

A TALE OF TWO MOTTOS

Generations of OC's (including me) will have gone in and out of the clock-tower doorway at Sheffield Road without noticing the Latin motto "Ingredere ut proficias" above our heads, chiseled into a frieze on the south side of the tower in 1846, when the building was completed and the Rev. Frederick Calder was Headmaster. The coat-of-arms on the west face is that of Chesterfield itself as at the same date.



The choice of wording, which translates as "enter so that you may progress", was a popular one, as it can also be found in the Google entries for a long line of well-known schools including Abingdon, Ilminster Grammar, Kirkham Grammar, Spondon House, St. Bees, St. Peters (York) and St. Pauls School.

It may have been its very popularity that persuaded James Mansell, Headmaster, to change it in 1908 when he introduced the House system, a new school badge and a new motto "non quo sed quomodo" (not whither but how). Even this was not unique, as further Google research confirms it to have been the family motto of Lord Howard de Walden and also, later, that of Plaistow Grammar School (since closed).



Unfortunately, history does not record why the School chose to change a motto carved into the very fabric of the building for over 60 years in favour of a new one, but it was a bold Headmaster who decided to do so.

Courtesy of Frank Gorman