

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0033149 • MANOR

Woodend or Launcelyns

Evidence status: Unverified

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Location: Cople, Bedfordshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

- Woodend or Launcelyns | Associated | | Unverified

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

OverlordshipOf the 10-hide vill of Cople, 9½hides belonged in 1086 to the fee of Hugh de Beauchamp, and were divided among no fewer than eight tenants. So extreme a division of a vill is highly remarkable. Of these tenants one only, Robert, is described as holding a manor of 4 hides, which later became known as WOODEND or LAUNCELAYNS MANOR. The overlordship passed to that branch of the Bedford barony which became vested in the Dukes of Norfolk.

LordshipThe tenancy of this manor was early vested in the family of Rufus, of whom mention has first been found in 1201, when Godfrey Rufus owned 1½ hides in Cople. In 1248 the same name appears in connexion with this parish. By 1293 Robert son of John Rufus appears to have succeeded Godfrey in Cople. Simon Rufus' name occurs in 1300, and he was followed by William Rufus, who died seised of a messuage and land in Cople in 1310, leaving a son and heir Simon, aged nine. In 1347 a settlement was made of land in Cople on the occasion of the marriage of Laura daughter of Simon Rufus to John Oyldeboeuf. No further trace of the Rufus family has been found in this manor, which next appears in the possession of a family called Launcelyn a Bedfordshire family of some standing. Walter Launcelyn owned land in the adjacent parish of Northill in 1316, and Richard Launcelyn was justice of the peace for the county in 1382. John Launcelyn, justice of the peace for the county in 1423, is the first member of the family whose name has been found in connexion with Cople, which he held of the Duke of Norfolk in 1433. He died in 1435, as is testified by a brass in Cople Church to the memory of himself and his wife Margaret. His daughter and heir Anne was nurse to Henry VIII and married Sir Walter Luke, justice of the King's Bench. Sir Walter Luke held Woodend until his

death

in 1544, when his son Nicholas, baron of the Exchequer under Henry VIII, succeeded him. Sir John

Luke son to Nicholas died in 1566 seised of the manor of Woodend, which descended from father to son

in due succession for at least four more generations. Sir Nicholas Luke son and heir of Sir John

died in 1613 and was buried at Cople. He was succeeded by Sir Oliver Luke. who sat in Parliament for

a long period as member for the county of Bedford, and probably died soon after he was secluded from

the Long Parliament in 1648. His son Sir Samuel Luke took an active part in the Civil War.

He fought

courageously by Hampden's side at the battle of Chalgrove Field (twice in 1643 receiving the thanks

of Parliament for his services) and also showed great energy and efficiency as

scoutmaster-general

in the army of the Earl of Essex. Butler severely satirizes even these good qualities

equally with

his pedantry, his 'Presbyterian true blew' religion, his clothing and his horse. He puts the following lines into the mouth of his hero: "Tis said there is a valiant Mamaluke In

foreign

land, yclep'd . . . To whom we have been oft compared For person, parts, address and beard.'

Sir

Samuel died in 1670 and was buried in Cople Church. In 1686 his successor sold the manor to Sir

William Gostwick, and it follows the same descent as his more important manor of Willington (q.v.)

until 1902, when the Duke of Bedford sold his property in this parish. It was immediately bought up

from the purchasers (Messrs. Keeble) by various persons, Colonel Shuttleworth acquiring the largest

portion about 1,200 acres.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- | Walter Launcelyn | Recorded holder | |

- | Sir Walter Luke | Recorded holder | |

- | Sir Oliver Luke | Succession | |

- 1686 | Sir William Gostwick | Sale | |

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