paston II's 5) Cf. op. cit. pp. 126, 128. But these, substantially taken, do not much affect our purpose.

stances of s-ending. 1) But in A Book of London English, we find 4 exx. of -es, and the influence from the north seems to have started quite early, and it still continues well into the 16th century.

6. The verb be, indicative present plural (including the polite plural 'ye')

The distribution of the forms is most complicated and abundant in variety. We shall examine how often and in what case each form is used. We have 101 exx. in all.

-er 1 (3rd person), arn 10 (1st 1, 2nd 1, 3rd 8), 2) (h)are 7 (2nd 4, 3rd 3), ar 8 (1st 1, 2nd 2, 3rd 5), ben(e), byn 23 (2nd 3, 3rd 20), be 50 (1st 1, 2nd 8, 3rd 41), bethe 2 (2nd and 3rd 1 each)

As easily perceived from the table given above, be is still by far the most frequent, followed by ben. This fact is sharply contrary to Brunner's statement that after 14th century, beth, be(n) are found only in the South and the West. 3) Besides these we notice a considerable number of the fewer arn and ar(e).

Other Norfolk texts also show a great vacillation in the distribution of these two forms. 4) The form are(n) has already spread from the north into London speech in the beginning of 15th century, and 'rather numerous' instances are found in London English of the time. 5) But the form is, comparatively speaking, still minor in the 15th century official London

1) Cf. Lekebusch. Die Londoner Urkundensprache von 1430 bis 1500 (Halle, 1906), pp. 121ff. He gives 1 instance of -es against 11x instances of -eth in London dd. 2 of -es against usual -eth (-ith, -yth), 5 of -eth against more than 600 -eth and numerous -th, -yth, ed (=eth) forms.

2) When the 3rd person is the subject we must see whether it is relative pronoun or not. When the subject is other than rel. pron. the examples found are: er 1, arn, ar(e) 15, be(n) 44, beth 1. But when it is relative pronoun: arn 1, ben(e), byn, be 17, bethe 1. For the frequency of be or ben after rel. pron. as subject. cf. the idiomatic 'authorities that be'. Besides all our examples, we have several instances where it is not certain whether the verb is indicative or subjunctive, which we have excluded from the table given above.

3) Cf. Brunner, Abriss der mittelenglischen Grammatik (Halle, 1938), § 73. The misleading statement is pointed out by Forsström. Cf. his The verb 'to be' in Middle English' (Lund, 1948), p. 103.


documents. It is interesting to find, beside the solitary instance of *er* of Scandinavian origin, two instances of Southern *bethe*, which is still found frequently in contemporary official London documents but which has almost completely been replaced by *ben* in the East Midland texts treated by Forström. This may probably indicate another instance of backward influence from the south.

All the forms, except *er* and *bethe*, are common to many letters, but the two brothers John Paston II and III again offer an interesting tendency. While John Paston III uses *ar* 3 times as against 8 exx. of *be*, John Paston II uses only the Midland types *be* (15 exx.) and *ben* (1 exx.).

7. Other features

We meet with two instances of the Southern imperative form with *-eth*, *comyth* and *sedyth* (Friar JB No. 23). Of the old Southern past participle only one instance is found, *ibounde* (1459 Eliz P No. 22).

The adverb of the Southern form with *-liche*, which, though very rarely, is still found in the contemporary London documents, is never instanced in our letters.

As for the Southern form of the verb, pres. pl., we encounter only the following dubious cases:

his ken and servantis that levith (with psychological agreement with 'his ken' No. 36)/ how your sonnys doth (No.43)/ All my felawshep ar mery...and recomandyth hem all (taking 'my felawshep' as collective singular in the second verb? No. 46).

Apart from all these discussed above, one of the features of the language of the Paston Letters is the frequency of the lowering of *i* of OE *i* and *io, eo* sounds to *e*.

This tendency is also current in London English of the 15th and even earlier 14th centuries. Such words as 'hedir', 'wete', 'leve', 'wretyn' and

1) Cf. Lekebusch, *op. cit.* p. 128. He gives 11 exx. of *er* and *are(n)* beside more usual *beth* (9x exx.) and *be(n)* (8 exx.) in Parliament documents, but only one in State and London dd.

2) Cf. Forsström, ibid.

"wedowe", all found both in the *Paston Letters* and in the contemporary London documents,\(^1\) are already found in *A Book of London English*.

Some graphical features commonly found in *PL*, as *qu-* for *wh-* and *a* for *have* of weak stress,\(^2\) are also found in the same book (qweche p. 221, shuld a yofe p. 106).

These concurrences may probably be another indication of earlier linguistic connection of the two regions.

As we have observed the linguistic features here presented are somewhat too complicated to be neatly discussed, and we find several symptoms of the effect of the standardization of the literary language and the influence from the south. But, generally, the pressure from the north is seen steadily working on.

This is largely due to the condition of population of those days. In the 14th century the South-East region of Midland was most populated, and people from the North brought with them their linguistic customs into the Metropolis.\(^3\)

The members of the Pastons, in the following century, had also frequent connections with London for their business, which is partly shown by the fact that 44 out of the whole 95 letters of the present edition have some mention of Londoners (64 times in all). Of all the letters 6 are explicitly stated as addressed to London, 8 from London.

The influence of London speech on the Pastons is, as already observed several times, perceived on the two brothers of the third generation. Their divergences are too great to be merely ascribed to the individual deviation or to the insufficiency of the materials.

It is highly probable that to John Paston II, who was often in London and was interested in tournaments and books, the language of the Metropolis seemed elegant, and that he tried to assimilate his language to it. His younger brother, of sober mind and attached to his ancestral property,

---

once says to his brother, 'I had lever se yow onys in Caster Halle then to see as many kyngys tornay as myght be betwyx Eltam and London' (No. 49). He was also, it seems, one who was attached to the dear accents of his native place.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is hoped that the above survey, though tentative and limited, may show how the English language as seen in the language of the Pastons had then been resolving into a newer language—so-called Modern English—how it had then been experiencing the crash and impact of older and newer elements of the language, thereby progressing a steady, if muddled, way towards the uniformity of a regional language—though with persistence of various usages in form and inflection—under the influence of the language of London which Norfolk was so close in touch with.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Texts

II. Linguistic
A. Phonology and Accidence

B. Syntax and Language of Individual Authors
Hitchcock, E. V. : Introduction on Pecock’s Language and Style. EETS, OS. NO. clxiv. 1924.
Simko, J. : Word-Order in the Winchester Manuscript and in William


C. General Studies


Lekebusch, J. : Die Londoner Urkundensprache von 1430 bis 1500. Ein

III. Literary
IV. Social

Bennett, H.S. : The Author and His Public in the Fourteenth and
      Fifteenth Centuries, Essays and Studies, 23, 1939.
Jusserand. J.J. : English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages. London,
      1899, 1950.

V. Dictionaries

Middle English Dictionary (A-B, C. E-F.), ed. by Hans Kurath and
      1935.
A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seven-