

LEIGHTON HALL

Ref No	PGW (Po) 34 (POW)
OS Map	126
Grid Ref	SJ 242046
Former County	Powys
Unitary Authority	Powys
District	Montgomeryshire
Community Council	Forden
Designations	<u>Listed building</u> Leighton Hall, including Leighton Hall Tower and attached walls to gardens on south and south-east of Hall - Grade II*; archways, gates and forecourt walls at the principal north-west entrance to the Hall - Grade II; lodge and principal entrance to north-west of Hall - Grade II; iron gate and gate piers, north-west entrance to gardens and forecourt of Hall - Grade II, foot bridge and wall walk to south-east of serpentine pond - Grade II; statue of Icarus (presently removed from site) - Grade II; stables - Grade II; cable house (park pond) - Grade II; poultry house - Grade II; Holy Trinity church - Grade II; walls, railings, gates and gate piers at church - Grade II; Church lodge - Grade II. <u>Tree Preservation Order</u> Blanket order on the Charles Ackers and Naylor redwoods.
Site Evaluation	Grade I
Primary reasons for grading	Grand mid Victorian house with contemporary garden of exceptional historic interest by the well known garden designer Edward Kemp. The estate was run as a model farm and has an exceptional collection of Victorian agricultural buildings. Woodlands of high arboricultural interest, especially the Charles Ackers Grove and Naylor pinetum. The Leyland cypress was bred at Leighton.
Type of Site	High Victorian formal garden with ornamental

woodland and parkland

Main Phases of Construction

House c. 1840 on, garden (Edward Kemp) c. 1850.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Leighton Hall is situated on level ground to the east of the Leighton/ Kingswood road (B 4388), in the centre of a once large estate on the west side of the Severn valley. To the west of the Hall and the B 4388 the land of the historic estate slopes down towards the River Severn, which winds along the wide, flat valley bottom. Beyond, on a corresponding ridge, is Powis Castle: the two estates face each other across the valley. To the east, wooded hillsides overlooking the Hall and its garden rise to a ridge, the Long Mountain, along which Offa's Dyke runs.

Leighton Hall is built in gothic style and is composed of two main blocks, on the west and south-east, both built in a hard grey-yellow Cefn stone with ashlar dressings. The high slate roof and irregular moulded stacks, pinnacles and parapets were deliberately designed to create a continually changing skyline to be seen from the gardens.

The west block is rectangular, with two storeys and dormers set in the slate roof. On the west front a full height projecting square Tudor style porch stands between two gabled bays, the bay on the north containing an ornamental mullioned ground floor window, that on the south lit by two high but narrow Gothic crosses. Short lengths of screen wall, containing Tudoresque timber doors, extend from the north-west and south-west corners of the west front, which screen off the north lawn and Library Garden from the forecourt. The porch contains an interior door. The arms of the Naylor family, who built the Hall, and the words 'Welcome' are set above the double doors in carved stone.

The north front of the west block is divided into five bays. The first bay, from the west, is full-height, semi-circular and contains tall, narrow Tudor windows which light the drawing room below and master bedroom above. On the ground floor of the fourth bay there is a second projecting bay, a high square bay with a castellated parapet above. In the fifth bay there is an upstairs small oriel window.

The south front of the west block is of three bays, the outer bays being defined by gables. French windows on the ground floor open out from the Morning Room on to a narrow paved terrace. To the east of the west block on this side of the house a wall extends for about 10m. A *Magnolia soulangeana* and a wisteria grow along the south face of the Hall and on this wall. This wall, and the north-east end of the north front now enclose an internal service court which was previously partly covered by two lost wings. One wing was demolished in the 1850s the other as late as 1940. A screen wall on the east, which connects the north-east of the west wing with the south-east wing, contains blocked up windows and a door. To the north of this wall a gable at the east end of the north front is ornamented by a bell cupola.

