

GREAT SUBSIDY

Thomas Stanley (1581–1669)

to Captain Richard Lee, M.P. for Rochester (1640–1648) and Mayor of Rochester (1643)

Oxenheath (Kent), 15 May 1643

About this time twelve-month, we (of the borough of Oxenheath of the Hundred of Hoo) received a warrant from Serjeant Clerk to certify the lands and goods of our borough, which we speedily did and sent it on 3 June 1642, a copy whereof I here present to your view. Since which time we heard nothing of it until the rate of £7 0s 6d was laid upon us for the first part of the Great Subsidy,¹ and a tax made without our privity and returned into the Exchequer, and then after sent us to collect, which I also present to your view. This being done (as by dark), has these errors in it

- (1) Whereas in our certificate under the title of Sir Nicholas Miller is contained all his lands in that borough both in his own and his tenant's occupation (where a corn mill is expressed) at £75 per annum, yet he is taxed for £80, and his tenant, Austen, for the said corn mill and lands at £24 besides, which comes to more than according to truth and our certificate, at 4d per £ (the rate of the rest of the Hundred) £29 per annum—which is 9s 8d.
- (2) All my lands in that borough were also certified by the name of my mansion house, 3 tenements, one fulling-mill, and 63 acres of land at £42 per annum, yet my tenant, Greene, for the fulling-mill is taxed at £20 per annum—6s 8d.
- (3) We certified John Usher for a tenement and 10 acres of land in the occupation of Robert Clampard at £7 per annum, which comes to but 2s 4d; yet this is set in that blind tax at £90—30s, which is more than right by 27s 8d (a gross mistake).

Yet because this was taxed and sent into the Exchequer, we were remediless and were forced to bear it. Our whole land comes to but £207, which at 4d per £ is 3s 9d, and our goods to £580, which at one half-penny per £ is £1 4s 2d. Which comes to £4 13s 2d, which sum is the full sum that ought in justice to be imposed upon us. And according to this error we are proportionably too much for the weekly contribution.

Good Sir, Serjeant Clerk is offended with us and suits have been touching the jurisdiction of the Court of Hoo over us, and we have little hope of help by any address to him, who we fear is the cause of our harm. I humbly beg your helping hand and just favour to reduce us to the said sum of £4 13s 2d, which is our due proportion for the last payment of the Great Subsidy. Also to do us justice by an equal distribution of the weekly contribution, which being proportioned generally to an eight part of the moiety of the great subsidy will be 11s 8d a week for our little borough of Oxenheath so shall we be the better encouraged to pay the sum.

Pardon, sir, that I in person do not wait upon you, which I would most willingly do but I have been long lame and cannot travel. Pardon also my want of paper. Lastly, my suit is that I may enjoy your former love and good esteem with a *continuendo*, and I shall ever rest your obliged kinsman and humble servant.

Scott Robertson, ed. "Dalison Documents," *Archæologia Cantiana* 17 (1887):363–364. [modernized]

¹ *An Ordinance for the Speedy Raising and Levying of Money Throughout the Whole Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales for the Relief of the Commonwealth, by Taxing such as Have not at all Contributed or Lent, or not According to their Estates and Abilities* (May 1643)