

SUMMARY

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| Ref number | PGW (Dy) 72 (CER) |
| OS Map | 145 |
| Grid ref | SN 177 459 |
| Former county | Dyfed |
| Local authority | Ceredigion |
| Community Council | Cardigan |
| Designations | Listed buildings: Cardigan Castle (Grade I); Castle Green House (Grade II*); Gate piers and gates to Castle Green House (Grade II); Outbuildings at Castle Green House stable yard (Grade II); Retaining wall in Castle Green grounds to east of house (Grade II); Boundary wall to Castle Green House, Carriers Lane (Grade II). |
| Site Evaluation | Grade II |
| Primary reasons for grading | The survival of most of the structure, and some planting, of an interesting and unusual Regency period garden, set within a medieval castle ward. The ward was extensively altered and adapted to accommodate and enhance the garden, thus providing a most romantic setting to Castle Green House. |
| Type of site | Pleasure garden; kitchen garden. |
| Main phases of construction | 1713; about 1808; 1827–30; 1924–39 |

Site description

Castle Green House

Castle Green House is a substantial, Regency period house in an unusual setting, situated within the ward of Cardigan Castle. The house stands on the north edge of the medieval castle, and its north end incorporates the castle's north tower, which projects beyond the line of the curtain wall. The castle itself is situated at the southern end of the town of Cardigan, on a rocky spur overlooking the river Teifi, to the south. Below the roughly oval castle ward of about 3 acres, the ground drops precipitously to the east and south. To the north and west, on the side of the town, the drop is gentle and slight.

The main block of the house is two-storey and is of Classical, Regency style. It is built of stuccoed stone, with a hipped slate roof. The main front faces south and has round-arched ground-floor windows and a similar central entrance sheltered by a porch. This is of delicate wooden trelliswork, some of which is broken, over which is a wrought iron balustrade. The floor of the porch is of slate slabs, with one step leading up to it. The door is flanked by slightly raised flowerbeds: that to the east retains its slate edging, which continues beyond the house as edging to the drive, and that to the west continues along the west side of the house. The front and side walls of the house have rigid supports for climbing plants, complete with their wiring, against them.

The rear of the house, to the north, is two- and three-storey, of finely jointed, blocked rubble stone, with hipped slate roofs. Behind the main block a substantial, round, medieval tower — the north tower — has been incorporated into the house, and its masonry survives to first-floor level. The medieval tower has been much altered: as a result of the raising of the ground level during the building and landscaping phase at the beginning of the nineteenth century the tower's second storey is now at ground level. A long wing, used mainly as guests' and servants' quarters, extends to the east.

Cardigan Castle has a long and complex history: it has changed hands many times and undergone alterations right up to the mid-twentieth century. The Norman lord, Gilbert de Clare, first built it on its present site in 1110. In 1136 the Welsh attacked the castle, but failed to take it and burnt the town. Lord Rhys captured the castle for the Welsh in 1164 and rebuilt it in stone in 1171; it has the distinction of having hosted the first Eisteddfod in 1176. Another Norman, William Marshal the younger, captured the castle in 1223, but it soon reverted to the Crown. In 1240 Walter Marshal, brother of the earl of Pembroke, captured and rebuilt it; however, in 1241 he was killed in a tournament and the castle again reverted to the Crown. A major rebuilding then took place in about 1244–54, under Robert Waleran, who became constable in 1248. Most of the medieval fabric that remains probably dates to this period. A keep on the north curtain wall was built in 1246–52 (completed in about 1261) and this may be the north tower that is now incorporated into the house. In 1279 Edward III made the castle the administrative centre for the new shire of Cardigan.

