

# DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY



*A View of Stopping Mill Water*

## The Local History Bulletin of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society

Volume 21

Spring 2016

Part 1

# DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY

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ISSN 0417 0687

Front Cover: Original Milford Weir in 1744 by Thomas Smith



Fig 1. Richard Keene's photograph of Exeter House 1854.

Fig 2A. S.H. Parkin's 1930s sketch. This appears to be an imaginative 'restoration' as the rear wall of the demolished wing of Exeter House is left standing.



Fig 2B. Exeter House (S. Glover, *History of Derbyshire*, Vol 2, 1833)

# EXETER HOUSE, DERBY.

(by Joan D'Arcy,

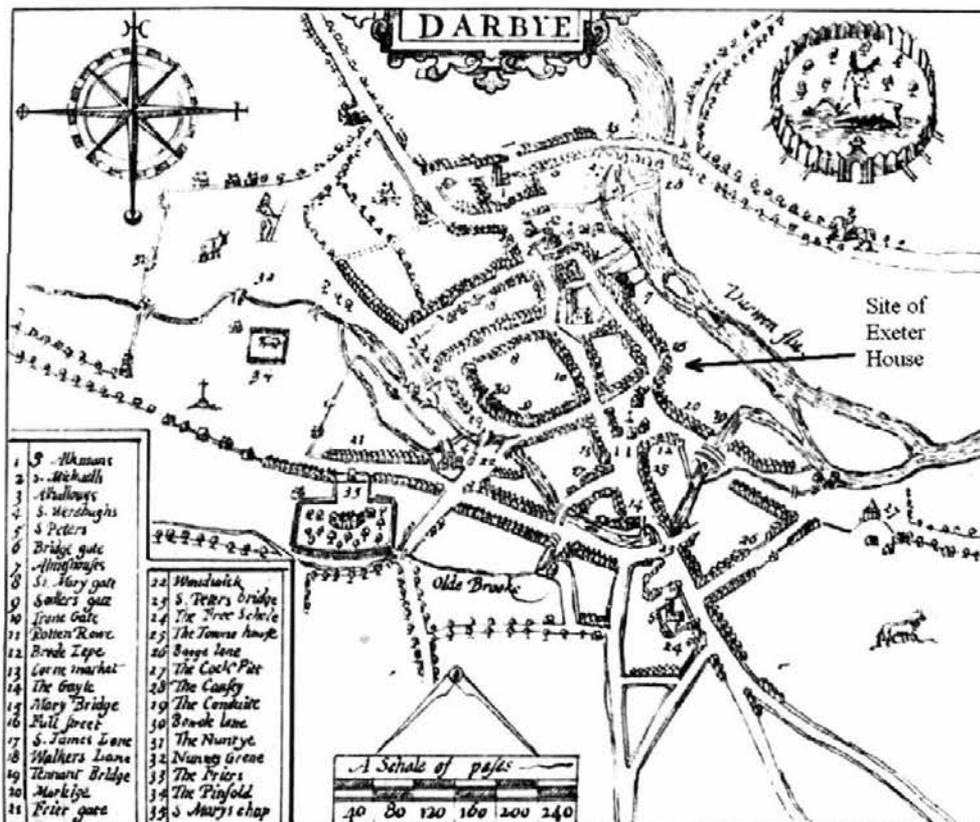
*'Derby Names to be retained. Another Exeter House.'*<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

In April 1934 a newly built block of flats in Derby required a name. After a short debate Exeter House was agreed upon. As Alderman Oswald Ling stated at the time, *'It retains a name famous in history. It was at Exeter House that the Young Pretender stayed on his ill fated visit to Derby in 1745.'* The Exeter House in which Charles Edward Stuart stayed, then the most prestigious house in Derby and the subject of this article, was demolished in 1854 but the name was embedded into the town's history.<sup>1</sup>

Exeter House was photographed shortly before its demolition by Richard Keene and it is this image that is most widely recognised, a nine bay, three storey house built in early neo-classical style with a long garden running down to the River Derwent. The central block is slightly recessed and the door is topped by a semi-circular fanlight beneath a pediment. A single band string course divides ground from first floor and the windows each have central key blocks. A late seventeenth century town house typically had same height windows on ground and first storey as is the case. This photograph however shows the House at the end of its story. The beginning was somewhat different and although the three day occupation by Charles Edward Stuart, otherwise Bonnie Prince Charlie, in 1745 is well documented and often recounted, much about the House's history is obscure and the subject of speculation. This article seeks to answer questions which have puzzled historians over time: when and by whom it was built, who owned and who occupied it and why it was so suddenly demolished.<sup>2</sup>

The house stood on Full Street in Derby beside the Derwent and close to the Market Place. Full Street was laid out by the mid-thirteenth century, possibly earlier, and on the east side was divided into long burgage plots. These plots gradually developed into a mixture of residential and industrial concerns such as fulling and tanning, the buildings on higher ground while gardens and yards occupied the river bank, a sensible precaution in view of the Derwent's propensity to flood. John Speed's town plan of 1611 below shows the street lined with buildings.<sup>3</sup>



### **The House and its first owner, John Bagnold, Town Steward and MP for Derby**

Full Street lay within the parish of All Saints and the parish church (now Derby Cathedral) houses a memorial to John Bagnold incised on a white marble slab set into the chancel floor, close to the altar rails on the south side.

*Here lyes the body of JOHN BAGNOLD, Gent. Steward for above 20 years to the Corporation, and sometime a worthy Member of Parliament. He married HANNAH daughter of JOSEPH PARKER of this towne, Gent. by whom he had issue, JOSEPH, JOHN, WALTER, and MARGARET. He dyed the 1st of May, 1698. Aged 55.*

John Bagnold was the builder and first owner of Exeter House. Born c1643 during the Civil War, he grew up under the Commonwealth, witnessed the restoration of Charles II (1660-1685) and took office under him. He may have been the son of Walter Bagnold of Marston-on-Dove who stood surety for him on his appointment as under-sheriff to Sir Robert Coke of Longford in 1672. It is supposed that he had a legal or clerical training as in 1676 he was appointed Receiver of Assessments for Derbyshire, a post he again held in 1678-80.<sup>4</sup>

By 1672 he was married to Hannah, or Anna, second daughter of Joseph Parker of St. Michael's parish. In 1670 a 'Mr. Parker' was taxed on 11 hearths, the house identified by historian Maxwell Craven as St. Michael's House, now the Cathedral Diocesan Offices. The marriage helped to advance him in his career. It connected him to a leading Derby family, members of whom had several times served as a town bailiff, while his mother-in-law, Margaret Parker nee Hamond, came from a wealthy London merchant family.<sup>5</sup>

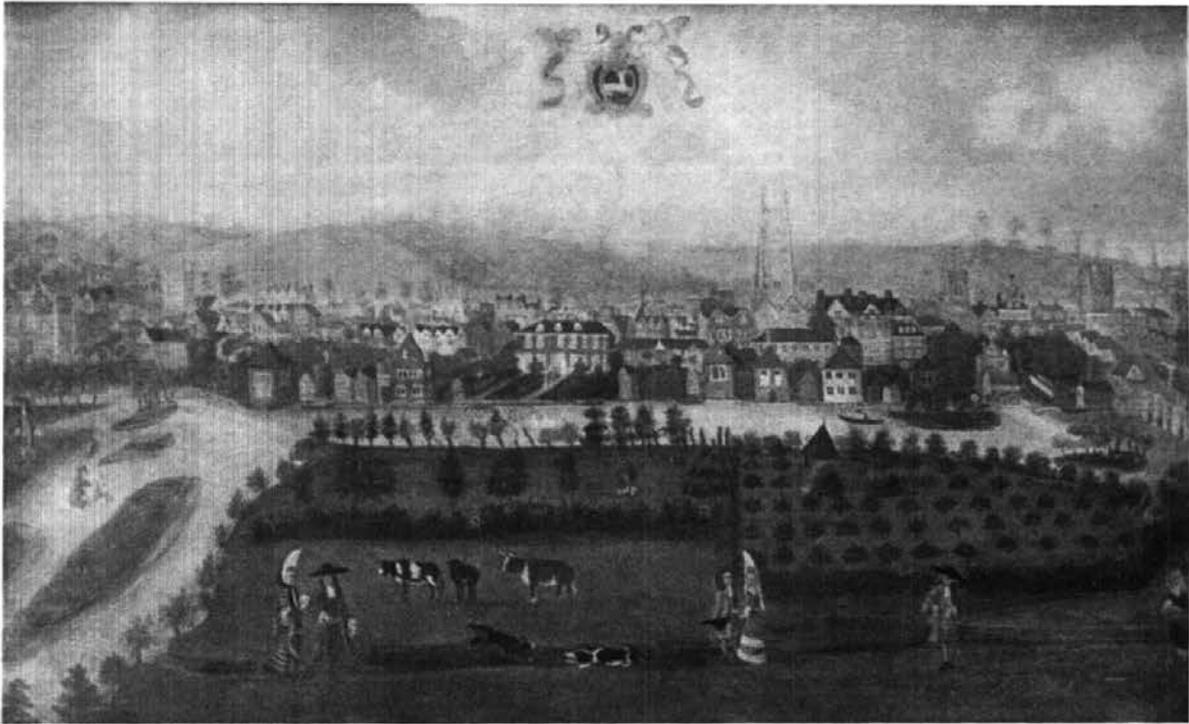
On 14 July 1675, Derby's town clerk, Thomas George, died and four days later the town council met in the Common Hall and Bagnold was appointed in his place, 'though many of the Hall opposed', the reason not given. By spring of the following year he was living in All Saints parish and playing an active part in parish affairs as he was a signatory to the Parish Order and Vestry accounts, which he afterwards frequently signed. It is presumed that he acquired the site of Exeter House at about this time. He was town clerk until his death, describing himself as 'seneschal', or steward, in 1680 and 'town clerk' in 1686 when witnessing leases of land. He also held the office of town coroner.<sup>6</sup>

Towards the end of his reign, King Charles II attempted to rule without parliament, leaving him without the power to raise direct taxes. Derby was a pre-Domesday borough, originally governed by two bailiffs and a company of brethren as established by medieval charters. In 1629 a new charter had replaced the bailiffs with an annually elected mayor. In 1680 the town found it politic to financially 'assist' Charles II by surrendering this charter, as historian Stephen Glover expressed it, 'under the pretence of obtaining some new immunities, for which a handsome gratuity was paid to the crown'. The 'gratuity' was a sum of roughly £400. Bagnold was given the task of drafting the new charter and he was careful to look after his own interests; 'our well beloved John Bagnold Gentleman to become and be the present common clerk and coroner of the borough aforesaid to continue in the same office during his natural life'. Derby was governed under this charter, which established a town council of mayor, 9 aldermen, 14 brethren, 14 capital burgesses and a body of common burgesses, until the Municipal Corporation Act in 1835.<sup>7</sup>

