

SUMMARY: The document below is the exemplification, dated 4 May 1597, of the fine dated five weeks after Easter 1597 by which title to New Place passed to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon from William Underhill (d.1597). In 1597 Easter Sunday fell on 27 March, five weeks from which was Sunday, 1 May 1597. It thus seems likely that the date of the fine was 2 May 1597, and that the exemplification below was engrossed two days later. For further particulars concerning the sale of New Place to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, see TNA CP 25/2/237/44/45 ELIZIMICH, Item 15. For a facsimile of the exemplification below, see Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 174. For the original exemplification, see the image at The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office at:

<http://calm.shakespeare.org.uk/dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqCmd=Show.tcl&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqPos=4&dsqSearch=%28%28%28text%29=%27underhill%27%29AND%28Date=%271597%27%29AND%28Repository=%27SBTRO%27%29%29>.

Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France & Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith etc., to all to whom our present letters shall have come, greeting;

Be it known that among the records and feet of fines with proclamations made thereof according to the form of statute in such case lately published & provided before our justices of the Common Pleas at Westminster [] in Easter term of the thirty-ninth year of our reign is contained thus:

Warwick. This is the final agreement made in the court of the Lady Queen at Westminster five weeks after Easter day [=5 weeks after 27 March 1597] in the year of the reigns of Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. from the Conquest the thirty-ninth before Edmund Anderson, Thomas Walmesley, Francis Beaumont & Thomas Owen, justices, & others faithful to the Lady Queen then there present, between William Shakespeare, querent, and William Underhill, gentleman, deforciant, of one messuage, two barns & two gardens with the appurtenances in Stratford upon Avon;

Whereof a plea of covenant was summoned between them in the same court, namely that the foresaid William Underhill has acknowledged the foresaid tenements with the appurtenances to be the right of the same William Shakespeare, as those which the same William has of the gift of the foresaid William Underhill, and he has remised & quitclaimed them from himself & his heirs to the foresaid William Shakespeare & his heirs forever;

And besides the same William Underhill has granted for himself & his heirs that they will warrant to the foresaid William Shakespeare & his heirs the foresaid tenements with the appurtenances forever;

And for this acknowledgement, remission, quit-claim, warrant, fine & agreement the same William Shakespeare has given to the foresaid William Underhill sixty pounds sterling;

In testimony whereof we have caused our seal appointed for sealing writs in the Common Pleas aforesaid to be affixed by our deputy to these presents;

Witness Edmund Anderson at Westminster on the 4th day of May in the year of our reign abovesaid.

Crompton

(writing on seal tab illegible)

1 Elizabeth dei gratia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regina fidei Defensor &c Omnibus ad quos presentes

2 littere nostre peruenerint Salutem Sciatis quod inter recorda ac pedes finium cum proclamationibus inde factis Secundum formam Statuti

3 in huiusmodi Casu nuper editi & prouisi coram Iusticiarijs nostris de Banco apud Westmonasterium [] Termino Pasche Anno regni nostri

4 Tricesimo nono Continetur sic Warruicus Hec est finalis Concordia facta in Curia Domine Regine apud

5 Westmonasterium A die Pasche in quinque septimanas Anno regnorum Elizabethhe dei gratia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regine

6 fidei Defensoris &c A Conquesto tricesimo nono coram Edmundo Anderson Thoma Walmysley ffrancisco Beaumont &

7 Thoma Owen Iusticiarijs & alijs Domine Regine fidelibus tunc ibi presentibus Inter Willelmum Shakespeare querentem et Willelmum vnderhill

8 Generosum deforciantem de vno Mesuagio duobus horreis & duobus gardinis cum pertinentijs in Stratford super Avon Vnde Placitum

9 conuencionis summonitum fuit inter eos in eadem Curia Scilicet quod predictus Willelmus vnderhill recognovit predicta tenementa cum pertinentijs esse Ius ipsius

10 Willelmi Shakespeare vt illa que idem Willelmus habet de dono predicti Willelmi vnderhill Et illa remisit & quietclamavit

11 de se & heredibus suis predicto Willelmo Shakespeare & heredibus suis Imperpetuum
Et preterea idem Willelmus vnderhill Concessit pro se &

12 heredibus suis quod ipsi Warantizabunt predicto Willelmo Shakespeare & heredibus
suis predicta tenementa cum pertinentijs Imperpetuum Et pro hac recognicione

13 remissione quietaclamacione Waranto fine & Concordia idem Willelmus Shakespeare
dedit predicto Willelmo vnderhill sexaginta

14 libras sterlingorum In cuius rei Testimonium Sigillum nostrum ad Brevia in Banco
predicto Sigillandum deputato presentibus

15 apponi fecimus Teste Edmundo Anderson apud Westmonasterium iijio die Maij Anno
regni nostri supradicto

Crompton

(writing on seal tab illegible)