Introduction

The objective of this piece is to bring to life one of the 15th century Bishops of Winchester, William Waynflete. He would have known of men who had fought at Agincourt in 1415, and seventy years later he would have known men who had fought on either side at the Battle of Bosworth Field. The great history plays of Shakespeare, Richard II, Henry IV (Parts I and II), Henry V, Henry VI (Parts I, II and III) and Richard III encompassed this man’s lifetime yet how many of us, when viewing his beautiful chantry chapel, give thought to the turbulent times in which he lived?

I will show that his life’s greatest work was the establishment of Magdalen College in Oxford, and I will argue that the driving force behind his great educational establishments was his desire to combat heresy. I will also show that Waynflete certainly did his best for the Lancastrian king, Henry VI, from the time he first knew him in 1440 until the King’s death in 1471, and that, as Chancellor, his one great political act of 1459 had dire consequences.

William of Waynflete, his Life and Times

William Waynflete was Bishop of Winchester from 1447 until 1486. The “Wars of the Roses” lasted from 1450, (taking account of Jack Cade’s revolt), until 1485; almost exactly the same period of time. This period has been described thus: “Ferocity and barbarism prevailed in no common degree. Faction, intrigue and discord were insatiable of human blood.” [1 p.211] Yet we remember Waynflete as the second Provost of Eton, as the founder of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Bishop of Winchester for nearly 40 years. And
wasn’t he Chancellor to the King at some point? How does he appear to be so untouched by these events? Why do we seldom think much beyond his chantry chapel (fig 2), of which it has been said, “the execution of its masonry ... has not been exceeded, if equalled, anywhere in England”. [1 p.234]

William Waynflete, as he called himself, was born in 1398 or possibly earlier and he died in 1486, so he lived for nigh on 90 years and through one of the bloodiest periods of English history. I wish to consider some of the realities of this man’s long life.

Waynflete lived during the reigns of eight kings (including Edward V):

Richard II: murdered in Pontefract castle, probably by Thomas Swynford, (Cardinal Henry Beaufort’s half brother), on the orders of Henry IV (another half brother of Beaufort).

Henry IV: an embattled ruler.

Henry V: suppressor of revolts at home, victor of Agincourt, died from dysentery at the age of 35 while on a siege in France.

Henry VI: infant king; an incompetent and sometimes insane ruler but founder of Eton College and King’s College, Cambridge. Deposed in 1461, and reinstated in 1470: his supporters defeated in battle in 1471, and himself murdered.
Edward IV: who seized the throne by violence twice; a mighty warrior and a philanderer.

Edward V: who never ruled, was never crowned, just murdered.

Richard III: killed at Bosworth Field.

Henry VII: victor at Bosworth Field, son of Margaret Beaufort, great niece of Cardinal Beaufort.

All these rulers of England, except, of course, Edward V, had blood on their hands.

At the end of his days I am sure that Waynflete would have claimed that he had done his best for the Church: to strengthen it, to defend it against heresy and to promote its future. For him, education was the key. He had been headmaster of Winchester College; he had modelled Eton College on Winchester, and he had founded Magdalen College in Oxford, for the education of priests. He had also devoted considerable time and energy, over a period of about 30 years, to the establishment of Tattershall College in Lincolnshire, to which I shall refer later. [2] In 15th century England the Church felt threatened by heretics. At the end of his life Waynflete must have taken some satisfaction knowing that he had done his best to combat heresy through education.

In his old age he commissioned a monument to his father, Richard Patten (also known as Richard Barbour), (fig 10) in the parish church at Wainfleet, Lincolnshire. So his name was not Waynflete at all! In 1421 William Barbour had changed his name to William Waynflete.

Waynflete was probably schooled at Oxford and went to the University there as shown by a letter from the University addressed to him when Provost of Eton College which speaks of the University as “his mother who brought him forth into the light of knowledge and nourished him with the alimony of all the sciences.” [1 p.321] William was ordained priest by the Bishop of Lincoln in January 1426. Some time after this, Bishop Beaufort appointed him Master of the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene (probably a leper’s colony) near Winchester and in 1429 he became headmaster of Winchester College (fig 3), a position which he held until 1441.