As town clerk Bagnold was a party to innovations which placed Derby in the forefront of new technological advances. The town owned several mills amongst which was the Gunpowder Mill which stood on a small island or 'byfleet' in the Derwent. In 1692 it was leased to George Sorocold, a water engineer. The lease enabled Sorocold to build a water house and water 'engine' to pump water from the river and gravity feed it through elm pipes to the town's main streets. Derby was the first provincial town to enjoy this facility.<sup>8</sup>

As an ancient borough Derby could return two members of parliament and normally nominees of the most prominent county families were elected. The Whig interest was in the ascendant after the 'Glorious Revolution' that placed William III and Mary II on the throne and in Derbyshire this meant the Cavendish family, the Dukes of Devonshire. In spite of this, in 1695 Bagnold was nominated and elected alongside Henry Cavendish. Politically Bagnold was more closely allied to the Tory interest. Lady Anne Pye, a contemporary observer of political life, in describing the 1695 election, wrote of him:

*Bagnold the town clerk is one, a small estate, no quality nor good repute but so great an interest in the town as to make the Duke at last resolve that his son the Lord Henry Cavendish should join with him.*



*Rd. Keene, Ltd.,*

*Printers, Derby.*

VIEW OF DERBY AT THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.  
FROM THE PICTURE IN SIR GEORGE SITWELL'S POSSESSION.

Fig 3A. View of Derby at the close of the 17thC

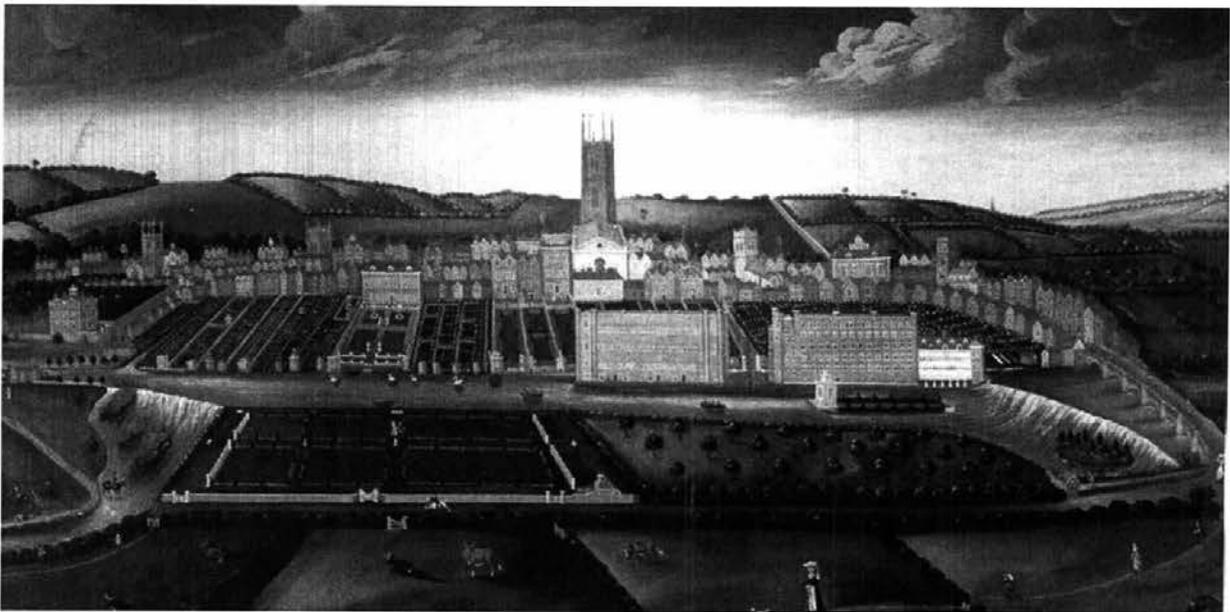


Fig 3B. East View of Derby 1728.

His biographer in the House of Commons biographical series suggests that he could be pragmatic and although scathing of his character and social position, Lady Pye acknowledged his importance in Derby affairs. He promoted a Derwent Navigation bill, no doubt at the behest of Derby's merchants and traders who dominated the town council. He prepared and presented a bill but it failed at Committee stage.<sup>9</sup>

His 'small estate', as evidenced in his will, included property in Stramshall, Staffordshire, tenanted by William Knowley, and a water mill with land at Hilton in Derbyshire purchased from Christopher Hinton.<sup>10</sup> By 1698, as his will testifies, Bagnold had major debts, the settling of which was a great concern. In addition to the costs incurred as a Member of Parliament he had laid out large sums on establishing his children. His monument in All Saints church records three sons, Joseph, John and Walter, and a daughter, Margaret. He wrote that Joseph's education 'has been very expensive to me'. Joseph entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge in 1687 and after his Masters degree in 1695 took holy orders in the diocese of Lincoln. In 1696 he was Rector of the small parish of Creton. He appears to have been dissatisfied as he was enjoined to live in his preferment until a better one arose but was bequeathed the estate at Stramshall. John remained at home, inherited the mill at Hilton and in 1717 was Mayor of Derby while Walter was apprenticed to James Grammar, a City of London goldsmith in 1695. It was however his daughter Margaret's marriage to multimillionaire Thomas Chambers that 'made' the family and it was to Chambers that he looked to manage his debts and take care of his wife.<sup>11</sup>

During these years Bagnold built Exeter House. He made a will in April 1698 in which he left the house built by John Reeve to his wife. Shortly before his death, he added an 'annex', written sideways:

*Item I give and bequeath yt pt of ye Messuage & Burgage or Tenement wherein I now live in ye Fullstreet in Derby wh was built by John Reeve to my dear & Loving wife for her Naturall Life with the egress and regress to ye same with half of ye garden, and also after her decease I give ye pt of ye messuage together with ye other pt of ye said messuage I likewise live in wch was built by Thomas Trimmer ... to my son Thomas Chambers and Margret his wife for and during their naturall lives ... and after their decease then to the use and behoof of the heirs of ye body of ye said Margret by ye said Thomas Chambers begotten or to be begotten and for want of such Issue then I give the same to my son John Bagnold & to his heirs for ever ...*

It is the succession to Thomas and Margaret Chambers which confirms this to be Exeter House as their daughter Hannah Sophia married the 8th Earl of Exeter after whom it came to be named.

The site was a double burgage plot on which, if Speed's map is accurate, a timber framed building would originally have stood. Bagnold's house was, as his will indicates, built in two parts, one looking on to Full Street and the other, as shown in Keene's photograph, facing the Derwent. The house built by John Reeve was presumably built in brick and, although the will does not give a date, it was perhaps built sometime after 1676 when Bagnold is recorded as living in All Saints parish. This building came with a right of access to the garden which places it on Full Street. There is no contemporary view of this part of the House and a sketch by S. H. Parkins, drawn in the 1930s, is of doubtful accuracy. (See Fig 2A) There is however a brief description written after a visit made by a Mrs Katherine Thomson in the 1840s:

*The house stands back from Full Street and is situated within a small rectangular court. An air of repose, notwithstanding the noise of a busy and important town, characterises this interesting dwelling. It is devoid of pretension; its gables and chimneys proclaim the Elizabethan period.<sup>12</sup>*

The identification of John Reeve would be a pointer to a building date but several John Reeves of Derby are to be found in seventeenth century records. One died and made a will in 1640, another occupied a house in St. Alkmund's parish in the 1660s, paying tax on six hearths, and two others bearing this name left wills in which they are described as 'carpenter'. (Carpenter, at first used to describe a worker in the construction of timber framed buildings, gradually modified its meaning to include a builder in general.) They may have been father and son; the wills suggest this and that the son died first in 1706. Either may have built Exeter House but John Reeve whose will was written in 1703 and died in 1708, is favoured as he was the more prosperous and bequeathed new built houses and a malthouse to his children.<sup>13</sup>

Thomas Trimmer, whose will was probated in 1733, is described as 'carpenter' and was perhaps the first of a skilled family of carpenter-builders in Derby. His building is essentially that of Keene's photograph but as yet it was only two-storey. Its contemporary William and Mary neo-classical style fits well into a date close to Bagnold's death; it is shown in an oil painting in the possession of the Sitwell family at Renishaw Hall with a

suggested date of 1698 (Fig 3A). The painting, reproduced in the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* for 1905, is of Derby's river frontage and the house is centrally placed.<sup>14</sup>

John Keys produced a similar view, a black and white engraving, in *Sketches of Old Derby and Neighbourhood* (1895), describing it as '*taken from an old painting in the possession of Mr. Harwood, Surgeon, Derby*'. The disposition and dress of people in the foreground suggests that it was copied either from the above or from a similar painting. Although not dated, internal evidence indicates that both views were probably painted between 1704 and 1716 because the large wheel of England's first silk mill on the Derwent, most probably designed by George Sorocold and opened by Thomas Cotchett in 1704, is shown but not the second silk mill built by Thomas Lombe in 1716. It also shows the Decorated medieval east windows of All Saints chancel before the body of the church was demolished in 1723. Exeter House is sketched in, the windows marked but the door missing. A single band string course dividing ground from first floor is visible.<sup>15</sup>

Exeter House is also depicted in the better known '*East Prospect of Derby*' executed by Yorkshire brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck and advertised for sale in 1728, one of six panoramas of England's '*Cities and Towns*'. Measuring 2 ft 9 inches by 13 inches, a 1720s date is confirmed by the depiction of Lombe's silk mill and doubling shop and the new chancel of All Saints church, built in Georgian style to a design of James Gibbs in 1725. Exeter House is more sharply drawn, a classically designed two storey building of nine bays with the door centrally placed, overlooking a long garden, divided by a central path and running down to a boat house at the river's edge. Third floor attic rooms are indicated by gables in the roof. A much enlarged copy now adorns the entrance to Derby Local Studies Library. Land on the east bank opposite Exeter House is laid out as a formal parterre with box trees and statues and is marked 3, '*Mrs Chamber's Garden*', of which more later.

