

TIMELINE OF THE CAVENDISH FAMILY AND  
SOME OF THEIR PRINCIPAL PROPERTIES.



## Introduction

In 1758, writing to the 4th Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Strafford touched upon two properties that the duke had recently inherited via his wife, Charlotte. These properties, Londesborough Hall, and Chiswick House, were not minor acquisitions, but as Strafford said, “Either would be a treasure to most people, and you will be rather indifferent about them.”(1)

This was not a flippant remark, but probably, simply, the truth. Even Chatsworth, as strikingly beautiful as it is, has seen its fortunes vary through the centuries. Newly built in the 1550s, by the 1670s Chatsworth was something of a creaking antiquity, much less favoured than the Devonshires’ other major Derbyshire home—Hardwick Hall. This was just in Derbyshire, even by the 1630s the Devonshires had major properties in Leicester (built from the remnants of Leicester Abbey) and in Buckinghamshire (Latimer) along with at least one property in London. In the mid 18th century the inheritance that Strafford wrote about brought in not only Londesborough and Chiswick, but also Lismore Castle, Bolton Abbey and Burlington House. Another fortunate dynastic union in the 19th century added Compton Place and Holker Hall. Where any one of these houses might individually be considered a treasure to most people, the Cavendishes had several, and the popularity of each waxed and waned as the years rolled by. By the 19th century and with such a panoply of choice, even Chatsworth was sometimes used for as few as seven weeks in the year—whilst Londesborough Hall, perhaps the greatest house in East Yorkshire, was simply demolished in 1818.

The purpose of this document is to outline, briefly, when and how the many major properties came into Cavendish possession, and when, and how they eventually left their ownership. Initially conceived as an internal document for staff, it has been enlarged and made public so that the general public may have a starting point in placing any given house in the context of Devonshires’ long history.

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(1) Devonshire Collections, Chatsworth. CS4/1064, Earl of Strafford, to William Cavendish, 4th Duke of Devonshire, 26 September 1758

## Table of contents

Property Time Line	pp.4-5
Map of locations of properties	p.6
Notes on Properties	p.7-21
Bolton Abbey	p.7
Burlington House	pp.7-8
Chatsworth	pp.9-10
Chiswick House	pp.10-11
Compton Place	p.12
Devonshire House	p.13
Old Devonshire House and other London properties	p.14
Hardwick Hall	p.15
Holker Hall	p.16
Latimer	pp.16-17
Leicester Abbey [Cavendish House]	pp.17-18
Lismore Castle	pp.18-19
Londesborough Hall	pp.19-20
Oldcotes	p.20
A couple of others...	p.21
A note on two inheritances	p.22
List of Figures	p.23

7th century: Monastery founded at Lismore.

1143: Leicester Abbey founded.

1154: Bolton Abbey founded.

c.1180: Castle built at Lismore.

—1500—

1547: Bess of Hardwick marries Sir William Cavendish

1557: Sir William Cavendish dies.

1568: Bess marries George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury

1539: Bolton Abbey bought by the Clifford family.

1549: Lands at Chatsworth bought by Sir William Cavendish.

c.1550: First house on site of current Compton Place built by James Burton.

1552: Construction starts on new Tudor house at Chatsworth.

1585-1590: Hardwick Old Hall built.

1590-1597: Hardwick New Hall built.

1593: Oldcotes construction starts.

—1600—

1608: Bess of Hardwick dies.

1618: William Cavendish (b. 1552) 2nd son of Bess and Sir William, made 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Devonshire.

1626: William Cavendish (b.1590) becomes 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl.

1628: William Cavendish (b. 1617) becomes 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl.

1602: Lismore Castle bought by Richard Boyle from Sir Walter Raleigh.

1613: Leicester Abbey (aka Cavendish House) bought.

By 1619: Latimer in use by the 1st Earl.

1625: 'Old' Devonshire House bought by 1st Earl of Devonshire.

1639: Oldcotes sold to Roger Pierrepont.

1666: 1st Earl of Burlington buys Sir Denham's house in Piccadilly — Burlington House.

1676: 'Old' Devonshire house sold.

1682: 1st Earl of Burlington buys Jacobean house at Chiswick.

1687-1707: Chatsworth altered by 1st Duke.

1696: Berkley House bought and renamed Devonshire House.

—1700—

1684: William Cavendish (b.1641) 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Devonshire.

1694: 4th Earl of Devonshire made 1st Duke of Devonshire.

1707: William Cavendish (b.1673) becomes 2nd Duke of Devonshire.

1729: William Cavendish (b.1698) becomes 3rd Duke of Devonshire.

1755: William Cavendish (b. 1720) becomes 4th Duke of Devonshire.

1764: William Cavendish (b. 1748) becomes 5th Duke of Devonshire.

1712: Burlington House remodelled by 3rd Earl of Burlington.

1726: 3rd Earl of Burlington builds Villa next to Chiswick House.

1727-1730: Compton Place improved by Colen Campbell.

1733: Devonshire House burns down and rebuilt by William Kent.; the remnants of Leicester Abbey (Cavendish House) sold.

1758: Bolton Abbey Estate, Burlington House, Chiswick House, Lismore Castle, and Londesborough Hall inherited by the dukes of Devonshire from the 3rd Earl of Burlington via his daughter, Charlotte Boyle .

c .1760: Latimer settled on Lord George Cavendish.

1788: 5th Duke of Devonshire adds two wings to Chiswick Villa and

—1800—

1811: William George Spencer Cavendish (b.1790) becomes 6th Duke of Devonshire.

