

the cost of litigation against Lord Willoughby.¹⁹

The lack of complaints about Spicer and Willoughby for the next 15 years suggests that the townsfolk felt unable to overturn Willoughby's control of the town. Indeed Spicer claimed that Willoughby 'had the upper hand and would drive out forty of the best men of the town'. Furthermore he would refuse to grant copyholds to any who filed complaints in the Queen's courts of justice.²⁰ However on 31 December 1559 Willoughby signed a quitclaim, releasing his claim to the windmill, 100 acres of land, 40 acres of marsh, 500 acres of pasture and free warren in Orford and Sudbourne.²¹ It appears that Orford Corporation was in the process of gaining independence from the manor, confirmed in the 1579 Charter.

Although Willoughby and his eldest son continued to have an interest in the town some sort of peace was obtained after 1574, by which time Willoughby himself was dead. The Assembly Book, which begins that year, may represent the bailiffs' attempt to recover control of the town regulations again.²² Indeed the year before the Charter was granted the bailiffs and burgesses leased 'the common right for shack' on King's Field, the location of the 1540 dispute, for 18 years at ten shillings a year. They also made an agreement with the leasee, William Gooding of Rendlesham, that for those 18 years they would not exercise their right 'from time immemorial' to graze animals on the field, nor erect gates or stiles.²³

Thomas Spicer and John Sawyer were the two men identified by the Orford burgesses as the ones who most oppressed the townsfolk on behalf of Lord Willoughby. Sawyer died in 1566 after making his will, and was identified as the wealthiest man in Orford in 1562.²⁴ Spicer did not leave a will, and

can probably be identified as the Thomas Spicer, singleman, who was buried in Orford churchyard in 1577.

In October 1562 Commissioners were sent to the various hundreds to re-enact statutes of Henry VIII and Philip and Mary regarding the provision of horses and weapons for use of the monarch. There was the usual hierarchy from Archbishops and Dukes down to persons worth £100 per annum in lands or goods. Wives who wore silk, as did the wife of Robert Forth of Butley, were required to provide 'a light horseman's gelding', and appropriate armour. He had to provide geldings, demilances and other weapons and armour.

In Orford the certificate was signed by Thomas Spicer, bailiff, John Sawyer, Robert Edmunds, James Coo and others. As the first to sign Spicer still ruled the roost on behalf of his master, who may have returned to his Lincolnshire estates. Nobody had 100 marks in lands, and only John Sawyer owned goods worth £400, and was 'furnished according to the Statute'. 'For women's apparel we have none that doth offend within our town' and no horses had been transported out, presumably to avoid the Statute.

John Sawyer bequeathed property in six parishes when he died in 1566. His widow, Agnes, was left his leases in Orford, granted by Lord Willoughby, and lands in Sudbourne, Marlesford, Alderton, Hollesley and Ramsholt, for the use of Roger and John, their sons. Agnes received John's part in a stallboat and all his horses, sheep and cattle. One bay ambling mare was, however, bequeathed to Lord Willoughby 'my good master'.²⁵

Vic Harrup

Sources	6	TNA ref. REQ 3/6	Context', Past and
The sources are all at Suffolk	7	EE5/7/11	Present, 1979, number
Record Office, Ipswich, unless	8	EE5/7/25	84. page 48.
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	10	EE5/7/2	19 IC/AA2/17/99
1 EE5/7/13	11	EE5/7/6	20 EE5/7/8
2 The National Archives	12	EE5/7/1	21 HD1538/313/1
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4 EE5/6/56	17	MacCulloch, Dairmaid,	
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