



The lovely Stretton Watermill near Chester, so rustically quaint against the backdrop of Carden Hall was once part of a local empire, that of the enormously influential Leche family. One of the early John Leches (and there were many 'Johns' through the centuries) was surgeon to Edward III and Richard II in the 14th century.



Carden Hall, early 20th century



Carden Hall, September 1912 following a devastating fire

Since the Norman Conquest corn mills in Britain had been owned exclusively by landowners; farmers were compelled to make use of their Lord's machinery to process grain, ensuring the continued wealth of the powers that be. For the Leches of Cheshire this watermill in the grounds of their own magnificent Carden Hall – destroyed by fire in 1912 - was not only an income stream but symbolised the family's local power.

Since the 1970's the mill has been a beautifully restored example of Britain's early industrial heritage and is

administered by Cheshire West council and the Grosvenor museum, Chester. It is run by a dedicated team of experts and is, in addition just a stone's throw from Carden Park hotel!



Leche House, Watergate St, Chester.
(Photo by Peter I. Vardy)



St Oswald's parish Church in Malpas

For anyone interested in investigating the Leche family legacy in Cheshire the Leche House in Watergate Street, Chester is a must-see. A less known site is in the lovely village of Malpas at the parish church of St Oswald's where you can find several references to the family.