1858: William Cavendish (b.1808) becomes 7th Duke of Devonshire.

1891: Spencer Compton Cavendish (b.1833) becomes 8th Duke of Devonshire.

1908: Victor Christian William Cavendish (b.1868) becomes 9th Duke of Devonshire.

1938: Edward William Spencer Cavendish (b.1895) becomes 10th Duke of Devonshire.

1950: Andrew Robert Buxton Cavendish (b.1920) becomes 11th Duke of Devonshire.

2004: Peregrine Andrew Morny Cavendish (b.1944) becomes 12<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire.

1809: Burlington House sold to Lord George Henry August Cavendish.

1818: Londesborough Hall demolished by 6th Duke of Devonshire.  
1820s-1840s: North wing added at Chatsworth by the 6th Duke.

1828: 6th Duke purchases a house in Kemp Town, Brighton.

1858: William Cavendish, grandson of the 5th Duke's brother becomes the 7th Duke, Compton Place has been in his line of the family since 1782, and Holker Hall since 1834. Kemp Town House leased out.

1892: Chiswick House leased out as an asylum.

1908: On the death of the 8th Duke, Holker Hall bequeathed to the 9th Duke's younger brother. 9th Duke moves to Chatsworth.

1919: Devonshire House sold by 9th Duke.

1924-5: Devonshire House demolished.  
1929: Chiswick House sold to Middlesex County Council.

1947: Chatsworth gardens open to the public after WWII.

1949: Chatsworth House re-opens to the public.

1954: Compton Place let as a language school.

1959: Duke Andrew and Duchess Deborah move into Chatsworth—the first time in 20 years it has been lived in by the family. Hardwick Hall given to the nation in lieu of death duties.

—1900—

—2000—

2005-2018: Chatsworth Masterplan, a £32m undertaking to restore the fabric of the building.

Locations of the principal Devonshire properties



**Key**

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lismore Castle     | 9. Latimer           |
| 2. Holker Hall        | 10. Devonshire House |
| 3. Bolton Abbey       | 11. Burlington House |
| 4. Londesborough Hall | 12. Chiswick House.  |
| 5. Chatsworth         | 13. Compton Place    |
| 6. Hardwick Hall      |                      |
| 7. Oldcotes           |                      |
| 8. Leicester Abbey    |                      |

# Notes on the principal Devonshire properties

## Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire.

Priory founded, 1154.

Bought by the Clifford family, 1539.

Inherited, 1758.

The Priory at Bolton dates from 1154 (an earlier monastery had been based in Embsay from 1120), built on lands given by Lady Alice de Romille of Skipton Castle. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, in 1539 the priory and its estates were sold to the Clifford family, Earls of Cumberland, by Henry VIII. On the death of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Cumberland in 1643 the priory passed to the Earl's daughter Elizabeth Clifford. Elizabeth

Clifford had married Richard Boyle, the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Burlington and 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Cork in 1635. The house then passed along the Burlington line until 1758 as, with other Burlington properties, Bolton Abbey and its estate came into the possession of dukes of Devonshire through the inheritance of Charlotte Boyle. The Hall at Bolton Abbey, formed out of former monastic buildings, remains the property of the dukes of Devonshire.



Fig 1: A Derby Porcelain plate, c.1815 with a view of Bolton Abbey

## Burlington House, London.

Built 1665.

Remodelled 1712.

Inherited 1758.

Sold 1809.

Of all the great ducal houses in London - Burlington House, Devonshire House, Montague House, Lansdowne House, Londonderry House, Northumberland House and Norfolk House – Burlington House is one of only two that remain standing (Lansdowne House being the other, although much altered). The original house was begun c.1665 by Sir John Denham, the poet. Following the death of his wife (amid rumours of poison) Denham sold the house to Richard Boyle, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Burlington in 1666. Burlington completed the house with the aid of

the architect Hugh May. Boyle's great-grandson, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington employed Colen Campbell and James Gibbs to remodel the house in Palladian style, starting 1712.

The Venetian painters Sebastiano Ricci and Antonio Pellegrini were commissioned to paint decorative wall and ceiling panels, along with William Kent. A semi-circular colonnade was included to enclose the forecourt, and was much admired, but this has since been demolished. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington moved

