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## WILLIAM CAXTON AND SUFFOLK

By N. F. BLAKE, M.A., B.LITT.

In 1922 Mr. Richard Holworthy<sup>1</sup> began to catalogue the muniments of Lord Winterton at Shillinglee Park, Sussex. Among these muniments was a series of fifteenth century deeds which referred to the manor of Little Wratting in Suffolk. These documents show that the manor was acquired by Henry Turnour of Haverhill in the latter half of the fifteenth century. As Lord Winterton is in direct descent from this Henry Turnour, it is to be assumed that these deeds remained in the family's possession from the fifteenth to the twentieth century. But among the earlier owners of the manor were a certain Philip Caxton and his wife Denise, who had two children, Philip and William. Mr. Holworthy thought that this William Caxton could be the same person as William Caxton the printer, although he did not pursue the matter further at that time. In 1941, however, Mr. Holworthy, then assistant archivist to the county of Kent, brought the documents to the notice of Mr. Alan Keen, a specialist in ancient muniments. Mr. Keen acquired them from Lord Winterton, but sold them again to Lord Kemsley on behalf of Kemsley Newspapers Ltd. In December 1942 these documents were accepted on permanent loan from Kemsley Newspapers by the Trustees of the British Museum and were catalogued as Loan 25. Despite war conditions almost all daily and provincial newspapers carried an account of the loan and by many it was hailed as an important landmark in the history of Caxton studies.<sup>2</sup> Little, however, has been done with the charters since then. In 1951 they were exhibited as 'The Caxton Deeds' in the Town Hall, Tenterden, as part of The

<sup>1</sup> I was unable to consult Mr. Holworthy, who died in 1961, about the discovery of the documents. The following account is based largely on newspaper cuttings, generously supplied to me by Mr. F. Hull, Kent County Archivist, from the papers of the late Mr. Holworthy.

<sup>2</sup> Among the more important newspaper articles appearing on 18/12/42 may be mentioned those in *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, *Daily Sketch*, *Glasgow Daily Record*, *Newcastle Daily Journal*, *The Star*, *Sussex Daily News*, *The Times*, and *Western Mail and South Wales News*. Informative articles also appeared in *The Sunday Times* 20/12/42 and *World's Press News* 24/12/42. The news also reached among others *Christian Science Monitor*, Boston, U.S.A., 18/12/42 and *Saturday Night*, Toronto, 20/2/43. Two mistakes appear regularly in these articles. First, the documents are not all in Latin; two are in English. Secondly many show a photograph of a seal above the caption 'Seal of William Caxton. The only one so far discovered'. But the seal is that of Philip Caxton on Additional Charter 75508.

Festival of Britain.<sup>3</sup> In 1959 Mr. Roy Thomson bought out Kemsley Newspapers Ltd., and thus became the owner of the documents as well. After correspondence between the British Museum and Mr. Thomson, the latter decided to offer the documents outright to the Museum and this gift was accepted by the Trustees of the British Museum on 14 July 1962. Consequently the documents have been added to the permanent collection and they have been recatalogued as Additional Charters 75505-75519.<sup>4</sup>

Although the documents 'open up a promising line of research' (*The Times* 18/12/42), little has been written about them since they have been at the British Museum. The fullest discussion as to whether the two William Caxtons are the same person is that by Mr. Holworthy in the guide to the Exhibition of Books at Tenterden. The article 'Historic Caxton Records' by Sir John Squire in *The Sunday Times* for 20/12/42 is informative and it was followed by a lively correspondence in the same paper. Otherwise the depositing of the manuscripts in the British Museum is referred to briefly in the *British Museum Quarterly*, xv (1941-50), p. 29, *The Year's Work in English Studies* (1943), p. 74, and *The Proceedings of The Suffolk Institute of Archæology*, xxiv (1948), p. 184. Yet most of these accounts are not generally available. It would seem, therefore, none too soon to publish a full abstract of the documents together with the evidence which has so far been adduced that the two William Caxtons are the same person. This could then serve as both a basis for and an incentive to further investigation and discussion of the identity of William Caxton of Little Wrattling.

Little is known about the early life of William Caxton the printer. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he himself says that he was born in Kent. In the prologue to *The Recuyell of the Historiys of Troye* he says that '[I] was born & lerned myn englissh in kente in the weeld where I doubte not is spoken as brode and rude englissh as is in any place of englond'.<sup>5</sup> But the manor of Little Wrattling is in the S.W. corner of Suffolk not far from Essex and Cambridgeshire, and so at first sight it seems surprising that anyone

<sup>3</sup> A guide was issued under the title *Exhibition of Books. The Town Hall, Tenterden, Kent. 22 July until 4 August 1951*. On pp. 7 ff. there is an account of 'The Caxton Deeds' by Richard Holworthy, Archivist to Kent County Council. Tenterden has been suggested as a possible birthplace of William Caxton, because we know that a Thomas Caxton lived there. But no connexion has been proved between this Thomas and William Caxton.