Something can be learned of the interior from an advertised sale of building materials after the House's demolition in 1854 which itemised fixtures and fittings:

*The whole of the very valuable building materials, comprising several lots of good bricks, blue slates, roofing-timbers, principals, jambs, spars, ceiling-joists, flooring-boards, joists and beams, strong oak panelled doors with casings and architraves, panelled wainscoting, framed, moulded, glazed, and ledged doors, coach house entrance and other gates, skirtings, surbase, about 60 excellent sash windows, with inside box-shutters and stone sills, marble and stone chimney-pieces, with grates and hearths ... marble and stone flags, several flights of stairs with oak hand rails, spiral balusters, and panelled dado ... a large quantity of stone-coping, cornice and string course ...*

The use of oak for staircases and panelling points to a date before the introduction of mahogany, which would surely have been favoured by Bagnold and his son in law Thomas Chambers had the house been fitted out when this exotic wood became fashionable in the 1700s. It is most likely that the doors, panelling and staircases were the work of Thomas Trimmer and his sons who were Derby's most eminent workers in wood of this time. Examples of their later work can be found in Derby at All Saints and St. Werburgh's churches.<sup>16</sup>

#### **Thomas and Margaret Chambers: The second owners**

Margaret Bagnold was born c.1678 and her marriage to Thomas Chambers must have taken place shortly before 1698 when her father's will was drawn up. She was almost twenty years his junior. In his will Bagnold referred to '*his Loving son Chambers*'. The tone is deferential in requesting that his '*son*' settle his debts by purchasing part of his estate. The will is unusual in that his wife was to chose whatever goods she desired of the '*best sort*' and the remainder sold to help pay his debts hoping that Chambers would buy them himself and '*live at Derby and my deare Wife to Table with him*'.

Thomas, the son of John Chambers, was born in All Saints parish on 10 December 1660. There is a monument in the church, a white marble slab, a companion to Bagnold's memorial, set into the chancel floor on the south side:

*Under this marble lyes Interred Thomas Chambers Esquire Merchant and Citizen of London, Son of John Chambers late of Derby Gentleman deceased. He Married Margaret the only Daughter of John Bagnold of the same, gentleman deceased by whom he had Issue, Thomas who dyed young, Arabella who Married William Bates of Foston Esquire, and Hannah Sophia who Married the Right Honorable the Earl of Exeter. He departed this life at Bristol, the tenth of December, being his birth day, Anno Dom 1726, aged Sixty Six.*

In other records his father, John Chambers, appears as a merchant with London and East India Company connections. Thomas Chambers' mother was Hannah (c1617-1699), the daughter of Thomas Hamond, a London merchant. A now lost monument in All Saints church was recorded for the College of Arms in 1710:

*Here lyeth the body of Hannah Chambers, the wife of John Chambers of Derby, Gent. who was daughter of Mr. Thomas Hamond of London, Merchant. She dyed the 16th day of February 1698&9. Aged 82.<sup>17</sup>*

Hannah Parker, Margaret Bagnold's mother, was also a Hamond and London merchant Thomas Hamond would have been a useful uncle to the young Thomas Chambers as he started out in life.

Thomas also had a wealthy uncle, William Chambers, his father's elder brother who likewise lived in Full Street. As mentioned above, in 1692 the Corporation had leased the Gunpowder mill to George Sorocold for the erection of a water house and water engine to pipe water around Derby. By an Indenture of 1696 William loaned Sorocold £200 so that he could complete the work. In a codicil to his will William bequeathed one third of the lease of the water engine and a malt mill to his son John which suggests that the loan was not repaid. William's wealth is manifested in his will, written on 11 April 1722, which states that Thomas, his second son, had been given £1000 'to advance him in the world'. A loan of £2728 for which Thomas was indebted to his father was waived.<sup>18</sup> A monument to John was once displayed on the third pillar on the north side of All Saints church recording his death and burial in the church in 1751 at the age of 59, and of his wife and children.

*In a Vault near this Pillar are deposited the Remains of John Chambers Gent : who departed this life May 7th 1751 In the 59th year of his Age. Also of his children, Jane Chambers who died December 29th 1771 Aged forty five, William Chambers Doctor of Divinity Rector of a church in Northamptonshire, who died Sept 4th 1777, Aged 52, And Theodosia Chambers who died January 20th 1778, aged fifty four. In the same Vault are interred the Remains of Elizabeth Widow of John Chambers who died Novr 6th 1785, Aged 85. And of Dorothy Widow of William Chambers DD who died November 1st 1809, Aged 64.<sup>19</sup>*

In addition to his wealthy uncle, Thomas had an influential brother-in-law through the marriage of his sister Sarah to Sir John Shore, Dr. of Physic, as his second wife. Shore had a house in All Saints parish taxed on 18 hearths in 1670. The Shores were Derbyshire gentry, tracing their ancestry to Richard II. *The Memoir of John Lord Teignmouth, Charles John Shore*, one of Shore's descendants, helps to explain the Chambers' wealth, the family having significant interests in the East India Company. A footnote in the Memoir refers to Thomas: '*This gentleman had two daughters the elder of which (N.B. she was the younger) mar. Tho Brownlow, 8th Earl of Exeter and inherited her father's house in Full Street, Derby*'.<sup>20</sup>

Thomas profited greatly from his family connections and found a place in the burgeoning West Country copper industry. Cornish copper mining developed at the end of the seventeenth century with the invention of the reverberatory furnace and rapidly expanded with the introduction of Thomas Newcomen's atmospheric steam engine in 1710, by means of which the vertical seams of copper could be reached by deep shaft mining. Demand for copper increased after the Mines Royal Act of 1689 ended the royal monopoly of brass making, brass being an alloy of zinc and copper. In the Forest of Dean, the Redbrook copper works was set up before c1691 by John Coster (d. 1718). He likewise set up the English Copper Company at Lower Redbrook at about the same time and with Thomas Chambers formed The Company of Copper Miners in England. A copper works had been established on the river Avon at Conham in 1698 and a major brass making industry developed around Bristol. Thomas spent part of his time in Bristol overseeing his interests there. He became the proprietor of a network of copper mines and when he died he was the Governor of the Company of the Copper Miners of England.<sup>21</sup>

As Thomas became super rich so did his standing in Derby. After the medieval nave and chancel of All Saints were demolished by Dr Michael Hutchinson, its minister, in February 1723, Thomas gave £100 to the rebuilding fund, his name immediately following the Dukes of Devonshire and Rutland and his donation only £5 less. In 1725 a proposal was made to sell seats to help pay for the cost of rebuilding, a suggestion so fiercely opposed that only six double seats were sold. However, two lay seats were reserved, one for 'Mr. Osborne', who had paid £20 for a block of seats, otherwise a pew, in 1705, and the other for 'Merchant Chambers' as these seats had been held in the old fabric. 'Merchant Chambers' pew, which was in the middle aisle and large enough for eight persons, was annexed to Exeter House and later sold as part of the property.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas's son and heir, also Thomas, died in his youth. His daughters, Arabella and Sophia, would however make advantageous marriages which elevated the family's social standing. Arabella's (c1701-1726) husband was

William Bate of Foston Hall and the dowry was a rumoured, though not credited, £90,000. Hannah Sophia's marriage to the 8th Earl of Exeter was arranged in 1723. Thomas quickly sued for and obtained a Grant of Arms, the shield bearing three copper cakes (ingots) and a cannon barrel (chamber piece), the crest a copper miner in a mine. The marriage took place at St. James, Westminster, on 18 July 1724: *The Right Honorable Brownlow Cecil, Earl of Exeter, was married on Saturday last to Mrs (sic) Chambers, a Merchant's daughter of this City, whose Fortune is Forty Thousand Pound down, and as much more at the Death of Her Father.*<sup>23</sup>

Thomas lived to see the Derwent made navigable in 1721 and a new wharf established on the Morledge but he died before smelting, slitting and rolling mills were erected in 1734, making Derby a centre for the production of copper sheeting for sheathing the country's naval fleet. Thomas had properties in London and in Bristol, but after his death in Bristol on 10 December 1726 at the age of 66, his body was brought back to Derby and in January it was interred in All Saints church.

*On Saturday last, dyed at Bristol, Thomas Chambers, Esq., of this City: he was Governour of the Company of Copper Miners in England; and hath left only two Daughters, one of whom is married to the Earl of Exeter, and the other to a gentleman in Derbyshire. He hath left a very great Estate; the Bulk of which goes to the said Earl.*<sup>24</sup>

Margaret Chambers outlived her husband by nine years and died in 1735. She was buried at All Saints on 2 May:

*Derby April 14. Yesterday morning dy'd after a long Illness, at her house in the Full Street in this Town, the Relict of Thomas Chambers Gent., a wealthy Merchant, who dy'd some years ago. She has left only one Daughter living, who is married to the Earl of Exeter, to whom the bulk of her estate now descends. We hear it will be a considerable Time before the Internment of her Corpse.*

She left a bequest, one third of the income from the Gunpowder Mill, to light the streets of Derby with 80 lamps and has been credited with this innovation. However, a deed in the Derbyshire Record Office makes clear that the bequest was money already set aside by her husband and the credit for the first lighting scheme in Derby ought properly go to Thomas Chambers.<sup>25</sup>

After Margaret's death, an ostentatious white marble monument was erected against the wall of the north aisle of All Saints church, with inset busts of Thomas and Margaret carved by Louis Francois Roubiliac (1702-1762), a French sculptor born in Lyon who lived in England from c1735 and worked from a studio in London. The monument is surmounted by flaming urns and two naked cherubs hold torches to represent the Chambers' lighting bequest to the town. The Chambers' Coat of Arms and an inscription are set within partially veiled curtains. A fine wrought iron screen made by renowned Derby blacksmith Robert Bakewell completed the memorial. It still stands, facing and vying for attention with the Cavendish monuments in the south aisle.<sup>26</sup>



Fig 4. The Chambers Monument in Derby Cathedral. Photo: John D'Arcy

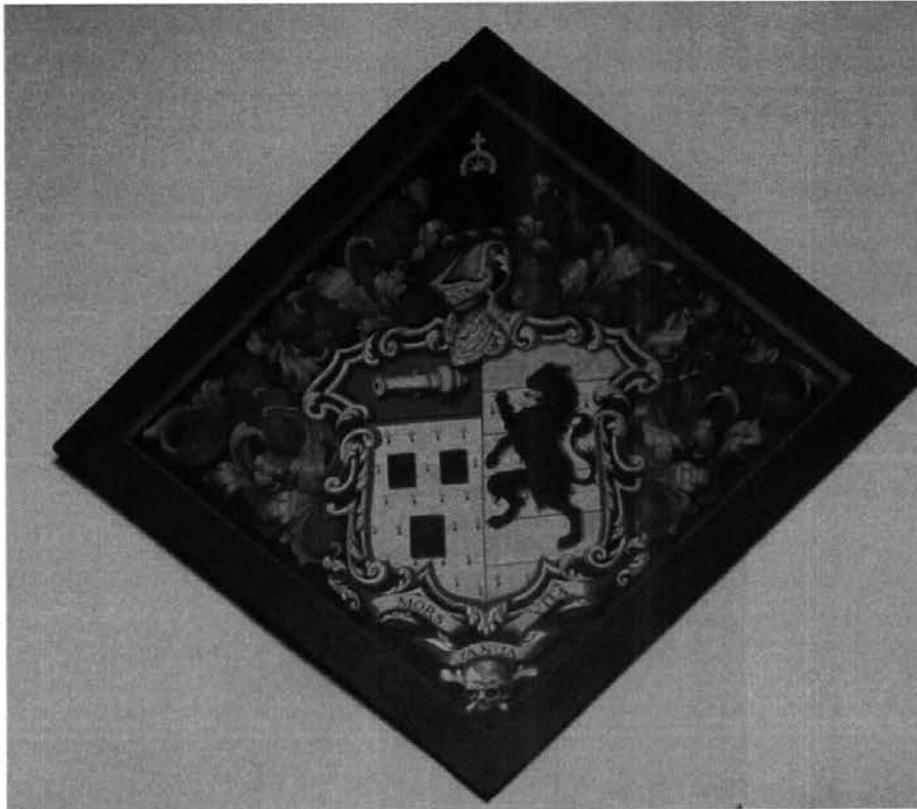


Fig 5: One of two hatchments displaying the Chambers Coat of Arms which hang in the entrance porch.

