

# THE HOUSE AND GARDENS

## THE HOUSE

It may seem odd to compare Wentworth Woodhouse with the house described in *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964); but as I stand on the lawn in front of the East Front of Wentworth Woodhouse, I am reminded of the poor tailor Tevye, who wanted to build something which would show the world, or at least his neighbours, that he was wealthy.

I'd build a big tall house with rooms by the dozen,  
Right in the middle of the town.  
I'd fill my yard with chicks and turkeys and geese and ducks  
For the town to see and hear.  
(Insert) Squawking just as noisily as they can. (End Insert)  
With each loud "cheep" "swaqwk" "honk" "quack"  
Would land like a trumpet on the ear,  
As if to say "Here lives a wealthy man."

Ostensibly, though, Wentworth Woodhouse is intended to convey a Christian message: *Mea Gloria Fides* - 'my Faith is my Glory'; and the owners between 1750 and 1950 were known for their philanthropy, thereby demonstrating their Faith by good works; but, nevertheless, my impression is of a family which enjoyed enormous wealth and power.

This great House, (by which I meant the East Front) is the biggest in England, perhaps in Europe, in terms of width, at 616 feet. When it was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was a perfect expression of state of the art Palladian architecture, imported from Vicenza in Italy, and decked out with statues of Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, despite the undoubted Christianity of the owners (between 1750 and 1952 the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquises of Rockingham and the 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Earls Fitzwilliam). That wealth, which was originally based on agriculture, eventually embraced a considerable industrial empire, with dozens of coalmines and hundreds if not thousands of miners employed in them (see Chapter 11). The Earls Fitzwilliam owned around 12,000 acres in South Yorkshire alone, and some 50,000 in Ireland. They also owned the entirety of Wentworth village (according to *Drake's Directory of*

*Rotherham* of 1862). The 7<sup>th</sup> Earl (1902-1943) was rich enough to finance an expedition to Cocos Island in the Pacific in 1904, and to set up a company to manufacture the Sheffield Simplex Motor Car a few years later.

There are in fact two houses, built back to back, and now known as the East Front (which is Palladian) and the West Front, which is Baroque. The latter was built in the early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and therefore, strictly speaking, preceded the period of our study; but it is mentioned in a newspaper report given to me in 2018 by David Allott, which would seem to provide evidence that not everyone agree that the West Front was a gem of architecture. It also provides evidence that the destruction of old documents, which Catherine Bailey alleges took place at Wentworth Woodhouse in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was not the first occasion on which the owners of Wentworth Woodhouse decided to go in for a spot of 'clutter busting'. The *Sheffield Independent* for Saturday 11 January 1862 contained the following report:

#### **WILFUL DESTRUCTION OF MSS<sup>1</sup> AT WENTWORTH HOUSE, IN 1728**

The following occurs in a memoir of William Oldys, Esq., Norroy Kjnng-at-Arms, in *Notes and Queries*:— "It was during Oldys's visit to Wentworth House that he became an eye-witness to the destruction of the collections of the antiquary Richard Gascoyne, consisting of seven great chests of manuscripts. Of this remorseless act of vandalism our worthy antiquary has left on record some severe strictures. Here is his account of this literary holocaust— Richard Gascoyne, Esq., was of kin to the Wentworth family, which he highly honoured by the elaborate genealogies he drew thereof, and improved abundance of other pedigrees, in most of our ancient historians, and particularly our topographical writers and antiquaries in personal history, as Brooke, Vincent, Dugdale, and many others, out of his vast and most valuable collection of deeds, evidences, and ancient records, etc, which after his death, about the time of the Restoration, when he was about eighty years of age, fell with great part of his library to the possession of William, the son of Thomas, the first Earl of Strafford, who preserved the books in his library at Wentworth Woodhouse, in Yorkshire, and the said [manuscripts]. in the stone tower there, among the family writings, where they continued safe and untouched till 1728, when Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, newly made, or about to be made, Earl of Malton,<sup>2</sup> and to whose father the said William, Earl of Strafford, left his estate, burnt them all wilfully in one morning. I saw the lamentable fire feed upon six or seven great chests full of the said deeds, some of them as old as the Conquest, and even the ignorant servants repining at the mischievous and destructive obedience they were compelled to. There

---

<sup>1</sup> Manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> Later made 1st Marquis of Rockingham.

was nobody present who could venture to speak but myself, but the infatuation was insuperable. I urged that Mr. Bodsworth had also spent his life in making such collections, and they are preserved to this day with reverence to their collector, and that it was out of such that Sir Wm. Dugdale collected the work which had done so much honour to the Peerage. I did prevail to the preservation of some few old rolls and publick grants and charters, a few extracts of escheats, and a few original letters of some eminent persons, and pedigrees of others, but not the hundredth part of much better things that were destroyed. The external motive for this destruction seemed to be some fear infused by his attorney, Sam Buck, of Rotheram (since a justice of peace), a man who could not read one of those records any more than his lordship, that something or other might be found out one time or other by somebody or other—the descendants perhaps of the late Earl Strafford, who had been at war with him for the said estate—which might shake his title and change its owner. Though it was thought he had no stronger motive for it than his impatience to pull down the old tower in which they were repositied, to make way for his undertaker, Ralph Tunncliffe, to pile up that monstrous and ostentatious heap of a house, which is so unproportionable to the body and soul of the possessor, so these antiquities, as useless lumber, were destroyed too."

Our next extract tells us something about the power of the Rockingham and Fitzwilliam families, which was based on their wealth, but also included political and military power. The classic case is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquis of Rockingham, at one time Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire, who sat in the House of Lords, controlled around 67 seats in the House of Commons in 1767, and was twice Prime Minister. As Lord Lieutenant, Rockingham also had control of the local militia.<sup>3</sup> The importance of the post was exemplified in an advert which appeared in the *Leeds Intelligencer* for Tuesday 9 March 1756 - the year which saw the outbreak of the Seven Years War of 1756-63:

1 March, 1756.

WHEREAS General Napier's Regiment of foot is ordered into the West Riding of the County of York, to recruit the same; and will be at LEEDES (their Head Quarters) on or about Wednesday se'night, and several Recruiting Officers will be sent to most of the principal Towns in the said County.

---

<sup>3</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquis of Rockingham is known to have played a part in organising the defence of Hull against the privateer John Paul Jones, and to have subsidised the Wicklow Volunteers, during the American War of Independence. The responsibility of the lords-lieutenant over the local militia was not removed until 1871, but they continued to have the right to call upon able-bodied men to fight when needed until 1921.

