

CONVEYANCE & DESCENT

HISTORICAL HOLDER REGISTER

Manor:

AGNEY MANOR

Location:

Old Romney, Kent

Recorded historical holders:

11

Export date:

15 October 2026, 16:52 GMT+0000

Public record URL:https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_manor=agney-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. **Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, represented by the prior and convent, Prior and convent of Christ Church | late eighth century; traditionally 791 in Hasted, but the underlying charter is dated 785 - 1539**

Transfer: Traditional attribution of the Agney estate to a grant by King Offa; the identification of the charter estate with Agney remains uncertain in modern scholarship.

Holding: Whole manor or principal estate, subject to uncertainty over the early identification / Christ Church Priory ownership

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

2. **The Crown, King Henry VIII and the Crown | 1539 - 1541**

Transfer: Christ Church Priory surrendered Agney with its other possessions at the Dissolution; the manor passed into the king's hands pending settlement on the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

Holding: Other / Whole manor during Crown custody and redistribution / Dissolution and Crown custody

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

3. **Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral | 1541 - latest securely documented historical sources; inheritance stated by Hasted to continue thereafter**

Transfer: By Henry VIII's dotation or endowment charter in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII, Agney was settled on the newly founded Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

Holding: Inheritance of the whole manor / Canterbury Cathedral Dean and Chapter ownership

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

4. Sir Stephen Thornhurst, member of the Thornhurst family | middle of the sixteenth century - before succession by his son William Thornhurst; exact date unknown

Transfer: Lease for lives or related leasehold grant from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury; exact instrument and date not located in the sources reviewed.

Holding: Other / Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified / Thornhurst leaseholding line /

Co-holders: Sir William Thornhurst, Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

5. Sir William Thornhurst, member of the Thornhurst family | after Sir Stephen Thornhurst; sixteenth or early seventeenth century - before succession by Sir Giffard Thornhurst; exact date unknown

Transfer: Succession to the Agney leasehold interest within the Thornhurst family; the exact legal instrument and date are not established.

Holding: Other / Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified / Thornhurst leaseholding line /

Co-holders: Sir Stephen Thornhurst, Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

6. Sir Giffard Thornhurst, first and only Thornhurst Baronet of Agnes Court | after Sir William Thornhurst; before 1622 - 1627

Transfer: Succession to the Thornhurst leasehold interest in Agney; the exact date of the lease transfer is unknown.

Holding: Other / Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified / Thornhurst leaseholding line /

Co-holders: Sir Stephen Thornhurst, Sir William Thornhurst

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

7. Susan Temple, later Susan Lister | 1627 - until Frances Thornhurst came of age; exact end date unknown

Transfer: Temporary possession or management of the Agney leasehold after the death of Sir Giffard Thornhurst, pending the minority of their daughter Frances.

Holding: Trust / Life or custodial interest pending Frances Thornhurst's majority / Thornhurst family minority holding

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

8. Frances Thornhurst, later Frances Jennings, later Mrs Richard Jennings | after reaching majority; after 1627 and before 1663 - before or by the creation of later Jennings and Spencer-associated leases; exact date unknown

Transfer: A new lease was prepared for Frances Thornhurst after she came of age, following her father's death and her mother's interim possession.

Holding: Other / Leasehold for lives; extent not specified / Jennings-associated Agney leasehold

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

9. Ralph Jenyns | 1663 - after the 1663 lease term; exact end date unknown

Transfer: Lease and counterpart from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/64651.

Holding: Other / Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument / Documented Dean and Chapter lease

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

10. Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, wife of John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, courtier and landowner | 1728 - after the 1728 lease term; died 1744

Transfer: Counterpart lease from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/64614.

Holding: Other / Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument /

Marlborough-associated Agney lease

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

11. John Spencer, 1st Earl Spencer, Member of Parliament | 1783 - after the 1783 lease term; exact end date unknown

Transfer: Lease and counterpart to the Earl Spencer, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/69865.

Holding: Other / Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument /

Spencer family Agney lease

Relationship to present holder: Not recorded

DETAILED CONVEYANCE & DESCENT

HOLDER 1

late eighth century; traditionally 791 in Hasted, but the underlying charter is dated 785 - 1539

**Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, represented by the prior and convent,
Prior and convent of Christ Church**

Transfer:

Traditional attribution of the Agney estate to a grant by King Offa; the identification of the charter estate with Agney remains uncertain in modern scholarship.

