

ATTWOOD PLACE.

One of the most delightful period houses in Ash is Attwood Place a lovely early Eighteenth century house and through the South Ash Court Rolls we are able to trace its ownership for close on two hundred years from 1738 until 1924.

It is not until the early part of the Twentieth century that the house is actually named in the Court Rolls and is one of only a couple of properties which can be identified by name.

The following references are all taken from the Court Rolls but for the sake of briefness I have omitted the names of those Manorial Tenants who attended the various Courts Baron of the Hodsoll and the Wild families:

22nd May 1738.

Also present that Robert Batt who lately held of the Lords of the Manner one messuage one barne one stable with divers pieces or parcels of land thereto belonging by the services aforesaid and yearly rent of 14 shillings since the last Court dyed seized thereof whereupon there accrued to the Lords a heriot and that a horse was seized and compounded at (blank) and 14 s for relief. And that he by his last Will and Testament devised the same premises to his son Edward Batt and his heirs who being present here in Court paid rent did fealty and was admitted tenant.

6th June 1758.

All say and present that Edward Batt who lately held of the Lord and Lady of this Manor a messuage a cottage a barn a garden an orchard and divers parcels of land to the same belonging within the manor aforesaid by the services aforesaid and yearly rent of fourteen shillings Died since the last court whereupon there became due a heriot which was compounded for at six pounds and fourteen shillings for a relief and that the said Edward Batt by his last Will and Testament duly executed devised the same premises to Robert Batt his son and heir whereupon there became due for an alienation fine fourteen shillings and that the said Robert Batt had since aliened the said premises to Henry Saxby Esquire and his heirs whereupon there became due a heriot which was compounded for six pounds and fourteen shillings for the alienation fine. Therefore the Bailiff is commanded to distrain for such alienation fine and fealty.

23rd May 1774.

Also the Homage present that Henry Saxby Esq. late Tenant of this Manor for a messuage cottage barn garden orchard and divers parcels of land to the same belonging since the last court is dead whereupon there became due to the Lord a Heriot of the best living animal of the deceased and a relief of one years Quit Rent being fourteen shillings which Charles Sayer Esq. one of the Executors of the said Henry Saxby paid and compounded for the Heriot. But to whom the estate is devised the Homage could not tell.

We have no idea when Thomas Skudder purchased the property but he is recorded as

paying the fourteen shillings Quit Rent on 27th October 1790 and the tenant of Attwood Place was a lady called Susannah Clark, at the next Court which was held on 30th October 1798 Thomas Skudder was the owner but the tenant of the house was Richard Elcombe. At the last court of William Hodsoll held on 26th January 1821 Thomas Skudder still continued as owner and Richard Elcombe continued as tenant.

It was during the year 1832 that owing to the Bankruptcy of William Hodsoll the Lordship and Manor of South Ash was purchased by John and William Wild, wine merchants of London and the handsome leather bound and clasp closed leather volume into which the Court Rolls were copied was purchased for the sum of £2. 6s. 6d and their first Court Baron was held on 22nd January 1835 when it was stated that Thomas Skudder had alienated the property to Richard Rogers an alienation fine of fourteen shillings was paid but no heriot seems to have been paid and Richard Rogers had become the owner occupier.

At the Court held on 13th November 1863 it was recorded that Richard Rogers had died in testate, he died on 3rd August 1860 and lies in Ash Churchyard (No 129 on the listing). Richard Rogers one of the sons appeared on behalf of himself and his brothers John Rogers and Charles Rogers and Sophia his mother as sons and co-heirs in Gavelkind of the said Richard Rogers.

According to the Court Roll dated 23rd November 1878 Sophia the widow of Richard Rogers had died on 27th March 1877 aged 72 years and she too lies buried in the same spot (No 129) as her husband.

The Court Roll dated 10th May 1911 shows that Richard Rogers who was the Bailiff of the Manor had died on 23rd November 1908 and that his brother John Rogers had passed away on 22nd March 1911. Their surviving brother Charles Rogers appeared at the Court who, in pursuance of an indenture dated 30th July 1909 and made between Charles and John Rogers of the one part and Mary Rogers widow of Richard Rogers deceased of the second part whereby an annuity of Fifteen Pounds per annum was granted to the said Mary Rogers in lieu of her claim for dower claimed to be entitled to the said hereditaments as heit at law jointly with the said John Rogers deceased Charles Rogers according to the Court Roll dated 27th September 1916 had died on 21st July 1912 and that his son Charles William Rogers had been appointed the Steward and Bailiff of South Ash Manor and so it remained until the final Court was held in the Manor House of South Ash on 24th April 1924 when the Rogers family finally disappear from the South Ash Manorial Court Rolls after One hundred and Fifty years.

It is not until the list of Quit Rentals dated 27th October 1790 that we read that the extent of Attwood Place amounts to some 35 acres and not until as late as 10th May 1911 that finally we read "Attwood Place" in the Quit Rental list.

From the above it will be seen why Manorial Court Rolls are still protected by Act of Parliament for they can still be used in a court of law to settle problems which could still arise for they were a type of Land Registration of a very localised nature.

The South Ash Court Book can be inspected at the Centre for Kentish Studies at Maidstone, the reference for this particular volume being U3382/M1/2.

In conclusion you may be wondering what the other properties that can be identified are; the answer is Swan Farm and The Crooked Billet.

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