



This is the Pastons

Volunteers Introduction



Thank you for volunteering for this project. Your input is going to help us make the Paston Letters available to the general public in a much more palatable form. This introduction takes you through the initial stages of what we'd like you to do in order to achieve that aim.

What should I do first?

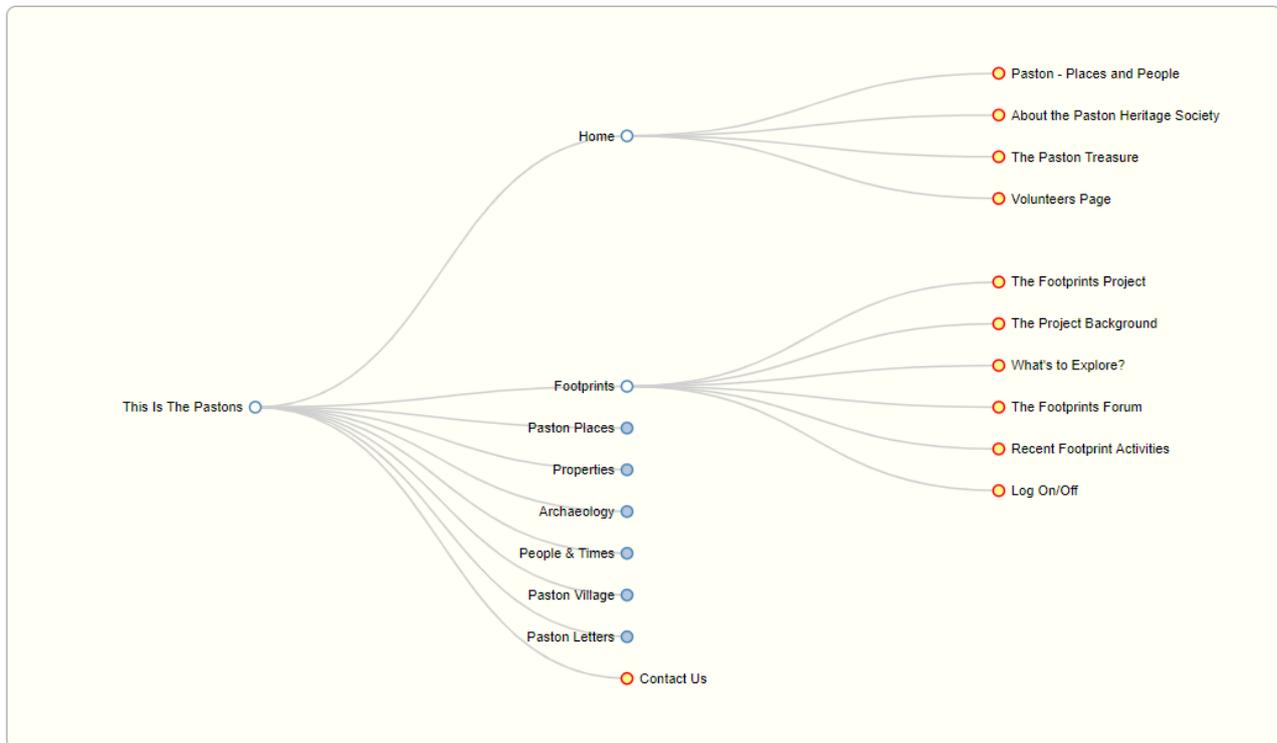
The first thing to do is to go to the website, which you can find at:
<https://www.thisispaston.co.uk>

If you haven't already taken a look around the site then please do so and make yourself familiar with it. You can see a full map of what's available by clicking on the **Site Map** option in the footer that appears on each page. This always shows an up to date, expandable representation of all the public pages currently on the site.



Site Map

Click on a blue/white circle to expand or close that section. Click on a red/yellow circle to go to that page.



To return to the home page either select the first option from the **Home** drop-down menu or, even quicker, just click on the **This is the Pastons** title in the main heading.

Logging In

Once back on the home page (shown below) scroll down the screen until you come to the large red **Become A Volunteer** box and click on the **Volunteers Page** button (shown circled in green).

