

## A SIXTEENTH CENTURY WILL

In the early part of the fourteenth century the manor of Shalstone was held by the Aete (Ayette, or Eyete) family, and at the beginning of the following century an heiress of that name married William Purefoy. For the next 300 years it remained in the direct descent of that family, and their descendants re-assumed the name of Purefoy by royal licence in 1900. For 600 years, therefore, the property has remained in the same family. It is the hope of the present owner, Admiral Richard Purefoy Purefoy to prepare a more accurate pedigree of his family than is given by Lipscomb.<sup>1</sup> This is clearly very faulty indeed; it mentions John as living in 1566, apparently the brother of Philip who died in 1466—an obvious absurdity. The *Visitation* of 1566 and the *Additional Pedigrees* to the *Visitation* of 1634<sup>2</sup> appear equally in error regarding John, and none of these pedigrees state whom he married. The *Victoria County History*<sup>3</sup> was better informed, and refer to the will of John<sup>4</sup> which is given in *extenso* below. The transcript was kindly made by Mr. F. G. Gurney, and its extreme importance for the careful inventory of property owned by a substantial landed proprietor at that date makes it appear worthy of inclusion in these RECORDS.

John's will, it is seen, provided for his widow and gave certain legacies to his nephew Edward; it then left his brothers William and Richard his residuary legatees. William was the father of "nephew Edward," and settled Shalstone upon him when he married in 1580. Edward, however, predeceased his father, who died in 1595, and Shalstone then passed to Edward's son George.<sup>5</sup>

T[estamentum] Johis Purefoy, Armiger

[P.C.C. Bakon 22]

In the name of God Amen the fourthe Daie of Maie in the yeare of our Lorde god one thousand five hundred

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. III., p. 71. <sup>2</sup> Printed by Harleian Society 1909, p. 199.  
<sup>3</sup> Vol. IV., p. 224. <sup>4</sup> P.C.C., 22, Bakon. <sup>5</sup> Chanc. Inq. p.m. (Ser. 2), CCLV., 91.

threescore and nineteene I John Purefoy of Shaldeston in the Countie of Buck' Esquire lame and sicke in bodie yet through Godes greate goodness whole in mynde and of good and perfect memorie do make and ordaine this my last will and testament in manner and forme followyng first I give and comend my soule into the handes of almightie god my heavenlie Father with a ffirmie Faithe and assured hope that of his infinite mercie and goodnes he will make me an inheritor of that heavenlie kingdome which before all worldes he hath prepared for his elect and that not for anie meritt or desert of mine beinge of my self but a lumpe of siñe [written suñe] a vessell of godes wrathe and vtterlie voide of all goodness but for the merittes of his dearlie beloved sonne Jesus Christe who tooke uppon him manes nature and died for my sinnes and rose againe for my justificaçon whereby he hath so amplie and fully appeased answered and satisfied the wrathe and indignaçon of almightie god in my behalf that neither deathe the divell nor hell itself can have anie power againste me. my bodie I comende and bequeathe to the earthe to be buried in suche place and such sorte as shalbe thought good to mine executors hereafter named so that the same may be voide of all vaine pompe and superstition nowe confirming [error for "concerning"] the disposinge of my goodes. First I give and bequeathe to Anne my wief Sixteene of my best milche kine with their suckinge calves yf they have anie at her choise and likewise a bull at her owne choise Item five hundreths of my best sheepe at her choise Item twelve of my best drawinge oxen at her choise Item sixe of my best ploughe horses which customablie goe to ploughe. and carte and theise at her choise Item a grey ambling nagge whiche she vseth to ride on Item a grey trottinge geldinge and the colte of the great white mare and a Dunne trottinge balde nagge Item all my cartes ploughes and all the husbandrie necessaries belonginge to the ploughe and carte and all carte and ploughe timber Item all my yearling bullockes as well heyfors as other Item all my wey [ ? weyninge] calves Item all my plate and jewels savinge the beste

salte and sixe of the best silver spoones which I give unto my nephew Edward Purefey Item I give my wief all my corne growinge uppon the grounde as well as wheate as barley pease and all other kinde of grayne Item I give her all my hogges geese and poultrie Item I give her eight fether beddes with their bolsters coverlettes blanckettes and other things to thē belonginge Item of mattresses and wolle beddes Foure with bolsters coverlettes and blanckettes to them belonginge. Item I give her my silke curtens Items two paire of the saide curtens Item the cupborde [in ?] the greate chamb next the dore Item foure little slooles two coverd with redd clothe and thother with redd mockado <sup>6</sup> Item a paire of andyorns in the great chamber Item a bedsted and a tester standing in the chamber within the great, chamber Item in the greene chamber the worsted bedsted with a chaire a cupborde and the hanginges therein. Item two chairs in the parlor and the lesser cupborde there a litle woman's chaire there Item in the parlor two of the worser greene carpettes Item in the kitchin chamber a bedstead with a tester of redd and greene and curtens to the same. A presse with fine coffers a trunke a fier panne a paire of tonges a paire of bellowes a paire of Andyrons a chaire a corselett a jack a pike with their furniture and the fish and fowlenettes in the saide chamber. Item the best bason and ewer with two of the best pewter pottes Item four jugges Item two stone cruses Item all the browne trenchers Item all the spades and skuppetts Item all my pewter vessell Item two brasse pannes Item sixe brasse pottes sixe possenettes foure. kettles with all the brass sauinge two brasse pannes two brasse pottes and one chafer which I give to my nephewe Edward Purefaye Item I give to my wief of spittes all sauinge the greatest spittes Item three dripping pannes two gridirons two pair of potte hookes one pair of rackes A bread grater a bastinge ladle a paire of tonges in the kitchen a stone mortar a brasse mortar and a pestle Item a bushell all my siues and sakes Item six paire of fine sheetes and twelve paire