Fig 3  Chapel Tower at Winchester College, built 1390
Photo: JA
In 1440 Henry VI, aged 18, had visited Winchester College and later the same year founded Eton College, to be modelled on Winchester. Eton was to consist of a provost, 10 priests, 6 choristers, 25 poor and needy scholars, 25 almsmen and a magister informator (later "headmaster"). [1 p.25] The King endowed the College with some £500 a year, which was a generous provision. In the summer of 1441 Henry VI visited Winchester College again and by that autumn Waynflete had ceased to be headmaster of Winchester, and by Christmas 1442 he was Provost of Eton. Although he was the second provost he was certainly the first to preside over Eton as an educational establishment whereas the first provost had been involved in establishing the College. Waynflete brought a number of scholars with him from Winchester College. However, after just one year, there were still just 5 fellows and 11 scholars at Eton. It was only by 1447 that the full complement of 68 men and boys had been achieved.
On 11th April 1447, Cardinal Beaufort died in Winchester. Henry VI knew this was coming; he was fully prepared and things moved very fast. That same day Henry VI wrote to the Prior and Chapter at Winchester instructing them to elect Waynflete as bishop. “We licence you to procede unto thelection [sic] of a newe pastoure there. And preye you hertily that in alle the haste that ye goodly maye, ye wol so do, having by oon assent oure right trusty and well beloved cler and councellore maist. William Waynflete ...at the reverence of us and contemplacion of this oure writing, in youre sayd election to be Bisshop of youre sayd chirche above alle other ...” [1 p. 299] In his haste this was written in English. The next day he awarded the “temporalities” of the bishopric to Waynflete. William Waynflete was elected by the 17th April and this was authorised by a Papal Bull in Rome (1200 miles away) dated 10th May. That was an astonishing average of over 50 miles per day, as the messenger had to cross both the channel and the Alps.

What could Waynflete now do for Mother Church? This was his great opportunity and he seized it with both hands. Within one year he had founded at Oxford his “Seint Marie Magdalene Hall for the rooting out of heresies and errors, the increase of the clerical order and the adornment of Holy Mother church ...”.¹ as stated in the Foundation Instrument shown in Fig 4(a). [1. p.323] This priority given to the “rooting out of heresies and errors” is Waynflete’s own; it is not found in the licence provided by Henry VI for the foundation of the Hall earlier that year.

Waynflete strove for the rest of his life to raise money for its foundation and to strengthen the establishment. In 1458 he raised its status to that of a college and that year persuaded Henry VI to hand over the large site of the former Hospital of St John the Baptist in Oxford and all its wealthy endowments for the benefit of the College. The foundation charter of the College, dated 1458, is shown in Fig 4(b). In 1459 Sir John Fastolf, a very wealthy man died. Waynflete was one of his executors, and over the next 15 years he succeeded in expropriating a substantial part of that wealth for endowments at
Magdalen College, with the Pope’s blessing. This was not his only expropriation of an estate; he exacted a similar toll from the estate of Ralph, Lord Cromwell who had died in 1456. [3] From the beginning the Hall occupied rented accommodation. Construction work did not begin on the new site until 1467, and I will offer an explanation for this later. The work, under the supervision of William Orchard, was completed to the highest of standards and very efficiently. By 1481 the three sided cloister, the chapel, the hall, the library and the muniments room had all been completed. [3] (There have been later additions.) Waynflete maintained a close interest in the building work. In the 1480s, now in his eighties, he prepared a set of statutes for the College. This is what I mean by declaring Magdalen College (Fig 5) his great life’s work. He had worked on it in the 1440s, 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s throughout five decades of his life.

