



## Lost Follies

Issue 28

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### What's on in July:

- **03—Open day** at Kensal Green Cemetery, London W10 5AA.
- **04, 10 and 11—Open days** at Lord Berner's Folly, Faringdon, Oxfordshire.
- **10-11—North Lincolnshire weekend:** Starting with a tour of the Brocklesby Estate and its Grotto and Root House, Arabella Aufrere's Temple, Holgate Monument, Newsham Lodge, Memorial Arch and Mausoleum for Sophia Aufrere. The visit also includes fish and chips at Cleethorpes and a tour of the town including its Plotland development called the 'Fitties'.
- **14-18—Larmer Tree Music Festival** at the Larmer Tree Gardens near Salisbury.

### And later...

- **15 August—Annual Garden Party** at Hall Barn, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire.
- **9-12 September—Heritage Open Days.**
- **11 September—Cotswold Weekend** visiting Painswick Rococo Gardens (to see the newly restored Red House, Exedra, Bothy, Pigeon House and more), Woodchester Mansion and Frampton-on-Severn.

### The Folly Fellowship

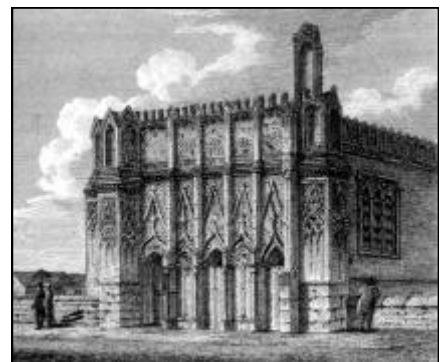
Articles, pictures, comments and feedback for the e-Bulletin should be sent to [andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk). All other correspondence should be sent to [membership@follies.org.uk](mailto:membership@follies.org.uk).



The Boathouse at Kettlethorpe Hall (above) and engraving of the pre-restored Bridge Chapel (below)

One morning in September 1995, the good people of Wakefield woke to the news that during the night one of their most historic treasures had been vandalised and lay in fragments on the ground. That 'heritage asset' as we must now call it under EU law, was the boathouse at Kettlethorpe Hall, and what made it important was the fact that it included the 14th century façade from Wakefield's Bridge Chapel.

Although common in the Middle Ages, where they provided travellers with a spiritual place to pray at the end of their often treacherous journeys, only four bridge chapels survive—Bradford-on-Avon (which later served as a lock-up), St. Ives (Cambridgeshire), Rotherham and Wakefield (the oldest). Two others at Derby and Rochester are often claimed to be bridge chapels but



actually stand on the river bank instead of being mid-stream.

By the early 1800s, Wakefield's bridge chapel had fallen into a bad state of disrepair, so in 1847-48 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott was asked to carry out 'improvements'. As part of his work he was allowed to remove the original front elevation and replace it with something more Victorian. The old stone was

then put up for sale and ended up at Kettlethorpe Hall where it was used as a decorative front to the boathouse. It was an action that Scott later regretted and thought of 'in his utmost shame and chagrin.' Toward the end of his life, he campaigned for the stone to be returned to the chapel but found little support elsewhere. It led to the boathouse being called **Scott's Folly** and to Pevsner describing it as 'the most valuable of all boathouses.'

When the extent of the damage was assessed it was found that 80 per cent of the stone survived. It has been put in safe storage ready to be returned to the boathouse as and when suitable funding is available. Other follies have been less fortunate and been lost forever. To show that they are not forgotten, a small number of them are highlighted in this edition of *Foll-e*.

### King Alfred's Castle at Meanwood, Leeds

**T**unnel How Hill, between Stonegate Road and the Ring Road, is often claimed to be the highest point in Leeds. Until the 1960s, when it was developed with houses, the area was covered with woodland and was the setting for **King Alfred's Castle**, a sham ruin built in 1770 by Jeremiah Dixon (1726-82).

Dixon was a wealthy merchant who rose to be High Sheriff for the West Riding in 1758 and Fellow of the Royal Society in 1773. In 1764 he bought the Gledhow Estate and set about building his personal tribute to England's greatest monarch, supposedly using a design prepared by John Carr of York. To it he added a plaque proclaiming:



To the Memory of Alfred the Great, the pious and magnanimous, the friend of science, virtue, law and liberty. This monument Jeremiah Dixon of Allerton Gledhow caused to be erected. MDCCLXX

In 1946 one of the surrounding trees fell against the main wall of the folly and left it in a weakened condition. It was later demolished by Leeds Council in 1960.



The entrance arch at King Alfred's Castle  
Photo: Leeds Library and Information Services

### Alfred's Tower at Castle Combe, Wiltshire

**D**uring the first half of the 19th century, two further monuments to King Alfred stood at Castle Combe in Wiltshire, built by William Scrope (1772-1852) to commemorate Alfred's victory over the Danes at the Battle of Ethandune in 878 AD.