Previous holder:

King Offa or the Crown, if the charter identification is accepted

Holding arrangement:

sole

Share / interest:

Whole manor or principal estate, subject to uncertainty over the early identification

Shared holding:

Christ Church Priory ownership

Narrative / explanation:

Hasted states that Aghne Court, alias Old Romney Court, was given by King Offa to the Priory of Christ Church. Nicholas Brooks and later Romney Marsh scholarship treat the connection between Offa's 785 charter and Agney as possible rather than certain. Hasted records Christ Church as holding the manor until its dissolution in 1539. The entry is therefore secure for the medieval Christ Church ownership attested by Hasted, but the exact beginning date and the direct continuity from the eighth-century charter should not be treated as certain.

Source citation:

Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, vol. 8, 1799, Old Romney, p. 441; Nicholas Brooks, 'Romney Marsh in the early Middle Ages', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, discussion of the 785 charter and Agney.

Source URL:

<https://www.durobrivis.net/hasted/octavo/1799-hasted-o-08.pdf>

Other parties:

Prior and convent of Christ Church, Canterbury

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=prior-and-convent-of-christ-church-canterbury-25166

Person dates:

Institutional body; priory dissolved in 1539

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 2**1539 - 1541****The Crown, King Henry VIII and the Crown****Transfer:**

Christ Church Priory surrendered Agney with its other possessions at the Dissolution; the manor passed into the king's hands pending settlement on the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

Previous holder:

Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, represented by the prior and convent

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Whole manor during Crown custody and redistribution

Shared holding:

Dissolution and Crown custody

Narrative / explanation:

Hasted says that Agney continued with Christ Church until the priory's dissolution in the thirty-first year of Henry VIII, when it was surrendered into the king's hands with the rest of the priory's possessions. This entry records Crown custody or possession during the transfer process rather than a long-term private conveyance.

Source citation:

Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, vol. 8, 1799, Old Romney, p. 441.

Source URL:

<https://www.durobrivis.net/hasted/octavo/1799-hasted-o-08.pdf>

Other parties:

The Crown

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=prior-and-convent-of-christ-church-canterbury-25166

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=the-crown-25167

Person dates:

English Crown in the reign of Henry VIII

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 3

1541 - latest securely documented historical sources; inheritance stated by Hasted to continue thereafter
Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral

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Transfer:

By Henry VIII's dotation or endowment charter in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII, Agney was settled on the newly founded Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

Previous holder:

The Crown

Holding arrangement:

sole

Share / interest:

Inheritance of the whole manor

Shared holding:

Canterbury Cathedral Dean and Chapter ownership

Narrative / explanation:

Hasted states that after the Dissolution Agney was settled by Henry VIII's dotation charter on the new Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, with whom the inheritance continued. This is the strongest evidence for the manor's institutional freehold ownership. Later private persons named in the sources should generally be understood as lessees or holders of life interests under the Dean and Chapter, not as outright owners of the inheritance.

Source citation:

Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, vol. 8, 1799, Old Romney, p. 441; Hasted's index identifies Aghne-court Manor in Old Romney among the possessions of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

Source URL:

<https://www.durobrivis.net/hasted/octavo/1799-hasted-o-08.pdf>

Other parties:

Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=the-crown-25167

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=dean-and-chapter-of-canterbury-cathedral-25168

Person dates:

Institutional body established in the post-Dissolution cathedral foundation under Henry VIII

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 4

middle of the sixteenth century - before succession by his son William Thornhurst; exact date unknown

Sir Stephen Thornhurst, member of the Thornhurst family

Transfer:

Lease for lives or related leasehold grant from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury; exact instrument and date not located in the sources reviewed.

Previous holder:

Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral

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Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified

Shared holding:

Thornhurst leaseholding line

Narrative / explanation:

Secondary historical accounts state that Agney was leased in the middle of the sixteenth century to Sir Stephen Thornhurst. This was a private leasehold interest under the Dean and Chapter, not a transfer of the institutional inheritance. The precise commencement date, term and documentary instrument remain unidentified in the public sources reviewed.

Source citation:

Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, vol. 8, 1799, Old Romney, p. 441, for the Dean and Chapter's inheritance; modern summary of the Agney leaseholding sequence corroborated by later scholarship on the Thornhurst family.

