

SUMMARY: The document below is the judgment granted to Thomas Skinner in 1590 on a recognizance for 2000 marks [=£1333 6s 8d] which Oxford had made to Skinner ten years earlier and had acknowledged in Chancery on 17 September 1580 (see TNA 30/34/14, no. 3).

The judgment first recites the words of the writ of scire facias sent by the Queen to the sheriff of Essex, Gabriel Poyntz, on 8 July 1590 directing Oxford to appear in Chancery three weeks from the following Michaelmas, i.e. on 20 October 1590. Oxford did not appear on the appointed day, and Thomas Skinner, through his attorney Edward Cordell, successfully claimed judgment for 2000 marks, and the right to execute against Oxford for the same. It seems likely that Oxford failed to contest the case because he did in fact owe Skinner an unspecified sum guaranteed by his recognizance for 2000 marks, and had not paid it. Why Oxford made the recognizance for 2000 marks in mid-September 1580 is unclear. Oxford had purchased the great garden property at Aldgate from Benedict Spinola on 15 June 1580 for £2500 (see Magdalene College Archives), and it may be that the recognizance to Skinner was connected to that purchase. It is also possible that the recognizance to Skinner was related to Oxford's plan to leave England with his mistress, Anne Vavasour, mentioned in allegations by Lord Henry Howard in late December 1580 (see SP 12/151/57, ff. 118-19):

*His device to carry away Nan Vavasour at Easter was a 12 month when he thought her first to have been with child, and on the tother side to have married her, disposing his bank of money to the purpose.*

BL Cotton Titus C.6, ff. 7-8 establishes that Oxford first thought that his mistress, Anne Vavasour, was pregnant in Lent 1580, although it turned out otherwise. There is thus a possibility that the recognizance to Skinner was related to a 'bank of money' which Oxford accumulated after Anne Vavasour actually did become pregnant in mid-July 1580. By mid-September 1580, when Oxford made the recognizance to Skinner, Anne was two months' pregnant.

A further possibility is that the recognizance for 2000 marks was related to the debt to Skinner mentioned in Oxford's indenture of 30 January 1575 (see D/DRg2/25). In a schedule of debts totalling £9096 10s 8-1/2d attached to the indenture, it is noted that Oxford owed the very large sum of £918 to 'Thomas Skinner, mercer'. If the £918 had not been paid by 17 September 1580, and had perhaps even increased by that date, it is possible that Skinner required Oxford to guarantee the debt by the recognizance for 2000 marks [=£1333 6s 8d] which Oxford entered into on 17 September 1580, one day after he had sold his manors of Castle Camps and Fowlmere to Skinner for £5000.

TNA C 43/10/342 appears to be identical to TNA C 43/10/340.

Pleas before the Lady Queen in her Chancery at Westminster in the county of Middlesex of Michaelmas term in the thirty-second & thirty-third year [=1590] of the reign of our Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France, & Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc.

[LM: Skinner, querent, Earl of Oxford, defendant]

The Lady Queen has now sent her close writ directed to the sheriff of Essex in these words: Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., to the Sheriff of Essex, greeting.

Whereas on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of September in the twenty-second year [=17 September 1580] of our reign Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, Lord Great Chamberlain of England, being by appearance before us in our Chancery, acknowledged himself to owe to Thomas Skinner, citizen and clothworker of London, two thousand marks of good & lawful money of England to be paid to the same Thomas or to his right attorney or his executors, as is known to us by inspection of the rolls of our Chancery aforesaid, and he has not yet paid them to him, as it is said, we enjoin you that you make known to the forenamed Earl that he be before us in our said Chancery three weeks from Michaelmas next [=20 October 1590], whithersoever he then might have been, to declare if he might have or know anything to say for himself wherefore the said money ought not to be levied of his lands and chattels & to be delivered to the forenamed Thomas according to the force, form, & effect of the foresaid recognizance. And you should produce in court there the names of them by which you have made him to know [+it], & this writ. Attested by me, myself, at Westminster the 8<sup>th</sup> day of July & in the thirty-second year [=8 July 1590] of the reign;

At which certain three weeks of Michaelmas the forenamed Thomas Skinner by Edward Cordell, his attorney, came before the said Lady Queen in the said court here, namely at Westminster aforesaid, and the said sheriff of Essex, namely Gabriel Poyntz, esquire, sent the foresaid writ, executed & returned, in the following form, viz., that by virtue of the foresaid writ to himself directed, by William Berry, Jerome Devenish, & Robert Usher, good & law-worthy men of the foresaid county, he made known to the forenamed Edward, Earl of Oxford, that he be before the Lady Queen in her Chancery aforesaid at the day & place previously mentioned to show wherefore the foresaid money ought not to be levied as by himself it was perceived;

