

The Parish Records show that there were two main Stafford families in Baslow in the 1600s headed by Edmund born in Darley, and John of Baslow. Two other families appear briefly Robert of Bubnell and another John (see Stafford family tree). All may or may not have been related. The outstanding Stafford in the 1600s was Robert grandson of Edmund above, who is described in more detail.

## Edmund Stafford of Darley & family

Edmund was described in the Parish Records as “of Darley”. He died in Baslow in 1607 with two children Elizabeth and Robert born in the village. This Robert had 2 daughters and Robert 1625-1702 who became an accountant at Chatsworth. Apparently had did not marry.

## John Stafford of Baslow & family

John was born in the mid 1600s. His descendants, and probably John himself, lived at The Farm at Nether End., next door to the Wheatsheaf Inn. Most of their land was in the area now occupied by Chatsworth Park. In 1824 the last Stafford John 1788-1853 had to give up the land in exchange for a similar area across the river near the Bakewell Road. His widow Margaret continued farming until her death in 1885 when the land reverted to Chatsworth and the farmhouse was given to the Hearnshaw family.

## Robert Stafford 1625 to 1702.

**Robert Stafford 1625 to 1702** (mentioned above) must have been an educated man. He may well have attended the newly endowed Charity School at Stanton Ford and perhaps gone on to a university. He first appears as a Sub Accountant at Chatsworth (Phillip Riden, Derbyshire Archaeological Journal vol 136 (2016) pp92-110). As such he was responsible to the Accountant at Hardwick for all the money received and spent by Chatsworth. During his tenure 1668-1700 he served the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Devonshire until his death in 1684 then the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl, who became the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Devonshire in 1694. During the years 1685 to 1692 when the gardens were being reshaped and then the house rebuilt, he was responsible for the spending of about £3400 annually– perhaps £350,000 in today's money. After 1692 until he retired in 1700 the amount was reduced to £440 annually when the House Steward managed the finances for the house rebuild. He died two years later in 1702 aged 77 years

He had a very responsible position.

When he died in 1702, the Parish Records describe him as Robert Stafford of Parkgate. Parkgate house or hamlet was and still is isolated on high ground above Chatsworth house on the border of Baslow and Chatsworth parishes. It was then at a road junction, where the main road from Baslow to Chesterfield/Ashover crossed the road from Chatsworth to Sheffield as it left the Chatsworth deer park – the gate or road to the park. Local tradition as recorded by J B Ward places The Horns Inn at this spot. Court records show that a victuallers licence was granted to Parkgate in 1760. Robert Stafford would have lived in the Inn or perhaps in a substantial house nearby.

His tombstone in Baslow Churchyard is solid large stone intricately carved and well preserved. Expensive. It is listed by Historic England as a Grade 2 Scheduled Monument. Its entry reads as follows



*Monument 10m South East of St Anne's Church GV II Monument to Robert Stafford in the form of a Coffin. 1702. Gritstone ashlar chest in the form of a coffin with relief carving on the top of an hourglass, a serpent eating its tail, crossbones and wings. At the foot a skull and crossbones in relief and at the ends stone lifting rings carved in relief. The coffin sits on a rectangular chamfered based. Inscription on the top appears to read,*

*"Here lyeth the body of Robert Stafford who was buried here March ye 20th Anno 1702 aged 78. Surgite Mortui."*



Note:-

- Surgite Mortui translates as "Arise ye dead". It is the only Latin inscription in the entire churchyard.
- The carvings are all related to death and the afterlife.

A handsome memorial to an educated and wealthy man.

David Dalrymple-Smith

## Dates

3 <sup>rd</sup> Earl of Devonshire	Born 1617, became Earl 1628, died 1684
4th Earl /1 <sup>st</sup> Duke	Born 1640, Earl 1684, made Duke in 1694, died 1707
Robert Stafford	b 1625, sub accountant in 1668, retired 1700, died 1702

After 1684, initial spending on gardens, then after 1687 on the main house

From 1693 to 1700 Stafford received £440 a year for ordinary expenses. Rebuilding money to John Wheldon av £2765/year

Imprests to Hackett av £539 annually

Imprests to 1684 av £740, then 1685-1692 av £3499

£1 in 1700 is worth about £100 today.