

BRYNTYSILIO

Ref No PGW (C) 20
OS Map 125
Grid Ref SJ 196 435
Former County Glyndwr
Unitary Authority Denbighshire
Community Council Llantysilio
Designations Listed building: Bryntisilio Hall Grade II
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Comparatively unaltered small terraced garden of the last half of the nineteenth century belonging to Sir Theodore Martin, biographer of Prince Albert and Lady Martin who was Helen Faucit, the Shakespearean actress.

Type of Site

Formal terraced garden with shrubberies. Typical nineteenth-century planting, with laurels and rhododendrons.

Main Phases of Construction

1865-1875

SITE DESCRIPTION

The house is approached by a short drive off the B5437 passing a nineteenth-century lodge, with wide grass verges planted with conifers and a small wood on the north side of the drive.

Bryntysilio is a stuccoed Italianate villa situated on a small bend above the River Dee to the west of Llangollen, overlooking the Horseshoe falls to Plas Berwyn on the other side of the river. The roof has wide eaves, and the windows are shuttered on the first floor, with french windows on the ground floor, which has a cast iron verandah. What now remains is the Georgian core of the house altered in the nineteenth century by Sir Theodore Martin and his wife, the actress Helen Faucit, although many of their additions and alterations were removed in the 1950s. The balustrading on the second floor has been removed and replaced with a plain type. An idea of the original wrought ironwork may be gauged from a small balcony on a bedroom window on the west side of the house.

The house has been much altered including the removal of original windows. A ground floor room has been extended into the verandah. A nineteenth-century addition, probably by the Martins, on the west side of the house with a canted window has been removed leaving a stone paved terrace. The outer wall of this extension has been retained and modified with the end scooped out and the top capped with stone slabs to form a curtain wall to the terrace. It would seem that the canted window was replaced on the reduced house.

The majority of the garden lies to the west of the house with sloping lawns immediately to the south planted with shrubs and specimen trees. From the south side of the house a path leads to the west and the

terraced garden which lies slightly to the north. An axial path running north-south up and down the garden leads to the terraces to the north-west. There are two main terraces with box-edged herbaceous beds either side of the stone path backed by yew hedges, behind which are further box-edged squares. Pathways running east-west link these areas. At the north end of the path is a semi-circle of *Chamaecyparis*, with a low wall of stone making a focal point. This is a much later addition and would appear to be of twentieth-century origin. Lying to the west of this terraced area and reached via steps is a large stone pool in an area surrounded by rhododendrons. This area is post 1872, the original boundary of the garden ending with the upper terrace of box-edged beds.

To the south of the terraces lie areas of sweeping lawn broken up in regular fashion by lines of trees and shrubs running east west. The axial north-south path continues into this southern informal area where the path is bordered with Irish Yews. A path runs along the southern boundary to the south-west perimeter of the garden where there is a door in the boundary wall, just opposite the church. Just below the upper terrace of box-edged beds is an axial path running east-west the full width of the garden.

A small orchard lies on high ground behind the house and immediately to the east of the formal terraced area.

Sources

Secondary

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p. 199.

HARTSHEATH

Ref No PGW (C) 21
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 285 603
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Delyn BC; Alyn and Deeside DC
Community Council Leeswood
Designations Listed building: Hartsheath Grade II
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Small nineteenth-century park and terraced and informal garden surviving in their entirety, with unusual feature of sunken servants' walk doubling as a ha-ha.

Type of Site

Landscape park; formal and informal garden

Main Phases of Construction

Nineteenth and twentieth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Hartsheath is a square stone house of five bays, rock-faced with a coursed rubble service wing and hipped slate roof. In the centre of the entrance front, on the north-west side, is a porch with Doric columns and later glazing. The house was first built for the Lloyd family in 1702, and there were further building phases in 1770 and 1810. The present house is the result of a re-modelling of 1825 for a short-lived mining company. The work was carried out by the architect and actor Charles James Mathews. The Joneses bought the house in an unfinished state in 1829 and the family has owned the property since that time.

The stables consist of a stone built rectangular block with hipped roof blocks at each end, united by a nine-bay Doric colonnade. This re-modelling was carried out by Mathews at the same time as the 1825 re-modelling of the house.

The park lies to the north and north-west of the house. The area is undulating, with a belt of trees concentrated on a low ridge to the north-west of the house. A small lake, now silted up, forms part of the north-eastern boundary. The river Alyn forms the boundary to the south-west. The western part of the park was disparked in c. 1938, and some parts of this area were planted with deciduous trees in 1990.