On the south-east of the west wing there is a smaller, gabled two-storey wing which extends about 20m to the south. At the northern end of this wing an eight stage tower rises above the

Hall. Executed in a Gothic design, the tower has two half balconies and, on the north-west, an external circular stair tower which leads up to a viewing platform. The upper storey of the tower contains tall narrow windows which rise from floor to ceiling.

The southern end of the south-east wing is decorated by a hard, stone carved frieze of two plain discs on either side of a shield. The frieze, on the upper storey of the building, is about 4m long and 2m high. A high screen wall, containing a high pointed carriage arch, stands between the north-west of the south-east wing and the east wall of the Library Garden, on the south front of the Hall. This screen wall encloses the interior court, its door providing access to the area. Above the door there is an almost life size stone sculpture of a romantic medieval knight in full armour. Inside the Hall rich, mid nineteenth-century interiors were created in Palace of Westminster style by A. W. N. Pugin, carried out by his partner J. G. Grace.

Leighton Hall, with its associated gates, lodges and estate buildings, was built for the millionaire Liverpool industrialist and banker John Naylor between 1850 and 1856 by the Liverpool architect W. H. Gee. The new house replaced an existing half-timbered house, dating from about 1541, that had been built for Humphrey Lloyd, High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire. Little more is known about this earlier house apart from the fact that by 1650 the house and estate had passed into the Corbett family of Shropshire, related to the Corbetts of Vaynor Park, Berriew, from whom Naylor's uncle, Christopher Leyland, bought in 1845 (there is a drawing of the house in the Vaynor papers). John Naylor, who was one of the richest men in Victorian England, was given Leighton as a wedding present by his uncle, followed by a gift of about £100,000 in 1847, which enabled him to start on his improvements. Apart from his building he amassed art works, much of the Leighton collection now being on display in the Walker Gallery, Liverpool. He also served as High Sheriff for Montgomeryshire in the 1850s. The house and grounds cost Naylor an estimated £275,000 and included the most modern technology of the day. The house was at the centre of a modern, technologically advanced estate, which extended to over 4,000 acres. The west block of the house was completed first, in about 1851, the east, south-east blocks followed and the tower was completed by about 1856.

The house remained within the Naylor family until John Naylor's grandson sold it in 1931. At the time of the sale the house was described as 'a residential domain ... suitable for a school, institution or country club'. This sale followed an earlier land sale of 1908/09 which had seen the break up of the wider estate, partly to pay his grandmother's death duties. The house was bought as a private house by Senator Davies who had been living on the other side of Welshpool at Brookland Hall. After the Second World War the house became a boys school and remained as such until the late 1980s when it was sold again to an arts foundation. In the early 1990s the foundation sold on to a private owner. The house gradually declined and was in a poor condition when the present owners purchased the Hall and gardens in the early 1990s.

The parkland, strictly speaking, is confined to an area to the north, west and south-west of the house. The form of the parkland, and other outposts to the north-east and east of the house and gardens, is Victorian. The field boundaries, plantations and ornamental planting were developed during the Naylor tenure and were recorded on a tithe map of 1847 and the Harrison estate maps of the 1860s. Some of the field boundaries may, however, be older.

Much of the estate was managed as a model farm, the buildings of which are of outstanding historic interest. Specimen conifers dotted about the farmland around Leighton are testament to Naylor's improvements. The plantations on the Long Mountain ridge to the east will be treated separately.

An area of parkland covering about 30 acres lies to the north-west of Leighton Hall. The land, which slopes down to the north-west is enclosed on the west by plantations of young mixed trees along the B4388 road and on the east by a formal, straight belt of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland, the New Plantation, which runs south from the model farm to the walled kitchen garden. An eastwards extension of the plantation runs to the edge of the woodland on the Long Mountain ridge. Straight tracks run down the middle of both sections, the north-south one between house and farm, the east-west one leading to Park Pool and on to the ridge. To the west of the north-south ridge the plantation is characterised by tall redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*). This area of parkland is divided in the middle by a narrow strip plantation running north-west/south-east. The woodlands frame the view of Welshpool from the north garden walk. The retaining wall of the north garden walk acts as a ha-ha on the garden boundary. A few parkland trees survive near the west boundary, particularly oaks in the south-western area.

