

TOUR OF HOUSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FOUNDERS AND BENEFACTORS OF CHESTERFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

July 24th 2019

A group of 20 OCT members were privileged to be able to visit a number of the houses in and around Chesterfield on a tour organised by Mark Thacker and led by Frank Gorman and Philip Riden. Philip produced an excellent guide covering each of the stops. This was drawn from draft text prepared for future volumes of the Victoria County History of Derbyshire. The guide can be accessed by [clicking here](#) (a version with fully annotated text with all the footnotes is available on request via the webmaster). He also described the properties and their history particularly in relation to our benefactors on each stop.

The tour began appropriately at the Crooked Spire where annually the Head Boy read the names of the main benefactors at the end of year service. Tony Hallam described the memorials to the Foljambe family including our benefactor, Godfrey Foljambe in the Lady Chapel to the right of the High Altar and also the neighbouring memorials to members of the Foljambe and Heathcote families. The following notes were kindly provided by Tony:

The earliest Foljambe connection with Chesterfield arose with the occupation of Walton Hall by the family of Sir Thomas Foljambe I in 1389 and lasted for over 200 years. Seven generations lived at the hall until 1595 - the hall was eventually sold in 1633. The present hall on Foljambe Avenue, was built on the site of the old hall c1788.

The last five of the above seven Foljambe generations have their tombs / brasses in the Parish Church:

Henry (1433-1510)... Godfrey IV (1472-1541)... James (1511-1558)
Godfrey V (1534-1585)... Godfrey VI (1558-1595).

The wills of Godfrey V and VI provided gifts which led to the founding of CHESTERFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

Then it was into the bus to Cutthorpe where both Cutthorpe Old Hall and Cutthorpe Hall were visited. Cutthorpe Old Hall, a striking early 17th century building, was once owned by the Clarke family. Cornelius, our benefactor, lived mainly at Norton Hall however.

It was then only a couple of hundred yards to our next stop, Cutthorpe Hall, hidden from the road down Green Lane. This late sixteenth / early seventeenth house also has connections to the Clarke family but more so to the Heathcotes.

Next stop was Hipper Hall in Holymoorside, again early seventeenth century, which, although in the village, can easily be missed behind its high boundary wall. The link to the school is unproven except that five panes of leaded window glass were found in a blocked up window which were inscribed with references to Godfrey and Hercules Foljambe including the date of 1607. We were very fortunate to be shown around the property by the current owner, Doctor Sterland. Adjacent to the Hall is a splendid cruck barn.

Heading back towards Chesterfield we next visited Walton Hall courtesy of its owner Matthew Jones. Remodelled as a handsome Georgian house, this was once a very large country house on the site of land owned by the Foljambes since to fourteenth century. It was not long after their donations to help found the School that their fortunes changed and the house was sold.

The Clarkes also owned Somersall Hall. Here we were entertained to refreshments by Mrs Hazel Linsey. Parts of the house are seventeenth century but most was rebuilt around 1763. Hazel, whose own ancestors had owned the property since 1820, presented an interesting history of the property.

Finally the group returned to town centre hoping to visit The Distillery for a settler. The property, 2 St Mary's Gate, was also owned by the Heathcote family. Unfortunately we found the doors barred and made other arrangements.

It proved to be a very interesting afternoon for which I am sure all were very grateful to the organisers, leaders and property owners.

