

SUMMARY: The document below is the fine in the Court of Common Pleas dated 18 April 1580 by which clear title to the manor of Doddinghurst in Essex passed from Oxford to Richard Stonley for £360.

By licence dated 1 December 1579 Oxford had been authorized to alienate Doddinghurst Park to Richard Stonley, reserving the jointure of Oxford's wife, Anne (see TNA C 66/1194, m. 34), and by a fine in the Court of Common Pleas dated 20 January 1580 clear title to lands in Doddinghurst passed from Oxford to Stonley (see TNA CP 25/2/131/1676/22ELIZIHIL, Item 8).

By another licence dated 1 March 1580 Oxford was authorized to alienate the manor of Doddinghurst to Stonley (see TNA C 66/1194, m. 16). It would appear that the fine below relates to this latter licence of 1 March 1580. For the recognizance in the amount of £1600 entered into by Oxford in connection with his sale of the manor of Doddinghurst, see TNA C 54/1093, Part 23.

Richard Stonley (d.1600) of London and Doddinghurst, who held an appointment for life as one of the four Tellers of the Exchequer, was the first recorded purchaser of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*:

*Richard Field entered Venus and Adonis in the Register at Stationers' Hall on 18 April 1593. Less than two months later, an elderly gentleman, Richard Stonley, Esq., saw the poem on the stalls at the sign of the White Greyhound in Paul's Churchyard, and bought a copy for sixpence. One of the four tellers of the Exchequer, Stonley had a London house in Aldersgate, but spent his weekends on his Doddinghurst estate in Essex; at the advanced age of seventy-seven this civil servant who had spent his whole career dealing with Crown finances found himself imprisoned in the Fleet because of massive personal debt. A figure of consequence in his own day, but later forgotten, Stonley has the minor distinction of being the first recorded purchaser of Shakespeare's first publication.*

See Schoenbaum, Samuel, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, rev. ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 175-6.

This is the final agreement made in the court of the Lady Queen at Westminster on the quindene of Easter 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 twenty-second [=18 April 1580], before James Dyer, Thomas Meade & Francis Wyndham, justices, & others faithful to the Lady Queen then there present, between Richard Stonley, esquire, querent, and Edward, Earl of Oxenford, Great Chamberlain of England, deforciant, of the manor of Doddinghurst alias Doddinghurst with the appurtenances and of twenty messuages, twenty gardens, two hundred acres of arable land, thirty acres of meadow, two hundred acres of pasture, one hundred acres of wood, fifty acres of furze & heath, & one hundred shillings rent & rent of one capon with the appurtenances in

Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst, Stondon, Blackmore, Keldon alias Kelvedon, Mountnessing & Bentley, and of view of frankpledge with the appurtenances in Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst, and of the advowson of the church of Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst;

Whereof a plea of covenant was summoned between them in the same court, namely that the foresaid Earl has acknowledged the foresaid manor, tenements, rents & view of frankpledge with the appurtenances, and the advowson aforesaid to be the right of himself, Richard, as those which the same Richard has of the gift of the foresaid Earl, and he has remised & quit-claimed them from himself & his heirs to the foresaid Richard & his heirs forever;

And besides the same Earl has granted for himself & his heirs that they will warrant to the foresaid Richard & his heirs the foresaid manor, tenements, rents & view of frankpledge with the appurtenances and the advowson aforesaid against the foresaid Earl & his heirs and against the heirs of John, late Earl of Oxenford, deceased, father of himself, the Earl, forever;

And for this acknowledgement, remission, quit-claim, warrant, fine & agreement the same Richard has given to the foresaid Earl three hundred & sixty pounds sterling.

Essex

Examined

According to the form of the statute the first proclamation was made on the ninth day of May in Easter term in the twenty-second year of the within-written Queen;

The second proclamation on the eleventh day of May in the same term;

The third proclamation on the thirteenth day of May in the same term;

The fourth proclamation on the sixteenth day of May in the same term.

The fifth proclamation was made on the fifteenth day of June in Trinity term in the twenty-second year of the within-written Queen;

The sixth proclamation on the seventeenth day of June in the same term;

The seventh proclamation on the twentieth day of June in the same term;

The eighth proclamation on the twenty-second day of June in the same term.

