

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003090 • MANOR

Topcliffes

Evidence status: Unverified

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Location: Cambridgeshire

Associated places: Cambridgeshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

- Lordship of the Manor of Topcliffes | Associated | 13th century | Provisional

ABOUT THE MANOR

IN THE PARISH of Meldreth, nine miles south-west of Cambridge, lies the Lordship of the Manor of

Topcliffes. In common with many Cambridgeshire parishes, Meldreth was divided at a very early period

into a number of Lordships. Topcliffes formed part of such a Lordship, which was held at the time of

Domesday Book (1086) by the Abbey of St Evroul in Orne, France. The entry for this reads:

In Meldreth the Abbot of St Evroul holds two hides from Earl Roger. Land for 5 ploughs.

In Lordship 2 ploughs;

5 villagers and 3 smallholders with 3 ploughs.

2 slaves; 2 mills, at 15s 4d; meadow for 2 ploughs.

Total value £6; when acquired 40s; before 1066 £8.

Goda held this land under Earl Algar; she could sell.

In the early 12th century Thomas Mansell gave the abbey further lands in Meldreth, but by the 13th

century the Lordship had been divided into two, Sheen and Topcliffes. From 1204 to 1304 there were a

number of disputes between the Bassingbourn family and others over what was to become Topcliffes and

it seems as though this family may have eventually gained control of the Lordship from the abbey

although it seems that it may have also, at some point, belonged to the Brompton family. In 1309,

however, the Bishop of Ely took control of the Lordship and it was then granted back to the Brompton

family. John Brampton was recorded as the Lord here in 1331. He was succeeded by his son George, a

minor, who was in the care of Sir Walter Manny and the administration of the Lordship fell to him.

Manny, who later became Baron de Manny, was the son of a French nobleman, Le Borge de Mauny, of

Valenciennes, and was born in Hainault, modern Belgium. He is recorded as attending Queen Isabella

on her visit there in 1326 and came to England in the following year in the train of Queen Philippa of Hainault who married Edward III. He was knighted in 1331 and greatly distinguished himself in the Scottish Wars of Edward III. He took a prominent role in the siege of Berwick and was rewarded with generous grants of land and the custody of Harlech Castle, Merionethshire, in North Wales. In 1337, he was recalled from Scotland and made admiral of the fleet north of the Thames. A year later, he accompanied Edward to Antwerp, and took part in several of the French campaigns, including the naval Battle of Sluys in 1339, where he was noted to have been the bravest of Edward's knights. For the next few years he was heavily involved in military matters, including helping the Countess of Montfort against Charles of Blois and as a marshal of Gascony in the service of the Earl of Derby. During this campaign, Manny is supposed to have masterminded the capture of 60 towns and castles. In November 1345, Manny was summoned to Parliament as a Baron and continued to receive Writs until 1371. He spent the ensuing years as a diplomat, aiding in drawing up treaties with France during this period of the Hundred Years War. In 1355, he accompanied Edward III to Artois and hastily returned with the King to save Berwick from the Scots. He spent many months there and eventually relieved the town. When the French broke the peace in 1359, Manny was made a Knight of the Garter and went to France with Edward, the Black Prince. He remained here until 1371 when he returned to England. In this year he founded a house of Carthusian monks, known as the London Charterhouse, now famous as a retirement home in the City. Manny died in 1372. Despite efforts by the Bassingbourn family to recover Topcliffes, George Brompton held it until his death in 1361, when it passed to his sister Alice. She and her husband, John Topcliffe (from whom the Manor received its name), held it until later in the 14th century. After this time it came into the hands of the de la Pole family. Sir Edmund de la Pole held it at the end of the 14th century. He was the son of William de la Pole, who had been a merchant in Kingston-upon-Hull and mayor of that borough. In 1337, William was contracted to furnish an army for Edward III's (1327-1377) invasion of Scotland. This

left him a
 very rich man and he was later able to lend Edward £1,000 in gold. For this William was
 created a
 Baron of the Exchequer and made a banneret. Edmund's eldest brother was Michael de la Pole
 who was
 created Earl of Suffolk in 1385 and served as Lord Chancellor under Richard II
 (1377-1399). In
 1403 Sir Edmund de la Pole settled the Lordship of Topcliffes on his son Sir Walter. He in
 turn was
 succeeded by his daughter Margaret, who was married to Thomas Ingoldisthorpe. Their son and
 heir was
 Sir Edmund, who died in 1456 leaving Topcliffes to his wife Joan, with a reversion to their
 daughter
 Isabel. Though she was married to John Neville, Marquess of Montagu, the Lordship seems to
 have been
 vested in Isabel's grandson, John Stonor, ancestor of the present Lord Camoys of Stonor
 Park, and
 sometime Lord Chamberlain at Buckingham Palace. He died a minor in 1498 and Topcliffes
 passed to his
 sister Anne who was married to Sir Adrian Fortescue. In 1513 he sold the Lordship to
 feoffees, for
 the benefit of the Savoy Hospital, who are recorded as holding it in 1531. After the
 Dissolution of
 that institution, Topcliffes was seized by the Crown and granted by Edward VI to the Royal
 Hospitals
 of St Thomas's and Christ's in 1553. The Special Trustees of St Thomas's have held the
 Lordship
 since then and are the current vendors. A copy of the original 1553 Grant is included in
 this sale.
 Catalogue source Lot #41 of Manorial Auctioneers - Undated but Post-2002
 Source notes Catalogue gifted & transcribed for the archive by the Lord of Finchingfield
 - a
 friend to learning

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Historical holder / succession information Special Trustees of St Thomas held_manor •
 historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: The Special Trustees of St Thomas's have
 held the
 Lordship since then and are the current vendors.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- | Special Trustees of St Thomas | held_manor | | Lot #41 of Manorial Auctioneers -
 Undated but Post-2002
 - 1086 - 1086 | Abbot of St Evroul | Domesday holding | Manor Property |
 - 1309 - 1309 | Bishop of Ely | seizure and regrant | Manor And Title |
 - 1331 - 1331 | John Brampton | recorded lordship | Manor And Title |
 - 1331 - 1361 | George Brompton | descent | Manor And Title |
 - 1361 - late 14th century | Alice Brompton and John Topcliffe | descent and marriage

settlement | Manor And Title |

- late 14th century - 1403 | Sir Edmund de la Pole | descent or conveyance | Manor And Title

|

- 1403 | Sir Walter de la Pole | settlement | Manor And Title |

- | Margaret de la Pole and Thomas Ingoldisthorpe | descent and marriage | Manor And Title |

- - 1456 | Sir Edmund Ingoldisthorpe | descent | Manor And Title |

- 1456 | Joan Ingoldisthorpe | descent with reversion | Manor And Title |

- | Isabel Ingoldisthorpe | reversion and descent | Manor And Title |

- - 1498 | John Stonor | descent | Manor And Title |

- 1498 - 1513 | Anne Stonor and Sir Adrian Fortescue | descent and marriage | Manor And Title |

- 1513 - 1531 | Feoffees for the Savoy Hospital | sale to feoffees | Manor And Title |

- after 1531 - 1553 | The Crown | forfeiture on dissolution | Manor And Title |

- 1553 | Royal Hospitals of St Thomas's and Christ's | royal grant | Manor And Title |

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