To the west and south-west of the house is a belt of parkland between the gardens and the B4388 road, and between the two drives. This is level grassland planted with deciduous and coniferous specimen trees.

The short north drive approaches the Hall from the north-west through a magnificent three arched Gothic stone gateway set back from the road on the east of a wide entrance, which is defined by ornamental stone screen walls. The north lodge stands on the south of the drive inside the gate arch. The drive proceeds for about 50m to enter a large turning circle on the west of the Hall, reaching the turning circle through a single cast-iron ornamental gate. Nineteenth-century cast-iron fencing separates the drive from the park on the north and a paddock on the south. Two high iron deer gates are set opposite one another in the fencing. Part way along the drive on the south there is a particularly old, hollow oak tree.

There is a second, less grand, entrance, with no gates, to the south-west of the house, with drives leading from it to the house and to Park House (omitted from the registered area), the former stables and kitchen garden to the east. To its south is a second lodge, Back Lodge, which is a small two-storey house in similar but plainer style to Front Lodge. A third entrance lies south of the house, with a lodge, Pine Lodge, to its west. The drive from here runs northwards to the former stables.

Holy Trinity church is situated c. 1 km to the north of Leighton Hall, on the west of the northern estate road. It was designed and built by W. H. Gee in 1851-53, at the same time as he was working on the hall. It stands at the western end of a small raised churchyard, and was positioned partly to serve as an eyecatcher from the hall and garden. It is a large and spectacular Cefn stone church with side aisles, flying buttresses and a high tower and spire at its north-west end. The external surface of the building is highly decorated in the Gothic Victorian style with stone traceries, gargoyles, green men and high perpendicular latticed plain and stained-glass windows. The interior of the church continues the extravagance of the

exterior. The churchyard is enclosed by a low, dressed-stone wall and contains Irish and golden yew in pairs on either side of the central path which connects to a fine stone entrance, set with cast iron gates. Yew trees, thuja and lawson cypress grow in the northern part of the churchyard, screening the building from the lane and Pentre village beyond. The vicarage, now Pentre Farm, also by Gee lies to the south-east.

A formal stone entrance leads into the estate opposite Pentre village. The estate road is bounded by two pairs of octagonal ashlar gate piers topped with ornamental stone gabled coping. Black-painted cast iron bar side gates, with fleur-de-lys detail, survive intact but the main gates are missing, only their pins remain. On the west of the gates a low screen wall, divided with an additional pair of narrow stone pillars, set with iron railings, connect to a smaller, but otherwise identical set of two iron gates which lead into the churchyard.

On the east side of the estate entrance the side gate connects to Church Lodge. This is a single-storey stone buildings with an attic storey and slate roof. It is executed in the Tudorbethan/Gothic style prevalent throughout the estate. A small porch stands on the west side of the house and the roof is ornamented with central, twin stone stacks, an ornamental iron ridge and finials on the gables. The lodge is also attributed to W. H. Gee and probably dates from about 1851-52 when Gee was working on the estate.

The park of Leighton Hall has an ancient history. The line of Offa's Dyke runs along the top of Long Mountain to the east of the park, the line of the dyke continuing as a track as, at that time, the surrounding woodlands were so dense they were considered impenetrable. Part of the dyke runs along the line of an older Roman road, which itself probably follows an ancient trackway. The southern part of this road now lies underneath a forestry track which leads into the Ackers Redwood Grove on the south-west of Long Mountain. By the time of the Domesday Book the area of the north park, which includes the north-west area, appears to have been partially cleared. The Leighton domain was recorded as 'Lestune', the manor of Roger Fitz Corbet, held by the Siward demesne of Caru-Cate and valued at the equivalent of 5 shillings. Woodland in the park extended to two leagues - enough for two hundred pigs.

