

= Westholme House =

Westholme House is a historic building in the English market town of Sleaford in Lincolnshire , set in 32 acres of parkland and school grounds . Built around 1849 in the style of a French Gothic mansion by Charles Kirk for his business partner Thomas Parry , it was privately owned until the 1940s , when Kesteven County Council acquired the house and its grounds . It subsequently served as the county library and part of Sleaford Secondary Modern School (later St George 's Academy) . The stone house follows an asymmetrical layout and incorporates a range of Gothic elements in its design . In 1974 , it was recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade II listed building , recognising it as of " special interest " .

= = History = =

Prior to the enclosure of Sleaford in 1794 , the lands that later became the Westholme estate were mostly open fields . The largest was Puddingpan Race behind the houses on Westgate , thought to be named for the muddy puddles that formed there . That field was bounded to the north by Drove Lane , a track running to South Rauceby , and parts of the future estate also included " Millgatemere Furlong " to the north west and claypits to the north east . Following the enclosure , Drove Lane was straightened and moved northwards by a third of a mile ; the old open fields were reorganised within this new space , producing straight , geometric boundary lines . The future Westholme grounds were divided up between several land @-@ owners , including Lord Bristol and Benjamin Handley .

= = = Private ownership = = =

Thomas Parry (1818 ? 1879) , an architect , builder and future Member of Parliament for Boston employed his business partner and brother @-@ in @-@ law , Charles Kirk the younger , to design Westholme House on the site for him ; their firm Kirk and Parry completed the mansion around 1849 . Parry moved in with his wife , mother and sister , and employed two servants ; by 1871 , two domestic workers had been added to his household . Parry died in 1879 followed by his wife , Henrietta , in 1882 .

Henry Peake (1821 ? 1886) was occupying Westholme in 1885 , three years after the death of Parry 's wife . Peake was a solicitor who served as clerk to the county magistrates , and was a partner in the local law firm Peake , Snow and Peake , along with his son Henry Arthur Peake . The partnership had connections with Kirk and Parry , and Peake married Eliza , a daughter of Charles Kirk the elder . After his death , Peake 's sons , George Herbert and Henry Arthur , successively occupied the house in the late 19th and early 20th centuries . During the First World War , Henry Arthur and his wife , Alice Ann , lost three of their sons in battle . In 1923 , Henry Arthur died while staying at Hastings . He and his wife were planning to sell Westholme and move to Guildford before his death ; she did so and died there in 1933 . The businessman and Liberal politician Samuel Pattinson (1870 ? 1942) lived at the house from at least 1924 . His wife , Betsy Sharpley Pattinson , also died in 1942 and their trustees auctioned off the furniture at Westholme two years later .

= = = Public ownership = = =

Westholme was occupied by the military during the Second World War . Kesteven County Council had acquired the land by 1945 and proposed to use it for educational purposes . The council wanted to convert the house into Kesteven County Library , but it had to wait for the War Department to agree to pay fees for " dilapidations " caused during its occupancy . The Department provisionally agreed on £ 1 @, @ 276 16s in 1947 and the library was operating at the house by 1949 . An Navy , Army and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) canteen supplied school meals after the war ; and in 1947 the council bought a series of huts on the site from the War Department .

In 1957 , the council planned to open a new mixed secondary modern at Westholme and , by 1960 , Sleaford Secondary Modern School was operating there alongside its original buildings on Church

Lane . In 1983 , an extension to the Westholme block opened , allowing the school to close the old site ; new teaching blocks were then built around the grounds . The school changed its name to St George 's School in 1984 , became a technology college in 1992 and converted to St George 's Academy in 2010 . The house continued to be used as a library into the 1980s , but by the next decade , had become the school 's sixth form base and an adult education centre . As a result of major rebuilding work at St George 's in 2011 ? 12 , a new sixth form centre opened and Westholme House was converted into the school 's administrative centre .

= = Architecture = =

Charles Kirk and Thomas Parry were builders and architects in Sleaford ; their company prospered in the mid @-@ 19th century and was responsible for a number of civic , religious and corporate buildings in the town , including the gas works , Carre 's Grammar School and Carre 's Hospital . Westholme has been called their " most cheerfully inventive " building ; built in the style of a Gothic château , Pevsner described the mansion as " an ebullient essay in French [15th century] domestic Gothic . "

The two @-@ storey house is built in coursed stone with steep , Welsh slate roofing . Its asymmetrical design incorporates an eclectic range of Gothic elements , including tall , polygonal chimney stacks , a four @-@ centred arch doorway , dragon motifs and carved pinnacles . The eastern façade includes two gables with a tall four @-@ centred arch window . To the right is a tower of three @-@ storeys with a pointed roof which connects to a projecting bay of two storeys . The bay incorporates a stack of three square windows topped with a Flamboyant arch , two hipped roofs with decorative spikes , and three chimneys . The rear is more simple ; the windows are mullioned and most are square , except for three bay windows . It has two wings laid out like half an " H " , which each have a gable and embattled parapets .

The site also houses a Gothic stable @-@ block , which Sir Nikolaus Pevsner considered " charming " , and two Tudor @-@ style lodges . A stretch of wall in the grounds is 100m long and made up of stone fragments , many Gothic , which were most likely taken from church restorations conducted by Kirk and Parry .