

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003260 • MANOR
ACTON BEAUCHAMP

Evidence status: Unverified
Generated: 14 October 2026 08:38 UTC

Location: Acton Beauchamp, Herefordshire
Associated places: Acton Beauchamp, Herefordshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

- Lord of the Manor of Acton Beauchamp | Historically associated | by 1280 - after 1879;
exact end date unknown | Provisional

ABOUT THE MANOR

Acton Beauchamp was a single manorial estate corresponding broadly with the parish of Acton Beauchamp, historically in Worcestershire and since 1897 in Herefordshire. The estate is recorded in

Domesday Book as Actune. In the reign of Edward the Confessor it had belonged to Evesham Abbey;

after the Conquest it was held by Urse d'Abitot of the fee of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux.

The estate

expanded substantially before 1086 through assarting and included demesne, customary land, open

fields, woodland waste, tenants, a water-mill and later a capital messuage and dove-cote. By the

late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries it was held by the Beauchamp family, later represented among the earls of Warwick. A manorial survey of 1594 records the estate under the

Madresfield interest and was apparently prepared in the context of its subsequent alienation. A

legal document of 12 June 1598 described the estate as including 20 messuages, 20 cottages, 3

dove-cotes, 600 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 300 acres of pasture, 6 acres of wood, and 100

acres of furze and wood. Most of the estate was sold by William Lygon to Rowland Berkeley in 1602.

It subsequently passed to the Berkeleys of Cotheridge and was gradually broken up and sold in

separate portions. The evidence does not establish a continuous chain of individual lords after the

Berkeley period, although W. M. Sparrow was recorded as lord of the manor and principal landowner in

1879.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

The earliest securely identified institutional interest is Evesham Abbey, whose ownership is

stated in the Domesday account for the time of King Edward the Confessor. After the Norman Conquest, Urse d'Abitot held Acton of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. The estate remained associated with the d'Abitot family into the later thirteenth century, but the precise descent and conveyance into the Beauchamp family are not established by the sources consulted. By 1280 James Beauchamp was described as lord of the manor and resident at the manor-house. William Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was the relevant lord at his death in 1298, and Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was the relevant lord at his death in 1315/16. The later medieval descent through the Beauchamp earls of Warwick is stated in secondary sources but is not reconstructed here person by person without direct Acton Beauchamp evidence. By 1594 the estate was associated with William Lygon of Madresfield; a 1598 sale document and the 1602 sale to Rowland Berkeley document the transition from the Lygon interest to the Berkeley family. William Berkeley inherited Acton Beauchamp from his father in 1611. The estate later passed among the Berkeleys of Cotheridge and was sold piecemeal. The precise conveyances between the Berkeley family and later owners are not established in the sources consulted. W. M. Sparrow was recorded as lord of the manor in 1879, but the conveyance by which the lordship reached him is unknown.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- reign of Edward the Confessor, before 1066 - after the Norman Conquest; exact date unknown | St Mary's Abbey, Evesham, also described as Evesham Abbey | Domesday states that Acton had belonged to Evesham Abbey in the time of King Edward the Confessor. The later disposition is described as an exchange involving Urse d'Abitot, but the precise legal form and date are not established here. | Victoria County History, Worcestershire, volume I, discussion of the Worcestershire Domesday Survey; C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 185 and 215-220.
- 1086 - after 1086; exact end date unknown | Urse d'Abitot | According to Domesday, Urse d'Abitot had received Acton from the abbot of Evesham in exchange for other land and in 1086 held it of the fee of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. | Domesday evidence as discussed in Victoria County History, Worcestershire, volume I; C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 215-216.
- after 1086 - late thirteenth century; exact end date unknown | D'Abitot family | The estate is reported to have continued in the d'Abitot family after Urse d'Abitot. The transfer from that family to the Beauchamp family is not established by a sufficiently

direct source in the material consulted. || C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 215-216.

- by 1280 - after 1280; exact end date unknown | James Beauchamp | By the time of the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1280, the manor had passed to the Beauchamp family and James Beauchamp was described as lord of the manor. The precise conveyance from the d'Abitot interest is unknown. || C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, p. 215, citing the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1280 and Hilton 1967.

- by 1298 - 9 June 1298 | William de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick | The valuation or memorandum of 1298 was made after the death of William de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and identifies him as the lord of Acton Beauchamp. || Inquisition post mortem or manorial valuation of 1298 as discussed by C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 215-216.

- by 1315 - 28 August 1315 or shortly thereafter; the inquisition was taken in 1315/16 | Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick | The inquisition post mortem taken after Guy de Beauchamp's death records Acton Beauchamp as part of his estate and describes its capital messuage, demesne, tenants and value. || Inquisition post mortem of Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 1315/16, as analysed by C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 215-216.

- by 1594 - 1602 | William Lygon | The 1594 manorial survey was associated with the Madresfield estate, and William Lygon sold most of the Acton Beauchamp estate in 1602 to Rowland Berkeley to settle debts. || C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 185 and 219-220; Madresfield Calendar Rolls, Kingsford 708, for the 12 June 1598 legal document.

- 1602 - 1611 | Rowland Berkeley | William Lygon sold most of the Acton Beauchamp estate to Rowland Berkeley of Spetchley in 1602. || C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 185 and 219-220.

- 1611 - 1658 | William Berkeley | William Berkeley inherited Acton Beauchamp from his father, Rowland Berkeley, in 1611. || Berkeley family of Cotheridge Court, landedfamilies.blogspot.com, section on William Berkeley (1583-1658), citing the Berkeley family descent and estate history; corroborated by C. W. M. Pratt, 2001.

- after 1611 - date of piecemeal sale unknown | Berkeleys of Cotheridge | After the 1602 acquisition and William Berkeley's 1611 inheritance, the Acton Beauchamp estate later passed to the Berkeleys of Cotheridge. The precise transfer and the identity of each intervening Berkeley holder are not established in the sources consulted. || C. W. M. Pratt, 'An Interpretation of a Tudor Manorial Survey of Acton Beauchamp,' Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, volume 50, 2001, pp. 219-220.

- by 1879 - after 1879; exact end date unknown | W. M. Sparrow | The 1879 Worcestershire directory records W. M. Sparrow as lord of the manor and principal landowner of Acton Beauchamp. The conveyance by which the lordship reached Sparrow is unknown. || Littlebury's Worcestershire Directory, 1879, entry for Acton Beauchamp.

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