

John Port



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Born: 1480 Chester, ENG

Married: Joan Fitzherbert

Died: 1541

Parents: Henry Port & Unknown Barrow

Sir John Port (1480-1541), judge, was born about 1480 at Chester, where his ancestors had been merchants for some generations : his father, Henry Port, was mayor of Chester in 1486^[3], and his mother was a daughter of Robert Barrow, also a mayor of Chester in 1526^[3]. Sir John Port was involved in the trials of Sir Thomas More, later Saint Thomas More, John Fisher, later Saint John Fisher and Ann Boleyn, Queen.

Biography

John studied law in the Middle Temple, where he was reader in 1509, Lent reader and treasurer in 1515, and governor in 1520. In 1504 he was one of the commissioners appointed to raise a subsidy in Derbyshire; on 2 June 1509 he was made king's solicitor, and on 26 November signed a proclamation as member of the privy council;^[4] in the same year he was "keeper of the king's books," and in 1511 clerk of the wardrobe. Before 1512 he was appointed attorney to the earldom of Chester, and in that year he appeared as one of the commissioners selected to inquire into the extortions of the masters of the mint.

In 1515 and most succeeding years he served on the commission for the peace in Derbyshire. In 1517 he was *clerk of exchange in the Tower*, and in 1522 was made serjeant-at-law. He acquired an extensive practice as an advocate, and in 1525 he was raised to a judgeship in the king's bench and knighted.

He was on the commission for gaol delivery at York, and in June went on the northern circuit as justice of assize. He was also a member of Princess Mary's council. In 1535 he was placed on the commission of oyer and terminer for Middlesex to try John Fisher and Thomas More, and in the following year was similarly employed with regard to Anne Boleyn.

He died before November 1541, having been twice married; his two wives were Margery, daughter of Sir Edward Trafford of Trafford, Lancashire, and Joan, daughter and coheir of John Fitzherbert, uncle of Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, and widow of John Pole of Radburn. By the latter marriage he acquired the manor of Etwall, Derbyshire, and had a son, Sir John Port who took a prominent part in the transactions relating to the foundation of Brasenose College, Oxford; he gave to it a garden lying on the south side of the college, and completed John Williamson's bequest of £200. *to provide stipends for two sufficient and able persons to read and teach openly in the hall, the one philosophy, the other 'humanity'*; The stipend was (then) 4 shillings a year, but the limitation to the descendants of Williamson and Port was abolished by Oxford University in 1854. His son was the founder of Repton School and the person John Port School is named after.

References

- ¹ ^ Magna Brittanica, Daniel and Samuel Lysons, Volume 5, 1817
- ² ^ ^a ^b Dictionary of National Biography now in the public domain
- ³ ^ ^a ^b Mayors and Sheriifs of Chester at BritishHistory accessed October 2007
- ⁴ ^ (Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, 1509-1514, No. 702) cited in DNB