

## The Crick Manorial Documents

Of the tens of thousands of medieval manors in England, documentation has survived for only a few hundreds – and in many cases, what has survived is very far from complete. Study of the extensive collection of Crick manorial documents therefore provides a relatively rare opportunity for the social historian to explore in incredibly fine detail the daily life of a small manor in the English Midlands.

Year	Crick		
1066	Geoffrey de Wirce		
1100	no issue, estates revert to Crown		
1100-1130	granted into Mowbray family		
1160-1190	de Camvile (holds from Mowbray), but no issue, so manor descends to de Camvile's 3 married sisters (de Esseby, de Astley and Curson)		
	<b>Esseby's manor</b>	<b>Astley's manor</b>	<b>Curzon's manor</b>
1249	Esseby holds 6.25 virgates in demense + 15 by tenants by service of 1/3 knight's fee		
1263		estate confiscated	
c1282		estate returned to Astleys, by service of 1/3 kt's fee	
1292			
1316			Curzon's estate passes to Astley for annual token payment of a rose
1323	Esseby's estate passes to Vinter ("Vinter's manor")		
1347		free warren in Crick and W.Haddon granted to Astley	
1400-1420		somewhere about this time, the Astley estate passes to Grey via marriage to the sole (female) Astley heir	
	descends by succession to John Winter	a later Grey marries the female heir to the de Groby estate, hence inherits a further title	
1475		a later Grey is created Marquis of Dorset; he also marries Cecillie, heiress to the Bonville estate; he is thus Marquis of Dorset, and lord of Groby, Harrington and Bonville, as quoted in the court rolls	
	descends by marriage to Felmersham, and to his daughter Agnes		
	descends by Agnes Felmersham's marriage to <b>Ralph Bucknell</b>		
c1500-1520	Bucknell's widow Agnes marries <b>John Smith</b>		
1547		On death of Henry Grey Marquis of Dorset, estate is sold to Ralph Warren alderman of London (hence rental 2EdwVI)	
c1588?		estate purchased by Sir Wm Craven (Lord Mayor of London in 1611)	
1620s			
1720s		manor still owned by Cravens, via Lady Craven widow of Sir Wm Craven of Winwick, whose hundred court was held at W.Haddon	

## Summary of Crick's manorial history

The original single Domesday manor, granted to Geoffrey de Wirce, reverted to the Crown in 1100 when de Wirce died without issue, and was granted to the Mowbray family, who sub-granted it to de Camvile around 1160. De Camvile died without male issue, and the manor descended to his three married sisters, so that it became split into three manors (Esseby, Astley and Curzon) around 1190. By 1316 Curzon's manor was re-absorbed into Astley's manor, reducing the situation back to two manors – and at roughly the same time the separate Esseby manor passed by inheritance to Vinter. Astley's and Vinter's manors continued intact to the 1500s (the smaller Vinter's manor descended by inheritance to Winter, and thence via his daughter to Felmersham, again by marriage to Bucknell around 1490, and thence to Smith around 1500 via the re-marriage of Bucknell's widow. The larger main manor that was Astley's

descended by marriage in the early 1400s to Grey, who was later created Marquis of Dorset, and was sold to Warren in 1547). On Warren's death in 1553 the manor passed to his widow, and thence by her second marriage, to Sir Thomas White, who devised about half of his share to an Oxford college in 1558 (see below) so that the manor was once again split into three more or less equal parts.

The Astleys had their seat at nearby Lilbourne, so that from about 1190 until the mid-1400s the manor of Crick was administered locally from Lilbourne. The seat of the Greys was Bradgate Park in Leicestershire, so that from the mid-1400s until 1547 the manor of Crick was administered from further afield. From 1547 the hand of Sir Ralph Warren wrought significant changes in a manor which – as we will see from the analysis of the court rolls – had become run-down and neglected under the Greys.

For more details of the extent and nature of manorial successions in Crick and its neighbouring west Northamptonshire villages, [click here](#).

### **Why St John's College Oxford?**



The college of St John the Baptist, Oxford, was founded in 1555 by Sir Thomas White, a wealthy London merchant. White was Master of the Merchant Taylors' Company, and established a number of educational foundations including the Merchant Taylors' schools.

In 1558 White married Joan, widow of Sir Ralph Warren. Warren was a very senior member of

the Mercer's Company of London – twice elected Lord Mayor of London, and also serving a term as Mayor of the Staple in Calais, he owned more than twenty manors in East Anglia and around London, together with wharves and wool-sheds in both London and Calais, and he was one of England's great Tudor wool merchants. Warren bought the manor of Crick in 1547 – and when White married his widow Joan (White was a long-term friend of Warren, and both had served as Lord Mayor of London), the manor passed into his hands. White then granted a part of the manor of Crick to his newly-founded St John's College in Oxford to support its ongoing funding.

St John's College therefore inherited much of the manorial documentation for Crick – and it is carefully preserved in the college's archive.

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### **Long term aim of this study**

This study aims to transcribe as many as possible of the surviving documents into electronic texts (in MS Word© format), to simplify analysis of the details contained in them.

Transcription of the hundreds of documents is a time-consuming business, and at present fewer than half of the documents have been processed. A full catalogue of all the surviving documents is held on spreadsheet, including a regularly updated record of which documents have been transcribed.

Some partial analyses have been attempted – notably, for the period between 1522 and 1555, for which extremely detailed records exist in the forms both of court rolls, accounts and rentals, allowing much useful comparison. The picture that emerges is incredibly detailed, and also shows the considerable changes that took place in Crick during this most volatile period in English history.