<sup>4</sup> When the documents were recatalogued the original sequence was maintained except that numbers 9 and 10 have become Additional Charters 75514 and 75513 respectively and numbers 6 and 8 were reversed, number 6 becoming Additional Charter 75512 and number 8 Additional Charter 75510.

<sup>5</sup> W. J. B. Crotch, *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton*, 1928, p. 4 [Henceforth referred to as Crotch.]

should have connected the William Caxton from Wrating with the printer. But Wrating was a part of the Honor of Clare,<sup>6</sup> as was the Weald in Kent—and it is thus possible that officials in the Honor might have moved or been moved from one part of the Honor to another. It is also known that a Caxton family which owned the important manor of Causton, near Hadlow, in Kent also had a branch in Essex.<sup>7</sup> William the printer has been connected with this family, though no proof has been found to support the theory. Yet it is interesting to bear in mind that there were branches of a Caxton family in Kent and E. Anglia.

The date of Caxton's birth is usually placed within the period 1413–23, though modern scholars favour a later rather than an earlier date. The first time his name is found in the records is in the Accounts of the Mercers' Company for 1438 where it is recorded that John Large and William Caxton were apprenticed to Robert Large, an influential mercer and an alderman of the city of London. As boys usually entered on their apprenticeship at the age of sixteen, this would mean that Caxton was born about 1422. But other scholars have suggested that, as in 1475 Caxton wrote 'age crepeth on me dayly and febleth all the bodye'<sup>8</sup> and as he was in business on his own in Bruges in the early 1440's, he was perhaps born earlier than 1422.<sup>9</sup> Can these facts be related to the present documents? The first of these which is from 1420 records a quitclaim of the manor by John Acy and William Paston in favour of Philip Caxton. It can be assumed that Philip bought the manor about this time and that he began to live there shortly afterwards, for in the later documents he is described as *nuper de Wrattyng Parua*. The earlier history of the manor is fairly clear<sup>10</sup> and it had never been in the possession of the Caxton family previously. Thus it is not improbable that Philip and his family had lived in another part of the country before he purchased the manor. Philip had two sons of whom the elder, Philip, was born in 1412. It is thus possible to think that William was born about 1415. Now although this date falls within the accepted dates of Caxton's birth, it has two weaknesses. First, modern scholarship tends to favour a date after 1420 for the printer's birth; and secondly as William could not have been older than five when he left Kent, one wonders

<sup>6</sup> For the Honor of Clare see I. J. Sanders, *English Baronies*, 1960, pp. 34–5, and G.E.C., *The Complete Peerage*, III, 1913, pp. 242 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, III, p. 1290, s.v. CAXTON, William.

<sup>8</sup> Crotch p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of his date of birth see Crotch pp. xxvii ff. and W. Blades, *The Biography and Typography of William Caxton*, 1882, pp. 5–6.

<sup>10</sup> W. A. Copinger, *The Manors of Suffolk*, v., 1909, pp. 317–8; note also Inquisition Post Mortem of Philip Caxton in 10 Henry VI 18.

whether Caxton in later life would have written that he learned his English there or whether he would have been familiar with Kentish English. This is something which later research must decide.

We know little of Caxton's father. Caxton himself tells us that he is 'bounden to praye for my fader and moders soules that in my youthe sette me to scole'.<sup>11</sup> From this we may assume that his father was fairly well-to-do. We also know from another source that the apprentices to the mercers were usually the sons of gentlemen,<sup>12</sup> and we would expect this to be true of Caxton's father. There is no reason to believe, as many have, that his father was himself a mercer. When we consider what we know about Philip Caxton there is nothing which contradicts what we know of Caxton's father; on the contrary he fills the position admirably. Philip Caxton, who is described as 'gentleman' or 'esquire' in the charters, is also mentioned in the issues of the Exchequer for 24 July 6 Henry V: 'To Thomas, Duke of Exeter. In money paid to him, by the hands of Philip Caxton, his attorney, in advance as well for 1000*l.* yearly, paid at the King's Exchequer, as for the support of the Earl of Oxford, in the King's custody by reason of his minority,—158*l.* 12*s.* 3½*d.*'<sup>13</sup> From this it is reasonable to suppose that Philip Caxton was a fairly important and well-to-do man who enjoyed the protection of certain noblemen. It is interesting to note that not only does the Earl of Oxford appear in two of the charters printed here (and one could I think assume that he was one of the lords enfeoffed in the manor by Philip Caxton, as mentioned in Additional Charter 75507), but also he is mentioned by Caxton in two prologues to his printed works, *The Fayttes of Armes* and *The Four Sons of Aymon*.<sup>14</sup> In the latter Caxton mentions that he had also translated for the Earl a French book about Robert Earl of Oxford, one of his ancestors, although no copy of this survives. Thomas Duke of Exeter is also mentioned by Caxton in one of his printed works, in this case the prologue to *Tullius of Olde Age*.<sup>15</sup> It is tempting to think that Caxton was in these places honouring his father's clients and protectors.

