

# Follies of Shropshire: Architectural Curiosities of England



Nestled amidst the rolling hills and picturesque landscapes of Shropshire, England, lies a hidden realm of architectural oddities: follies. These enigmatic structures were built for no practical purpose, serving instead as

whimsical expressions of their eccentric creators. From towering towers to miniature castles, each folly tells a unique story, inviting us into a world of architectural curiosity and imagination.



## Follies of Shropshire (Follies of England Book 30)

by Luciano Thomazelli

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 5371 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 57 pages

Lending : Enabled

Item Weight : 9.2 ounces

Screen Reader : Supported

Paperback : 225 pages

Dimensions : 5.24 x 0.47 x 8.23 inches

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### The Origins of Follies

The concept of follies emerged in the 18th century, during the Picturesque Movement. This movement emphasized the beauty of nature and the importance of creating landscapes that resembled painted scenes. Follies were integral to these landscapes, adding an element of surprise and delight.

Follies were often built by wealthy landowners and aristocrats as a way to display their wealth and eccentricity. They were also used to commemorate significant events or individuals. Some follies were even built as practical

structures, such as gazebos or summerhouses, but over time, their original function was often forgotten, leaving behind only their whimsical charm.

## **A Journey Through Shropshire's Follies**

Shropshire is home to an impressive collection of follies, each with its own unique character and history. Here are some of the most notable examples:

### **The Wrekin**

Standing prominently on the Shropshire-Staffordshire border, The Wrekin is a natural hill that has been transformed into a folly. A winding path leads to the summit, where visitors are rewarded with breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. The Wrekin's transformation into a folly includes the addition of a beacon tower and a series of terraces, making it a popular destination for hikers and sightseers.

### **Hawkstone Park**

Hawkstone Park is a sprawling estate that features a collection of over 100 follies, grottoes, and other architectural curiosities. These structures are scattered throughout the park's woodland and gardens, creating a whimsical and enchanting atmosphere. Highlights include the Grotto, a subterranean cave adorned with sparkling crystals, and the Swiss Cottage, a charming Swiss-style cottage complete with a working waterwheel.

### **Stokesay Castle**

Stokesay Castle is a well-preserved medieval castle that has been extended and modified over the centuries. One of its most striking features is the Great Tower, a 13th-century folly that dominates the castle's skyline. The tower was built by an eccentric owner who wished to create an

imposing symbol of his power. Today, it offers visitors an unparalleled view of the castle and its surroundings.

## **Tong Castle**

Tong Castle is a grand mansion that incorporates several follies into its design. The most notable folly is the Gothic Gateway, a towering structure that mimics a medieval gateway. The gateway leads to a series of courtyards and gardens, each with its own unique charm. Tong Castle is a testament to the grandeur and eccentricity of the Victorian era.

## **The Enduring Charm of Follies**

Follies may have served no practical purpose, but their enduring charm lies in their ability to capture the imagination and spark a sense of wonder. They are testaments to the human desire to create, innovate, and leave behind a mark on the world. Whether they were built as expressions of wealth, eccentricity, or commemoration, follies continue to fascinate and inspire visitors to this day.

## **Escape into the World of Follies**

If you are looking for an escape from the ordinary, a journey through the follies of Shropshire is the perfect adventure. These architectural curiosities offer a glimpse into the past and invite you to explore your own imagination. Whether you are a history buff, an architecture enthusiast, or simply someone who appreciates the unexpected, you will find endless charm and inspiration in the follies of Shropshire.

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