

Extract from the Hobs Moat Community Project Final Report 2016.

The descent of the manor of Ulverley/Solihull.

The first documentary reference to the manor of Solihull, or Ulverley (above), comes from the Domesday Book. Together with the Warwickshire manors of Arley and Long Itchington, and the manor of Broadwell in Oxfordshire, Ulverley formed the estate given by William 1 to Christina; the sister of Edgar "the Atheling". The Domesday entry shows Ulverley to be thinly populated:

Christina holds 8 hides in Ulverley from the King. Land for 20 ploughs. In Lordship 1; 3 slaves. 22 villagers with a priest and 4 smallholders have 7 ploughs. Meadow 12 acres; woodland 4 leagues long and 1/2 league wide; when exploited, value 12s. The value was £10; now £4. Earl Edwin held it.

Ralph de Limesi, a knight who came to England in 1066 from Limesy, a small town north of Rouen,¹⁵ was awarded Christina's estate upon her retirement to Romsey Abbey in 1086.¹⁶

Ulverley remained part of the de Limesi barony until 1195 when John de Limesi died without male heirs. The lands were held in custodianship until 1213 when the estate was divided between John's two surviving daughters, Basilia and Eleanor.

Both of the daughters had married by 1213, Basilia marrying a knight from Oudinghsela in Flanders, Hugh de Odingsell, while Eleanor had married David de Lindsey, a Scot.

At some time between 1213 and 1216, Hugh and Basilia paid 500 marks livery to take possession of their half of the de Limesi barony, their sons William and Hugh standing as surety.¹⁷ Hugh's half of the barony included the manors of Solihull, Maxstoke and Long Itchington, of which he held half of each as tenant in chief, and the other halves as tenant of David de Lindsey.¹⁸ It seems reasonable to assume that Hugh was resident in Long Itchington since it was the residence of the senior branch of the family in later years.

In 1238 Hugh died, his eldest son, Gerard, succeeded him and he became Lord of the manor of Long Itchington. William, Gerard's younger brother, became his tenant in the manors of Solihull and Maxstoke, and it is probable that William was the first resident Lord of the manor of Solihull.

William died in 1264 leaving two sons; William and Nicholas. William was the elder of the two and he succeeded to his father's manors of Solihull

15 M. Bourel, *La Commune de Limesy*, Rouen, p. 13 (1899).

16 *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Ed. D. Whitelock, D.C. Douglas, S.I. Tucker, p. 162 (1961).

17 *Rotuli de oblatiis et finibus tempore regis Johannis*. Ed. Hardy, T.D., p 507 (1835).

18 A. Payne, *Portrait of a Parish, Kineton*, pp. 16-19 (1968).

and Maxstoke; holding one moiety from his uncle Gerard and the other from Henry de Pinkney;¹⁹ the de Pinkney family had inherited the de Lindsey portion of the de Limesi barony.

At some stage the manor of Forshaw was created for the younger brother, Nicholas.²⁰ Forshaw was the underdeveloped southern extension of Solihull, which Nicholas held from William in return for one penny each Michaelmas, and one pound of cumin seed which was to be paid at the first court in Solihull after Michaelmas.²¹ The de Odingsells of Forshaw continued until the early fifteenth century, and the remains of a double moat which surrounded their manor house still exist.²²

On 2nd April 1295 William,²³ or Sir William as he now was, died in Ireland of unknown causes.²⁴ He was followed by his only surviving son, Edmund, who died in the ensuing month, May 1295.²⁵

Since no male heirs existed, William's estate was divided between his widow, Ela, and his four daughters. In 1290 Ela had been jointly enfeoffed with William of the manor of Olton in Solihull, which made up one third of the manor of Solihull. Ela complained that the manor had been taken into the King's hands, and as a result she was assigned one third of the lands left by William in Solihull, presumably Olton.

The eldest of William's daughters, Ida, received the whole of the manor of Maxstoke,²⁶ and half of the manors of Pirton,²⁷ and Budbrooke. These lands passed into the de Clinton family through Ida's marriage to John de Clinton.²⁸

The younger daughter, Ela, received two thirds of the manor of Solihull which passed to the de Birmingham family through her first husband, Piers fitz James MacPhioris de Birmingham.²⁹

William's youngest daughter, Margaret, was 18 when her father died,³⁰ and

19 *The Victoria County History, Herts.*, vol. III, p 46; Fisher, A.S.T, *The History of Broadwell, Oxfordshire*, pp. 9-10 (1968).

20 Dugdale, pp. 948-9.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid; Solihull Archaeological Group.

23 Dugdale, p. 940.

24 *Annals of Ireland, A.D. 1162-1370*. Ed. Gilbert, J.T., ii, p. 324 (1965, reprint). William was the king's representative, Justiciar - effectively Viceroy - in Ireland at the time and had been so for six months.

25 *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, vol III, pp. 186-7.

26 *The Victoria County History, Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 138.

27 *V.C.H. Herts.*, vol. III, p. 48.

28 Ibid; *V.C.H. Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 138.

29 *V.C.H. Warks.*, p. 218; *Feet of Fines*, vol. XV, p. 81.

30 *Cal. Inq. P.M.*, vol. III, pp. 186-7.

was married to John Grey of Rotherfield. John died in 1311, and the inquisition into his estate included only 22 marks of rent in Solihull,³¹ yet his descendants were in possession of the manor of Olton.³²

It would seem probable that the third of William's land granted to his widow was in fact Olton, and that upon her death sometime after 1311 the manor passed to Margaret as her portion of the estate. This would explain the two thirds of Solihull which Ela de Birmingham received as her share of the estate.

It may therefore be that, with the devolvment of Olton on the heirs of John Grey and Ela, occupation at Hobs Moat as the seigneurial residence came to an end at this time, and that the henceforth non-resident Lords of the manor had no further use for the site.

31 *V.C.H. Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 218.

32 *Ibid.*