By the mid sixteenth century the estate appears to have passed out of the Corbet family through marriage, to the Lloyds. By 1650 the Corbetts had regained possession under Sir Uvedale Corbett. A deer park is believed to have been established in the north park within this period, the park itself extending west and south to Kingswood village. Uvedale Corbetts' son, Sir Richard, took advantage of the wooded eastern slopes of the park in the early eighteenth century, felling large areas of oak for sale to the Admiralty. In 1741 he successfully prosecuted for timber theft, the accused being hung at Welshpool.

Following the purchase and gift of the estate in 1845 from Panton Corbett by the Leyland family to John Naylor, Naylor began to lay out a model estate which embraced the technology of Victorian industry but one that also served to highlight his own social standing. A new Home Farm complex was built to the north of the house, but out of its view, and set-piece lodges, formal entrances, a new central-northern estate road, estate buildings and a boundary wall were built around the new house. Naylor retained the deer park in the north-west park, filling it with pale fallow deer. He also retained some of the older smallholdings and cottages within the northern park. The form of the belt plantations in the north-west park date from

this period. In the 1860s Naylor began to develop a second area of formal parkland to the west of the Kingswood road, the New Park. Plantations were laid out around this park on the west and south with Moor Park, which included a new lodge and a formal drive, on the east. All Naylor's improvements are beautifully recorded in J. Harrison's bound maps of Leighton Hall, The Estate and Lands of John Naylor Esq, in egg tempura and gold-leaf on velum, dating from the 1860s and now held at the National Library of Wales.

Following the death of Naylor's widow in 1909 there was an extensive land sale which saw the break-up of the wider estate. The immediate area of the park, however, remained with the house. A second sale in 1931 saw the final break-up of the estate when the house and garden, park, estate buildings and woodlands were sold off in separate lots. The deer park is believed to have been lost at this time. Most of the land in the north and east park was purchased at this time by the local council, many of the buildings and woodlands going into private hands. Since the 1930s the north-west park and model farm have been farmed by a succession of council tenants.

The gardens lie to the north, east and south of the house and cover about 6 acres. To the north of the main west entrance of the house a timber door in a connecting screen wall leads through into the garden, on to a wide, raised straight terrace that runs along the north front of the house. The terrace is about 4m wide and 30m long. At the eastern end of the terrace there is an old yew tree. Near the west door a flight of semi-circular stone steps leads down from the terrace on to the north lawn, opposite the semi-circular bay of the drawing room. The rectangular north lawn slopes gently downhill for about 60m to a raised boundary wall which separates it from the park. On the west the lawn is separated from the entrance drive and approach by a mature shrubbery of laurel and rhododendron. Serpentine grass walks run through this shrubbery from the west end of the terrace to reach an octagonal stone bastion that projects into the park. The dressed stone walls of the bastion continue to the east as the retaining wall along the north of the lawn. From the western bastion the line of a straight formal walk, now grassed over, proceeds for about 200m to the east where it meets a second circular stone bastion. About 50m along the walk from the west bastion the walk drops to a lower level down a set of ten wide dressed stone steps, which are set between dressed parapets. The lower walk continues for about 40m, crossing over the Lion Bridge which is incorporated into it. This single-arched stone bridge crosses a dry, overgrown, valley that continues to the north into the park. Three symmetrical pairs of slate seats, some of which are ruinous, are set into the parapet along the length of the bridge. To the west of the bridge a flight of dog-leg steps runs down, around a mature oak tree, into the valley below. At the east end of the bridge a second set of ten steps leads up to the original level and is followed by a second and a third set of twelve steps which take the walk up to the east bastion. To the east of this the ground continues to rise as tree and shrub-planted lawn to the wooded west boundary of the south ride. Near the east bastion a derelict, partly bark-clad, timber summerhouse stands close to the garden boundary. To the south of the summerhouse the ground begins to slope down into a second dry valley that runs downhill to the west. From the east bastion a second long straight formal walk runs south for about 100m. This walk crosses over the second dry valley on a three-arched ornamental stone bridge, decorated on its east and west sides by stone gargoyles and animal heads. To the west of the bridge the dry valley is overgrown with mature flowering cherries, lilac, philadelphus and deutzia. Near the southern end of the bridge, on the west, there is a mature deodar cedar. About 10m to the