Further repairs and building works continued into the fourteenth century, but after this the castle appears to have been neglected. By 1343 the curtain wall was in ruins and by 1610 (John Speed, map of Cardigan) the Great Tower (north tower), shown round and free-standing, was partially ruined. Excavations in 1984 revealed that there had been a ditch, 7m wide, north of the tower, with a counterscarp bank about 7m wide and 1.5m high.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the castle had various private owners, beginning with Sir John Lewis of Coedmore and Abernantbychan, who acquired it in 1633. In the Civil War it was damaged during a siege of Cardigan by Parliamentary forces in December 1644; the curtain wall between the east and south-east towers was partially destroyed. A drawing of the castle by the Buck brothers, dating to 1741, shows the towers with a steep slope between them. Another drawing, by Francis Grose, dating to 1770, gives a similar picture. Both show the river running right up to the foot of the towers.

The first mention of Castle Green House is in 1799, when John Bowen (d. 1815) was leasing it to Thomas Colby. Samuel Meyrick, in *The History and Antiquities of the County of Cardigan* (1808), indicated that Bowen began the building of the house: '... John Bowen, Esq. who is erecting a house on the site of the keep, the dungeons now serving as his cellars'. Bowen levelled the ward, filled in the ditch around the north tower and generally raised the level of the ward quite considerably. Excavations in 1984 revealed that medieval archaeological deposits are buried under up to 2m of topsoil.

The house took on its present form in 1827, when the owner, Arthur Jones, a solicitor and high sheriff of Cardiganshire, began building a new front range; he also altered and added a storey to the north tower. The architect and master builder was David Evans of Eglwysrwr. Sale particulars of 13 July 1832 described a 'Capital modern mansion' and Samuel Lewis in 1833 called it 'a handsome modern villa'. It is shown in its present form on Wood's map of 1834. The property was bought by David Davies of Carnarchenwen, Fishguard, in 1836. Davies was a wealthy man, founder of the Cardigan Mercantile Company and high sheriff of the county in 1841. An engraving of the house in Thomas Nicholas's *Annals and Antiquities of the Counties and County Families of Wales*, vols I and II (1872), shows the house much as it is now.

Castle Green House remained in the ownership of the Davies family until 1924, when David Berrington Griffith Davies bought and moved to nearby Plas Llangoedmor.

The property was bought by a local auctioneer, John Evans, who

sold it to Mr and Mrs Wood and their daughter Barbara in 1940. The east wing of the house was requisitioned during the Second World War, between 1940 and 1945, and was never reoccupied afterwards. Under the Woods' ownership the condition of the house rapidly worsened and it eventually became uninhabitable. It was declared unfit for human habitation in 1984 and Miss Wood moved out into a series of caravans in the grounds.

During the second half of the twentieth century the condition of the castle walls began to give rise to concern, resulting in the installation of three steel buttresses against the south wall, by Ove Arup, in the 1970s. In December 1984 a 10m section of the south-west curtain wall collapsed and was revealed to be post-medieval; this was confirmed during Ove Arup's structural survey of 1985. In 2003 the castle, including the house, was bought by Ceredigion County Council, who are undertaking a comprehensive programme of repair and restoration.

The garden

Castle Green House was built as a prestigious, well-appointed residence, requiring an attractive and appropriate setting of fashionable gardens, grand entrance, drives, coach house and stabling. The castle ward and its immediate surroundings were altered and adapted to provide all of these features. The resultant early nineteenth-century overlay, within the medieval castle, is unusual and interesting, combining elements with two very different purposes: defensive strength and aesthetic pleasure.

The first requirement was access. Castle Green House is reached by drives from two entrances. The main one is on the north-west side of the castle. A narrow street runs from Bridge Street up to the entrance gap in the curtain wall. This is flanked by two pairs of substantial, square, blue lias piers of dressed stone, about 2.5m high; the second pair are set back from the first by about 2.5m. The outer piers abut adjacent houses. All of the piers are topped by stepped coping with cast-iron urn finials, taking the total height to about 3.5m. Between the pairs of piers are low, outward-curving stone walls, about 0.4–0.5m high. These are topped with slate coping and spearheaded iron railings about 1.8m high. Ornate, iron fixings for the upper ends of gates survive on the inner piers and on the eastern outer pier. Wrought-iron gates from the outer pair were removed for restoration in 2004. The gates were originally hung from the inner pair of piers but were moved to the outer in 1924 by John Evans. He built rendered brick piers, from which to fix the gates, which had to be modified to fit, within the original outer piers. These have since been removed. The entrance is probably contemporary with the second building phase of the house in about 1828; it is shown on Wood's 1834 map of Cardigan.