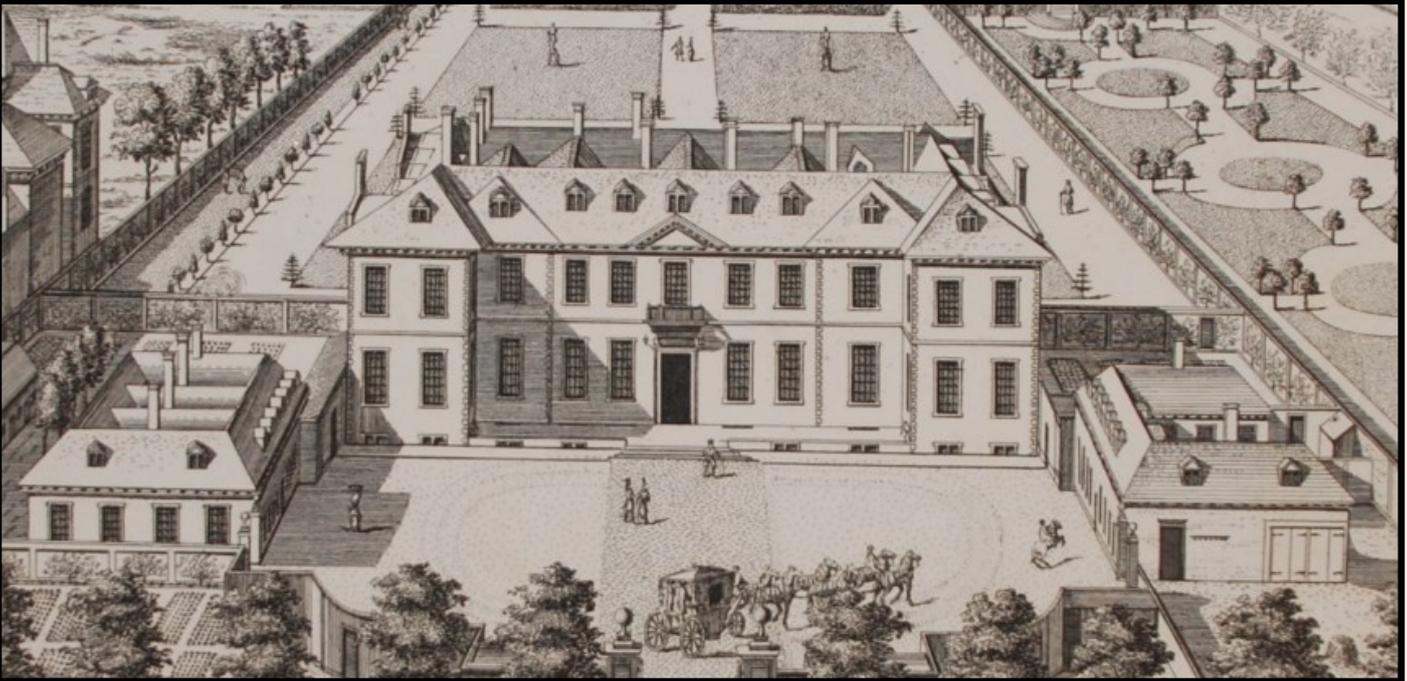


Fig 2: Detail from an 1809 print, showing Burlington House c.1710

much of his collection to Chiswick Villa in the 1730s.

Following the Devonshires' inheritance of the house in 1758, the family owned two great London residences a mere two hundred yards from each other (Devonshire House being just a little further along Piccadilly), so the house was rented out. Lord George Cavendish (the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke's younger brother) was there 1782-1785, but it was primarily rented by the Duke of Portland. Following Portland's death in 1809, the house was bought outright by the same Lord George Cavendish for £70,000, who commissioned an interior remodelling of the house by Samuel Ware. On Lord George's death (by then 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Burlington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Creation), his youngest son Charles inherited the site and he sold it in 1854 to the government for £150,000.

## Chatsworth, Derbyshire.

Bought 1549. Built 1552-c.1570.

Altered in the 1680s-1700s, 1750s and 1820s-1840s.

“In the reign of Edward the Confessor a certain Chetel, whose name is said to suggest a Norse origin, held lands, jointly with Leofnoth, a Saxon, in three neighbouring townships, Ednesoure on the west side of the Derwent and Chetesuorde and Langeleie on the east. Chetesuorde, meaning Chetel’s manor, was the name given to that portion of the tenure which in some sense was peculiarly his own.” (1)

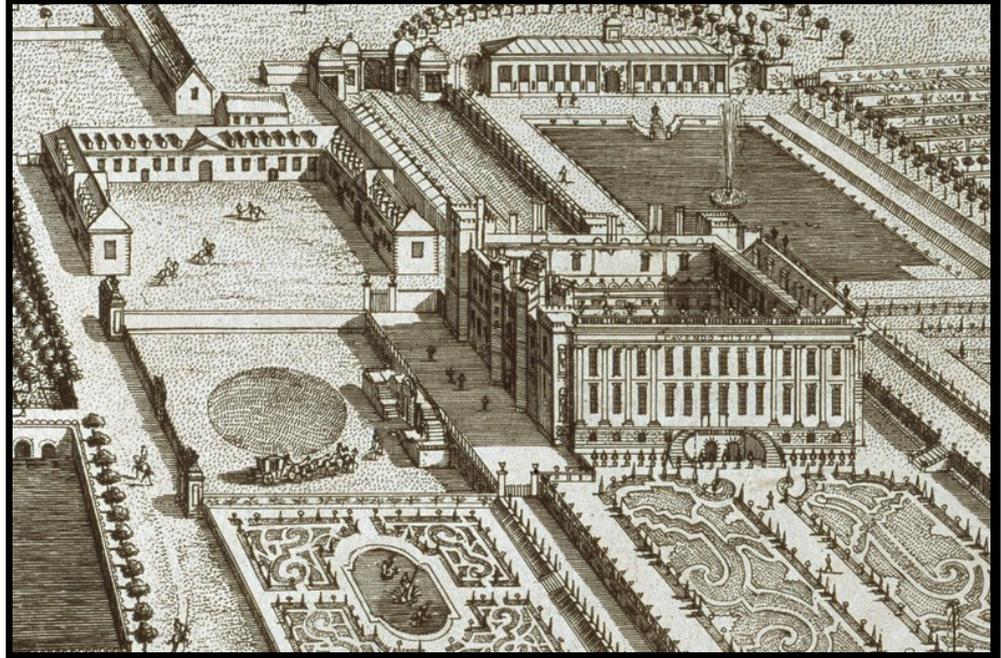


Fig 3: Detail showing Chatsworth c. 1700 from Kip and Knyff’s engraving of 1707

The name Chetesuorde evolved over time, and by the late 12th and the mid-13th centuries Chattisworth was being recorded.

