

SUMMARY: The document below is the copy on the Close Rolls of a recognizance in the amount of £1500 acknowledged by Oxford on 17 August 1579 to Thomas Ashfield (d.1609) in connection with Oxford's sale to Ashfield of the site and certain demesne lands of the manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury.

On 6 October 1564(?), Thomas Ashfield brought suit in Chancery alleging that Thomas Bacon (d.1577) had failed to fulfil an agreement reached shortly after the death of the 16th Earl of Oxford for the sale of the office of bailiff of the manors of Chesham and Chesham Bury. See TNA C 3/5/26 (bill and answer) and TNA C 3/1/115 (replication).

For Thomas Bacon (d.1577), Serjeant of the Acatry to Queen Mary, TNA PROB 11/59/473.

For Thomas Ashfield and Thomas Bacon (d.1577) as bailiffs of the manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury, see TNA SP 12/44/19.

For the licence dated 16 August 1579 authorizing Oxford to alienate the site and certain demesne lands of the manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury, with reservation of specified rights and a life estate to his wife, Anne Cecil, should she survive him, see TNA C 66/1180, m. 24.

For a later licence dated 2 May 1580 authorizing Oxford to alienate the manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury to Nicholas West, Joan his wife, and William West, see TNA C 66/1197, m. 23. For the recognizance acknowledged by Oxford to Nicholas West on 19 May 1580 in connection with this sale, see TNA C 54/1094, Part 24(?). For a further licence dated 1 December 1580 authorizing Oxford, Nicholas West, Joan his wife, and William West to alienate the manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury, together with a yearly rent of £7 reserved to Oxford in the earlier grant by Oxford to Thomas Ashfield and Alexander Hampden, to Thomas Farmer, Matthew Smyth and Edward Amerydeth, see TNA C 66/1207, m. 14.

For Thomas Ashfield, see also his will, dated 8 June 1607 and proved 9 February 1610, TNA PROB 11/115/126, and:

'Parishes: Chesham', in *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 3*, ed. William Page (London, 1925), pp. 203-218. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol3/pp203-218> [accessed 28 July 2018].

For some reason unknown Chesham Bury escheated to the Crown, by whom it was granted a month after Thomas Lynde's death to John Earl of Oxford. In 1490 the earl obtained a pardon for all past alienations, and seems to have acquired it in fee, as its descent is henceforth identical with that of Chesham Higham (q.v.), already held by the Earls of Oxford.

The site of the manor of Chesham Bury, including woods and solums called Wuckeridge Wood, Higham Park and Cowcroft, was alienated in 1579 by the Earl of Oxford to Thomas Ashfield and his heirs, to hold of the queen in chief, reserving a rent of £7 to the earl and his successors. Thomas Ashfield, who had formerly been bailiff to the Earl of Oxford, had received a grant of Chesham advowson (q.v.) in 1571, with which the site of Chesham Bury then descended.

The recognizance below is also mentioned in TNA PRO 30/34/14, No. 3.

LM: Recognizance between the Earl of Oxford and Ashfield

Edward, Earl of Oxford, having appeared personally before the Lady Queen in her Chancery, acknowledged himself to owe to Thomas Ashfield of Chesham in the county of Buckingham, esquire, one thousand & five 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], then the foresaid Earl wishes & grants for himself, his heirs & executors, 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 Oxenford, 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 seventeenth day of this present August made between the said Earl of thone party and the above-named Thomas Ashfield & one Alexander Hampden, esquire, 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 to stand in full force, effect and virtue.

LM: Recogn{itio} int{er} Comit{em} Oxon{ie} et Asshefield

1 Edwardus Comes Oxon{ie} coram d{omi}na Regina in Cancellar{ia} sua p{er}sonalit{er} constitut{us} recognouit se

2 debere Thome Asshefield de Chessham in Com{itatu} Buck' Armig{er}o mille & quingentas libras legalis

3 monete Angl{ie} soluend{as} eidem Thome aut suo c{er}to Attorn{ato} executorib{us} vel assign{atis} suis in

4 festo s{an}c{t}i Barth{olome}i App{osto}li p{ro}x{ime} futur{o} post dat{um} huius Recognic{i}o{n}is Et nisi fec{er}it p{re}d{i}c{t}us Comes vult &

5 concedit p{ro} se hered{ibus} & executorib{us} suis q{uo}d p{re}d{i}c{t}a pecunie sum{m}a leuet{ur} de om{n}ib{us} terr{is} ten{ementis} bonis &

6 catall{is} suis ad opus & vsum ip{s}ius Thome hered{um} & assign{atorum} suor{um} vbicumq{ue} fu{er}int inuent{is} T{este} R{egina} apud

7 Westm{onasterium} decimo septimo die Augusti Anno regni d{i}c{t}e d{omi}ne n{ost}re Elizabeth{e} dei gr{acia} Angl{ie} ffranc{ie} & Hib{er}n{ie}

8 Regine fidei defensoris &c vicesimo primo