

VAYNOL

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OS Map 115

Grid Ref SH 537 695

Former County Gwynedd

Unitary Authority Gwynedd

Community Council Pentir

Designations Listed buildings: 43 separate items, including Old Hall, old chapel, main house all Grade I; stables south of Old Hall, Old Hall garden walls and terraces, main barn and Bryntirion all Grade II*; the rest of the stables and other outbuildings, estate cottages, Dairy Cottage, Butler's House, gateways, terraces, walls and other garden features associated with the main house, dock and boat house, folly tower, mausoleum and 'new' chapel, all Grade II.

Site Evaluation **Grade I**

Primary reasons for grading A well preserved walled and terraced Elizabethan garden survives at the centre of a superb, walled, coastal landscape park, with recently restored lake, laid out in the 1820s. The setting is outstanding, with the Menai Strait on one side and Snowdonia on the other. There are also later formal gardens and kitchen gardens, a large model farm, various park buildings including mausoleum, viewing tower and boat house, and good surviving plantings along the main drive.

Type of Site Landscape park; formal gardens; kitchen gardens.

Main Phases of Construction Late sixteenth and early seventeenth century; 1820s; around 1900.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Old Hall lies at the centre of the ancient *maenol* (manor, hence Vaynol), surrounded by the large later park with its imposing wall, between Bangor and Felinheli (Port Dinorwic), the port developed to serve the quarries belonging to the estate. It is situated a short distance to the north-east of the house which replaced it as the main residence, and its west facade forms part of the east range of buildings around the main stable-yard. The main front faces away from the later house and is cut off from it, looking out over its own small garden and chapel, so that it seems very self-contained in the centre of the later large complex of buildings.

The building is of stone with a slate roof and has stone-mullioned windows. There is a basement, giving three storeys altogether. The main, north, front has a gabled

wing either side of a central block with a two-storey porch; the wing on the west is crow-stepped and of later date. The house has been little changed and retains its original door with a frame carved with roses in the corners. It is now being restored, a process which is shedding new light on its age and the order of construction of the various parts of the building. The house was built by the Williams family, owners of Vaynol until the end of the seventeenth century, and most of the structure appears to be of the sixteenth century, with two later seventeenth-century phases. Since then alterations and additions have been minimal.

The much larger later house, which lies a short distance to the south-west of the Old Hall, was originally built in the eighteenth century, probably towards the end, as Hyde Hall, writing about 1810, described the house as 'not long built'. It does not appear on an estate map of the 1770s, which shows only the Old Hall. However, it was extensively remodelled quite early in the nineteenth century, and has continued to be altered ever since. The first remodelling was by Thomas Assheton Smith in about 1825, shortly before he died, and the house may originally have been built by the Smith relative from whom he inherited (the estate having been granted to John Smith, a politician, by the Crown after the failure of the Williams line).

The present building, which is stuccoed with a slate roof, is oriented quite differently from the Old Hall, south-eastwards to face the view of Snowdonia across the park. It has three storeys with ten sash windows at each level on the main, south-east front; the south-west front, on a wing at right-angles, overlooking the Rose Garden, is similar, with seven windows. There was originally a wing balancing the south-west wing on the north-east, but this has been demolished and a new main entrance created on this side (after 1900); the rear of the house has been much altered and is now an untidy jumble of extensions and outbuildings.

A small, rectangular chapel, dedicated to St Mary, lies just to the north of the Old Hall, within its garden, and is reached by steps from one of the terraces. The porch, which may be an addition to the chapel, has a date-stone of 1596, with the initials of William Williams and his first wife Ellen. The porch has balustraded openings at the sides; some of the balusters are original and must be amongst the oldest in Wales. The chapel is stone, with an original east window of four rounded lights, and the slate roof has been replaced. There is a small crypt (where members of the family were at one time buried, but all have now been moved to the mausoleum in the park) and the interior was completely faced with Italian marble in the second decade of the twentieth century. Two marble angels on the altar and a virgin and child over the door were also part of this refurbishment. There are memorials to twentieth-century family members on the west wall. Some original sixteenth-century window glass remains, re-set in the side windows.