The present drive runs eastwards from the Pontblyddyn-Wrexham road just to the south of the river Alyn to the gravel sweep on the north-west side of the house. The entrance is flanked by simple square stone piers. The drive was built in about 1825, and the stone bridge carrying it over the river is by Mathews, the architect of the house. It replaced an earlier drive which ran directly from Keeper's Cottage on the north boundary of the park, then a public road, south-eastwards to the house. The line of this drive was subsequently disrupted by quarrying. In about 1840 a new

drive was constructed from a lodge in the north corner of the park. This ran along a ridge to the east of the earlier drive, joining it to the south of the quarry. In the early twentieth century a branch was built from the junction to Park Cottage north of the house. When the drive to its west became disused in about 1950 this drive was connected to the gravel sweep in front of the house. Subsidiary drives lead to the Plas Newydd, the home farm which lies to the north-east of the house. Both entrances are flanked by nineteenth-century rusticated stone gate piers. A further short stretch of disused drive, with a lodge dated 1840, runs from the A5104 (former Corwen Turnpike) to the A 541 Wrexham road to the south-west of Fferm.

A curious and unusual feature of the grounds is a curving sunken passageway revetted in stone in front of the house. This was a servants' walk, sunken so that they could not be seen from the house, but also serves as a ha-ha, giving uninterrupted views across the park from the front of the house. A bridge of 1916 crosses the walk to the park.

The ridge in the north-west part of the park is covered with mixed deciduous woodland, mainly replanted after clear-felling in the Second World War. Small clumps of lime and oak are situated within the central area of the park. An extremely large, multiple-stemmed sycamore dating to the early nineteenth century is sited just to the north of the servants' passage. The land to the south along the river Alyn and the present driveway is densely planted, with recent planting of exotic trees along the drive. A conifer plantation lies just south of the river.

The garden lies immediately to the south of the house, sloping down to the river Alyn. Most of the garden is thought to date from the nineteenth century, with twentieth-century overlays, particularly of planting. The 1811 survey shows a rudimentary garden next to the house and two ponds in the valley bottom. The ponds remain, albeit silted up, and near the house the stone wall bounding the garden on the north side is probably the one shown on the survey.

The garden can be roughly divided into three areas. The first area immediately adjacent to the house is a lawn with perimeter shrub planting. A double herbaceous border, made in the 1920s, is centred off the main axis of the house. The borders are aligned on the middle window of the dining-room, and replace Victorian parterres that are visible as parch-marks in the lawn. This area also includes a small rectangular pre-war formal garden with paved perimeter and cross paths on the south side of the house. The garden is bounded by a stone wall on the north side. The north-westward extension of this wall, which bounds the north-east side of the forecourt, has two ice-tunnels, facing north-east, built into its base.

The land drops sharply away from the lawn south-westwards to an area of informal woodland garden which slopes down to a level area of wild garden. The steep slope is scarped into a series of narrow terraces, and earthen paths lead across the slope from the upper to the lower parts of the garden. The valley bottom is planted with mixed trees, shrubs, and bamboos, and two elongated rectangular former ponds, now silted up, lie parallel with the river, which bounds the garden.

The nineteenth-century kitchen garden forms the third area. This lies to the south-east of the pleasure garden on ground sloping slightly to the south-east. It is circular in shape, and unwallled on all but the north side. Its southern perimeter is a post and rail fence, which replaced a hawthorn hedge c. 1960. There is a grass perimeter path and a cross walk which is planted with old fruit trees. The quarters are edged in box. The centre point is marked by a late nineteenth-century stone Japanese lantern removed from the woodland. It replaced the (ex-situ) marriage

stone now in the Dutch garden. The north side is bounded by a brick-lined stone wall, with a ruinous lean-to glass house against it. Another glass house was demolished recently. In the north-east corner, outside the garden, is a small cottage, formerly the gardener's house. North of the kitchen garden is a small triangular grass area, probably a frame yard, bounded by a revetment wall on the east and the garden wall on the west. A narrow space left open behind the revetment wall may indicate that it was originally heated in some way.

A Dutch garden is situated in the northern part of the kitchen garden, consisting of box hedges and a simple cross path made of slabbing. Part of this was constructed by the present owner's parents, although a small garden of some kind is indicated by pathways on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map.

Sources

Primary

1811 survey for G.L. Wardle: private collection.

Secondary

Dickens, Charles, Life of C.J. Mathews (undated).

Harbron, D., 'Minor masters of the XIXth century. V. Charles Mathews, or Architect into Actor', Architectural Review LXXX (1936), no. 477, pp. 77-80.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p. 378.

