Robert Hedrington and Wynkyn de Worde at Winchester College

The letterpresookes. 1577.a number ofdistinguished early English books, two of themLists ofpublished on several occasions, and all have included the

radical Calvinist defence of resistance to secular rulers. ownership of this volume gives some indication of his religious beliefs and it surely allows us to discount the possibility that he purchased his early books out of sympathy for the medieval devotional texts that most of them contain. This is then a further indication that his interest in Caxton and his successors was predominately antiquarian.

The two books from library at Winchester are certainly the kind of early English imprints which might particularly appeal to a collector. Wynky

the Life of St Katherine would undoubtedly have been mistaken for a Caxton by a sixteenth-

deat , and with his large device on the colophon leaf.⁴ *The Orchard of Syon*, a Middle English translation of the revelatory visions of St Katherine of Stena, was published much later in his long career. Its printing was funded by Sr Richard Sutton, steward of the Bridgettine house at Syon.⁵ According

hathe caused at his greate coste thys booke to be prynted trustinge that moche fruyte shall come .⁶ It is one of s press, enlivened with much red printing and inventive typesetting, and adorned with fine initials and eight specially commissioned woodcuts.⁷

each of the Winchester volumes, in both cases on the final leaf of text and the verso of the facing page. It is composed of metal type, rather carelessly inked, an is among the earliest recorded English book stamps and the first known from more than a single example.⁸ There are no other early marks of ownership in either book, both of which had reached Winchester College by 1634. They are referred to in a catalogue of the Library The Revelations .⁹ The identification of was begun in 1652 and has some retrospective coverage back to 1543, but the records of sixteenth and early seventeenth-century gifts are very incomplete. The two early seventeenth-century inventories likewise omit many volumes known to have been present. All that can be said for certain is that both point

between 1577 and 1634. Both have been rebound in modern times and no evidence of their earlier bindings is preserved. The *Life of St Katherine* contains several marginal annotations in English in a sixteenth-century hand. These have been heavily cropped in rebinding but clearly comment disapprovingly on the text. A partially obliterated annotation at the top of the first page, apparently in a different sixteenth-century hand, includes an intriguing description of the . One of these annotators may be Hedrington, though no similar

marginalia are found in any other books with his stamp.

The Life of St Katherine and The Orchard of Svon are quite unlike most of the books added to Library in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, nearly all of which were the quite recently published works of theology, classics, law and history. Among a collection predominantly of working texts for a community of scholars, the two volumes once belonging to Hedrington must have seemed out of place. Shelfmarks added to the Library catalogue in the 1660s show that The Orchard of Syon had by then found a home in a section of the Library largely given over to Bibles, concordances, harmonies and sermons, and that it shared a shelf with several other curious volumes which cannot have been any practical use to the fellows. These included a Parisian Book of Hours printed on vellum, an early edition **s** Rationale Divinorum (Lyon, 1506), a Sarum Missal (Paris, 1556), and the Book of Common Praver in Latin (London, 1560).¹³ The physical location of the book suggests the difficulty of finding an appropriate place for it in the classification system of a Protestant institutional library. At the same time, the evidence of shelfmarks shows clearly that The Orchard of Syon, like the books beside it, was regarded as interesting enough to be worth preserving in the chained section of the Library. It did not share the fate of many obsolete works which were removed from the chained shelves in the middle of the seventeenth century and placed in a cupboard or storeroom referred

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seems at Winchester to have become predominately a place for dumping unwanted volumes, very few of which remain in the Library today. Like *The Orchard of Syon*, the *Life of St Katherine* was kept among the chained books. Bound with four other works on various subjects, it was shelved alongside other composite volumes in a section of the Library stocked mostly with medieval theology and controversial works of the Reformation.

Although they are not mentioned in the Donations Book, The Orchard of Syon and Life of St Katherine often

purchased with the commencement fees paid by commoners and money from benefactors, these were always useful, scholarly texts.¹⁴ It is tempting to think that the books might have been given by Hedrington himself it would certainly be an extraordinary coincidence if two volumes from his library had found their way to Winchester independently of one another but no one of that name (or any of its likely variants) had any connection to the College in this period. Both books may of course have passed from Hedrington to another collector who gave them to the College, but did not leave any mark of his ownership. The related subject matter of the two books surely increases the likelihood that they travelled together.

¹³ The 1634 c

¹⁴ Though not always in recent editions for example a copy of Alberti, *De re aedificatoria* (Florence, 1485) purchased with fees received in 1642 and Vesalius, *De corpore fabrica* (Venice, 1568), in 1651.

Robert Hedrington and Wynkyn de Worde

The Orchard of Syon (Wynkyn de Worde, London, 1519), sig. B4r