

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003374 • MANOR
ALDCLIFFE MANOR

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Location: Lancaster, Lancashire
Associated places: Lancaster, Lancashire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Aldcliffe Manor was the manorial estate at Aldcliffe, immediately south-west of Lancaster on the east bank of the River Lune, historically in the parish and hundred of Lonsdale, Lancashire. Aldcliffe is recorded as Aldeclif in Domesday and as Audecliva in 1094. In the foundation charter of Lancaster Priory dated 1094, Roger of Poitou granted the Priory of St Mary at Lancaster, dependent on the Benedictine Abbey of St Martin at S  es in Normandy, land at Aldcliffe including a mansio, indicating a manor house and associated manorial land. The estate later formed part of the Lancashire possessions administered by the Bridgettine Abbey of Syon. Aldcliffe courts were held there for the abbess's tenants, and the manor included free tenants, bondmen and tenants-at-will. After the Dissolution and the Crown's disposal of the former Syon and Lancaster Priory possessions, Aldcliffe was sold in 1557 to Robert Dalton of Thurnham. The Dalton estate was forfeited or sequestered in stages during the Civil War and after the 1715 rising because of the family's recusancy and political associations. By 1716 four-fifths had been acquired from the Crown by Richard Leigh, while the remaining fifth was first awarded to Robert Blackburn and then purchased by Benjamin Leigh in 1724. The consolidated estate passed by bequest in 1742 to Robert Dawson and Isobel Leigh and remained associated with the Dawson family through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the nineteenth century the estate was widely described as the Aldcliffe estate or the manor of Aldcliffe, and Edward Dawson and later Edward Bousfield Dawson were recorded as its principal freeholders and lords of the manor. By 1916 the estate was divided by trust and inheritance between the Dawson family members, and the evidence indicates that the historic estate was thereafter fragmented rather than remaining under one securely

documented
manor-wide owner.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Aldcliffe was held by Roger of Poitou after the Norman Conquest and was granted in 1094, with the Aldcliffe manor house and lands, to Lancaster Priory, the dependent cell of the Abbey of St Martin at SØes. The priory retained the manorial interest while granting substantial leases, including leases of the manor itself to John de Ippe in 1360 and Peter de Bolron in 1384. Following the suppression of alien houses in 1414, Lancaster and its associated possessions were transferred or settled upon the Bridgettine Abbey of Syon; the final settlement was delayed until the death of the incumbent prior in 1428. Syon retained control of Aldcliffe, held a court there, and leased parts of its Lancashire possessions to local men. The Crown acquired the ecclesiastical estate at the Dissolution and sold the Aldcliffe and Bulk possessions to Robert Dalton in March 1557. A later Robert Dalton, his son, held the manor and associated estate; the property was occupied by and partly settled for his Catholic daughters. Two-thirds of the Dalton estate was sequestered during the Civil War period, and after the 1715 rising the remaining Dalton interests were forfeited or confiscated. Richard Leigh bought four-fifths from the Crown in 1716. Robert Blackburn received one-fifth as an informer and sold that share to Benjamin Leigh, who purchased it in 1724 and thereby consolidated the former Dalton holding. Benjamin Leigh bequeathed Aldcliffe to his daughter Isobel and her husband Robert Dawson in 1742. Robert Dawson managed the estate until his death in 1769, after which Isobel Leigh Dawson continued in possession and re-conveyed the hall, lands and related interests to her son Edward Dawson in 1814. Edward Dawson held the estate until his death in 1876, when it passed to his son Edward Bousfield Dawson. At his death in 1916, his will divided the estate: the bulk of the land went under trust to his eldest grandson Edward Dawson Gwion Harries, while the hall, gardens and immediate surrounding land were held in trust for his daughter Mary Philadelphia Dawson. She purchased the hall and just over forty acres from the trust in 1933 and remained owner until her death in 1945. Her nephew Eric Edward Dawson Hall inherited the

