

The book by local historian Emmeline Garnett about the relationship between George Wright and John Marsden is entitled **John Marsden's Will**.

The following details are from the Google Books website

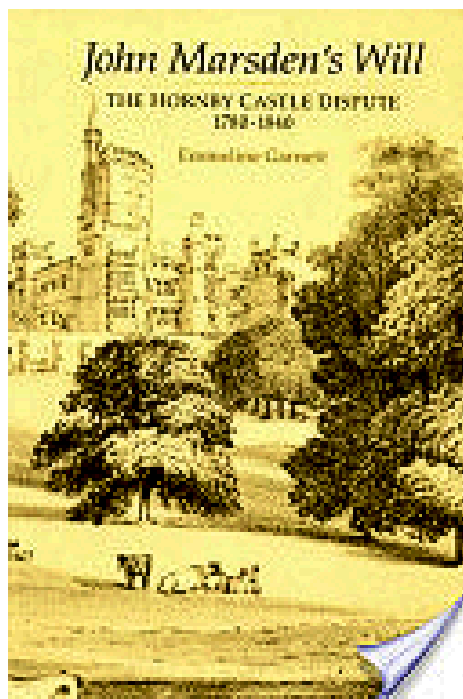
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## John Marsden's Will

Hornby Castle Dispute, 1780-1840

Emmeline Garnett

, 1998 - History 225 pages



*John Marsden's Will* is the story of an extraordinary legal case. John Marsden himself was a mentally retarded Lancashire gentleman, looked after by his aunt. A servant, George Wright, became the aunt's lover and steward of Marsden's estate, continuing in office even after the aunt's death. When the unmarried Marsden finally died, his will effectively left Hornby Castle to the steward.

The will was then contested by the heir at law, Admiral Sandford Tatham, basing his claim on the incapacity of his cousin to understand and therefore endorse a complex will. Because John Marsden's mental state was at the heart of the case, depositions were taken by sides from all who had known him. This evidence allow us not only to follow the case but also to see the personalities and emotions of the men and women involved. In particular, it enables us to see Marsden himself in remarkable detail, from his fruitless attempts to learn his tables to his death from a stroke while in an earth closet. It is very rare for a handicapped person's life in any period before the twentieth century to be traceable in this way.

Tatham faced the problem that English courts were loath to overturn a will. The admiral suffered numerous set-backs in his attempt to oust Wright, as the action was fought out in a variety of courts followed by appeals, delay, manoeuvre and intrigue. The prolonged struggle and its outcome was followed by an enthralled public throughout the country.