A larger new chapel was built in the nineteenth century, before 1855 as it appears on an estate map of that date, and probably after 1840 as it does not seem to be shown on the Ordnance Survey 1-in. 1st edition. It is a fairly plain stone building with a slate roof, incorporating elements of various different styles. There is a small bell turret. It is located to the north of the house, behind the kitchen garden.

A fine, very large barn north of the Old Hall was built in 1605 by William

Williams (by then married to a second wife, Dorothy, whose initial appears with his on the date-stone), and extended in the 1660s by Sir Griffith Williams. A cupola and clock, with weather-vane, have been added to the roof much more recently. It had an upper floor and a pair of large, opposing entrances; the windows are slits. It has been altered and possibly used as a coach-house, but the main structure is intact and it is by far the most imposing of the farm buildings, which are grouped around it.

The dairy is dated 1911 and is built of roughly-dressed stone in a fanciful Gothic style with pointed gables with finials, mullioned windows with drip-mouldings, and a verandah running around three sides. It presumably replaces a short-lived octagonal dairy which was built, after 1871, on the east side of the Old Hall, but was demolished in 1902 or 1903. It is now a dwelling.

There are several ranges of stables, and other farm buildings were also converted to this use, probably during the first and second decades of the twentieth century. Sir Charles Duff Assheton Smith, who inherited the estate in 1904, was a keen breeder of racehorses, and had Grand National winners in 1912, 1913 and 1914. The principal range of stables adjoins the Old Hall on the east side of the main stable-yard and has a well-preserved interior, fitted out by Young & Co in 1913; the original building may, however, be older than this.

The butler's house, a small, plain, late nineteenth-century house, is located in a garden enclosure between the kitchen garden and the dairy, but has always been known by the present name and does not seem ever to have been a gardener's cottage. Its main facade has three semi-dormer windows on the upper floor, a central door and a bay window, and it is rendered.

The ballroom is a long brick range added to the north outside wall of the kitchen garden between 1869 and 1871. It has no architectural merit and was clearly a building of convenience, merely providing a suitable covered area for large gatherings.

There are many other ranges of farm buildings, mostly of later nineteenth-century date, north-east of the house. Some of these were used as stables, others were barns, stores and so on. There is an outlying group of stables, with brick-walled yards, just to the east of the Old Hall (shown on late nineteenth century maps, so not built by Sir Charles for his racehorses, but used by him for his brood mares), and more farm buildings around a yard to the north, near the ice-house.

There are several stone-built estate cottages within the park, mostly in a similar early nineteenth-century style with low-pitched slate roofs. One, Ty Glo, is recorded as having been refurbished in 1845, but it is not shown on an estate map of the 1770s. This is located near the boat house; there is a similar cottage near the house, opposite the new chapel, known as Y Bwythyn, and another near the nursery to the north. Later cottages include Werngogas and the gardener's cottage, Pen-lan.

A building close to the rear of the main house, a little to the north, is known as the Coach House although in fact it seems never to have served this purpose. It was previously called The Barracks and used for staff accommodation, but has been

converted into a house and outbuildings. It is of three storeys, stone-built with brick dressings and sash windows, and is probably mid nineteenth century in date. Attached to the rear is a brick tower with a pyramidal slate roof, formerly a water tower.

Vaynol is an old site, originally a possession of the Bishops of Bangor, and the good, level or gently sloping land a few miles south of Bangor must always have been highly desirable. A substantial sixteenth-century house was built towards the northern end of the demesne by the Williams family, who owned the estate until the end of the seventeenth century, but this building could not be enlarged sufficiently to suit the aspirations of later owners, resulting in the construction of a grand new house, facing south-east to take advantage of the views of Snowdonia offered by the site, slightly to the south-west of the old house. A fortunate side-effect of this decision was that the sixteenth-century house, later used as the agent's house, remains largely unchanged.

