
SUMMARY: This unsigned note dates from after Sir Christopher Hatton's purchase of lands in Cheshire from Oxford in 20 Elizabeth [=1577/78]. It provides evidence of the lengths to which Oxford was driven by his unpaid debt in the Court of Wards. In order to meet his cash flow problems, Oxford had to sell lands which he had inherited from his father. But when Oxford had come of age, the Queen had required that he put up all his lands as security for his debt to the Queen in the Court of Wards. Anyone who purchased lands from Oxford thus had to be protected against possible extents against the lands by the Queen. As part of each sale of land, Oxford was therefore required to give the purchaser a bond in an amount sufficient to indemnify the purchaser for any losses which might be incurred by the purchaser if the Queen were to extend against the lands at some time in the future. The note below records that this interconnected web of obligations to purchasers of Oxford's lands had reached the point that the lands which Sir Christopher Hatton purchased from Oxford were encumbered with £54,683 worth of such statutes and recognizances. Even worse, the note records that all such bonds as Oxford had given to purchasers to guarantee quiet enjoyment of the lands which they had purchased from him had been forfeited by Oxford because the Queen had in fact extended against the lands on the basis of £4600 worth of bonds made to the Court of Wards as security for Oxford's debt to the Queen when he sued his livery in 1571. The note appears to date from 1587, at which time negotiations were underway by which the purchasers of Oxford's lands were to repay Oxford's debt to the Court of Wards.

By this note it appeareth of record that the lands which the right honourable the Lord Chancellor purchased of the said Earl are liable to statutes and recognizances of £54,683 6s 8d over and besides £4600 to her Majesty in the Court of Wards and Liveries.

Note that as many of the said recognizances and statutes as are for enjoying of lands are all forfeited by reason of an extent out of the Court of Wards of £4600 for the Queen upon bonds to her Majesty in the 13th year [=1571] of her Highness' reign.