PENTREHOBYN

Ref No PGW (C) 22

OS Map 117

Grid Ref SJ 250 624

Former County Clwyd

Unitary Authority Delyn BC

Community Council Leeswood

Designations Listed building: Pentrehobyn Grade II*
Scheduled Ancient Monument: Round barrow at Pentrehobin (F51)

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of seventeenth-century garden associated with fine early seventeenth-century house and unusual llettyau

Type of Site

Small park; walled and terraced gardens

Main Phases of Construction

Seventeenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries

SITE DESCRIPTION

Pentrehobyn is situated south-east of Mold on low lying ground south-west of the river Alun, with the house facing south. The house was for long in the hands of the Lloyd family. There have been Lloyds living in or around Pentrehobyn from the eleventh century, being descended from Hywel ap Edwin, Prince of Wales 1096.

The dating of the present house is uncertain, but is thought to have been built for Edward and Margaret Lloyd in the first half of the seventeenth century. Their initials are carved on an overmantel dated 1546, but combined with the coat of arms of James I, none of which tallies. The datestone of 1540 over the front door is also misleading, as the house is probably of the early seventeenth century. Edward's son was to be High Sheriff of Flint in 1679.

The layout of the house is H-plan, built of stone under a slate roof which has coped gables with finials. The mullioned and transomed windows are irregular, varying from three to six bays and these are not even consistent within a block. The round arched windows to the rear and side of the house are thought to be mid sixteenth century.

A row of eight stone roofed cells, or llettyau, is situated to the east of the house which is said to have been for wayfarers. The two-storey stone building standing at the eastern end of the cells is thought to have been for an overseer. An inscription states that they were built by Mr Edward Lloyd who built the house, as night stops for travellers displaced as a result of the dissolution of the monasteries. However there is no certainty as to which Edward Lloyd was the builder. It could be he who rebuilt the house in 1625 or his grandfather circa 1550, if the the story of the dissolution is to hold water the latter would seem more favourable. However the gable ends of the overseer's house

seem seventeenth-century, re-build perhaps at the same time as the house. The arched windows however would seem to belong to an earlier date as indeed do the cells themselves. Other suggestions for the use of these buildings include a private workhouse.

A roughly triangular area to the west, south and east of the house, forms a small park. This land did not become part of the Pentrehobyn demesne until the mid nineteenth century, when the public road was re-routed to take it to its present position, thus allowing a drive to be built to the house. The original public road in fact followed part of the route of the present drive. There are two drives, to the north-west and south of the house. The southern one is now disused, but is visible in the grass, and still has gates and gate piers at the entrance. That from the north-west has a small nineteenth-century lodge and simple stone piers flanked by stone walls at the entrance. The drive is flanked by limes, and runs to a small forecourt on the south side of the house.

Planting in the park is mainly nineteenth-century. The drive to the south of the house is flanked by sycamores; that to the north-west by limes. Further limes mark the field boundary north of the house, with one of similar age to the south-east of the house. Further planting in the area around the garden include a copper beech, three limes in a row, and conifers including a redwood.

The garden is small and lies to the south and east of the house. The garden consists of a lawn bordered by narrow beds and broken up by a small wall on the east side which runs back to the east corner of the house. This also indicates a drop in level and it is possible that this is the remains of a courtyard or garden at the front of the house. The remains of such a wall also runs south from the eastern corner of the overseer's house of the llettyau. Again this could indicate the remains of a seventeenth-century court or garden. This wall formed the boundary until the nineteenth century when the garden boundary was pushed out to the east and another wall built, thus making access possible to the rear of the llettyau. The boundary wall is built of stone, and is about 2 m. high with triangular stone copings.

The present garden layout of paths is post 1871, as up until this date the layout appears to have been informal, planted with trees. A path runs east from the front of the house to the lower level to the south of the llettyau. A circular bed breaks up the path, which then continues to the low wall which formed the original pleasure garden boundary.

There is a small walled garden, probably of seventeenth-century date, to the rear of the llettyau attached to a barn. The walls have half-moon coping stones of Buckley ware, which are probably of twentieth-century date.

Sources

Secondary

- Leslie, C.H., Rambles round Mold (1869): Clwyd Record Office (Hawarden), NT/977.
- Hussey, C., 'Pentrehobyn, Flintshire', Country Life, 15 October 1943, pp. 684-86.
- Pratt, D., and A.G. Veysey, A Handlist of the Topographical Prints of Clwyd (1977), nos 836-37.
- Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 396-97.

BRYNBELLA

Ref No PGW (C) 23
OS Map 116
Grid Ref SJ 080 724
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Rhuddlan BC
Community Council Tremeirchion
Designations Listed building: Brynbella Grade II*
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Late eighteenth-century small park and informal garden, with later overlays, built for Mr and Mrs Piozzi. Mrs Piozzi, previously Mrs Thrale, was a friend of Dr Johnson, who visited Brynbella. The setting of the house and views from it and the garden out over the park and Vale of Clwyd make this an exceptionally attractive site.