This is the Pastons

Home Footprints Paston Places Properties Archaeology People & Times Paston Village

Paston - Places and People

Welcome to the story of the Paston family. The Pastons grew from small beginnings in the north east Norfolk village of Paston to become a family of considerable influence across the county for the next three centuries. But they are best known because about two thousand letters and other documents to and from family members have survived from that time to tell us many details of their lives.

Here's one of the latest developments from our Footprints 600 project, which you can read further below. This video helps explain some of the work we've undertaken to bring some of the Paston back to life - starting with Paston Hall in the village of Paston.

pages are about the family and will eventually contain all the letters as well as links to such sites as the British Library, where you can see the letters as originally written. We also include some pages about the village of Paston itself.

If you've read or heard about our National Lottery Heritage Fund award under the heading Paston Footprints, and you'd like to know more, then use one of the options below. You'll also find plenty about the exciting 600 Footprints project in the **Footprints** menu, at the top right. There's a couple of pages of introductions and then there's a page showing some of the areas of interest and methods of study for those wishing to take part. If it's for you, then log in: it's not an open log-in system; as soon as our moderator has picked up on your area of interest, we'll be able to assess your participation and set up access to the forum section).

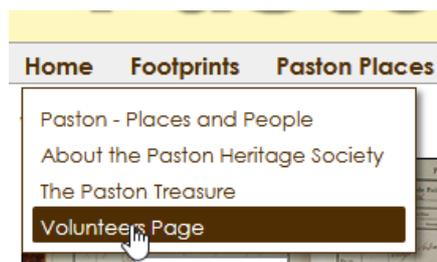
Become A Volunteer

Volunteers Page **Register as a Volunteer** **Contact Us**

This site is under development for Paston Footprints under a scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Bear with us as we gradually add material: please don't regard some of the data sets as complete for the

This will take you to a new page where you will see a log on box as shown on the right.

Another way to reach the **Volunteers Page** is to click the **Home** menu button and select the bottom option from the drop-down menu as shown below.



Existing volunteers log on

User Name

Password

If you have forgotten your user name or password, or have yet to log in for the first time, then please click [here](#) to set or reset it.

You should have already been issued with a user name and password (if you haven't and you have already registered as a volunteer then please contact us via the menu button on the site). Enter your user name and password in the appropriate fields and click the **Log On** button.

This will reload the page and the Log On area will be replaced by a menu of options. The options displayed may not be exactly as you see here as we are updating the site constantly with new features. However, the **Forum** and **Administration** options will always be present.



The Forum

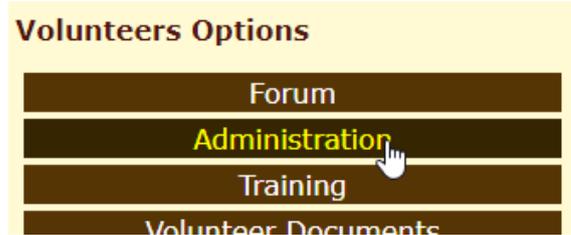
If ever you have any problems or want to discuss anything to do with the website then please use the forum as this is going to be one of the main ways in which we intend to disseminate information to all volunteers.

To use the forum just click on the most appropriate option, and read and comment on any of the threads there.