After the last Williams died without issue in 1696, the estate reverted to the Crown, but was later granted to John Smith, an eighteenth-century Member of Parliament and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Hyde Hall tells a long and complicated story explaining how this came about. Later in the eighteenth century it was inherited by Thomas Assheton of South Tedworth, who then added Smith to his name. His son of the same name succeeded him but thereafter the estate went to a nephew, George William Duff, who in turn added Assheton Smith to his name. Vaynol then stayed with the Duffs until after the death of Sir Michael Duff in 1980, although much of the estate was sold in the 1960s; the house and park were sold in 1984.

With the Vaynol estate went the Dinorwic quarries, source of much wealth and much trouble in the nineteenth century. The first Thomas Assheton Smith took over the management of the quarries himself and he and his son were regarded as fair employers; while demand for slate was high, the revenue was directed to developing the port of Felinheli (Port Dinorwic) as well as improving the estate. Later on demand fell and unions were formed; Duff fell out with his employees and there were long strikes. At one time 2,000 quarry workers were sacked for joining a union. The relationship between the estate and the quarrymen was never the same again, but the estate continued to employ substantial numbers of local people at Vaynol. Even in the 1930s there were seventeen gardeners, and at an earlier period there was a man who raked the gravel every day, as well as the house staff, coachman and grooms, farm workers, foresters, gamekeeper and numbers of other estate workers.

Thomas Assheton Smith (the first) was a keen foxhunting gentleman, and he it was who laid out the present park, with this favourite sport in mind. Clearly the maximum space was required, and the new park, dating from the 1820s, is much larger than that shown on an estate map of the 1770s, and largely free of inconvenient hedges and boundaries, of which many were shown on the map mentioned. The park was extended to the south around Bryntirion, a substantial house which had its own demesne, and other properties, any not already belonging to the estate presumably being acquired at the time.

Woodland was mostly restricted to small copses and coverts, with only one large

block of woodland (still existing) in the north corner. John Evans' map of North Wales dated 1795 seems to show rather more woodland than was later present, and the overall coverage may have been reduced somewhat. The park was later more often used for shooting than for hunting, for which it was equally suitable. The same pattern of woodland can still be seen today, although it has expanded and, in some cases, neighbouring blocks have coalesced.

The park was surrounded by a high stone wall at huge expense in the 1860s, and at the same time the road was re-routed so as to run along the edge of the park, outside the new wall. The lodges were built at this time and the grand main entrance created on the south-east side, with a wide splay on either side of the road to permit smooth turning. In the 1880s a lake was created in the parkland in front of the house, supplied from a reservoir nearly 4 km away to the south-east, and although the lake later dried up it was cleared and refilled just over a hundred years later. At some time before 1840 a folly tower was built on one of the high points in the park, whence a view over the Menai Strait could be obtained.

A ferry used to cross the Menai Strait from Vaynol to Plas Newydd land the other side, and the two families would send messages and visit each other across the water. There is a dock and boat house, constructed between about 1840 and 1855, nearly opposite Plas Newydd's dock. In 1949 Sir Michael Duff married Lady Caroline Paget, Lord Anglesey's daughter, thus cementing the relationship between the families. The part of the park which is visible from Plas Newydd now belongs to the National Trust, like the Plas, ensuring that the view across the water, from either side, will be preserved.

In 1872 George William Duff introduced a herd of white park cattle to Vaynol, which remained a closed herd long enough to develop individual characteristics and be recognised as a separate breed, taking the name of the estate. The breed survives, although now reduced to a few individuals and in the care of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. The cattle have left Vaynol but although an attempt to return them in recent years was unsuccessful, it is still hoped that one day it will be possible for them to return to their home.

Duff also kept deer in the park and a menagerie of exotic animals in various enclosures; he built a bear pit and monkey house close to the kitchen garden, of which the former survives. He also entertained lavishly and began the tradition of giving hospitality to the Royal Family at Vaynol, which was continued particularly by his great-grandson Sir Michael Duff, who was a school friend of the Duke of Kent. When the present Prince of Wales was invested at Caernarfon in 1969 numerous members of the Royal Family stayed at Vaynol; the Queen Mother planted an oak tree there in 1958.