In 1549, at the behest of his wife, Bess of Hardwick, Sir William Cavendish bought the land from the Leche family (relations of Bess’s) for £600. Recent work for the Chatsworth Master Plan (2005-2018) has uncovered possible traces of this earlier Tudor house in the Baroque building’s northern cellars. William and Bess started construction of their house in 1552, but William did not live to see its completion, as he died in 1557. Although Bess of Hardwick completed the building work, the house was entailed to the eldest son from her marriage to William Cavendish, “my bad son Henry” and she made Hardwick her primary residence in 1590. Henry sold the house to his younger brother William (who became the 1st Earl of Devonshire in 1618). The Elizabethan house was successively rebuilt by the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Dukes, obtaining its current form with the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke’s major additions and alterations as designed by Sir Jeffry Wyatville, which were implemented c.1820-1841. The Elizabethan gardens were swept away by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke and William Kent, and were further altered by

(1) Thompson, Francis. “A History of Chatsworth” (1949) p.21

Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown in the 1760s. From 1827 Joseph Paxton (later Sir Joseph Paxton, and architect of the 1851 Crystal Palace) added, among a variety of green and hot houses, “The Great Stove” (or Great Conservatory, for a short while the largest in existence), the rockery, the pinetum, the Emperor Fountain, and also greatly increased the number, and variety, of plants, either by purchase or by funding of plant collecting expeditions in India and America.



Fig 4: The Great Conservatory, Chatsworth, c.1890

### Chiswick House, Middlesex

Jacobean house bought in 1682.

Villa built 1726.

Inherited 1758.

Sold 1929.

A Jacobean house in Chiswick was bought by Richard Boyle, the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Burlington in November 1682. His great-grandson, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington, added a Palladian façade, but the house caught fire in 1725 and the west wing had to be demolished. In 1726 Burlington started a new ‘villa’ some 18 metres west of the old house. The reasons for building the villa are obscure. The house had no servants’ quarters or kitchens, whilst the rooms upstairs were adjoining and some lacked fireplaces, which would suggest that it was not designed as a

house to be lived in. Despite this, Burlington made Chiswick his primary London residence in 1733. As with other Burlington property, the house passed to the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire in 1758 following the death of Lady Burlington.

Chiswick was a favourite home of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke, and his duchess, Georgiana. The couple (along with Elizabeth Foster) often retreated to the house; there is a period of at least decade where the couple barely visited Chatsworth, if at all. In 1788 they demolished the old Jacobean house and added two wings to the villa built by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington. On the death of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke in 1811 the house passed to their son 'Hart' who, as at Chatsworth, made alterations and ad-



Fig 5: Lord Burlington's neo-Palladian Villa at Chiswick and the Jacobean house, by Jacques Rigaud, c.1733

ditions to the garden under the direction of Sir Joseph Paxton.

On the death of the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke, the house was left to his sister Georgiana, by then Lady Carlisle, for her lifetime; she died only seven months later so the house then passed to the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke's younger sister, Harriet. She used the house intermittently for the last 4 years of her life. The house was then rented to the Duchess of Sutherland (1863-1868); the Prince of Wales (1869-1877) and finally The Marquess of Bute, (1881-1892). From 1892-1928 it became home to an asylum, a private and expensive institution. In 1929, the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke sold the house to Middlesex County Council (who in turned leased it for 999 years to Brentford and Chiswick Urban District Council). The two wings added by the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire suffered war damage and were demolished in 1952. Chiswick House is now managed by English Heritage and the grounds are a public park.

## Compton Place, Eastbourne.

Built 1550.

Improved 1727-1730.

Inherited 1858.

Let to language school, 1954.

A Tudor house was built, on or near the site of the present house by James Burton c.1550. The house passed through various families until 1724, when it was bought by Sir Spencer Compton, Speaker of the House Commons and 3<sup>rd</sup> son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of

Northampton and later (1727) Earl of Wilmington. Wilmington added considerably to the house 1727-1730, with Colen Campbell acting as his architect.

On Wilmington's death in 1753 the house passed to his nephew James, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northampton and then successively to James' brother George, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl, and then Charles, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl and nephew of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl. The 7<sup>th</sup> Earl died in 1763 and the estate passed to his daughter, Lady Elizabeth Compton, at that point a minor. In 1782 she married Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish, 3<sup>rd</sup> son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire. The couple moved the stables and the kitchens and servants quarters were extended. They also added stucco and other embellishments to the house, so that it largely appears as it does today. Lord George's grandson, William, became 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire in 1858 and as such the house passed into the Dukes of Devonshire's possession by descent.

The house remains the property of the Duke of Devonshire, but was let to a language school in 1954 as part of the strategy to pay of the 10<sup>th</sup> Duke's death duties. It continues to be used as such.