From the entrance a drive, now gone, ran eastwards to a slightly wider forecourt in front of the house. From here a service drive, in a reasonable condition, continues around the east side of the house and down the steep slope to the east, which it negotiates by a hairpin bend north-east of the house, to the second entrance on The Strand. Below the bend, the drive is flanked by a crenellated rubble-stone wall on the east and by a battered drystone revetment wall against the steep, rocky slope, on the west. The crenellations of the rubble-stone wall are roughly triangular in section and built of tapering, horizontal bands of slate, with the straight edge facing the drive. Built into the outer side of the revetment wall, opposite the east end of the house, is a circular, stone-lined well of unknown date. The outer (east) wall continues northwards, beyond the drive, to the back of no. 43 St Mary's Street; the northern half acts as a revetment wall for a terrace.

The wall is contemporary with the building of Castle Green House and is shown on the 1834 map of Cardigan.

The gate piers at the entrance on The Strand are set back from the outer boundary, situated just inside the entrance to the stable courtyard. The less ornate nature of the piers, and the proximity to the stables, indicates that this was the back entrance. The piers are rectangular, about 3m high, and are built of coursed slate with simple, gently tapered stone tops. Between them are simple, spearheaded iron gates.

From the outer, walled boundary of the site the drive runs north-westwards, flanked by coursed, rubble-stone walls. That on the south is the stable courtyard wall, about 2.1m high, with simple slate coping; that on the north side is slightly higher and topped by triangular-section crenellations, with the sloping side towards the drive. Just outside the entrance gate is a wide gap.

Inside the entrance gates the flanking wall continues along the east side of the drive, but here the triangular crenellations face the other way, with the straight edge next to the drive. This curious arrangement is hard to explain. The walls are post-medieval, but the design intention appears to have been to give a medieval impression. This would have best been achieved with the straight face. Below the gates this is on the north side of the wall, facing into a walled enclosure. The conclusion must be that it was more important to give a medieval impression on this side than on the drive up to the entrance.

Just outside the gates, to the west of the drive, is a small building, of coursed stone and with a simple arched doorway, built against the castle curtain wall. On its west side, at a higher level, is a blocked window in the wall. Its purpose is unclear, but it would probably have been utilitarian.

To the south of this building is a wide entrance into the small, cobbled stable yard. The entrance piers are similar to those on the drive. The yard is a small enclosure bounded by stone walls on the south and east and the castle wall on the north. The stable buildings are built against the north and west sides of the yard. They consist of two-storey, roofless buildings of banded, coursed rubble stone, with simple, gently arched door and window openings. In the east corner of the yard is a small, slate-lined sunken area with a drain in the corner. In the north corner are the partial remains of a slate trough with a drain next to it. The stables and yard were built soon after 1800 and are marked on the Wood map of Cardigan (1834). A four-stall stable and coach house are mentioned in the 1832 sale particulars. The groom's cottage occupied the south-east end of the building. The range below the curtain wall contained a blacksmith's forge and stores. By the 1920s the stables were redundant and from then on were used for different purposes. The whole complex was abandoned in the 1940s and declined rapidly into a ruinous state.

The gardens of Castle Green House occupy several areas within and adjacent to the castle ward. The main ornamental garden was contained within the walls of the ward. To the north, walled garden compartments of various functions were laid out just outside the ward. To the north-east and east are further compartments, including the stables courtyard.