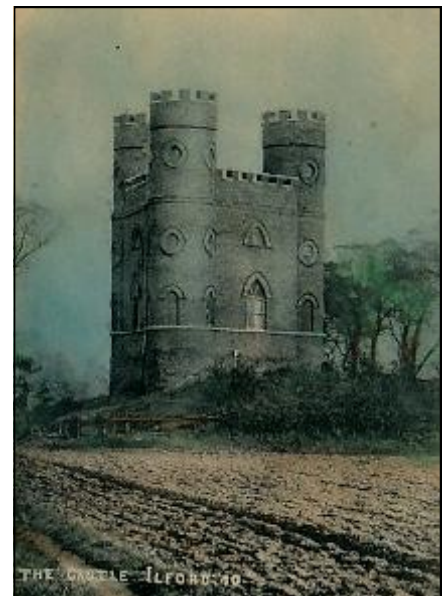
One of the monuments stood to the east of Dank's Down Wood and was a five-storey-high cylindrical tower of Cotswold stone. By 1930 it had fallen into disrepair and was demolished around 1935.

Its sister tower was square and stood at West Yatton, close to the present motor racing circuit. After World War II it was used as a store but was finally demolished in 1962 after it had become unsafe.



### Raymond's Folly at Ilford, Essex

**C**harles Raymond (1713-88) was born at Withycombe Raleigh (part of Exmouth). After making his fortune as a captain in the East India Company and setting up the Williams Deacon Bank, he retired to Gants Hill in Essex in 1754 and bought the Valentines Estate. He immediately set about updating the house (built 1696-7) and buying the adjoining Wyfield, Cranbrook and Highlands estates, where in 1765 he began work on his three-sided folly castle. His original intention was to use it as his family mausoleum, and to facilitate this he created a catacomb



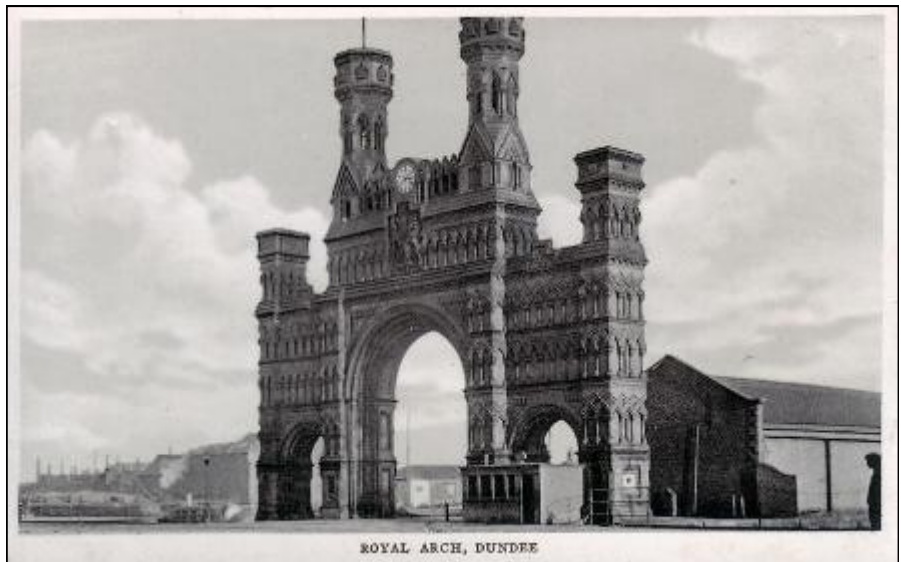
with fourteen compartments in the basement, a chapel at first floor level and a small top room where refreshments could be served. According to George Tasker's book *Ilford: Past and Present* (1901), the folly cost £420 to build and was said to have magnificent brick walls. He also reported that Raymond and the Bishop could not agree the terms of the consecration so the ceremony was never performed, causing Raymond and his wife to be buried at St. Margaret's in Barking instead.

The tower remained until 1923 when it was demolished to make way for a tennis club. By then it was known as **Cranbrook Castle** or **Raymond's Folly**, and lives on through the tennis club's logo.

### Scott's Folly at Horsmonden, Kent

Although **Scott's Folly** was demolished in the 1960s, the first edition of Barbara Jones's *Follies and Grottoes* (Constable, 1953) describes it as "two stark towers, organ pipes or silos in a rough field, pruned of every decoration except the castellations at the top. As one approaches it across the field...it is clear that the main tower is in fact wider at the top than at the bottom, exactly like an anti-aircraft shell stuck nose down into the earth at the level of the driving band. The narrower tower, joined to it, is taller, and the windows to the stairs and the two rooms that were once in the shell

Scott's Folly circa 1923  
from Walter Hutchinson's *Beautiful Britain* series



ROYAL ARCH, DUNDEE

are small and simple."

The tower was built in 1858 by Sir William Smith-Marriott in honour of Sir Walter Scott, who had dedicated the second canto of his *Marmion* to one of Marriott's relatives. It stood on a hill in Spelmonden Road and was enclosed by a small copse, although this had gone by the time that Barbara Jones saw it.

It is said that the tower used to contain most of Sir Walter's works. At one time between the wars, the writer Edward Lucas wrote about its interior, saying: "On the first floor, up the winding stairs, the ruin is more noticeable. The glass on the table is in pieces; the watercolour drawings of scenes in the novels and poems are stained; the windows are smashed; the statue of the crusader has lost his head, and the bust of Sir Walter himself has been robbed of its nose and enriched with a pencil moustache."