Heresy [4]
Early in his life, Waynflete would have been well aware that unbelief and heresy were rife. Some may have blamed the Black Death; many would have blamed men like John Wycliffe who denied transubstantiation and Papal infallibility, and insisted that ordinary people should be able to read the Scriptures in English. Back in 1388 Commissioners had been appointed to search for heretical books and documents in every county of England. In 1395 the English clergy had demanded the death penalty for heresy. In 1397 the bishops again petitioned the King for the execution of impenitent heretics. Richard II had refused. But in 1401, Henry IV, who owed much of his support to the Church, passed De Haeretico Comburendo and heretics could be burned. That same year a priest named William Sawtrey (Sautre) was burned at the stake for his Lollard beliefs, but still these beliefs persisted. In 1414, which was one year after Sir John Oldcastle's Lollard inspired...
revolt, Henry V brought out a new statute: the *Suppression of Heresy Act* [5] which declared that those who read the Scriptures in English should be considered heretics and enemies of the crown, that “they should forfeit all land, cattle and goods, that they should have no benefit of sanctuary, and, if impenitent should be hanged first and then burned.” [5] Despite this, the secular authorities showed a marked reluctance to burn heretics. By 1447, when Waynflete became bishop, only four persons had been burned at the stake in England since William Sawtry.

There was John Badby in 1410 burned at the stake for denying transubstantiation. There was Sir John Oldcastle, a former companion of Henry V, hanged and burned, apparently, in one great spectacle in 1417. [6] In 1431 Thomas Bagley, an adherent of Wycliffe, was burned at the stake. In that same year Jeanne, la Pucelle, (Joan of Arc), in Normandy had been burned. No doubt the French Inquisition earned high praise from the English clergy, although 25 years later the French King somehow persuaded a papal court to declare the verdict on Joan of Arc by the court of the French Inquisition to be null and void. By then, of course, the English would have looked upon the French with a jaundiced eye. In 1441 Margery Jourdemayne, “the witch of Eye” had been burned at the stake at Smithfield. But, even here, the secular authorities had shown little enthusiasm for burning. The principal heretic had been Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, who had been tried for “necromancy, witchcraft, heresy and treason” by the two archbishops plus Beaufort and the bishop of Salisbury, and then by another commission of bishops. Her sentence was three days public penance, and then life imprisonment (she died in 1452). One fellow conspirator was hanged, drawn and quartered, the penalty for treason; another died in the Tower of London.

In 1457 Waynflete took part in the trial and condemnation for heresy of Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester, whom Waynflete had known for the last 30 years. [1 p.85] Pecock, by his writings, had opposed the use of “fire, sword or hange-ment” against heretics, had denied Papal infallibility and had exalted the authority of the Scriptures and reason over dogma. [7] He wrote this in English! He was obviously a dangerous man, but only Pecock’s books were burnt. After a public recantation he was forced from office. [8]

With such little support from the secular authorities for burning, Waynflete came to the conclusion that the best way to combat heresy was through education, and hence his desire to establish Magdalen College. Education was the key, but not the kind of education that opens the mind, but strict and formal learning about liturgical dogma and Christian orthodoxy. The College was his great life’s work, but often interrupted by politics. No heretics were burned at the stake in England between 1447 and Waynflete’s death.

**Politics**

In 1450 Jack Cade’s revolt took place. The rebels demanded that the “traitors” surrounding the person of the King be dismissed, seized and punished. Henry rejected their demands. A short battle ensued in northern Kent in which the rebels were victorious and they pressed forward in large numbers to the south bank of the Thames opposite London. This was seen at the time as a Yorkist plot. Waynflete fled from Southwark to Shoreditch. The rebels briefly entered London and seized James Fiennes (the 1st Lord Saye and Sele) and his son-in-law, the Sheriff of Kent, and executed them. Later, with the
Archbishop of Canterbury, Waynflete negotiated with the rebels at St Margaret's Church, Southwark, where the rebels were promised a full pardon if they withdrew. Some time later the rebels were rounded up. Jack Cade was killed during this process, and Waynflete was one of the special commissioners who tried those rebels who survived. Some 34 were executed. Henry VI attended their executions. Cade’s body was hanged, drawn and quartered for good measure. [9] Later that year there were disturbances in Winchester, possibly because one of Cade’s quarters had been displayed there on its way down to Salisbury. [8]