These are to inform such Persons who not did choose to enlist for Life that in the said Regiment they may do it for three Years, or during the Continuance of the War: And that to Men 5 Foot 8 Inches high, or upwards, in their Shoes, there will be given by the recruiting Officers at the Time of their enlisting, the Sum of *Two Guineas*, and *Half a Guinea* more when they shall join the Regiment. To Men from five Foot five Inches without their Shoes, to five Foot eight Inches with their Shoes, will be given a Guinea and Half, and Half a Guinea more when they come to the Regiment. And as a further Encouragement the Marquis of *Rockingham* proposes to give *One Guinea* to every *Yorkshire* Man (over and above what will be given by the recruiting Officers) who shall enlist into the said Regiment within the Space of one Month from the Date hereof, to be paid at Wentworth House, or by GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq. at *York*; JAMES PRESTON, Esq. at *Malton*; or by Lieutenant-Colonel Buck, of the said Regiment, to be quarter'd at *Leedes*; or by JEREMIAH DIXON, of the same Place.

And that the Persons who shall enter into the Service in Consequence of this Encouragement may be the better known, his Lordship has ordered a List of them to be kept that they may meet with the Favour they shall deserve on their Discharge from the Service, at their Return home.

N B A *proper Person* will attend at Wentworth-House *every* Tuesday and Thursday for the space of one Mouth, to receive such Persons as shall be able and willing to enlist into the said Regiment.

The military connection was again on display in 1867, when the *Sheffield Independent* for Tuesday 5 November 1867 carried the following report:<sup>4</sup>

#### **PRESENTATION OF PRIZES TO THE SHEFFIELD ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS BY THE COUNTESS FITZWILLIAM**

Last evening, the Countess Fitzwilliam presented a number of money and other prizes which have been won by members of our Artillery corps during this and the previous year. The presentation took place in the Music Hall, Surrey Street, which was decorated with flags, and at the back of the platform were several trophies made with rifles and bayonets, the whole having a very military and appropriate effect. In the centre of the platform was a table on which were placed a number of silver cups, amongst which were those constituting the Duke of Wellington's Prize, won at Shoeburyness in 1866, and the Queen's Prize, and the Lords' and Commons' Prize, won at Shoeburyness this year. There were also the Brigade Challenge Cup and several others which had been presented to the corps for competition. The members of the

---

<sup>4</sup> See also the report about the Yeomanry in the *Sheffield Independent* for Wednesday 28 December 1881.

No. 1 Battery formed a guard of honour, and were stationed at the entrance to the hall and on the staircase. Each side of the hall was occupied by members of other batteries, and as the Countess Fitzwilliam was led on to the platform by Lieut. Colonel Creswick, these gave a military salute. The Countess was accompanied by Earl Fitzwilliam and Lady Mary Fitzwilliam, and on the platform were Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Creswick, and Mrs. Shepherd. The proceedings were commenced by Colonel CRESWICK....

Earl FITZWILLIAM then said: I thank you on Lady Fitzwilliam's behalf for the opportunity you have given her of coming among you, and presenting to each successful man the various prizes which by your skill you have won. It is now, as you are well aware, some years since the Volunteer movement had its origin, but I am happy to say that generally throughout the country, and more especially in this county, the movement is in the ascendant. We as Englishmen and Englishwomen are proud of the citizen force which has risen up to guard our homes;<sup>5</sup> and we have to thank you for the trouble which you take in perfecting yourselves in the discipline which is necessary to make you efficient soldiers. These prizes are the marks in various ways of your respective efficiency. Some are prizes won from one another in your own corps, whilst others were won in a more extended competition— I mean won in a national competition. I congratulate you on the success which has enabled you to win so many, and it will be a great gratification to Lady Fitzwilliam to place in your hands this evening the various prizes to which you are entitled.

I do not know that I need say anything more than, holding the prominent position I do in this county, to thank you for the soldier-like appearance you present. You cannot but be aware that I must take a deep interest in the efficiency not only of my Volunteer friends at Sheffield but also in the efficiency of the members of all the corps with which I am brought into connection. And as I remarked just now, I am happy to say that in the county over which I preside the Volunteer movement is greatly on the increase.

Lady FITZWILLIAM then proceeded to award the prizes to the successful competitors.

There are several stories about Wentworth Woodhouse which emphasize its size. In 1910 an American visitor is said to have remarked:

---

<sup>5</sup> The late 1850s and 1860s were a time of renewed Anglo-French hostility (following the successful alliance which had fought the Crimean War with Imperial Russia in the 1850s); and there were serious fears that Napoleon III of France might attempt an invasion of these Islands. This was what led to the building or reinforcement of many of the Martello towers on the South coast. It also led to the formation of the **Volunteer Force in 1859** - a citizen army which later merged with the Territorial Army.

It is a place so huge that guests find it of advantage to bring with them treble the ordinary number of hats, which are kept at the various entrances, so as to save themselves the trouble of walking about a quarter of a mile from one entrance in order to get the hat which they may have left at another.<sup>6</sup>

Another story, related by a national newspaper in 1931, concerned the basement and vaults. Supposedly, one of the Countesses Fitzwilliam had advised her husband that it was his duty to know every part of his house in great detail. He had confessed that he knew very little about the geography of the nether regions, and undertook a voyage of exploration, by way of penance:

For what seemed to him like a very long time he groped his way along passages and through cellars without encountering any human being. At last he came across a smallish boy and asked him what might be his function in the establishment. "Me?" said the boy, "Why, I do all the work as is done in this place, don't I?" Upon that, Lord Fitzwilliam decided that he had, as it were, discovered the mainspring of his household, and retired to the upper regions.<sup>7</sup>

In 1937 the 'Court and Society' column of another national newspaper informed its readers that:

Nervous guests are reputed to have tried the experiment of having a paper trail along passages to guide them back to their rooms; and another tale is that, during Doncaster week, when the host and hostess always entertain a large party, a manservant decided to test the distance covered while performing his duties, and his four days' work registered over fifty miles on a pedometer.<sup>8</sup>

The lords of Wentworth had a reputation for philanthropy, especially towards their own employees. This is demonstrated by the giving of presents on St Thomas's Day, 20 December 1851, as reported in the *Sheffield Independent* for 3 January 1852 but the list of beneficiaries provides us with a wider picture of the numbers employed on the estate as a whole, and the variety of occupations pursued by Fitzwilliam's workers:

## TWELVE HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS AT WENTWORTH WOODHOUSE

---

<sup>6</sup> *Northampton Mercury*, 16 September 1910.

<sup>7</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, 10 December 1931.

<sup>8</sup> *The Observer*, 12 September 1937.

St. Thomas' Day being on Sunday, Earl Fitzwilliam's munificent donation of a piece of beef and sixpence to each of his workmen was given on Saturday, the 20th ult., by Mr. Charles Hague, at Wentworth Woodhouse. The following is a list of the number of persons in each department, namely:— Joiners, five; shoeing smiths, 2; saddlers, 2; plumbers, 2; masons, slaters, labourers, excavators, and quarrymen, 36; carpenters, smiths, painters, sawyers, cooper, and labourers, 24; kitchen and botanic gardens labourers, &c., 40; menagerie keepers, 6; agricultural labourers, &c, 43; woodmen, 20; Hooper farm labourers, 4; gamekeepers' assistants, 5; park keepers, 2; grooms' helpers, 16; Elsecar middle colliery, 112; Elsecar high colliery, 110; Elsecar low colliery, 132; Park Gate colliery, 155; Stubbin colliery, 66; Strafford main colliery, 66; Elsecar works and railroad, 74 ; Tankersley ironstone ground 248; Sheffield coal yard, 4; park and other gate-keepers 12 ; tailors who make charity clothes, 3; almspeople in Barrow Hospital, 12; millers, 2; chimneysweepers, 3; sundry persons, 23; total 1241. The weight of the beef was 581 stones, which gives an average of rather more than 6lbs. to each person.