The entire former ward of the medieval castle was laid out as the ornamental garden associated with Castle Green House. The curtain wall itself was adjusted, punctured, and in places demolished or rebuilt to suit the needs of the garden. The garden was laid out in a mainly informal way, with a central lawn, circuit and side paths and informal planting. The ground is for the most part level, with a low terrace scarp running north-east/south-west across the lawn to the south-west of the house. On the south-east edge of this garden area the ground begins to drop down to the presumed line of the curtain wall,

which was damaged and then demolished on this side. It then drops precipitously down to the boundary wall at the foot of the slope.

The drive to the east of the house is well preserved, flanked by sloping borders which are bounded by upright slate edging. The border to the west, between the drive and the house, is planted with choice small trees and shrubs, particularly yew and hollies, including an unusual variegated one (*Ilex altaclerensis* 'Belgica Aurea'); that to the east is planted with a large, spreading turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*), one of the most significant, and probably oldest, of the trees in the garden. It is possible that this predates the mid-nineteenth-century planting phase and was planted by Bowen. The border runs up to the crenellated curtain wall, which is about 1.5m high. On the outside the wall drops down to the stables below.

The main circuit path curves around the south-east, south and north-west sides of the garden, joining the drive near the east end of the house. Its surface, where visible, is of slate gravel. From the north-east end it runs southwards and the first feature it leads to is the east tower. This is a semicircular bastion projecting out from the curtain wall, with two flights of precipitous steps leading down to garderobes at the base of the tower on either side. The battlemented walls of the tower are about 2.1m high. In the south-east corner are the remains of a flight of steps, with a tapered fireplace behind, leading up to a partially preserved platform. This is about 0.3m high and extends all around the inside of the tower, with an extension on the north side, and was probably used as a viewing platform.

The path continues south-westwards, flanked on either side by sycamore trees and by variegated hollies (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Argentea Marginata' and *Ilex altaclerensis* 'Belgica Aurea', the larger and smaller trees respectively, on the inner side), yew and *Ruscus aculeatus* (on the outer side). Set back from the path, to its west, is a large wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), with a sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) to its north-west. The wellingtonia is a prominent focal point in the garden. The terrace scarp, about 0.2m high, runs between the two.

On the opposite side of the path to the wellingtonia are the remnants of a whale jawbone arch. This consists of one complete upright bone and one broken one leaning on it. The complete bone is about 2.8m high and the broken one is about half its height. Graffiti carved on the inner side of the complete bone include 'DWJ 1905'. Parts of broken bone are lying on the ground nearby. The jawbones are said to have come from Canada and to have been given to David Griffith Davies, who bought the property in 1836, by Captain James Ellis. They originally stood on the other side of the river, at the Ropewalk, but were moved to their present position before 1900.

The main path originally continued around the southern end of the garden, but it is currently overgrown. A branch path runs southwards, next to the whalebone arch, to a flight of five slate steps, flanked by the remains of a parapet wall of stone and slate, which leads down to a lower path parallel to the main one. This is currently impassable to the north but open to the south. It is flanked on its upper side by a low stone revetment wall, above which is a row of round iron posts about 1.5m high. These are too widely spaced to be fence posts, making it probable that originally there were chains between them. Between the third and fourth posts to the south is a second flight of slate steps. Originally these would have led to a linking path, but this is now obscured. Large beech trees (that on the north side being a purple beech — *Fagus sylvatica purpurea*) flank the path to the south. Below the path are more hollies and then a steep bank down to the boundary wall. This bank is covered in dense, scrubby vegetation, including hollies and sycamore trees. During the twentieth century it was an orchard of apple and pear trees.

Near the south-west end of this path, shortly before it joins the main circuit path, there are two slate steps up to the higher level. A side path, at present the only circuit path, leads off southwards to the south-east tower of the castle. This is a semicircular projecting bastion. Its battlemented walls stand to about 2.1m high, but are broken down on the east side. A raised platform about 0.6m high runs along the south-east and south sides of the interior and was probably a garden seat. A yew tree is planted on the west side.

