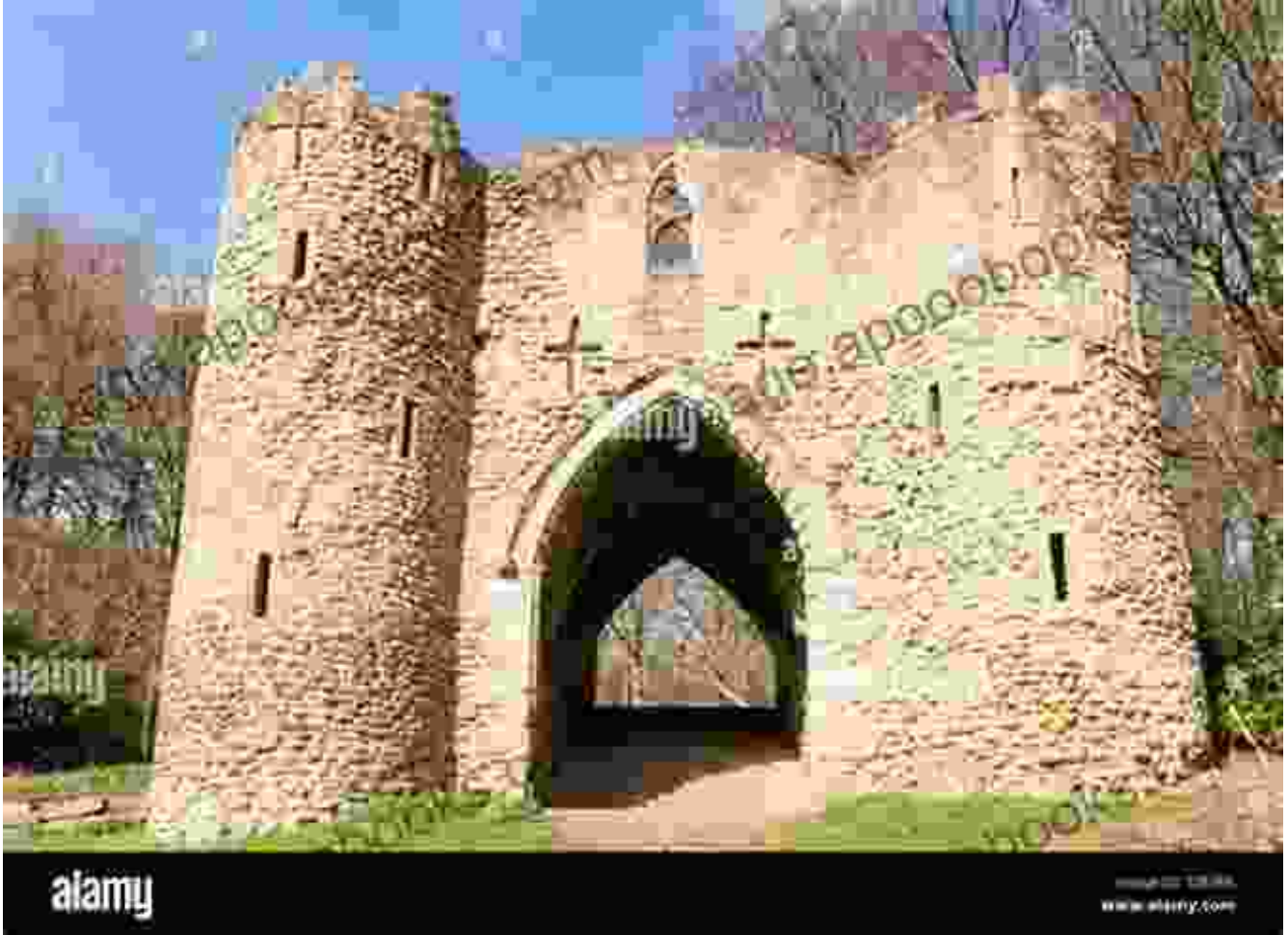


Follies of West Yorkshire: Eccentric Architectural Wonders Unveiled



Nestled amidst the rolling hills and lush greenery of West Yorkshire, England, lies a peculiar collection of architectural oddities known as follies. These enigmatic structures, built for ornamental or extravagant purposes, offer a glimpse into the eccentric and imaginative minds of their creators.

From whimsical towers and crumbling castles to elaborate gazebos and mock ruins, the follies of West Yorkshire stand as testaments to the human desire to leave a lasting mark on the landscape. While some may dismiss

them as mere curiosities, these structures hold immense historical and cultural significance, providing insights into the social and architectural trends of their time.



Follies of West Yorkshire (Follies of England Book 38)

by Robert Whitlow

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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One of the most striking examples of Yorkshire's folly architecture is the Obelisk at Ripon Cathedral. Completed in 1772, this towering sandstone monument stands at 175 feet tall and serves as a prominent landmark in the city. It was commissioned by William Weddell, a wealthy landowner known for his eccentric tastes, as a memorial to his deceased wife. The obelisk's design is both elegant and imposing, featuring a square base adorned with intricate carvings and a fluted shaft that tapers gracefully to a point.

Another notable folly in West Yorkshire is Temple Newsam's Gotch's Folly. Built in 1767, this enchanting structure resembles a ruined medieval castle, complete with battlements, turrets, and a moat. It was designed by John Carr, an esteemed architect of the Georgian era, and served as a hunting

lodge for the Ingram family, who owned Temple Newsam House. Gotch's Folly is a testament to the romantic fascination with the Gothic Revival style, which sought to evoke the grandeur and mystery of medieval architecture.

The Shire Oak in Adel, Leeds, is another fascinating folly that tells a tale of historical significance. Built in 1783, this large oak tree was hollowed out to create a dining room, complete with a fireplace, seating, and a retractable roof. It served as a gathering place for local nobility and gentry, who would partake in lavish banquets and social gatherings within its unique setting. The Shire Oak is a testament to the ingenuity and opulence of the 18th century elite.

Beyond their architectural significance, the follies of West Yorkshire also offer glimpses into the lives and eccentricities of their creators. Some follies were built as vanity projects to彰显 the wealth and status of their owners, while others served as monuments to commemorate important events or individuals. The Burton Agnes Pyramid in Driffield is a prime example of the latter, built in 1788 as a tribute to the wife of Sir Henry Boynton, who died in childbirth. The pyramid's elegant design and poignant inscription serve as a lasting memorial to a beloved spouse.

The follies of West Yorkshire are not without their detractors. Some critics dismiss them as frivolous and wasteful, questioning their architectural merit. However, these structures offer a valuable glimpse into the creativity and imagination of their time. They remind us that architecture is not always about practicality or functionality but can also be an expression of whimsy, eccentricity, and the human desire to leave an enduring legacy on the landscape.

Today, the follies of West Yorkshire stand as cherished landmarks, protected by the Yorkshire Buildings Preservation Trust. They continue to captivate visitors with their architectural charm and historical significance, offering a unique insight into the bygone era that gave birth to these peculiar creations.

If you are intrigued by the allure of architectural follies, a journey through West Yorkshire is a must. Whether you marvel at the grandeur of the Ripon Cathedral Obelisk, explore the romantic ruins of Temple Newsam's Gotch's Folly, or dine within the hollowed trunk of the Shire Oak, the follies of this region promise an unforgettable encounter with history, eccentricity, and the enduring human spirit.



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