

SUMMARY: The document below is an indenture dated 20 December 1536 by which John Hilsey (d. 4 August 1539), Bishop of Rochester and last Prior of the Blackfriars, leased premises in the Blackfriars for a term of three lives plus one year to Sir William Kingston (d. 14 September 1540), his wife, Lady Mary Scrope Jerningham Kingston (d. 25 August 1548), and Lady Kingston's eldest son, Sir Henry Jerningham (d. 6 September 1572).

The terms of the lease, which state that the prior and convent would be responsible for repair of the existing tenement, but that the lessees would be responsible for the repair of 'such new buildings as [they] hath re-edified new from the ground' suggest that the Kingstons had already constructed, or intended to construct, new buildings on the premises.

Holder describes the location of the leased property:

*On the other side of the inner cloister lay the library wing, only a short distance from the schoolhouse. The library was on the upper floor and it had rooms described as the 'under lybrary' below. By the early sixteenth century this lower library was leased to lay tenants: the 1536 lease to Sir William Kingston mentions the former tenant Elizabeth Denton, a lady-in-waiting to Elizabeth of York and who was probably related to Kingston's wife Mary through the latter's first marriage.*

Holder, Nick, 'The Medieval Friaries of London', PhD thesis, University of London, August 2011, p. 53, available online.

The former tenant, Lady Elizabeth Denton (d.1519) was Henry VIII's governess. She is said to have married John Denton, about whom nothing appears to be known, and as noted above, she was related by marriage to one of the lessees in the indenture below, Lady Mary Kingston. She was born Elizabeth Jerningham, the daughter of Sir John Jerningham (d.1474) and Agnes Darell, the daughter of Sir John Darell (d.1509) of Cale Hill and Little Chart, Kent, by Anne Isaac. Her eldest brother, John Jerningham (d.1503), was the father of Lady Mary Kingston's first husband, Sir Edward Jerningham (d. 6 January 1515), and she was thus Lady Kingston's aunt by marriage. For the will of Sir Edward Jerningham, see TNA PROB 11/18/104. For the will of Sir John Darell, see TNA PROB 11/16/51. For Lady Kingston, whose sister, Elizabeth Scrope (d.1537), was the wife of John de Vere, 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, see her will, TNA PROB 11/32/320, and Folger MS L.b.310. For the will of Lady Kingston's son, Sir Henry Jerningham, see TNA PROB 11/55/240. For the will of Lady Elizabeth Denton, see Guildhall Library MS 9171/15 f. 108v. See also Druery, John Henry, *Historical Notices of Great Yarmouth*, (London: Nicholas & Son, 1826), pp. 171-2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/historicalandto00druegoog#page/n244/mode/2up>.

In his will dated 31 October 1473, Sir John Jerningham left a reversionary life interest in his manor of Little Worlingham to his daughter, Elizabeth Denton:

. . . *Osberne Jernegan, my son, [to] have all my manor of Little Worlingham, with all the commodities etc. within the towns of Little Worlingham, Cove, Ellough and Great Worlingham . . . and in default to Elizabeth Denton, my daughter, for life, and after to Walter Denton, her son for life, and after to be sold.*

See Suckling, Alfred, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk*, (London: John Weale, 1846), Vol. I, p. 105 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=R8w\\_AAAAcAAJ&pg=PA105&lpg=PA105&dq=Sir+John+Denton+Jernegan&source=bl&ots=e7r21Stmyd&sig=xI27cOlZMmi2ojVWO4Wm1K9q\\_Co&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ulY5Ve6uOY64oQSW4IC4Aw&ved=0CCkQ6AEwBDgK#v=onepage&q=Sir%20John%20Denton%20Jernegan&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=R8w_AAAAcAAJ&pg=PA105&lpg=PA105&dq=Sir+John+Denton+Jernegan&source=bl&ots=e7r21Stmyd&sig=xI27cOlZMmi2ojVWO4Wm1K9q_Co&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ulY5Ve6uOY64oQSW4IC4Aw&ved=0CCkQ6AEwBDgK#v=onepage&q=Sir%20John%20Denton%20Jernegan&f=false).

