

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003130 • MANOR
Windermere (Undermillbeck)

Evidence status: Unverified
Generated: 17 October 2026 21:42 UTC

Location: Cumbria
Associated places: Cumbria

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Windermere is one of the most famous places in Britain, certainly one of the most visited.

It is, of

course, the largest lake in England and one of the most popular destinations for tourists from

Britain and around the world. It is the location of countless films and television programmes and

forms one of the most well loved vistas in the British Isles. The area became famous through the

work of the lake poets, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey and Samuel Coleridge. Windermere was the

setting for Wordsworth poem, There Was a Boy;

There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs

And islands of Winander! many a time,

At evening, when the earliest stars began

To move along the edges of the hills,

Rising or setting, would he stand alone,

Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;

And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands

Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,

Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls

That they might answer him.

And they would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,

Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,

And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud

Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild

Of jocund din! And, when there came a pause

Of silence such as baffled his best skill:

Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise

Has carried far into his heart the voice

Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene

Would enter unawares into his mind

With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.
The history of the manor is long and detailed and can be traced to the Norman Invasion of
1066 and
the struggle to capture the Lake District for the new rulers of England. After William had
subdued
most of England the North remained a problem for a number of years into his reign. In order
to try
to subdue it a huge swath of land from Northern Lancashire and what was the county of
Westmorland
was granted to Ivo de Talebois, a powerful Norman nobleman who had besieged and captured the
rebellious Hereward the Wake, at Ely in 1071. Ivo was granted this estate as long as he
could subdue
it and his grip was strengthened after the accession of William II in 1087. The territory
eventually
became the basis of the feudal Barony of Kendal and Windermere, otherwise known as
Undermillbeck,
and was included in the baronial extent. The descent of the barony is shown in this history.
It
passed from Ivo to Eldred, to Ketel and thus to Gilbert. The historian William Farrer noted
that at
this time the parishes of Windermere and Grasmere were forest. Down to a comparatively
recent
period, there were no freeholds in these parishes except the Fleming estate in Rydal and
Loughrigg.
After the death of Gilbert the estate passed to his son, William, who took the name de
Lancaster.
Although Windermere was considered his manor at the time, for much of this period of the
12th
century it was controlled by Scottish kings. It was not until the reign of Richard I
(1189-99) that
the Barony of Kendal was formerly erected in favour of Gilbert Fitz-Reindred, the son in law
of
William by his daughter Halwise. Gilbert's seal can be found on Magna Carta and he was one
of the
barons who rebelled against the rule of King John. He was succeeded early in the reign of
Henry III
by his only son William de Lancaster (III) who was the last true Baron of Kendal. At his
death the
barony was divided between his two sisters, Helwisia and Alice and it was divided into three
fees,
Richmond, Marquis and Lumley, a division which remains until the present day.
Windermere/Undermillbeck formed part of the Richmond Fee along with Grasmere, Langdale,
Loughrigg,
Ambleside, Troutbeck, Applethwaite, Crossthwaite and Lyth, New Hutton, Casterton, Strickland
Ketel
and Helsington, Thornton, Westhouse and Maysinghill. This passed to Alice and thence to the

family
of her husband, William de Lindesay,
Several generations of William de Lindesays followed. At the death of the third William, in
around
1386 it was noted at the time of his death that he was Lord of Richmond Fee which included
the
manors of Grasmere, Langden, Troutbeck Forest, Applethwaite, Wynandermere, Ecclesall,
Skandall,
Lyith, Crosthwaite, Skirkland Ketell, Kirkeby, Helsington and Horton in the Hay. Of his son
and heir
one historian of the Barony noted that we find nothing in particular, save only that he died
without
any male of his body. The manor thus passed to his brother, Christian who obtained a charter
of free
warren in the manor from Edward III. He was married to Ingelram de Guisnes, Lord of Coucy in
France.
The couple lived there and their son and heir, William was classed as an alien and unable to
inherit. Windermere, along with the rest of the Richmond Fee manors was therefor escheated
to the
Crown.
In 1347 Edward III granted Windermere and the other Richmond Fee manors to John de Coupland.
He was
a relatively lowly squire from Northumberland who had the wit and skill to capture the
Scottish king
David at Battle of Neville s Cross on 16 October 1346. Coupland was knighted by the king
and
granted land and position. The grant of the Richmond Fee was one of a number of such gifts.
John was
infamous in the North of England and Scotland for his brutality and was killed in December
1363 by
20 men whilst he crossed Bolton Moor in Richmondshire. Despite three subsequent inquiries
the
murderers were never found nor arrested. The estate remained in the possession of his wife,
Johan or
Joanna and at her death in 1375 it was found at her inquisition that she held the manor of
Wynandermere, with its members and appurtenances. The manor then reverted to Ingelram de
Courcy and
then to his daughter, Phillipa, the former wife of Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford. She died
childless in 1413 and Windermere then reverted to The Crown for a second time.
The Lordship of Windermere was granted by Henry IV to his third brother, John Duke of
Bedford, in
whom it remained until his death in 1436. Henry VI then granted it to John Beaufort, Duke of
Somerset but he died childless and the king regranted it to his daughter, Margaret, who was
Countess
of Richmond in her own right. Born in 1443 she was descended from John of Gaunt, fourth son
of
Edward III, a lineage which gave her royal claim. As a young teenager she was placed under
the