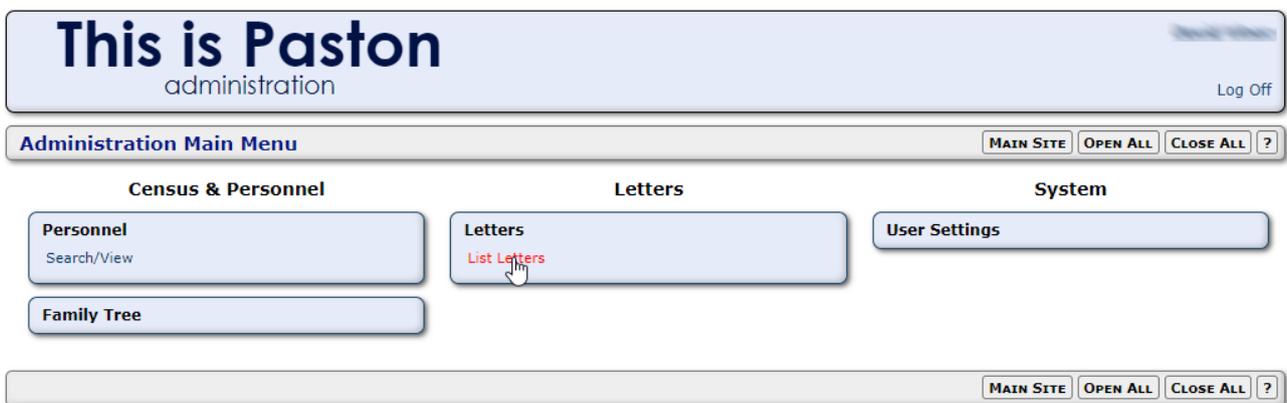
All Forums				
Forum	Threads	Posts / Last	Status	Owner
Literature Books and articles on the Pastons and related subjects	1	2 / 19 Sep, 2019	ST	Rob Knee
Digital Letters This forum is for discussion of the digital material on the Thisispaston web site.	1	4 / 21 Nov, 2019	ST	Peter Stibbons
Heraldry of the Pastons A forum to question and discuss all aspects of the heraldry of the Paston family and Norfolk heraldry in a wider context.	1	3 / 11 Sep, 2019	ST	Penelope Knee
Web Site This part of the forum is used for you to be to report anything you notice that needs correcting on the site. We will also use it to announce and describe new features that have been added to the site.	2	2 / 23 Nov, 2019	ST	Peter Stibbons

Administration

The administration section is where all the hard work is done!



After clicking on the **Administration** button you will see a new page called the **Administration Main Menu**. It will contain a number of boxes each of which will expand with sub-options when you click on it – a second click will close it back down again. In the example below both the **Personnel** and the **Letters** sections have been expanded by clicking on them. You can also use the **Open All** and **Close All** menu buttons to open and close all the section boxes in one go.



The **Main Site** button takes you back to the public or output side of the website. There is also some online help available from the “?” button at the far right. This opens up in a new pop-up window and the help there can be searched and has shortcut buttons to the index and various “How do I do...?” pages.



The **User Settings** section allows you to change your password and update any other information about yourself that you choose to give us. Please note that we only really need to know your name and email address so that we can email you by name when the

various Volunteer emails go out. It's up to you if you want to enter anything more than that, though, given that we sometimes organise meetings or events in specific places, it is also sometimes useful for us to know your general location – e.g. your nearest city, town or village.

Returning to the Administration Main Menu

When you are on any page other than the **Administration Main Menu** (or, for brevity, just 'main menu') itself, then **Home** button will always return you back to that menu. The buttons that appear to the right of the **Home** button will depend on the section you are currently in. The example on the right was taken from the **Change Password** screen in the **User Settings**.



What Do You Want Me To Do?

An Overview of What's Needed

All of the volunteer work currently revolves around the Paston letters themselves, though it also involves interaction with other related databases that contain information about the people (Personnel), the places (Locations) and the non-modern words used in the letters (Dictionary).

The tasks mainly involve making sure that all the following are checked and, where necessary, corrected:

- Each letter should be checked to make sure it is linked to the correct from/to people from the Personnel section (where possible).
- The text of each letter needs to be checked to make sure it has been entered correctly and the text matches the source document (Davis, Gairdner etc.).
- Where necessary, any references/notes within the text added to the source document are removed and converted into phrases and comments.
- Any person mentioned within the text of the letter needs to be linked to their Personnel database entry (where known).
- Any location or place name mentioned within the text needs to be linked to an entry in the Locations database.
- Where characters such as þ and ȝ appear in the original or source text, these need to be put back in to the letter text so that they replace their modern equivalents.
- Each word, whether in modern or old English needs to have an entry in the Dictionary database.
- Where we've linked to or included images of the original letter, then that image needs to be checked to make sure it is actually the correct one.

This introduction will go through each of the above in more detail below. In some cases you may find you don't have full access to be able to perform certain items from the list above. Don't worry about this – we will be opening up more of the administration as volunteers become more familiar with the system.

How Should I Do All This?