The park today probably looks much as it did in the nineteenth century, with wooded areas dispersed in lush parkland dotted with oak trees, sloping gently to the Menai Strait on the west and spreading out below the view of the mountains of Snowdonia on the east. The southern part remains rather more fragmented as there are several houses within it, now again in separate ownership. An area on the north-east has been sold to the Welsh Development Agency and made into a business park,

but several of the copses have been retained. Some of the woodland is managed for timber and areas of softwoods have been planted, but mostly within or around the original wooded areas.

When the wall surrounding the park was built there were five entrances to Vaynol park; assuming that these included the dock, all survive. Only two, however, now have drives in use leading to the house. The southernmost entrance is now the entrance to Bryntirion and also gives on to a route round to the boat house and the cottage, Ty Glo, via the extreme southern corner of the park. The lodge, named after Bryntirion and much altered and extended, was a small, single-storey stone building, presumably of the same date as the others. The gates have gone but the very tall, rectangular-sectioned stone-built pillars at the end of a bridge over the river are still imposing. Similar pillars flank the entrance where the old road enters the park, but there was never a lodge here. The drive is now closed off at Bryntirion, but continues northwards through the park, still tarmac-surfaced, to meet up with the complex of trackways around the house and farm.

Not far to the north of the Bryntirion entrance is another, where the route of the old road is now a tarmac-surfaced access drive to Yr Efail and Werngogas, cottages within the park. Although there are also gates at the other end of the old road, it becomes a rough track beyond Werngogas.

The main entrance is further to the north, and the drive is again tarmac-surfaced. A lodge is shown on the 1855 estate map, but when the park was walled in the 1860s this was replaced by the grander structure now present. It is single-storey with an attic, built of roughly-dressed stone with a slate roof, and has a two-storey tower attached at the back. There is a gable with a tall finial facing the drive and a tall stone chimney. The double iron gates are very imposing, with a pedestrian gate either side and a flat stone overthrow; the gate piers are tall, stone-built and have decorative stone caps. There are also gates at the end of the stretch of the old road which now falls within the park, just to the south-west of the lodge. The family arms were carved by R Evans in about 1870 on a large stone tablet to go over the main gates. This had been removed and was recently found in a compost heap near the Old Hall, still in good condition.

The first part of the drive runs through a cutting, the sides of which are planted with many different varieties of trees. The planting of these is contemporary with the making of the entrance and re-routing of the drive in the 1860s; this drive is the only one shown on the estate map of the 1770s, but the beginning of it was altered when the park wall was built, and a wide turning area either side of the road was made. The area in front of the gates remains the same, but the semi-circle on the far side of the road no longer exists. Until about the time of the First World War this drive approached the front of the house, where there was a turning circle, but later a new main entrance was made on the north-east side of the house and the drive now approaches this, through a tarmac parking area. The former turning circle has become part of the lawn.

Towards the north-eastern corner of the park the rear drive, leading to the farm buildings, opens off the road leading to Britannia Bridge. There is a lodge, but this

has now been bypassed, and the entrance to the drive is to the north of it, the new length of drive looping round to join the old just beyond the lodge. The lodge is an extended single-storey stone building, with a slate roof and a verandah on three sides. The gates have gone and the piers are tall and stone-built, like those at the other subsidiary entrances. The more recent entrance to the north still has plain iron gates with much shorter, square-sectioned stone-built piers. The caps copy those at the main entrance, and the wall is lower either side, perhaps formerly with railings. The alteration to the layout is probably fairly recent (certainly post-1914), but is shown on the current edition of the 1:10,000 map. The drive is tarmac-surfaced, and comes in to the eastern side of the farm complex. A new link road connects it with the road system in the business park.

The drive from the dock now links up with the track coming up to the boat house from the south, the end of the old route having been fenced off as part of the garden area of the boat house, which is now a dwelling. From Ty Glo it follows the old route in a sweeping curve back towards the house, and retains a tarmac surface, but the last stretch, nearest the house, is now disused and unsurfaced.

Other tracks lead off from the farm, to the nursery area and garden cottages, the new National Trust car park and down through the woodland to the mausoleum. These are stony-surfaced and fairly rough. Around the houses and buildings, which are in a scattered group, is a system of mostly tarmac drives and tracks which, despite some changes, is shown on maps going back to 1855.