See also House, Anthony Paul, *The City of London and the Problem of the Liberties*, PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 2006, p. 113:

*Blackfriars shared more prosaic links with Henry VIII, as well. His governess, Dame Elizabeth Denton, moved to Blackfriars after she left Henry's household in the first decade of the sixteenth century. She temporarily returned to royal service during Catherine of Aragon's pregnancies. When Denton died in 1519, she left thirty shillings to the prior and chapter. Soon thereafter her tenement was taken up by Sir William Kingston, a gentleman of the king's privy chamber. Kingston's wife remained a resident of Blackfriars until her death in the 1550s [sic].*

For Lady Denton's service in the royal household, see also Weir, Alison, *Elizabeth of York; The First Tudor Queen*, (London: Vintage, 2013), p. 449 at

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=PcU1AAAQBAJ&pg=PA449&lpg=PA449&dq=%22Elizabeth+Denton%22+%221518%22&source=bl&ots=KhYX\\_V5jWQ&sig=grPm9nF7sXe9\\_kpHiSAqASlYy3M&hl=en&sa=X&ei=REg5VaXzA9fcoASsvYGICg&ved=0CD EQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=%22Elizabeth%20Denton%22%20%221518%22&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=PcU1AAAQBAJ&pg=PA449&lpg=PA449&dq=%22Elizabeth+Denton%22+%221518%22&source=bl&ots=KhYX_V5jWQ&sig=grPm9nF7sXe9_kpHiSAqASlYy3M&hl=en&sa=X&ei=REg5VaXzA9fcoASsvYGICg&ved=0CD EQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=%22Elizabeth%20Denton%22%20%221518%22&f=false).

Lady Denton was buried in the Blackfriars. See Seymour, Robert, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark, and Parts Adjacent*, (London: T. Read, 1733), Vol. I, pp. 692-3 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=nGVZAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA692&lpg=PA692&dq=%22Elizabeth+Denton%22+%22Monument%22&source=bl&ots=\\_gLEAzui1u&sig=TVPb6udj2R3QxSxWaVLGZL2n334&hl=en&sa=X&ei=2l45VbqiJY60oQSN2YHoCw&ved=0CDEQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=%22Elizabeth%20Denton%22%20%22Monument%22&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=nGVZAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA692&lpg=PA692&dq=%22Elizabeth+Denton%22+%22Monument%22&source=bl&ots=_gLEAzui1u&sig=TVPb6udj2R3QxSxWaVLGZL2n334&hl=en&sa=X&ei=2l45VbqiJY60oQSN2YHoCw&ved=0CDEQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=%22Elizabeth%20Denton%22%20%22Monument%22&f=false)

*Here [i.e. in Blackfriars church] was also the image of St Thomas Aquinas before which Elizabeth Denton, widow, willed (her will bearing date April 26, 1518) to be buried.*

For John Hilsey, see the *ODNB* article.

At the foot of the indenture is a note by Richard Rich (d. 12 June 1567), who had been appointed Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations on 24 April 1536. The note appears to date to July 1543, when the lease below was surrendered, and a new lease for 21 years was granted to Lady Mary Kingston and Sir Henry Jerningham. See TNA E 315/216, f. 52, and Feuillerat, *infra*, 104-5.

For the letters patent dated 5 September 1545 by which the freehold of property in the Blackfriars, including the property leased by the indenture below, was granted to Lady Mary Kingston, see TNA C 66/768, mm. 23-4.

For a partial transcript of the indenture below, see Feuillerat, Albert, *Blackfriars Records*, (Oxford University Press: Malone Society, 1913), p. 104 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/collectionspt102malouoft#page/104/mode/2up>.