In May 1451 Waynflete, fearing some attempt to remove him from his See, had prepared an appeal through the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Pope for protection and appointed 19 proctors to go there on his behalf, if necessary, which was a quite extraordinary measure. [1] Was this a Yorkist plot at the Vatican to remove him from office? [8] In the event it appears the proctors never left England and the threat came to nothing. One thing became clear from the Jack Cade rebellion and that was where Waynflete’s sympathies lay. He was a Lancastrian supporter.

Politics, of course, could become violent, and, in 1452, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, declaring that his sole object was to rid the King of Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and other “evil counsellors” raised a force, and marched on London. Waynflete was sent to negotiate with him at Blackheath. It was agreed that Somerset be seized and imprisoned and that York swear a special oath of fealty to the King but, when York entered Henry’s tent, unarmed, to swear fealty to Henry he found Somerset there alive and well and himself practically a prisoner. York was escorted to London, to make his oath before a great congregation gathered in St Paul’s cathedral. However, York’s great popularity at the time amongst the citizenry prevented him from coming to any harm. York wanted to be declared Henry’s heir but in 1453, after eight years of barren marriage, Margaret of Anjou gave birth to a son and heir, Edward, dashing his hopes. Earlier that year, after more great losses in France, Henry VI had experienced his first serious bout of insanity. After the birth of her son, Margaret tried to rule as regent but was overruled by Parliament and York was made Protector. He imprisoned Somerset and remained Protector until February 1455.

Civil War 1455 – 1471 [9]

Henry recovered in February 1455. York was dismissed and Somerset reinstated. The first battle of St Albans followed, in which Somerset was slain, and the King captured. Shortly after this he reverted to insanity and York was again appointed Protector. The King recovered and an uneasy peace prevailed at court while local conflicts broke out across the land. In October 1456, amidst rising tensions and continued local conflicts, Henry appointed Waynflete as Chancellor, and the ceremony was attended by the Duke of York. Why Waynflete accepted this post is difficult to understand. Henry’s reign at this time was characterised by misrule, injustice, political assassinations, disastrous losses in France and faction. Margaret of Anjou and Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset contrived to rule the land through Henry VI. They were intensely unpopular and widely blamed for the great losses in France. Waynflete also knew that back in 1450 Henry’s personal confessor, the Bishop of Salisbury, had been hacked to death outside the church at Edington. Close association with this dreadful king could be dangerous. Yet Waynflete became Henry’s Chancellor. We will never know why.
As time passed Henry now retreated into a world of religious devotion and private prayer and the Yorkists and Lancastrians built up their forces and arms. Did Waynflete assist in this religious retreat? He was, after all, very close to the King and he was a bishop. In 1459 a large force of Lancastrians encountered a large force of Yorkists at Blore Heath in Shropshire. Battle was joined, the Lancastrians were massacred. Both sides swore allegiance to the King. A little later a Yorkist army of some 25000 men confronted a larger army of some 40,000 to 60,000 men led by Henry himself. To fight against Henry could be seen as treason and, as the battle of Ludford Bridge got underway, many of the Yorkist forces melted away and the Yorkist leaders fled; York fled to Ireland and Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, later known as the “king-maker”, fled to Calais. In November, at a parliament held in Coventry (the “Parliament of Devils”), Waynflete presented an act of attainder against the Yorkist leaders by which their titles, lands and estates were forfeited and they were declared traitors. The parliament listened to a lengthy indictment of all the Yorkist leaders, almost certainly prepared by Waynflete. At the end of the parliament each of the 60 or so Lords present was required to swear (and seal) a special oath of allegiance to Henry, Margaret and her son Edward [10] in the presence of Waynflete. This act of attainder was certainly the most important act of Waynflete’s political career. The next 15 months were horrendous.