protection of Henry VI's own half-brothers, Edmund and Jasper Tudor. This arrangement was made specifically to marry her off to Edmund, which she duly did in 1455. Only a few months after her marriage the 12 year old girl became pregnant. This was as a result of a rather brutal act on Edmund's part and was a ritual known as the 'courtship of England'. By making her pregnant Tudor secured a life's interest in Margaret's estates, which were worth £1,000. Even in the 15th century this was considered too young an age to conceive and she seems to have suffered considerable internal damage and had no further children for the rest of her life. Tudor, however appears to have received no censure for his actions save perhaps a divine one, since after just six months of his wife's pregnancy Tudor was killed by the plague. Fortunately she carried her child to term and gave birth to a son, Henry. This act alone embroiled her in the internecine struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, which was now raging across England. Within a year she had married Henry Stafford, second son of the duke of Buckingham. The history of her son Henry at Bosworth in 1485 brought triumph for the family. At the first Parliament of the new regime she was declared 'femme sole', a woman in law capable of actions independent of her husband and in 1487 she was granted a huge landed trust for the monarchy including, of course, Windermere and her portion of the Barony of Kendal. In 1492 a survey was conducted of her estates and it was found that the manor of Windermere, here noted as Undermillbeck, owned a yearly rental of £8 10s 6d. Margaret died in 1509, a few weeks after seeing her grandson crowned Henry VIII. His lands and estates came to the Crown and Henry granted Windermere to his illegitimate son, Henry, Duke of Richmond, who died in murky circumstances aged just 17 in 1536. The Lordship of Windermere or Undermillbeck remained in the hands of the Crown for the next 150 years. It was granted to various members of the Royal households to provide an income and, as part of the Richmond Fee, developed a rich and efficient system of tenancy and administration. The final royal holder of the Manor was Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles. A survey of her estate in 1677 found that the annual value of Windermere had increased to £13 8s and consisted of 81 tenements. Fishing in Lake Windermere alone netted £6 per year. After her death in 1705, the Lordship and the

Richmond Fee were granted to the Lowther family. William Lowther had been appointed steward of Richmond Fee in 1662, a position he inherited from his father, Sir John Lowther. It was therefore a natural step to award this long established Yorkshire family the actual estate. The Lordship of Windermere remained in the hands of the Lowther family for the next 30 years. They became one of the leading landowners in the North of England and possessed over 80,000 acres of Westmorland and Cumberland alone. The family were raised to the peerage in 1696 when John Lowther was created Viscount Lonsdale. After this line became extinct in 1751 the estate was settled on a cousin, when Sir John Lowther was created Earl of Lonsdale. The Lordship remained in the hands of the Lowther family until the late 1980s when it was purchased by the family of the present Vendors. Bowness is the main town in the manor and this became a major tourist destination at the beginning of the 19th century when the wilds and mountains of the Lake District began to be celebrated and the upper classes were cut off from Europe by the Napoleonic Wars. Bowness itself dates to at the least the 8th century. Rights, customs and incidents The manor thus passed to his brother, Christian who obtained a charter of free warren in the manor from Edward III. Henry VI then granted it to John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset but he died childless and the king regranted it to his daughter, Margaret, who was Countess of Richmond in her own right. Catalogue source Lot #1 of Manorial Services Auction - Spring 2020 - Stephen Johnson Associated manorial documents / archive references 1441-1443: court rolls The National Archives 1505-1507: ministers accounts 1603-1605: estreats 1619-1665: rentals 1624-1641 estreats 1615-1616: minister s accounts Duchy of Cornwall Office 1550-1550: jury charge Cumbria Archive Centre, Carlisle 1614-1614: boundary riding 1652-1683: court rolls 1654-1679: verdicts 1669-1672: estreats 1670-1670: court papers 1696-1696: court book of admittances 1752-1804: call books 1800-1946: call book 1831-1839: notices and perambulations of boundaries 1878-1891: fines, fees, admittances, accounts and valuations 1925-1931: stewards papers

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Historical holder / succession information his son, William [source claim requiring identity review] passed_to • historical_holder_or_transferee Source wording: After the death of Gilbert the

estate passed to his son, William, who took the name de Lancaster.his brother, Christian
[source
claim requiring identity review]passed_to • historical_holder_or_transfereeSource wording:
The
manor thus passed to his brother, Christian who obtained a charter of free warren in the
manor from
Edward III.of his wife, Johan or Joanna and at her death in 1375 it was found at her
inquisition
that she [source claim requiring identity review]1375 • held_manor •
historical_holder_or_transfereeSource wording: The estate remained in the possession of his
wife,
Johan or Joanna and at her death in 1375 it was found at her inquisition that she held the
manor of
Wynandermere, with its members and appurtenances.Lowther family1705 • granted_to •
historical_holder_or_transfereeSource wording: After her death in 1705, the Lordship and the
Richmond Fee were granted to the Lowther family.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- 1705 | Lowther family | granted_to | | Lot #1 of Manorial Services Auction - Spring 2020 -
Stephen Johnson
- 1347 | John de Coupland | royal grant | Manor And Title |
- 1363 - 1375 | Johan or Joanna de Coupland | inquisition post mortem | Manor And Title |
- 1375 | Ingelram de Coucy | reversion | Manor And Title |
- - 1413 | Phillipa de Coucy | inheritance | Manor And Title |
- 1413 - 1436 | The Crown | escheat/reversion | Manor And Title |
- 1413 - 1436 | John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford | royal grant | Manor And Title |
- 1509 - 1536 | Henry FitzRoy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset | royal grant | Manor And Title
|

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