

DOCUMENT: CCA-U63_70254_062RH_063LH

SOURCE: Canterbury Cathedral Archives

LANGUAGE: English

DATE: 6/11/1779

SUMMARY:

6th November 1779, letter from John Holmes from Exeter, the lessee of Doccombe manor, to the D & C that he will renew the lease for it though he hasn't yet received £20 from it & not a farthing from the woods. He bought it from the heirs of Herman Kattenkamp & gave £750 for it. He knows almost nothing about the estates on it, the real value or the rents, nor the number of sheep that common etc. He has never troubled himself about it or thought about it. He has no way of finding out as he would not be told.

He cannot therefore fulfill this part of the contract with the D & C so they may not let him renew but if they don't mind he would like to. He will contribute his proportion of the expense if the D & C wish to employ someone to find out what they are interested in. He will also advance his renewal money. If another similar estate came up for leasing, he would not now do it.

P.S. Herman Katenkamp 14 or 21 years ago did have an evaluation of the manor made & an estimation of the acreage but land prices have dropped by a 1/5th since., he has never seen the estimated acreage amount but took the word of Herman Kattenkamp's heirs when he bought the lease.

TRANSCRIPTION

Inside:

Exon Nov[ember] 6th 1779

Sir

I have receiv[e]d your Letter of the 29th Inst and wish to comply w[i]th every Requisition of the Dean and Chapter according to the Engagement entered into respecting Doccombe manor as far as possible or not attended with <such> trouble and inconvenience as could on ? originate in Idea either on their Part or mine.

With respect to the Premises for w[hi]ch I am a Tenant to the Church of Canterbury: I have never examined one field & fit either directly or indirectly and do not know either the real value or real Rent of one of the Estates the Tenants Leases or Interest in their Estates from the nature of the holding. Setting my view at so great a distance and the Manor itself for the Woods have never yet produced me

a farthing, nor do I know if they ever will. I so inconsiderable that I have never given myself any trouble about it and almost as little employed my thoughts.

Indeed the State of the Manor is such th[at]: there is no way I know th[at] I can get a true and full Information. That no man cant a judge of the value of the Land except on among themselves i.e. the farmer; or a skilfull Neighbour: I am fully perswaded: that they will not instruct me either in the value of what they farm themselves or let out to others and I have no way to compel them. I am sure. Of course how many sheep do common etc etc are particulars it is absolutly impossibly for me to pretend ? to guess With regard then to this part of the Contract I am sorry to say it is impossible according to my apprehension to fulfill <it> and I cannot therefore renew it: if my Landlords should

however be differently minded and think it a mere Evasion w[hi]ch I should be sorrry for ? advise them to imploy the most eligible Person in their Judgment and to shew that I am <?writing>

to contribute to procure what Intelligence they may think interesting to them will I pay my proportion of the expence according to my supposed Interest against that of theirs in possession of the Fee Simple.

Farther If the Dean & Chapter wish to know what it cost me (a matter of more Elucidation to them than they will receive from any Survey, though if a pepper corn would prevent it I would not give it) Ill tell them the purchase money to Mr Kattenkamps Heirs ?was-- seven hundred & fifty pounds for which and for Interest of the renewal Money since paid. I have not yet seen twenty pounds – it therefore then be my Intent in to advance the Renewal Money <except a mere trifle> or any thing further required w[hi]ch it is impossible for ?me to perform: I

w[oul]d not trouble you further on this Subject {oblit} main in the Interim for your answer

If another such Estate were now afford me at the same Price I think should have nothing to do with it.

Sir

your obed[ient] humble Serv[ant]

John Holmes

P.S. since the within written I learn Mr Kattenkamp either 14 or 21 years ago after great la-

bour & pain furnished the Dean & Chapter with a supposed Evaluation and a surmised quantam

of the acres tho' the latter cannot be decreased the former is in the present day perhaps –

{oblit}

was then a true one lessened one fifth by the general decline in the value of Lands. In accord

I never heard the computation of acres and never saw any estimate but what Mr K[atttenkamp] his

Heirs handed me at the time of my purchase into which I never inquired since for the Reason

already given relying wholly on their word. Excuse me for having enlarged so much on this subject.