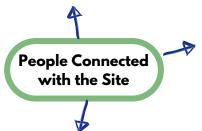
Location

- Hardwick Hall is in Derbyshire, England
- Built on the estate where Bess of Hardwick was born and raised, next to her childhood home, Hardwick Old Hall
- Situated in the Derbyshire countryside, it showcases materials and craftsmanship from the surrounding region

Bess of Hardwick (Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury) Wealthy widow and builder of Hardwick Hall





Robert Smythson

Architect and stonemason, responsible for the Hall's design, emphasizing glass and symmetry

Structure

- The Hall is noted for its striking symmetry, with balanced design on all four sides
- Features three main floors: the ground floor for servants, the first floor for Bess, and the top floor with large rooms for potential royal guests
- Known for "more glass than wall," with extensive windows and internal chimney flues to maintain the external glass effect

Function

- Hardwick Hall was built as a grand residence for Bess of Hardwick, showcasing her wealth and status
- Designed for social gatherings and to impress high-ranking guests
- Its layout reflects Elizabethan social hierarchy, with distinct floors for servants, family, and important visitors

George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury

Bess's fourth husband, one of England's wealthiest men, who brought her wealth and influence but whose relationship with Bess deteriorated

Legacy and Historical Importance

- Hardwick Hall is one of the best examples of Elizabethan architecture, particularly in its use of glass and symmetry
- It showcases Bess of Hardwick's influence and wealth, as well as her role as a powerful and independent figure of her time
- The Hall set a new standard in Elizabethan architectural style, combining luxury with regional pride and self-sufficiency

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: HARDWICK HALL

The Hall's design reflects
Elizabethan ideals of symmetry
and order, emphasizing a
balanced, structured
appearance





Notable for large, impressive glass windows, a status symbol of wealth

Built from local materials like wood, stone, iron, and glass from Bess's own properties, showcasing her economic independence and local pride

Key Events/Developments

- Hardwick Hall was built shortly after Bess's estranged husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury, died, allowing her to return to her birthplace
- The Hall's design reflects the trend among Elizabethan nobility to build grand, private estates showcasing their status
- Bess's investment in local materials and craftsmanship supported regional industries and highlighted the growing domestic economy

Cultural Values and Fashions of the Era

- Glass was a luxury material in Elizabethan England, symbolizing wealth and refinement
- The Hall's symmetry reflects Elizabethan ideas of balance and the social order
- Using materials from her own estates aligns with the Elizabethan ideal of noble self-sufficiency and support of local industries



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