The ninth proclamation was made on the twenty-first day of November in Michaelmas term in the twenty-third year of the within-written Queen;

The tenth proclamation on the twenty-third day of November in the same term;

The eleventh proclamation on the twenty-sixth day of November in the same term;

The twelfth proclamation on the twenty-eighth day of November in the same term.

The thirteenth proclamation was made on the seventh day of February in Hilary term in the twenty-third year of the within-written Queen;

The fourteenth proclamation on the ninth day of February in the same term;

The fifteenth proclamation on the eleventh day of February in the same term;

The sixteenth proclamation on the thirteenth day of February in the same term.

Examined

1 Hec est finalis Concordia facta in Curia Domine Regine Apud Westmonasterium A die Pasche in

2 quindecim dies Anno regnorum Elizabethhe dei gratia Anglie ffrancie & Hibernie Regine fidei

3 defensoris &c A Conquesto vicesimo secundo coram Iacobo Dyer Thoma Meade & ffrancisco

4 Wyndam Iusticiarijs & alijs domine Regine fidelibus tunc ibi presentibus Inter Ricardum Stonley

5 Armigerum querentem et Edwardum Comitem Oxonie Magnum Camerarium Anglie deforciantem de

6 Manerio de Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst cum pertinentijs ac de viginti Mesuagijs

7 viginti gardinis ducentis acris terre triginta acris prati ducentis acris pasture

8 Centum acris bosci quinquaginta acris Iampnorum & bruere & Centum solidatis

9 redditus & redditus vnus Caponis cum pertinentijs in Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst

10 Stondon Blakamoore Keldon alias Kelvedon Mountnezing & Bentley Ac

11 de visu ffranci plegij cum pertinentijs in Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst ac de aduocacione

12 ecclesie de Dodinghurst alias Doddinghurst Vnde Placitum conuencionis summonitum fuit

13 inter eos in eadem Curia Scilicet quod predictus Comes recognovit predicta Manerium tenementa redditus

14 & visum ffranci plegij cum pertinentijs ac advocationem predictam esse Ius ipsius Ricardi Vt illa que

15 Idem Ricardus habet de dono predicti Comitis Et illa remisit & quieteclamavit de se & heredibus

16 suis predicto Ricardo & heredibus suis Imperpetuum Et preterea Idem Comes concessit pro se &

17 heredibus suis quod ipsi Warantizabunt predicto Ricardo & heredibus suis predicta Manerium tenementa redditus &

18 visum ffranci plegij cum pertinentijs ac aduocacionem predictam contra predictum Comitem

19 & heredes suos ac contra heredes Iohannis nuper Comitis Oxonie defuncti patris ipsius

20 Comitis Imperpetuum Et pro hac recognicione remissione quietaclamacione Waranto fine &

21 Concordia Idem Ricardus dedit predicto Comiti trescentas & sexaginta libras

22 sterlingorum

Essex

examinatus

Secundum formam statuti

Prima proclamatio facta fuit Nono die Maij termino Pasche Anno vicesimo secundo Regine infrascripte

Secunda proclamatio vndecimo die Maij eodem termino

tercia proclamatio terciodecimo die Maij eodem termino

quarta proclamatio sextodecimo die Maij eodem termino

Quinta proclamatio facta fuit quintodecimo die Iunij termino sancte Trinitatis Anno vicesimo secundo Regine infrascripte

sexta proclamatio decimo septimo die Iunij eodem termino

septima proclamatio vicesimo die Iunij eodem termino

octava proclamatio vicesimo secundo die Iunij eodem termino

Nona proclamatio facta fuit vicesimo primo die Novembris Termino sancti Michaelis Anno vicesimo tercio Regine infrascripte

decima proclamatio vicesimo tercio die Novembris eodem termino

undecima proclamatio vicesimo sexto die Novembris eodem termino

duodecima proclamatio vicesimo octavo die Novembris eodem termino

Terciadecima proclamatio facta fuit septimo die februarij Termino sancti Hillarij Anno vicesimo tercio Regine infrascripte

quartadecima proclamatio nono die februarij eodem termino

quintadecima proclamatio undecimo die februarij eodem termino

sextadecima proclamatio terciodecimo die februarij eodem termino

examinatus