Thomas Chambers had every reason to display his wealth and status as the father-in-law of the Earl of Exeter and he might well have refronted Exeter House but the Buck brothers' East Prospect, printed two years after his death, argues against this. Other confirmation comes from the header chosen for the Derby Mercury, launched in 1732 by Samuel Drewry. This was a version of the East Prospect, a somewhat ill executed copy engraved by 'Wennock', with minor additions but Exeter House still appearing as two-storey.<sup>27</sup>

#### **The Earl and Countess of Exeter**

Hannah Sophia's marriage in 1724 restored the Cecil family's depleted fortunes. Her husband was the second son of John Cecil, 6th Earl, and Elizabeth Brownlow and he succeeded to the title in 1722 on the death of his elder brother. Amongst the portrait collection at Burghley (or Burleigh) House are two enamel oval miniatures set in gold frames, painted by Christian Friedrich Zincke about the time of the wedding. One is of Hannah Sophia and the other the 8th Earl. Some time later, a full length oil painting was commissioned and this, painted in oils by Maria Verelst (1680-1744) now hangs in Burghley. She wears a deep blue dress, her blonde hair simply styled, the whole in a landscape setting (see page 10).

In the spring of 1729 the Exeters presented All Saints church with a lavish gift of communion plate. The gift was recorded in the Parish Order Book:

1730 May 23

*Whereas the Parish Church of All Saints in the Borough of Derby has lately been rebuilt in a very magnificent & beautiful manner. And the Right Honble Brownlow Earl of Exeter, and his Lady the Right Honble Hannah Sophia Countess of Exeter out of their pious dispositions and great Affections for the Church and to add farther to its magnificence & great Beauty, have lately most generously given to the said parish Church of All Saints, a large set of Communion Plate consisting of two large silver Flagons, two Cups and Covers and a large Basin, all double Gault, and also a large Cover, two large Cushions, & two Stools for the Communion Table, a fine embroider'd Pulpit Cloth, & a Cushion, all of rich Crimson Velvet, neatly Fring'd.*

*We therefore, the parishioners of the said Parish of All Saints, whose names are hereunto subscribed together with the rest of the Parishioners have unanimously caused this to be written in the Parish Book to be kept for a perpetual testimony of their great Kindness and*

*Benefaction to Us, and of our Gratitude & Thanks for the same.*

*Here follow the signatures of the Minister, Churchwardens and 43 of the parishioners.*

1730 *Paid Mr Matlock for entering the Earl of Exeter's Gifts.  
Paid Jno Manning for fixing ye Communion & Pulpit Cloth.*



Fig 6. Miniature and portrait of Hannah Sophia, Countess of Exeter. (The Burghley House Collection)

The communion plate, crafted by goldsmith George Wickes and hallmarked 1728-9, is presently on view in Derby Cathedral's Treasury. Each piece is lavishly engraved with the Exeter Coat of Arms in a shield, complete with helm, coronet, crest, mantling, supporters and motto. The Chamber Coat of Arms is also displayed.<sup>28</sup>

The Exeters spent most of their time at Burghley or in London but made regular visits to Derby. During a visit in July 1737, all the church bells were rung to celebrate the Earl's birthday. The *Derby Mercury* reported visits in 1742 and in March 1743:

*This Afternoon arrived at his House in this Town, from his Seat at Burleigh near Stamford in Lincolnshire, the Right Hon. the Earl of Exeter, the Countess his Lady, with the Lord Burleigh, their eldest son, &c. They were met at some Distance from hence by their Tradesmen here, and all the Bells were rung upon their Arrival. We hear they will honour this Town with their Presence for some time.*<sup>29</sup>

It is possible that the House was modified and the two storey river frontage raised to three storeys at this time to make it a more seemly dwelling for an Earl's household. The new build was only a facade, the third storey being tied into the existing house and sashed windows inserted into the gables. A symmetrical appearance was maintained by adding dummy windows to hide the valleys between. This can be seen in Keene's photograph of 1854. The architect added consequence to the door and central window surrounds. Refronting was a common practise in Derby at this time to give old buildings a fashionable uplift and an illusion of Georgian elegance.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to their three sons and three daughters, Hannah Sophia took Arabella Bate (1720-1802), her young niece, into the household after the early death of her parents, William in 1734 and Arabella in 1726, the latter only 25 years of age. Arabella was a considerable heiress and in September 1741 she married William Banks:

*On Saturday last, William Banks, Esq., of Reavesby Hall in the County of Lincoln, was married at Burghley House, the seat of the Right Hon. The Earl of Exeter, to Miss Baites (sic),*

*Niece to the Countess of Exeter, a Lady of considerable Fortune, and endued with every amiable Qualification.*

Arabella was widowed and in 1746 remarried to George Aufrere M.P. (1715-1801). Their marriage portraits hang at Brocklesby Park in Lincolnshire where there is also a bust of Arabella by Louis Francois Roubiliac sculptured in 1747.<sup>31</sup>

The Exeters were not in residence in 1745, when on 4 December, the most publicised event in the history of Derby began with the arrival of Prince Charles Stuart, the 'Bonnie Prince', his army having preceded him and occupied the town. He was greeted in the Market Place by those burgesses who had not hurriedly left on the news of his approach. Exeter House would for three days be his billet and centre of operations. His close entourage occupied the house to stand guard while his senior commanders were billeted around the Market Place and the main body of men found lodgings in side streets and on the edge of the town. Money was demanded and raised for the march south but attempts to win recruits were largely fruitless.<sup>32</sup>

While there, a government spy named Eleizer Birch was apprehended and brought to Exeter House where he was interrogated in the parlour and 'Hey's lodging' and then imprisoned overnight in 'the Colonel's guard room which was a chamber in Lord Exeter's house looking to the garden'. The tale of his escape helps to confirm that the river frontage had been raised to three storeys by the Exeters. He tried to open the sashes, 'one I found was nailed, the other I opened the shutter of and raised the lower sash a little ...'. He 'flung himself out of the window under which was a hard gravel walk in Lord Exeter's garden' and later estimated that the drop was about seven yards. After recovering he ran down to the Derwent and found the garden enclosed by high brick walls, 'at the end of which to the water long iron spikes were drove to prevent, as I apprehend, the communication betwixt that and the adjoining garden ...'. He ran south through two gardens until he reached Mr. Heathcote's, where Sir George Murray was billeted, and in attempting to climb a wall fell into the river. After regaining the bank and sheltering in Heathcote's boat house he took off his clothes and swam over the weir to Alvaston and safety.<sup>33</sup>

On 5 December the Prince held a Council of War at Exeter House in an oak panelled first floor drawing room overlooking the river. As Mrs. Katherine Thomson wrote a century later, 'the arguments which sealed Charles Edward's fate, resounded within the walls of Exeter House'. The decision was taken to retreat, the turning-point of one of the most important crises in the country's history. The Prince's brief stay in Derby became enshrined in local memory and Jacobite sympathisers and the curious alike would later go on 'pilgrimage' and seek out Exeter House. In 1839 Philip, Lord Stanhope, wrote of his visit :

*a substantial, handsome brick building, the front to the garden apparently much the same as it was a century ago. The dining-room is on the ground floor, but its character has been completely altered by modern improvements which will doubtless be better appreciated by Mr. Mousley's convivial guests than by his antiquarian visitors. The staircase, however, is of dark polished oak, with carved balustrades, the same as when trod by the feet of the insurgents. On the first floor the drawing room is completely unaltered, it is all over wainscotted with ancient oak, very dark and handsome, and looks out as also the drawing room below into the garden.*

After her visit in c.1845, Mrs Katherine Thomson wrote:

*A wide staircase, rising from a small hall, leads to a square oak-panelled drawing-room, the presence-chamber in the days of the ill-fated Charles. On either side are chambers retaining, as far as the walls are concerned, much of the character of former days, but furnished recently. One of these served the Prince as a sleeping-room; the rest were occupied by his officers of state, and by such of his retinue as could be accommodated in a house of moderate size. The tenement contains many small rooms and closets, well adapted, had there been need, for concealment and escape ...<sup>34</sup>*

Horace Walpole, in a letter describing the happenings at Derby as rumoured in London, spread a false account that the house had been destroyed:

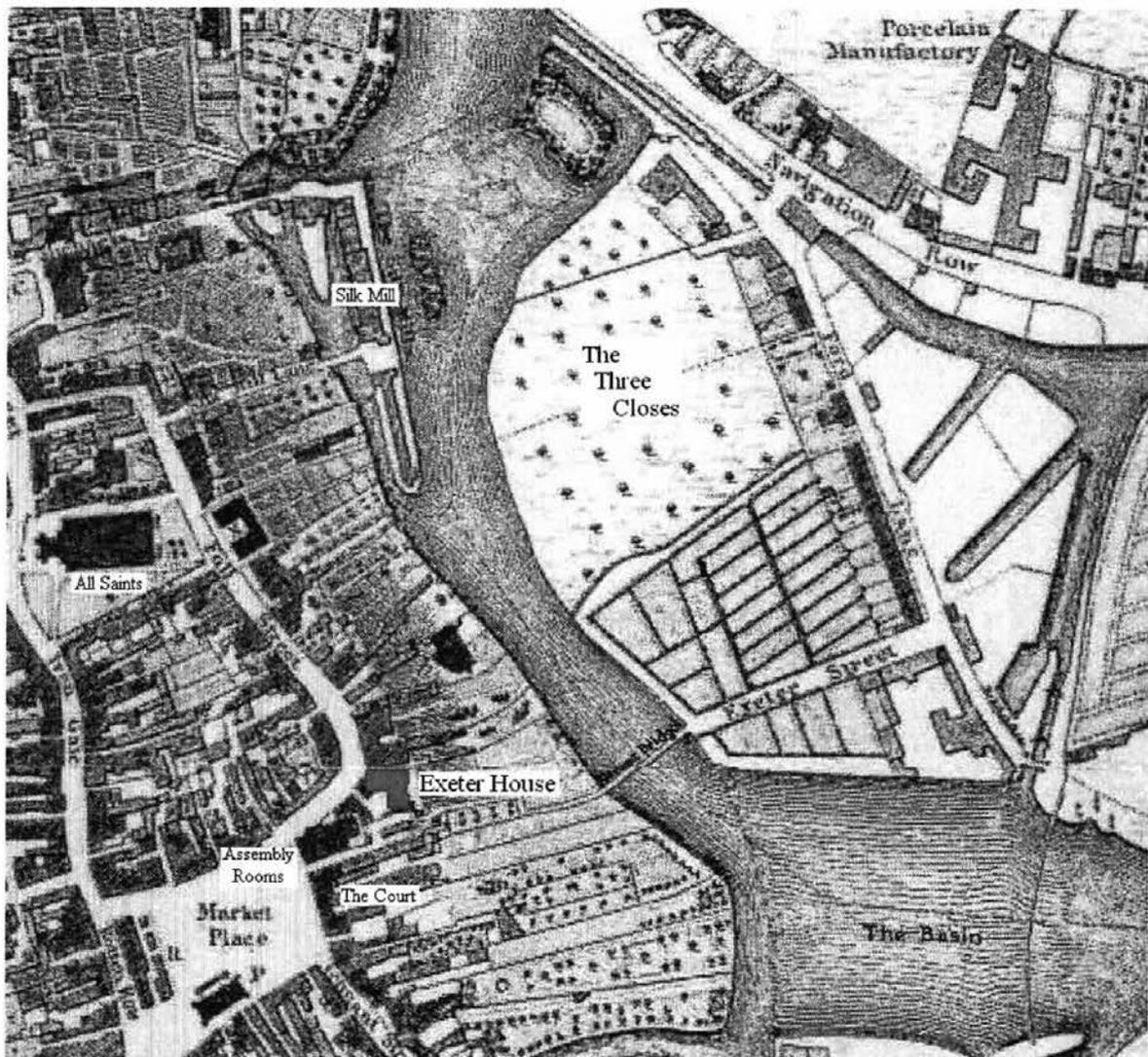
*Arlington Street, December 9th, 1745 ... they got nine thousand pounds at Derby, and had the books brought to them, and obliged everybody to give them what they had subscribed against them. Then they retreated a few miles, but returned again to Derby, got ten thousand pounds*

*more, plundered the town, and burnt a house of the Countess of Exeter. They are gone again, and got back to Leake, in Staffordshire, but miserably harassed ...*<sup>35</sup>

So ended the most memorable event in the House's history. On the death of the 8th Earl of Exeter at Burghley in November 1754 the house reverted to Hannah Sophia and in December 1757 it was put up for sale. An advertisement in the *Derby Mercury* mentions several additions:

*TO BE SOLD. The House, Gardens, Coach-Houses, and Stables, with the several Tenements adjoining, and belonging to the Right Hon. the Countess of EXETER, also three Closes ; all situate in and near DERBY. For further Particulars enquire of Mr. JOHN HEATH in DERBY.*<sup>36</sup>

The three Closes lay on the Derwent's east bank opposite Exeter House. They were attached to the House as an extended garden together with areas of orchard, meadow and pasture, although directly accessed from it only by boat until the early 19th century. It was from this area that the panoramic *East Prospect of Derby* was drawn in 1728, marking it as 'Mrs Chamber's garden'. The 'Closes' are further described in a Marriage Settlement of 1771 as stretching from the Derwent to 'the messuage held by William Duesbury', that is to the Nottingham Road where Duesbury was manufacturing porcelain now known as Royal Crown Derby. They were named Derby Close and the 'Ford Closes'. By 1757 two coach houses and two stables stood there to serve the House but were probably attached to it from at least John Bagnold's time as in his will he refers to stables, gardens, backsides and middling places.<sup>37</sup> (See Chatterton and Swanwick map, 1819, below)



### **The Bingham: The House divided**

The House was sold to John Bingham (c.1693-1773), a mercer and draper and Mayor of Derby in 1757-8.

*Derby Nov. 10th 1757. This being his Majesty's Birth Day when he enters into the 75th Year of his Age, the Morning was usher'd in with ringing of Bells; in the Evening the Soldiers quarter'd here, are to fire several Vollies of small Arms in Honour of the Day; and the Worshipful John Bingham, Mayor, hath given an Invitation to the Officers, Gentlemen of the Corporation, and others, to wait upon him at a Bonfire near the Town-Hall, to drink his Majesty's Health, &c. afterwards to repair to the George to partake of a handsome Entertainment provided on the Occasion.<sup>38</sup>*

John Bingham was wealthy and of high local standing but lacked the great fortune and prestige of earlier owners. Writing some 70 years later, Stephen Glover looked back over four generations of Bingham.

*The great grandfather of the present John and Thomas Bingham esqrs. was a mercer, and resided in the market-place; while the Scotch army remained in Derby, in 1745, Lord Nairn lodged at his house. His sons, John and Joseph, both served the office of mayor of the borough, viz. Joseph Bingham, esq. in 1750 and 1760, and John Bingham, esq., in 1757. The latter gentleman purchased and resided at Exeter House, and died 10th of April, 1773. His sons, Thomas and John, were both aldermen ...<sup>39</sup>*

John Bingham owned Exeter House but in 1755 he had paid Bache Thornhill of Stanton £800 for a pair of houses standing at 'the Lower End of the Market Place by the Derwent', a property, known as 'The Court'. This property was referred to by William Woolley when describing the east side of the Market Place c1712: 'a handsome large pile of building called the Court, which helps to adorn it'. John Bingham and his wife Mary, nee Whithorne, lived in one house and in 1755 a 'Mrs Catherine Heathcoat' occupied the other. On 21 November 1760 the *Derby Mercury* reported a fire which almost destroyed both houses.

*Last Saturday at about Seven in the Evening, a Fire broke out in one of the Rooms of the House (late Mr. Heathcote's) in the great Yard at the lower End of the Market-place, adjoining to Mr. Alderman Bingham's, which burnt with great Fierceness for some time, and did considerable Damage to the same, but by timely Assistance, and help of the Fire Engines, was prevented spreading any further.<sup>40</sup>*

While John Bingham lived at the Court, Exeter House was occupied by Thomas, his eldest son who was living there with wife and two children at the time of his death in 1764. The *Derby Mercury* reported:

*Last Saturday Night died, at his House in the Full Street, aged 33, Mr. Thomas Bingham, an eminent Mercer, eldest son of Mr. Alderman John Bingham. His death is greatly regretted by all who were acquainted with him, on account of the many good Qualities with which he was endow'd.<sup>41</sup>*

John Bingham drew up his final will on 2 February 1768 and died five years later in April 1773. The *Derby Mercury* reported: 'Saturday about one o'clock, died at his house in the Market Place, in the 80th year of his age...'. His second son, John II, a hosier with a shop in Irongate, was already resident in Exeter House and this he now inherited, together with 'my close late a Garden with the buildings thereon Situate on the East side of the River Derwent and also that my Close on the side of the Foard Lane now in my own possession...'. He also inherited the 'Seat in All Saints church'. However, Exeter House came to John II with restrictions. He had married Martha, daughter of Thomas Rogers of The Hill, Swinford near Stourbridge in July 1771, at which time a Marriage Settlement had been drawn up and the House placed under the Trusteeship of Joseph Bingham and Thomas Rogers Jnr. to the use of the married couple for their life times and afterwards the children, if any, of their marriage, while John II received £1500 from Thomas Rogers. John and Martha had two sons, Thomas and John, and two daughters, Martha and Mary Ann. The House was also subdivided and the Full Street wing let to 'Mrs Meynel Widdow'.<sup>42</sup>

As for the rest of the family, John Bingham's wife Mary was endowed with an annuity of £100, an initial sum of £100 and all the household goods. The Court was advertised to let and was to pass to grandson Thomas, son of Thomas, after Mary's death and on reaching 21 years of age. Young Thomas also inherited property at Catthorp, Leicestershire and Lilbourne, Northampton. Mary died in September 1788 and was buried at All Saints church. In the following year Thomas, now Rector of Norbury, sold the Court to Charles Hope for £1150. James, the youngest son and vicar of Calverton in Nottinghamshire, inherited £600 invested in the Derby and Uttoxeter

turnpike road and £250 in the Derby to Nottingham turnpike road. The daughters, Susanna and Mary, were each to receive £2,000 a year after their father's death and a further £1000 on the death of their mother.<sup>43</sup>

Susanna was barely 18 years old when, in December 1773, she married Rev. Thomas Manlove, aged 44, vicar of St. Alkmunds, Derby and of Spondon. He had also been headmaster of Derby Free Grammar School but resigned the post shortly before his marriage. The *Derby Mercury* reported as follows: '*Yesterday was married at Northampton, the Rev. Mr. Thomas Manlove, to Miss Bingham, eldest daughter of the late Mr. Alderman John Bingham; a most amiable young lady, with a large fortune.*'<sup>44</sup>

Thomas Manlove, son of Joseph of Church Broughton and a graduate of St John's College, Cambridge, was ordained deacon in Lichfield diocese, taking full orders in 1753. By 1760 he was undermaster of Derby School and became headmaster in 1763 with a salary of £40 a year. He was instituted vicar of Spondon in 1761 and Derby St. Alkmunds in 1762 and after their marriage the couple settled at St. Alkmunds vicarage. In a Diocesan Visitation Return of 1773, Manlove wrote that to help him serve two parishes he had a resident curate at Spondon where he preached every other Sunday and an assistant curate, Mr Cade (a former pupil), who served the attached chapel at Ockbrook. He was evidently a gifted teacher as on his promotion to headmaster the *Derby Mercury* wrote that it was by his '*Sole Conduct the School has been brought to the flourishing Condition it is now in*'. After his resignation some of his pupils set up an Old Boys Club and held dinners in his name, as in 1781, '*The Anniversary meeting OF GENTLEMEN educated under the Rev. Mr. Manlove will be held at the KING'S HEAD in Derby, on Wednesday the Fourth of July next. Dinner on the Table at three o'clock ...*'. When the school had only one pupil under Rev. James Bligh, in 1824 his pupils looked back nostalgically to Manlove, '*whose memory will be long revered*' and drew up a list of 145 boys he had taught from 1760 to 1770. Some were sons of Derbyshire gentry, others of townspeople and many became notable in their field; the army, civil service, church, parliament, law, medicine and banking.<sup>45</sup>

There were no children of the marriage but in 1796 Manlove challenged the Trustees to acknowledge the right of himself as husband of Susanna to an inheritance from Exeter House, claiming £2000 and taking the claim to the Court of Common Pleas. An Indenture was drawn up and on his death in 1802, Susanna appears in her own name as a beneficiary. The Trust was partially broken and Susanna received her legacy.<sup>46</sup>

Both the *Derby Mercury* and the *Northampton Mercury* reported the marriage of Mary, the younger daughter, to Joseph Harding, a surgeon, in 1781: '*Tuesday was married at St Alkmund's Church; Mr Harding of Northampton, to Miss Bingham, Daughter of the Late Alderman John Bingham of this Town.*' A bequest from her uncle Joseph who died in 1780 may have helped the marriage along as he left the bulk of his fortune, including property in Derby, Kirk Ireton and Hognaston, to his nephews and nieces.

