



CHESTERFIELD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY HISTORY BITES

Chesterfield and District Local History Society's 'History Bites' are an occasional series of website published articles about Chesterfield and district's history.

The Clarke Families of Chesterfield

Clarke is a name that crops up very frequently in the history of Chesterfield in the Tudor and Stuart periods. Ralph Clarke (probably a tanner) was the first Mayor after the Elizabethan charter of 1598. Others were notably innkeepers and charity beneficiaries while the most wealthy lived at Somersall Hall.

The probate inventory of Godfrey Clarke of Somersall is dated 6th November 1670 and is preserved at Lichfield joint county archive office and gives a fascinating insight into the comfort in which a member of the seventeenth century lived. His total personal and moveable estate is valued by the appraisers Ro. Milward, Godfrey Watkinson, John Ffoljambe and Jo. Strode at £5,668 of which £1,600 is represented by money in the house.

The inventory traces its way through the entrance hall with it's three tables, two formes, four joint stools, a range, fire shovel, pr. of tongs, a poker, four suits of armour, 10 otter staves and a pair of tables on to each of the other rooms (with phonetic spellings) detailing and valuing it's contents in turn.

The Dyneing room, again with three tables and carpets and so on, the Butry, the Cellars, the Boulting house (where the meat was jointed), the Outer Brewhouse and the Inner Brewhouse, the Wash house and Dayry, the larder, the Dayry Chamber, the Store Chambers in the roof loft, the roof loft, the Great Chamber, (with it's pair of bed storkes and the bedding thereunto belonging worth £20) on to Willimott's chamber, the Stayre head chamber, the Seel'd (Ceiling) chamber, the White chamber, the new chamber, the Still House, the Nursery, the Clossett in the Nursery, the Chamber over the nursery, the Midle Chamber, the Blew Chamber, the Closset at the Stayr head, the Study, the Sumer house in the Garden, the Garden house and Garden, the Stable chamber, the Stables, the coach house, the Kiln house and Kiln house yard, the dogg kennell (with 6 prs of dogg couples), the Iron house, the hen houses, the Dayry court, the Wayne House and worke house, the Coale yard, and finally the Barnes. In addition there were the quick goods (animals) the Cumingrey holding £190 worth of timber and Hawley Smilting Mill.

It is written in secretary hand so is not too difficult to decipher and it tells an intriguing story.

Contributor: unknown.

Published by Chesterfield and District Local History Society, 22 March 2022.

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