In the same vein, there is an account of the foundation of a Coal and Clothing Club in the *Sheffield Independent* for Monday 1 January 1894

#### WENTWORTH CHARITY TRUSTEES AND THE POOR

Several months back it was decided to start a Coal and Clothing Club amongst the poor people of Wentworth. A largely-attended meeting was held, from which a committee was appointed, and it was decided to ask the trustees of the Wentworth Charities for an annual subscription... This was allowed upon certain conditions. Membership was limited to widows of the township, the inmates of the Almshouses, and deserving and necessitous residents of the township.... The contribution is not less than 3d. per week, and at the present time there are upwards of 50 members... During the past year the charity trustees have given them a grant amounting to £40, out of which each member receives a bonus of 7s., which, with the contributions of 13s. for the year, amounts to 20s. each. During the past week each member has received 12s. worth of coal. In addition to this the charity trustees have given 12 poor people, not members of the club, 12s. worth of coal; also, 20 pairs of blankets have been distributed to poor people not members of the club, through the kindness of Earl Fitzwilliam each inmate of the Almshouses received 5lb. of beef, in addition to a dinner given to them in the Barrow School on Christmas Day.

Wentworth Woodhouse was built on the grand scale; and one reason for this was so that it could accommodate a large number of guests, from all walks of life.

Naturally, the newspapers always carried accounts of visits paid by important dignitaries, and they really 'went to town' when the guests included members of the royal family, most notably in 1912, when the visitors included the King and Queen, and coincided with the most terrible mining disaster of the age.<sup>9</sup>

The arrangements for the visit were set out in the *Leeds Mercury* for Friday 5 July 1912

**KING AND QUEEN IN YORKSHIRE.  
TIMETABLE FOR THE ROYAL VISIT.  
WHEN AND WHERE TO SEE THEIR MAJESTIES.**

With the rapid approach of the date when their Majesties the King and Queen are to begin their prolonged visit to Yorkshire, the keenest interest is being displayed throughout West and South Yorkshire in the details of the Royal programme. What their Majesties will see and the places they will visit are now well known to all readers of the "Leeds Mercury," but official information for the general public has not been very full of details. We have, therefore, compiled the following time-table, which believe will be of the greatest value to those who are anxious to catch a glimpse of the Royal motorists, though the times may be slightly altered.

**MONDAY, JULY 8<sup>th</sup>  
ARRIVAL AT DONCASTER**

1p.m.—Their Majesties arrive at Doncaster station and are received by the Mayor and Corporation. Proceed via Station Road, St. Sepulchre Gate. By road, Conisborough.

4.30 —Tea at Conisborough Castle with the Earl and Countess of Yarborough.

5.00—Leave Conisborough Castle. Pass through Denaby to Wentworth.

5.30—Arrive at Wentworth Woodhouse and inspect National Reserve.

---

<sup>9</sup> See also the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Wednesday 17 November 1875 (HRH the Princess Mary and the Duke of Teck); the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 14 June 1886 (on the occasion of the Elsecar Exhibition); the *Barnsley Chronicle*, Saturday 27 June 1891 (the Prince & Princess of Wales); the *Sheffield Evening Telegraph* for Saturday 27 October 1906 (H.R.H. Princess Christian of Schleswig Holstein, with H.R.H. Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein); *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 12 July 1912 (King George V and Queen Mary). There are photos of the royal visits in 1886, 1891 and 1912 in Young, BHLV 2010, pp 47-9. The Prince of Wales had visited in 1789, when Fitzwilliam held a grand ball, attended by Francis Hurt Sitwell of Renishaw Hall: see Desmond Seward, *Renishaw Hall* (2015) p 50.



**TUESDAY, JULY 9<sup>TH</sup>**  
**VISITS TO COLLIERIES**

10.15.—Leave Wentworth by motor-car for main thoroughfare, Effingham Square, College-street, Doncastergate, Clifton Park, to Dalton for Silverwood Colliery.

11.0.—Inspect Silverwood and proceed, via Swinton, Mexborough, and Barnbrugh, Hickleton. Lunch at Hickleton Hall with Lord and Lady Halifax.

2.30—Leave Hickleton Hall and proceed through Goldthorpe, Bolton-le-Dearue, Wath-upon-Dearne, to Elsecar.

4.30—Leave and return to Wentworth Wood house. In connection with this part of the visit times given are only approximate, detailed times have not been finally fixed.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**WEST RIDING MOTOR TOUR**

10.30.—Leave Wentworth Woodhouse for Barnsley.

10.55. — Arrive at Messrs. Rylands Glass Bottle Works for tour of inspection.

11.20.—Leave Messrs. Bylands works and proceed past Kendray Hospital, by way of Measbro' Dyke, Doncaster Road, Cheapside, Queen Street.

11.25 (approximately). — Arrive at bottom of Market-hill and halt to receive the Mayor and Corporation.

Proceed by way of Market-hill, Church Street, Eldon Street North, to the Wakefield Road. Travel via Newmillerdam and Sandal.

11.45. — Arrive at Wakefield. Proceed, via Ings Road, Messrs. Cradock's Wire Rope Works in Denby Dale Road.

12.15. —Leave Messrs. Cradock's works and proceed, via Ings Road and Calder Vale Road, Messrs K. Green and Sons Works and the Seamless Boat Company's Works.

1.15 - Leave these works and proceed to Nostell Priory.

1 30—Lunch at Nostell Priory with Lord and Lady St. Oswald.

Etc etc

What the organisers and the journalists involved could not know, on 5 July, was that the entire event would be affected, by the terrible mining disaster which took place at Cadeby Main pit on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1912, in which 91 men died. This caused the royal party to revise their plans, radically. As the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* Wednesday for 10 July 1912 reported:

**THE ROYAL VISIT TO YORKSHIRE**  
**SHADOW OF A GREAT DISASTER**  
**VISITS TO COLLIERIES**

## THEIR MAJESTIES IN A MINER'S: COTTAGE THE KING DOWN A PIT.

A day of rejoicing was turned into day of mourning. It was the miners' day of the Royal week in Yorkshire. In the saddest of all senses it was indeed miners' day, and the shadow of the great tragedy at the Cadeby Colliery at the dawn of one of the brightest and sunniest of summer days hung like a black cloud over the movements of the King and Queen, and chastened the ardour of the thousands of people who turned out to see their Majesties. Little thought had the King and Queen they passed in sight of the pit-head gear, in driving through Mexborough on Tuesday, that within a few hours, the pit was the tomb of many brave fellows. It is this close relationship of the King and his Consort to the terrible tragedy that gives the personal touch of sympathy so feelingly expressed in the telegram authorised by them to be sent on learning of the awful event:—

The King and Queen are shocked to hear of the terrible accident at your colliery, and perhaps the fact that their Majesties were near to the scene in the midst of so much rejoicing, when they visited Conisborough yesterday, brings home to them still more the sorrow and sadness which now prevail amongst you.