*On Thursday the 2nd inst. died, at his House in the Friar-gate, at the advanced age of 82, Joseph Bingham Esq., senior Alderman, and one of the Justices of this Borough. He twice served the Office of Mayor (in 1750 and 1760) with great Vigilance and Dignity. The active part of his Life was marked with a cool, dispassionate, and upright Conduct; the Close of it with a cheerful Serenity and Complacency of Mind, always looking for the grand End of his Existence. - His remains were Yesterday Evening interred in a handsome Manner in St. Werburgh's Church.*

Joseph Bingham left £3,200 and '*stock in the 3½ %*'. By his will, dated 11 April 1777, he made John II his sole executor and residual legator. His nephew James was bequeathed £1,500, his nieces Susanna and Mary were each to receive £1,500 while Frances and James Bingham, his nephew Thomas's children, would inherit £500 at the age of 21.<sup>47</sup>

#### **The First Tenants: Mrs and Miss Meynell**

In 1763 the building began of a new Assembly Room on the east side of the Market Place. Essentially finished by 1770, though not fully fitted up for a few years, it was separated from Exeter House by only a narrow passageway which ran down to the Derwent between the yard of the adjacent Wheatsheaf Inn and the house of Mr George Wheeldon. The House, if not in decline, was losing some of its style and in his will in 1768 John Bingham referred to a leasehold tenant, '*Mrs Meynell widow*', her tenancy described as '*all that House lately erected*'. The word '*lately*' can cover a wide time period and may mean no more than substantial alterations.<sup>48</sup>

The occupation by a family named Meynell is further attested in the aforementioned 1771 marriage settlement

which places John Bingham II in 'the capital messuage' while 'that other messuage or tenement situate & being in Full Street ... adjoining to the sd capital messuage' was in the occupancy of 'Mary Meynell Spinster'. The Meynell identities are not securely established but Mrs Meynell is likely to be Jane, the widow of Francis Meynell, a Derby apothecary with a shop in the Market Place and a house in Iron Gate, who died in 1758. It is likely that his widow moved to Full Street on her husband's death with at least one of her daughters; there were two sons, John and Francis, and three daughters, the eldest of whom was named Mary. The *Derby Mercury* recorded her death:

*Derby May 17. On Friday last died, at her house in Full Street, in an advanced Age, Mrs Meynell, relict of Mr Francis Meynell, Apothecary, who died in the year 1758. She was sister to the late Richard Harpur, Esq., of Littleover near this Town, who serv'd the office of High Sheriff of this County in the year 1728; and yesterday her corpse was carried in a Hearse, attended by a Mourning Coach, and deposited amongst her Ancestors at Littleover Church.<sup>49</sup>*

John Bingham II was still at Exeter House in 1790. William Hutton, in his *History of Derby*, described the best houses in Derby in the 1790s and wrote: 'Full Street boasts Mr. Bingham's, late Lord Exeter's, once graced with the presence of the unfortunate Prince Charles, also the house of Dr. Darwin ...'. Dr Erasmus Darwin, the Enlightenment philosopher, poet and botanist, had moved into the adjacent house on the north side c1780, following the bankruptcy of its previous owner, banker John Heath.

By 1793 John Bingham II had moved out. The land tax now registers two tenants, Miss Meynell and Mr Strutt. Mr. Strutt was William, brother of Jedediah, the cotton spinning magnate. In 1791 the 'Merchant Chambers' pew was advertised to let by John Bingham II: 'a large pew, situated in the middle Aisle of All Saints, that would agreeably accommodate eight Persons'. As a Unitarian William would have no interest in the All Saints pew.<sup>50</sup>

#### **William Strutt Senior**

Much is known about Jedediah Strutt but very little about William (1731-1800), the third son of William and Martha Strutt of South Normanton in mid-Derbyshire and younger brother to Joseph and Jedediah (1726-1797). Jedediah, having patented an improvement to the silk knitting machine known as the 'Derby rib', set up a silk hosiery business in Derby in the 1760s bringing his family, including William, into the business. Stocking making would be William's chief interest in the firm and he called himself 'hosier' in his will.

A family home was set up in Derby, at first possibly in St. Mary's Gate but by the 1780s the Strutts were living in St. Peter's parish, close to St. Peter's bridge. As subscribers to good causes their names are often found in the columns of the *Derby Mercury* and in 1784 they are listed under that parish as sponsors of Sunday Schools: Mr. Strutt, Mr. Wm Strutt, Mr. Wm Strutt, Jnr, the latter being Jedediah's eldest son. (Their house in St. Peter's parish is the subject of forthcoming new research by Heather Eaton.) In the 1770s Jedediah moved into the burgeoning cotton spinning industry and became a leading entrepreneur in its development, setting up cotton spinning mills in the Derwent Valley at Belper and Milford and a calico mill in Derby. In the last years of his life he built himself a new house at New Mills, otherwise Milford.<sup>51</sup>

In recent articles on the Internet it is claimed that Jedediah bought, lived and died at Exeter House, a claim so often repeated that has found its way into *The Dictionary of National Biography*:

*In 1762 Strutt was made a freeman of Nottingham and the family moved to St. Mary's Gate, Derby. His later life was split between his mansion, Milford House, and Derby; in 1795 he bought Exeter House, Derby, and after a lingering illness, died there, on 7 May 1797, aged seventy. He was buried in the Unitarian chapel at Belper.*

Newspaper obituaries do not record where Jedediah died but the implication is that it was at his recently built home at Milford. The *Derby Mercury* for 11 May 1797 was one of many newspapers to carry these words: 'Sunday last, after a lingering illness, aged 71, Jedediah Strutt, Esq. of New Mills, in this county, greatly lamented by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance ...'.<sup>52</sup>

It is always possible that Jedediah died at Exeter House while visiting his brother and even, as is claimed in some accounts, stayed there to receive medical attention from Dr Erasmus Darwin who lived next door, but there is no evidence to support these assertions. It was undoubtedly William who took over the tenancy and occupied Exeter House for the last few years of his life. The mistake may have stemmed from a passage in Stephen Glover's *History of Derby*, although Glover is strictly correct:

*The author thought it right to give a sketch of Exeter House, the mansion house which communicates with the Full-street, from its connexion with the history of this county, in the year 1745 ... This house was subsequently occupied by an ancestor of the late celebrated William Strutt, esq., and by other families, and is now the residence of William Eaton Mousley, esq., to whom it belongs.*<sup>53</sup>

In Felkin's *History of the Machine-Wrought Hosiery Industry* (1867) the 'ancestor' has become Jedediah, who we are told returned to Derby in 1795 due to illness and died at Exeter House. An article by the Hon Frederick Strutt (1843-1909) in J. C. Cox's *Memorials of Old Derby* partially repeated the story: *Jedediah Strutt passed the end of his life at Milford House, which he had himself built. He did not die there, but at Exeter House, Derby, in the year 1797. He lies buried in the Unitarian chapel at Belper. Fitton and Wadsworth extended the story 'He died after a 'lingering illness' on May 7, 1797, aged 70. In 1795 he had bought Exeter House, Full Street, Derby, an historic mansion where the Young Pretender had stayed, and he died there'.*<sup>54</sup>

Land tax returns are a primary source of information for these years and show a 'Mr. Strutt' living in Exeter House as a tenant and then 'owner' from 1793 to 1800. The latter date is too late for Jedediah (who died in 1797) but exactly right for William Snr whose death was announced in the *Derby Mercury* on 24 April 1800: 'On Monday evening last, aged 68, William Strutt Esq. of this town.' The year 1793 is also significant as William Strutt Jnr. married at the beginning of this year and it is suggested that William Snr moved out of the family home to make way for the incoming bride. Conclusive proof of William Snr's occupation of Exeter House comes in an Indenture drawn up in 1796, added to the aforementioned Marriage Settlement, specifically naming the tenant of the 'capital messuage or tenement with the gardens orchards stables coachhouses' etc. as William Strutt. In his will, dated 29 Jan 1800, William left his estate as follows:

*I give and bequeath to each of my servants who shall be living with me at the time of my decease one years wages besides what shall be their due to them and also proper Mourning. I give devise and bequeath all my real estate whatsoever and wheresoever and also the rest residue and remainder of my Personal Estate of what nature or kind soever unto between and amongst my nephews WILLIAM STRUTT George Benson STRUTT and Joseph STRUTT (sons of my late brother JEDEDIAH STRUTT) their heirs administrators and assigns according to the nature of the said estates respectively equally to be divided share and share alike as tenants in common and not as joint tenants.*<sup>55</sup>

His household goods were auctioned, giving a snap shot of the furnishings of Exeter House at this time:

*TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION by Mr. Shaw.  
On Thursday and Friday the 5th and 6th of June next, on the premises of the late Mr. William Strutt, on Full Street, Derby ... Consisting of Mahogany 4 post Bedsteads, beautiful printed Cotton Furniture, Window Curtains to match, with painted Cornices; excellent Feather Beds and Mattresses; Capital set of Mahogany Dining Tables, circular ends; Comode Side Board, Twelve Arm'd Mahogany Carved Chairs, with Cushions, and Chintz furniture; Comode sofa, and Window Curtains to match the Sofa, and Chair Covers; Wilton Carpet 20 by 14; Mahogany Dressing Chest, Wardrobe &c. an 8 day Clock by Whitehurst, 60 yards of Staircase Carpet, with Brass Wires, Set of Derby Tea China, a complete Set of Blue and White Staffordshire Ware, Silver Candlesticks, Spoons, Salts, &c. A pair of Adam's 12- inch Globes, as good as new - Variety of Kitchen Furniture, Brewing Vessels, &c.*<sup>56</sup>

#### **The Last Owner: William Eaton Mousley**

A Colonel Denby took up Strutt's tenancy but following Thomas Manlove's death in 1802 the 'capital messuage' was sold to pay his widow her aforementioned £2,000 inheritance. An Indenture was now drawn up between John II, his wife Martha, Susanna Manlove and the business partnership of Messrs Saxelbye & Co. which consisted of Thomas Saxilbye ironfounder, Nathaniel Edwards solicitor (a witness to William Strutt's will), Richard Forester Dr of Physic, all of Derby, and William Wylde of Southwell. The partnership bought the 'capital messuage', sub divided it and leased it to 'Mr. Ewin and others', leaving Miss Meynell to remain as tenant under John Bingham. By 1803 Saxilbye & Co. had set up the Derwent foundry on a piece of land on the east bank, close to the Derby Canal, and later brought James Oakes, coal owner and ironfounder of Riddings, near Alfreton into the partnership.<sup>57</sup>

John II died in June 1819, five years after his wife Martha. A wall monument in All Saints church, a white

marble slab to the south of the main entrance, reads 'To the memory of John Bingham, gentleman, who died June 11, 1819, aged 84. And of Martha his wife who died Oct 30, 1814, aged 74. Their bodies are interred in a vault in the middle aisle.' His will, written on 9 November 1815, left his daughters Martha and Mary Ann £1000 each. His son Thomas had already been given a competent share out of his father's estate. Much of the Trust had been sold to the partnership but there was still £2000 owing to his estate. He bequeathed £10 to Thomas and £995 each to Martha and Mary Ann. Everything else went to his eldest son John who was appointed sole executor. The Trust was rapidly wound up and Exeter House was sold to William Eaton Mousley by James Oakes for £6270, the purchase described as '*All that capital messuage dwelling house or tenement with the Gardens down to the river Derwent, Coach houses Stables the Cottage then lately erected & then adjoining thereto with other outbuildings ...*'.<sup>58</sup>

William Eaton Mousley was born about 1787 at Sutton on the Hill in Etwall parish. In 1806 he was articled to solicitor Leonard Piddock of Ashby de la Zouch and soon after qualifying he moved to Derby where he set up a practice in All Saints parish. In 1815 he took on Francis Bradshaw Page as an articled clerk and in 1817 Thomas Piddock, the son of his mentor. After his death, an obituary referred to the '*many eminent professional gentlemen*' who had been trained in his office. He married Antoinetta Hardcastle, the 21 year old daughter of John and Lucy Hardcastle of Birmingham, on 3 July 1816 at St. Werburgh's church. Their first child, William Eaton, was baptised at All Saints in 1817, followed by John Hardcastle (1819/20), Francis (1820), Antoinette (1821), Charles (1828), Mary Ann (1830), Charlotte Ann (1831) and Frances Sophia (1836).<sup>59</sup>

In partnership, at first with fellow solicitors Clarke and then John Barber, he soon had an extensive clientele. He was one of eight local proprietors of the Guardian Fire and Life Insurance Company; a Trustee of the recently widened and improved Derby-Ashbourne Road and one of five commissioners for Derby to administer a '*Fines and Recoveries Abolition Act*' with powers to administer all deeds executed by married women. He became steward and solicitor to George Stanhope, 6th Earl of Chesterfield, and Master of several Barmote Courts in North Derbyshire including Wirksworth, to which in 1842 he appointed his son John Hardcastle as Steward. He acquired the Lordship of the Manor of Brassington and in 1824 was granted the Manor of Hilton by the trustees of the Earl of Chesterfield which gave him a county vote and certain game rights over the manor's 1700 acres. He was a life long High Tory and a Protectionist. In 1844 he helped to set up a meeting in Derby to oppose the Anti-Corn Law Movement. He also became President of the South Derbyshire Agricultural Protection Society.<sup>60</sup>

By 1833 Mousley had freehold chambers in London at 5 Stone buildings, Lincolns Inn and was a Chancery solicitor. At this time he met Henry Pelham-Clinton, the 4th Duke of Newcastle, a man who deeply distrusted solicitors but found in Mousley a like mind. Together they negotiated the Duke's purchase of Worksop Manor, which was carried out with a certain amount of subterfuge. After the sale, the Duke wrote in his diary, '*I find Mr Mously Every thing I can desire in such a case - quick active intelligent & Zealous for his Employer -*' He complimented him further, '*Mousley has done wonders*'. It was certainly profitable as in March 1841 Mousley presented a bill for £5200. '*I must fairly Say for Mousley - that his work has been well done & that I am of opinion that I could not have found a Man who would have served me so well, with So much Cleverness & ability - He may be a rogue & a sharp practitioner, but he possesses means of action which few have*'. In 1847 the relationship was brought to an end by the Duke who made what Mousley believed were unjust charges against him, Mousley trusting that it ended '*with the same spirit of right feeling with which it commenced*'.<sup>61</sup>

He may have been '*a rogue and a sharp practitioner*' but this would not become common knowledge until after his death. In life he was highly respected by his fellow solicitors. As a '*humble*' member of the Incorporated Law Society, when a meeting was held in Derby which leading Derby solicitors attended, he made a lengthy speech supporting a resolution to extend the Metropolitan Provincial Law Society (founded 1847) '*to promote the welfare of the legal profession, and to assist its members to discharge their duties to their clients and to the public*' in an Association.<sup>62</sup>

As his professional standing and income grew, Mousley added modern conveniences to the House: a water closet, Wheeldon's cooking apparatus and two large iron safe doors with frames, also by Wheeldon, proprietor of the Derwent foundry. As cited above, not all the changes met with approval. He also sought to exploit the '*three closes*'. In 1833, when the Midland Counties Railway Company was formed to build a line from London to Birmingham, an extension was also proposed to link Derby, Nottingham and Leicester to the main line. Mousley & Barber acted as solicitors for the Derby branch and Mousley put forward the land he owned on the east bank as a suitable site for a station:

*To make a railway ... 'commencing at or near a certain piece of Ground belonging to Wm.*

*Eaton Mousley, Esquire, in the occupation of William Bemrose, Joseph Hunt and the said William Eaton Mousley, some, or one of them, situate near a certain Yard, called Darby's Yard, in the parish of All Saints, in the Borough of Derby ... and contiguous to the River Derwent, near to where the same River is crossed by a Wooden Bridge, called Exeter Bridge, and terminating at or near the Flood Road in the parish of Saint Mary, in the Town and County of the Town of Nottingham ... He also owns Exeter Gardens in the par of St. Alk ... to which a branch line is proposed from Exeter Bridge.*<sup>63</sup>

In this he was unsuccessful but he was to become a dominant if contentious figure in town affairs, becoming an alderman and a magistrate. In 1841 he was offered the Recordership of Derby at £25 per annum but declined: *'that sum much too small for a gentleman of his rank and station in his profession'*. He later obtained an agreement at £50 per annum. In 1843 he became a Commissioner under the Improvement Act and agreed to pave Exeter Place, part of which was his land.<sup>64</sup>

At this time, the only bridges over the Derwent as it ran through Derby were St. Mary's Bridge, north of the town centre, and a ramshackle wooden affair built on five piers and piles (referred to above) which had been built c1810 by Exeter House trustees (Saxilbye, Edwards and Forester) to link the House directly to the east bank. As Mayor elect, during his inauguration Mousley was challenged to replace it, a suggestion he himself had made but not followed through in 1819. The present bridge, it was said, was a danger to cattle which were being driven across it en route to the Cattle Market but Mousley argued that it was intended only for horse and foot passengers and not for cattle or heavy loads. James Haywood, proprietor of the Phoenix iron foundry, suggested an iron replacement; the borough had sufficient money for this but not the approach roads. The debate continued until June 1849 when sufficient money had been raised by subscription to build a bridge in stone. It was an acrimonious debate with Mousley ranged against his former partner, now Alderman John Barber, who spoke on the subject for one and a half hours. The Derby Mercury refused to publish the full proceedings, calling it *'a local disagreement, particularly as much personal matter was mixed up in what was advanced on both sides.'* However, the three span Exeter Bridge was built to a design of James Trubshaw (1777-1853) and opened in October 1850. It was replaced in 1931 by a wider, single span bridge.<sup>65</sup>

In 1845-6 and again in 1846-7 Mousley was elected Mayor of Derby. As Mayor he effectively brought the annual Derby Shrovetide football match to an end, although it was not finally banned until 1848 under the Mayoralty of Henry Mozley, who acknowledged *'the very efficient manner in which the late Mayor had for two years discharged the duties of his office. He was aware that he had to be tried by a high standard.'* Great applause greeted this vote of thanks. Many fine things were spoken and written about Mousley at this time. In December 1851 he was awarded a public dinner at the King's Head with 100-120 guests. In his speech of thanks he said that he had resided in Derby for 40 years and remembered the execution of the Pentrich Rioters and the Reform Bill riots when he was under sheriff.<sup>66</sup>

On 5 January 1853 Mousley died very suddenly at Exeter House from a chest infection on his return from a train journey to Nottingham. He was 66 years old. An obituary commented that his loss to the Conservative party would be severe and leading gentry members of the party, including Sir Oswald Mosley, were pall bearers at his funeral and interment in the family vault at Etwall. The same obituary commented on his *'great talents and industry'* and his untiring energy, his staunch friendships and his numerous charitable deeds. In a series of articles on *'Mayors of Derby'* in the *Derby Advertiser*, former newspaper editor Alfred Wallis later gave a brief account of the man, writing that he possessed remarkable energy of character and strong intellectual powers and that he was widely respected. Later, Wallis wrote that he was *'A masterful man fond of imposing his will on other people.'*<sup>67</sup>

