

Inquisitions post mortem

- Sworn enquiries into the lands held at their deaths by direct tenants of the crown (tenants-in-chief)
- Survive from about 1236 to 1660 (when feudal tenures were abolished) in more-or-less continuous series at the National Archives
- Usually created by *escheator*
- Designed to record and enforce royal feudal rights, especially
 - *Wardship*, when a tenant died and their heir was not of full legal age
 - *Primer seisin and relief*, when an heir was of full age
- Related documents:
 - *Proofs of age*
 - *Assignments of dower*

William Foreman.

Delivered into Court 17th March, 12 Charles I.

Inquisition taken at Malmesburie, 29th October, 8 Charles I [1632], before Henry Shuter, esq., escheator, after the death of William Foreman, by the oath of Simon James, gent., William Adye, Nicholas Archard, William Maio, Thomas Rich, Thomas Wayte, Robert Wattes, Thomas Hathrell, Thomas Younge, William Wytte, Richard Woodroffe, William Clarke, and William Neale, who say that

William Foreman, on the 7th day of September, 7 James I [1609], was seised of one capital messuage in Calne, then in the tenure of the said William; divers other messuages, lands and tenements there, sometime parcel of the manor of Chilvester alias Chilfester; one messuage there in the street called Woodstreet; and 5 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, and 4 acres of pasture there.

So seised, the said William Foreman made his will on the said 7th September, and hereby devised the said premises to William Foreman, his son, and to his heirs, if the said William died without heirs then the same to remain to Christiana Foreman and Susanne Foreman, daughters of testator.

The premises sometime parcel of the manor of Chilvester, at the death of the said William Foreman were held of Lionel Duckett, esq., now deceased, as of his manor of Calston, by knight's service, to wit, by the 90th part of a knight's fee: they are now held of John Duckett, esq., as of his said manor of Calston, by the same service, and are worth per annum, 20s. The residue of the said premises are held of Richard Lowe, esq., but by what service is not known: they are worth per annum, clear 3s. 4d.

William Foreman died at Calne, 24th September, 7 James I [1609]; William Foreman is his son and next heir, and was then aged 9 years 10 months and 8 days. Henrica Foreman, now the wife of Richard Ernely, gent., was the wife of the said William Foreman, and is dowered of the said premises: she still survives at Calne.

Inq. p.m., 13 Charles I, pt. 4, No. 2b.

"Abstracts of Wiltshire Inquisitions Post Mortem," 1901, edited by George S. Fry & Edw. Alex Fry.