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. 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 appear equally in error regarding John, and none of these pedigrees state whom he married. The Victoria County History was better informed, and refer to the will of John 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.

T[estamentum] Joĥis 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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1 Vol. III., p. 71.  2 Printed by Harleian Society 1909, p. 199.
3 Vol. IV., p. 224.  4 P.C.C., 22, Bakon.  5 Chanc. Inq. p.m. (Ser. 2), CCLV., 91.
threesome and nineteen I John Purefoy of Shaldeston
in the Countie of Buck' Esquire lame and sicke in
bodie yet through God's great goodness whole in
mynde and of good and perfect memorie do make and
ordaine this my last will and testament in manner and
forme followynge first I give and comend my soule
into the handes of almightie god my heavenlie Father
with a ffrme Faithe and assured hope that of his
infinite mercie and goodnes he will make me an in-
heritor 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 ytterlie voide of all goodness but for the
merrittes of his dearlie beloved sonne Jesus Christe
who tooke uppon him manes nature and died for my
sinnen and rose againe for my justification whereby
he hath so amplie and fully appeased answered and
satisfied the wrathe and indignacon of almightie god
in my behalf that neither death the divell nor hell
itself can have anie power against me. my bodie I
comende and bequeathe to the earthe to be buried
in suche place and suche 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 theire
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 sise 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 upon the grounde as well as wheate as barley pease and all other kinde of grayne Item I give her all my hoggges geese and poultarie Item I give her eight fether beddes with their bolsters coverlettes blankettes and other things to the belonginge Item of mattresses and woolle beddes Foure with bolsters coverlettes and blankettes 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 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 little 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 corsselelt 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 skuppets Item all my pewter vessell Item two brasse pannes Item sixe brasse pottes sixe posenettes 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 bastingel ladle a paire of tonges in the kitchen a stone mortar a brasse mortar and a pestle Item a bushell all my siues and sackes Item six paire of fine sheetes and twelve paire

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6 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 Elizabethe 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 weight 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 Eidward Purefey my will and 
meaninge is shal 

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 
dauters sonne a colte and a Cowe Item I give to 
eurie one of the children of my cosin Andrewe Slwie 
[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 Worseley tenne sheepe and to Katherine 
Worssley 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 Corsselett 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 things 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 debttes 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 a little baye nagge colte Item I give to my cosin Andrew Slinne a baye stoned colte wch I bought of him Item to my nephewe Eldwarde Purefoy a splayed [sic] yearlinge mare colte A millstone the mill Pikes and all the furni-ture 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 catelles 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 testa-ment my fulle and sole executors Witnesses to the publicačon and subscribinge of this present will and testam Peter Wentworthe Thomas ----_ [not filled in] Edward Purefeye Richard Addames


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." Wentworth was almost a neighbour, since he lived at Lillingstone Lovell.

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.