

CONVEYANCE & DESCENT

HISTORICAL HOLDER REGISTER

Manor:

ACKHAMPSTEAD MANOR

Location:

Lewknor, Oxfordshire

Recorded historical holders:

7

Export date:

15 October 2026, 11:18 GMT+0000

Public record URL:https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_manor=ackhampstead-manor

Colour key: green - direct blood, blue - collateral, purple - marriage-linked blood, amber - in-law, grey - unclassified. Colours describe the saved relationship classification, not documentary certainty.

SUCCESSION AT A GLANCE

Earliest recorded holder to present. Relationship descriptions are reproduced from saved published paths; categories are not evidence ratings.

1. Abingdon Abbey, Benedictine abbey of St Mary the Virgin | 1052 - 1279

Transfer: Traditional grant by Edward the Confessor and Queen Eadgitha, with a later grant or confirmation in 1278; the abbey was the superior lord of the wider Lewknor estate and its appurtenances.

Holding: Other / overlordship or superior estate

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

2. William de Leigh, member of the Leigh family of Besselsleigh | 1199 - 1247

Transfer: Documented transactions and recognitions concerning land in Akamsted, Hakamsted and Achamsted, including a 1199 Curia Regis or related fine, a 1222 fine involving half a hide, and a 1247 recognition of Thomas de Leigh's right.

Holding: Leigh family estate / Co-holders: Thomas de Leigh, John de Leigh

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

3. Thomas de Leigh | 1247 - 1279

Transfer: In 1247 William de Leigh recognised that a carucate in Achamsted belonged to Thomas de Leigh and the heirs of his body, with a remainder to Stephen de Leigh if Thomas had no heirs. Thomas is recorded as holding the estate in 1279.

Holding: Leigh family estate / Co-holders: William de Leigh, John de Leigh

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

4. John de Leigh | 1279 - c.1348

Transfer: Descent from Thomas de Leigh to his heir John de Leigh; John is reported to have died about 1348.

Holding: Leigh family estate / Co-holders: William de Leigh, Thomas de Leigh

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

5. Katherine de Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Bessels | c.1348 - 1406

Transfer: Descent after the death of John de Leigh; Katherine de Leigh is recorded in possession of Ackhampstead and died in 1406.

Holding: Leigh-Bessels family estate

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

6. Sir Peter Bessels, Sir Peter Bessels of Besselsleigh, knight, Member of Parliament, Sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire | 1412 - 1425

Transfer: In 1412 Sir Peter Bessels placed Ackhampstead Manor in trust and dealt with the reversion because Thomas Chaucer held the manor for life.

Holding: Trust / Reversionary interest; exact share not stated / Bessels family estate

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

7. Thomas Chaucer, Thomas Chaucer of Ewelme, Member of Parliament, Speaker of the House of Commons | 1412 - 1429

Transfer: Life lease or life tenure already in existence when Sir Peter Bessels dealt with the reversion in 1412; the reversion of the manor held by Thomas Chaucer for life was still recorded in 1429.

Holding: Other / Life interest or life lease / life tenant under Bessels reversion

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

DETAILED CONVEYANCE & DESCENT

HOLDER 1

1052 - 1279

Abingdon Abbey, Benedictine abbey of St Mary the Virgin

Transfer:

Traditional grant by Edward the Confessor and Queen Eadgitha, with a later grant or confirmation in 1278; the abbey was the superior lord of the wider Lewknor estate and its appurtenances.

Holding arrangement:

other

Shared holding:

overlordship or superior estate

Narrative / explanation:

The evidence concerns the wider Lewknor estate, described as including Ackhampstead or its members, rather than a separately documented freehold of Ackhampstead Manor. Abingdon Abbey should therefore be treated as overlord or superior holder, not as proof that the abbey directly occupied the later Bessels Ackhampstead manor.

Source citation:

Gordon Wyatt, A History of Ackhampstead, citing the Abingdon Abbey tradition and the Hundred Rolls; corroborated by the Buckinghamshire Heritage Portal monument record for Ackhampstead.

Source URL:

https://www.friethhistory.org/A%20History%20of%20Frieth/090_Ackhampstead.html

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=abingdon-abbey-23667

Person dates:

Founded before the Norman Conquest; suppressed in 1538

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 2

1199 - 1247

William de Leigh, member of the Leigh family of Besselsleigh

Transfer:

Documented transactions and recognitions concerning land in Akamsted, Hakamsted and Achamsted, including a 1199 Curia Regis or related fine, a 1222 fine involving half a hide, and a 1247 recognition of Thomas de Leigh's right.

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Holding arrangement:

sole

Shared holding:

Leigh family estate

Narrative / explanation:

William de Leigh is the earliest securely named lay holder connected directly with land in Ackhampstead. The surviving evidence records specific parcels and rights rather than using the full expression Ackhampstead Manor throughout, so the entry should be understood as the documented predecessor estate from which the later manor developed.

Source citation:

Feet of fines and related records as transcribed by Gordon Wyatt in A History of Ackhampstead; the account identifies the 1199, 1222, 1231 and 1247 transactions and connects the Leigh family with Ackhampstead.

Source URL:

https://www.friethhistory.org/A%20History%20of%20Frieth/090_Ackhampstead.html

Co-holders:

Thomas de Leigh, John de Leigh

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=william-de-leigh-23668

Person dates:

Flourishing c.1199–1247

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 3**1247 - 1279****Thomas de Leigh****Transfer:**

In 1247 William de Leigh recognised that a carucate in Achamsted belonged to Thomas de Leigh and the heirs of his body, with a remainder to Stephen de Leigh if Thomas had no heirs. Thomas is recorded as holding the estate in 1279.

