2014

Reports of Cases in the Court of Chancery from the Time of Lord Harcourt (1710-1714)

William Hamilton Bryson

University of Richmond, hbryson@richmond.edu

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REPORTS OF CASES
IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY
FROM THE TIME OF LORD HARCOURT
(1710-1714)

British Library MS. Hargrave 80

Edited by
W. H. Bryson

Richmond, Virginia
2014
The anonymous source includes cases from the judicial tenures of Lord Chancellor to 1714, and Lord commissioners to hold Chancery from 1708 to the time of Lord Cowper (who decided some cases by Sir William Blackstone, 1727), who was Lord Chancellor at the beginning of this collection. Cases, mostly from the others; they are not in systematic reporting of cases. Some collection are some cases. Only a few of these, as Chancellor, Case No. 1710-1714. Clement Tudway Swan: Mr. Cox’s notes, Inn MSS. Misc. 106, 108, they fill a gap in the previous during the tenure of Lord much has been known Harcourt, only approximate been reported in print; these five years in this Foss and Lord Campbell.  

INTRODUCTION

The anonymous set of law reports now first published here includes cases from the Court of Chancery from 1706 to 1715, the judicial tenures of Lord Cowper, 1705 to 1708, Lord Harcourt, 1710 to 1714, and Lord Cowper again, 1714 to 1718. There were commissioners to hold the great seal and to sit in the Court of Chancery from 1708 to 1710. Although there are a few cases from the time of Lord Cowper and earlier, the vast majority are reports of cases decided by Sir Simon Harcourt, Lord Harcourt (1661-1727), who was Lord Chancellor from 1710 to 1714.1 At the beginning of this collection of cases are nineteen slightly earlier cases, mostly from the Court of Chancery, but there are a few others; they are not in strict chronological order. Then begins the systematic reporting of Harcourt’s cases. At the end of this collection are some cases from the second tenure of Lord Cowper as Chancellor, Case No. 372 to the end.

Only a few of these cases have been reported elsewhere. Six of the cases in these manuscripts were printed much later by Clement Tudway Swanston (1783-1863) in the apparatus to his nineteenth-century Chancery reports, these six cases being taken ‘from Mr. Cox’s notes, Lord Colchester’s MSS.’, i.e. Lincoln’s Inn MSS. Misc. 106, 107. The importance of these reports is that they fill a gap in the printed reports from the Court of Chancery during the tenure of Lord Harcourt, about whose decisions not much has been known. From the five-year tenure of Lord Harcourt, only approximately 150 Chancery cases have heretofore been reported in print; there are now more than 350 cases from these five years in this set of reports first printed here. Edward Foss and Lord Campbell had somewhat tepid opinions of Lord

Introduction

Harcourt as a judge, but there were only a few of Harcourt’s opinions in print at the time when they were writing. Perhaps, a reassessment is now due.

There are two cases in these reports from the Court of Exchequer, *Constable v. Agates* (Ex. 1707), British Library MS. Hargrave 80, f. 9v, pl. 5a; Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383, p. 12, and *Haanan v. King* (Ex. c. 1707), British Library MS. Hargrave 80, f. 10v, pl. 5b; Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383, p. 14. These two cases have not been printed here since they are already in print at *Equity Cases in the Court of Exchequer 1660 to 1714* (ACMRS 2007), pp. 559, 560. There are two cases from the Court of Queen’s Bench, *Anonymous* (Q.B. 1705), Case No. 9, and *Anonymous* (Q.B. 1705), Case No. 10, and three from the House of Lords, *Turnor’s Case* (H.L. 1680), Case No. 334; *Roper v. Ratcliffe* (H.L. 1714), Case No. 346; and *Earl of Warrington v. Booth* (H.L. 1714), Case No. 347.

Although the original manuscript has not been located, three copies have been found.

*Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383*

Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383 was owned by Lucius O’Brien of Dublin and later by Lord Chancellor Alexander Wedderburn, earl of Rosslyn (1733-1805). It was bought by Lincoln’s Inn in 1848 from the London bookseller, Thomas Rodd (1796-1849). This manuscript ends with an incomplete report of *Pearson v. Rowland* (Ch. 1715), Case No. 384, herein.

*Lincoln’s Inn MSS. Misc. 106 and Misc. 107, ff. 1-66*

Lincoln’s Inn MSS. Misc. 106 and Misc. 107, ff. 1-66, is another copy of these reports. It includes most, but not all, of the cases printed here. Each case ends with a notation that it came ‘from Mr. Cox’s notes’; it is unclear whether Cox is being referenced or, alternatively, whether Cox might have merely transcribed cases. Another hand to correct ‘marriage’ for ‘mortgage’ has been used to correct a number of errors in the other two copies. The British Library has been used to correct a number of errors in the other two copies.

British Library MS. Misc. 106 and Misc. 107, ff. 1-66 were owned by Charles Blomfield and later by Lord Chancellor Alexander Wedderburn, earl of Rosslyn (1733-1805). It was bought by Lincoln’s Inn in 1807 from a Mr. Lynch of Dublin. It includes a professional copy of the manuscript and was presented to Lincoln’s Inn in 1848.

The case of *Anonymous* (Q.B. 1705) was presented to the British Library from the manuscript. It includes most, but not all, of the cases; thus, this copy has been used to correct a number of errors in the other two copies.

These reports were rendered into modern style. The written word is being referenced or, alternatively, whether Cox might have merely transcribed cases. Another hand to correct ‘marriage’ for ‘mortgage’ has been used to correct a number of errors in the other two copies.

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were only a few of Harcourt’s notes that they were writing. Perhaps, a few reports from the Court of Chancery (1660 to 1714), British Library MS. Hargrave 80, f. 383, p. 12, and British Library MS. Hargrave 80, f. 383, p. 14. These two cases were already in print at Equity Cases, 1660 to 1714 (ACMRS 2007), and from the Court of Queen’s Bench, Case No. 9, and Anonymous from the House of Lords, Case No. 334; Roper v. Ratcliffe (H.L. 1660), Warrington v. Booth (H.L. 1660). This copy has not been located, three reports from the House of Lords, Case No. 334; Roper v. Ratcliffe (H.L. 1660), Warrington v. Booth (H.L. 1660).

British Library MS. Hargrave 80

British Library MS. Hargrave 80 has the title ‘Cases in Chancery’. It was bought by Francis Hargrave (c. 1741-1821) from a Mr. Lynch of Dublin. Hargrave’s manuscripts were bought by the British Museum (now the British Library) in 1813. This is a professional copy of the original; corrections have been made in another hand to correct some of the obvious misreadings, such as ‘marriage’ for ‘mortgage’. This manuscript has slightly more cases than Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383, which ends with an incomplete report of Pearson v. Rowland (Ch. 1715), Case No. 384, herein. The British Library manuscript continues on for another fifteen cases; thus, this copy has been chosen as the basis of this edition. The case of Anonymous (Q.B. 1705), Case No. 10, was omitted from the British Library copy of this set of reports and from Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 106 and is taken from Lincoln’s Inn MS. Misc. 383.

These reports were originally in English. They have been rendered into modern spelling for this edition, according to the principle of idem sonans, which is that a word is the spoken word, not the written word.

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2 H. Ellis, A Catalogue of Manuscripts ... of Francis Hargrave, Esq. (1818), pp. [v], 21.