I am desired to express their Majesties' sympathy with the families of those who have perished, and with the sufferers in this grievous calamity.

The sorrow that is felt alike by their Majesties and their subjects is deepened by the pathetic coincidence that the disaster occurred on the very day that had been set apart for the King and Queen to come into intimate contact with the life and work of the West Riding miners, and for His Majesty to descend a pit.

It was thought at one time yesterday that in the painful circumstances the King might abandon his intention to descend the pit Elaeear, and even when the Royal party arrived at the colliery there was still some doubt on the point. It is understood that the decision was left entirely to His Majesty, who, after consultation with experts, determined, with characteristic courage, not to forego this part of the programme. Accordingly he went down the mine, having as companions the Archbishop of York, Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Stamfordham, Lord Charles Beresford, and other members of the Wentworth house party. They walked some hundreds of yards along the workings, and His Majesty initiated himself into the craft of coal-mining by taking a pick and hacking away the coal face. With no concern for his clothes—he was wearing light grey suit - His Majesty,

like his fellow-explorers, discarded overalls, and it was noticeable that upon his reappearance he bore less trace of the subterranean dust than any other member of the party.

Earlier in the day their Majesties had made somewhat prolonged examination the surface works of the Silverwood Pit, near Rotherham, Queen Mary accomplishing the greater part of her journey to the different sections seated on a railway plate-layer's trolley, propelled by half-a-dozen workmen. This was after leaving Rotherham, where, in Clifton Park, they had been acclaimed by a crowd estimated at from 40,000 to 60,000, including 8,000 school children. A pathetic incident here was the appearance upon the scene of a lad who, having lost both his legs as the result of serious illness, was recently presented by the King with a pair of artificial limbs. The little lad nervously ambling forward, was spoken to with great kindness by both the King and Queen.

Another noteworthy event was a surprise visit a miner's cottage in the model mining village of Brodsworth. Without any pre-arrangement the King's motor car pulled at the cottage, and their Majesties, stepping out, spoke to the good lady of the house, who was in the garden with her baby. Though the perturbation of the housewife at such an unexpected honour may be imagined, she readily yielded to her visitors' desire to enter her abode. The King asked her questions about her husband's wages, the rent for her cottage, and similar matters, and the Queen obtained Mrs. Brown's permission to see the bedrooms.

It was an interesting well as instructive day; still, the shadow of a great calamity rested over it all. In the evening the King and Queen paid a visit to the stricken village of Denaby, and offered in person their sympathy with the bereaved.

At the very end of the Royal Visit, the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* for Saturday 13 July 1912 reported that:

Earl Fitzwilliam complimented the police on the excellent manner in which the menu had been carried out. He said, "I laid myself out to show their Majesties three million people, and I think I have done it," adding, with a smile, "The only casualty of the tour was one chicken, killed by a motorcar(?)".

On all hands the visit to Yorkshire is spoken of as having been one of extraordinary interest and of brilliant success. Though the colliery disaster at Cadeby lay heavily on all(?) after the first day, this dramatic tragedy was in itself to render closer still relations between Sovereign and the people. Everybody with whom I have talked was impressed and delighted by the

friendliness, utterly devoid of intrusive familiarity, which their Majesties displayed. Casting aside all Royalty, they have mingled with the common people, watching them at work, chatting with them freely and naturally, visiting here a cottage, there a lonely farmhouse, and seeing for themselves with discerning eyes the conditions under which their industrial and industrious subjects in the North live and labour. The most striking feature of the visit was enthusiasm of the mining population. It is unlikely that the miners of Yorkshire will ever forget that the King descended a mine in their midst, and himself handled a miner's pick and shovel at the coal face.

It is often said that the famous Russian ballerina, Anna Pavlova, danced in the Marble Saloon at Wentworth Woodhouse, during the Royal Visit of 1912; but I have been unable to find evidence for this in the BNA. The Archive does, however, reveal that she sometimes gave private performances at that time, for 250 guineas a time.

Visitors to the House often came from the less exalted stations in society. There was a visit in the Summer of 1857 by the members of the Manchester Athenaeum, reported in the *Sheffield Independent* for Saturday 25 July 1857. We get a good idea of the treasures which Wentworth once housed, now long since dispersed:

The members of the Manchester Athenaeum have arranged to make an excursion trip to Wentworth House today, the noble owner having kindly given permission for them to inspect his picture galleries and collection of statuary. In the fine collection of paintings which Lord Fitzwilliam has directed to be exhibited to the excursionists, are two by Titian, a Guido, and a Paul Veronese, of rare excellence. Vandyck's chef-d'oeuvre, the Earl of Strafford giving instructions to his secretary the night before his execution, the Ecce Homo, by Annibale Carracci, two by Salvator Rosa, two by Carlo Dolce, and others of great value by Teniers, Claude, Spagnoletto, Rubens, and Panini. The paintings by English masters include Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir G. Kneller, King, Hurlston, Shackleton, Stubbs, Sir T. Lawrence, &c, &c. The statuary in this noble mansion is of itself worthy of a visit. The museum of antiquities, and the costly cabinets of ivory and tortoiseshell, with capitals of pure gold, should be examined with attention. Few residences can boast of an equal number of artistic treasures. — The house will be closed next week, as his Lordship returns to Yorkshire for the season.<sup>10</sup>

The *Sheffield Evening Telegraph* for Monday 23 March 1891 contained a report of a curious incident, involving someone who had been found inside the House itself, where he had no business to be:

---

<sup>10</sup> There was a further report about the art collection, and the Earl's wine cellars, in the *Sheffield Evening Telegraph* for Friday 7 September 1888, to make the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl and Countess.

## A CASE OF SUSPICION

Today, the Rotherham West Riding Police, before Mr. G. W. Chambers (in the chair). Mr. H. and the Rev. H. G. Jebb, a labourer named Dennis Gainer, Irving St. Platt's Common, near Barnsley, was charged with having been on the enclosed premises of Wentworth Woodhouse, the residence of Earl Fitzwilliam K.G., for an unlawful purpose.

The hall porter deposed that about 11 o'clock on Sunday night he heard someone near a door the south wing of the house, and he went make enquiry. He found the prisoner, who said had broken his leg. The prisoner was standing against a corner in a recess. He was given into the charge to Police-constable Titcombe<sup>11</sup>. He must have come through gate leading to the south wing. The leg was not broken, because the prisoner afterwards walked.

