

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003241 • MANOR
ACKHAMPSTEAD MANOR

Evidence status: Unverified
Generated: 15 October 2026 11:17 UTC

Location: Lewknor, Oxfordshire
Associated places: Lewknor, Oxfordshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Ackhampstead was a detached upland township or chapelry of Lewknor, historically in Oxfordshire and later transferred administratively to Buckinghamshire. It lay in Lewknor Uphill in the Chiltern Hills and is now largely within Great Marlow and Lane End areas. The estate was associated with the hamlet of Ackhampstead, also called The Moor, and was distinct from, although connected by tenure and geography with, the principal manor of Lewknor. Ackhampstead was explicitly described as a manor by the fifteenth century. Medieval evidence shows land there held under the Abbot of Abingdon by members of the Leigh family, followed by Katherine de Leigh and the Bessels family. In 1412 Sir Peter Bessels dealt with the manor's reversion while Thomas Chaucer held it for life. After Sir Peter's death in 1425 the subsequent descent is not securely established. A late-fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manor called Lewknor may possibly have represented the former Bessels Ackhampstead estate, but the identification is expressly uncertain and should not be treated as a proven continuation.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

The wider Lewknor estate, including Ackhampstead or its appurtenances, was traditionally said to have been granted to Abingdon Abbey by Edward the Confessor and Queen Eadgitha in 1052, with a further grant or confirmation recorded in 1278. This represents an overlordship or superior estate, not necessarily direct occupation of Ackhampstead Manor. By the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the land specifically associated with Ackhampstead was in the hands of the Leigh family. Feet of fines and related evidence record William de Leigh dealing with land there in 1199

and 1222,
 and a 1247 settlement recognised Thomas de Leigh's right to a carucate in Achamsted.
 Thomas was
 holding the estate in 1279. The descent then passed to John de Leigh, who died about 1348,
 and
 subsequently to Katherine de Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Bessels, and her son Sir Peter
 Bessels.
 Ackhampstead Manor was expressly recorded in 1412, when Sir Peter Bessels placed it in
 trust; at
 that time Thomas Chaucer possessed a life lease and Sir Peter could dispose only of the
 reversion.
 Sir Peter died in 1425 after directing that his lands be sold for alms. The later history of
 Ackhampstead Manor has not been securely traced. The possible identification with a later
 Lewknor
 Manor is a historical hypothesis rather than a documented conveyance.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- 1052 - 1279 | Abingdon Abbey | Traditional grant by Edward the Confessor and Queen Eadgitha, with a later grant or confirmation in 1278; the abbey was the superior lord of the wider Lewknor estate and its appurtenances. | | Gordon Wyatt, A History of Ackhampstead, citing the Abingdon Abbey tradition and the Hundred Rolls; corroborated by the Buckinghamshire Heritage Portal monument record for Ackhampstead.
- 1199 - 1247 | William de Leigh | Documented transactions and recognitions concerning land in Akamsted, Hakamsted and Achamsted, including a 1199 Curia Regis or related fine, a 1222 fine involving half a hide, and a 1247 recognition of Thomas de Leigh's right. | | Feet of fines and related records as transcribed by Gordon Wyatt in A History of Ackhampstead; the account identifies the 1199, 1222, 1231 and 1247 transactions and connects the Leigh family with Ackhampstead.
- 1247 - 1279 | Thomas de Leigh | In 1247 William de Leigh recognised that a carucate in Achamsted belonged to Thomas de Leigh and the heirs of his body, with a remainder to Stephen de Leigh if Thomas had no heirs. Thomas is recorded as holding the estate in 1279. | | Feet of fine dated 3 June 1247, as transcribed by Gordon Wyatt in A History of Ackhampstead; 1279 holding evidence discussed in the Lewknor Manors account.
- 1279 - c.1348 | John de Leigh | Descent from Thomas de Leigh to his heir John de Leigh; John is reported to have died about 1348. | | Lewknor Manors historical account, drawing on the descent of the Leigh family and the medieval estate evidence; corroborated by the Ackhampstead historical account.
- c.1348 - 1406 | Katherine de Leigh | Descent after the death of John de Leigh; Katherine de Leigh is recorded in possession of Ackhampstead and died in 1406. | | Lewknor Manors historical account, stating that Ackhampstead was found in the possession of Katherine de Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Bessels, and her son Sir Peter Bessels.
- 1412 - 1425 | Sir Peter Bessels | In 1412 Sir Peter Bessels placed Ackhampstead Manor in trust and dealt with the reversion because Thomas Chaucer held the manor for life. | | Lewknor Manors historical account, which dates the first explicit record of Ackhampstead Manor to 1412 and describes Sir Peter Bessels's trust arrangement and 1425 death; see also the underlying medieval estate discussion in the Ackhampstead history.
- 1412 - 1429 | Thomas Chaucer | Life lease or life tenure already in existence when Sir Peter Bessels dealt with the reversion in 1412; the reversion of the manor held by Thomas

Chaucer for life was still recorded in 1429. | | Ackhampstead historical account citing a 1429 record of the reversion of the manor of Akhampstede held by Thomas Chaucer for life; the Lewknor Manors account gives the corresponding 1412 trust context.

RECORDED RIGHTS

DISCLAIMER

This is a historical registry extract generated from the Manorial Heritage Registry. It records the registry's documented research and assertions; it is not a Land Registry title document, legal certificate, or guarantee of ownership, lordship, rights, boundaries, or enforceability.