

Rockingham Mausoleum

The monument can be seen from Wentworth Woodhouse across the valley. It is flanked by four obelisks, brought from the west front of the mansion in 1793, and encircled by an iron railing. Although usually described as a mausoleum, it would be more accurate to call it a cenotaph or tribute, the Marquis being buried elsewhere. The form of the monument is based on that of the Roman tomb of the Julii at Saint-Remy in Provence. It is of three stages; at ground level there is a walled chamber, the first floor is open-sided but shelters a sarcophagus, and the top storey takes the form of a ring of columns capped by a cupola. Standing in the middle of the chamber of the ground floor is a statue of the Marquis by Nollekens, its pedestal inscribed with epitaphs by Edmund Burke and Montagu. The four niches in the walls contain paired bases for busts, inscribed with the names of Rockingham's closest friends: Edmund Burke, Charles James Fox, Admiral Keppel, Lord John Cavendish, John Lee, the Duke of Portland, Frederick Montagu and Sir George Saville. The busts themselves (by Nollekens) have been removed for safekeeping.

Architect(s)

John Carr of York

Listing

Grade I (England and Wales)

Year Created

1785

Style

Romanesque Revival

History

The monument was built in memory of Charles Watson-Wentworth, 2nd Marquis of Rockingham (1730-1782) by his nephew and successor, William Wentworth Fitzwilliam, 4th Earl Fitzwilliam. The Marquis was an important Whig politician. He was lord of the bedchamber between 1851 and 1862; lord-lieutenant of the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire in 1851; and vice-admiral of Yorkshire in 1855. But in 1862 he fell out of favour and was dismissed from his offices. In 1865, while premier of a coalition ministry, he angered George III by repealing the Stamp Act, opposing grants to the King's brothers, and condemning general warrants. He was dismissed again the following year; was leader of the opposition in the House of Lords between 1768 and 1781; supported proposals to grant independence to the American colonies in 1778; and was prime minister when he died in 1862.

Condition

Good (2003).

Sources

B.oE: Yorks West Riding (1967), 545;

H Colvin, *Architecture and the After-Life* (1991), 353, fig.339 and *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects* (1995), 222;

G Headley and W Meulenkamp, *Follies*, 449;

R B Wragg, 'The Rockingham Mausoleum, 1784-1793', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* (1980), 52, 157-166.



Location

Wentworth Woodhouse (in the grounds),
Cortworth Lane,
Wentworth,
South Yorkshire.
S62 7TQ