Titcombe proved seeing the prisoner concealed in the recess near the tower end of the house. When asked what he was doing the place, prisoner said he had gone there for shelter. He also stated that his leg was broken, and at first did appear injured. The place where the prisoner was found was a very difficult one to get to. He must have entered through the gateway which was unfastened. Witness received the prisoner into custody.

Major Hammond thought the story the prisoner had given was the truth. He had been on the spree, and had hurt his leg in the park. The police knew very little about him. After he had injured his leg he seemed to have gone into the recess—the first place he could get to. He (Major Hammond) did not think the prisoner intended to anything wrong. He had told the same story three times.

Mr. Chambers: You are discharged.

Prisoner: Thank you, gentlemen all.

The *Leeds Mercury* for Wednesday 12 September 1906 carried news of a party at Wentworth, at the time of the St Leger meeting:

### FORTY-FIVE GUESTS AT WENTWORTH

This year there was more than a possibility of no party coming from Wentworth, for Lord Fitzwilliam has been quite laid up in town, and has had to depute his pretty young wife (who, by the way is the niece of Lord Scarbrough) to make all the arrangements for the Doncaster party. Lady Fitzwilliam proved fully equal to the occasion, and the result was that the invited guests arrived at Wentworth, including Lord and Lady Craven, Lord Richard Nevill, Lord Kenyon, Lord Hastings, Mr. and Lady Evelyn James, and a host of others. The Fitzwilliam guests are quite unmistakable when they

---

<sup>11</sup> See chapter 3: Titcombe lived at Doric Lodge in 1893.

arrive on the course, for, like the Lonsdale carriages, every conveyance from the Wentworth Woodhouse stables is painted bright yellow and splendidly horsed. Wentworth is an enormous house, but its capacities are being taxed to the full this week, Lady Fitzwilliam has bidden forty-five guests.

Later the same year there was a ball, as reported by the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Saturday 29 December 1906:

### **BALL AT WENTWORTH WOODHOUSE. BRILLIANT GATHERING.**

The chief event in connection with the Christmas entertainments arranged by Earl and Countess William at Wentworth Woodhouse, Rotherham, was a ball, to which most of the leading families of a wide district were invited, and which was held last night. It was a brilliant gathering, the acceptances numbering fully 400. All the state apartments were requisitioned, the drawing-room being utilised for dancing. It was not until 9.45 that the company began to assemble. The park, with its snow-clad coverlet, and feebly illuminated by the moon's rays, looked exceedingly beautiful; and there was just sufficient snap about the weather to afford a reminder of the traditions the season. In the house itself the effectiveness of the scheme of decorations and of the electric installation, which were completed about a year ago, was seen to the very best advantage, and were in marked contrast to the old order of things. Radezki's band, under the conductorship of Mr. Norman Denarius, provided the dance music. Supper was served in the famous picture gallery and other rooms. The house party included the Earl and Countess of Scarborough, Mr. Mackenzie and Lady Mabel Smith etc etc Captain A. K North, and Mr. Lancelot Smith. Amongst those invited were the following [there follows a long list, including Dr & Mrs Barr of Wentworth].

The foregoing events were small, compared with the festivities held when Lord Peter (later the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl) was baptised. The *Berks and Oxon Advertiser* for Friday 17 February 1911 recorded:

### **7,000 GUESTS AT CHRISTENING**

With all the pomp and ceremony of the old days Viscount Milton, the infant heir of Earl and Countess Fitzwilliam, was christened at Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire, perhaps the most magnificent mansion in the whole of England.

Seven thousand invitations to the festivities had been issued by the parents of the long-awaited heir to the famous title and vast estates, and the

ceremony acquired added interest from the fact that it was first time for nearly a quarter of a century that a direct heir had been born to the reigning head of the family.

Outside in the great park hospitality was distributed on a lavish scale to the seven thousand guests who had been bidden to the christening. Six large marquees, lit by electricity, and attended by three hundred waiters, had been erected, and there were fireworks, football matches, and entertainments galore for the multitude of guests. Thousands of people gathered round the giant spit where an ox was roasting, and countless glasses were raised to the health of the baby heir.

Only the immediate relatives and friends of the family were present in the little private chapel, which had been decorated with white blossoms from the hot-houses. A magnificent baptismal bowl of solid silver bearing the family arms stood in front of the Communion table.

The tiny babe who was the occasion of all the festivities was carried into the chapel wearing the ancestral scarf of the Fitzwilliams. According to tradition, this scarf presented by William the Conqueror to Sir William Fitzwilliam for valour at the Battle of Hastings.

...The Rev. R.E.W. Verini, vicar of Wentworth performed the ceremony.... The baby was also present in the Whistlejacket Room to which the christening party proceeded after the ceremony. Here the Countess cut the vast christening cake. It was in four tiers, and stood four feet high, being surmounted by china cherubs and a small cradle.

One of the most picturesque ceremonies in connection with the christening was the series of presentations to the Earl and Countess and their infant son. These presentations were made in the afternoon in front of the House, in the presence of some 20,000 people.

The festivities at Wentworth on the occasion of Lord Peter's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday were reported in the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* for Monday 28 December 1931

An elaborate programme is being arranged to mark the coming-of-age of Lord Milton, the only son Lord and Lady Fitzwilliam, whose birthday is on Thursday.....There will also be a big house party, and at all the gatherings the health of Lord Milton will be drunk in beer that was brewed and placed in the cellars of Wentworth Woodhouse 21 years ago. The history of this brew is very interesting. Until 1911 it was the custom at Wentworth Woodhouse to brew their own beer. The plant was then scrapped, and a firm of brewers was asked to take it over. When Lord Milton was born his father asked them to brew 50 barrels of strong ale, and after 21 years of careful maturing the "Milton ale" is ready.

Wentworth Woodhouse must have been a good deal colder and darker before 1850 even than it is today; but we know that gas was installed at some date prior to 1872. However, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Wednesday 3 July 1872 reported on a:

### **SERIOUS EXPLOSION GAS AT WENTWORTH HOUSE TWO MEN INJURED**

Considerable alarm was caused among Earl Fitzwilliam's household yesterday afternoon, by report from the cellar in Wentworth House. The cause of the alarm was as follows: —About nine o'clock yesterday morning an escape of gas was discovered in the spacious passage from which all the cellars branch, and it was deemed advisable to send for some plumbers to find out and stop the leakage. Two plumbers residing in Wentworth, named respectively Joseph Woodward, a foreman, and Henry Greenwood, answered the summons. About twenty-five minutes past one o'clock yesterday afternoon these two men were in the cellar passage, which is of great height, and Woodward standing at the top of a ladder to investigate whence the gas escaped, but he had not been there many minutes before the explosion above referred to took place, and resounded throughout the mansion.