It should be noted that although Feuillerat, *supra*, p. 104, and Irwin Smith in *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, (New York: New York University Press, 1964), p. 426, give the date of the indenture of lease as 20 September, the document is dated 20 December.

This indenture made the 20<sup>th</sup> day of December the 28<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> between the Reverend Father in God John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, Perpetual Commendatory of the Order of Friars Preachers of the House of Saint John Evangelist in London next Ludgate, and the convent of the same place of the one party, and the right worshipful Sir William Kingston, knight, Dame Mary, his wife, [+and?] Henry Jerningham, son and heir apparent of the said Dame Mary, on the other party;

Witnesseth that the said Reverend Father Perpetual Commendatory & convent of one assent and consent, will and full agreement, have given and granted and by these presents do give and grant, demisen & letten to farm to the foresaid Sir William Kingston, Dame Mary, his wife, & Henry Jerningham all the messuage, tenement [+and?] garden which of late was in the hands of Dame Elizabeth Denton, with a way to the water-side between the garden of my Lady Peacock's of the west party and the garden of Richard Tryce of the east party, and also 2 chambers and a cellar underneath(?) the library which sometime was the under-library adjacent to the hill garden;

To have and to hold the said messuage, tenement, garden, 2 chambers [+and?] cellar with the appurtenances during the lives of the said Sir William, Dame Mary and Henry Jerningham or the longest liver of the[m] or any of the[m], and a year after the death of the[m] or any of the[m], in as large & ample wise as the said Perpetual Commendatory or convent hath authority to let or set any tenement of theirs by virtue of their convent seal;

Yielding and paying therefore to the said Perpetual Commendatory or convent & to their successors £5 sterling yearly at 4 sundry terms by even portions, that is to say, at th' Annunciation of Our Lady next following the date hereof 25s, at the feast of Saint John Baptist 25s, at the feast of Saint Michael th' Archangel 25s, and at the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord 25s;

And moreover it is agreed that the said Reverend Father Perpetual Commendatory [+and?] convent & their(?) successors shall repair, build & make reparations of the said tenement & messuage so often as need shall require, except such new buildings as the said Sir William [+and?] Dame Mary hath re-edified of new from the ground, which shall be maintained and repaired at the costs & charges of the said Sir William, Dame Mary & Henry Jerningham during their lives;

And if it fortune the said rent of £5 to be behind unpaid in part or in all after any of the said feasts by the space of two months, and so lawfully demanded and asked, that then it shall be leeful to the said Perpetual Commendatory & convent & to their successors into all the said tenement to re-enter and distrain, and the distress so taken to bear, carry away and withhold unto such time that they of the said £5 and of th' arrearages of the same be fully content and paid;

And if it happen the said yearly rent of £5 to be behind unpaid in part or in all by the space of a whole year, and no sufficient distress there can be found, that then it shall be leeful unto the said Perpetual Commendatory or convent & their successors into all the said tenement with other the premises with th' appurtenances to re-enter, & the same to have again and repossede as in their first estate, these indentures notwithstanding;

And also it shall not be lawful unto the said Sir William Kingston nor Dame Mary [+nor?] Henry Jerningham their estate & terms of years of and in the said tenement with other the premises with th' appurtenances nor any parcel thereof to any person or persons to grant, alien, [+or?] let to farm in any wise without the licence, will, consent and agreement of the said Perpetual Commendatory or convent or their successors first asked, had & obtained;

In witness whereof as well the common seal of the said Perpetual Commendatory and convent as the seals of the said Sir William Kingston, Dame Mary, his wife [+and?] Henry Jerningham to these indentures interchangeably are set to, given in the chapter-house of the said Perpetual Commendatory and convent the day and year above-written.

I have taken a surrender hereof, & therefore make a new lease for 21 years.

Richard Rich

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Endorsed: The lease of the house wherein my Lady now dwelleth by the prior's(?)  
convent