Previous holder:

William de Leigh

Holding arrangement:

sole

Shared holding:

Leigh family estate

Narrative / explanation:

The 1247 fine or recognition provides a direct link between Thomas de Leigh and a substantial Ackhampstead holding. The 1279 evidence confirms that Thomas held it. The precise legal form of the 1279 tenure is not stated in the available source.

Source citation:

Feet of fine dated 3 June 1247, as transcribed by Gordon Wyatt in A History of Ackhampstead; 1279

holding evidence discussed in the Lewknor Manors account.

Source URL:

https://www.friethhistory.org/A%20History%20of%20Frieth/090_Ackhampstead.html

Co-holders:

William de Leigh, John de Leigh

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=william-de-leigh-23668

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=thomas-de-leigh-23669

Person dates:

Flourishing 1247–1279

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 4**1279 - c.1348****John de Leigh****Transfer:**

Descent from Thomas de Leigh to his heir John de Leigh; John is reported to have died about 1348.

Previous holder:

Thomas de Leigh

Holding arrangement:

sole

Shared holding:

Leigh family estate

Narrative / explanation:

The available local and county-history material identifies John de Leigh as Thomas de Leigh's heir and places the Ackhampstead holding in the Leigh descent until John's death about 1348. No separate dated deed of transfer has been located, so the conveyance is recorded as an evidenced hereditary descent rather than as a specific instrument.

Source citation:

Lewknor Manors historical account, drawing on the descent of the Leigh family and the medieval estate evidence; corroborated by the Ackhampstead historical account.

Source URL:

<https://astonrowant.wordpress.com/lewknor-manors/>

Co-holders:

William de Leigh, Thomas de Leigh

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=thomas-de-leigh-23669

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=john-de-leigh-23670

Person dates:

Died c.1348

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 5

c.1348 - 1406

Katherine de Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Bessels

Transfer:

Descent after the death of John de Leigh; Katherine de Leigh is recorded in possession of Ackhampstead and died in 1406.

Previous holder:

John de Leigh

Holding arrangement:

sole

Shared holding:

Leigh-Bessels family estate

Narrative / explanation:

Katherine de Leigh is explicitly associated with possession of Ackhampstead after the death of John de Leigh. She was the wife of Sir Thomas Bessels, who died about 1378, and the mother of Sir Peter Bessels. The source does not establish whether her possession was in fee, for life, or under another precise legal form.

Source citation:

Lewknor Manors historical account, stating that Ackhampstead was found in the possession of Katherine de Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Bessels, and her son Sir Peter Bessels.

Source URL:

<https://astonrowant.wordpress.com/lewknor-manors/>

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=john-de-leigh-23670

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=katherine-de-leigh-23671

Person dates:

Died 1406

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 6

1412 - 1425

Sir Peter Bessels, Sir Peter Bessels of Besselsleigh, knight, Member of Parliament, Sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire

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Transfer:

In 1412 Sir Peter Bessels placed Ackhampstead Manor in trust and dealt with the reversion because Thomas Chaucer held the manor for life.

Previous holder:

Katherine de Leigh

Holding arrangement:

trust

Share / interest:

Reversionary interest; exact share not stated

Shared holding:

Bessels family estate

Narrative / explanation:

This is the first source located that expressly uses the designation Ackhampstead Manor. Sir Peter Bessels did not have unfettered present possession because Thomas Chaucer held the manor for life. Sir Peter's interest was therefore a reversionary and trust-related interest rather than immediate occupational possession. He died in 1425, after directing that his lands be sold for alms. The later execution of that direction and the identity of any purchaser are not securely documented.

Source citation:

Lewknor Manors historical account, which dates the first explicit record of Ackhampstead Manor to 1412 and describes Sir Peter Bessels's trust arrangement and 1425 death; see also the underlying medieval estate discussion in the Ackhampstead history.

Source URL:

<https://astonrowant.wordpress.com/lewknor-manors/>

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=katherine-de-leigh-23671

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-peter-bessels-23672

Person dates:

c.1363–1425

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 7

1412 - 1429

Thomas Chaucer, Thomas Chaucer of Ewelme, Member of Parliament, Speaker of the House of Commons

Transfer:

Life lease or life tenure already in existence when Sir Peter Bessels dealt with the reversion in 1412; the reversion of the manor held by Thomas Chaucer for life was still recorded in 1429.

Previous holder:

Katherine de Leigh and Sir Peter Bessels

Holding arrangement:

other

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Share / interest:

Life interest or life lease

Shared holding:

life tenant under Bessels reversion

Narrative / explanation:

Thomas Chaucer was the life tenant of Ackhampstead Manor, not necessarily its fee-simple owner. The 1412 trust transaction expressly states that Sir Peter Bessels could dispose only of the reversion, and a 1429 record describes the reversion of the manor as held by Thomas Chaucer for life. This entry must therefore be distinguished from ownership of the reversion by Sir Peter Bessels and his trustees.

Source citation:

Ackhampstead historical account citing a 1429 record of the reversion of the manor of Akhampstede held by Thomas Chaucer for life; the Lewknor Manors account gives the corresponding 1412 trust context.

Source URL:

https://www.friethhistory.org/A%20History%20of%20Frieth/090_Ackhampstead.html

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=thomas-chaucer-23673

Person dates:

c.1367–1434

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.