It has been mentioned already that the earliest reference to William Caxton the printer so far discovered is that to his being apprenticed to Robert Large, a mercer, in 1438. This Robert

<sup>11</sup> Prologue to *Charles the Grete*, Crotch p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> John Wheeler, *A Treatise of Commerce*, 1601. For a discussion of this passage see Crotch p. xxx.

<sup>13</sup> F. Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, 1837, p. 359.

<sup>14</sup> Crotch pp. 103, 106-7. The prologue to *The Four Sons of Aymon* is not extant in Caxton's own print, but survives from an edition of 1554, though there is no need to doubt that it is genuine. For John Earl of Oxford see G.E.C., *The Complete Peerage*, x, 1945, pp. 236-9.

<sup>15</sup> Crotch p. 42.

Large must have brought William Caxton to London and helped him to establish himself. On Large's death in 1441 he left William Caxton a small legacy. It is therefore of some importance that this same Robert Large is mentioned in the third charter. Here he acts as a guarantor for the younger Philip Caxton and attaches his own seal to the charter in Philip's favour. It is as though Robert Large had been keeping both sons under his wing on their father's death; although the connexion of Large with two families called Caxton could merely be a coincidence. But another link between the documents and the printer is Benedict Burgh. Caxton clearly knew 'Mayster Benet Burgh late Archedeken of Colchestre and hie chanon of saint stephens at westmestre', who had translated *Caton* 'for the erudicion of my lord Bousher Sone & heyr at that tyme to my lord the erle of Estsex',<sup>16</sup> Yet this Benet Burgh is certainly to be identified with one of the feoffees of Little Wratting; Master Benedict Burgh, mentioned in Additional Charter 75516. Among his fellow feoffees were Thomas Bouchier Archbishop of Canterbury and Henry Viscount Bouchier. It is thus possible that Caxton knew Benedict both in early life in E. Anglia and in later life at Westminster.

It was commonly held at one time that Thomas Bouchier Archbishop of Canterbury had been responsible for the introduction of printing by sending William Caxton and Robert Turnour to the Continent in order to learn the secret of printing. This theory was propounded in the seventeenth century by a Richard Atkyns, but it is no longer acceptable to modern scholars<sup>17</sup> and thus no connexion can be made between Thomas Bouchier and Caxton. But in Additional Charter 75515 mention is made of Richard, Duke of York, who owned the manor of Little Wratting. This Richard is the father of Margaret Duchess of Burgundy, for whom Caxton completed his first translation, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*. It is tempting to think that it was because he had known her father in early life that Caxton showed his translation to the Duchess of Burgundy, who thus became his patron; but there is no proof for this assumption.

William Caxton is mentioned in six of the charters, numbers 5, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 14. In 5 and 6 he is merely mentioned *en passant*,

<sup>16</sup> Crotch p. 76. For an account of Burgh, who earlier in his life held a clerical appointment in Essex, see Blades, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-5; *Dictionary of National Biography*, III, p. 315, s.v. BURGH, Benedict. For the Bouchier family see G.E.C., *The Complete Peerage*, v, 1926, pp. 137-9.