south of the bridge another hexagonal bastion stands to the west of the walk at the top of a slope which was possibly the base of a garden building. Loose stonework lies in the long grass around. At the southern end of the walk the path passes beneath a short length of laurel tunnel to reach a third octagonal bastion. From here five stone steps lead down on to a third straight walk which runs to the west to reach a continuation of the north terrace running along the east side of the house. This walk crosses over a third bridge, of five arches, which itself crosses over a third dry valley that slopes down to the north. At the western end of the walk a final set of stone steps leads up between two mature overgrown silver holly trees on to the terrace. The yew tree stands to the north of the steps.

To the east of the north lawn the ground slopes down to a long, serpentine lake which covers about 1 acre. To the north, south and east the dry valleys run down to the water. Great clumps of rhododendron crowd around the north-east and south of the lake. On the west and east sides more open areas of grass, between the evergreens, contain specimen trees and shrubs. In the southern part of the lake there is a small overgrown island, to the south of which is a similarly overgrown formal stone cascade. A small stone bridge runs along the top of this feature carrying a path which connects to the east, through overgrown laurels, on to the south walk. Near the north end of the lake a bronze statue of Icarus originally stood, seemingly about to fall into the water. The statue was removed from the site in the early 1990s but has since been recovered and is now in safe keeping. The statue base remains underneath the surface of the lake.

To the south of the third walk is the terraced part of the garden. This area is about 1 acre in size and bordered on the west and south by a connecting raised terrace walk, a continuation of the north house terrace. On the south two sets of narrow stone steps, between ornamental parapets, descend on diagonals from the terrace on to the central level from the south-east and south-west. To the south the south terrace is retained by a high stone wall which separates it from a higher area of overgrown shrubbery that continues to the south-east and south. Steps lead up into this shrubbery on the south-east and centre of the south terrace but a wire fence, denoting a property boundary, prevents access into the area. A second pool lies within the shrubbery. Along the north of the shrubbery mature flowering cherries overhang the south terrace and the garden. To the west the terrace continues along underneath a high buttressed stone wall which separates the garden from a service drive beyond. Two pointed-arch doorways lead into this drive from the garden, to the south of the library tower and at the south-west corner of the garden. The centre of the terraced garden is now a level lawn in which the lines of grassed over paths are discernible. Near the south terrace a mature thuja in the centre of four overgrown yew topiaries, which mark the corners of a slightly raised square, grow in the lawn. To the north there is an disused octagonal pool edged in moulded stone. This pool originally contained a fine, tiered, ornamental bronze Victorian fountain which was lost from the site in about 1950. On both the raised and level terraces rectangular stone statue bases and broken stone composite urn planters survive. To the east of the terrace a tree- and shrub-planted lawn slopes up to the south ride. Magnolias, Japanese acers and viburnum grow here.

To the south of the west front entrance a second doorway leads through a screen wall into the Library Garden, so called as it is overlooked by the library tower. This garden lies immediately to the south of the house, on two levels and enclosed around by a high buttressed

stone wall. A paved terrace on the south front of the house also leads into the garden through French windows which open from the south formal rooms. The first level of the garden is on that of the house. A rectangular area contains a central grassed over path which proceeds to the south, creating a central axis, up a short flight of stone steps on to a second, higher level. On either side of the path there are symmetrical grassed over rose gardens, each of which contain four beds. To the west and east of the steps a high clipped yew hedge screens off the upper and lower levels. The upper level is laid out as a grass tennis court on a west/east alignment. To the south-east of the court there is a doorway in the wall which leads through to the east on to the service drive. Nearby, to the north of the doorway, an old ginkgo tree grows against the wall with a few mature prunus beyond. Opposite the steps in the centre of the north wall there is a second doorway that originally led through into a further area of garden. This doorway now marks the property boundary.

