



History of Sutton Hall

Here is a little potted history of our pub and the local area... if you have a spare minute or two and maybe a cup of tea (or is that a G&T), we think it's well worth a read.

Naturally, when the site has existed since the Bronze Age, it has played host to many different people; from lords and ladies, explorers and authors to more recent times of a hotel and now a pub.

We love hearing your stories, tales and mysteries that surround this historic manor house, and we want to thank you for helping us create this little bit of history.

This is an early draft of the Sutton Hall history page, and if you have any interesting bits and pieces, be they anecdotes, old menus, old photographs or whatever, we'd love to see them.

The Sutton Hall Crew

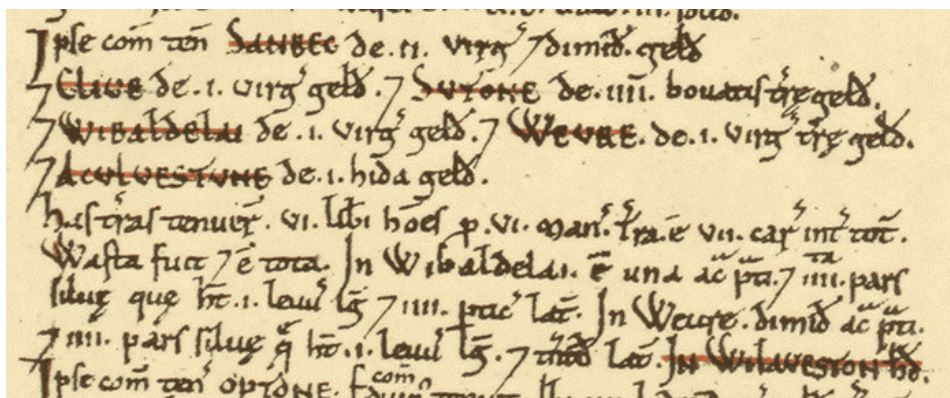
Back to the Bronze Age...

In the grounds of Sutton Hall there is a somewhat dilapidated Bronze Age barrow (now the resting-place of a water trough).



In 1962 the barrow was again excavated, by James Forde-Johnston of Manchester University, who unearthed evidence of several further cremations. He discovered that the mound had originally been around 100 yards in diameter, but was substantially reduced, with many of the river cobbles having been removed to the nearby farmyard for use in paving, where they can still be seen.

It is believed, that the site today is listed in the Domesday Book of 1086. Which was a manuscript of the Great Survey of England and parts of Wales conducted by King William the Conqueror, and the Hall was under the care of Earl Hugh of Chester. Later, it was used by Edward I and Queen Eleanor as a hunting estate! With countryside surrounding the hall as beautiful as it is, it's easy to understand why!



A couple of millennia later...

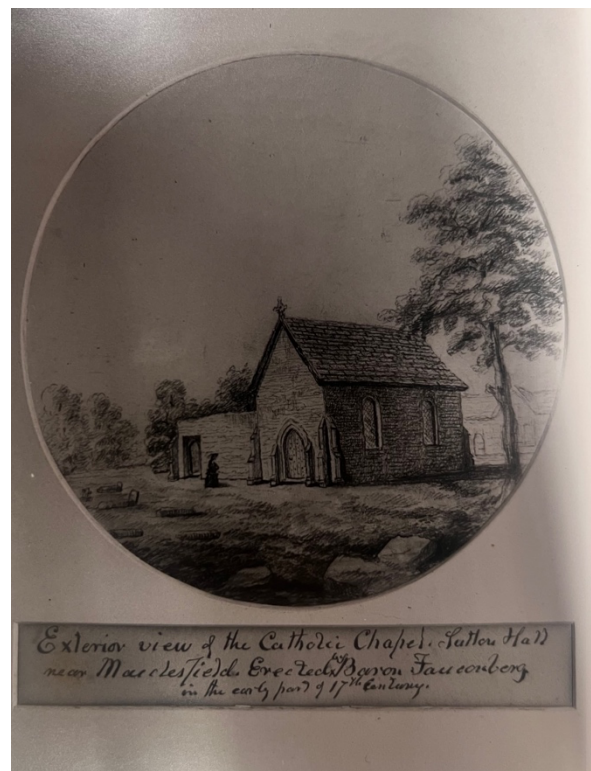
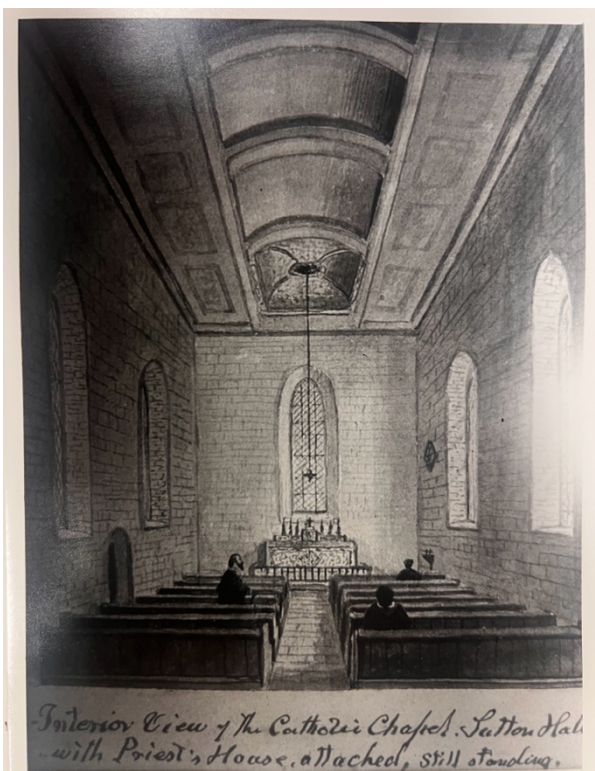
In the 12th century, the Norman earls granted the manor of Sutton to individual families, for the performance of certain duties within the Forest of Macclesfield. Sutton was originally two manors, Sutton and Downes, both of which gave names to separate families. In the second half of the twelfth century, Hugh Keveloic granted the land to Adam, son of Onyt, whose family assumed the name of Sutton. The Suttons may have acquired the remainder of the manor in the 16th century.

