

## 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*

## Michael Drewe, gentleman.

**Inquisition** taken at Devizes, 24th April, 9 Charles I [1633], before William Harbert, esq., escheator, by virtue of his office, after the death of Michael Drewe, gent., by the oath of John Hitchkox, etc. [names of the other jurors not given], who say that

Before the death of the said Michael Drewe one Thomas Baylye, gent., was seised of 15 messuages and 15 gardens in the borough of Devizes, then in the several tenures of Thomas Upgrove, Judith Cromwell, widow, John Enwood, John Blanford, James Willils, --- Porter, widow, Robert Cordrey, Robert Morris, Thomas Porter, Richard Hawarden, William Swaine, and John Hadnett; and 6 messuages and divers lands, tenements, and hereditaments in Rowde and Bromham in the several tenures of Robert Child, Simon Yorke, Thomas Shell, Robert Stephens, William Stephens, and Thomas Learch; and one messuage, 2 closes of pasture containing 20 acres called Hagheyses, one arable close containing 8 acres called hagheys piece, 15½ acres of arable land lying in the common fields of Kundway, one close of pasture next Spittle Crofte containing ½ acre lying in Cannings Episcopi, in the tenure of Thomas Bayly.

So seised, the said Thomas Bayley made his will 19th May, 1601, and thereby bequeathed the said premises to Mary Bayley, then his wife, with remainder to Mary Drewe, his daughter, then wife of the said Michael Drewe, for her life; the remainder to the heirs of the body of the said Mary Drew; and for default, the remainder thereof to the said Mary, wife of the said Thomas Bayly, and to her heirs for ever.

The said Thomas Bayley died 2nd April, 1 James I [1603].

On the 29th September, 16 James I, the said Mary Bayly married Richard Vandray, gent.

Afterwards, to wit, on the 28th November in the said year, the said Richard and Mary and the said Michael and Mary Drewe conveyed the said premises to Robert Drew, esq., and Robert Flower and their heirs, to the use of the said Michael Drewe and Mary and the heirs of the said Mary by the said Michael; and for default, the remainder thereof to the use of the right heirs of the said Mary for ever.

The said Michael Drewe was likewise seised of one messuage lying in the borough of Devizes, now or late in the occupation of Robert Dyer, clerk; one orchard, and one close of pasture containing one acre; 2 close of pasture in Cannings Episcopi called Knightleazes, containing 13 acres; 2 closes of pasture there called Surbattes and Pickellandes, containing 14 acres; and 44 acres of land there.

So seised, the said Michael Drewe, on the 20th December, 16 James I [1618], conveyed the said premises to the said Robert Drewe and Robert Flower and their heirs, to the use of the said Michael Drewe and Mary his wife and his heirs for ever.

The said messuage in the borough of Devizes is held of the King in free burgage as of his borough of Devizes, by a yearly rent and fealty only and not in chief or by knight's service, and is worth per annum, clear, 2s. 6d. The other premises in the said borough are held of the King as of his said borough, by a yearly rent and fealty only and not in chief or by knight's service, and are worth per annum, clear, 6s. 8d. The premises in Rowde and Bromham are held of . . . Countess of Rutland in free and common socage as of her manor of Rowde, by a yearly rent, suit at court, and fealty only, and are worth per annum, clear, 13s. 4d. The messuage and other the premises in Cannings Episcopi are held of Robert Drewe and John Grubbe, esquires, in free and common socage as of their manor of Cannings Episcopi, by fealty and suit at court, and are worth per annum, clear, 10s. The orchard and other the premises there are held of the said Robert Drewe and John Grubbe in free and common socage as of their said manor, by fealty and suit at court, and are worth per annum, clear, 13s. 4d.

Michael Drewe died 25th December last past; Michael Drewe, gent., is his son and next heir, and was then aged 20 years and 8 months.

The said Mary Drewe still survives.

**Inq. p.m., 9 Charles I, pt. 20, No. 140**

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