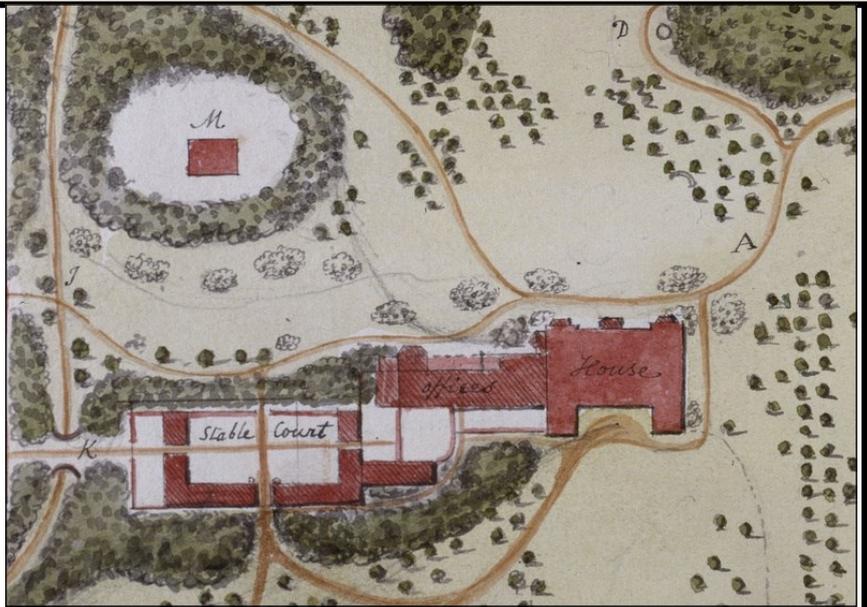


Fig 6: Detail from Humphrey Repton's Red Book for Compton Place, 1803



Fig 7: Compton place in the late 19th century.



Fig 8: Devonshire House, 1761, by Samuel Wale

### Devonshire House, London

Berkley House bought 1696.

Burns down and rebuilt 1733.

Sold 1919.

Demolished 1924-5.

In 1696 the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke bought Berkeley House in Portgual St (later called Piccadilly), renamed the house Devonshire House and spent some £2,000 on alterations by Talman – despite “4 reception rooms and 3 dining rooms this house had little convenience and Lord Harrington was encouraged to live elsewhere”. This house burnt down in

1733 and was replaced with one designed by William Kent. Thereafter it was the family’s principal home for nearly two hundred years. As a result of the impact of death duties following the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke’s death in 1908, the family eventually sold the house in 1919 for £750,000. The house was demolished 1924-1925 and the site redeveloped.



Fig 9: The Saloon, Devonshire House, 1822, by William Henry Hunt

Most information on the various London houses of the Devonshires has come from Mitchell, Roger “The Devonshires in London 1600-1740” an unpublished paper (1998) held by the Collections Department at Chatsworth.

## Old Devonshire House, and other Devonshire residences in London.

Bought 1625.

Sold 1675.

Before the purchase of Devonshire House in 1696, the Cavendishes had held various other London properties. An inventory of 1617 records a house in Aldersgate, but little else is known of it. Circa 1625 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl bought a house on Bishopsgate. This house had been built in the 1560s by Jasper Fisher, a goldsmith. The house, large, and with extensive gardens, had stretched the builder's finances to the point of ruin and so was known for a while as "Fisher's Folly". Before its purchase by the Cavendish family the house had a succession of owners, including Sir Roger Manners, the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Argyll and the Marquis of Hamilton. The house, by then known as Devonshire House, was sold in 1675

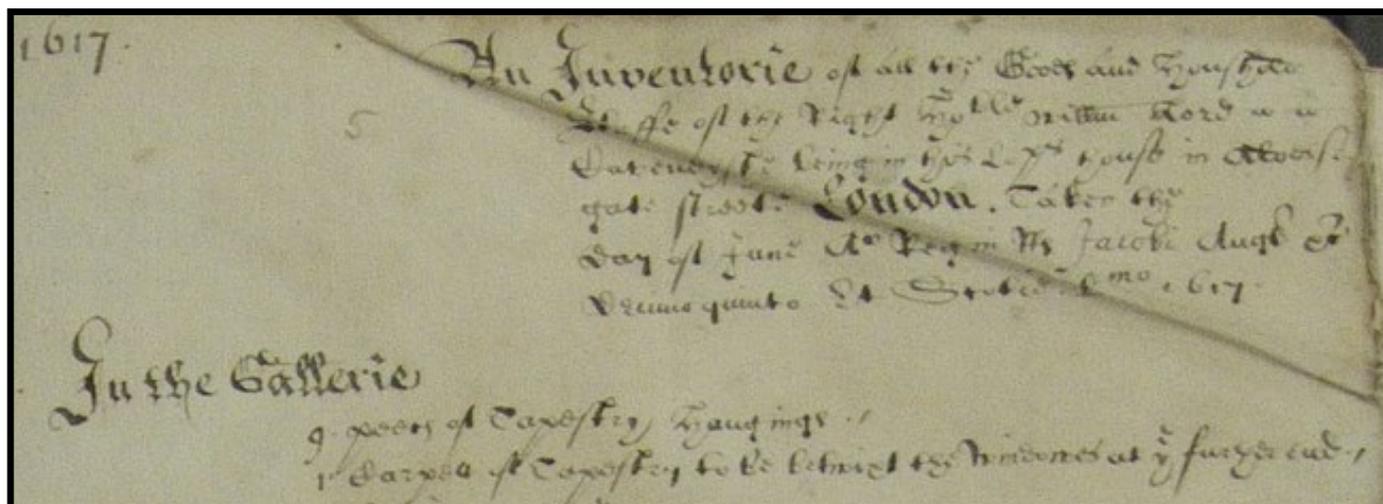


Fig 10: A snippet from the 1617 inventory of the Devonshires' early London home.

and redeveloped as Devonshire Square.

