

GB 1896 Deeds

## Dunstable Town Council

**This catalogue was digitised by The National Archives as part of the National Register of Archives digitisation project**

NRA 1154



The National Archives

Town Clerk's Dept., Municipal Office  
High St. North, Dunstable.  
Deed Packet No. A54

PRIORY HOUSE, Dunstable

HISTORICAL MSS.  
1154  
COMMISSION

Deeds in Possession of Dunstable Corporation

Priory House, the documents show, was at this period the manor house of 'Dame Sayers' manor in Kensworth and in the earliest of these deeds it is the house rather than the lands in Kensworth to which the name is applied; the Kensworth property being called "Berristead".

Six  
AT  
9.78

By how long the association of these two properties ante-dated 1694, the date of the earliest of these deeds, it is difficult to say. There seems no doubt that the house in Dunstable and its surrounding closes (to which strictly in 1694 the name of Priory was attached), were originally part of Priory of St. Peter's, Dunstable (Beds. V.C.H.III, p.351), the building apparently being the guest house while the land in Kensworth, where the Priory itself seems to have possessed only common rights, was leased in 1694 from the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, London, and from whom it was held as early as 1544 (Herts. V.C.H.II, p. 232). Yet there was a manor of 'Dame Sayers' in Dunstable and Kensworth before the dissolution (1534) (Beds. C.R.O. D.D.F. 130). The House in Dunstable and the land in Kensworth apparently became associated at some date between the dissolution of Dunstable Priory and 1694; the only indication of when this took place being that the name of the manor, 'Dame Sayers', was that by which the house was called in 1694; if this suggests anything it is that the junction of house and lands took place some decades before that date.

An additional complication is that despite land in Kensworth being known as early as 1578 by the name 'Dame Seres' (Herts. V.C.H. *ibid.*) the land in Kensworth held in conjunction with 'Dame Sayers House' was called 'the Berristead' in the earlier deeds of this group, but the names of the lords of the manor in surviving copies of court roll of Dame Sayers are the same as the owners of the property of these deeds (Beds. C.R.O. WR.2), which seems to show they were the same property.

The house at Dunstable and the lands at Kensworth remained associated for the whole of the 18th century; they were separated when in 1809 William Brown sold the Priory House, but not the lands in Kensworth, to William Gresham.

- (1) PROBATE of Robert Crawley of Dunstable, Beds. Doctor to wife Joan - 'The Mann' for Manshirt House) at south end Dunstable called 'Dame Sayers' and appurtenances together with 5 acres called by the name of the 'Priory',

The Berrystead in Kensworth leased from Chapter of St. Paul's, London.

To John, Elizabeth, Mary Martha and Catherine, his children, 20/- each.

30-11-1694

Witnesses: Bryant Simpkins, Ralph Slater, Jn. Pomfretty,

21-1-1694/5

(2) PROBATE of Joane Crawley.

- To son John Mansion House in South Street, Dunstable land to East of above called the "Priory" containing 4 acres.
- Berrystead in Kensworth.  
To four daughters £200 each to be paid by John two years after death, or six months after they have contracted marriage: out of Lease of Berrystead.

To daughter messuage in South Street, Dunstable, lately purchased from Wm. Bloun, as long as unmarried, then to longest liver.

Witnesses: Jn. Pomfrett, Hy. Howard, Ralph Slater.

26.7.1801

22.7.1702

(3) PROBATE of John Crawley of Dunstable.

To wife Berrystead 'title' of Kensworth for life, as by marriage settlement

2 acres in Caddington late purchased for life then to son John, House called Dame Sayres with 'Pryreie' for life: then to son Thomas.

Witnesses: Eliz. Crawley, Jn. & A. Burrow.

17.9.1727

28.5.1728

(4) COPY OF PROBATE of Th. Crawley of Dunstable.

To John Lord - Rector of Drayton Parsloe

- All my manor of Dame Sayer, in Dunstable or Kensworth, capital messuage in which I dwell in Dunstable and other lands in Dunstable.
- Clifton Manor of Lacies and lands belonging in Clifton in occupation of Jn. Ffield, 3 Messuages in Clifton in occupation Wm. Warde, Th. Come, Wm. Rogers and Rd. Edwards

To Newdigate Poynt<sup>r</sup> Esq. of Hexton, Herts, £200.

To James Hanscombe of Clifton, husbandman and to Eliz. his wife £30, to servant Grace Barrow £30, to servant Ben Taylor £5.

Codicil to N.P. riding horse and colt.

14.12.1752

Witnesses: Th. Howard, Jn. Sharpe, Amb. Reddall.

14.12.1752

17.1.1753

(5) and CONVEYANCE (L. & R.) & Covenant to Levy Fine: £800.  
(6)

- (1) Jn. Lord of Drayton Parsloe, Bucks,  
Clergyman, cousin and heir of Th. Crawley.  
Doctor.
- (2) Th. Vaux of Dunstable, Esq.

