

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0003421 • MANOR
ALETHORPE MANOR

Evidence status: Unverified
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Location: Alethorpe, Norfolk
Associated places: Alethorpe, Norfolk

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS

ABOUT THE MANOR

Alethorpe was a medieval settlement and manor in the former parish and hundred of Gallow, Norfolk, approximately two miles north-east of Fakenham. It was recorded in Domesday Book as Alatorp, when the estate was held by King William; before the Norman Conquest it had been held by Earl Harold. The settlement survived as a substantial medieval vill but declined through the later medieval and Tudor periods, probably in connection with enclosure and the conversion of arable and common land to sheep pasture. The church of All Saints was still in use in 1552 but was in disrepair and being used as a barn by 1602. By the nineteenth century Alethorpe had become a very small extra-parochial and later civil-parish unit, consisting principally of one farm. A modern Alethorpe Hall and a seventeenth-century barn occupy or adjoin the deserted settlement site; only low earthworks and traces of the former village remain.

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

The earliest securely identified lordship is the pre-Conquest holding of Earl Harold, followed by King William's royal holding recorded in Domesday Book in 1086. The surviving publicly accessible material located in this research does not provide a continuous medieval descent for the manor. A late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century body of evidence identifies William Dye as a substantial landlord or manorial demesne holder at Alethorpe, involved in disputes concerning the manor's foldcourse, enclosure, common rights, and sheep pasture; the available evidence does not establish the precise legal conveyance by which he acquired the manor or prove that he held the entire manorial lordship rather than the demesne and associated manorial interests. By 1896,

Sir

Lawrence John Jones, baronet, of Cranmer Hall, was explicitly recorded as lord of the manor and sole

landowner of Alethorpe, a status repeated in the early twentieth-century directory evidence.

The

links between the medieval holders, William Dye, and the Jones family remain documentary gaps in the

publicly accessible sources consulted.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- 1066 - 1066 | Earl Harold | Held immediately before the Norman Conquest; no separate conveyance is recorded in the source used. | | Open Domesday, Alethorpe, TF9431, summarising Domesday Book evidence for the pre-Conquest and 1086 lords.

- 1086 - 1086 | King William I | The estate appears in the Domesday survey in the royal holding after the Norman Conquest; the precise legal mechanism of transfer from Earl Harold is not stated in the cited source. | | Open Domesday, Alethorpe, TF9431, summarising the Domesday Book entry and identifying King William as tenant-in-chief and lord in 1086.

- circa 1580 - 1604 | William Dye | Acquisition and the precise nature of the interest are unknown. The evidence places William Dye as the landlord or manorial demesne holder involved in Alethorpe disputes, but does not document a conveyance to him or establish that he held every component of the manor. | | David Belcher, *The Chiefest Wealth of Our Country : Land, Lordship and Rural Society in Norfolk*, doctoral thesis, University of East Anglia, discussion of Alethorpe and William Dye, citing A. Hassell Smith and G. M. Baker, *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, volume II, Norfolk Record Society XLIX (1982), pp. 131, 152; and related enclosure evidence.

- 1896 - 1912 | Sir Lawrence John Jones, Baronet | The transfer from the preceding holder is not identified in the sources consulted. By 1896 the directory explicitly records Sir Lawrence John Jones of Cranmer Hall as lord of the manor and sole landowner; the same status is repeated in the 1904 and 1912 directory evidence. | | Kelly's Directory of Norfolk, 1896, Alethorpe entry; Kelly's Directory of Norfolk, 1904, Alethorpe entry; Kelly's Directory of Norfolk, 1912, Alethorpe entry.

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