The gardens at Leighton Hall were laid out from about 1850 by Edward Kemp, a pupil of Sir Joseph Paxton, and were designed at considerable expense to include 'set-pieces' with pools and sculpture, linked together by the raised walkways and bridges. The gardens included a rose garden (the later 'Library Garden'), a geometric garden (the east terraces) and more informal gardens around the lake. Kemp worked on another Welsh garden, Maesmawr Hall, Meifod, at the same time as Leighton. The gardens were complete by about 1870 and remained virtually unaltered until about 1930, partly due to the longevity of John Naylor's widow who lived on at Leighton for twenty years, following his death in 1889.

It seems that Kemp may have included the remnants of an earlier garden in his Victorian layout. Leighton Hall replaced an earlier house belonging to the Lloyd and Corbett families and certain planting in the garden, especially the yew tree at the east end of the house terrace and perhaps the terrace itself, predate the present house. No details of this earlier garden are, however, known.

Kemp's gardens were recorded in J. Harrison's Leighton Hall, The Estate and Lands of John Naylor Esq. in the 1860s as 'Shrubberies and lawns'. Originally the gardens lay to the north, east and immediate south of the house, the pleasure grounds to the south of Library Garden being the final area to be developed in the early 1870s. On both a tithe map of 1847 and on Harrison this area, now within a separate property, was used as a large potato patch.

The Kemp gardens remained largely unaltered into the new century. The garden shown in photographs accompanying a *Country Life* article of 1902 is distinctly Victorian, with planting and ornaments more reminiscent of the mid than late nineteenth century. The article recorded the 'solidity' and 'elegance' of the structures in the garden, the 'sylvan dells' and 'enchanted gardens'. The photographs show the gardens cluttered with ornaments and clipped evergreens, gravel paths edged in annual bedding, particularly pansies, and smooth lawns around the terraced garden sweeping up to shrubberies. A narrow gravel path ran around the north end of the lake, around the periphery of the already maturing planting. The article also included a good photograph of the terrace garden fountain. It stood in two tiers to about 2.5m, water issuing from a pile of fruit to fall on to a concave dish over three finely executed Moorish or peasant figures, who constituted the support, into a wide, shallow dish ornamented around its perimeter with gargoyle spouts and swags. Underneath the dish was supported by three dolphins from whose mouths more water issued into shells before falling

into the basin below.

When the family finally sold the property in 1931 the sales particulars noted fish ponds, the Lion Bridge and the Library Garden. Accompanying photographs show that the gardens were still extremely well cared for. The house was bought by the Hon. Senator W. Rupert Davies. He retained the character of the gardens but added more trees and rhododendrons and other plants around the lake. Apparently a set of dinosaur bones (probably whale bones) were brought over from his native Canada and laid out on the grass on the west side of the lake. He also had a grass tennis court constructed on the southern terrace of the Library Garden.

After the Second World War the house became a school, which signalled the beginning of the decline of the gardens. A sale removed most of the remaining statuary and ornaments from the site and the ornate east and library gardens were gradually simplified. During the 1950s the bronze fountain was removed and the basin converted into a swimming pool.

Outside the garden, John Naylor ornamented parts of the wider estate, particularly on the Long Mountain to the east, as 'pleasure grounds'. These were reached by an extensive system of tracks. The main features of interest to remain are the cascades and ponds in the valley to the east of Park House, the conifer groves and the Poultry House to the south-east of the Hall. A funicular railway to a timber-framed summer house at the top of the ridge, in place by 1870, has gone.