- Manor of Dame Sawyers (alias Kensworth) with  
appurt in Herts and Beds; with manor house  
in South Street, Dunstable; orchard and yard  
adjoining and also two closes called the  
'Priory' likewise adjoining, late in occupation  
of Th. Crawley

(Recites conveyance (B & S) (a) Sir Jn. Napier, Bart  
Roger Chillingham, (b) Robert Crawley, doctor,  
grandfather of (1)

Above property in Dunstable then in Tenure  
Robert Haddon of Dunstable, Baker.

25.3.1673)

- Messuage late Th. Crawley ~~to be~~ late in occupation  
Robert Eames and now Jn. Miles in South Street,  
Dunstable next Manor House.
- Other lands in Dunstable once Th. Crawley.
- (1) Covenant to levy fine on above property before  
Trinity 1754.

Witnesses: Jn. Hurst and Th. Varr.

28/9.5.1753

(7) and  
(8)

CONVEYANCE (L & R): £1,000

- (1) Th. Vaux, late of Dunstable, now Bedford:
- (2) Th. Cooke, late Bow Brickhill, Bucks, now  
Leighton Buzzard.

Property as 28/9.5.1753 except occupation of  
Manor House now Jn. Bird; with internal fittings;  
except piece on west of Lower of two Priory  
Closes lately conveyed to Mark Braum, where  
house adjoins.

Witnesses: Th. ffoulkes, Jonothan Davis.

(9) FINAL CONCORD: £300.

Th. Vaux, Esq. pl.  
John Lord and Mary wife Def. 20 acres of  
pasture.

20 acres of pasture,  
Manor of Dame Sawyers & 20 acres of furze  
and heath in Dunstable and King's Houghton.

Trinity 1754.

(10)and (11) CONVEYANCE (L. & R.) & Covenant to levy fine:  
£1,200.

(1) Th. Cooke of Dunstable Esq; Frances his wife.

(2) Geo. Maddison of Stainton Vale, Stainton en le Hole, Lince.

- Manor of Dame Sawyers in possession (1) and other property as before.

- Covenant to levy fine before Mich. 1797.

Witnesses: Hy. Allington 'of Hertford',  
Jn. Hooper, Dunstable.

1/2.5.1796.

(12) FINAL CONCORD: £260

Geo. Maddison, plt.  
Th. & Mary Cooke, def.

Manor of Dame Sayer in Dunstable & Houghton R.

All Souls 1796

(13) EXTRACT of Will of Geo. Maddison, late of Stainton Vale, Stainton in le Hole, Lincs, now of Dunstable Priory; Dunstable.

To son George All manor of Dame Seirs and dwelling house called Dunstable Priory, lately purchased of Jn. Cooke and all other lands in Bedfordshire.

Mentions third son Charles. 21.1.1805  
31.1.1806

(Codicil Recites - Agreement of Sale. £1,205.

(1) David Fonberton, Maltster of Market Street. Geo. Scriven of Dunstable, Draper, being trustees under will of Nassan Smith late of Dunstable.

(2) Geo. Maddison

Message with close of pasture adjoining containing 4 acres 25 poles

23 poles adjoining under lease from Duke of Bedford 24.1.1805. )

Devized as property above:

25.1.1805  
5.5.1807

(14)and (15) COVENANT to declare Uses of Recovery (L. & R.)

(1) Geo. Maddison, Esq. of Winchester, Hants. Lt. Col. in 77th Foot, 2nd son of Geo. Maddison.

(2) Mordaunt Clennell of Staple Inn, London.

Dame Sayer's Manor.

To break an entail.

004

1/2.5.1809

(16) EXEMPLIFICATION OF RECOVERY.

Hy. Allington, dem.  
M.L. Glennell, ten.

Geo. Maddison and wife vouches.

Manor of Dame Sayers.

Easter

(17 & 18) CONVEYANCE. (L. & R.) £1,850.

- (1) Geo. Maddison.
- (2) Jn. Th. Maddison of Fulford, York, Lt. Col.  
son and h. of (1)
- (3) Hy. Alington of Hertford.
- (4) Wm. Brown of Dunstable, gent.

(1) to (4) Manor of Dame Sawyer's and other  
land in Dunstable.

3/4.7.1809

(19 & 20) CONVEYANCE (L. & R.): £1,750

- (1) Wm. Brown, Dunstable.
- (2) Wm. Gresham, "
- (3) Jn. Durham, "

Message and close called the Priory in Dunstable.  
(1) to (2).

Manor of Dame Sayers reserved to (1)

For life, then to (3).

1/2.4.1814

(21) MORTGAGE: £600

- (1) Wm. Gresham.
- (2) Th. Smith and Dan. Rudd.

Message and Priory Closes, Dunstable.

29.9.1815.

(22 & 23) CONVEYANCE (L. & R.) £1,950

- (1) Wm. Gresham
- (2) Robt. Thorp, Esq.

Mansion House & Priory Closes.

10/11.10.1823

(24 & 25) CONVEYANCE (L. & R.) £2,250

- (1) Robt. Thorp of Bedford.
- (2) Richard Munt) of Wood Street, London.  
Th. Brown ) Straw Bonnet Manufacturers.

Mansion House & Priory Closes in Dunstable, in  
occupation (2)

(26) Envelope containing 11 miscellaneous legal papers,  
19th century.