

## The Story of Rockingham Pottery 1826-42, by the Leader brothers

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The Leader brothers displayed their love of Rockingham Pottery in their talk on Thursday night. Leo Leader, the eldest, did the talking and was prompted from time to time by his brother Malcolm who also operated the two slide projectors simultaneously. He explained how the pottery came to be at Swinton, this was mainly because all the ingredients required were there, water coal and clay and records show that pots were made on that site from 1745. The pottery passed through several owners including Leeds Pottery until it came into the hands of the Brameld family. He explained that the pottery got its name because it was for some time under the patronage of the

[Earls Fitzwilliam](#)

, indirect descendants of the

[Marquesses of Rockingham](#)

, who were the major landowners in the area, and lived just a few miles away. He showed us many pictures of the beautiful and intricate pottery produced by the factory over the sixteen years of its existence, much of this was commissioned by royalty and a lot of the remaining pieces are still owned by the queen. He showed us a slide of one of the famous pair of Rhinoceros vases which were the largest single-piece porcelain objects in existence unique at that time, they were elaborate displays of

the artistic and practical capabilities of the pottery, and one of these is now in the Victoria and Albert museum. Unfortunately the Brameld family were more artists than business men and after being bailed out several times by the Earls of Fitzwilliam, they finally went bankrupt in 1842 and closed the pottery down. The talk was informative and very well presented by the brothers.