The cascades are, or were, fed from a reservoir pond above, by Hollybush Cottage. The water is channelled down a west-facing valley, on the south side of the track which runs up it, into two linear ponds at the foot of the slope. For most of the length of the valley the water runs down a narrow, partly stone-lined channel and over a series of artificial cascades. Each one is different. All are well built of stone and, in places, brick, with dressed stone tops of walls and piers. Some of the cascades are vertical drops, some sloping, some smaller, some larger. The most elaborate gathers water in a splayed, stone-lined pool above and then sends it down a water ladder into a semi-oval pool below. Parts of the channel, particularly where stone-lined, dry out frequently as water disappears down fissures into the rock below. Several of the pools above or below cascades are now heavily silted and no longer hold water. One cascade is flanked by stone piers ornamented with heraldic shields, one with the Naylor coat of arms on it and the other with the date 1874. A short iron bridge stretches between them, at the head of the sloping cascade. At the bottom of the valley, just before the first pond, is a high arched bridge carrying one of the paths over the stream.

The Poultry House and Poultry House Cottage lie on the lower slope of the west side of the Long Mountain, towards the south end of the ridge. These two buildings date from 1861, a time when there was a fashion for keeping ornamental fowl. The Poultry House is a long, ornamental, symmetrical brick and timber-framed building that faces west, with two wings which descend to the north and south on either side of a central high-pitched Gothic gable. On the west of the house a steep grassy bank slopes down to a long, rectangular lily pond and to the east an open yard separates the Poultry House from an open-fronted storm shelter in a similar style. To the north-east of the Poultry House the ground rises up to a small, brick cottage with dormer windows which faces south-west. This, Poultry House Cottage, is now a

holiday home. To the west cast iron nineteenth-century gates and fencing separate the buildings from the track.

To the south of the Poultry House there is an open tree-planted area of grass on the sloping hillside. This is the Naylor pinetum and the area contains many fine, mature, examples of pines, firs and other conifers. The area is bounded by tracks to the east, west and south. To the south and east of the pinetum the woodland becomes steadily denser and redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) predominate. This is the Charles Ackers grove. Informal paths wind through the woodland. Redwoods dating from the 1870s grow to the south of the western track and these trees have reached well over 100m in height. One fallen tree has sprouted several new trees from its side. To the south of the Poultry House there is a stand of about ten mature Leyland cypress trees (*x Cupressocyparis leylandii*). This hybrid arose as a chance cross in 1888 between two trees (still existing) at Leighton, a *Cupressus macrocarpa* and a *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*. The original tree was lost in a storm in 1954. Other groves of conifers have been planted on the Long Mountain, including one of wellingtonias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and one of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*.

In 1857 Naylor purchased seedling plants of redwoods and wellingtonia brought in pots from California and the forests of the Pacific north-west and planted up the hillside. The surviving Naylor redwoods, which cover about 12 hectares, now form part of the Charles Ackers grove. Charles Ackers was a benefactor of the Royal Forestry Society and presented the entire woodland to them in 1958, having bought it from Captain J. Murray Naylor in 1931. He had bought the area of the original redwoods in the 1930s and planted an additional redwood woodland to create one of the most densely planted coniferous woodlands in Europe. In addition to his American conifers, Naylor also started to lay out a pinetum to the north and east, work which has been continued by the Royal Forestry Society.

The square, walled kitchen garden, now a private garden, lies to the south-east of the main garden. According to the sale particulars of 1931 it contained three separate areas of garden, each '50 yards by 50 yards' with a range of greenhouses including a carnation house, 33ft by 17ft, a vinery, 33ft x 19ft and a flower house 33ft x 17ft. The garden contained water and coal and warm propagating houses, a range of twelve pits and a second flower house. A fruit store, potting sheds, a bothy, gardener's office, seed and mushroom house, two orchards and a store were also included.

Sources

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