

SUMMARY: In the letter below dated 13 May 1587 to Sir Francis Walsingham, Lord Burghley refers to the Queen's grant to Oxford of lands which had formerly belonged to Edward Jones of Cadogan in Denbigh, Wales, who had been executed for treason on 21 September 1586 for his participation in the Babington plot, and whose lands and goods had escheated to the Queen. Lord Burghley notes that Oxford intends to sell the lands upon receipt of the grant, and that his own preference would be that Oxford use the proceeds to redeem some of his other lands. He also notes that the grant is to be made in the names of two other persons in order to protect the properties from Oxford's creditors, and suggests that Oxford's servant Hugh Beeston should be one of the two. He expresses concern about the condition that Oxford must provide the Crown with a reversionary interest in lands of his own equal to the value of the escheated lands being granted to him, fearing that this will create hardship for Oxford's heirs. He also mentions the annuity of £30 to be granted to Edward Jones' widow out of the value of the lands being granted to Oxford. For the Queen's grant of the lands of Edward Jones to Robert Cecil and Hugh Beeston on Oxford's behalf, and Oxford's grant of Castle Hedingham to the Queen pursuant to the condition mentioned above, and the fine by which Oxford transferred clear title to Castle Hedingham to the Queen, see TNA C 66/1291, mm. 5-7; TNA E 211/35, and TNA CP 25/2/133/1707/29/30ELIZIMICH, Item 45.

Sir, I heartily thank you for your care had of my Lord of Oxford's cause, wishing his own care were the like to convert her Majesty's goodness to his own benefit, and in some part for his children, being three daughters to be seen and pitied, and a 4th in his wife's body at hand shortly also with like pity to be seen. I find that he hath a meaning to make present sale of these lands to be given, wherein sometime he saith he will follow my advice, which was to convert the money to the redemption of some of his own lands sold, which I know may be done, to be left amongst his poor children, with whom during my life he neither is nor shall be charged.

He himself would have these lands to be granted from her Majesty in the name of 2 others, for otherwise they will be liable to his debts at all times.

For the grant of £30 annuity to Jones wife may be very well done out of the lands that Jones redeemed, having been her father's, whereof Mr Attorney may take care.

For the limitation of a reversion to the crown of other lands of his own to the value of these which he shall have of the Queen's Majesty's grant, I think the bargain hard for his heirs, whosoever they shall be, to have the fee simple of lands of an undoubted title to be granted for these now escheated. But for mine own part, I could be content that all the lands that he hath were tied for the fee simple to the Crown.

Concerning this latter clause, I mind to send for one Beeston whom my Lord useth at this day, and to cause him to wait upon you for to determine of the proceeding therein.

When the form is agreed on, I must pray you that my Lord of Oxford may perceive that the making of the books may be directed from you as by her Majesty's order to Master Attorney, for anything directed by me is subject to his lewd servants, who still undo him with flatteries. I have had by grievous anguish this night a sharp ague, and at this time have an idle head, unfit for any matter but to melancholy cogitations, out of which [].

13 Maij 1587

Your most assured,

W. Burghley