

SUMMARY: The document below is the copy on the Close Rolls of a recognizance in the amount of £800 acknowledged by Oxford to Thomas Duncombe (d.1601) on 17 August 1579 in connection with Oxford's sale to Duncombe of the honour or manor of Whitchurch on 15 August 1579. For the licence dated 1 July 1579 authorizing Oxford to alienate the honour or manor of Whitchurch to Duncombe, see TNA C 66/1180, m. 33.

See also:

'Parishes: Whitchurch', A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 3 (1925), pp. 442-449. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42596>

The castle of Bolebec in Whitchurch, which stands on the south side of Market Hill, was the head of the Buckinghamshire barony of Bolebec. The barony comprised the lands which Hugh de Bolebec held in chief in 1086 in Missenden, Amersham, Chesham, Medmenham, Cheddington, Whaddon, Calverton, Great Linford, Hardmead and Wavendon, and, in addition, those which he held of Walter Giffard in Hartwell, Great Kimble, Addingrove in Oakley, and in Whitchurch. It included ten knights' fees in 1166. In 1235 the Countess of Oxford held ten fees of the Earl Marshal (representing the honour of Giffard) in Buckinghamshire, of which Whitchurch was the head, in addition to the fees which she held in chief. In 1263 Whitchurch was the head of eighteen fees which the Earl of Oxford held of the heirs of the marshal. These are not specified, but included some in Oxfordshire. They became known as the honour of Whitchurch, of which the Earls of Oxford were seised in tail-male in 1633, when fifteen and a half fees are enumerated.

The castle is of the mount and bailey type. Its earthworks may have been thrown up by Hugh de Bolebec during the 'anarchy' of Stephen's reign, for in 1147 Pope Eugenius specially referred to castle works which had been wrongfully exacted by Hugh, of whose barony this castle was the head. . . . The castle followed the descent of the manor until 1579, when Edward Earl of Oxford obtained a licence to alienate the site and demesne lands of Whitchurch Manor (still mentioned as Bolebec Castle in 1634 and recently again called Bolebec) to his tenant Thomas Duncombe to hold in fee farm. The transfer took place in the following year.

The recognizance below is also mentioned in TNA PRO 30/34/14.

LM: Recognizance between the Earl of Oxford & Duncombe

Edward, Earl of Oxford, having appeared personally before the Lady Queen in her Chancery, acknowledged himself to owe to Thomas Duncombe of Whitchurch in the county of Buckingham, gentleman, eight hundred pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid to the same Thomas or his designated attorney, executors or assigns on the feast of Saint Bartholomew the Apostle next to come after the date of this recognizance;

And if he shall not have done [+so], the foresaid Earl wishes & grants for himself, his heirs, executors & administrators that the foresaid sum of money be levied of all his lands, tenements, goods & chattels to the use & behoof of the same Thomas, his heirs & assigns, wheresoever they may be found;

Witness the Queen at Westminster on the seventeenth day of August in the twenty-first year of the reign of our said Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France & Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith etc.

The condition of this recognizance is such that if the above-bounden Edward, Earl of Oxford, his heirs, executors and assigns and every of them, do well and truly for his and their parts hold, observe, perform, fulfil and keep all and singular the covenants, grants, articles and agreements contained and specified in a pair of indentures bearing date the fifteenth day of this present month of August made between the said Earl on thone party and the above-named Thomas Duncumbe on thother party, except such covenants in the same indentures specified as do concern the delivery of evidences, which on the part and behalf of the said Earl, his heirs, executors and assigns and every of them are to be holden, observed, performed, fulfilled and kept, except before excepted, according to the intent and true meaning of the same indentures, that then this present recognizance to be void and of none effect, or else it to stand in full force, effect and virtue.

LM: *Recognitio inter Oxonie Comitem & Doncombe*

1 Edwardus Comes Oxonie coram domina Regina in Cancellaria sua personaliter constitutus recognouit

2 se debere Thome Doncombe de Whytchurche in Comitatu Buck' Generoso octingentas libras

3 legalis monete Anglie soluendas eidem Thome aut suo certo Attornato executoribus vel assignatis suis

4 in festo sancti Bartholomei appostoli proxime futuro post datum huius Recognicionis Et nisi fecerit predictus Comes vult &

5 concedit pro se heredibus executoribus & administratoribus suis quod predicta pecunie summa leuetur de

6 omnibus terris tenementis bonis & catallis suis ad opus & vsum ipsius Thome heredum & assignatorum suorum vbicunque

7 fuerint inuentis Teste Regina apud Westmonasterium decimo septimo die Augusti
Anno regni dicte domine nostre Elizabethhe

8 dei gracia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regine fidei defensoris &c vicesimo primo