

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003199 • MANOR
ABER MANOR

Evidence status: Unverified
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Location: Caernarfonshire
Associated places: Caernarfonshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Aber Manor was the manor of Aber in the historic county of Caernarfonshire, centred on Aber, now Abergwyngregyn, in north-west Wales. The manor appears to have developed from the royal or princely maerdref associated with the llys at Aber. It was successively a manor of the Crown or Prince, a grant to named medieval holders, and from the sixteenth century an estate associated with the Thomas family, the Bulkeley family of Baron Hill, and subsequently the Penrhyn estate. Pen-y-bryn, a surviving Jacobean manor house at Abergwyngregyn, was the principal Thomas residence associated with the manor by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The available evidence is not a continuous title abstract: several medieval and early Tudor transitions remain undocumented or are reported only through later calendars and archival summaries.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Aber was a princely or royal manor before the surviving named grants. In 1287 it was granted to Henry Somur for five years. Medieval evidence then records named holders including Edmond de Dynieton in 1323 and John de Houseum in 1327, although one later summary gives a conflicting date of 1352 for Edmond de Dynieton. Henry de Coton claimed the manor in 1390, but the manor was seized by the Prince's escheator and Coton was compensated with Walton upon Trent; this was not a confirmed tenure of Aber. The manor was granted to John de Pont in 1417, and a 1437 petition refers to the houses, woods, closes and gardens belonging to it. In 1484 Aber, together with Cemaes in Anglesey, was granted to Richard Vaughan. The intervening descent from Richard Vaughan to the Thomas family is not established in the sources consulted. Rice Thomas was lessee of Aber by 1551,

and in 1553 he and his wife Jane received a grant of the manors of Aber and Cemaes to themselves and their heirs. The Thomas family held the manor through Rice Thomas, William Thomas, Sir William Thomas, William Thomas, Richard Thomas, Gruffydd Thomas and John Thomas. Sir William Thomas obtained a further Crown grant or confirmation of Aber and Cemaes in 1609. John Thomas was certainly lord of Aber from at least 1686 until his death in 1705, although Lord Bulkeley appears to have obtained temporary possession in or about 1680. After John's death the manor passed out of the Thomas family's possession; it was certainly owned by Richard, Viscount Bulkeley, by 1715, and a separate archival summary places the manor with the Bulkeley family by 1689. The Bulkeley family remained the principal proprietors until 1863, when the Aber and other Caernarfonshire holdings were sold to the Penrhyn estate. The Penrhyn holding continued into the twentieth century and is reported to have lasted until 1925, when Henfaes and associated upland holdings were sold. The precise legal conveyance from the Thomas family to Bulkeley, the identity of every intervening Bulkeley holder, and the precise 1863 conveyance instrument were not established from publicly accessible material.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- 1287 - 1292 | Henry Somur | Grant of the manor of Aber for five years | | Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey: Stage One Report, report 419, section 3.2.1.1, citing R. Rees, Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales, pp. 61, 167, 323, 451-452.
- 1323 - 1327 | Edmond de Dynieton | Recorded as holding the manor of Aber | | Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey: Stage One Report, report 419, section 3.2.1.1; compare Abergwyngregyn Conservation Area Appraisal, which gives 1352.
- 1327 - 1390 | John de Houseum | Recorded as holding the manor of Aber | | Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey: Stage One Report, report 419, section 3.2.1.1.
- 1417 | John de Pont | Grant of the manor of Aber | | Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey, report 419, section 3.2.1.1, citing R. Rees, Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales, pp. 61, 167, 323, 451-452.
- 1484 | Richard Vaughan | Grant of the manors of Aber and Cemaes | | University of Wales Bangor Archives, BMSSXII/21171, item 21275, Grant to Richard Vaughan of the manors of Aber and Wig, co. Caernarvon, and Kemmes, co. Anglesey, 1 Richard III, 1484; corroborated by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust report 419.
- 1551 - 1553 | Rice Thomas | Lease of the manor of Aber | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography,

'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire,' citing the Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1553, p. 121.

- 1553 - 1577 | Rice Thomas and Jane Thomas | Grant of the manors of Aber and Cemaes to the grantees and their heirs | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire,' citing Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1553, p. 121.

- 1577 - 1586 | William Thomas | Succession to the Thomas family's estates, including Aber, after Rice Thomas's death | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire.'

- 1586 - 1634 | Sir William Thomas | Succession to the Thomas estates, followed by a Crown grant or confirmation of Aber and Cemaes in 1609 | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire'; University of Wales Bangor Archives, BMSSXII/21171, item 21281, Grant by letters patent to Sir William Thomas of the manor of Aber, temp. James I.

- 1634 - 1654 | William Thomas | Succession to the Caernarfonshire estates of Sir William Thomas, including Aber | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire.'

- 1654 - 1666 | Richard Thomas | Succession as eldest son and heir of William Thomas | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire.'

- 1666 - 1676 | Gruffydd Thomas | Succession as brother of Richard Thomas | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire.'

- 1676 - 1705 | John Thomas | Succession as next kin after the death of Gruffydd Thomas, who was described as tenant for life | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire,' citing PRO C7/339/71, U.C.N.W. Garthewin MS 2077, U.C.N.W. Baron Hill MS 3133, and Caernarfonshire record office material.

- by 1715 - 1863 | Richard Bulkeley, Viscount Bulkeley of Baron Hill, and the Bulkeley family | Manor passed out of the Thomas family's possession and was certainly owned by Richard, Viscount Bulkeley, by 1715; the precise conveyance is not established | | Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 'Thomas family, of Coed Helen (or Alun) and Aber, Caernarfonshire'; Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey, report 419; Gwynedd Archives and University of Wales Bangor Baron Hill archival catalogue references.

- 1863 - 1925 | Penrhyn Estate | Purchase of the Bulkeley family's Aber and other Caernarfonshire holdings; the estate remained in Penrhyn ownership into the twentieth century | | Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Coedydd Aber NNR Historic Landscape Resource Management Survey, report 419, section 3.2.1.5; Welsh Government, A55 Abergwyngregyn to Tai'r Meibion Improvements Environmental Statement, appendix A.

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