There were several other properties in London, and the Home Counties that the Devonshire occupied in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Countess Christian, mother of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl owned Roehampton, which was a centre of Royalism during Charles II's exile. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl also had his own London property in the 1660s, but this is yet to be definitively identified. In 1672 he is known to have rented Newport House. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl died at Roehampton in 1684. The 4<sup>th</sup> Earl/1<sup>st</sup> Duke appears to have lived at No. 3 St James Square which was bought for him by his father in 1675, it was sold in 1710. The 4<sup>th</sup> Earl was, by 1685, renting Montagu House in Bloomsbury, but this was destroyed by fire in 1686, costing some £40,000 as well as destroying £6,000 worth of plate. In 1690 the family rented Arlington House (later Buckingham House and, later again, Buckingham Palace). This house also suffered from a fire in 1694 (the 2<sup>nd</sup> of three at the Devonshires' London Properties, there being fires in 1686, 1694 and 1733.)

Two centuries later, after Devonshire House was sold, the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke took 2 Carlton Gardens as his London residence, buying the house in 1920 but not taking up residence before 1923, after having altered and furnished the property. In November 1950, the 10<sup>th</sup> Duke was planning to move from 85 Eaton Square to 19 Hill Street, but he died suddenly before the move could be completed.

## Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire.

Old Hall Built, 1585-1590.

New Hall Built, 1590-1599.

Given to Nation, 1959.

Although born at Hardwick c.1521, it was not until 1583 that Bess bought the property from her brother James, who had been in debt for many years. Following increasing acrimony in her marriage to her fourth husband, George Talbot, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shrewsbury, Bess made Hardwick her primary home around the same time. From 1585-1590 she replaced the exist-



Fig 11: An 19th century interpretation of Hardwick in the 17th century, by David Cox the Elder

ing Hardwick house with what is now known as Hardwick Old Hall. Following Shrewsbury's death in 1590 Bess's finances were considerably improved and she set about building the new hall at Hardwick. Finished in 1599 (ready for oc-

cupation in 1597), Hardwick Hall still stands as one of the country's finest examples of Elizabethan architecture. On Bess's death the house was bequeathed to her second and favourite son, William. The house remained the property of the dukes of Devonshire until 1959 when it was given to the nation in lieu of death duties, before being transferred to The National Trust.



Fig 12: Hardwick in the 19th century

## Holker Hall, Cartmel.

Inherited 1834.

Bequeathed 1908.

After the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Preston family bought the lands that once belonged to Cartmel Priory and built the first recorded house on the site where Holker Hall now stands. In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the house passed, by marriage, to the Lowthers. The Hall came into the possession of the Cavendish family when Sir William Lowther died unmarried in 1756 and left Holker to his first cousin, Lord George Augustus Cavendish, 2nd son of the 3rd Duke of Devonshire.

Lord George Augustus Cavendish was succeeded by his brother, Lord Frederick Cavendish. He died unmarried in 1803 and left Holker to his nephew, Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish, later (1831) created Earl of Burlington (2nd creation). On his death in 1834, Holker passed to his grandson, William Cavendish, 2nd Earl of Burlington and (1858-1891) 7th Duke of Devonshire.

Holker then passed to his eldest son, the 8th Duke of Devonshire, who in turn left Holker to his nephew, Lord Richard Cavendish, brother of Victor, who became 9th Duke of Devonshire. The 9<sup>th</sup> Duke had preferred living at Holker to Chatsworth, and on the day he finally left Holker is said to have muttered bitterly, "Holker, the best loved house in England'." (1) The house is currently the home of Hugh Cavendish, Baron Cavendish of Furness, created life peer in 1990 and grandson of Lord Richard Cavendish.

(1) Holker Hall History <http://www.holker.co.uk/holker-estate/holker-hall-history/#sthash.SvyM9TOz.dpuf>, [accessed 28 January 2014]

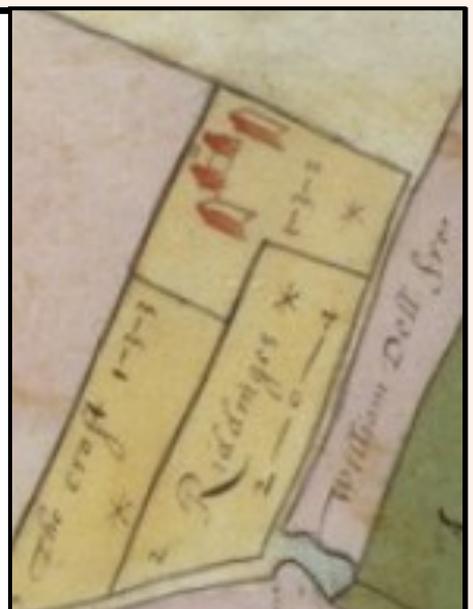
## Latimer, Buckinghamshire.

Bought: c.1619

Settled on subsidiary line: 18<sup>th</sup> century.

It is unclear when the Devonshires bought Latimer (in the 17<sup>th</sup> century sometimes referred to as Latimers), though they were paying for servants in the house by June 1619 (1). The house was probably bought to be used as a staging post on the long

Fig 13: The 1620s survey of 'Latimers,' by William Senior.



(1) See Devonshire Mss, Chatsworth, HM/29, Steward Accounts for the Earl of Devonshire, June 1619

journey between Derbyshire and London. Despite this rather utilitarian nature, the house was evidently well liked by the family during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Devonshire spent a considerable amount of time there after he returned from exile in 1645, whilst the family spent at least two Christmases at the property between 1658 and 1672. Later, the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Devonshire had his beloved mistress, the actress Mary Anne Campion, interned in Latimer church in 1703.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Latimer was settled first on James Cavendish (c.1707-1751), 3<sup>rd</sup> son of the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Devonshire. Presumably, as Lord James had no surviving sons, the house reverted to the Devonshire line before being settled on another cadet branch, that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> surviving son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire, Lord George August Henry Cavendish. Although some of the properties held by Lord George's descendants – including Holker Hall and Compton place – passed into the main line when Lord George's grandson became the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire in 1858, Latimer was instead settled on the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire's uncle - Charles Compton Cavendish, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Chesham – and did not return to Devonshire ownership.