<sup>17</sup> See W. F. Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, v, 1867, pp. 362-4; Blades, *op. cit.*, p. 90. There is no mention of it in Crotch. Mr. Holworthy's attempt to cling to this story in the guide to the Exhibition of Books at Tenterden is not convincing.

but 7 and 8 are quitclaims by William Caxton. These are both dated 1438. It will be remembered that this is the first year of Caxton the printer's apprenticeship. Yet if he were only sixteen when he was apprenticed, which was the usual age then, he would have been too young to make a legal quitclaim in his own right. He would only obtain his civic majority at the age of 24, the age which Philip Caxton reached in 1436 and which he was so anxious to have recorded. It is thus possible to think that Philip Caxton's brother was 24 years old in 1438 and that that accounts for the two quitclaims being issued in that year and not in 1436;<sup>18</sup> but it is hardly conceivable that Caxton the printer began his apprenticeship at the age of 24. This is a real difficulty which must be resolved before the two Williams are accepted as the same person. William Caxton or Causton is among the witnesses to charters 13 and 14, both dated 1457. It follows that, if the two Williams are the same person, Caxton the printer must have been in England in 1457. We have no information on this point, but we do know that he paid occasional visits to England, one of which took place in 1453. Yet more important perhaps is the reference in charter 14 to 'Willyam Caxton otherwise callid Causton sadeler'. The variation in the spelling of the surname is a common feature in all documents in which the Caxtons are named, the printer's own name being spelt in a variety of ways.<sup>19</sup> But William Caxton, the printer was a mercer, and in all records and in all his books which make mention of his profession he is so described. He is already so described in a charter dated 1453.<sup>20</sup> Why then would he be referred to as a saddler in 1457? It is true that the same person could belong to more than one company and be described as for example either an ironmonger or a fishmonger,<sup>21</sup> though it is hardly likely that Caxton who spent most of his life abroad would have joined another company. There is in fact no reference to a William Caxton in the records of the Saddlers' Company and it thus remains possible that the scribe made a mistake and confused the Latin names of two companies, although this is surely a rather desperate solution. It is a problem to which there is as yet no answer.

It will be realised that there is as yet no proof for the assumption that William Caxton of Little Wratting is identical with William Caxton the printer. There are many suggestive features, such as the appearance of Robert Large and Benedict Burgh in the lives of the two William Caxtons. But there are also serious obstacles in the way of the identification. The most important of these revolves

<sup>18</sup> This was suggested by W. A. Darlington in a letter to *The Sunday Times* 27/12/42.

<sup>19</sup> See Crotch p. xxx.

<sup>20</sup> Crotch pp. cxxxiii-cxxxiv.

<sup>21</sup> To use an example quoted in a letter by J. H. Maine to *The Sunday Times* 3/1/43.

round the date of Caxton's birth: modern scholars prefer a date for the printer's birth which is too late to agree with the birth of William Caxton of Wrattynge. Until these difficulties are surmounted any identification between the two can be regarded only as hypothetical; but in view of the absence of any other information about the early life of the printer, the documents provide us with clues which should be followed up until proof is forthcoming one way or the other. It is hoped that this article will contribute towards that end.

#### THE DOCUMENTS

##### 1. *Additional Charter 75505. Latin. 1420.*

Quitclaim by William Paston and John Acy to Philip Caxton, Denise his wife and Philip's heirs of all their right in the manor of Parua Wrattynge with all its appurtenances and in all lands, tenements, rents and services with appurtenances in Parua Wrattynge, Magna Wrattynge, Thrillowe, Wederesfeld, Hauerill, Kedyngton, Berneston, Stepilbumpstede, Clare and Hanchecche [Hanchett] in Suffolk, which the said Philip and Denise had by demise and feoffment of Peter Shelton clerk, Richard Egate clerk, Robert Reve clerk and John Egate clerk. Given 15 January 7 Henry V.

One damaged seal with fancy device; another seal missing.

##### 2. *Additional Charter 75506. Latin. 1434.*

Lease made 3 September 13 Henry VI by Denise Caxton to Thomas Schypwrygthe of Hunden of certain parcels of land in her manor of Wrattynge Parua, to wit that part of the manor outside le Pales and the stone wall with a new house between the stables inside le Pales, a sun-lounge [*solarium*] built over the stable nearest the hall, and fields, meadows and commons adjoining, viz. two fields known as le Heyefeldys, Downesfeld, Cherchefeld, Schepcotecroft, Mellefeld, a meadow called Brodemedewe, and three acres of meadowland in Todeney le Helles with the garden adjacent and woods next to the manor, Smalmedewe, Carterespighthell, and le Coldmedewe together with the commons facing Kedyngton and Wrattynge Magna called Stonylond; the lease to run for six years at rent of 6d an acre for first two years and 7d an acre for last four; rent to be paid quarterly at usual feasts. Thomas is to cut down the trees for his own domestic use and repair of the fences; and he agrees to repair any damage done by his animals. A clause of distress allowing Denise to distrain for unpaid rent. Thomas is to keep all corn grown on the manor in the barns of the manor, and all

his animals' dung is to be used on the manor. Denise is responsible for the upkeep of the buildings so that Thomas' animals suffer no hurt. Thomas is to share half the profits of the manorial courts and half the expenses of a seneschal. Thomas and Denise are to divide all fish, birds and game caught. Thomas may lease the lands a further three years at 7d an acre on giving a year's notice to Denise, and he has right of entry for three months after expiration of lease. A clause of warranty by Denise, her son Philip and her heirs. Given at Wrattyng on the date abovementioned.