hall and a much-reduced estate, but the available evidence does not establish that he held the whole historic manor. The post-1916 evidence therefore supports fragmentation of the former manor estate rather than a single continuous manor-wide title.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- after 1066 - 1094 | Roger of Poitou | Acquisition or possession after the Norman Conquest; the available local history states that Aldcliffe passed into Roger of Poitou's hands before his grant to Lancaster Priory. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, section on the early medieval period, pp. 10-11, stating that Aldcliffe passed to Roger of Poitou after 1066 and that he granted it in the 1094 foundation charter.
- 1094 - 1414 | Priory of St Mary, Lancaster, dependent on the Abbey of St Martin at SØes | Granted by Roger of Poitou in the foundation charter of Lancaster Priory. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 10-12; Lancaster City Council, Place Names of the Lancaster District, entry for Aldcliffe.
- 1360 - 1420 | John de Ippe, or John of Ypres | Sixty-year lease of Aldcliffe Manor from Peter Martin, Prior of Lancaster. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, p. 17, quoting the 1360 indenture of lease from Peter Martin, Prior of Lancaster, to John de Ippe.
- 1384 - c.1444 | Peter de Bolron | Sixty-year lease of Aldcliffe Manor from John Innocent, Prior of Lancaster. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, p. 19, stating that Prior John Innocent leased Aldcliffe Manor to Peter de Bolron in 1384 for sixty years and that Thomas Bolron still held land there in 1482.
- 1428 - 1539 | Abbey of Syon, also known as Syon Priory or Syon Abbey | Ecclesiastical succession and final settlement of the Lancaster possessions after the suppression of the alien priory in 1414; settlement was delayed until the death of the incumbent prior in 1428. | | F. R. Johnston, The Lancashire Lands of Syon Abbey, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, volume 107, pp. 49-50; R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 19-22.
- 1462 - 1472 | John Gardiner of Ellel | Lease of Syon's Lancashire possessions, with Gardiner's 1472 will specifically referring to the remainder of his terms in Aldcliffe. | | F. R. Johnston, The Lancashire Lands of Syon Abbey, pp. 49-50; R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, p. 19, quoting Gardiner's 1472 will.
- 21 March 1557 - by 1626 | Robert Dalton of Thurnham | Purchase from the Crown of the former Lancaster Priory and Syon possessions, including Aldcliffe and Bulk, for a stated purchase price of £1,667 17s. 4d.; the tenure was stated to be by knight service. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 26-27, reproducing the 21 March 1557 grant and its terms.
- by 1626 - 1716 | Robert Dalton of Thurnham, the younger | Family succession from the first Robert Dalton is directly indicated by the Aldcliffe account; the exact date and instrument of succession are not identified. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 28-32; Dalton Databank, From Knights to Dreamers, chapter 1, describing Robert Dalton's settlement of Aldcliffe for his daughters.
- 1716 - 1716 | The Crown | Forfeiture and confiscation of the Dalton interests after the 1715 rising and associated inquiry; four-fifths of the former Dalton estate were then sold to Richard Leigh. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, p. 42, stating that after the inquiry and confiscation Richard Leigh bought the remaining four-fifths from the Crown in 1716.

- 1716 - after 1716 | Richard Leigh of Newton-in-Bowland | Purchase from the Crown of four-fifths of the former Dalton Aldcliffe estate. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, p. 42; accompanying family chart at p. 48.
- 1716 - 1724 | Robert Blackburn | Award of one-fifth of the former Dalton Aldcliffe estate as a reward for informing against the Daltons after the 1715 rising; the share was then sold to Benjamin Leigh. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 42 and 48.
- 1724 - 1742 | Benjamin Leigh | Purchase from Robert Blackburn of the remaining one-fifth share; Benjamin Leigh thereby consolidated the former four-fifths Leigh acquisition and became sole owner of the former Dalton holding. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 42 and 48.
- 29 September 1742 - 6 April 1769 | Robert Dawson and Isobel Leigh | Bequest by Benjamin Leigh to his eldest daughter Isobel Leigh and her husband Robert Dawson, following their marriage on 29 September 1742. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 42 and 48-49.
- 6 April 1769 - 2 August 1814 | Isobel Leigh Dawson | Continued possession after the death of Robert Dawson in 1769; in August 1814 she re-conveyed the hall, lands and related interests to her son Edward Dawson. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 48-49 and 72-73.
- 2 August 1814 - 29 March 1876 | Edward Dawson | Re-conveyance from his mother Isobel Leigh Dawson, including the hall, lands and related interests; the transfer was accompanied by release of her marriage dower on 10 August 1814. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 72-73 and 91-92; the transcript records Edward Dawson as holding freehold lands in the manor of Aldcliffe and as owner of practically all Aldcliffe by 1876.
- 29 March 1876 - 1916 | Edward Bousfield Dawson | Inheritance from his father Edward Dawson. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 91-93 and 103-104; the transcript explicitly records his role as lord of the manor and the extent of his Aldcliffe ownership.
- 1916 - after 1916 | Edward Dawson Gwion Harries | Provision under the will of Edward Bousfield Dawson, proved in September 1917, granting the bulk of the land to his eldest grandson. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 103-104, describing the 11 December 1907 will, its codicils and probate in September 1917.
- 1916 - 20 December 1945 | Mary Philadelphia Dawson | Held the hall, gardens and immediate surroundings under the trust created by her father's will; purchased the hall and just over forty acres from the trust in April 1933. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 103-105, recording the testamentary trust, the 1933 purchase and her death in 1945.
- 20 December 1945 - 1953 | Eric Edward Dawson Hall | Inheritance from his aunt Mary Philadelphia Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall and a much-reduced estate; he adopted the surname Dawson-Hall by deed poll in 1946. | | R. Bellis, Aldcliffe historical transcript, pp. 104-107, recording Eric Edward Dawson Hall's inheritance, 1946 deed poll and 1953 sale.

RECORDED RIGHTS

- Manorial court: Aldcliffe courts were held for the abbess of Syon's tenants during the period of Syon ownership.
- Freehold, customary and tenancy-at-will interests: The manor included free tenants, bondmen and tenants-at-will.

DISCLAIMER

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