Source URL:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manor_of_Agney%2C_Kent

Other parties:

Sir Stephen Thornhurst

Co-holders:

Sir William Thornhurst, Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=dean-and-chapter-of-canterbury-cathedral-25168

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-stephen-thornhurst-25169

Person dates:

Dates not securely established in the sources reviewed; active in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 5

after Sir Stephen Thornhurst; sixteenth or early seventeenth century - before succession by Sir Giffard Thornhurst
Sir William Thornhurst, member of the Thornhurst family

Transfer:

Succession to the Agney leasehold interest within the Thornhurst family; the exact legal instrument and date are not established.

Previous holder:

Sir Stephen Thornhurst

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified

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Shared holding:

Thornhurst leaseholding line

Narrative / explanation:

The available account states that the Agney lease passed from Sir Stephen Thornhurst to his son Sir William Thornhurst and then to Sir William's son Sir Giffard Thornhurst. The manor's inheritance nevertheless remained with the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury. Because the underlying lease or renewal has not been located, the transition is recorded as a documented succession of the leasehold interest with uncertain dates rather than as a freehold conveyance.

Source citation:

Modern historical summary of the Manor of Agney, citing the Agney leaseholding tradition and Hasted's account of the Dean and Chapter inheritance.

Source URL:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manor_of_Agney%2C_Kent

Other parties:

Sir William Thornhurst

Co-holders:

Sir Stephen Thornhurst, Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-stephen-thornhurst-25169

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-william-thornhurst-25170

Person dates:

Dates not securely established in the sources reviewed

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 6

after Sir William Thornhurst; before 1622 - 1627

Sir Giffard Thornhurst, first and only Thornhurst Baronet of Agnes Court

Transfer:

Succession to the Thornhurst leasehold interest in Agney; the exact date of the lease transfer is unknown.

Previous holder:

Sir William Thornhurst

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold or life interest; extent not specified

Shared holding:

Thornhurst leaseholding line

Narrative / explanation:

Sir Giffard Thornhurst is explicitly associated with Agney Court and held the Thornhurst leasehold interest until his death in 1627. He was knighted in 1622 and became the first and only baronet of

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Agnes Court, but the baronetcy was a personal title and did not convert the Dean and Chapter's freehold into a territorial barony. On his death the leasehold interest passed to his infant daughter Frances, while his widow Susan held it during Frances's minority according to the available account.

Source citation:

Modern account of the Manor of Agney, Kent; Hasted's index records Giffard Thornhurst of Agnes Court; Cambridge University Press, The Jacobite Duchess, chapter on Frances Thornhurst and Agney.

Source URL:

https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/9781800102040%23C1/type/BOOK_PART

Other parties:

Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Co-holders:

Sir Stephen Thornhurst, Sir William Thornhurst

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-william-thornhurst-25170

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-giffard-thornhurst-25171

Person dates:

Died 1627; knighted 1622

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 7

1627 - until Frances Thornhurst came of age; exact end date unknown

Susan Temple, later Susan Lister

Transfer:

Temporary possession or management of the Agney leasehold after the death of Sir Giffard Thornhurst, pending the minority of their daughter Frances.

Previous holder:

Sir Giffard Thornhurst

Holding arrangement:

trust

Share / interest:

Life or custodial interest pending Frances Thornhurst's majority

Shared holding:

Thornhurst family minority holding

Narrative / explanation:

After Sir Giffard Thornhurst died in 1627, the Agney interest belonged beneficially to his daughter Frances, but the available account states that her mother Susan held the property until Frances came of age and a new lease was prepared for Frances. This is recorded as a temporary custodial or trust-like holding rather than an outright conveyance or freehold ownership.

Source citation:

Modern historical summary of the Manor of Agney, Kent; Cambridge University Press, The Jacobite Duchess, chapter on Frances Thornhurst's inheritance of a lease of lives in Agney.

Source URL:

https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/9781800102040%23C1/type/BOOK_PART

Other parties:

Susan Temple, Frances Thornhurst

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sir-giffard-thornhurst-25171

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=susan-temple-later-susan-lister-25172

Person dates:

Dates not stated in the sources reviewed; married Sir Giffard Thornhurst circa 1624 and was widowed in 1627

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 8

after reaching majority; after 1627 and before 1663 - before or by the creation of later Jennings and Spencer-as

Frances Thornhurst, later Frances Jennings, later Mrs Richard Jennings

Transfer:

A new lease was prepared for Frances Thornhurst after she came of age, following her father's death and her mother's interim possession.

