

Week beginning 1st May 2023



God Save the King!

A true story this week. As we celebrate 'history in the making' let's remind ourselves of a coronation which took place 464 years ago. The Coronation of Elizabeth I and its place in Tadcaster Grammar School's own history.

Elizabeth 1's coronation: Westminster Abbey Resource



She was crowned at Westminster Abbey on 15th January 1559 by Dr Oglethorpe, Bishop of Carlisle. The Archbishop of Canterbury usually performs this ceremony but the See was vacant at that time and the Archbishop of York had refused to take the service. The ceremony was partly in the traditional Latin and partly in English.

Bishop Owen Oglethorpe

Our very own founder of the school, Owen Oglethorpe, was the Bishop who crowned Elizabeth I. David Starkey explains what happened in his book, 'Elizabeth', published in 2000:

'In these circumstances, Heath, the Archbishop of York, would have been the obvious choice to crown the Queen. He was well disposed to Elizabeth and she had a high regard for him. But he found the religious innovations she had introduced at Christmas unacceptable and declined. And so did all the other leading members of the bench of bishops, which admittedly, had been much depleted by the influenza epidemic. Finally, one of the most junior of the episcopate, Oglethorpe of Carlisle, was prevailed upon to officiate. He had already experienced Elizabeth's heterodoxy, when she had withdrawn from his celebration of the Christmas Mass. So he was forewarned. Probably, indeed, a deal was done. And at least he looked the part, since Elizabeth, who liked her clergy to be nicely turned out, ordered Bonner to lend him his richest vestments for the day. The remaining bishops were present in their copes and mitres; they proceeded with their crosses and sang the anthem 'Salva Fesa die' (Hail festive day!) and swore the oath of allegiance. But they took no further part in the ceremonies.

What would have happened if Oglethorpe had not agreed is anybody's guess.'

A very brief history of Owen Oglethorpe



Owen Oglethorpe was born in Newton Kyme in 1503, he went to Oxford University where he became Vice Chancellor and was a Bishop in the Roman Catholic Church. Born before the Reformation he saw the return of the Catholic faith under Queen Mary and its decline under Queen Elizabeth I, when he was the Bishop of Carlisle. Oglethorpe died in 1559, having been stripped of his bishophood, along with his fellow bishops, due to his Catholic faith.

Tadcaster School was established by Oglethorpe by a Chantry (an charitable endowment founded by a priest or priests to celebrate masses for the soul of the founder) in 1557. The original school was built on the north side of the church in Tadcaster and consisted of one large room (the church has since been moved! In 1877 the church was actually moved stone by stone from its original position five feet lower on the bank of the River Wharfe to its present position on higher ground just a few yards away. This was done to eliminate the risk of persistent flooding, a shrewd move in the present climate). There was a house for the school master, who had to be an ordained minister of the church. The school was free to attend, although voluntary benevolence would be welcome! (i.e. please give generously!) And the school day ran from 6 am to 11 am and from 1 pm to 5 pm! (so don't moan about our school day, although to be fair, most pupils would attend either a morning or an afternoon session!)

TGS and the Royal Family



Toulston Hall was built by Sir Thomas Fairfax in 1603 (a Parliamentarian during the Civil War but a supporter of the Restoration), the hall was pulled down long before the end of the 1800s. The Lodge was used as the dowager house by the family. Whilst there are 'gaps' in the known ownership of the Toulston site we know that a Sir Frederick Milbank resided at the Lodge in the early 1800s, during which time he was honoured by a visit from the then King, George IV, who is said to have dined at the Lodge.

The Lodge was sold to Herbert H Riley-Smith in 1890 (brewing royalty!), and it was under his ownership that the Lodge was extended and improved and the gardens landscaped. The elaborate carved entrance hall was added by Riley-Smith, along with the marble fireplace and also the electric lighting (this has been updated since!).

One of the governors of Tadcaster Grammar School in the late 1800s through to the 1940s was Sir Edward Clitherow Brooksbank, 1st Baronet Brooksbank of Healaugh Manor. He is the great grandfather of Princess Eugenie's husband Jack Brooksbank.

