

SUMMARY: The document below is the indenture of 1 April 1580 by which Oxford granted a lease for 21 years of a cottage and garden in the parish of Castle Hedingham, to his servant, Nicholas Bleake. The lease was to commence on 6 May 1595, after the expiration of an earlier lease for 21 years which Oxford had granted to Richard Purcas on 6 May 1574.

For other documents concerning Oxford's servant, Nicholas Bleake, see his last will and testament, dated 17 November 1600 and proved 16 January 1601, TNA PROB 11/97, ff. 53-4.

This indenture made the first day of April 1580 and in the two and twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., between the Right Honourable Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, Lord Great Chamberlain of England, Viscount Bulbeck and Lord of Badlesmere and Scales, of thone party, and Nicholas Bleake, servant to the said Earl, on thother party;

Witnesseth that the said Earl, for the sum of six pounds of lawful money of England to him in hand truly paid before the ensealing of these presents by the said Nicholas, hath demised, granted, betaken and to farm letten and by these presents doth demise, grant, betake and to farm let unto the said Nicholas Bleake all that his cottage and garden thereto belonging called Shepcottes with one parcel of land or pasture with th' appurtenances set, lying and being within the parish of Hedingham Castle in the county of Essex, and also two crofts of land called Kendall crofts, as the same parcels be, more or less, now in the tenure or occupation of one Richard Purcas, tanner, or of his assigns;

To have and to hold the said cottage, garden, and all and singular the premises with th' appurtenances unto the said Nicholas Bleake, his executors, administrators and assigns, for and during the whole term of twenty and one years fully to be complete and ended, the same term to begin the sixth day of May which shall be in the year of Our Lord God one thousand five hundred four score and fifteen [=6 May 1595], or immediately from such time as one demise or lease for one and twenty years heretofore made and granted by the said Earl to the foresaid Richard Purcas of the said cottage by indenture dated the 6th day of May in the sixteenth year [=6 May 1574] of the Queen's Majesty's reign that now is shall be ended, expired or otherwise determined;

Yielding and paying therefore yearly from thenceforth during the terms in the year, that is to say, at the feasts of St. Michael th' Archangel and the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady Saint Mary the Virgin by even portions;

Provided always and it is covenanted and agreed between the said parties to these presents that if it shall happen the said yearly rent of fourteen shillings and four pence to be behind unpaid in part or in all by the space of six weeks next after any of the said

feasts and being lawfully demanded, that then and at all times after it shall and may be lawful to the said Earl, his heirs or assigns, into the said cottage and other the premises with th' appurtenances to re-enter, and the same to have again, retain and repossede as in his or their former estate, this indenture or anything herein contained to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding;

And the said Nicholas Bleake for him, his executors and administrators, covenanteth and granteth to and with the said Earl and his heirs by these presents to repair, maintain and keep in sufficient reparations at his and their own costs and charges the said cottage (great timber only except), and the same so sufficiently repaired and amended in th' end of the said term to leave and yield up;

And the said Earl covenanteth and granteth for him, his heirs and executors, to and with the said Nicholas Bleake, his executors and assigns, that it shall be leeful to the said Nicholas Bleake, his executors and assigns, to have and take in and upon the premises sufficient timber for the reparations of the said cottage, and also sufficient fire-bote, haybote and house-bote, there to be spent and not elsewhere, during the said term;

In witness whereof the said parties to these indentures interchangeably have set their seals, given the day and year first above-written.

Sealed and delivered in the presence of Richard Brooke and Walter Hayes.

Edward Oxeford

Irrotulata coram Georgio Golding Auditore
Aprilis xvijvo(?) 1580

[=Enrolled before George Golding, auditor, on the 18th day of April 1580]

Recognitum coram me Iohanne Gybon in cancellarie magistro decimo septimo die mensis
Aprilis anno regni suprascripti vicesimo secundo

[=Acknowledged before me, John Gybon, Master in Chancery, on the seventeenth day of the month of April in the year of the reign above-written the twenty-second.]

[On dorse]

Irrotulata in dorso Clausarum Cancellarie infrascripte domine Regine vicesimo secundo die
Aprilis Anno infrascripto

per Willelmum Herd et Johannem Bailie
deputatus Clericis Irrotulamentorum

[=Enrolled on the back/dorse of the Close [+Rolls] of the Chancery of the within-written Lady Queen on the twenty-second day of April in the within-written year by William Herd and John Bailey, Deputies to the Clerks of the Enrolments]

Oxonie Comes et Bleake [=Earl of Oxford and Bleake]

Shepcotes [] croftes

1 aprillis anno 22 Elizabethe Regine

A lease from Edward Earl of Oxon' unto Nicholas Bleake of Shepcottes [] 6 maij 1595 [] expired(?)