

Smeaton and Austhorpe Hall

- *The motion of fluids, natural and artificial... (2nd edition, 1737) – Martin Clare. The front flyleaf has written in manuscript “John Smeaton's book Anno Domini 1741. Austhorp' [sic].” Smeaton also makes a few minor marginal notes, text corrections etc.
- ‘One of only 3 copies of a book by John Smeaton [title unspecified] found in the offices of the Western Morning News’, Country Life, October 1 1992, p.96. Illustrated.
- ‘Leeds man, Mr. F.S, Wilby, claims to be the last living descendant of John Smeaton,’ YEP, March 14 1972
- ‘Austhorpe Hall up for sale – letter appealing for it to become a John Smeaton museum,’ YEP, May 11 1984, p. 64 – 65
- ‘Commemorative plaque at Leeds Grammar School, which he [Smeaton] attended’, YEP, November 19 1992, p. 147 – 148
- ‘Memorial plaque to [Smeaton to] be dedicated at Westminster Abbey on November 8,’ YEP, November 5 1994, p. 6
- ‘John Smeaton, born at Austhorpe, 1724,’ Leeds Yearbook, 1936, p. 1
- ‘John Smeaton and Austhorpe Lodge,’ Skyrack Express, September 11 1993, p. 8. Illustrated.
- ‘Biographers of John Smeaton are trying to locate his private letters,’ Yorkshire Post, November 18 1968, p. 6 – 9

See images of Smeaton and Austhorpe Hall on our Leodis archive:

<https://bit.ly/AusthorpeHall> (both images on this guide are from Leodis)

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Smeaton Research Guide

Our Research Guides list some of the most useful, interesting and unique items in Local and Family History at Leeds Central Library. Many others are listed in our online and card catalogues. Items marked * may require 24-hours notice to view. PTS = Publications of the Thoresby Society.

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John Smeaton (1742 – 1792) was born in Austhorpe, Leeds and was celebrated in his own time as one of Britain's foremost civil engineers. He designed many important buildings, including canals, bridges, harbours and lighthouses – most famously the Eddystone Lighthouse in Cornwall.

Works by John Smeaton

- *A narrative of the building and a description of the construction of the Edystone Lighthouse with stone (1791* and 1813 editions)
- *Account of the observation of the Right Ascension and Declination of Mercury out of the Median, near his greatest elongation, Sept 1786: with plate and autograph note (1787)
- *An historical report on Ramsgate Harbour written by order of, and addressed to, the trustees (1791)
- *Experimental enquiry concerning the natural powers of wind and water to turn mills and other machines depending on a circular motion: with five plated of machines (1794* and 1813 editions)
- *New fundamental experiments in the collision of bodies ... in a letter to Sir John Banks. With autograph note: read at Gray's Inn April 18 1782 (1782)
- *Plans for the Middleton engine and engine house. Six technical drawings (1779 – 1780)
- *Reports of the late John Smeaton, F.R.S. made on various occasions in the course of his employment as a civil engineer (1812 – 1814)

Biographies of Smeaton

- 'John Smeaton: Father of English civil engineering,' The Dalesman, November 1968, p.630 - 633
- Smeaton of Austhorpe: The Father of English civil engineering (2007) – Robert Lawrence
- Leeds and Yorkshire biography, Volume III, p.565
- Portraits of Yorkshire Worthies, Volume III, p.125
- Methuen's Brief Lives: Newcomen and Smeaton (1971) – Roger Raymond Sellman
- John Smeaton (1981) – A.W. Skempton
- 'Note on his children, including his illegitimate son, John Reynolds', Skyrack Express, November 13 1992, p.1
- Lives of the engineers. Smeaton and Rennie: Harbours, lighthouses, bridges (1904) – Samuel Smiles

Publications celebrating Smeaton's life and works

- 'Letter concerning Smeaton's early steam engines, plus a sketch c.1784 for York Waterworks,' Country Life, August 16 1979, p.477
- 'The present-day Eddystone Lighthouse and remains of the original Smeaton design,' YEP, July 15 1975, p.6. Illustrated.
- 'John Smeaton's work in Scotland,' YEP, January 23 1993, p.15
- 'A philosopher among engineers: John Smeaton's bridges and viaducts,' Country Life Annual, 1972, p.124-25. Illustrated.
- *'Worthies: Some men of mark in old time Leeds,' lantern lecture (1938 – 1940) – Alf Mattison
- The Eddystone Lighthouse: Old and New (1882) – Edwards E. Price
- 'John Smeaton,' in PTS, Vol. LIII, Miscellany 15, part 3 (1973) – C.A. Lupton
- 'Pedigree of Smeaton of Austhorpe,' PTS, Vol. II, Misc. I, 1891 – J.W. Morkill
- 'Civil engineering in the Ridings,' Yorkshire Ridings, July 1970, p.21-32. Illus.
- The Foundry Mill at Seacroft: a brief history (2016) – Ken Cross

Smeaton's contributions to the Proceedings of the Royal Society of London

Contact us for a full list of Smeaton's contributions to the Royal Society

- 'An Engine for Raising Water by Fire; Being an Improvement of Savery's Construction, to Render It Capable of Working Itself,' November 9 1752
- 'An Account of Some Experiments upon a Machine for Measuring the Way of a Ship at Sea,' April 4 1754
- 'A Letter from Mr. J. Smeaton to Mr. John Ellicott, F. R. S. concerning Some Improvements Made by Himself in the Air-Pump,' April 16 1752
- 'A Description of a New Tackle or Combination of Pullies,' June 11 1752
- 'Description of a New Pyrometer, with a Table of Experiments Made Therewith,' May 23 1754
- 'Remarks on the Different Temperature of the Air at Edystone, from That Observed at Plymouth, between the 7th and 14th of July 1757,' Jan 12 1758
- 'An Experimental Enquiry concerning the Natural Powers of Water and Wind to Turn Mills, and Other Machines, Depending on a Circular Motion,' May 3 & 10 1759
- 'Description of a New Method of Observing the Heavenly Bodies out of the Meridian,' May 16 1768
- 'Observation of a Solar Eclipse the 4th of June, 1769, at the Observatory at Austhorpe,' November 16 1769
- 'Description of a New Hygrometer,' March 21 1771