The largest area of woodland is in the north corner of the park, and this is shown on the estate map of the 1770s, although it has shrunk and been enlarged again since then. It now encloses the mausoleum, but in 1855 the latter was on the edge of it. This building is indicated on the 1855 estate map, but the surrounding elongated octagonal enclosure seems to have been added later, as a drawing for the gate piers is dated 1879. The enclosure consists of a dwarf wall with railings, and the gates and stone piers are fairly simple.

The building itself takes the form of a small but tall chapel in more or less Gothic style, built of roughly-dressed stone with a red sandstone doorway and paler sandstone windows. The roof has fish-scale slates. There is a crypt and an ornate, colonnaded octagonal bell turret attached to the north corner. Memorials to members of the family on the walls inside have mostly been removed, and the interior, which is permanently open, has been much vandalised. There is stained glass in the windows and the chapel has a tiled floor.

The wood surrounding the mausoleum is commercially managed for timber at present. A similar timber plantation now occupies the corner of the park near the main entrance, an area which was originally a covert, and most of the rest of the woodland is in copses and coverts about the park. Near Bryntirion there is a fairly large continuous strip of woodland across the park, which has developed from three separate coverts, but it was already much as it is today by the 1890s. Other fairly large coverts are found around Ty Glo and the boat house and surrounding the site of old quarries (used for stone for the park wall) and a lime-kiln near the south corner of the park.

The lake had two artificial islands and a boat house. A third island was added between 1889 and 1900. The lake is long and narrow, not particularly large, but very well sited as it is in the foreground of the view towards Snowdonia. It probably also attracted wildfowl for shooting, being extremely well visited by them today.

There is a linked pair of ornamental ponds on the north-east side of the main drive, with a smaller one the other side, and there is also a pond, completely surrounded by woodland, in Hendre-las covert in the south-east of the park. Sealpond Wood, now in the area of the business park, once contained a pond (probably, from the name, connected with George William Duff's menagerie), but this has disappeared and new ornamental ponds have been made in the business park. There was also a fishpond on the far side of the road near the main entrance, but this has been destroyed by alterations to the road.

The ponds north-east of the drive have a fairly substantial dam with a grass bank over it at the lower end, and are linked by a channel crossed by a small wooden rustic bridge. They are fairly shallow and had stone reinforcement in the edges, but this edging is wearing away in places due to the action of water and wildfowl. The ponds are not shown on an estate map of 1871 but are on the 25-in. Ordnance Survey map of 1889.

The pond near the top of the drive on the other side is obviously much more recent, and may have been created when the lake was reconstructed. It is shallow and largely overgrown with water plants, but it has a small concrete otter on a rock in the middle and a seat placed to overlook it. The water supply runs underground to it from a short length of stream which is evidently fed by the outflow from the lake; this stream has artificial waterfalls and seems to exist mainly to create a pleasing sound. It is not indicated on maps up to 1914 and may also be recent.

The pond in Hendre-las covert was constructed between 1889 and 1900, probably to attract wildfowl for shooting. It later had a Chinese bridge and an artificial waterfall (no longer functioning) and was evidently treated as part of the ornamental grounds, reached by several footpaths through the wood. It still exists, although rather overgrown.

The folly, eyecatcher or lookout tower on a high point in the middle of the western side of the park was built before 1840. At that time it was on the edge of a small covert, but as in the case of the mausoleum the woodland has expanded to surround it. The tower is stone-built, round, battlemented and has both quatrefoil and slit windows, the former with brick surrounds. It is open to the sky and there is no indication that there was ever a stair or a floor, although there is a doorway by which to enter. It is sited at a point where there are good views (now only to the south due to the growth of trees), but was probably itself intended more as an eyecatcher from other points in the park than as a lookout.