The path then runs along beside the castle's curtain wall, flanked by a belt of trees and shrubs, including oak, sycamore, various hollies and laurel. A well-preserved flight of five slate steps leads up to a Second World War concrete pillbox, built in 1940. This small hexagonal building overlooks the bridge over the river Teifi. The path skirts it, backed by hollies (*Ilex altaclerensis* 'Hendersonii' and *Ilex altaclerensis* 'Hodginsii'). The walk continues along the west curtain wall, flanked by hollies, yew and aucuba, with beech and sycamore trees further into the garden. As the castle wall begins to run north-eastwards the path turns inwards, passing through an area planted with hollies (including *Ilex altaclerensis* 'Hodginsii'), aucuba, beech and oak. It then picks up the main circuit path, which runs north-eastwards parallel with the curtain wall. Inside this path the interior of the garden is now overgrown with seedling trees, scrubby vegetation and ivy.

Against the north-west curtain wall, here formed by the pine end wall of a house, are the remains of a small shelter, measuring about 2m across. It has four wooden supports and a pent slate roof, with a partially collapsed ornamental wooden strip beneath its lower end. To the left of the shelter is a low wall, then a raised platform, about 0.5m high, of coursed rough slate stone, with a slate top. This continues as a seat under the shelter. In front is a small area paved with slate flagstones, with a large sycamore and aucuba shrubs on the other side of the path.

The path continues northwards to join the drive at the main entrance. A slate path, edged with upright slate, curves around the north side of the entrance, with the remains of a small sunken area to its north, against the curtain wall. This has low walls, about 0.5m high, of large slate slabs and a doorway on the south-west side. It may have been the boilerhouse for the adjacent glasshouse.

The curtain wall to the east of the entrance, although probably on the line of the medieval wall, dates to about 1830 and was built as the back wall of a glasshouse. It is about 5m high and built of stone, with a band of large, hand-made bricks. This part of the wall is a 'hot' wall, hollowed inside for the passage of hot air from a boiler to heat the glasshouse. The wall appears to have been raised, or had its top rebuilt, at some time. Towards the west end is a filled-in chimney, presumably for the glasshouse boiler. Against the wall is another flimsy, ruinous shelter, similar to but slightly simpler than the first. In it is a collapsed wooden seat.

Next to this are the footings of a glasshouse that stood against the curtain wall. Its outer brick wall, which has remnants of rendering on it, stands to about 0.4m high, with a collapsed slate bench against it. Much of the former interior is taken up with a rectangular, concrete-lined, shallow pool, which no longer holds water and replaced the glasshouse in about 1927. Miss Wood referred to this area as the 'Italian Garden'. The pool narrows in the middle on the north side and the narrow point has a gently arched stone bridge over it. Four small steps lead up to it on both sides. A slate path runs along the south side of the pool. Three seedling sycamore trees now stand within the former glasshouse: one at each end and one in the middle. At the east end is a stone wall, about 0.5–1m high, with quartz blocks set in the top. In the middle is an entrance, with a simple iron gate with spearheaded rails. On the south side of the gate the wall is

topped by the remains of a concrete and stone finial. On the outside of the wall is a slate-edged flowerbed and a slate water tank. This originally collected rainwater from the roof of the hothouse, which was used to water plants. When the pond replaced the hothouse, water from the tank was used to replenish it. A slate path runs along the west side of the house and through a gap in the curtain wall to the next section of the garden.

The second area of the garden consists of various walled compartments to the west, north and north-east of the house. These were mostly, but not all, of a utilitarian nature. The compartment walls are of rubble stone and stand up to about 2.5m high. The compartment to the west of the house only became part of the property in the late nineteenth century. It is roughly square and was originally used as a croquet lawn. In the 1930s a glasshouse was built within it and the remainder continued as a lawn. It is overgrown at present, planted with a few poor, overgrown specimen trees — wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) and larch (*Larix europaea*). The compartment immediately to the north of the house is four-sided. A path, with the remains of some of its slate edging visible, can be traced along the north side. In the north-west corner is a door into a very small extension. An unusual holly (*Ilex altaclerensis* 'Hendersonii') grows against the north wall.