In 1399, the abbot and convent of the monastery of Chester was granted a royal license to crenellate the manor at Sutton (that is, to fortify the building and add a stepped parapet wall to the roof from which archers can fire their bows with a measure of protection). The wording of this licence, granted by Richard II by privy seal, reads, "Licence for the abbot and convent of the monastery of Chester, of royal foundation and in the king's patronage, to crenellate their manors (manerium) of Salghton, Sutton and Ins.

"This license was not acted upon, but in 1410 Henry IV granted a confirmation licence to crenellate Sutton manor, for which the abbot of Chester paid 13s. 4d. (67 pence in today's money).

This building no longer survives, in its place a new chapel was erected in the 16th century almost 500 years ago and was a centre of Roman Catholic worship managed by the Diocese of Shrewsbury. It was in this time the residents of Sutton Hall, established priest holes and rumoured tunnels, one of which is believed to be from the Library fire place!

The Chapel still stands to this day along with the Priest's house attached, the walled courtyard was during this point a walled garden with the lych-gate and this, along with the tunnels and priest holes, are perhaps a direct result of the oppression of the Roman Catholic religion under Henry VIII and more particularly, Edward VI.



Literary connections...

Sutton Hall was the birthplace of Ralph Holinshed, a 16th century scholar whose historical chronicles were used as the basis for fourteen of Shakespeare's plays. As a young man he worked for Reginald Wolfe, who in 1548 planned to prepare a history of the world. Wolfe died in 1573 with the book incomplete and his heirs gave Holinshed the task of completing a less ambitious work covering the United Kingdom alone. These were published in 1577 as *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. Holinshed is very well known amongst Shakespeare scholars, but Shakespeare played fast and loose with many of Holinshed's texts. We also think it's appropriate that one of our favourite dining rooms, is called *The Library*!



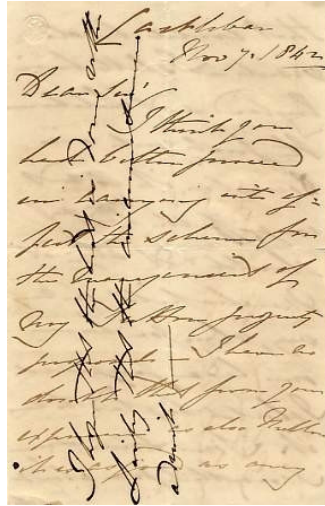
Explorers Renown...

Some of our more adventurous residents over time were Theodore and Mabel Bent, who during the 1800's went all over Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle-East. With so many nooks and crannies, it's easy to imagine all the wonderful antiquities they must have collected over the years they spent here.



Murder most foul...

Sutton Hall became part of the family estate of the Earls of Lucan. Here is a letter from the 3rd Earl of Lucan, George Charles Bingham (1800-1888) to William Brocklehurst, his estate manager at Sutton Hall. The letter was written in 1842, urging Brocklehurst to implement a scheme for the management of his Sutton estate and asking for help in securing two mares ("I have always admired the horses about Manchester & Liverpool"□)



Moving on another century or so, George Charles Patrick Bingham, the 7th Earl of Lucan, also earned a measure of notoriety, having disappeared on 7th November 1974 after the murder of his nanny at his house on Lower Belgrave Street, London. All the evidence points to Lucan as the murderer.

The belief is that he was actually intending to murder his wife, but his children's nanny was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He fled the scene and has never been found, although numerous sightings have been reported from around the world. For the full story go to <http://www.lordlucan.com>. The author of this piece is of the firm belief that Lord Lucan is alive and well, living in South America or Africa, possibly Canada or the USA (which narrows it down a bit).



Lord Lucan in the '70s and perhaps now in Goa

If you see this character hanging around the bar looking furtive, the police would be grateful if you would ring them.