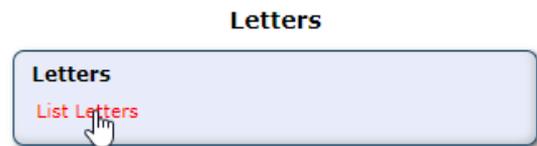
This is entirely up to yourself! It may also depend on the amount of time you have available in total and how that time is available to you. For example, you may have a few half days spread over a month or, instead, you may be able to spare 25 minutes a day for up to 3 times a week.

You might want to tackle each letter one at a time, making sure it is as correct and complete as you can make it before moving onto the next. Alternatively, you may want to take one task at a time. For example, you might take of the simpler aspects – such as checking the images linked to are really the correct ones – and do that for all the letters first. Once that's done you would move onto another task – such as checking all the from/to names and matching them up – and get all those done next, and so on.

Basically, just work in a manner with which you feel most comfortable. Also, if something isn't clear, don't be afraid to ask questions on the forum – if you don't understand some aspect of what's needed then it's likely that others may be having the same problem. So, please ask away!

Allocated Letters

We have allocated each volunteer an initial batch of letters (usually 25 but this may change). You can list the ones allocated to yourself by clicking on the **List Letters** option from the main menu.



The resulting list shows our internal letter number ID, the title and the letter's current status.

Letters List		
ID	Letter Title	Status
926	Margaret Paston to Sir John Paston, 15th July 1470	Being worked on
927	Sir John Paston to John Paston, 5th August 1470	Being worked on
928	Abstract, 7th August 1470	Being worked on
929	Abstract, 1470	Not ready
930	Abstracts, Painter's work, 1470	Not ready
931	Abstract, 1470	Being worked on
932	Abstract, 1470	Not ready
933	Fastolf's College, 27th August 1470	Being worked on

To view the full details about a letter click on either the ID or the title. The letter will be displayed on a tabbed page as shown below:

The image shows a web form titled "Edit Letter 926". At the top right, there are buttons for "HOME" and "LIST LETTERS" (circled 1). Below the title bar is a navigation menu with tabs: "Date/From/To" (highlighted), "Text", "Phrase/Comment", "Data", and "All" (circled 2). A "Save" button is circled 3. The form contains several input fields: "Letter ID" (926), "Type of Document" (Letter), "Era" (Gairdner), "Topic(s)" (blessing, siege), "Title" (Margaret Paston to Sir John Paston, 15th July 1470), "Date" (with "Years -" and "Years +" fields, circled 5), "From" (Margaret Paston), "From Reference(s)" (Margaret01), "To" (Sir John Paston), "To Reference(s)", "Picture" (Choose File), and "Position" (0). On the right side, there is a "Public Notes" field (circled 5) and a "Hidden Notes" field. At the bottom right, there are buttons for "Analyse Words" and "View Letter" (circled 4). At the very bottom, there are "HOME" and "LIST LETTERS" buttons.

The numbered items on the image are:

- (1) **The Menu Buttons** – these appear on all administration pages – in this case and because we are in the Letter's section of the administration, there are buttons to take us **Home** (back to the main administration menu as mentioned earlier) and back to the **List Letters** screen. Each administration page will have its own set of menu buttons which will relate to the

section of the site you are currently viewing, though the **Home** button will always be present unless you are on the main administration menu itself.

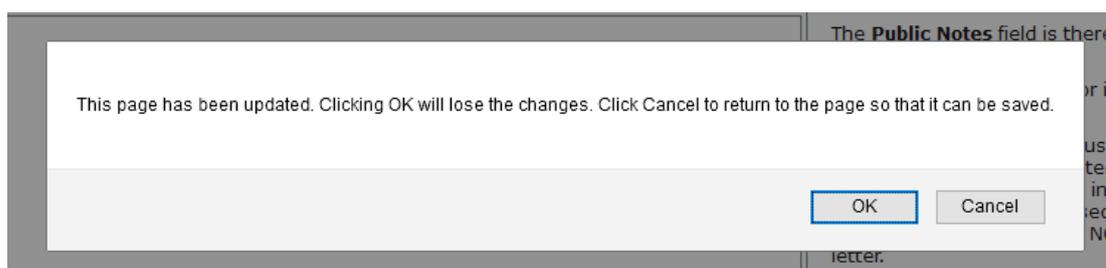
The menu buttons are always duplicated at the bottom of the page.