Almost due west of the house, on the edge of the Menai Strait, is a small dock with a square boat house, constructed between 1840 and 1855. The boat house is large and has been converted to a dwelling; it is single-storey on the landward side with doors

on the seaward side across the underfloor bays where the boats were stored, and has a slate roof and a verandah along the south-west side. The dock is stone-built with steps down to the water, and to the south is a long curve of railings replacing the park wall, which permits enjoyment of the view over the water and adds greatly to the attractiveness of the area. Nearby is Ty Glo, whose name ('Coal House') perhaps suggests a practical side to the dock as well as a recreational one.

Two bath houses, both now ruined, formerly stood close to the shore of the Strait. The more northerly lies in the wood which also hides the mausoleum; this is the older and probably went out of use when the park wall was built as there is no access through the wall to the shore, although there is a short stretch of railings, permitting a view. The ruins of the building still stand in the wood, with the remnants of an unusual dwarf slate fence alongside part of the disused path leading to it.

The other bath house was near the dock and was probably built later, after the wall was constructed, to replace the older one and concentrate all the waterside activities in the same area. It appears on the first edition 25-in Ordnance Survey map of 1889.

The Old Hall garden is undoubtedly contemporary with the Old Hall itself, thus at least seventeenth century, sixteenth century if it was laid out when the house was first built. It lies on a sloping site and is a small, terraced formal garden. The gardens associated with the main house are much later in date and much grander in style, though still basically formal. In the late nineteenth century there were only lawns to the south-west and north-east of the house, where the gardens now are, and the formal layout first appears on plans of the early twentieth century. References to garden alterations in 1913 may date the creation of the formal gardens very closely.

The gardens divide broadly into three areas: the garden of the Old Hall, the Water Garden, which lies between old and new houses, and the Rose Garden, at the side of the main house. Apart from these three enclosed gardens, there are only small areas now maintained as garden, although some of the enclosures around the outbuildings, now completely neglected, were undoubtedly once gardens. None of these show any interesting features or layouts on old maps.

The Old Hall garden is the most interesting, on account of its age and unusually good state of preservation. The original enclosing wall survives on the east, and possibly partially also on the west, although this has been altered; the terrace walls and steps are also original. The entrances have probably all been altered. The doorway in the north wall, although reset, is dated 1634 and was probably in an entrance through the original north wall.

The garden of the Old Hall starts with a broad, straight walk across the front of the house, with wide grass verges; this has been recently gravelled, and there is a stone-paved path off it leading to the door of the house. To the north are two narrow parallel terraces, and above them a wider, later, third terrace which curves outwards to the north in a semi-circle, allowing space for a circular pool. All the terraces are grass-surfaced. The whole is enclosed within stone walls, and includes the old chapel of St Mary. There are entrances in the west wall at the north and south ends, in the east wall at the south end, and in the north wall. The top terrace is much the

widest, and the lowest the narrowest. The middle terrace has a seat under a hedge backing against the chapel at the west end, the chapel being built at the level of this terrace, but reached by steps from the one below. There is a slope down from the upper level at the other end of the middle terrace. The difference in height between the terraces is a little less than 1 m, managed by a retaining wall between the middle and upper terraces and a steep grass slope between the bottom and middle ones. The main steps down are in the centre, the top and bottom flight being semi-circular, but there are also narrow steps down from the two lower terraces at the east end. There is another retaining wall, with a parapet, for the bottom terrace.

The top terrace is likely to have been constructed in 1913, when the original north wall of the garden must have been demolished. The other two terraces and the main walk, however, are undoubtedly contemporary with the house, and the original layout must have been much the same as it is now.

The garden encloses the sixteenth-century chapel of St Mary, and the relationship of this building with the terraces suggests that it is older than the garden. Old photographs show topiary in front of the house, but originally the wide grass verges of the walk may have been used as beds. The first and second terraces seem structurally unchanged, but the third, highest, terrace, with its circular pool, has been added since 1900, at which date the north wall of the garden was on the line of the present terrace wall. This alteration is therefore likely to be contemporary with the other garden improvements carried out in about 1913.

The best remaining stretch of the original enclosing wall of the Old Hall garden is on the east side. It has, inevitably, been very much altered but part of the wall this side is probably at its original height (over 3 m) and may not have been rebuilt. It is of random stone, much repointed, but patches of lime mortar remain and may be original.

