

# BISHOPS HOUSE



One of Sheffield City Museums

## the location

On the south side of Sheffield, the house is sited at the highest point in Meersbrook Park, a public park from which there are panoramic views over the City. The gardens around the building are planted with herbs, shrubs and flowers typical of sixteenth and seventeenth century small domestic gardens.

The locality is Norton Lees in the historic Parish of Norton, once part of Derbyshire, but now within the City of Sheffield. Other interesting buildings in the Parish include the Parish Church with the Blythe family Chapel, and The Oakes, a Georgian Hall, open to the public in summer

### Open—

Wednesdays—Saturdays  
1000—1700

Sundays  
1100—1700

Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas  
and Boxing Day

### Admission

Children (5 to 16) 5p  
Adults 10p  
O.A.P. free

Booking is essential for parties,  
including schools

ADULT

53748

# the house

Bishops' House is the most complete example of a timber-framed house surviving in Sheffield. Built around 1500, the two separate wings in plan form an L shape. The hall, the centre of household life, was in the east wing and originally open to the roof; in the west wing were the family's private apartments, chief of which was the parlour. Not large enough to have been an important manor house, it is more likely to have been built as a home for a member of the minor gentry or a prosperous yeoman farmer. Documents and pictures record that barns and outbuildings were once attached.

For 200 years, between 1500 and 1700, alterations and improvements were made, reflecting both the rising prosperity of the owners and new standards of comfort. Many original features survive and each window, door and fireplace represents a different part of an interesting and complex story, in many ways typifying the development of smaller houses in sixteenth and seventeenth century England.

In 1753 the property was sold and the house divided into two dwellings. No major alterations were made, and apart from a few additional doors, windows and internal partitions, the house remains substantially as in 1700. Last occupied in 1974, extensive restoration and repairs were carried out before the house opened as a Museum in 1976.

# the name

The Bishops thought to have lived here were two brothers, John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury (1494-1499) and Geoffrey Blythe, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (1503-1533). Although tradition is strong there is no proof for this story, and the name Bishops' House is itself of recent origin.

The original owners and builders are not known. The Blythes, however, owned land and property locally from at least the fourteenth century, and by the 1600's there is documentary evidence for a branch of the Blythe family at Bishops' House. One member, a William Blythe, was a Captain with the Parliamentary Army in the Civil War and helped supervise the demolition of Sheffield Castle. He was also a prosperous farmer and miller as well as a wealthy organiser of scythe manufacture and trade.

# the museum

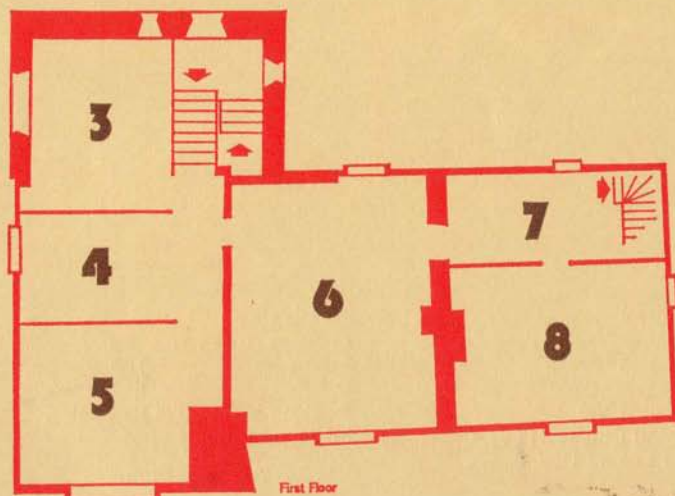
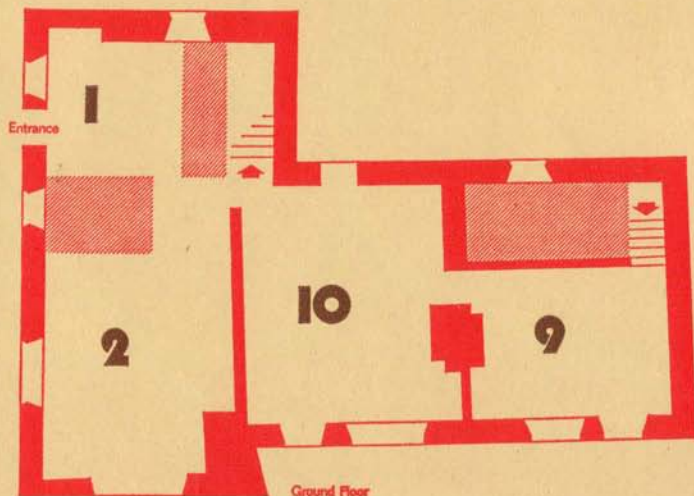
The house is the main exhibit and two rooms are furnished in the style of a prosperous yeoman's home of the seventeenth century.

Displays and models illustrate the structural development of the house, including techniques of timber-framing.

Exhibition rooms feature regularly changing displays exploring facets of Sheffield life and history from the sixteenth century to the present day, and special exhibitions on a variety of topics.

One room has been set aside where children can explore the building and life style it represents, and also aspects of childhood, through displays and activities for both individuals and groups.

- 1** Entrance and sales desk
- 2** Dining room, furnished
- 3** Bedroom, furnished
- 4** Rest and information area
- 5** Exhibition room
- 6** Bishops' House: History and Structural Development
- 7** Exhibition gallery
- 8** Exhibition room
- 9** Children's room
- 10** Exhibition room



# how to get there

Bishops' House is close to the A61 trunk road (Sheffield—Chesterfield) and the following buses stop nearby:

20 stops in Norton Lees Road

33 stops at junction of Derbyshire Lane and Norton Lees Lane

34 and 38/39 stop in Norton Lees Lane

2 (Outer Circle) stops at junction of Derbyshire Lane and Norton Lees Lane

8/9 (Inner Circle) stops in Valley Road

## Facilities

Information about exhibitions and activities for children available on request.

Guided tours for small parties available if booked in advance.

Toilets nearby

## Bookings and Enquiries to—

Bishops' House  
Meersbrook Park  
Norton Lees Lane  
Sheffield S8 9BE

Telephone 0742 57701

## Other enquiries and details of publications to

City Museum  
Weston Park  
Sheffield S10 2TP  
Telephone 0742 27226

Drawing of Bishops' House by  
Perry Garceau

Published by Sheffield City Museums, 1976

