

MANORIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY HISTORICAL RECORD EXTRACT

MHR-M-0040515 • MANOR
Wokefield

Evidence status: Unverified
Generated: 17 October 2026 13:49 UTC

Location: Stratford Mortimer, Berkshire

LORDSHIP / TITLE ASSOCIATIONS
- Wokefield | Associated | | Unverified

OWNERSHIP / HOLDER ACCOUNT

Under the Windsors Wokefield was held by the Danvers family at the beginning of the 13th century.
This family are elsewhere found holding under the same overlordship. The manor seems to have been held by Ralf Danvers who died in 1213, leaving as his heir in Wokefield his son Roland Danvers, for whose wardship and marriage, together with the marriage of Ralf's widow, William Archdeacon of Huntingdon gave £100. Probably Roland Danvers came of age in 1214, for in that year he was sued for land in Wokefield by Nicholas de Bolney, who seems to have claimed half the manor. Roland stated in answer that Wokefield had been given to his ancestors in marriage, and had descended to him from Torold the son of Geoffrey. Possibly the mother of Nicholas de Bolney was a co-heir with the wife of Ralf Danvers (see Winterbourne), for, though Roland retained the manor, his successor, Robert Danvers, in 1241 obtained a quitclaim of half a knight's fee in Wokefield from Alan de Farnham and Reynold de Whitchurch and their wives Margaret and Alice, daughters and co-heirs of Nicholas. This land was to be held of Alice and Margaret and their heirs, and Robert gave them lands in Aston in exchange for the quitclaim. Robert died about 1246, and was succeeded by his son of the same name, whose heir Sir Thomas Danvers was Sheriff of Berks. and Oxon. from 1286 to 1289. Sir Thomas Danvers was still living in 1308, but seems to have died before 1321, in which year his son and namesake granted the manor to Roger Mortimer, apparently on the condition that Roger should provide for his two younger sons, Richard and William. The manor of Wokefield remained in Mortimer's possession

until his fall in 1330. In 1331 Edmund Danvers, the eldest son of Thomas, tried to recover it on the plea that his father had been of unsound mind at the time of the grant. He was, however, unsuccessful in his suit, possibly owing to the fact that he had been an adherent of Mortimer, and the king granted the manor for life first to William Trussel and afterwards to Amy de Gaveston. But even then Edmund did not give up hope of getting Wokefield back, for in 1338 he was still trying to recover it against Amy and her husband John de Driby in the court of the Abbot of Reading, within whose liberty the manor lay. Probably the suit had then been going on for some time, and John and Amy found the maintenance of their right expensive, for a few days later the king granted them 'licence to fell trees in the woods of the manor at their will and to apply the money arising from the sale to their own use and in defending the right of the King and Amy in pleas moved against them touching the said manor.' In 1340 the king granted to John Brocas certain lands in Wokefield which Amy de Gaveston held for life by the king's grant. John was succeeded by Sir Bernard Brocas, who married Mary the daughter and heir of John des Roches, and obtained in right of his wife the mastership of the Royal Buckhounds, an office which remained in his family for three centuries. Sir Bernard represented Hampshire in most of the Parliaments of the reign of Richard II. He died in 1395, and was succeeded by his son, a second Bernard, who was beheaded in 1400 for his opposition to Henry IV. His widow was, however, granted dower in all his forfeited lands shortly after his execution, and her son William obtained restitution of his father's estates in the same year. William died in 1456, holding two crofts and a meadow in Wokefield. He left a son, also called William, to succeed him. Meanwhile the manor had evidently been restored to Roger Mortimer the son, who granted it with Stratfield Mortimer to the Bishop of Winchester and other trustees. After this date the manor of Wokefield followed the descent of Stratfield Mortimer (q.v. supra) until 1553, when it was granted by Edward VI to John Wright and Thomas Holmes, who alienated it the same year to Sir Richard Rede. Sir Richard granted it before 1564 to Sylvester Cowper, who sold it in 1564 to Edmund Plowden, treasurer of the Middle Temple. Plowden's reputation was at this time very high; it is said that among men of his profession he was not only easily first in knowledge of the

