

## PIGEONSFORD WALLED GARDEN

<b>Ref number</b>	<b>PGW (Dy) 71 (CER)</b>
<b>OS Map</b>	145
<b>Grid ref</b>	SN 325543
<b>Former county</b>	Dyfed
<b>Unitary authority</b>	Ceredigion
<b>Community council</b>	Llangrannog
<b>Designations</b>	None
<b>Site evaluation</b>	<b>Grade II</b>

**Primary reasons for grading** The walled garden is a very good and well preserved example of a large, eighteenth-century former kitchen garden, with impressive walls and original internal layout. It contains an unusual seven-sided former apple store and an interesting 1930s gazebo, visited by David Lloyd George.

**Type of site** Walled former kitchen garden

**Main phases of construction** Mid eighteenth century; 1930s

### Site description

Pigeonsford walled garden lies on the north flank of the small valley of the Nant Hawen, about two kilometres from the seaside village of Llangrannog, to the west. On the other side of the valley, to the south, is the mansion of Pigeonsford, for which the walled garden was originally the kitchen garden. The two are now divorced from each other and little remains of any ornamental grounds around the house. The northern part of the path that originally led from the house to the kitchen garden is now used for access from a visitors' car park, on the south side of the stream, to the walled garden, on the north.

In the Tudor period Pigeonsford, then called Rhydycolumennod, was owned by the Parry family. In the second half of the seventeenth century it passed to the Price family, which rose to local prominence in the eighteenth century. George Price (died 1786) married Dorothea Bowen of Llwyngwair, who brought considerable wealth to the marriage. He had embarked on an ambitious rebuilding of the house, from then on known as Pigeonsford, in 1755 and was High Sheriff in 1759. His son George (died 1829) was Mayor of Cardigan in 1808 and 1812. His son, also George (died 1881) continued the family tradition of local prominence, was a keen sportsman and changed his name to Jordan after inheriting the property of a maternal aunt, Hester Jordan. His second wife was Eleanor Powell, whose brother Edward inherited the Nanteos estate. The house was probably remodelled in about 1820 and new stables were built in 1831. On George's death the property was let and the estate was broken up and sold in 1908.

The sale particulars described the grounds as having: 'a walled garden through which runs the Cranog (sic) river. There is a drive and tennis courts. In front of the mansion is a clean green sward with azaleas, rhododendrons, laburnum, bay and other trees. To the left is the rose garden'.

The house and grounds were bought by Charles W.W. Hope (1864-1926), whose wife was Florence Lewes of Llanllyr. Charles's mother was Ellen Jordan, of Pigeonsford. On his death Pigeonsford became the property of David Owen Evans, a non-conformist barrister, from 1932-45 Liberal MP for Cardiganshire and close friend of David Lloyd George, who visited Pigeonsford many times.

The rectangular walled garden is situated on a south-facing slope. Below it, on its south side, is a small lawn next to the Nant Hawen stream, which flows westwards. The gravel path from the car park crosses the stream to the west of the garden, curves up the slope and then runs parallel with the south wall of the garden, flanked by two borders. Next to the garden the path is edged with concrete and the south border is supported by a low revetment wall of stones.

The high walls of the garden are well built of narrow courses of local stone and lime mortar, with traces of rendering remaining in places. The walls survive to their full height. Only the north wall is lined with brick. On the outside the south wall is about 3 m high, rising to about 3.5 m towards the west end, with overhanging cut stone coping, above which is a tapering stone top. At intervals along the outside are flat buttresses. On the inside the wall is only about 1.5 m high, rising to about 2.2 m at the west end. There is a central entrance, with a shallow brick arch and buttresses either side. The west wall extends southwards for a short distance beyond the south wall, but this part has fallen and is only about 1.2 m high.

