

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003407 • MANOR

ALDINGTON SEPTVANS OTHERWISE WESTCOURT MANOR

Evidence status: Unverified

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Location: Thurnham, Kent

Associated places: Thurnham, Kent

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Aldington Septvans, also called Aldington Westcourt, West Court, Aldington Gower and Byrtones

Aldington, was the Septvans moiety of the manor of Aldington in Thurnham, near Maidstone, Kent. The

estate was distinguished from the other moiety, Aldington Eastcourt. It was historically held by the

Septvans family, later acquired by John Gower, and subsequently passed to the Brockhull or Brockhill

family. By the early eighteenth century the house and estate were associated with Richard Sheldon.

The name Westcourt or West Court reflects the estate's position in relation to the other part of Aldington.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

The earliest securely documented descent begins with William Fitz Helte, whose estate was inherited

through his co-heir Emma by Robert de Septvans. The senior Robert de Septvans was dead by about

1180, and his son Robert was in royal wardship in 1185. Robert de Septvans was recorded as holding

manorial rights in Aldington in 1248-1249 and died possessed of Aldington Septvans in 1253.

The

estate subsequently descended in the Septvans family. William Septvans held the moiety, then called

Westcourt or Septvans, in the twenty-fifth year of Edward III, approximately 1351-1352. His son

William Septvans, while still a minor, was recorded in 1366 as holding the moiety. A conveyance to

John Gower made about Christmas 1365 was treated as invalid while William was under age; after

William attained full age, a royal licence enabled the estate to be re-granted to Gower in 1368. In

1373 Gower transferred the manor to trustees, including John de Cobham, to hold for

Gower's benefit. It was later alienated to Sir John Brockhull, after which it remained with the Brockhull or Brockhill descendants. Nicholas Brockhill was lord of Aldington Westcourt in the second year of Edward IV, approximately 1462-1463. Henry Brockhill was lord of Aldington Westcourt by the late sixteenth century and in 1590 purchased the separate Aldington Eastcourt moiety, thereby bringing both moieties of Aldington into his possession. By 1719 Aldington West Court was associated with Richard Sheldon, whose family continued to hold the estate into the eighteenth century. The public sources consulted do not establish every intermediate conveyance between the medieval and early modern holders, so those gaps are retained rather than reconstructed by inference.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- before circa 1180 - circa 1180 | Robert de Septvans | Inheritance through his wife Emma, co-heir of William Fitz Helte | | Reginald Tower, The Family of Septvans, Archaeologia Cantiana, volume 40, section Aldington-Septvans; the article cites the Pipe Roll of 26 Henry II and related royal records.
- 1185 - 1253 | Robert de Septvans, son of Robert de Septvans | Inheritance from his father; the estate was held in royal wardship during his minority | | Kent History and Archaeology, Index to Inquisitiones Post Mortem, entry for Aldington; Reginald Tower, The Family of Septvans, Archaeologia Cantiana, volume 40.
- 25 Edward III, approximately 1351-1352 - 25 Edward III, approximately 1351-1352 | William Septvans | Descent within the Septvans family | | Reginald Tower, The Family of Septvans, Archaeologia Cantiana, volume 40, section Aldington-Septvans, citing Hasted and the relevant medieval descent evidence.
- before 28 August 1366 - Christmas 1364 or 1365, with the transfer later annulled | William Septvans, son of William Septvans | Enfeoffment to John Gower while William was a minor; the arrangement was subsequently challenged and the estate was restored or re-granted | | Probatio Aetatis of William de Septvans, Archaeologia Cantiana, volume 1, pp. 124-129; the text cites the royal inquisition and records the moiety of Aldington in Thurnham.
- Christmas 1365 - 1366 | John Gower | Enfeoffment by William Septvans; the conveyance was annulled or treated as ineffective because William was under age | | Michael Bennett, Gower, Richard II and Henry IV, in Historians on John Gower, summarizing the royal proceedings and the 1365-1368 conveyances; corroborated by the Probatio Aetatis of William de Septvans.
- February 1368 - 1373 | John Gower | Re-grant or confirmation following William Septvans's attainment of full age and a royal licence | | Michael Bennett, Gower, Richard II and Henry IV, in Historians on John Gower; the chapter states that royal licences enabled Septvans to enfeoff Gower again in 1368.
- 1373 - After 1373, date not established | Trustees of John Gower, including John de Cobham | Settlement by John Gower to trustees to hold for his benefit | | Michael Bennett, Gower, Richard II and Henry IV, in Historians on John Gower.
- After 1373 - Before the fifteenth-century Brockhull succession, exact date unknown | Sir John Brockhull | Later alienation from John Gower's trust or Gower's estate; the precise

deed and date are not established in the public sources consulted | | Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, account of Thurnham and Aldington; later reproduction of the historical text identifying the transfer from Gower to Sir John Brockhull.

- By 2 Edward IV, approximately 1462-1463 - After 2 Edward IV, exact date unknown | Nicholas Brockhill | Descent within the Brockhull or Brockhill family | | Historical account of St Mary the Virgin, Thurnham, reproducing the manorial and ecclesiastical history of Aldington Westcourt and identifying Nicholas Brockhill as lord of the manor in 2 Edward IV.

- By 1590 - 1596 | Henry Brockhill | Descent within the Brockhill family; in 1590 he also purchased the separate Aldington Eastcourt moiety from William, Lord Borough | | Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, account of Thurnham and Aldington, as reproduced in the historical account of St Mary the Virgin, Thurnham.

- By 1719 - 1736 | Richard Sheldon | Descent or acquisition within the Sheldon family; the precise conveyance is not established in the public sources consulted | | John Harris, The History of Kent, 1719, illustration of Aldington West Court as the seat of Richard Sheldon; corroborated by the historical account of Thurnham.

RECORDED RIGHTS

- Manorial rights in Aldington: Robert de Septvans was recorded as holding manorial rights in Aldington in 1248-1249; this supports the existence of manorial rights associated with the estate but does not specify every component of those rights.

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