

KING'S MANOR



A fascinating look at this former Abbot's Residence and Royal Residence, visited by many of the Tudor & Stuart Kings and Queens. King's Manor was originally built as the Abbot's Residence of St Mary's Abbey by Simon de Warwick in c.1270 and rebuilt in brick – then the latest technology – by Abbot Sever in about 1490.

St Mary's Abbey

King William Rufus founded the Abbey in 1088, to atone for the many bloody and terrible deeds he and his father had committed in York. It was rebuilt in 1270-1300 and was one of the ten wealthiest and biggest abbeys of England. It was once as big as Fountains or Westminster Abbey.

The last Abbot was accused of having a sinful relationship with his housekeeper at Overton, and was thus easily persuaded to surrender the Abbey to Henry VIII's commissioners in 1539. The Abbey was then pillaged for stone to extend King's Manor and by the citizens of York, until c.1830 when the Museum was built and the gardens were created, and destruction ceased.

St Mary's Abbey Walls

The Walls of St Mary's Abbey were erected in 1266 as, in 1262, citizens attacked the Abbey and threatened to crucify the Abbot, castrate the novices and murder the monks! This was over disputes about the Market in 'Bootham' – "the street of the Market stalls" – where the Abbot had a Market. In 1318 the Walls had battlements added due to threat of a Scots invasion. 'Queen Margaret's Postern' was nothing of sort – it was opened up c.1490 to give the Abbot better access to the city from the Abbot's Residence.

Main Door of King's Manor

The Royal Arms above the door include the motto 'Dieu et mon Droit' with 'N' in 'MON' back to front – a drunken carver?

Summary

King's Manor was a Royal Palace and headquarters of the Council of the North – a regional Royal Government – from the time of Henry VIII to the Civil War. Henry VIII stayed here with wife number five, Catherine Howard, in 1541; James VI of Scotland called on his way to become James I of England, and Charles I was here in 1642, immediately before the Civil War broke out. It ceased to be a Royal Palace with the downfall of James II in 1688, and was then high-class apartments until the early 19th century. It then housed a Girls' boarding school, and the Manor School, but from 1833 it was taken

over by the Yorkshire School for the Blind, who occupied it until York University assumed control in 1962. It is owned by the City of York, but on a very long lease to the University.

Highlights of Tour

'The Royal Flush', the garderobe probably used by Henry VIII and Catherine Howard.

The magnificent Huntingdon Rooms, the former state apartments of the Palace.

The cellars, allegedly built to house the food and drink for Henry VIII's visit, later used to soak willows for blind children to make into baskets; used in recent past for student discos, but now a computer room.

Windows in the Huntingdon Rooms are scratched with diamond rings with passionate messages by the genteel young ladies of the boarding school. Messages include "All of us say that Tom is going to run off with Lumley to Hull", "I love Miss Violet, I love Miss Greenside" and "I love Wood & Collins the best in the school"; "S Carville loves Miss Nelson best in the house by far and Bell & Coulthurst the 2nd best by far in York"; "With this diamond I cut this glass, With this face I kissed a lass" and finally "I love Miss Green better than Mi..." – here the writing stops-caught in the act? Evidence of early 19th century adolescent crushes!

This fact sheet has been provided by YorkWalk. Established in 1990, YorkWalk offers a programme of themed walking tours of York throughout the year. This information is intended to assist journalists with information on different York themes and has been written to give a flavour of York's themed walking tours.

For more information and to book your stay in York:

Visit www.visitYork.org

Twitter: @visityork #yorkadventure #visityork #onlyinyork

Media contact: Kay Hyde, Head of PR & Communications.

Tel: 01904 554451 Email: Kay.Hyde@makeityork.com