In June Warwick invaded England, was welcomed in London and headed for Northampton where Henry waited with a small army. Waynflete was with the King. On 7th July 1460 he entered Henry’s tent and resigned his office and fled. His judgment was sound. Three days later the battle of Northampton took place. The Lancastrians were rapidly defeated and Henry was sent to London. A parliament was held in Westminster in October 1460 [11] which annulled all provisions of the Coventry parliament. The Duke of York arrived late and dramatically claimed the crown for himself, presenting an extensive genealogical proof that his claim to the throne was superior to Henry’s. Henry was required to present a counter claim. The Lords appeared to accept that York’s claim had priority but, in the interests of peace, urged a compromise by which Henry would remain king for his lifetime and that York would be his heir.

Margaret of Anjou, Henry’s queen, refused to recognise this arrangement, and collected an army in the north. On 30th December 1460 a great battle at Wakefield resulted in defeat for the Yorkists and Richard, Duke of York was killed and his head was placed on the walls of York. His 17 year old son Edmund was taken prisoner and murdered after the battle, contrary to the rules of war at that time. On 2nd February 1461 York’s eldest son Edward defeated a Lancastrian army at Mortimer’s Cross on the Welsh borders and several Lancastrian leaders were taken prisoner and executed once the battle was over, including an elderly Owen Tudor, grandfather of the four year old Henry Tudor. Edward declared himself King of England. Later, that same month Henry VI was forced by the Earl of Warwick to attend the second battle of St Albans but the Yorkists were defeated and Henry was taken north to join his wife and son. On 29th March at Towton in Yorkshire the Lancastrians were defeated in what was probably the biggest and bloodiest battle ever fought on English soil. It is estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 men died on the one day. (Henry was not present; he spent the day in prayer at York.) Many of the Yorkist leaders were killed and Henry VI, Margaret of Anjou and Edward, Prince of Wales, fled to Wales and later found their way to Scotland. Much later Henry VI went to live in hiding in northern England but was apprehended and taken down to London and imprisoned.
Edward, aged just 19, was crowned King Edward IV on 28th June 1461 amidst great rejoicing; he was accompanied by his two brothers, George, aged twelve, and Richard, (later Richard III), aged nine. Waynflete does not appear to have attended the ceremony.

Later that year, on a progress through Hampshire, Edward IV received complaints from a “great multitude” of Waynflete’s tenants about his treatment of them. One account [12] relates that he had been seized by “those who sought his life” and that Edward rescued him and “severely condemned and imprisoned their captains” [translation by the author]. The whole affair is very odd. Edward’s first parliament began in November 1461 at which great matters such as his assumption of power, Henry’s enforced abdication, and the punishment of Lancastrians were considered, yet, over two whole days in December, the King’s lawyers presented to parliament the numerous complaints of Waynflete’s tenants [13]. Eventually, the Lords of the land (who were landlards themselves!) found for Waynflete. However, Waynflete was heavily fined for his support for Henry VI. It was not until 1466 that he cleared all his fines. This would explain why no building work took place at Magdalen College until 1467. Three years later he was given a full pardon by the King, but that had taken 8 years!

From 1461 peace was restored across much of England, but parts of Wales and the Scottish borders did offer continued resistance. Bamburgh castle, for example, held out until 1464 when it was destroyed by gunfire; the first British castle to be so destroyed. At Harlech the castle held out heroically until 1468, from which, some believe, comes the heroic song, *Men of Harlech*.