- (2) **The Tabs.** Because there is lots of information that needs to be taken care of per letter, this page has been broken up into four main sections, each of which is accessed via one of the TAB controls which, again, appear at both the top and the bottom of the page.

All of the tabs will show the Letter ID and the system will remember the last tab used so that, if you move away from the page to another, then once you return it will be on the tab you last saw.

The tabs are:

- **Date/From/To** – this tab shows the date the letter was written (if known) along with the information about who it was from and to. In addition, where there is a usable picture of the original letter available (unless it is in the British Library) we may have that picture uploaded here.
 - **Text** – this tab contains the text of the original letter, the full translation (if it has been filled in) along with the public and hidden notes.
 - **Phrase/Comment** – this tab is where you can enter the phrases (where a section of the letter has a number of words where just converting each word into modern equivalent wouldn't make a lot of sense) and comments (where a specific item in the original letter needs further explanation).
 - **Data** – this tab primarily displays the:
 - Fenn, Gairdner and Davis information;
 - Details of where the original letter is located;
 - Any links to the letter images on the British Library website;
 - Information about the scribe (the person who physically wrote the letter, if known and if it wasn't the author themselves);
 - The current letter status.
 - **All** – clicking this tab displays a page with all the fields present together. You might prefer this view as opposed to the separate sections.
- (3) **The Save button. IMPORTANT!** When you make changes to the information held about a letter it will **not** be stored in the database until you click the **Save** button. Please get into the habit of clicking this every so often just to make sure that entered data isn't lost. If you forget to click **Save** before moving to another screen then the system may warn you that information could be lost and give you a chance to backtrack and save the changes:



- (4) **Additional Buttons.** There are several other screens associated with a letter which can be brought up using one of these buttons:
- **Analyse Words** – this checks each word of the original letter to see which words have still to be added to the built-in dictionary.
 - **Side By Side Comparison** – this button only appear if there is a picture saved with the record of the original letter (or a transcription of it). Those letters that have links to the original letter text on the British Library website won't have this button.
 - **View Letter** – this displays the letter in various different formats including the original, the original with word links, with substituted modern words and phrases, and the modern translation (if it has been entered).
- (5) **Help Information** – the right hand column shows the help specific to letters as well as some possibly useful links.

Specific Tasks

Here we will tackle specific tasks that may be required for a letter. These have been listed in order of difficulty starting with the simplest.

Checking that the linked letter images are correct

If the picture is linked to directly, such as in the following example (letter ID 15 – *Sir Thomas Holland to Lady Muriel Knyvett, 16th February 1603*) then this is can be done in two ways.

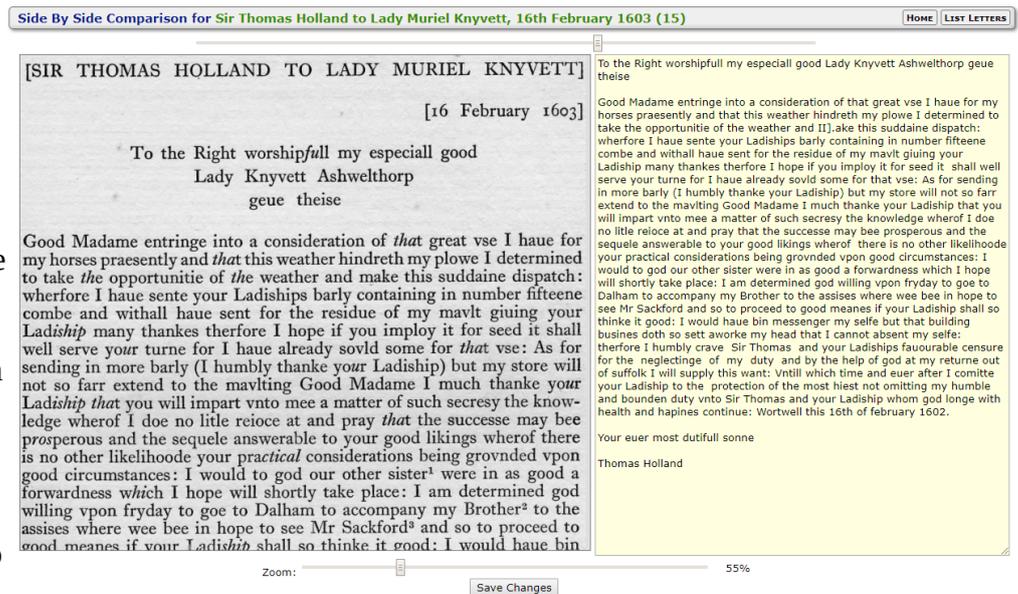
The first method is best done with the tab setting at **All** to enable both the entered text and the picture to both be onscreen at the same time.