By the force of the explosion Woodward was thrown to the ground. His face and neck were severely scorched, and he sustained several bruises by the fall. That was the extent of the injury he experienced. From what we can learn, the man Greenwood was, at the time of the catastrophe, kneeling on the floor few yards distant from where his companion fell, notwithstanding which he received injuries of a more serious nature. He had a candle and some matches, but whether either these were lighted or not we were unable to ascertain. At any rate he was sadly scorched on the face and neck, and the hair of his head and his whiskers were completely burnt off. He was also badly scorched on the right arm and left wrist, and for a short time lay on the ground insensible, but soon recovered and was able to walk.

Both men were removed to their homes, where they were promptly attended to by Dr. Clarke, of Wentworth. The damage done to the premises was not so serious character was at first imagined, nevertheless it showed in measure that the explosion was attended with great force. For instance, the top of the steps leading from the cellar passage to the servants' hall above, some 50 or 60 yards distant from the exact place where the explosion occurred, was a heavy door of timber, which was smashed to pieces.

By the force of the concussion it would appear that the body of escaped gas returned from this door near to the place whence it emanated, where it then completely destroyed the door of the butler's pantry. It also lifted the ventilators at the top of the cellar passage, which communicate with the servants' hall, directly above it, to the extent of about a foot. Beyond what we



have described no damage to property was done. On subsequent examination it was found that the gas had escaped from a flaw, three four inches in length, in a brass pendant hanging from the main, which is supplied from his lordship's private gas works, contiguous to the house.

Electricity came along in 1904, as reported by the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Thursday 17 November 1904:<sup>12</sup>

### **IMPORTANT CHANGES AT WENTWORTH. Electric Installation**

Earl Fitzwilliam's natural bent for mechanics and his desire to bring the beautiful seat at Wentworth Woodhouse into line with modern advancement has been responsible for the introduction of electricity for lighting and motor purposes. The old has had to give way to the new, and in a few weeks a gas making plant which has done service for three or more generations will be out of use, while the old beam engine, believed to date from the time of Watt, and which is still capable of effectively driving machinery in the workshops, will be superannuated... The decision to entirely dispense with gas, and substitute on an extensive scale the newer method of illumination, was arrived at early in the present year. The scheme not only included the mansion, and the famous stables, but the chief houses on the estate.

Mr. Wingfield Bowles consulting engineer, 28, Victoria Street, London, who had superintended another important installation for the Earl, was called in to advise and to prepare the necessary specifications, plans etc., for the whole of the required works. His lordship, who throughout has manifested the greatest interest in the scheme, realised the magnitude of the undertaking, and the advantages to be derived from a plant of such a character that even a municipality entrusted with the lighting of a town would not hope to surpass.

The electricity will be generated in a central station erected on a site close the village of Wentworth, and easily accessible to the highway. This power-house is in close proximity to the private gasworks, which have done such useful service, and to the joiners' and other workshops. It is a substantial structure of stone, and when its position in regard to the house is considered it is well hidden with tall trees. From this modern generating plant which has been put down, underground mains conveying the current, radiate to the mansion, the agents' houses building offices, kennels, stables, etc., where they are connected to the wiring inside the buildings.

Remembering that Wentworth Woodhouse is the largest private house in England it is not surprising to learn that the installation required is

---

<sup>12</sup> The condition of the House in 1902, before electricity was installed, was described in BHLV (2010) p 68. The information was provided to Roy Young by Elfrida, eldest daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl Fitzwilliam

equivalent to 3,000 eight-candle power lamps. The generating plant necessary to maintain the proper proportion of these lamps has an output of 120 kilowatts; and for duplication purposes this is divided equally between two slow speed multipolar direct current dynamos, running at 130 revolutions per minute, direct coupled horizontal compound steam engines of 90 horse-power each. Steam for these sets is generated by two economic return tube boilers. In separate room a storage battery of 111 cells is arranged and by means of a switch board and a booster this can be charged and discharged through the lamps night, or when the plant is not running.

Sufficient space has been left for extensions and the whole installation laid out on the lines of a central power house. There are about five miles of underground lead-covered cables laid on the solid system in Howards patent troughing Iso about 2 ½ miles of underground armoured telephone wires connecting the outlying building with the local exchange in the mansion. [There follows a list of contractors; and a brief history of the House].

Without particularising at too great a length,<sup>13</sup> it may be mentioned that the grand saloon, a noble apartment, 60ft. square, will lit by 400 incandescent lamps. These will peep out from the half-cornice under the gallery with fine effect. Just now this apartment is not in its normal state, but conspicuous on an easel the centre is a striking portrait of the late earl, evidently painted on his yacht, the *Kathleen*. The semi-concealed lights — an idea effectively carried out elsewhere — will give refulgence that will show to greater advantage than ever before the beautiful marble work which is so abundant. In the ante-room a very ingenious plan has been pursued. The plaster-work of the main cornice is enriched with dolphins, and mouth of each will grip a glowlight... etc etc etc. The installation is nearing completion, and in a few days a part of it will be use, while the whole will be ready for Christmas.

## THE GARDENS

Joan and Mel Jones's book on the Wentworth Woodhouse Gardens makes it clear that, in their heyday (say, in the 1930s) the Gardens included many features which have now disappeared (for example, the gardeners' bothy, which had room for 14 gardeners, and a museum, with stuffed animals) or are in sore need of restoration - for example, the Camelia House - or which lie in ruins - for example, the Ice-House. It is equally clear that the Gardens were then far more extensive, since they included the whole of what is now the vibrant and busy Garden Centre. In those days, the area now occupied by the phenomenon that is the Centre included a kitchen garden (the old entrance to

---

<sup>13</sup> The reader might think that the journalist doth protest too much, at this point!

which can still be seen in Hague Lane), an Italian garden, a Japanese Garden (with duckhouses), a maze, a large motte (or mount), a bear pit, a pond, and Countess Maud's tea-house (now a photographer's studio). At one time, there were also greenhouses, glasshouses, a vinery and a menagerie (for birds and exotic animals e.g. llamas and a bear). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is known that pineapples and peaches were grown here.<sup>14</sup>

Our first newspaper entry relates to an accident which according to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Thursday 6 December 1877 had taken place in the Gardens the previous Tuesday:

### **ACCIDENT AT WENTWORTH GARDENS**

On Tuesday afternoon a serious accident happened to Thomas Ardron, aged 9 years, son of Henry Ardrom, of Wentworth. He had accompanied a farmer's labourer to the Wentworth gardens to fetch a water-barrel and, whilst playing near it the barrel fell upon him, breaking his thigh. He was carried his home, and attended by Dr. Clarke, of Wentworth, and is progressing favourably.

There was another accident nearby, reported in the *Sheffield Evening Telegraph* for Monday 9 January 1888:

### **ACCIDENT TO A BOY AT WENTWORTH.**

On Saturday morning an accident befell a lad named Walter Chapman, nine years old, son of Sam Chapman, Wentworth. The lad made his way into some farm buildings where a steam turnip pulper was working. Seeing the slices of turnip coming out of the machine he stooped down and put his hand under to catch some as they fell, when by some means his jacket sleeve was caught the machinery and his arm pulled and smashed up in the pulper. Dr. Clarke was immediately in attendance, upon examination it was found necessary to amputate the arm close to the shoulder.