### Leicester Abbey [Cavendish House],

#### Leicester:

Founded: 12th century

Purchased: 1613

Burned down: 1645

Sold: 1733

An abbey was founded in Leicester in the 1143 by the Robert *le Bossu*, Earl of Leicester. The abbey was surrendered in 1538 and came, in 1562, to Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon. (1) Huntgindon built a house on site using materials from the Abbey's ruins and incorporating the Abbey's former gate house. It is this house that William

Fig 14: Detail from a view of the ruins of Leicester Abbey, by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck c.1730



(1) Houses of Augustinian canons: Leicester abbey, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/leics/vol2/pp13-19> [accessed 09/09/2020]

(2) For the price of purchase, see Devonshire Mss, Chatsworth, HM/29, p.356

Cavendish, later the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Devonshire, bought in 1613 for £11,200, giving it its later name of Cavendish House.(2) Although the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl and the widowed wife of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl, Countess Christian, are known to have used the house relatively frequently, it was occupied, plundered and burned down by Royalist troops in 1645. Its fortunes did not recover following the Interregnum. In 1678 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Devonshire settled the house on his grandson Henry Cavendish (1673-1700), but following Henry's early death Cavendish House reverted to the main line of the family, was not used again, and was finally sold in 1733.

### Lismore Castle, County Waterford, Ireland.

Monastery founded 7<sup>th</sup> century.

Castle built c.1180.

Bought by Richard Boyle from Sir Walter Raleigh in 1602.

Inherited 1758.

Lismore's history dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Saint Mo Chutu mac Fínaill (anglicized as St Carthage) founded Lismore monastery. Following his invasion of Ireland In 1171, Henry II stayed at what was still a monastic centre. A castle was built shortly afterwards, but mainly remained an episcopal residence for the Bishops of Waterford. During the reformation

the monastery passed into Protestant hands and in 1589 the castle was first leased, and

then later acquired by, Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh's continual absence from the area meant he could never make the estate pay and, following his imprisonment, he sold the castle in 1602 to Richard Boyle. Boyle, another Englishman speculating on making a vast fortune in Ireland (and successfully so, shortly becoming the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Cork), restored the castle from the dilapidation it had fallen to un-



Fig 15: Lismore Castle during its refurbishment c.1854, by Francis Edmund Currey

der Raleigh and his predecessors, only for it to be sacked by Irish rebels in 1645. His son, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Cork undertook further restoration. The castle remained in the Boyle family until 1758 when it passed to the Dukes of Devonshire.

It was the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire who was responsible for most of the castle's present appearance, employing the architect William Atkinson to virtually rebuild the castle in the gothic style in the 1810s, whilst his gardener, Paxton worked on the grounds between 1850 and 1858.

The castle was briefly occupied in 1922 by the IRA. In the 1930s the house was settled on Lord Charles Cavendish, great-uncle of the present Duke. With his wife, Adele Astaire, the pair made Lismore their home in the 1930s and early 1940s. When Lord Charles died childless in 1944, the house reverted to his nephew, Andrew, later the 11<sup>th</sup> Duke. After Charles' death, Adele made regular

### Londesborough Hall, Yorkshire. (1)

Inherited 1758.

Demolished 1818.

It is presumed that the Fitzherberts, descended from Herbert, brother-in-law of King Stephen, had a manor house at Londesborough by the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

From the Fitzherberts the house passed to the Broomfleets, active Lancastrians in the War of the Roses. Ownership passed from the Broomfleets to the

Clifford family in 1469. The Cliffords, one of the major landowning families in the north of England, made little use of the house until the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, when it became one of their chief places of residence. They enlarged the estate through purchases of adjoining land and in 1589 built a new house on the site. In 1643 the house passed through marriage to the Boyles, Earls of Burlington and Cork.

The Boyles spent a great deal of time at, and money on, Londesborough, especially during the 1670s and 1680s and it appears to have been a family favourite, despite their ownership of numerous other properties. The opening of the family vault at Londesborough in 1905 showed that 12 members of the Boyle family had been buried there, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington.

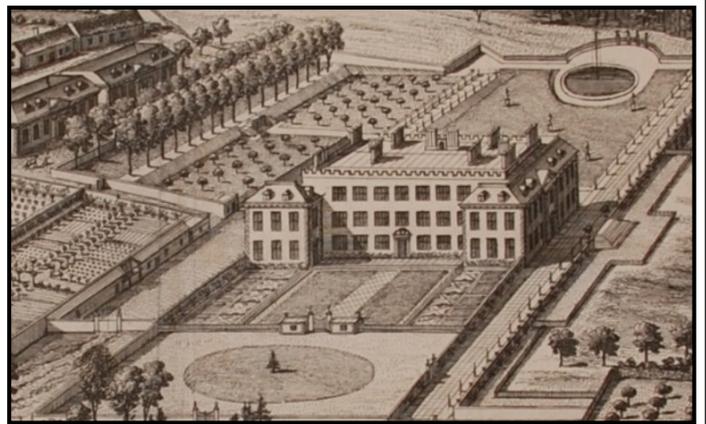


Fig 16: Detail from a Kip and Kniff engraving of Londesborough Hall, c.1700

(1) Notes largely taken from David Neave's "Londesborough: History of a East Yorkshire Estate Village" (1977)

(2) Neave, David, "Londesborough Hall" *Lost Houses* (No.4, May 1978)

The house passed to the Devonshires in 1758 but excluding a few visits by Georgiana and the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke, the family visited little in the 60 years that it was in their ownership. The 6<sup>th</sup> Duke spent no more than a few months at the house, and in 1818 ordered “what must have been the East Riding’s greatest country house” to be pulled down.(2) The Duke sold the remainder of the estate in 1845. An abundance of property, and the expense of building work at Chatsworth and Lismore, seem the likely reason for the house’s demolition.