### Royal Arch in Dock Street, Dundee

The Royal Arch at Dundee was built to commemorate Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's visit to the city in 1844, the first visit by a ruling monarch since the 17th century. They arrived at King William IV Dock on 11 September on their way to see Lord Glenlyon and the Duke of Atholl, and returned to London through the same route on 1 October.

On both occasions the Royal Party passed through a wooden

arch that had been hurriedly built by James Leslie, the harbour engineer, and decorated with flags, bunting and garlands of flowers. It proved to be so successful that a fund was established to pay for a permanent arch using funds raised from public subscription topped up with contributions from the harbour trustees.

The city eventually launched a design competition that was won by the Edinburgh architect John Rothead (1814-78), who later designed the Wallace Monument at Stirling. His proposal was for a giant triumphal arch measuring 38 metres in width and costing somewhere around £2,500-3,000.

Work on the sandstone arch began in 1849 and ended in 1853. It was erected on the south side of Dock Street, by the entrance to King William IV Dock, and was officially known as Victoria Arch.

In a move that would be outlawed today, the arch was blown up in 1964 to make way for the slipways for the new Tay Road Bridge. Most of the stone remains were thrown into the redundant docks and packed beneath layers of hardcore and tarmac.

Additional information on some of these follies appears in back issues of *Follies* magazine, available from the Membership Secretary, including:

- King Alfred's Castle at Meanwood (see 58;11-12),
- Scrope's Folly (see 26;4 and 58;10)
- Raymond's Folly (see 26;4-5)
- Halfway Turnpike (see 78;8) and
- Chanter's Folly (sees 18;5 and 41;7).

## The Halfway Turnpike at Kintbury, Berkshire

In the seventeenth century, it was the responsibility of every parishioner to give his time to help maintain the local road network. Since the work was unpaid and few men wanted to work for free, the condition of the roads soon deteriorated to the point where they were perilous and unusable. For landowners and those who used the roads for business, the solution was to pay people to carry out the repairs and recover that investment through tolls levied on all road users. But, before this could be done, the financiers had to establish a Turnpike Trust and have it endorsed by Parliament.

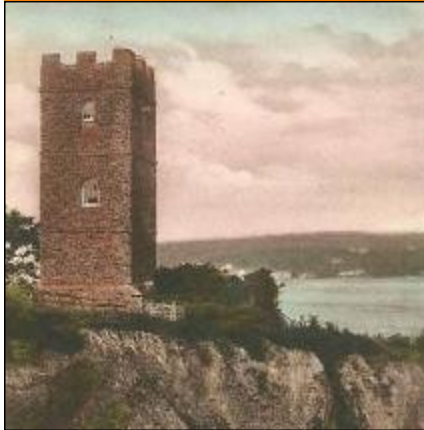


The tollhouse at Kintbury c.1930

In 1726, the Speenhamland to Marlborough Turnpike Act was passed enabling tolls to be levied on the Newbury to Marlborough section of what is now the A4 Bath Road—this was one of twelve Acts in the period 1707-56 for the Bath to London section. In the beginning the tollgate was located to the north of Kintbury, but was later moved closer to Halfway Manor. In the 1760s, a permanent tollbooth was erected in the form of a small castle and set close to the side of the road. It remained there until the 1960s when it was ironically demolished to make way for road improvements.



## Chanter's Folly at Appledore, Devon



Thomas Burnard Chanter (1797-1874) was a wealthy merchant who ran a fleet of ships out of Richmond Dock at Appledore. In 1841, in an attempt to have men ready to unload his ships as soon as they docked, he built an observation tower on the cliffs above Appledore so he could see his ships cross the Bideford Bar. According to legend, however, Chanter built his tower on the wrong side of the hill meaning that he couldn't see the bay at all from the top.

Shortly after it had been built the tower was abandoned and later converted to a small cottage. It was eventually demolished in 1952 when the council deemed it unsafe.

## Elliott's Folly at Worthing, West Sussex

At some time during the 1860s, Dr Cyrus Elliott built on his land (originally known as The Quashetts) an arch made of large flints that he had collected off the chalk hills around Worthing. Originally intended to be a screen to the town beyond, the arch stood collecting ivy until 1967 when its condition became precarious and it was demolished.

Today, the road leading to the site of the arch has been re-named Ivy Arch Road, and The Quashetts retained as a footpath between Little High Street and Broadwater Street West.



## Wetheral Tower at Wetheral, Cumbria

According to H+R *Follies*, Wetheral 'had a wonderful folly house built by the Misses Waugh in 1790, but it has now been demolished.' It is mentioned in Mannix and Whellan's *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Cumberland* (1847) and referred to as **Wetheral Tower** and built as a summerhouse 'in the gothic style, with turrets'.

David Ramshaw's recent book *Great Corby and Wetheral: An Illustrated History* (2008) takes a more detailed look at the story and says that the three Waugh sisters lived at Tullie House and used to live in the folly at weekends, taking with them a coach and horses, and a collection of servants.

Could this be it?



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