

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*

Josias Taylor, esquire.

Inquisition taken at le Devizes, 24th April, 9 Charles I [1633], before William Herbert, esq., escheator, by virtue of his office, after the death of Josias Taylor, esq., by the oath of John Hitchkox, etc. [sic, no more names given], who say that

Josias Taylor was seised of one capital messuage, 79 acres of land, 44 acres of meadow, and 60 acres of pasture, in Yatton Keynell, to the said messuage belonging, late parcel of the manor of Yatton Keynell; one other messuage there, and one garden, one orchard, and one backside thereto belonging, containing $\frac{1}{2}$ acre; 2 closes of pasture there, containing 6 acres; 4 parcels of meadow there, containing 3 acres; 24 acres of arable land there: which said premises last mentioned are now in the tenure of Thomas Bishopp.

The capital messuage, with the premises thereto belonging, are held of the King as of his Duchy of Lancaster, by knight's service, and not in chief, and are worth per annum, clear, 40s. The other messuage there, the 2 closes of pasture, 4 parcels of meadow and 24 acres of arable land, are held of Henry Earl of Dunby, as of his manor of Lee and Cleverton, in free and common socage, by fealty, suit at court, and the yearly rent of 1d. only, and are worth per annum, clear, 5s.

Inq. p.m., 9 Charles I, pt. 20, No. 192.

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