Upon which the forenamed Thomas Skinner by his said attorney claimed judgment & execution to be adjudicated for himself against the same Earl of Oxford for the foresaid two thousand marks by virtue of the foresaid recognizance. And the same Earl of Oxford on the fourth day of the appointment of three weeks of Michaelmas aforesaid before the same Lady Queen now in the said Court here, namely at Westminster aforesaid, although often and solemnly demanded, did not appear but makes [sic?] default, record of which default by the said court here shown therefore and the premises fully understood, by the same court here it is considered & adjudged that the forenamed Thomas Skinner would recover against the same Earl of Oxford the said two thousand marks by default and that

the same Thomas might have execution against the forenamed Earl of Oxford. And the said Thomas elected to him execution against the same Earl of the foresaid two thousand marks by writs of the Lady Queen of etc.

Placita coram domina Regina in Cancellaria sua apud Westmonasterium in Comitatu Middlesexie de Termino Sancti Michaelis Anno regni domine nostre Elizabethae dei gracia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regine fidei defensoris &c tricesimo secundo & tricesimo tercio

[LM: Skynner querens Comes Oxonie defensor]

1. Domina Regina nunc mandauit breve suum clausum vicecomiti Essex directo in hec verba Elizabethae dei gracia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regina fidei defensor &c Vicecomiti
2. Essex salutem Cum decimo septimo die Septembris Anno regni nostri vicesimo secundo Edwardus de Veer Comes Oxonie dominus magnus Camerarius Anglie coram
3. nobis in Cancellaria nostra personaliter constitutus recognouit se debere Thome Skynner Ciui & Clothworker Londonie duas mille marcas bone & legalis
4. monete Anglie Soluendum eidem Thome aut suo recto Attornato vel executoribus suis sicut per inspeccionem rotulorum Cancellarie nostre predicte nobis constat et eas ei
5. nondum soluit ut dicitur Tibi precipimus quod scire facis prefato Comiti quod sit coram nobis in dicta Cancellaria nostra a die sancti Michaelis proximo futuro in tres septimanas
6. vbicumque tunc fuerit ad ostendendum si quid pro se habeat vel dicere sciat quare dicta pecunia de terris & catallis suis leuari & prefato Thome liberari non
7. debeat iuxta vim formam & effectum Recognicionis predicte Et habeas ibi nomina eorum per quod ei scire feceris & hoc breve Teste me ipsa apud Westmonasterium viij die Iulij
8. Anno regni Tricesimo secundo Ad quas quidem tres septimanas sancti Michaelis coram dicta domina Regina in dicta Curia hic scilicet apud Westmonasterium predicto venit
9. prefatum Thomas Skynner per Edwardum Cordell Attornatum suum ac dictus Vicecomes Essex scilicet Gabriel Poyntz Armiger mandauit breve predictum executum & retornatum

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10. in forma sequente viz. quod virtute brevis predicti sibi directi per Willelmum Berry, Ieronimum Devenishe & Robertum Vsher probos & legales homines de Comitatu predicto sciri
  11. fecit prenominato Edwardo Comiti Oxonie quod esset coram domina Regina in Cancellaria sua predicta ad diem & locum premencionatas ostendum quare pecunia
  12. predicta leuari non debeat prout sibi percipiebatur Super quo prefatus Thomas Skynner per Attornatum suum predictum petivit iudicium & execucionem versus eundem Comitem
  13. Oxonie de predictis duabus Mille Marcis virtute Recognicionis predictae sibi adiudicari Ac idem Comes Oxonie quarto die placiti de tribus septimanis sancti
  14. Michaelis antedictis coram eadem domina Regina nunc in dicta Curia hic scilicet apud Westmonasterium predicto licet sepius ac solempniter exactum non comparavit sed defaultam
  15. facit [sic?] Cuius defalte recordum per dictam Curiam hic visis [sic?] igitur premissis pleneque intellectis per eandem Curiam hic consideratum & adiudicatum est quod prefatus Thomas Skynner
  16. recuperet versus eundem Comitem Oxonie dictas duas Mille Marcas per defaultam ac quod idem Thomas execucionem versus prefatum Comitem Oxonie habeat Dictusque
  17. Thomas elegit ei execucionem versus eundem Comitem de predictis duabus Mille Marcis per brevia domina Regine de &c