First hover your mouse over the thumbnail picture until the full sized version is displayed. Then drag the picture into a convenient position using the mouse so that you can see both the picture and the letter text. In the case shown here, the letter in the picture is obviously not the original hand-written version but is a transcription. It can be seen that the text in the picture matches the text.

To close the picture just double click on it.

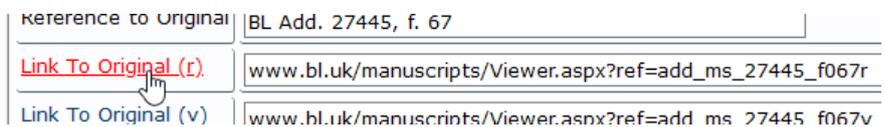
The second method is to click the **Side By Side Comparison** button. This brings up a new screen with the picture on the left and the editable letter text on the right.

You can adjust the zoom using either the slider underneath the picture and text or by using your mouse wheel over the picture. You can also drag the picture around in order to position as you require. The slider above the picture and text changes the divider position between the picture and text. In the above example the picture has been give more width than the text.



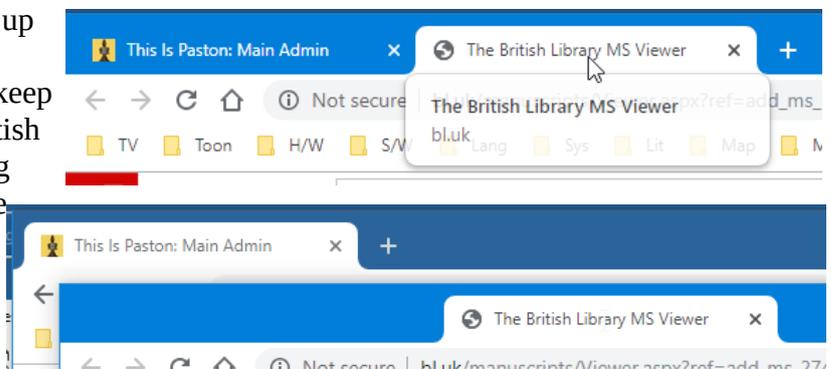
Checking against the British Library linked picture(s)

Checking the text against the original letter will not be quite so straightforward as you will need to work with two web browser windows onscreen at the same time. This may not be too easy if your screen isn't too large.