The east and west walls rise to about 5.5 m high at the lower end of the slope. The west wall has two rudimentary buttresses on the outside, towards the south end, to the south of which a section of wall has fallen outwards, leaving a gap. The east wall has two large, tapering buttresses on its outside. The top of the wall is similar to that on the south side but has been cemented in place. There are two entrances, one in the middle and one at the north end, both leading to internal paths. The upper doorway has a wooden lintel; that in the middle is of brick. At the south end of the wall is the former apple store, now used as a visitors' entrance building. The rendered, two-storey building is an unusual shape, being seven-sided, with doors on the north-east and west sides. It has a tapering slate roof, two ground-floor sash windows, on the north-west and south-east sides, and one upper window on the west side. The upper floor can only be reached by a trap door.

The north wall is about 5 m high on the inside, 2.5 - 3 m high on the outside, built of stone on the outside and large, hand-made bricks set on end on the inside. The lowest metre of the wall is entirely of stone. On top is the same stone coping as on the rest of the walls. In front of the wall is a slightly raised border supported by a low stone wall.

The interior of the garden is divided into large beds by gravel paths. The layout is original but the raised concrete edging to the paths was installed in the 1920s. There are perimeter paths around the walls, with borders between the paths and the walls, two north-south paths and one central east-west path. Where the paths meet the corners have been cut diagonally to create splays. Some original drains and drain covers remain. The only planting of any great age is a few fruit trees. The garden has been planted with a great range of herbaceous plants, fruit and vegetables in the late twentieth century.

Built against the north wall, at the end of the westernmost north-south path leading to the door in the south wall, is a single-storey brick gazebo dating to the 1930s. It is a five-sided structure of red engineering brick, the bricks at the corners moulded to fit the shape. The outside is neatly pointed, the inside only roughly finished, as though further finishing was originally intended but never instigated. The front has a round-arched door, with two steps up to it. The sides have round-arched windows. All openings are glazed, with wooden frames and small panes. Inside, there is a quarry-tiled floor and a fine, made-to-measure, oak bench stretching the full length of the back wall. It has a sloping back, curved ends and pairs of cupboards underneath each end.

Outside the east wall of the garden is a small enclosure with a glasshouse at its south end. On the north it is enclosed by a wall and on part of the east side by a hedge. The south-facing glasshouse, which appears on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map but not on the 1823 tithe map, is three-quarter span, built against a rendered stone wall. It has lost its superstructure. Its side walls are of brick and stone with slate coping, its front wall of rendered stone, topped with slate slabs. Inside, there is a terracotta tile floor, with a raised bed behind built on a low brick revetment wall. The bed has terracotta roll-top edging. There are three central steps up to the raised bed. The outer wall is lined with heating pipes and parts of the ventilation system remain. On the west door is a maker's plaque, indicating that the builders were R. Halliday & Co., Middleton, Manchester. Fruit labels found in the garden were made by the firm of John Pinches, Crown Buildings, Crown Street, Clerkenwell, London.

The walled garden dates to at least 1823, when it is shown on the tithe map. It is also shown in outline on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1 in. Ordnance Survey map of 1830 and, with its present layout but without the gazebo, on the 1888 25 in. Ordnance Survey map. It is probable that it is of mid to late eighteenth-century origin, possibly contemporary with the major rebuilding of the house in the mid 1750s by George Price. It was David Owen Evans who built the gazebo in the 1930s and entertained Lloyd George there during his stays at Pigeonsford.

## Sources

### Primary

1<sup>st</sup> edition 1 in. Ordnance Survey map, 1830: Carmarthenshire Record Office.  
Martin Davies MSS, 1910 plans: National Library of Wales.  
Amphlett Lewis and Evans MSS: National Library of Wales.  
Sale catalogues 1907, 1908 and 1926: National Library of Wales.

### Secondary

Lewis, S., *A topographical dictionary of Wales* (1840).  
Evans, G.E., *Cardiganshire* (1903), 78.  
Hope, E., *Llangrannog and the Pigeonsford family* (1931).  
Charles-Jones, C. (ed.), *Historic Cardiganshire Homes and their families* (2000).