law, but second to none for righteousness of life. He was, however, regarded with increasing suspicion by the Privy Council on account of his steady loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith, though his opinions seem to have been held with a moderation equal to their firmness. On his refusal in 1569 to declare his willingness to observe the Act of Uniformity he was required to give a bond to be of good behaviour and to appear before the Privy Council when summoned, but it was apparently not until 1580 that articles were exhibited against him on the matter of religion. He died in February 1585, leaving as his heir his son Edmund, who died in 1587, and was succeeded by his brother Francis. Francis Plowden was still living in 1620, in which year he settled the manor of Wokefield upon his son and namesake, who sold it in 1627 to Peter Weaver. Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Peter Weaver, succeeded her father before 1653. She married Charles Pearce of Eton, who died before 1685, leaving her with two children, Katherine and Dorothy. The manor of Wokefield was settled upon Katherine and her husband Francis Parry and his heirs; her son Charles Parry had succeeded to it before 1706. His son Charles was holding in 1734, but died in 1740, and in 1742 the manor of Wokefield was held by his eldest sister and co-heir Katherine and her husband James Morgan and his other sisters. In 1742 three-fourths of this land with manorial rights were sold to the Earl of Uxbridge. The second earl, his grandson, sold this portion, now Wokefield Park, to Bernard Brocas of Beaurepaire, who died in 1777 and left the property for life to his widow Harriet Brocas, daughter of Henry Lannoy Hunter of Beech Hill, who lived till 1819. The estate then passed to her husband's grandson, Bernard Brocas, whose father, Captain Austin, had, in 1774, taken the name of Brocas and had died in 1809. On the death of Mr. Brocas in 1839 the manor was sold to Robert Alfrey, from whose grandson, Herbert C. Alfrey, it was purchased in 1900 by Mr. Alfred Palmer. The remaining fourth, now called Oakfield, remained to Katherine and James Morgan. It is partly in the parish of Sulhamstead Bannister. Their son, the Rev. James Morgan, Prebendary of Gloucester and vicar of Mortimer from 1768 to 1811, was succeeded by his nephew Francis Morgan. At his death it passed to Colonel Morgan, who sold it in

1893 to Mr. George Tyser. In the inquisitions on the Windsors, overlords of Wokefield, the manor of Wokefield is regularly returned as parcel of Stanwell. In the return on Brian de Windsor in 1399 the tenant of the manor was said to be unknown, and the tenant's name is illegible in the inquisition on Miles, son of Brian, who died in 1401. The inquisition on Richard Windsor, however, taken in 1428, gives William Danvers, tenant of Chilton, as holding this manor. According to subsequent inquisitions the estate followed the descent of Chilton (q.v.) as late as the time of Joan Danvers, who died in 1458. As there seems to be no mention of Wokefield in any documents relating to the Danvers family it seems probable that the jurors were ill-informed and that they were returned as tenants after they had ceased to have any interest in the manor.

CONVEYANCE / DESCENT

- | Under the Windsors Wokefield | Recorded holder | |
- 1321 | Roger Mortimer | Grant | |
- | William Trussel | Grant | |
- | Sir Bernard Brocas | Succession | |
- | the Bishop of Winchester and other trustees | Grant | |
- 1553 | John Wright and Thomas Holmes | Grant | |
- 1553 | Sir Richard Rede | Conveyance | |
- 1564 | Sylvester Cowper | Grant | |
- 1564 1569 | Edmund Plowden | Sale | |
- 1587 | Francis | Succession | |
- 1627 | Peter Weaver | Sale | |
- | Katherine and her husband Francis Parry and his heirs | Settlement | |
- 1742 | the Earl of Uxbridge | Sale | |
- 1777 | Harriet Brocas | Devise | |
- 1839 | Robert Allfrey | Sale | |
- 1768 1811 | Francis Morgan | Succession | |
- | Colonel Morgan | Passed | |
- 1893 | Mr. George Tyser | Sale | |

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