Joan and Mel Jones tell us, however, that after the accident the Countess Fitzwilliam told Walter that he could have a job for life on the estate; and further that as a result "he became a respected gardener, specialising in growing vegetables, and was said to 'pick peas quicker than anyone else.'"<sup>15</sup>

A final example of an accident comes from 1893, when the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Tuesday 1 August carried this report:

---

<sup>14</sup> There are many interesting illustrations and photographs in this book, including some of the old maze and the Japanese Garden. Evidently, the two Roman soldiers (one of whom is missing most of one leg) which now stand near the duck-houses were at one time on top of the pillars which flank the gate near the maze. See photo below.

<sup>15</sup> Wentworth Goodhouse Gardens, p 45.

## POISONED BY WEED KILLER WENTWORTH

Yesterday Mr. D. Wightman, coroner, held an inquest the Rockingham Arms, Wentworth, on the body of William Shillito, 74 years of age, a labourer in the gardens belonging to Earl Fitzwilliam, of Wentworth Woodhouse. William Tothy, foreman gardener at Wentworth Woodhouse, said that about a fortnight ago some weed destroyer in a four gallon can was placed in a box inside a mushroom frame. Witness had told deceased that the stuff was poisonous and that he must not touch it or would soon put him in the churchyard. The poison was the colour of water, and had not been diluted at all. Deceased drank out of the can thinking that it was beer. The jury returned a verdict that deceased died from having inadvertently taken poison.

This incident took place only a fortnight before the suicide of John Kingstone, who had worked in the stables at Wentworth Woodhouse for many years, and who drowned himself in Betty Gill's Pond - see below Chapter 3.

There were many shows and fetes held in the Gardens, for example, the *Barnsley Chronicle* for Saturday 1 September 1883 carried a report about the

## WENTWORTH FLOWER SHOW

The third annual exhibition of flowers, fruits, &c., in connection with the Wentworth Floral, Horticultural, and Cottage Gardeners' Society was held on Monday afternoon in a marquee in a field adjoining the George and Dragon, Wentworth. The weather fortunately held fine and, although early in the afternoon the attendance was not large, the numbers were greatly increased towards evening. The centre of the tent was occupied by a magnificent collection of foliage and flowering plants from the conservatories in Wentworth Gardens and the Handsworth Nurseries.

The society is to be congratulated upon having so generous a patron as Earl Fitzwilliam, who has this year taken greater interest, if that were possible, in the welfare of the society than in previous years. The collection of plants from the Wentworth Gardens occupied more than half the centre of the tent, and included some beautiful plants, ferns, dracaenas?, coleus?, &c, Messrs Fisher, Son, and Sibray's collection was especially noticeable for its plants, tree ferns, and lilliums. Altogether the collection of decorative plants was greater than any seen so far at the various shows which have been held in the district. Besides contributions in this direction Earl Fitzwilliam exhibited a quantity of farm produce, not for competition; Mr John Cobban showed very fine tray of vegetables and a neat stand of roses; Mr F. S. Johnson showed dish

of 63 potatoes, of good size, the produce of one root; and besides these other specialities were shown.

The exhibitors were nominally divided into three classes, cottagers, amateurs, and farmers, but practically the cottagers' class absorbed the other two, only three or four in the farmers' class did not exhibit as cottagers, while in the amateur class there was only one exhibitor, and he also showed amongst the cottagers. The exhibits throughout were very commendable, though in some few instances the competition not very great.

Vegetables occupied the greater part of the space, and potatoes were quite a feature from their numbers and good qualities; peas and beans were good; and so were cabbages, turnips, parsnips, and beet; onions were not a large class, but the celery was excellent. Amongst the cut flowers roses and stocks were most noticeable, and there were also some good stands of asters and marigolds; window plants were rather a poor show. The amateurs' greenhouse plants were moderate, and did not call for special mention; but flowers, dahlias, stocks, etc., were good. A special prize for the best dish of potatoes was won by Arthur Robinson, Wm. Hague being second. There was a novel competition, in the shape of the best dish of boiled potatoes.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Earl and his Countess celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1888; and the celebrations involved a garden party reported in the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* for Monday 17 September 1888

### **MINERS AT WENTWORTH WOODHOUSE**

The miners and other workmen employed Earl Fitzwilliam, together with their wives and children, were invited to a garden party at Wentworth Woodhouse on Saturday afternoon. The guests, all told, numbered about 3,000. The park gates were thrown open to the public, and during the afternoon several thousand persons took advantage of the privilege thus accorded of taking part in the festivities connected with the celebration of Earl Countess Fitzwilliam's golden wedding. The event recalled a similar gathering of miners at his lordship's charming residence some fifteen years ago under circumstances which showed the good feeling which then existed between Lord Fitzwilliam and those in his employ, and Saturday's proceedings were no less significant testimony of the friendly relations still maintained by the noble Earl and his workmen. The weather was not so favourable might have been wished: but though the sun was hidden by threatening clouds and occasional showers fell, the affair passed off most successfully, and the visitors spent a very pleasant afternoon and evening.

During the afternoon those who had received invitations to the garden party were allowed to walk through the hall and inspect in the marble saloon

the numerous presents received Earl and Countess in commemoration of their golden wedding.

As they left hall they repaired to the charming pleasure gardens, and were afterwards provided with tea in the large marquee. The band of the Rotherham detachment of 2nd York and Lancaster Regiment enlivened proceedings playing a selection of music. The general public found plenty to occupy their time watching a well-contested cricket match between Elsecar and Low Stubbin miners and a team representing Wentworth, an equally exciting football match between Stubbin and Elsecar, and a variety of athletic sports, such as bicycle and foot racing and a tug of war. At dusk a torchlight procession entered the path from the village, with an effect which was considerably heightened when in front the hall a chorus of trained vocalists rang "Home, Sweet Home," "Auld Lang Syne," and "God Save the Queen". A pretty firework device, representing the Earl's coronet and the figures 1838-1888, was an appropriate prelude to a grand pyrotechnic display, with which a pleasant day's festivities ended.

The gardens were often thrown open to the public in aid of charity. So, for example the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Friday 19 August 1904 reported on a garden party held at the Big House in aid of the Lifeboat Saturday Fund, while a richly illustrated article in the *Telegraph* for Friday 10 September 1915 informed its readers of a fete held in aid of the Marchioness of Lansdowne's Officers Families Fund:

#### **CHARITY FETE LADY FITZWILLIAM AIDS OFFICER FAMILIES**

A glorious day did much to ensure the success of the garden party and entertainment held yesterday afternoon at Wentworth Woodhouse by the Countess Fitzwilliam in aid of the Marchioness of Lansdowne's Officers' Families Fund. At an early hour in the afternoon all the roads leading to Wentworth Woodhouse were crowded with traps and chars-a-bancs, while a little later many motor-cars were added to the steady procession of vehicles. BY three o'clock large -numbers people were gathered in the grounds, which were looking at their best beneath the golden September sunshine, while the Marble Hall, where a concert took place at 3.30, was filled to its utmost capacity some time before the entertainment began.

