

Howard Mausoleum (North Yorkshire)

The mausoleum stands on a hill in the grounds of Castle Howard and is raised on a wide grassy terrace encircled with a stone wall. A massive double flight of steps leads up to the main chamber of the mausoleum which is encircled with a peristyle of Doric columns and crowned with a shallow dome. Inside it has a mosaic floor, a coffered ceiling and richly carved entablature supported by Corinthian columns. This circular funerary chamber rests on the great square plinth formed by the vaulted burial vault below. The latter contains sixty three catacombs.

The mausoleum is supported by an area with great retaining walls. These were described by Pevsner:

'The wide-spreading retaining walls, by Daniel Garrett, have three semicircular projections and square, smoothly rusticated projections between. Niches punctuate this whole ample base. On it stands, far recessed, the base proper of the rotunda.'

Castle Howard (in the grounds)
Henderskelfe
North Yorkshire
YO60 7DA
England

Scan for Google Maps Link



Architects

Nicholas Hawksmoor

Year Built

1729

Style

--

Listing

Grade I (England and Wales)

Condition

Fair. Included on the HE Buildings at Risk register (2021).

History

The mausoleum was built for Charles Howard, 3rd Earl of Carlisle (d.1738) and the magnificence of its design, setting and workmanship (it is said to have cost over £10,000) played a major part in spreading the fashion for such monuments. Horace Walpole famously described it as a building which 'would tempt one to be buried alive'. Although Howard had discussed the project with Sir John Vanbrugh in 1726, the mausoleum was actually designed and constructed by Nicholas Hawksmoor after Vanbrugh's death. It was built between 1729 and 1736. The clerk of works was William Ety and the carving inside was carried out by Charles Mitley. The somewhat incongruous balustraded steps and outer bastion wall being added by Daniel Garratt between 1737 and 1742. The fact that the mausoleum is set in a park reflects Howard's sceptical attitude to religion; it was intended to be a place of secular, not religious, family commemoration. Hawksmoor's circular design is derived from Bartoli's engravings of the Tomb of Gallienus on the Via Appia (wrongly identified by Bartoli as the Temple of Domitian).

Sources

BoE: Yorks North Riding (1996), 117-8;

H Colvin, *Architecture and the After-Life* (1991), 316-21, 33-5, fig. 293, and *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects* (1995), 394, 476;

G Headley and W Meulenkaamp, *Follies* (1990), 439.

C Saumarez Smith, *The Building of Castle Howard* (1997)

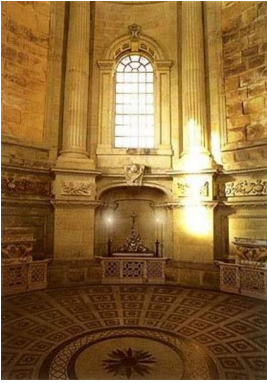
V Hart, *Hawksmoor* (2002)

Online Links

Castle Howard website

Photos





Location

SatNav Co-ordinates: 54.11753685291352, -0.8886587290980482