

hold, to John Paston. Sir John was dead, and from Paston, who was one of the executors for the Fastolf estate, Payn claimed indemnity for his losses in the rebellion, giving particulars as to what these were, and how they were incurred. He was, he says, ordered by Sir John to take with him a mounted servant and proceed on horseback to Cade's camp to find out what the commons wanted, and to spy out their strength. He sent the servant back with the horses, gaining entrance to the camp on the plea that his wife's brothers, who were there, had sent for him. But somebody recognized him as one of Fastolf's men, when he was seized and proclaimed by a herald, at four parts of the camp, as a spy, and was led before the captain, where an axe and block were brought to behead him. At the last moment Paston's brother-in-law, who was with Cade and had much influence, appealed to Cade on his behalf and saved him on condition that he swore fealty to them. Afterwards he was permitted to go home for his armor and was then to return to the camp. He took the news to Fastolf, who had fortified his house and manned it with old soldiers from the wars in Normandy. The old knight, Payn further says, at his suggestion put his soldiers away, made no show of resistance, fearing if he did Cade would burn the house, and then withdrew to the Tower for safety. Payn and another servant were left in the house, and when the "Commons of Kent" came, by a judicious distribution of meat and drink, for which he made outlay of nearly £4 of his own money, he saved his master's house from being burnt. The captain sent certain men to his rooms to plunder his chests, and at the White Hart, Southwark, the captain bade one Lovelace despoil him of his apparel. The house of his wife, who with his five children lived in the county, was also sacked; and for all these his losses, in defense of Fastolf's property, he asked indemnity from the knight's executors. Four pounds, at first sight, looks a small sum with which—even when turned into bread and sack—to mollify the destructive designs of a following like Cade's. Competent authorities, however, estimate the purchasing power of money to have been fifteen times more in those days than it is in ours, which brings Payn's outlay of his personal money to an equality with nearly \$300 of our current money, not so mean a sum for his purpose as his £4 look at first.

A central figure amongst the many personages of the past, these letters make live again, is Sir John Fastolf. He was a noted soldier in the wars with France, and fought under Henry V. at Agincourt, and at the siege of Rouen. He afterwards served in France under the Duke of Bedford and many distinctions were conferred upon him. Shakespeare imputes cowardice to him, and to sustain his charge has at his back the statement of the annalist, Holingshed, who says Sir John left the battle of Patay without striking a blow, and that Bedford "for doubt of misdealing at this brunt, took from him the image of St. George and his Garter, though afterwards the same were to him again delivered against the mind of Lord Talbot." The French chronicles

make no mention of this, nor does Caxton, the first English printer, who says Fastolf "signified his military abilities in France for 40 years."

After the conquests in France, Fastolf returned to England, became a member of the privy council, and, after he was 70 years old, built an imposing castle at Caister, in Norfolk, his native place. The building of a fortified place near the mouth of the river Yare, was a cherished project of Sir John's. His family had long held the manor of Caister, and Henry V. gave him license to build a castle there, as strong as himself "could devise." The structure he built was of brick. It had embattled towers and the foundations are said to have enclosed six acres. A moat which surrounded it led to a navigable creek by which the six vessels for which he had a license from the crown could reach the sea. The ruins of Fastolf's castle still remain. The Paston collection contains more than 60 of Fastolf's letters, besides a number from William Worcester, or Botoner—his mother's maiden name, by which he often called himself—the scholarly secretary to Sir John. In addition to the letters, we have also given us a curious statement of Sir John's claims on the crown for special services, his will—or wills—for he had three drawn up before the disposal of his earthly goods pleased him, and a complete inventory of what his castle contained at his death, which took place in his eighty-second year. Besides the public rooms, halls, offices and chapels, the inventory enumerates 26 chambers. It conveys a good idea of what constituted the equipment of a castle and the armor and apparel of a knight in the middle of the fifteenth century, the time of Fastolf's death.

Sir John, from all we learn of him, was a self-asserting, irascible man, who, dealing somewhat penuriously and harshly with his servants and dependents, sought to solace his conscience and compound his faults with heaven by making costly additions to religious edifices; by founding a college of seven priests to say mass for his soul, and by endowing an hospital for seven poor men. One of his servants says: "Cruel and vengeable he hath ever been, and for the most part without pity and mercy." To his friend the parson of Castellcombe, Sir Thomas Howes, he writes, inquiring whether certain persons who had been his enemies continue still in their wilfulness, instructing him to tell, on his behalf, some who had dared to be so hardy as to kick against his rights, that they should be requited as far as law and reason permitted, and if they would not dread nor obey that then they should be requited "by Blackbeard or Whitebeard, that is to say, by God or devil."

His faithful and most capable secretary, Fastolf treated like an ordinary servant of his household; and although Worcester—who was as Mr. Gairdner shows, the most loyal of secretaries—had vindicated the French policy and campaigns of his master, all that Sir John did for him specially was to express a wish that he had been a priest so that "a living by reason of a benefice" could have been given to him. No wonder Worcester, who wrote thus to Paston, should add "may our Lord bring my