In 1464 Edward IV married Elizabeth Woodville, a commoner, much to the fury of Warwick and other Lords. Her many relations proceeded to take great profit from the situation. In 1469 a great northern uprising coincided with a rebellion by Warwick in the south and Edward himself was held in protective custody for a while by Warwick. The support that Warwick needed failed to materialise and he fled to France. Here, with the active encouragement of the King of France he formed an unholy alliance with Margaret of Anjou and in 1470 invaded England in the name of Henry VI. Edward had to flee the country. Waynflete was sent by Warwick to the Tower of London to release Henry VI. Henry was then paraded through the streets of London, “in majesty”, but, according to the chronicler George Chastellain he looked more like “a stuffed woolsack ... a shadow on the wall ...mute and submissive as a crowned calf.” [9 p.320]

In 1471, with support from the Duke of Burgundy, Edward of York invaded England, defeated the Earl of Warwick at Barnet, where Warwick was slain, and, finally, at the battle of Tewkesbury on 4th May 1471 defeated the last great Lancastrian army. Edward, Prince of Wales, was slain and Margaret of Anjou captured. Edward and his two brothers George and Richard, forced the Lancastrian leaders out of Tewkesbury Abbey where they had sought sanctuary and they were executed on the spot. On the day that Edward entered London, Henry VI was murdered in the Tower, possibly by Richard, who was by then 19.

On Edward’s re-accession, perhaps, England’s “winter of discontent” was “made glorious summer by this son of York.” Certainly peace and prosperity returned to most of the land for the next dozen years. As for Waynflete, he had to pay 2000 marks (about 7 years salary as Chancellor) for a pardon and thereafter appears to have dutifully attended court and the several parliaments of Edward IV’s reign. Elsewhere he devoted much of his time to his building works. This, undoubtedly was his most creative period, here at Winchester, at Magdalen College, at Eton and elsewhere.
Waynflete was present at the coronation of Richard III and later brought him to Magdalen College, his pride and joy. Richard and his Queen probably stayed in the Founder’s Tower. (Fig 5) In 1485 Waynflete paid Richard £100 for the raising of forces against Henry Tudor. After Bosworth and Henry VII’s accession Waynflete retired from Southwark to his “palace” at Bishop’s Waltham where he drew up his will on the 27th April 1486 and died on 11th August.

Waynflete’s Building Works

Waynflete was actively involved in the construction of a number of buildings, sometimes raising money for them, sometimes paying for them himself. They all have one thing in common; they are all of the highest quality.

Winchester Cathedral: Although Beaufort’s Chantry Chapel may have been started in the 1450s as provided for in Beaufort’s will, the whole scheme of things, the Great Screen, Beaufort’s chantry chapel, St Swithun’s shrine and Waynflete’s chantry chapel, has to be to Waynflete’s design. (Fig 6) The two periods during which he was out of the nation’s political turmoil were 1462 to 1469 (when Waynflete laboured to pay off a heavy fine) and from 1472 until his death. This latter period was surely when most of this work was done.

Magdalen College: Building work began in 1467 and progress was interrupted by Edward IV’s demand for skilled craftsmen at St George’s Chapel, Windsor, from 1475. Waynflete’s architect was a mason named William Orchard. (According to the History of the County of Oxford, [14] Orchard was almost certainly not the builder.) Orchard remained in frequent contact with Waynflete throughout the construction. Waynflete had to make a special
request to the king for the release of sufficient craftsmen for the construction of Magdalen College. Masons were well paid, from 6d to 8d a day. [15] As stated earlier, the three sided cloister, the chapel, hall and library were all completed by 1481. Further work was carried out during Henry VII’s reign. Magdalen College School was founded by Waynflete, adjacent to the College, in about 1480. It now occupies different premises.

**Eton College**: Waynflete may have contributed to the costs of building the College from as early as 1449. [1 p.153] In the 1470s Eton (fig 7) lost much of its funding and the College Chapel had to be unexpectedly completed well short of its original design (Edward IV had seized much of the College’s endowments). The Chapel is approximately one half of its original intended length. Waynflete is credited with having commissioned and paid for much of the work in the 1470s until completion around 1481. [1 p.154] Eton College records show that he was making payments for the cycle of wall paintings commissioned for the chapel, illustrating legends of the Blessed Virgin Mary. [16]

Fig 7  Statue at Eton of Henry VI, Founder of the College  
*Photo: JA*
Tattershall College: In the 1470s too, Waynflete took a great interest in the construction of what is now known as the Church of the Holy Trinity at Tattershall, Lincolnshire. At the time this was the collegiate church for Tattershall College, a richly endowed establishment.

