

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0002916 • MANOR
Martells Hall

Evidence status: Unverified
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Location: Essex
Associated places: Essex

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

- Lordship of Martells Hall | Historically associated | | Provisional

ABOUT THE MANOR

Ardleigh lies 5 miles north-east of Colchester, on the road to Manningtree.

The name is derived from the family of Martell who were under-tenants in the Manor soon after the

Domesday Survey, when Geoffrey de Magnaville was Lord. Morant tells us that "in the reign of

Henry II, Ralph de Martell held on e Knight's fee here of Geffrey de Mandeville, Earl of

Essex." It passed to Elias Dorewood in 1424 and was left to David Mortimer in 1438. It was

bought ninety years later by William Mannock.

The first General Court Baron of Willian Mannock was held on the 6th November, 1733. In a View of

Frank Pledge and General Court Baron under the same Lord in 1738, the Inquisition of the Leet

appointed two Constables and we read, "They also chuse Robert Luckin and Ambrose Cooper to be

Bread and Ale Tasters within the Precincts of this Manor for the year ensuing." ON 29th December, 1778 is recorded the "View of Frank Pledge and First General Court

Baron" of Sir

Thomas Mannock, Baronet. Constables and Bread and Ale Tasters were again elected and the Amercements

at this Court were only 4d. instead of the customary 6d. in previous Courts. At the next Court (25th

November, 1783) Sir George Mannock is Lord and the Court is held before Thomas Brands, Deputy

Steward of John Round, who was then Chief Steward.

After belonging to Abram Newman and William Webb the Lordship was acquired by Alexander Baring,

later Lord Ashburton. This family was in possession of the Manor for the rest of the century; the

Hon. and Rev. Frederick Baring's first Court was held on the 19th June, 1850 and that of

Francis Denzil Baron Asburton on the 8th September, 1892. It was from the latter that the

late

George Frederick Beaumont purchased the Lordship in 1917.

Among interesting entries in these records are the presentment on the 3rd October, 1726 of the death

of "Sir Ralph Creffield Knight who held of the Lady of the Manor by deed and by fealty suit of

Court" properties known as Abells on the Hill, Barbers and 20 acres of arable land abutting

upon Barbers Hall, Fillies, and 4 1/2 acres of meadow and two acres of wood abutting upon Barbers

Heath. The total of the rents was 17/- and reliefs payable were of a like amount. The Bailiff was

commanded to distrain for the same.

At a Court held on the 6th November, 1798 there are entries which record the power of the Lord to

carve up the Common land and create fresh holdings, for which rents had to be paid by the tenants.

There were sixteen grants of pieces of Crockleford Heath and three pieces of Smythes Heath, and in

some of the grants the "timber and other rights" were reserved to the Lord. This wholesale

enclosure of what was formerly Heath land explains why, although Crockleford Heath is marked in

large letters on the Ordinance Map of Ardleigh, there is in fact no heath land apart from roadside

verges. Barbers Heath and Smythes Heath seem to have been dealt with just as drastically, for their

names do not appear at all on the Ordinance Map to remind villagers of their lost open spaces. Had

the Commons, Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society been in existence then the greedy Lords

would have had opposition to these ruthless enclosures.

In this Manor the Eldest son succeeded to copyhold properties on the intestacy of a tenant.

The documents (insured for £200, premium 10/0 per annum) to be handed over are:

Court Books: 1726-98; 1798-1815; 1816-41; 1843-92; 1892-1925

Minute Books: 1744-98; 1828-45; 1844-67; 1871-1910

Fee Book: 1848-73

Sundry draft admissions, surrenders, etc.

The following enfranchisement rent charges issuing out of lands formerly copyhold of the Manor of

Bovills Hall, Ardleigh, are included in the sale of this lot:

(Image detailing two rent charges & tenants - totaling 19s. 5d per annum, payable 1st Jan &

1st July)

It might be interesting to students of old customs and franchises to note here that at a Court held

on 28th October, 1754 for the Manor of Bovills Hall, which is not included in this sale, the following entry appears:

It was presented that William Meakings, a copyhold tenant was accidentally killed by a cart since the last court, whereby the said cart became forfeited to the Lord of the Manor as a deodand for which the widow being poor the Lord compounded for 10/-.

Deodand, a franchise only accruing for the benefit of the Lord if expressly granted by the Crown, was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1846 probably because Railway Directors feared that their trains might be forfeited on the occasion of accidents.

Rights, customs and incidents At a Court held on the 6th November, 1798 there are entries which record the power of the Lord to carve up the Common land and create fresh holdings, for which rents had to be paid by the tenants.

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Catalogue source Lot #9 of 'Beaumont Collection'; Auction - Nov 1954

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Historical holder / succession information Alexander Baring, later Lord Ashburton purchased by

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historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: After belonging to Abram Newman and William Webb the

Lordship was acquired by Alexander Baring, later Lord Ashburton. It was from the latter that the late

George Frederick Beaumont [source claim requiring identity review] 1917 • purchased •

historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: It was from the latter that the late George Frederick

Beaumont purchased the Lordship in 1917.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- | Alexander Baring, later Lord Ashburton | purchased_by | | Lot #9 of 'Beaumont Collection' Auction - Nov 1954

- | Ralph de Martell | | Manor Property |

- 1424 | Elias Dorewood | | Manor And Title |

- 1438 | David Mortimer | bequest | Manor And Title |

- | Abram Newman | | Lordship Title |

- | William Webb | | Lordship Title |

- 1850 | Hon. and Rev. Frederick Baring | court entry | Lordship Title |

- 1892 | Francis Denzil Baring, 3rd Baron Ashburton | court entry | Lordship Title |

- 1917 | George Frederick Beaumont | purchase | Lordship Title |

RECORDED RIGHTS

- Court baron and view of frankpledge or leet: The record documents general courts baron, views of frankpledge, the appointment of constables and bread-and-ale tasters, and presentments.

- Copyhold succession by the eldest son on a tenant's intestacy: The supplied account states that in this manor the eldest son succeeded to copyhold properties on the intestacy of a tenant.
- Enclosure and grant of former common or heath land: A 1798 court recorded grants of pieces of Crockleford Heath and Smythes Heath, with rents payable by the resulting tenants.
- Reservation of timber and other rights to the lord: Some of the 1798 heath-land grants reserved timber and other rights to the lord.

RESEARCH GAPS / WANTED EVIDENCE

- [OPEN] Verify whether Martells Hall itself, rather than the wider settlement or manor of Ardleigh, had a Domesday entry. | Wanted: Source-backed evidence resolving this point
- [OPEN] Verify any alternative historical forms of the name. | Wanted: Source-backed evidence resolving this point
- [OPEN] Establish the chronology and legal status of any distinct lordship title after the recorded twentieth-century transfer. | Wanted: Source-backed evidence resolving this point

DISCLAIMER

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