

SUMMARY: In this letter dated 6 February 1566, Sir William Cecil and other officers of the Court of Wards advise Robert Christmas, now servant to the Earl of Leicester, that the yearly rent of £66 due to the Queen for Colne Priory was omitted from the lease of Oxford's properties made by the Queen to Leicester on 22 October 1563, and that the arrears now amount to £198.

After our hearty commendations, whereas there is a yearly rent of £66 by year due unto the Queen's Majesty reserved unto her Highness out of the late priory of Colne in the county of Essex, parcel of the possessions of Edward, now Earl of Oxenford, the Queen's Majesty's ward, which priory, amongst other of the possessions aforesaid, is contained within the lease thereof granted unto our very good Lord your master under the seal of the Queen's Majesty's Court of Wards and Liveries, and forasmuch as the said rent reserved is not reprised in the said lease for lack of instructions given upon the making thereof, the same hath remained unpaid ever since the death of the late Earl, father of the said now Earl, which is by the space of three years ended at Michaelmas last past admounting unto the sum of £198 [] after the rate aforesaid, for the payment whereof the Queen's Majesty's receiver of the said county of Essex is and hath been a suitor unto us;

These are therefore to require you to take such order herein as the said arrears may be forthwith paid unto the said receiver, and that likewise hereafter yearly the said rent reserved may be paid unto the receiver of the said county for the time being without further suit unto us made for the same, and these presents shall be as well sufficient warrant and discharge unto our said very good Lord for the payment thereof as aforesaid as unto the Auditor-General of the said Court of Wards and Liveries to give due allowance thereof upon his Lordship's account for the possessions of the said now Earl as well now presently(?) as hereafter, so long as the same shall remain in the Queen's Majesty's hands, notwithstanding the [+non?] reservation of the rent reserved upon the making of his Lordship's lease. Thus fare you well from Westminster the 6th of February 1565 [=1566].

Your loving friends,

[William Cecil = signature illegible on original]

William Tooke

Robert Nowell

W Damsell

To our loving friend Robert Christmas, gentleman, servant unto the right honourable the Earl of Leicester.