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<sup>6</sup> Moccado ; a fabric, probably of velveteen type.

of corser Item one dyaper towell six diaper napkins tenne tables (*sic*) clothes five dozen of napkins of the best Item foure towelles Item sixe pair of pillowberes Item I give to George Purefey and his sister my nephew and my neece one Cowe and fortie sheepe a piece whereof the said two kinne and fortie of the saide sheepe to be chosen by them nexte after my wife hath chosen those which I have given her Item I give to my cousen Thomas Purefey a colte and twentie sheepe over and beside a browne baye hobbie colte which I bought of him And to my cosin Elizabethhe his sister twentie sheepe and one heyfor Item I give to my nephew Edward Purefaye two paire of the best sheetes and my cheese presse with a waight of leade my mustarde querne all the pothanginges in the kitchen with a Barre of yron over the same which theye hange uppon and a great Bedsted in the great chamber a bedsted in the greene chamb A great cupborde in the parlor a table in the parlor with sixe long stooles and a bedsted in the buttrie chamber all which premisses given to my cosin Edward Purefey my will and meaninge is shall from time to time be continued and remaine standerdes and heirelomes in my dwellinge house of Shaldeston not to be remoued duringe the naturall lief of Anne Purefey my wief Item I give to my said cosin Edwarde Purefey two fetherbedes with two mattresses blanckettes pillowes and coverlettes to the same Item I give to Thomas Worsseley my sisters daughters sonne a colte and a Cowe Item I give to eurie one of the children of my cosin Andrewe Slinne [later written with 5 minims, grouped 3 and 2; query Slinne ? clerk evidently uncertain,] beinge at this present five in nomber twentie sheepe a peece Item to my cosin Robert Thorne a crosbowe Item I give to Marie Worsley tenne sheepe and to Katherine Worsley tenne other sheepe and to Thomas Dudley other tenne sheepe to Thomas Stretley twentie sheepe and a cowe Item I give to my nephew Edward Thorne a Corselett and a pyke furnished fourthe my will is that Anne my wife shall have her chamber furnished as it is with coffers chestes apparrell sadles bridles furniture of horse and all other thinges which be in

her chamber the Armor my evidences and other thinges which be heretofore given away onlie except Also I give unto my saide wief fortie poundes in money or somuche thereof as shall remaine in money in my house at the time of my deathe which fortie poundes my meaninge is shalbe levied of severall debttes due to me by Peter Wentworthe Esquier Fraunces Pore Esquier and Matthew Coles yoman and not otherwise the costes and charges in the lawe of mine executors for the recoverie of the same debtes to be deducted and allowed to mine executors Item I give to my louinge friende Peter Wentworthe Esquier a great roned mare colte and to Thomas Wentworth his soone my godson a little baye nagge colte Item I give to my cosin Andrew Slinne a baye stoned colte w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of him Item to my nephewe Eldwarde Purefoye a splayed [sic] yearlinge mare colte A millstone the mill Pikes and all the furniture of the mill and all the sawen Ashe and Elme aboute the house Item I give to my Seruante Henrie Greene alias Muñie [ ? Muñe = Munne] a heckfor Item to oulde Lansdale my tenaũnte a cowe the residue of my goodes and cattelles vnbequeathed after my debtes paid and legacies and funeralles discharged I give and bequeath to my louinge brother William Purefeye and Richard Purefeye whom I make of this my last will and testament my fulle and sole executors Witnesses to the publicaçon and subscribinge of this present will and testam<sup>t</sup> Peter Wentworthe Thomas -----\_ [not filled in] Edward Purefeye Richard Addames

Probatum fuit huius Testamentum Apud London Coram magfo Willimo Drurye legum doctore curie Prerogative Cant Comissario vicesimo quinto die mensis Maij Anno dñi millimo quingentesimo septuagesimo nono juramento Willmi. Purefaye unius ex<sup>rs</sup> personal<sup>t</sup> pnt [præsenti] et Edwardi Barker notarij publici pro<sup>rio</sup> [procuratorio] Richi Purefaye alterius executor<sup>s</sup> Quibus comissa fuit A'd<sup>o</sup> [Administario] de bene &c. Jurat.

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This wonderful schedule of property not only shows us the entire contents of the house with minute accuracy, but it reflects the extreme scarcity of

money at a time when legacies could only be measured in terms of sheep. Even the money mentioned is not entirely a liquid asset, since part was owing to him by his " louinge friende Peter Wentworthe Esquier." This was the very distinguished Member of Parliament during Elizabeth's reign, who "must be credited with having contributed in no inconsiderable degree to the advancement of constitutional liberty."<sup>7</sup> Wentworth was almost a neighbour, since he lived at Lillingstone Lovell.

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For an excellent account of him see an article on " Went-worth of Lillingstone Lovell. " by W. L. Rutton in *Records of Bucks*, VI, pp. 219-222.