One seal with fancy device.

3. *Additional Charter 75507. English. 1436.*

Indenture of sale by Philip Caxton of Lityll Wrattyng, Suffolk, Gentleman, to John Cristemasse, citizen and draper of London, of the manor of Wrattyng together with all its lands etc. and with the advowsons of the churches of Wrattyng and Berneston, which was once the property of Sir Thomas Hamgrave Knight, and which was recently the property of the said Philip Caxton's father, the late Philip Caxton, who in his lifetime enfeoffed certain lords and others in the manor to the use of his son Philip. The said Philip Caxton agrees to obtain a release with livery of seisin of the said manor with the advowsons of the two churches from all the feoffees now living before the following Candlemass, and within fourteen days of being seised of the manor Philip shall in turn make a release with livery of seisin of the said manor with the advowsons of the two churches with their appurtenances to John or to whomsoever he shall assign. He shall also obtain a quitclaim from Thomas West of Sudbury and his wife Denise, Philip's mother, of all their rights in the said manor; and all the evidences are to be delivered to John. In return John is to pay Philip 200 marks, of which £100 has already been paid. If Philip breaks any clause of the indenture, he and his heirs are liable to John for £200. As Philip's seal is not well known, he has had the seals of the Mayoralty of the City of London and of the aldermen Robert Large and Thomas Cateworthe attached to the indenture. John Michell, Mayor of London, after examining Philip recorded at Philip's special request his age of 24 and the above agreements. Dated 17 December 15 Henry VI.

Seals: (i) Damaged seal of Mayoralty; (ii) Philip Caxton's damaged seal (armorial:(?) three stags' heads, over all a bend engrailed ermine; inscribed . . . *philippi caxtoni*); (iii) and (iv) fancy devices.

4. *Additional Charter 75508. Latin. 1438.*

Demise by Philip Caxton, son of Philip Caxton deceased, and William Brocrofte clerk to William Bourghier esq., John Wryther of Wyntoma, John Cristemasse, Andrew Michell and Thomas Clerk, citizens of London, of the whole manor of Parua Wrattyng in Suffolk with all appurtenances and commodities whatsoever in Wrattyng, Haueryll, Wyghtisfeld and Busted in Suffolk and Essex, which Philip and William had by demise and feoffment of Henry Bishop of Winchester, Thomas Bishop of Durham, John de Veer, Earl of Oxford, Richard de Veer esq., William Paston of Paston, William Tresham, William Haddeshole, John Tilney, Henry Bradley, William Oldehalle, William Giffard and William Brainton. A clause of warranty by Philip Caxton. Witnesses: John Burgoyne, John Cukkowe, John Serle, William Barker, Nicholas Walpool etc. Given at Wrattyng 20 July 16 Henry VI.

Seals: (i) Philip Caxton's armorial; inscribed *sigill . . . pi caxtoni*; (ii) fancy device.

5. *Additional Charter 75509. Latin. 1438.*

Assignment by Denise, formerly wife of Philip Caxton, to John Cristemasse, citizen and draper of London, and Edmund Ekeney of London, of the whole manor of Blunteshall in Parua Wrattyng with all its appurtenances in Suffolk and Essex with reversion at her death to her son Philip Caxton and his heirs, and of the lands etc. in Parua Wrattyng called Gardyneres, which she held jointly with her husband Philip Caxton of the gift and feoffment of John Sorell of Bockesham senior, and of the lands etc. which she with her husband Philip acquired piecemeal from various people in Parua Wrattyng, Magna Wrattyng, Kedyngton and Haverhill with reversion at her death to her son William Caxton; but within the manor Denise reserves to herself for her life the parlour, the buttery and the building known as le Larderhows with all the rooms built above them, her easements in the kitchen, bakery and the garden within the stone walls, together with free entry and exit for herself, her servants and assigns. For this John shall pay Denise 19<sup>22</sup> marks 6s. 8d. annually, payable quarterly at the usual feasts, and her son William Caxton 26s. 8d. payable quarterly as long as Denise lives. During Denise's lifetime John Cristemasse and Edmund and their heirs shall bear all

<sup>22</sup> There have been attempts to erase the 19 in three of its four occurrences in the charter.