To the north of this compartment is a larger walled area, now mostly overgrown, with a few mature sycamore trees and hollies (*Ilex aquifolium* and *Ilex altaclerensis* hybrids). This was a kitchen garden, originally planted with fruit trees, soft fruit and vegetables. The ground slopes gently down towards the east; the upper, west end is levelled into a rectangular terrace, bounded on its east side by a scarp about 0.5m high. The north wall has a single-storey stone house, with two windows facing the garden, built into it. To the east of this and built against the wall are the remains of a glasshouse, which probably date to the 1930s. These consist of the brick footings of its walls, which stand to about 1m high.

Against the east wall of this area is the Gardener's House (Ty'r Ardd). This is a small, two-storey stone building, at present derelict and somewhat overgrown, with a hipped slate roof and sash windows. It was built in about 1808 by John Bowen to provide staff accommodation and has been unoccupied since 1954. In the area between this house, the back of the main house and the glasshouse, parts of a layout of paths, with remnants of slate edging, are visible. To the north of the Gardener's House is a large sycamore tree. To the south is a small walled court, through which a path of slate flagstones, flanked by revetment walls topped with large slate coping stones, runs down to an arched door in the east wall of the compartment. The east side of this doorway is ornamented with flanking square piers that extend above the top of the wall, and which are capped with tapering, stepped coping.

The enclosure to the east is rectangular, with the former coach house at the north end. It is a small, single-storey stone building with one large and one small opening, in which are the remains of doors. It was built soon after 1800 and is mentioned in the 1832 sale particulars. On the west side, in the angle of the front wall and boundary wall, is a slate water tank. Inside are the remains of a fireplace and collapsed roof. The building was used as a garage from the early twentieth century onwards and in 1940 the Woods installed an Armstrong-Siddeley and Morris 8; when the roof collapsed in 1946 the cars were crushed. An unusual holly, *Ilex altaclerensis* (possibly 'Balearica'), is planted against the east corner.

Next to the east side of the building is a narrow snicket leading to an elaborate nineteenth-century ironwork gate into the street. The north end of the east side of the enclosure is bounded by simple

spearheaded iron railings, about 0.7m high. The remainder of this side is enclosed by a stone wall about 1.3m high, topped by triangular-sectioned battlements with the sloping face on the outside.

A doorway in the wall leads to a terrace running parallel to the enclosure. The doorway has an arch of slender, coiled ironwork over it, a slate flagstone on the ground and hinge brackets for a door or gate. The terrace is bounded in part by a steep embankment and in part by a high stone wall, with no parapet. There is no significant planting at present on this terrace. At the south end is a steep flight of stone steps leading to a lower compartment. This is enclosed by a rubble-stone boundary wall, 3–4m high, on the east side, and the wall to the drive on the south and south-west. The boundary wall on Carrier's Lane is topped with sloping crenellations similar to those on the service drive. The compartment is overgrown and contains a few sycamore and beech trees, privet, laurel and some *Lonicera nitida* and *Euonymus japonicus*.

The first phase of landscaping within the castle seems to have been in 1713. This was in order to create a level terrace, used at least some of the time as a bowling green. It would appear that part at least of the castle grounds was available for public use at this time. On the west side of the castle the raised ground was bounded partly by buildings beyond the castle boundary. These were demolished in the 1930s and replaced by a section of wall.

The next major phase of development took place in 1801–15, under the ownership of John Bowen. It was Bowen's landscaping that created most of the garden layout as it exists today. At the same time as building his house he was evidently making major alterations to the castle ward to transform it into a garden. The ground was levelled and raised on an extensive scale in order to create an attractive setting for the house. N. Carlisle, in *A Topographical Dictionary of the Dominion of Wales* (1811), gives some indication of the landscaping: 'the wall between the two Towers being lowered and the Green sloped down so as to form a hanging Garden'. The towers mentioned would be the east and south-east towers, between which it appears that what remained of the curtain wall was demolished. The lowering of this section of wall provided a fine panoramic view from the front of the house across the river Teifi and beyond. The 'hanging' (terraced) garden presumably refers to the castle ward, which is sculpted into shallow terraces, with the ground below the outermost one, beyond the perimeter path, steeply sloping down to The Strand. Samuel Lewis (1833) stated that 'the outer ward has been converted into a verdant lawn, tastefully disposed in parterres, the whole effected by John Bowen Esq'.

