

HOOPER STAND

In 1745, Thomas Watson Wentworth, Earl of Malton and Lord Lieutenant of the West Riding of Yorkshire, was enlisted by the Hanoverians to help gather intelligence regarding the Jacobite Army's whereabouts in the country. He was rewarded for his services with the rare honour of promotion in the peerage to Marquis of Rockingham.

In 1746 he commenced the building of Hooper Stand to commemorate the defeat of the Jacobites and to show his gratitude to his King, George II, for elevating him to Marquis, the first time such an honour had been bestowed.

Designed by Henry Flitcroft, Hooper Stand is situated on a ridge and commands far-reaching views all around. Although the Marquis feared that the structure may prove too costly to finish due to the increasing cost of carrying the materials higher as the building grew, it was eventually completed in 1748 and together with the East front to Wentworth Woodhouse the Needles Eye and Keppels Column, became part of the Marquis' renowned architectural legacy.

The Marquis himself composed the (following) inscription found above the doorway:

THIS PYRAMIDALL BUILDING WAS ERECTED BY HIS MAJESTYS MOST DUTIFUL SUBJECT THOMAS MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM IN GRATEFUL RESPECT TO THE PRESERVER OF OUR RELIGIOUS LAWS AND LIBERTYS KING GEORGE THE SECOND WHO, BY THE BLESSING OF GOD HAVING SUBDUED A MOST UNNATURAL REBELLION IN BRITAIN ANNO 1746 MAINTAINS THE BALANCE OF POWER AND SETTLES A JUST AND HONOURABLE PEACE IN EUROPE 1748.

Pyramidal in construction, Hooper Stand is roughly 30m (100ft) high and almost devoid of architectural ornamentation on its exterior, the true dignity of 18th century craftsmanship being preserved for the interior. The walls ascend perpendicularly for around 4.5m thereafter tapering inwards, a shape which has been interpreted by some to represent England, Ireland and Scotland preserved under one crown. The optical illusion created by this form of construction gives the impression that the building is leaning, and although the cupola is situated over the centre of the tower, it's position seems to move from side to side as the visitor's angle of approach changes!

Hooper Stand was held in great affection by the Fitzwilliams (heirs of the 2nd Marquis) and visitors to Wentworth Woodhouse would often be taken to view the sights from its lofty vantage point. In 1887 the Fitzwilliams celebrated the Golden Wedding anniversary of the 6th Earl at Hooper Stand. Again in 1931, feasting and fireworks at the Stand marked the coming of age of Viscount Milton.

Over the centuries the Stand has sustained some wear and tear, including a lightning strike in the late 1870's. Extensive repair and restoration works were undertaken by the Fitzwilliam Wentworth Amenity Trust as part of a project for the Year 2000 Millennium celebrations and the Stand subsequently opened to the public so that the 360° views can be enjoyed by those brave enough to ascend its 150 stone steps.

The Fitzwilliam Wentworth Amenity Trust is a charitable trust formed in 1979 with an endowment from the 10th Earl Fitzwilliam. The principal aim of the Trust is to promote the permanent conservation of lands and building of beauty or historic interest and generally to protect, preserve and improve the rural and visual character and amenities of the Parish of Wentworth and the adjacent areas. The Trust continues to invest in the conservation and restoration of the landscape and buildings in and around Wentworth.



KEY FACTS

BUILT: 1748 ARCHITECT: HENRY FLITCROFT HEIGHT: 30M (100ft)

Estate Office • Wentworth • Rotherham • South Yorkshire • S62 7TD
Telephone 01226 742041 • Email office@wentworthestate.co.uk • www.wentworthestate.co.uk



Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate

HERITAGE | LANDSCAPE | ECONOMY | COMMUNITY