expenses for the upkeep of the manor and lands; they shall stable the horses of Denise's friends visiting the manor and, provided they have hay available, they shall provide food-stuffs for two horses four times a year for a day and a night; they shall house all the corn grown in the fields of the manor within the barns of the manor and nowhere else. If the rent or any part of it is not paid within fifteen days of the due term, Denise has the right to distrain on their goods, and John and Edmund shall not resist any such distraint; if the rent or any part of it is not paid within forty days of the due term Denise has right of re-entry. Furthermore John Cristemasse is liable to pay Thomas . . . and John . . .<sup>23</sup> £40 at the following Christmas in accordance with a certain charter. However the said Thomas and John acknowledge that if John Cristemasse and Edmund Ekeney carry out faithfully all the clauses of this indenture, then the aforesaid liability is annulled. Witnesses: William Gyffard, John Cornewaille, John Thommesson, John Burgoyne, John Cukkow etc. Given at the foresaid Parua Wrattyng 16 August 16 Henry VI.

Two seals with fancy devices; third seal missing.

6. *Additional Charter 75510. Latin. 1438.*

Quitclaim by Philip Caxton, son and heir of Philip Caxton esq. deceased, to John Cristemasse, citizen and draper of London, and Edmund Ekeney of London and their heirs of all his right in the whole manor of Blunteshall with its appurtenances and in all lands etc. called Gardyneres and in all other lands, whereas during the lifetime of Denise Caxton, Philip's mother, John Cristemasse and Edmund Ekeney hold of her the manor of Blunteshall in Parua Wrattyng with its appurtenances in Suffolk and Essex with reversion after the death of Denise, Philip's mother, to him and his heirs, and all the lands etc. called Gardyneres which Denise held with Philip Caxton her husband of John Sorell of Bockesham senior and all the lands in Parua Wrattyng, Magna Wrattyng, Kedyngton and Haverhill with reversion after Denise's death to William Caxton, Philip's brother, in accordance with the deed made between Denise and John Cristemasse and Edmund. A clause of warranty by Philip and his heirs. Witnesses: William Giffard, John Cornewaille, John Thommesson, John Burgoyne, John

<sup>23</sup> The surnames are not legible and there are one or two other words which I have been unable to read. However, the sense seems to be as that given above.

Cukkow etc. Given at Parua Wrattyng 17 October 17 Henry VI.

Armorial seal of Philip Caxton, inscribed *sigillum philippi caxtoni*.

7. *Additional Charter 75511. Latin. 1438.*

Quitclaim by William Caxton, one of the sons and heirs of Philip Caxton esq. deceased, to John Cristemasse, citizen and draper of London, and Edmund Ekeney of London and their heirs of all his right in the whole manor of Blunteshall in Parua Wrattyng with all its appurtenances in Suffolk and Essex. A clause of warranty by William and his heirs. Witnesses: William Giffard, John Cornewaille, John Thommesson, John Burgoyne, John Cukkow etc. Given at Parua Wrattyng 19 October 17 Henry VI.

One seal with fancy device.

8. *Additional Charter 75512. Latin. 1438.*

Quitclaim by William Caxton, one of the sons and heirs of Philip Caxton esq. deceased, to John Cristemasse, citizen and draper of London, and Edmund Ekeney of London and their heirs of all his right in the lands etc. in Parua Wrattyng called Gardyneres, which Denise Caxton his mother held jointly with her husband Philip Caxton of the gift and feoffment of John Sorell of Bockesham senior and of all the lands etc. which Denise with her husband Philip acquired piecemeal from various people in Parua Wrattyng, Magna Wrattyng, Kedyngton and Haverhill, with reversion after Denise's death to William Caxton and his heirs, which land John Cristemasse and Edmund Ekeney now hold of Denise Caxton during her lifetime. A clause of warranty by William and his heirs. Witnesses: William Giffard, John Cornewaille, John Thommesson, John Burgoyne, John Cukkow etc. Given at Wrattyng Parua 19 October 17 Henry VI.

One seal with fancy device.

