

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003047 • MANOR

Spetisbury

Evidence status: Unverified

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Location: Dorsetshire

Associated places: Dorsetshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

- Lordship of Spetisbury | Associated | 1086 | Provisional

ABOUT THE MANOR

LYING ON THE river Stour, Spetisbury, also spelt Spettisbury, is a pleasant village, 3 miles from

Blandford and 11 miles from Poole. It is a rural Lordship and the parochial extent is 2,229 acres.

Within this extent is Spetisbury Rings or Crawford Castle. This is a series of Saxon earthworks in

which a number of relics have been found.

The earliest mention of this Lordship occurs in Domesday Book, compiled in 1086. This records that

Spetisbury was divided into two parcels. The entries read;

The Count holds Spetisbury himself. Three thanes held it before 1066. It paid tax for 1 1/2 hides. Land for half a plough.

1 smallholder and 1 villager.

Meadow, 16 acres, pasture 34 acres.

Of this land the Count has 1 virgate of land and 3 acres.

Robert 3 virgates and 6 acres.

Value of the whole, 18s.

William holds Spetisbury. Aethelward and Godric held it

as two manors before 1066. It paid tax for 7 hides and 1 virgate

of land and 6 acres. There is land for 6 ploughs. In Lordship 4 ploughs;

6 Slaves and 10 Villeins and 12 borders.

10 villagers and 12 smallholders with 6 ploughs.

A mill which pays 12s, 50 acres of meadow and pasture five quarentens

and a half long and two broad.

the value was 100s now £7 10s.

The two owners were Count Mortain and William de Moion. Very soon after this date however the entire

Lordship came into the hands of the Earls of Mellant and Leicester. During the reign of Henry I

(1100-1135) Earl Robert granted Spetisbury as an endowment to Preaux Abbey in Normandy. A small

monastery? was built here as a cell of the main house to take care of their concerns .

The

Priory's possessions here are mentioned in a number of records from the 13th century. In 1205

Spetisbury was found to contain 300 sheep, eight cows, sixteen oxen and numerous pigs. It was worth

£20: a considerable reduction from its Domesday figure. In 1293 the lands Preaux were valued still

lower at £12 though it appears that a number of plots had been granted out, particularly to the

abbess of Tarent Abbey.

In 1318 it was noted that the Lordship of Spetisbury was held by the abbot of Preaux Abbey who in

addition was the Lord of the manors of Tofts in Norfolk, Aston in Berkshire and Warmington in

Warwickshire. Seven years later Edward II ordered that all the possessions of alien priories,

that is, institutions outside England, should be valued and recorded. In the reign of his son, Edward

III all the lands of French institutions were seized by the king. Spetisbury was therefore taken by

the Crown and held until 1415, when it was granted to the Carthusian Monastery of Witham in Somerset. This was one of only nine such houses in England since the order was one of the strictest.

Witham was the first Carthusian monastery in England and had been founded by monks from the Grand

Chartreuse near Grenoble in 1179. Witham was of personal interest to Henry II, perhaps as part of

his penance for the murder of Thomas Becket. The Cartusians laid down strict guidelines for the

monks. They were required to live in rough cabins and punishments for transgressions were harsh.

The grant of Spetisbury to Witham was confirmed by Edward IV in 1464 and it remained as Lord of the

Manor until it was dissolved in 1536. The Lordship was then granted to Charles, Lord Mountjoy. His

father, William Blount had been a member of the Privy Council under Henry VII and master of the Mint

throughout England and Calais, a very lucrative position. Charles was the 5th Baron Mountjoy and

served as a commander in Henry's largely unsuccessful French campaigns of the 1530s. On his death

in 1544 he appears to have been succeeded in the Lordship of Spetisbury by his mother Margaret, Lady

Mountjoy. Eventually it passed to her grandson John, the 6th Baron Mountjoy who held it until 1575.

It was then sold to John Bowyer of Beer, in Somerset, whose father, Walter had been a successful

London Merchant and bought a country estate after the Dissolution. Though unremarkable in terms of

politics the Bowyers continued to hold the Lordship for the next 100 year. John was succeeded by his son Edmund in 1598. He lived until around 1623 when Spetisbury descended to his eldest son Edmund. In 1697 the last of the Bowyers sold the Lordship to Robert Henly of Bristol who died in 1709 when it came to his son and heir, John. He had no children and bequeathed Spetisbury to his wife for life. On her death it passed to her brother Henry Fane of Wormsley in Oxfordshire. He served as a Member of Parliament for the borough of Lyme. After a number of years Fane passed the Lordship to his son, Francis, who was also a Member of Parliament, for Dorchester. Fane lived at the manor house in Spetisbury and made a number of improvements. He was a good land lord, repairing his tenants cottages, which had fallen into conspicuous decay and gave them an unusually decent and comfortable appearance . In 1809 the Fanes sold the Lordship to Henry Bricklade who in turn sold it on the Richard Edward Drax. It has remained in the possession of this family until the present day.

Catalogue source Lot #42 of Manorial Services Auction - 2004 UNPUBLISHED/ABORTED - Stephen Johnson

Associated manorial documents / archive references Survey 1414 Somerset Record Office Court Book 1534-1553 Public Record Office Court Book 1707-1773 Dorset Record Office

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Historical holder / succession information Charles, Lord Mountjoy granted_to • historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: The Lordship was then granted to Charles, Lord Mountjoy. his son and heir, John [source claim requiring identity review] 1697|1709 • passed_to • historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: In 1697 the last of the Bowyers sold the Lordship to Robert Henly of Bristol who died in 1709 when it came to his son and heir, John.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- | Charles, Lord Mountjoy | granted_to | | Lot #42 of Manorial Services Auction - 2004 UNPUBLISHED/ABORTED - Stephen Johnson

- 1086 | Count Robert of Mortain | Domesday survey | Manor Property |
- 1086 | William de Moion | Domesday survey | Manor Property |
- 1100 - 1135 | Preaux Abbey | endowment grant | Manor Property |
- 1318 | Abbot of Preaux Abbey | administrative record | Manor And Title |
- Edward III's reign - 1415 | The Crown | seizure of alien-priory possessions | Manor And Title |
- 1415 - 1536 | Witham Charterhouse | royal grant and confirmation | Manor And Title |
- - 1575 | John, 6th Baron Mountjoy | descent and sale | Manor And Title |

- 1575 | John Bowyer of Beer | sale | Manor And Title |
- 1598 | Edmund Bowyer | descent | Manor And Title |
- circa 1623 | Edmund Bowyer | descent | Manor And Title |
- 1697 - 1709 | Robert Henly of Bristol | sale | Manor And Title |
- 1709 | John Henly | descent | Manor And Title |
- | Henry Fane of Wormsley | will and life interest | Manor And Title |
- | Francis Fane | descent | Manor And Title |
- 1809 | Henry Bricklade | sale | Manor And Title |
- 1809 | Richard Edward Drax | sale | Manor And Title |

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