



**St. Mary's Church, Somerleyton**, is where John Blyssynge married Joan Preaste in 1569 and baptized their daughter Julian in 1571. The relationship to Jone (Joanna) Blessing has not yet been definitely established but we all loved visiting this charming county church, with its square tower. It was built by John Thomas, who also built Somerleyton Hall. It is typical medieval church that includes a South Porch. ∞

One of our several long walks to a church.



**More pictures of Somerleyton; stained glass panels said to come from St. Olaves Priory in north Nave Window**



Notice that the font still has a face on its carving.

The rood screen contains 16 painted panels along the bottom with paintings of St. Michael, the archangel, St. Edmund, St. Apollonia, St. Lawrence, a female saint, Tomas of Canterbury, St. Anne, St. Andrew, St. John the Evangelist, St. Mary Magdalen, a bishop, St. Petronilla, St. Stephen, St. Dorothea, St. Edward the confessor and St George.







**Holy Trinity Church, Caister**, may be regarded as the “Blessing Church,” since it was here that Jone (Joanna Blessing) was baptized in 1595. Her siblings, Margaret and John, were also baptized here. This same brother, John, was buried here. The earliest feature is the thirteenth-century nave. The south aisle was added around 1300. There were restorations made in the late 1800’s. ∞



More pictures of Holy Trinity in Caister; a close up of the altar and the organ pipes.



Colin Fenn, the church organist, played the beautiful organ for us.



The beautiful church windows and the baptismal font.

## Holy Trinity Parish Church, Caister-on-Sea

**The church where William Towne's mother Jone (Joanna) Blessing was baptized.  
Jone's ancestral information by Karen Johnsen and Charles Farrow, note from James Roome**

1. Baptism: "13 Jan 1593/94 John Blessing son of John and Margaret."  
Record PD 450/1 Holy Trinity Parish Records CAISTER-ON-SEA at Norfolk Record Office in Norwich, Norfolk, England
2. Baptism: "22 June 1595 Jone Blessing daughter of John and Jone."  
Record PD 450/1 Holy Trinity Parish Records CAISTER-ON-SEA at Norfolk Record Office in Norwich, Norfolk, England. Jone in later records is referred to as Joanna. This baptism is also reported in the "About Towne" Newsletter Dec. 2001 on page 66.

From Charles Farrow: "Jone Blessing was baptized at Caister-on-Sea at Holy Trinity Church on 22 Jun 1595, daughter of John Blessing & Jone it says in the Parish Register. However, on 13 Jan 1593/1594 John Blessing son of John Blessing & Margaret was baptized there. I suspect that the wife Jone is a mistake made because the priest had written Jone for the daughter and repeated it. This occurs occasionally, since they were only human. I can see no reason why he would put Margaret for Jone, but repeating a name you have already written is more easily understood. Of course I have no proof for this – you can look at the printout of the entries which I got for you."

James Roome, a former TFA Genealogist, had a theory that John Blessing, the father of Joanna Towne, was the son of John Blessing and Joane Preaste who married Octoe 12, 1569 in Somerleyton. This son John had a first wife named Margaret and they had a daughter named Margaret who was baptized on 9 Aug 1590. This daughter Margaret marries Robert Buffam on 23 Aug 1613 at St. Nicholas, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, England. John Blessing had a second wife with the name of Jone and they had a daughter named Jone who went by the name of Joanna in America. Margaret and Jone would then be half sisters.

### **Note from James Roome:**

"Before August 1613, when half-sister, Margaret Blessing, was married in the St. Nicholas Church at Great Yarmouth, the Blessing family evidently removed to that town. On 25 April 1620, in the same church, Joanna Blessing, was married to William Towne (Norfolk Record Office, Norwich, letter of 29 July 1988, from Paul Rutledge, County Archivist to J. F. Roome)." This is on page 66 of About Towne Newsletter dated December 2001.