The next section to the south must be relatively recent as it encloses the early-twentieth-century top terrace. The southern end of the wall is much lower and has probably been partly demolished and consolidated, possibly completely rebuilt. A wide gap in this part of the wall, at the end of the main walk, has a pair of modern wrought-iron drive gates, hung on dumpy, square-sectioned stone-built piers.

The north wall is fairly modern, about 1913, although the original stone was probably re-used. In it is set a doorway with dressed stone surrounds, of different kinds of stone on the inside and the outside, and it is possible that the surrounds came from different places. One or both is likely to have been an original entrance through the north wall, formerly on the line of the edge of the top terrace. The inner side has the Williams family arms over the top, with the date 1634 and the initials of Thomas Williams and his wife Katharine. Around the inner arch is carved 'YE MYSTIC GARDEN FOLD ME CLOSE I LOVE THEE WELL', and under the arch, 'BELOVED VAYNOL', but this inscription is unlikely to be contemporary with the doorway because of the modern spelling of 'Vaynol', as well as the style of the lettering, and is probably at the oldest nineteenth century, if it does not date from 1913. In the doorway is a wrought-iron gate, older than any others now in the garden, but similar to one in a modern stone surround leading from the track to the east into

the garden or yard area behind the dairy, north of the Old Hall garden; this may perhaps once also have been in an entrance to the Old Hall garden.

The north end of the west wall dates from 1913, as far as the chapel, but there is little of it as there is a wide entrance with double iron gates, probably of the same date. On the other side of the chapel there may be some original walling, but the wall joining the hall, which has an archway through it opposite the gates on the east of the garden (the gravel walk links the two entrances), is probably of nineteenth-century date, as plans from earlier in that century do not show it, but it had appeared by 1889. The gates in this archway are modern iron drive gates, like those opposite.

At the west end of the middle terrace is a decorated stone bench, which is thought to be an early garden ornament, perhaps seventeenth century. It has scrollwork legs and arms and the back is decorated with animal and human figures. On the same terrace there are two later large, open urns, one at present off its plinth. The pool on the top terrace has no fountain and planting around the edge obscures any edging.

One other small walled rectangular area of garden near the Old Hall, adjoining it on the east, now neglected and overgrown, has had a chequered history. Originally it may well have been part of the contemporary garden of the Old Hall, and in 1855 was roughly square, enclosed, and divided into four plots by perimeter and cross paths. By 1889 walls had been moved so that the area was divided into halves, the outer half having been taken into a new yard on the east. An octagonal dairy had been built in the other half, by the house, but this was demolished later and the foundations made into a pool with fountain. The pool survives but is dry, and the layout of the rest of the garden is now hard to establish.

The Water Garden is oblong in shape and fills the space, which slopes gently down to the south-east, between the relatively new courtyard area on the north-east side of the main house, and the Old Hall and stable yard. It is clearly part of the major phase of alterations around 1913, and is not shown on maps before 1918. It is defined on the curved south-east side by a balustraded wall; the garden slopes only gently, but the slope below the wall is steeper, and a good view over the park is obtained from the south-east part of the garden. The opposite end backs on to the kitchen garden wall, which is disguised by a row of tall cypresses. The south-west side has a yew hedge, but the north-east side, shown on the 1918 map as also defined by a wall or hedge, is now open to the continuation of the kitchen garden wall.

The oval pool which gives the garden its name is towards the north-west end, and is incorporated into the terrace wall which crosses the garden, so that the pool surround is flush with the higher level of the terrace, and there are steps up to the pool from the main area of garden below. Balustrading similar to that around the south-east edge of the garden runs along the terrace wall and the back of the pool. Again like the enclosing balustrade, this is topped with urns at intervals.

There are entrances via an imposing flight of steps in the centre of the south-east side, through double iron gates (of the same pattern) from both the house side and the Old Hall side towards the south-east end, and from the kitchen garden on the north-west. From all of these stone-flagged paths lead. Three straight parallel paths

run north-west to south-east, one from the south-east entrance to the pool, and the others up the sides from the gates; the side paths link up with the path along the terrace, curving round the back of the pool. From this the path to the north-west entrance leads off. A cross-path runs straight across the garden between the two sets of side gates, balancing the terrace at the other end of the garden. There are steps at several points. The path from the drive through the main entrance to the cross-path is not shown on the 1918 map, but is similar to all the others. It, continuing to the pool, has low hedges either side, and these continue around the south-east edge of the pool, up to the terrace wall.