9. *Additional Charter 75513. Latin. 1440.*

Final concord made in the Royal Court at Westminster 15 days after Easter 18 Henry VI before the justices Richard Neuton, James Strangways, William Paston and Thomas Fulthorp and others between John Cristemasse and Edmund Ekeney, querents, and Philip Caxton of Parua Thirlowe, son.

and heir of Philip Caxton late of Parua Wrattyng, deforciant, concerning the manor of Parua Wrattyng called Blunteshall with its appurtenances; the advowsons of the churches of Parua Wrattyng and Barneston; two messuages, four gardens, 160 acres of land, twelve acres of meadowland, sixty acres of pasturage, twelve acres of woodland and 6s. 8d. rent in Parua Wrattyng and Barneston in Suffolk; and 36s. rent with appurtenances in Stepilbumpstede, Hempstede, Sampford, Fynchyngfeld, Hauerell and Kedyngton in Essex; and twenty acres of land and 6s. rent in Shudycampes, Horseth and Wykham in Cambridgeshire. Philip recognises that the manor, lands and advowsons are John's right by virtue of his own gift to John and Edmund; a clause of warranty by Philip and his heirs. In return for which . . . <sup>24</sup>

10. *Additional Charter 75514. Latin. 1440.*

Quitclaim by Edmund Ekeney of London to John Crystemasse, citizen and draper of London, and to his heirs of all his right in the lands etc called Gardeners and Bukkes and in all lands etc. which Denise late the wife of Philip Caxton acquired jointly with her husband Philip piecemeal from various people in Parua Wrattyng; Magna Wrattyng, Kedyngton and Hauerhill. Given 28 July 18 Henry VI.

One seal with fancy device in straw frame.

11. *Additional Charter 75515. Latin. 1441.*

Letters of attorney of Richard, Duke of York, Earl of March and Ulster, Lord of Wyggemore and Clare, appointing William Hoberd and Robert Burgh his attorneys to deliver to William Oldehalle Knight, Richard's chamberlain, full seisin in his manor in Parua Wrottyng called Blunteshall and in the advowson of the church of the same town together with a water mill in accordance with Philip's charter in favour of the said William. Given at Parua Wrottyng on Passion Sunday 19 Henry VI. Signed: R. York.

Portion of Duke's large seal with inscription . . . *gemore et de clare.*

12. *Additional Charter 75516. Latin. 1456.*

Demise by Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, formerly Bishop of Ely, John Veer, Earl of Oxford,

<sup>24</sup> The charter is incomplete and ends with *Et pro hac recognicione.*

Henry Viscount Bourghchier, Thomas Fyndern Knight, Thomas Tyrell Knight, John Doreward, Master Benedict Burgh clerk, John Flegge esq. and Agatha his wife to John Fyncham Gentilman, Henry Caldebek esq., Robert Deen, Simon Poley, John Yates, Master Richard Bumpsted, John Hervy chaplain, John Rysby chaplain, Henry Banyard and John Massenger of their manor of Parua Wrattyng called Blountysshall with its appurtenances with all lands etc. appertaining in Parua Wrattyng, Magna Wrattyng, Magna Thyrlowe, Parua Thyrlowe, Wytheresfeld, Hauerhill, Kedyngton, Berneston, Stepilbumpsted, Clare and Hanchech in Suffolk and Essex together with the advowsons of the churches of Parua Wrattyng and Berneston. Witnesses: William Berneston, John Kelyng, John Meyre, John Stubbyng, John Stalon, John Dowe, John Burgoyne, Thomas Shipwright, James Stacy, Robert Derle, John Cukko, John Ryvyll smith, William Pulter, John Grygge etc. Given at Parua Wrattyng 6 October 35 Henry VI.

Nine seals, two armorial.

13. *Additional Charter 75517. Latin. 1457.*

Quitclaim by Denise, late the wife of Philip Caxton esq. of Wrattyng Parua in Suffolk, to Henry Turnour of Hauerhill, Philip Fyncham, Henry Caldebek, Simon Poley, Master Richard Bumpstede clerk, John Rysby and John Hervy chaplains, John Yates, Robert Deen, Henry Baynard and John Goldsmyth of all her right in the manor of Wrottyng Parua called Blunteshall, in the advowsons of the churches of Parua Wrottyng and Berneston in Suffolk, and in a tenement called Gardeners and forty acres of land with appurtenances in Wrottyng Magna, Wrottyng Parua and Kedyngton in Suffolk. A clause of warranty by Denise and her heirs. Witnesses: John Clopton, John Denston, John Harleston esq., Robert Phelepot, William Poklyngton, Ralph Felmessham, William Causton, John Dentard etc. Given 6 November 36 Henry VI.

One seal with fancy device.