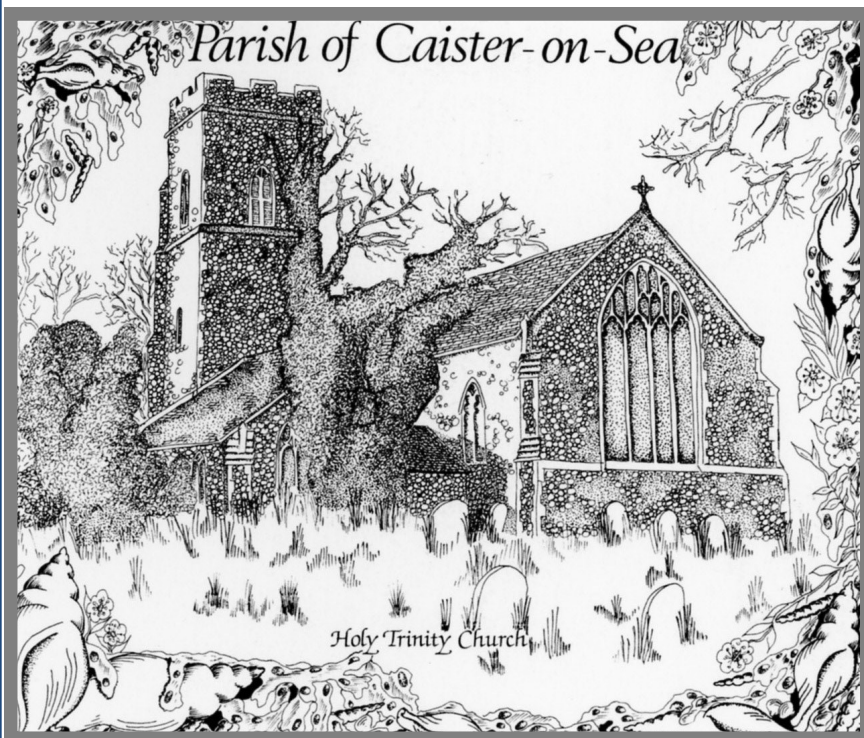
**C**harles Farrow was able to locate a baptism for a Julian Blessing on 22 Sept 1571 daughter of John Blysynge and Joane Preaste. Charles has not found any baptism for a son named John Blessing or a son named William Blessing.

Julian Blessing married Thomas Goose Vergoose on 31 Jul 1622 at St. Nicholas Church in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, England. The source is "About Towne" Dec. 2001 pg. 64.

So is John Blessing, who married Joane Preaste, the father of Jone (Joanna) or is he the grandfather? John would have been around twenty when he married Joane in 1569. When Julian was born he would have been about twenty-two. When Margaret is born he would have been forty-one, when John was born he would have been forty-four and when Jone (Joanna) was born he would have been around forty-six. There is a nineteen year span between Julian and the next born Margaret. Obviously, Joane Preaste is the mother of Julian, but not of any of the other children.



## Several theories are possible:



**T**heory 1 has John Blessing married to Joane Preste. There is a record for this marriage at Somerleyton. They have a child named Julian. John married second Margaret and had 2 children—one named Margaret and one named John. John had a third wife named Jone and they had a daughter named Jone named after her mother who was the 3<sup>rd</sup> wife of John. His children span from 1571 to 1595 with 3 different wives.

**T**heory 2 has John Blessing and Joane Preaste married at Somerleyton and they have a child named Julian and a child named John. This son named John marries Margaret and has a child named Margaret and a child named John. Then he marries again to a woman named

Jone and has a child named Jone (later called Joanna). In this scenario, the original John Blessing and Joane Preaste are the grandparents of Jone (Joanna) Blessing who married William Towne. Margaret and John (who died as an infant) are step-sister and step-brother. The original John Blessing and Joane Preaste are grandparents to all three of their son John's children: Margaret, John (died as infant), and Jone (Joanna).

**T**heory 3 is that John Blessing and Joane Preste have a son named John Blessing. This son John marries a woman named Margaret and they have three children:

1. Child one is named Margaret and is baptized 9 Aug 1590 daughter of John and Margaret. (need record)
2. Child two is named John and is baptized 13 Jan 1593/94 Caister-on-Sea record lists son of John and Margaret. John died 29 Jan 1593/94 Caister-on-Sea. (My record has 1593/94 which would be 2 weeks after his birth. If it were 1594/95, it would be a year after his birth?)
3. Child three is Jone Blessing. Jone was baptized 22 June 1595 and recorded at Caister-on-Sea. She is listed as the fourth child of John and Jone, but in reality she is the third daughter of Margaret.

**Note 1:** According to Charles Farrow, the mother's name is most likely mistakenly listed as Jone same as daughter but should be Margaret.) This Jone later goes by the name Joanna.

**Note 2:** With this scenario, the first child is named after her mother Margaret, the second child is named after the father and grandfather John Blessing and the third child is named after the grandmother Joane Preaste. This scenario has the original John Blessing and Joane Preaste as the grandparents of all three of John and Margaret Blessings children—Margaret, John (who died as an infant) and Jone (later called Joanna). Let's hope that more records will be found that will help determine the relationships. At the present time, this all remains a mystery with several scenarios possible for the ancestry of Jone (Joanna) Blessing. ∞