### Oldcotes, Derbyshire.

Built 1593.

Sold 1639.

Commemorated on her tombstone in Derby Cathedral, Oldcotes was another of Bess of Hardwick’s building projects. The house was started in 1593, shortly after the Old Hall at Hardwick had been completed and work on the New Hall had begun. A letter in the Devonshire Collection Archives records this legend of the house, as told by Francis Thompson, curator of the collections 1921-1953:

“The name is a corruption of Owlcotes. According to tradition, she [Bess] built the house to score off her neighbour Sir Francis Leake, who was building a house at Sutton [Scarsdale] which she considered an attempt to outshine Hardwick. She declared that she would build as good a house ‘for owls’ as he for men, and Owlcotes was the result.”

Never as grand as Hardwick, Oldcotes was sold to Robert Pierrepont in 1639. The house is no longer standing.

### And finally, a couple of others...

As well as these major properties, the Devonshires had a number of smaller houses that were better suited to day to day living, or suited their interests or needs at the time. Both the 2nd and 8th Dukes had houses near their favourite racecourses, Odsey and Newmarket respectively, and the 6th Duke had a house in Kemp Town, Brighton. Whilst Governor General of Canada, the 9th Duke lived in the official residence, Rideau Hall, and had a summer home on Blue Sea Lake, called New Lismore House.



Fig 17: New Lismore House, Blue Sea Lake, c.1918

### Note on two major inheritances

Although the Devonshires bought and sold property as needed, there are two notable dynastic events that greatly affected the quantity of the major properties they held.

The first came in 1745 when Charlotte Boyle, the only surviving daughter of Richard Boyle, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington and 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Cork, married William Cavendish, the eldest son of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Devonshire (and himself 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire from 1755). When the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington died in 1753, he bequeathed his property to his wife, Dorothy, to be held in trust for Charlotte. Charlotte, however, died in 1754, predeceasing her mother, so on the death of Lady Burlington in 1758, Bolton Abbey, Burlington House, Chiswick House, Lismore Castle, and Londesborough Hall passed directly to Charlotte's eldest son, William, later the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire (so these properties were never the legal property of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire (who himself dies relatively young in 1764).

Many of the Burlingtons' Yorkshire estates had themselves come to the family through the inheritance of Lady Anne Clifford, daughter of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Cumberland, who had married Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Burlington in 1634 – this inheritance had included Bolton Abbey and Londesborough Hall.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Burlington's death, the earldom of Burlington became extinct (the second creation in 1831 is the one that currently resides in the Cavendish family). The Earldom of Cork, being an earlier creation than the Earldom of Burlington, passed to a descendant of the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Cork's third son.

The second fortunate dynastic union came in 1858 when the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke, a bachelor, died without issue. As a result his first cousin once removed (that is, the grandson of the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke's uncle) William Cavendish inherited the dukedom, bringing into the senior line Compton Place and Holker Hall.

### List of Figures

Cover: Detail of Chatsworth, c. 1590, from a needlework panel.

Fig 1: A Derby Porcelain plate, c.1815 with a view of Bolton Abbey

Fig 2: Knyff, Leonard and Sawyer, Richard, "Burlington House as it appeared about 1720" [WP 1421],

Fig 3: Kip, Johannes and Knyff, Leonard "Bird's eye view of Chatsworth" [WP 1325], c.1707

Fig 4: Photograph of the Great Conservatory, c.1890

Fig 5: Rigaud, Jacques, "Lord Burlington's neo-Palladian Villa at Chiswick and the Jacobean house" [WC 159], c.1733

Fig 6: Detail from Repton, Humphrey "Red Book for Compton Place", 1803

Fig 7: Photograph of Compton Place, c.1900

Fig 8: Wale, Samuel, and Green, Benjamin "Devonshire House" [WP 1419], 1761

Fig 9: Hunt, William Henry "The Saloon, Devonshire House" [WC 45], 1822

Fig 10: Detail from HM/26, Book of accounts, with inserts, 1617-1651

Fig 11: Cox, David, the elder "The Long Gallery, Hardwick" [WC 22], c.1835

Fig 12: Greatorex, [Joseph Roberts] "Photograph of Hardwick", c.1900

Fig 13: Senior, William, "Survey of Latimer", n.d [c.1625]

Fig 14: Buck, Samuel and Buck, Nathaniel "The South View of Leicester Abbey" [WP 1413], 1730

Fig 15: Currey, Francis Edmund, "Photograph of Lismore Castle renovations," c.1854

Fig 16: Kip, Johannes and Knyff, Leonard "Bird's eye view of Londesborough Hall",

Fig 17: Anonymous photographer, "New Lismore House, Blue Sea Lake, Canada" c.1918

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