Mousley's will, his wife now dead, made bequests to his seven living children, three sons and four daughters. There had been a fourth son, Francis, born c1825, who was educated at Repton and Eton, entered as *'son of the Duke of Newcastle's solicitor who lived at Derby'*. In 1845, at the age of 18, he went to New College Oxford but fell from a horse and was killed. The eldest son, William was settled in life, having attended Repton, followed by Trinity College Cambridge and then Lincoln's Inn. In the end he chose the church and his father purchased the next right of presentation to Etwall vicarage which he filled when it became vacant in 1844. He was also Master of Etwall Hospital (1842-63) and Rector of Somershal Herbert. His inheritance was the *'plate'* and his wife Caroline, nee Boynton, was left £500. John Hardcastle, born in 1818, was also settled. He had followed William to Repton and was then articled to his father, qualifying in 1841. He was appointed a Master Extraordinary in the High Court of Chancery and joined his father in the practice which became Mousley & Son. John was bequeathed the valuable law library, but not the private library. The third son, Charles Hardcastle, who had

attended Derby School (1838-42) and Eton was to have a rectory (Norbury or Cubley) when he had graduated. On her marriage to Theodore Harry Dury at Etwall in 1845, the eldest daughter Antionette had been endowed with £5,000. The three as yet unmarried daughters Mary Ann (Lucy), Charlotte Ann, and Frances Sophie, were each to receive £5,000 in Trust. There was money in stocks and government funds. William and John were appointed executors and Trustees.<sup>68</sup> Shortly after their father's death in March 1853, Exeter House was put up for sale. Its rooms were described as:

*Late the residence of W. E. Mousley, Esq., deceased, containing dining, drawing and breakfast-rooms, library, large number of bed-rooms, stables, coach-house, and all necessary out-offices, together with the large garden in front, extending to the River Derwent, near to the New Bridge. For particulars apply to Mr. J. H. Mousley, Full-street ...*<sup>69</sup>

Throughout his life Mousley had been held in high repute but after his death it gradually emerged that he had indeed been a 'sharp practitioner' and by various dubious methods had brought financial ruin to many people. Even before his death claims of malpractice had begun to emerge and continued to be brought against his sons as executors. Amongst the local claimants were the Strutts who reclaimed a loan. Far more damaging were claims from Trustees and in particular a case brought into Chancery which led to the demise of the House.<sup>70</sup>

Before a buyer could be found, not only Exeter House but a large portfolio of properties were seized when a case was instigated by the firm of Gregory, Gregory, Skirrow and Rowcliffe of 1, Bedford Row, London, a firm established in 1784. Gregory, who joined the firm in 1811, was the President of the Law Society in 1851. Mousley's property was seized and advertised for sale:

*To be SOLD, PURSUANT to an ORDER of the High Court of Chancery, made in a cause 'GREGORY against MOUSLEY', with the Approbation of the Master of the Rolls, at Derby, sometime in the month of August or September next, of which due notice will be given, the MANSION HOUSES called Exeter House and Babington House; also several valuable dwelling houses and gardens and building land in the town of Derby ...*<sup>71</sup>

From this Notice and a later auction sale it emerged that he was the largest private property owner in Derby:

*Two excellent residences, Nos. 59 and 60, Friar-gate; six desirable residences, Nos. 44, 45, 45a, 45b, 56 and 47, Bridge-street, together with two cottages, in Agard-street; a productive walled-garden on the Ashbourne-road; and two valuable pieces of building-land, adjoining the Ashbourne turnpike-road and the Markeaton-lane ...*

*Two convenient residences, Nos. 1 and 2, North Parade; two very desirable residences, Nos. 10 and 11, Full Street, with a valuable piece of building land adjoining Full Street and the River Derwent; an extensive and well arranged mansion house, No. 2 Full Street, known as Exeter House, with the very valuable and important building land adjoining Derwent-street and the River Derwent; also two newly erected corner houses and shops, a convenient residence, No. 2 Darwin-terrace, and the Derwent Meadows, with extensive frontages to the Midland Railway and the River Derwent; also all that messuage or tenement with the currier's shop, stable, and 12 cottages and gardens ....*<sup>72</sup>

When no buyer was found for the 'capital messuage' it was demolished. In July 1854. P.T. Candelet advertised a two day auction of the 'very valuable building materials' from Exeter House. Catalogues were available from J H Mousley solicitor, Mr Wright solicitor, Mr Gisborne land agent or P.T. Candelet at his offices, 24 Old Mill Gate, Manchester. A second auction was held by Moody & Newbold at the King's Head in September 1856, with larger areas now divided into small plots of building land. This sale including 'the site of Exeter house and gardens'. The lots were sold 'without reserve' except when subject to mortgages. In 1857 there was a further sale when Edward Smith auctioned lots bought in the sale of Exeter House including an oak staircase.<sup>73</sup>

Estates were also advertised for sale in Derbyshire at Hartington, including Hurdlow Hall, and the manor of Brassington. In Leicestershire land was sold at Willington, Castle Donington and 'beds of coal and ironstone' at Church Gresley. However, in 1858 a case was brought against the Mousley's for the return of the valuable Gresley estate which, it was claimed, had been unlawfully acquired. For many years prior to 1837 William Eaton had been confidential adviser and agent to Sir Roger Gresley, 8th baronet (1799-1837) who died without issue on 12 October 1837. Shortly before Sir Roger's death, Mousley had bought the estate from him with no other person present to act as adviser or witness. In 1861, Gresley v Mousley came to the Vice Chancellor's Court, Lincoln's Inn. The verdict was in the Gresley's favour but the Mousley brothers appealed and in January 1862 it

came back to court and was again found in favour of Gresley. It was reported in the *Derby Mercury* but as a major case it had wide national coverage as in the *Daily News* on 18 January 1862:

*The suit had been instigated by Sir Thomas Gresley, son of Sir Nigel, cousin and heir of Roger of Drakelow Hall, against the Reverend William Eaton and John Hardcastle Mousley to set aside a real estate sale made in 1837 by the late Roger Gresley to his solicitor William Eaton Mousley. The £6,900 purchase money was declared to be inadequate, the vendor (Roger) not having the benefit of independent professional advice and was at the time in embarrassed financial circumstances. Their Lordships also queried whether the purchase money had actually been paid, the only existing evidence being an acknowledgement of a receipt in the body of the deed of conveyance and a receipt signed by the vendor endorsed on the deed. Mousley was given credit for the payment of the purchase money as although there were suspicions, the prosecution could offer only circumstantial evidence ...*<sup>74</sup>

His sons had requested a low key, private funeral, perhaps because they foresaw these revelations. Their father's unlawful actions rebounded against the family. William Eaton although secure in his vicarage at Etwall, died young in 1863 at the age of 46. Although the 'capital messuage', No 2 Full Street, had been demolished, the Full Street wing, No 1, was still standing and John Hardcastle continued to practice as a solicitor from there, carrying the burden of defending the family's honour and finances. The third brother, Charles, had intended to enter the church but did not complete his degree, emigrated to New Zealand and died at Nelson in 1860 aged 31. Of the daughters, Antoinette was fortunate to have married during her father's lifetime. In 1851 she was living at Sudbrook Hall, Shorten Hill, Lincolnshire in comfortable circumstances with four young children and seven household servants including a nurse and two ladies maids. Her sisters, Mary Ann (Lucy) aged 27, Charlotte Ann aged 19, and Frances Sophie aged 16 were living with her. By 1861 Theodore Dury, an army captain, had moved with his family to New Abbey, Kirkcudbrightshire and there were seven children. The 1871 census records the three less fortunate younger sisters, still unmarried, living together as annuitants in Brighton where Frances Sophie and Charlotte Ann died in 1876. Mary Lucy died at Angmering Sussex in 1881. Each left a will naming their nephew and army colonel Alexander William Dury, Antoinette's eldest child, as executor.<sup>75</sup>

In 1872 John Hardcastle, unmarried and now living at Hilton cottage, took on John Henry Powell as an articulated clerk and then partner. At his death on 23 March 1875, he left a modest estate and his effects were valued at under £1,500. One of the executors of his will was Powell who remained at No 1 until his death in 1929, after which the practice moved to Amen Alley. Towards the end of his life, through Powell, he revealed that he had stored, possibly secretly hidden, the panelling and other fittings of the room in which Prince Charles Edward had held his last Council of War. In 1872 they were advertised for sale:

*Old Historic Oak. On Sale the whole of the Oak Panelling, Cornices, Fittings of three Window places, two Fluted Pilasters, two solid oak Doors etc. which were removed from the Oak Council Room (on the pulling down of Exeter House in Derby, formerly the residence of the Earls of Exeter), in which Prince Charles Edward Stuart held his Council of War previous to his retreat from Derby in 1745. The whole of the oak is of the finest grain and polish, and a plan of the room having been kept (the dimensions being 20 feet square, height 10 ft 6) it can be easily adapted and refixed. Apply to Mr Powell, 1 Full Street.*<sup>76</sup>

The advertisement caught the attention of Alfred Wallis, editor of the *Derby Mercury*, who informed Michael Bass, brewing magnate and M.P. for Derby who commissioned Wallis to negotiate the sale. The owner (John Hardcastle Mousley) is said to have broken off other negotiations and sold the whole for £100. Bass had offered to fund a Free Library and Museum for the town and when his offer was eventually accepted, a room was specially constructed within the building to house the panelling. It opened in 1879, incorporating the 'Prince Charles Room'. On the outer side of the door into the room is a brass plaque relating the history of the discovery and the manner in which the panelling was brought to light 'after being hidden for some years in the Assembly Room cellars'. Lord Stanhope took a great interest in the scheme and presented three commemorative medallions relating to the Prince and made Queen Victoria aware of the project. The Queen contributed an autograph letter from the Prince to his father, written in October 1745 from Scotland, expressing anxiety. Michael Bass had this framed with a Royal Coat of Arms and it now hangs in Derby Museum and Art Gallery.<sup>77</sup>

Otherwise, while other fittings may still exist though unidentified, in some private dwelling, the Prince Charles Room in Derby Museum is all that is left above ground to testify to the rich history of the 'capital messuage' of Exeter House. After its demolition in 1854, a new street was created and called Burghley Street and the site stood relatively open until 1934-5 when a Police Station and Magistrates Court, designed by borough architect

C. H. Aslin, was built. This has recently been converted to office use and houses Derby's Local Studies Library. No 1 was standing until the 1940s, at one time owned by Richard Weston, a chartered accountant who named it Burghley House, and then by Wilkinson & Fisher auctioneers who were there until it was demolished for road widening. Along with No 3, Erasmus Darwin's once home, the entire site of Exeter House is now covered by the widened Full Street and the aforementioned Police buildings, now Riverside Offices. A Premier Inn, recently built next door is currently, but quite erroneously, claiming that Exeter House once stood there and is looking to create a new myth.<sup>78</sup>

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78. DLSL, DER 722, FULL Glass negative 45

#### Derbyshire Archaeological Society Publications

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