The Rose Garden to the south-west of the main house is also post-1900 in date, but lies over a previous lawned garden area and runs into a much older wood. Like the Water Garden, it has a formal character, with terracing, balustrading and garden ornaments, which include a classical statue and wellhead. Before this layout was imposed the area seems to have been informal, with curving paths and scattered trees.

Apart from the lawns and woodland, the only hint of garden features near the main house before the 1913 alterations are some small structures shown on old maps, all of which have now gone. From before 1855 to some time between 1900 and 1918, presumably 1913, there was a small hexagonal building in a small grassy area with trees, surrounded by drives, immediately behind the main house. Some steps, now leading nowhere, which remain in this area presumably related to this. In the woodland beyond what is now the Rose Garden, to the south-west of the house, there was a small circular building, probably a summer house or gazebo, from before 1889 (but after 1871) until again, probably, 1913. One map, of 1869, shows another structure, octagonal with, apparently, an enclosure of the same shape around it, to the north of the hexagonal building at the rear of the house; this must have been very short-lived, or perhaps was never actually built, as it does not appear on the maps of 1855 or 1871.

The three main areas of ornamental garden all probably look much the same today as they would have done early in the century, although little planting survives on the lower terraces of the Old Hall garden, and the topiary near the hall has gone. As survival is quite good elsewhere, it may be that the terraces, which are quite narrow, were maintained as grass walks with little planting.

The walled kitchen garden, which lies to the north of the house, beyond the Water Garden, is now completely overgrown so that detailed investigation is impossible, but the remains of some glasshouses and some of the planting can be seen. It is a strange shape, like an irregular inverted L, and was divided into four unevenly-sized plots by paths. Before the ballroom was built, the site of this building was also a kitchen garden plot, though outside the wall of the main area, and the garden of the Butler's House contained most of the glass.

The kitchen garden is shown, always the same odd shape, on all the nineteenth-century estate maps, so it must originally have been constructed before 1855, and is perhaps contemporary with the early nineteenth-century rebuilding of the house. Other outlying plots were also utilised as kitchen gardens, or for glass.

Later in its history a tennis court and housing for the menagerie kept by George William Duff, including a bear pit, monkey house and bison house, were inserted into the garden. The bear pit still survives.

In 1889 there were glasshouses next to the ballroom at the south-west end of the garden, one on the north-east wall and several more in the Butler's House garden. The south-western part of the garden was an orchard and there were fruit trees in two further areas. By 1900 the glasshouse on the north-east wall had increased in size and there were several more glasshouses and frames in the part of the garden nearest it, but the orchard trees were no longer shown on the map. By 1916 the glasshouses had increased by two, giving a huge expanse of glass overall.

The Butler's House garden, an enclosure to the north-east of the main kitchen garden, is clear of vegetation and is entered through an ornate iron gate with a decorative overthrow, incorporating provision for an electric light. All the glasshouses have gone except for the long vine house against the north-west wall, which is derelict and overgrown. The walls are stone, with a flat stone coping, and they dip downwards near the gates. The normal height is about 2.5 m. A similar gate leads into the main garden, but little can be seen here apart from the remains of derelict glasshouses and frames.

The entrance from the north-west end of the Water Garden latterly led to the tennis court, and has an iron gate with a bell over it, now overgrown. It is not possible to penetrate far in here but an outgrown box hedge, formerly no doubt edging a path, can be seen, and one or two fruit trees. There are also some old slate water tanks in the garden.

The surrounding wall is stone, apparently not brick-lined, and is still more or less intact although much threatened by vegetation. It has a flat coping, and apart from the entrances mentioned there are three more in the back (north-west) wall. The north-east wall, which supported a large glasshouse, is still whitewashed, although the glasshouse has gone.

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