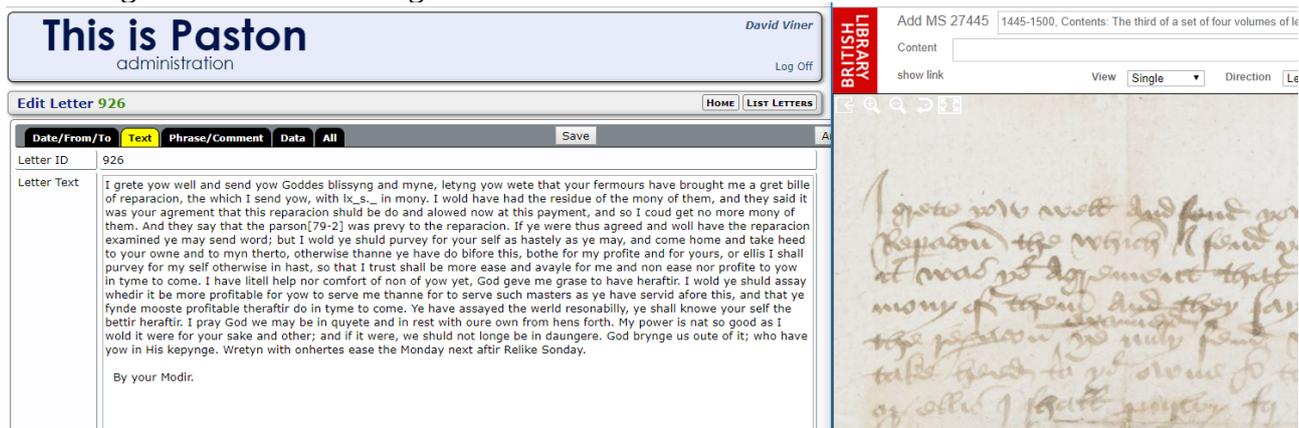


First of all, click the **Link To Original (r)** link on the **Data** tab (or near the bottom of the page if you are using the **All** tab). This will only work if there is a link in the field to the right. If that field is empty then please flag it up with us via the forum as all the letters allocated to volunteers should have a link here if they do not have the picture loaded with the record.

When you click the link, it will open up in a new tab in your web browser. However, you don't want to have to keep moving between tabs so grab the British Library tab with your mouse and drag downwards until it separates from the rest of the web browser into a new window. If you drag the Paston website window to the left until your mouse is at the edge of the screen and release the mouse then that window should fill half of the screen. The right hand side of the screen will then show the other



windows you have open – just click on the one with the British Library screen and it will fill the remaining half of the screen to give a view similar to that shown below.



The screenshot shows a web application for 'This is Paston' administration. The user is 'David Viner'. The main content area is titled 'Edit Letter 926' and has tabs for 'Date/From/To', 'Text', 'Phrase/Comment', 'Data', and 'All'. The 'Text' tab is selected, showing the letter ID '926' and the following text: 'I grete yow well and send yow Goddes blissing and myne, letyng yow wete that your fermours have brought me a gret bille of reparacion, the which I send yow, with lx_s_ in mony. I wold have had the residue of the mony of them, and they said it was your agreement that this reparacion shuld be do and alowed now at this payment, and so I couod get no more mony of them. And they say that the parson[79-2] was prey to the reparacion. If ye were thus agreed and wold have the reparacion examined ye may send word; but I wold ye shuld purvey for your self as hastily as ye may, and come home and take heed to your owne and to myn therto, otherwise thanne ye have do bifore this, bothe for my profite and for yours, or ellis I shall purvey for my self otherwise in hast, so that I trust shall be more ease and avayle for me and non ease nor profite to yow in tyme to come. I have litell help nor comfort of non of yow yet, God geve me grase to have heraftr. I wold ye shuld assay whedir it be more profitable for yow to serve me thanne for to serve such masters as ye have servid afore this, and that ye fynde mooste profitable theraftr do in tyme to come. Ye have assayed the world resonably, ye shall knowe your self the bettir heraftr. I pray God we may be in quyete and in rest with oure own from hens forth. My power is nat so good as I wold it were for your sake and other; and if it were, we shuld not longe be in daungere. God bringe us oute of it; who have yow in His keypyng. Wretn with onherets ease the Monday next afir Relike Sondag. By your Modir.'

(Please note that the above instructions are for Windows 7 to 10 only – other operating systems may require different methods to position two windows side by side.)

If you switch to the **Text** tab (or, if using the **All** tab then scroll the screen so that the letter text field is shown) then you should now be able to determine if the text on the British Library picture corresponds to the we have in the letter text.

(still to document)

Each letter should be checked to make sure it is linked to the correct from/to people from the Personnel section (where possible).

The text of each letter needs to be checked to make sure it has been entered correctly and the text matches the source document (Davis, Gairdner etc.).

Where necessary, any references/notes within the text added to the source document are removed and converted into phrases and comments.

Any person mentioned within the text of the letter needs to be linked to their Personnel database entry (where known).

Any location or place name mentioned within the text needs to be linked to an entry in the Locations database.

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