Waynflete was one of the executors for the will of Ralph, Lord Cromwell, who died in 1456. (Fig 8) Cromwell had received a licence from Henry VI in 1439 to found a college at Tattershall, close by his castle, but progress had been slow and no building work began until after Cromwell’s death.

In his will he generously provided for the College’s endowment and Waynflete was closely involved in the College’s foundation and building work over the next 30 years. [2] As previously stated he also expropriated part of Cromwell’s estate for endowment of Magdalen College. Tattershall College chapel (now Holy Trinity church), the only building still in existence, was finished in about 1500. (Fig 9)

The headless brass of Ralph Cromwell (Fig 8) which originally included his wife Margaret is incomplete, and much of the Latin is also missing. The complete inscription would have translated to:

*Here lies that noble Baron, Ralph Cromwell, knight, Lord Cromwell, former treasurer of England, and founder of this college; together with his consort Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Lord Dayncourt; the which Ralph died on 4th day of the month of January, AD 1455, and the said Margaret died on 15th day of the month of September AD 1454; on whose souls may God have mercy Amen.*
**Wainfleet Grammar School**: In his last years he also founded a free school in Wainfleet and commissioned the monument to his father in the parish church there. (Fig 10)

The monument was removed during a 19th century restoration to the church and parts of it survive at Magdalen College.

Magdalen College, however, was his greatest achievement. He brought both Edward IV and Richard III there to show them his great work and to safeguard its future.
Conclusion

Clearly, Waynflete was a man with little personal ambition; his estate was very modest compared to his predecessors. He certainly did his best for Henry VI from the time he first met him in 1440 until Henry’s death in 1471. Why he accepted the post of Chancellor is an unanswerable question. He continued at Court and in Parliament to serve Henry’s killers, Edward IV and Richard III, but of course, they could not rid themselves of him unless he were killed; only the Pope or the church courts could dismiss him. He certainly took great pride in bringing them to Magdalen College. He devoted much of his life to the establishment of educational institutions and it is my firm belief that he did so in order to combat heresy. He was evidently a wily negotiator as Jack Cade’s supporters and also Richard, Duke of York might have testified. He does, however, not appear to be a man to be trusted as an executor of a will.

Notes

1 “(cum) . . . . . extirpationemq(ue) heresum et errorum augmentum cleri decoremq(ue) sacrosancte Matris Ecclesie” Foundation Instrument for Magdalene College, 20 August 1448.

2 In 1413 Sir John Oldcastle had been tried for heresy by Archbishop Arundel, with Henry Beaufort and the Bishop of London. The sentence had been excommunication and burning, but Sir John (a former close companion of Prince Henry (later Henry V) was held a long time in the Tower of London from which he escaped. He was on the run until 1417. After the Oldcastle Revolt of 1413 some 60 of Oldcastle’s fellow conspirators were hanged, a few being burned after their hanging. [6]

3 Deinde rex Edwardus Cantaurium peregre profectus partes meridionales pertransiit ubi Willemum episcopum Wintoniensem de manibus querentium animam ejus eripuit insectatores suos graviter redarguit et eorem capitaneos carcerali custodie mancipabat.

References


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8. *Dictionary of National Biography*


12. *British History Online 3*: *A Brief Latin Chronicle Being the Concluding Portion of a Work Entitled Compilatio De Gestis Britonum et Anglorum, pages 164-185 of Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles* ... by John Stowe, Camden Society London 1880


16. **Adams, Julie**, *The Wall Paintings in The Lady Chapel*, Record Extra, published online by Friends of Winchester Cathedral, January 2017

**Photographs**

Photographs attributed to JA were taken by Julie Adams