

The Alluring Follies of Cumbria: Architectural Eccentricities of Northern England



Follies of Cumbria (Follies of England Book 6)

by Margaret Atwood

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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: Unveiling the Eccentric Side of Cumbria

Nestled in the picturesque landscapes of Northern England, the county of Cumbria is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, rich history, and cultural heritage. Amidst its rolling hills, tranquil lakes, and historic towns, there lies a fascinating collection of architectural oddities known as follies. These enigmatic structures stand as a testament to the whimsical and

eccentric nature of British history, offering a glimpse into the minds of their creators.

What are Follies?

Follies are essentially ornamental buildings or structures that were constructed primarily for aesthetic reasons rather than practical utility. They often mimic the architectural styles of medieval castles, Roman temples, or other historical monuments. In the 18th and 19th centuries, follies became popular among wealthy landowners and aristocrats who sought to add an air of grandeur to their estates.

The Follies of Cumbria: A Unique Architectural Tapestry

Cumbria is home to a remarkable number of follies, each with its own unique design and intriguing backstory. These architectural gems are scattered throughout the county, inviting visitors to embark on a captivating journey through time and imagination.

1. Castle How, Keswick

Perched on a hilltop overlooking the town of Keswick, Castle How is a folly that mimics a ruined medieval castle. Constructed in the 18th century, it features a central tower, battlements, and a winding staircase leading to a viewing platform. The folly offers stunning panoramic views of the surrounding Derwentwater and Borrowdale Valley.

2. Mirehouse, Whitehaven

Mirehouse is an impressive folly that resembles a Norman castle. Built in the 19th century, it boasts a grand entrance hall, a banqueting room, and numerous turrets and crenelations. The folly was originally intended to be a

home for the Hasell family, but it was never completed and instead became a popular tourist attraction.

3. The Temple of the Winds, Lowther Castle

Nestled within the grounds of Lowther Castle, the Temple of the Winds is a circular folly that features eight Ionic columns supporting a drum and a conical roof. Built in the 18th century, it was inspired by the Temple of the Winds in Athens. The folly offers a serene retreat with stunning views of the surrounding parkland.

4. The Seven Arches, Carlisle

The Seven Arches is a folly consisting of seven arched bays that span a small stream. Constructed in the 18th century, it served as a picturesque focal point for the grounds of Edenhall Estate. The folly is now surrounded by a public park, offering a tranquil spot for contemplation and relaxation.

5. The Gothic Arch, Rydal Mount

Overlooking the picturesque Rydal Water, the Gothic Arch is a folly that resembles a medieval abbey gateway. Built in the 19th century, it was designed by William Wordsworth, the renowned Romantic poet who lived at Rydal Mount. The folly serves as a fitting tribute to the literary and artistic heritage of the region.

The Significance of Follies

Beyond their whimsical and aesthetic appeal, the follies of Cumbria hold significant historical and cultural value. They provide insights into the architectural tastes, social aspirations, and eccentricities of the county's

past inhabitants. These structures also contribute to the unique character and charm of Cumbria's landscape, attracting visitors from far and wide.

Preserving the Follies of Cumbria

Many of the follies in Cumbria are protected by law as listed buildings or scheduled monuments. This ensures their preservation for future generations to appreciate. However, some follies have fallen into disrepair and are in need of restoration. Conservation efforts are underway by various organizations to protect these architectural treasures and ensure their continued legacy.

: A Legacy of Architectural Eccentricity

The follies of Cumbria are a testament to the enduring power of imagination and the whimsical spirit that has shaped British history. These architectural eccentricities stand as reminders of a time when creativity and aesthetics reigned supreme. By exploring these fascinating follies, visitors can delve into the county's rich heritage and discover the hidden gems that make Cumbria a truly captivating destination.



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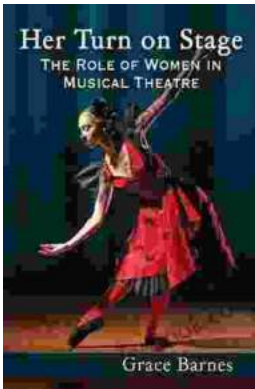
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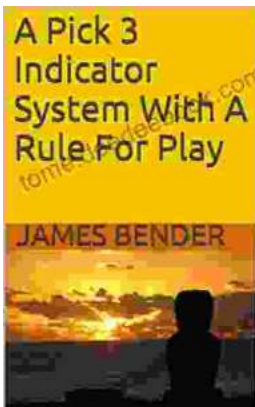
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