14. *Additional Charter 75518. English. 1457.*

Indenture made 6 November 36 Henry VI between Henry Turnour Gentilman and Thomas West and Denise his wife, late the wife of Philip Caxton, whereby Thomas and Denise agree to deliver all evidences, estreats, monuments, rentals and court

rolls belonging to the manor of Lityll Wrottyng called Bluntys-hall in Suffolk or to the lands and tenements called Gardeners in Wrottyng or to the advowsons of the churches of Litill Wrottyng and Barnardeston or to any part of them to whomsoever the said Henry, his heirs or executors shall appoint to the said Thomas and Denise; and Thomas and Denise also agree that they and all their feoffees in and of the lands etc. abovementioned or any part of them shall allow recovery to be made of the same by the said Henry, his feoffees, heirs or executors at any time so ordained. In return for which Henry shall pay Denise £23 in the following way: £12 to William Pokelyngton, 40s to William Caxton otherwise called Causton saddler, 26s 8d to Ralph Felmesham, 4 marks to William Barneby priest, and £5 and a gown worth 6s 8d or the 6s 8d in cash to Denise herself. Thomas and Denise acknowledge that 40s of this £5 has been paid by Henry to Denise on the date of this indenture, and the remainder, viz. £3, is to be paid at the Candlemass next following the date of this indenture. Thomas and Denise also acquit Henry and his heirs of all obligations to them except for the £3 and the abovementioned gown. Witnesses: John Clopton, John Denston, John Harleston esquires, Roger Phelpot, William Pokelyngton, Ralph Felmesham, William Caxton, John Dendard, John Munyng etc. Given the date abovesaid.

One seal with fancy device.

15. *Additional Charter 75519. Latin. 1467.*

Letters of attorney of John Fyncham Gentilman, Robert Deen, Simon Poley, Master Richard Bumpstede clerk, John Rysby chaplain and Henry Banyard appointing Walter Rys and Thomas Vnderhill their attorneys to deliver to Henry Turnour esq. of Hauerhyll in Suffolk and Margaret his wife full seisin of their manor of Blountys Halle with its appurtenances in Parua Wrattyng, Magna Wrattyng, Magna Thyrlowe, Parua Thyrlowe, Wythersfeld, Hauerhyll, Kedyngton, Bernardeston, Bumpstede ad Turrim, Clare and Hanchacch [Hanchett] in Suffolk and Essex together with the advowson of the church of Parua Wrattyng in accordance with their former charter. Given 30 January 6 Edward IV.

Six seals with fancy devices.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

The Holworthy Catalogue is now in the West Sussex Record Office at Chichester. Mr. F. W. Steer, the Sussex County Archivist, has kindly checked my article against the catalogue and he has informed me that the catalogue lists no other Wrattling charters. But on 28 November 1961 two charters which clearly belong to this series were sold at Sotheby's. They were bought by C. W. Traylen Ltd. of Guildford, who sold them to Francis Edwards Ltd. I have, however, been unable to discover who is the present owner of the charters and I have not been able to consult them. The following description is from the Sotheby Sale Catalogue<sup>25</sup> (and for ease of reference I have continued the numbering of the series).

16. Quit-claim by William Burchier, knt., John Crystemesse, Edmund Ekeney, John Writher, and Thomas Clerk, to Thomas, Bishop of Ely, Henry, Lord of Bourghier, knt., Thomas Fyndern, knt., Thomas Terell, knt., John Doreward, Master Benedict Burgh, clerk, John Flegg, and Agatha his wife, of all their right in the manor of Parva Wrattyng [Little Wrattling in Suffolk]. Witnesses: John Burgoyne, John Cukhowe, John Coksale, senior, John Serle, William Barker, and John Stubbyn, *MS deed on vellum, with three seals.* 1450.
17. Quit-claim by Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, late Bishop of Ely, John Vere, Earl of Oxford, Henry, Viscount Bourghier, Sir Thomas Fyndern, Sir Thomas Tyrrell, John Derewarde, Master Benedict Burgh, clerk, and John Flegge, and Agatha his wife, to John Fyncham, Henry Caldebek, Robert Deen, Simon Poley, John Yates, Master Richard Bumpstede, John Hervy, chaplain, John Rysby, chaplain, Henry Banyard, and John Messenger, of all their right in the manor of Bluntysshall in Parva Wrattyng, and elsewhere, *MS deed on vellum, with nine seals.* 2 Nov. 1456.

The two charters are described as being 'in a morocco case bearing the arms of Lord Kemsley in gilt, with a letter from Sir Henry Thomas<sup>26</sup> relating to the document, in a buckram case'.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Sotheby & Co., Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Fine Bindings, Autograph Letters and Historical Documents*, 28 November 1961, lot 538, p. 111.

<sup>26</sup> Presumably the late Keeper of the Printed Books at the British Museum.

<sup>27</sup> I should like to thank Miss Jean Imray and Mr. Paul Harvey for their help in the preparation of this article.