The next owner, Arthur Jones, for whom the main block of the house was built, probably undertook further landscaping and development of the grounds. In 1830 Jones built a 26.5m (87ft) hothouse and pinery between the house and the main entrance. Other garden features from this phase, in the 1830s, include a small fernery, under glass, against the wall to the south of the main entrance.

By 1834 — according to the Wood map of Cardigan — the main elements of the gardens were in place, including entrances, stables, walls, drives and paths. The major planting that survives today probably dates to the ownership of David Davies, from 1836. This can be deduced from the date of introduction, or breeding, of many of the surviving woody plants. The hollies, that are such a feature of the garden, can be attributed to Davies. They include early varieties of the 'High Clere Holly' that are unusual in cultivation. The engraving in T. Nicholas's book, *Annals and Antiquities of the Counties and County Families of Wales* (1872), shows a substantial tree — possibly the turkey oak — to the east of the house, a gently sloping lawn, a path, a

young tree planted on a mound in front of the house (possibly the wellingtonia) and a glasshouse against the curtain wall to the west of the house.

Twentieth-century alterations did not substantially alter the overall layout and planting of the garden. The easternmost compartment of the garden, between the service drive and Carrier's Lane, was added in 1906–07, when the lane was widened. The row of cottages that stood to the east of the service drive was demolished and the present boundary wall was built along Carrier's Lane. The new enclosure included rockeries, flower borders and a small glasshouse. Along with the rest of the garden, it was abandoned in the 1940s.

John Evans made a number of alterations between 1924 and 1939, when he died. In the 1920s he added a tennis court at the south end of the lawn. The east end of the hothouse was taken down in 1927 and the remainder in the following year or two. Cast-iron posts salvaged from it were relocated in their present position by the circuit path. In 1931 the head gardener, Victor Reed, demolished the fernery and built the small sheltered seat and flagstone patio on its site. He also built two similar seats on the site of the hothouse, which he replaced with an ornamental lily pond and slate patio, the remains of which survive. Terracotta heads were placed on the gate piers at the east end of the pond. New glasshouses were built in the kitchen garden and croquet lawn enclosure at the same time.

After the Woods bought the property in 1940 both the house and garden were neglected. The last gardener, Mr Sharpe, left in 1940. The garden became overgrown, seedling sycamore trees and scrubby vegetation swamped the lawn, and the orchard and other enclosures and structural features disappeared in the undergrowth. It is only recently, since Ceredigion County Council bought the site in 2003, that clearance has begun to reveal them again.

The adaptation of the inner ward of the medieval castle for use as a pleasure garden is an unusual and interesting aspect of the site. Direct comparisons can be made with the early nineteenth-century conversion of the outer ward of Laugharne Castle, Carmarthenshire, into a pleasure garden (PGW (Dy) 2 (CAM)). The work entailed major alterations to the medieval remains within and around the ward. These consisted mainly of ground levelling and raising, the removal of any remaining medieval buildings and walls, and alterations to the curtain wall. The process was begun in 1713, when the ward was converted to a bowling green. As part of the early nineteenth-century landscaping, probably by John Bowen at the beginning of the century, the curtain wall of the medieval castle was adapted to become a garden wall. This entailed not only the removal of the remains of the wall between the east and south-east towers, which took place in or just before 1811, but the probable lowering of some sections, repair of others and the making of garden seats and vantage points within the towers. At some point during the nineteenth century, possibly slightly later, false crenellations, similar to those on the new walls, were added to the tops of the walls for medieval effect. Below the crenellations on the south-east tower another layer of post-medieval crenellations is visible, possibly dating to the 1713 landscaping.

Sources

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