

Ranmoor Society News

September 2010

Lords and Ladies of Hallamshire

Our Next Meeting on September 21st

Peter Machin, a regular speaker at our meetings, will entertain us with another of his illustrated talks. He has previously given us *Victorian Sheffield* (last year) and *Sheffield's Little Mesters*. His September talk will cover some fascinating parts of Sheffield's manorial history.

Sheffield's high-born families dominated the

town's life and development over many centuries and their names, if not their buildings, are still evident today.

Waltheof, a Northumbrian noble, first made peace with William the Conqueror but after conspiring against the king was beheaded by him by 1075. His substantial Manor of Hallam then passed to a

wealthy Norman lord Roger de Busli and next to William de Lovetot. This man is often regarded as the city's founder, as it was he who built Sheffield Castle and the church on the site of today's cathedral.

The de Lovetot line petered out and in 1190 the Hallamshire estates passed by marriage to the Lords Furnival. They were active crusaders, and in order to finance that activity created new sub-

manors such as Ecclesall and Owlerton from which they could levy feudal dues. The last male Furnival died in 1383, and the estates passed through his wife to John Talbot the first Earl of Shrewsbury. By 1617 they had passed to one of the daughters of the deceased seventh Earl, Alethea.

She was married to Thomas Howard, the 14th Earl of Arundel, through which line the Sheffield estates descended to the Dukes of Norfolk.

Ranmoor and the Drunken Duke



The gentleman on the left was once described as *“one of the richest and smelliest men in England”, “sodden with drink”, “slovenly dressed”, “degenerate”, “vulgar in his ideas, licentious in his habits, coarse in his manners, vicious in his tastes”, “big and stout . . . destitute of grace and dignity . . . passing through life surrounded by parasites and illegitimate children”*. Of the latter he had 12, with different mistresses. He had no legitimate heirs. His first wife died less than a year after marriage, and his second wife became insane, apparently being hysterical on the church steps at their wedding. His after-dinner speeches were notorious for praising the prettiness of attendant ladies' maids

And yet, as the 11th Duke of Norfolk, he owned until quite recently much of Ranmoor. Born in 1746 and succeeding to the title in 1786, he made a big difference to our area – by disposing of it! He obtained permission from parliament to use money from land sales in Sheffield to refurbish his major property, Arundel Castle in Sussex. The

land he sold-off locally found its way into the hands of property developers, and the residential suburb of Ranmoor was not far behind.

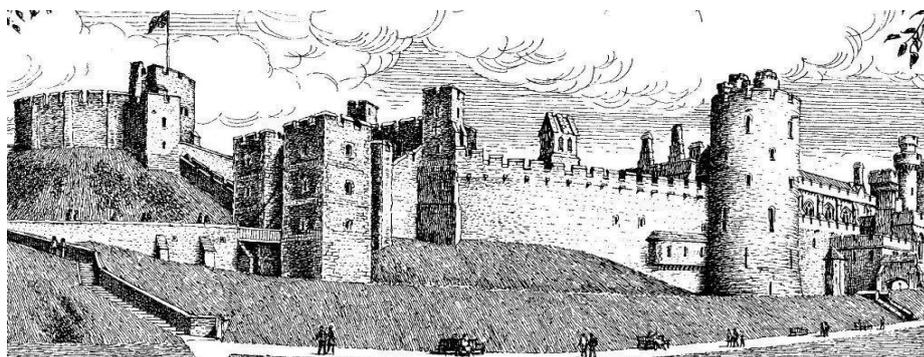
Despite his reported misbehaviors, the 11th Duke held a string of impressive titles. At different times these included Earl Marshal of England, Lord of the Treasury, Deputy Lieutenant of Sussex and of Derbyshire, Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and of the West Riding, Colonel of the West Riding and the Sussex Regiments, High Steward of Hereford, Recorder of Gloucester, and President of the Royal Society of Arts. He was also Member of Parliament for Carlisle.

His public description – “*The Drunken Duke*” – resulted from his renown for consuming vast

quantities of claret and beer and for collapsing in a stupor during drinking competitions with the Prince Regent and others.

Because he refused to wash himself or change his clothes it was only when he was insensibly drunk that his servants could carry him into a bathtub.

Surprisingly in the light of his sociably dissolute habits, he was a serious collector of books. Whilst much of 11th Duke’s building work at Arundel was short-lived, his magnificent library was (and is) greatly admired, remaining much as he built it – possibly with Ranmoor money!



Arundel Castle:

The Sussex family seat of the Dukes of Norfolk

Ranmoor Fun Day



Ranmoor Society Committee 2010

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On 11th July, the day of St John’s Fun Day, it dawned sunny and warm although it was rather gusty early on. It wouldn’t have been good for anyone in the way of this huge lime tree when it decided to crash unceremoniously through Ranmoor Grange’s perimeter wall onto Ranmoor Road. Luckily it happened before 8 o’clock in the morning, so there were mercifully few people about.