

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003358 • MANOR
ALCISTON MANOR

Evidence status: Unverified
Generated: 15 October 2026 15:50 UTC

Location: Alciston, Sussex
Associated places: Alciston, Sussex

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Alciston Manor was a substantial Sussex manor centred on Alciston, with lands and dependent outliers extending into Alfriston, Lullington, East Blatchington, Hellingly, Berwick and other places. Domesday evidence records the estate at 50 hides in 1066, although later descriptions explain that outlying portions were detached into neighbouring rapes and that the manor was subsequently assessed at approximately 44 and a half hides. The manor became one of the principal agricultural estates of Battle Abbey and was operated as a demesne farm or grange, specialising particularly in sheep and cereal production. The surviving manorial evidence includes title deeds from about 1100, account rolls from 1336 to 1539, court rolls and later manor records. The medieval manorial complex included a curia or manor-house complex, a large tithe barn, dovecote and fishponds. At the Dissolution of Battle Abbey, the manor, excluding the portion lying in Alfriston, passed from the Crown to Sir John Gage of Firle and his wife Philippa. Later evidence shows the manor and much of the surrounding estate continuing in the Gage family or Gage Estate; the exact sequence of later legal conveyances has not been established from the publicly accessible sources consulted.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

In 1066 Alciston was held by ðelnoth Cild, the pre-Conquest English landholder named in Domesday-related scholarship. Shortly after the Norman Conquest, William the Conqueror granted Alciston to the newly founded Benedictine Abbey of Battle. Battle Abbey retained the manor for the medieval period and administered it as one of its most important agricultural manors, with extensive

outlying lands and a large body of surviving account and court records. The abbey remained lord until its dissolution in 1538. The Crown then granted the manor, shorn of the part situated in Alfriston, to Sir John Gage of Firle and his wife Philippa, in consideration of Gage's service. The accessible sources describe Alciston as having had only two principal ownership phases since the Conquest Battle Abbey and the Gage family but do not provide a complete sequence of individual Gage conveyances. A 1867 directory identifies Lord Gage as lord of the manor, and East Sussex archival and Firle Estate material records the continuing association of the manor with the Gage Estate. The precise legal descent between the original 1539 grant and the later Gage holders remains a documentary gap in this backfill.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- 1066 - shortly after 1066 | ðelnoth Cild | Domesday evidence records ðelnoth Cild as holder of the 50-hide manor of Alciston in 1066. The subsequent transfer is described in later historical sources as a post-Conquest grant by William the Conqueror, but no precise date for the change of possession is established here. | | Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England, entry for ðelnoth Cild, discussion of the Domesday holding of Alciston in Sussex.
- shortly after the Norman Conquest - 1538 | Battle Abbey | William the Conqueror granted Alciston to Battle Abbey after the Conquest. The exact date and surviving grant instrument were not established in the accessible sources consulted. | | Judith A. Brent, Alciston Manor in the Later Middle Ages, Sussex Archaeological Collections, volume 106, 1968, pages 89-102; Victoria County History, Sussex, volume 1, discussion of Battle Abbey and Alciston.
- 1538 - 1539 | The Crown | On the dissolution of Battle Abbey in 1538, Alciston passed into Crown hands before being granted to Sir John Gage and Philippa his wife. The accessible sources do not establish the precise date on which Crown title was perfected or the exact form of the grant. | | The Keep, Alciston parish and settlement history, stating that when Battle Abbey was dissolved the Crown granted Alciston to Sir John Gage and Philippa his wife.
- 1539 - after 1556 | Sir John Gage and Philippa Gage, nØe Guldeford | Granted by the Crown after the dissolution of Battle Abbey, in consideration of Sir John Gage's service. The grant included Alciston Manor but excluded the part which lay in Alfriston. | | The Keep, Alciston parish and settlement history; Firle Place, The Collection, identifying Alciston as a reward granted to Sir John Gage KG by Henry VIII at the Dissolution.
- 1867 - after 1867 | Lord Gage | The 1867 Kelly's directory identifies Lord Gage as principal landowner and lord of Alciston Manor. The intervening legal conveyances within the Gage family were not established from the accessible public sources and are therefore not inferred. | | Kelly's Post Office Directory for Sussex, 1867, entry for Alciston, identifying Lord Gage as principal landowner and lord of the manor.
- nineteenth century, before 1867 - at least 1925 | Gage Estate | The East Sussex archival summary describes the manor as remaining in the Gage family and records manor court books

ending in 1925. It does not provide a discrete conveyance into or out of the Gage Estate, so this entry records continued family ownership rather than an inferred transfer. | | The Keep, Alciston parish and settlement history, including the statement that the manor records end with the last manor court book completed in 1925 and that most parish land remained owned by the Gage Estate.

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