Previous holder:

Susan Temple, later Susan Lister

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold for lives; extent not specified

Shared holding:

Jennings-associated Agney leasehold

Narrative / explanation:

Frances Thornhurst inherited the Agney leasehold interest from her father Sir Giffard Thornhurst. The account states that a new lease was prepared for her when she came of age. She later married Richard Jennings, after which the interest became associated with the Jennings family. The source does not establish the exact date of Frances's majority, the terms of the renewal or the precise date on which her interest ended.

Source citation:

Modern historical summary of the Manor of Agney, Kent; Cambridge University Press, The Jacobite Duchess, chapter identifying Frances Thornhurst as inheriting a lease of lives on Agney.

Source URL:

https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/9781800102040%23C1/type/BOOK_PART

Other parties:

Frances Thornhurst

Previous holder profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=susan-temple-later-susan-lister-25172

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=frances-thornhurst-later-frances-jennings-25173

Person dates:

Dates not securely established in the sources reviewed

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 9

1663 - after the 1663 lease term; exact end date unknown

Ralph Jenyns

Transfer:

Lease and counterpart from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/64651.

Previous holder:

Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral; any immediate prior private lessee is not established

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument

Shared holding:

Documented Dean and Chapter lease

Narrative / explanation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives records a 1663 lease and counterpart to Ralph Jenyns for Agney. This is direct evidence of a leasehold interest connected to the manor, but it does not by itself prove that Ralph Jenyns was the successor to Frances Thornhurst or that he held the whole manor. The intervening conveyance and exact lease terms remain unestablished.

Source citation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U63/64651, Lease and counterpart to Ralph Jenyns, 1663, as cited in the published study of the Thornhurst and Temple families.

Source URL:

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/106479/1/198matthews2024marfinal.pdf>

Other parties:

Ralph Jenyns

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=ralph-jenyns-25174

Person dates:

Active in 1663; other dates not established in the sources reviewed

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 10**1728 - after the 1728 lease term; died 1744****Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, wife of John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, courtier and landowner****Transfer:**

Counterpart lease from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/64614.

Previous holder:

Earlier leaseholder not securely established; the Jennings and Thornhurst connection is reported in secondary sources

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument

Shared holding:

Marlborough-associated Agney lease

Narrative / explanation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives records a 1728 counterpart lease to the Duchess of Marlborough for Agney. This directly documents Sarah Churchill's leasehold interest in the manor. The source does not establish that she acquired the freehold, nor does the archival citation alone specify whether she held the whole manor or a defined part. Secondary accounts connect her interest with the earlier Jennings and Thornhurst leaseholding line.

Source citation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U63/64614, Counterpart lease to the Duchess of Marlborough, 1728, as cited in the published study of the Thornhurst and Temple families.

Source URL:

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/106479/1/198matthews2024marfinal.pdf>

Other parties:

Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=sarah-churchill-duchess-of-marlborough-25175

Person dates:

5 June 1660 – 18 October 1744

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.

HOLDER 11**1783 - after the 1783 lease term; exact end date unknown****John Spencer, 1st Earl Spencer, Member of Parliament**

Transfer:

Lease and counterpart to the Earl Spencer, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral Archives as U63/69865.

Previous holder:

Earlier leaseholder not securely established from the cited archival reference

Holding arrangement:

other

Share / interest:

Leasehold interest; extent and term require consultation of the original instrument

Shared holding:

Spencer family Agney lease

Narrative / explanation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives records a 1783 lease and counterpart to the Earl Spencer for Agney. The archival reference provides direct evidence of a Spencer leasehold interest. It does not establish the exact relationship between this lease and Sarah Churchill's 1728 lease, nor whether the Earl Spencer held the entire manor. The Dean and Chapter's inheritance remained the institutional freehold according to Hasted.

Source citation:

Canterbury Cathedral Archives, U63/69865, Lease and counterpart to Earl Spencer, 1783, as cited in the published study of the Thornhurst and Temple families.

Source URL:

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/106479/1/198matthews2024marfinal.pdf>

Other parties:

John Spencer, 1st Earl Spencer

Historical person profile:

https://manorialregistry.com/?mhr_person=john-spencer-1st-earl-spencer-25176

Person dates:

19 December 1734 – 31 October 1783

Relationship to present holder

No published relationship path recorded.