Countess Fitzwilliam received the visitors at the entrance to the Marble Hall, and was assisted by Miss Magdalen Talbot, who pointed out the way to the picture gallery and State rooms. Concert programmes were sold by the three elder daughters of the Countess Fitzwilliam, the ladies Elfrida, Joan, and Donatia, the same capacity being fulfilled by Miss Rosemary Scott Smith. Viscount Milton and Lady Helena Fitzwilliam, in charge of their nurse, were also present during the musical entertainment. The time previous to the

concert was beguiled for the seated guests by Mr. Norman Denare's orchestra, from London, which played numerous selections, both grave and gay, in masterly fashion.

The concert was opened and closed by the singing of the National Anthem, in which the audience was requested to join. Its items included two duets, Brahms' "Beware" and Stanford's "The Return", which were perfectly rendered by Miss Eva Rich and Mr. Lycett; clever anecdotes by Dutch Daley, well-known *raconteur*: Eva Della Alqua's "Song of Provence" exquisitely sung by Miss Eva Rich: two 'cello solos, "An Old Italian Love Song" by Sammartini and "Tarantelle" by Popper, rendered by Mr. Colin Smith with his accustomed delicacy of touch; a couple of songs, Coleridge Taylor's "Thou art risen, beloved" and Sanderson's "All joy be thine" by Mr. Lycett; and a humorous song by Mr. Heath. Skilful card manipulations were performed by Carlton. Mr. Jefferson. 13th S. Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, acted as accompanist. Among the audience one noted Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mrs. Phipps Poster, Mrs. Scott Smith, Mrs. Warde-Aldam (Frickley Hall), and Mrs. Fullerton, of Noblethorpe. Many well known Sheffield people were present.....

Out in the grounds the holders of half-crown tickets found much to delight them in the old world Blue Garden, all of whose blossoms were of this lovely colour; the Japanese garden, with its quaint arrangement of ponds and bridges; and the beautiful rose garden and interesting hot-houses. The younger generation gained much amusement from the maze and were thrilled by the gloomy bear-pit, while the sale by auction of two fine billy-goats, which took place at six o'clock, caused much laughter. Many elderly people were quite contented to bask on the velvety lawn in the mellow sunlight and listen to the admirable musical programme provided by the band of the Sheffield Volunteer Defence Corps, which, under the direction of Lieutenant Suckley, played throughout the afternoon, by permission of Major J. Hall-Dalwood. Tea in the open air also proved a great attraction.

There is no doubt that Lady Lansdowne's Fund will benefit largely from this entertainment, so splendidly organised by Countess Fitzwilliam. Every single one of the hundreds who were present at yesterday's fete might feel that while enjoying a delightful afternoon, they were also helping one of the most meritorious funds, for the Officers' Families' Fund exists to assist widows and dependents of commissioned officers who have fallen, and also wives and dependents of incapacitated officers.

## **THE MENAGERIE and the MUSEUM**

There is a very full description of the Menagerie, which once lay to the South of the Camelia House, in Joan and Mel Jones's Wentworth Woodhouse Gardens (2002). The following extracts are reproduced with their consent:

At Wentworth Woodhouse the first mention of a menagerie that we have found was in 1738 when Thomas Watson-Wentworth recorded that 'the new Menagery [was] taken in... '. In 1748 a visitor to Wentworth Woodhouse wrote that:

*Just by this [Ionic] temple is the menagery in front of the green-house [the Camellia House], containing a prodigious number of foreign birds, particularly, gold and pencil pheasants, cockatoos, Mollarca [sic] doves, etc, etc. The greenhouse is very spacious, and behind it a neat agreeable room for drinking tea'.*

The next reference we have found is for 1794 when John Burgan was paid £8 per annum for his post as pheasant keeper at the 'menagery'. Among the [19<sup>th</sup> century] records that have survived, the most comprehensive are those relating to the 1850s, which list the mammals and birds in captivity and give details of expenses for journeys to and from the ports of London, Liverpool, Hull and other places where the animals were collected.

The mammals and birds in the menagerie in the middle of the nineteenth century came from all the continents with the exception of Antarctica. Of the mammals, from South America there were llamas, and also alpacas, agoutis (small forest browsers), a tapir and a tiger cat; from Africa an African goat, mongoose rats, three species of lemur including the ring-tailed lemur and a chimpanzee; from Asia there was an Indian antelope, an axis deer, a Java hare and four Cashmere goats; from Australia, a wombat and a male and female kangaroo (the latter with a 'joey' in its pouch); and from North America a racoon and a female American bear.

The list of birds is equally impressive. First there was a large collection of European birds including pheasants, partridges and grouse; turtle doves; a capercaillie, cormorants and guillemots; a golden oriole and a godwit; seven pairs of crossbills; a night heron; a 'European butcher bird' (either a great grey or red-backed shrike); a golden eagle, a Bonelli's eagle, an eagle owl and a peregrine falcon. There was also a collection of ducks and geese at the quarry pond in the gardens including pintail, teal and widgeon, shelduck and a Brent goose. Presumably this is why there are duck houses beside the pond. Secondly there were many birds from beyond Europe.

There was also a museum with stuffed animals and birds. Between the 1830s and the 1850s Hugh Reid was paid an annual fee for 'preserving' and 'stuffing' birds and 'providing them with cages'. In 1841 H. Chapman was paid £4-5s-0d for 'mounting the Skeleton of an Antelope' and in 1843 Charles Cooper was paid £12-13s-0d for 'preparing skeletons of llama, etc'. The nineteenth century menagerie accounts also record payments for food for the animals, for example, John Addy for biscuits for the birds; Charles Cooper for meat and seeds; Ann Dawson for fish; and the Home Farm for corn. The museum and tea room at the menagerie were obviously regularly cleaned. In the early nineteenth century Elizabeth Gothard (or Goddard) and Mary Pepper both received payments for doing this job.



The following article in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for Monday 11 August 1873 contains an account a visit to Wentworth Woodhouse, when the guests viewed both the menagerie and the museum:

### **EARL FITZWILLIAM AND HIS COLLIERS**

The main business of the afternoon having been accomplished, the company were at liberty to stroll round the spacious grounds and gardens. On the beauties of these it is needless here to enlarge. Sheffield readers do not need to be told of the venerable old oaks, nor of beeches whose branches extend over a circumference of a hundred and fifty feet. Most of them have seen or heard of the eagle caged up on a mountain ash, and no doubt good many of them have heard the old raven croak, and have visited the museum under the guidance of the genial old lady who points out the ostrich, the emu, the armadillo, the orang-outang, and the chimpanzee who, "bless you, sir, was fed on port wine and biscuits, and attended to just if he had been a Christian."