

## COURT LODGE FARM, BEXHILL

This farm was the Desmesne land of the Manor of Bexhill.

### PROPERTY DETAILS (NGR TQ 7463 0800)

The Manor was given to Oswald, Bishop of Selsey in 772 by King Offa. The Manor belonged to the Bishopric until it was seized by the Count of Eu as part of the Rape of Hastings, granted to him by William the First in 1066. (1)

In 1075 the seat of the Bishopric was transferred from Selsey to Chichester, in accordance with Norman policy of removing Sees from villages into towns. ( and of course it was being washed by the sea). Bishop Godfrey, Ralph and Seфриd unsuccessfully claimed Bexhill, but in November 1148 John Count of Eu restored the vill and the churches to Hilary Bishop of Chichester. The gift being confirmed by King Stephen. The Manor was to be held directly of the King as freely as other possessions of the See. (1)

There is an account of the Manor in 1478 on the death of Bishop Arundel. Before this time the practice of direct farming the desmesne lands by a steward had been given up and the demesne lands had been let on lease to Robert Easton at a rental of £6 per annum. Hens were continued to be payable at Christmas and eggs at Easter. (1)

- 1535            The demesne lands were let to George Burkham on a lease of £7 per annum. The Bishops having leased the Manor took less and less interest in it especially as it was 60 miles from their cathedral city of Chichester.(1)
- 1559            The Act of 1559 giving Elizabeth power to take into her hands the lands of vacant bishoprics affected the See of Chichester. Bishop Montagu in 1634 says she took away 8 manors out of 13, one being in Bexhill. (1)
- 1570            Queen Elizabeth granted the Manor to Sir Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst and the first Earl of Dorset. The Manor remained with the Earls of Dorset then the Dukes of Dorset. The Earldom was advanced to a Dukedom in 1720 with Lionel Cranfield being the first Duke. (1)
- 1669            The Manor Farm now being called Court Lodge Farm was in the tenancy of John Russell at the rent of £100 per annum.
- 1720            John Russell was also holding Chinting Farm at £62 per annum. At some point in the late 17th or 18th century Chinting Farm

was absorbed into Court Lodge Farm and was not shown as an individual tenement on Rentals. (1)

The manor lands came into the ownership of the De la Warr family on the death of the 4th Duke when they passed to his two sisters, Mary Countess of Plymouth and later Countess of Amherst and Elizabeth Countess De la Warr. The death of the former without heirs in 1864 left her sister sole heir. (1)

1719 Feb 15 & 16 An Indenture describes: All the Manor of Bexhill .... Capitol Messuage of Manor House called Court Lodge Farm with malthouses, barns, stable buildings, outhouses, gardens, orchards, closes and several parcels of land arable, meadow, pasture, outlands, saltmarshes & woodlands or shaws to the said farm belonging and near lying called Crowmare and Chinting Farm 450 acres then or late in the tenure of John Russell under the yearly rents of £100 and £60, and also Cooding Farm. (2)

1803 Part of the desmesne lands of the Manor was purchased by the Barrack Dept for the building of barracks to house the Hanoverian soldiers with the threat of invasion by Napoleon. An extract of the Abstract of Title dated 1822 dealing with the sale is outlined in brief. This abstract also recites the earlier Indenture of 1719 quoted above. (2)

44 George III (1803-4) An Act of Parliament to enable the King to provide for the defence of the country with respect to the purchase of land for the public service. It should be lawful for his Majesty to authorise officers to survey and mark out any lands or grounds wanted for the public service and agree with the owner for the absolute purchase or the possession for use for such time as required. (2)

Bexhill Barracks was partly built on land which belonged to the Manor, and as the Lord of the Manor, George John Frederick, Duke of Dorset, was under 21, his father having died in 1799, his mother and guardian, Arabella Diana Duchess of Dorset agreed with his Majesty's Commissioners for the affairs of the Barracks, namely Osborne Markham, John Fisher and Alexander Loraine to sell to the Barrack Dept the land which they required for £3041 12s 11d. (2)

The land purchased comprised of:  
A parcel of land cont. 16a 3r 5p bounded on the East by Chantry Lane, on the North by lands of John Lansdell, West by a field called Nine Acres and the lands of James Fuggle, on the South

of the lands of John Lansdell which was formerly part of Court Lodge Farm comprising of three fields and part of a fourth called Crowmare Three Acres 3a 0r 8p, Crowmare Spring Field 3a 2r 14p, Crowmare Eight Acres 8a 3r 37p and part of Crowmare Nine Acres cont. 1a 0r 26p and on which said piece of ground thereby granted barracks and other buildings had been erected and built for the use and accommodation of His Majesty's Forces and also 1 acre formerly part of the common Down or waste of the Manor of Bexhill whereon the Artillery Barracks were then erected together with all houses etc. (2)

## SOURCES

- 1 Victoria County History Vol 9
- 2 Abstract of Title 1822 loaned by Michael Kent from the Dunn Papers.