Type of Site

Landscape park; informal garden

Main Phases of Construction

Late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Brynbella is situated on the east side of the Vale of Clwyd, at the foot of the Clwydian Hills. It is a neo-classical Georgian mansion built by Mr and Mrs Gabriel Piozzi in 1792-5, and designed by Charles Mead. Mrs Piozzi, born Hester Lynch Salusbury, and previously Mrs Thrale, was a friend of Samuel Johnson, who was a visitor to the house. The Piozzis were also great friends of Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, the 'ladies of Llangollen'.

The house consists of three blocks, a central block with two wings. The east-facing entrance front is two storeyed and stuccoed, with a Doric sandstone doorcase and fanlight above. The west front is ashlar with neo-classical detailing including a four-column Doric porch with balcony over. The side wings have niches and three-bay pediments. The upper storey was added in the mid nineteenth century.

The brick stable yard lies to the north of the house, and was also designed by Mead, in 1795-96. The buildings are around three sides of a central courtyard. The east-facing portion has a wooden bell tower with lion rampant weather vane. The outward face of this section has a brick pediment with stone copings and a central clock.

The area to the west of the house cannot truly be called a park, being very small and more the adaption of fields to provide a better setting for the house. It incorporates some old hedgerow trees, and a dried up stream bed. The park is divided from the garden by a ha-ha running the length of the west side of the garden. Mixed deciduous trees are scattered throughout the area, with a few specimen oaks in the eastern part. On either side of the view from the garden front of the house are

clumps of mixed deciduous trees, and in the western end of the area is a similar clump around a dew pond.

The architect of the house Charles Mead is said to have had a hand in the design of the original garden, but it is not clear if any of his work remains. The pathway system and woodland planting may have been his work. Apparently Gabrielle Piozzi vetoed a plan for an ornamental canal.

There are two drives, one to the north and one to the south both with lodges. The house is well protected from the road by a belt of trees. The drives meet at a sweep on the east side of the house. Woodland with some walks, now rather overgrown, occupies the area to the south of the house.

The west front of the house is planted with a shrub border obscuring the basement level of the house. A paved terrace leads down to a croquet lawn, which is a twentieth-century addition. The croquet lawn has shrub borders on the north and south and a path leads from here to the rest of the garden.

The main part of the garden lies to the north of the house and consists of shrubberies of twentieth-century origin plus a small area of woodland. Just outside the walled garden is a small area enclosed with yew hedges utilizing the walled garden wall as a background for a herbaceous border. Running east-west behind this enclosure a twentieth-century yew walk with herbaceous border leads back to the house via the stable yard.

The west side of the walled garden is also planted up as a herbaceous border, with views west to the park over an area of lawn with a formal pond. North of the walled garden is another area of woodland providing a buffer between the garden and boundary. This area, though rather overgrown, has a walk along its edge to a gate at the end of the ha-ha which leads into the park.

A square walled kitchen garden of nineteenth-century date lies at the north end of the garden. It is bounded by brick walls standing to their full height of c. 5 m., with overhanging coping stones. Half of the garden is taken up with a tennis court, otherwise it is maintained as traditional fruit and vegetable garden. A border dissects the garden and is planted with roses and dahlias.

Sources

Secondary

Howell, P., 'Country houses in the Vale of Clwyd - I', Country Life 22 December 1977, pp. 1906-09.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 450-51.

PLAS TEG

Ref No PGW (C) 24
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 287 597
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Alyn and Deeside DC
Community Council Leeswood
Designations Listed building: Plas Teg Grade II*
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of seventeenth-century courtyard, with gazebo, to one of the most important houses in Clwyd

Type of Site

Courtyard entrance; walled garden; shrubberies; avenue

Main Phases of Construction

Seventeenth century; nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Plas Teg was built by Sir John Trevor (1562-1629) in 1610. Trevor was the second son of Sir John Trevor of Trevalyn Hall. In terms of design Plas Teg stands on its own amongst other houses of the period in Clywd. Its compact design has similarities to houses such as Hardwick Hall, Wollaton and Lulworth Castle in England and Ruperra Castle in south Wales. Sir John was knighted by James I, and was made steward and receiver at Windsor Castle amongst other honours. No doubt these court connections influenced the design of Plas Teg. A house is known to have stood on the site of Plas Teg before the building of the present house but nothing survives.

Plas Teg stands with its back to the hill, facing north-east. The building consists of a three-storey central block with corner towers. The towers have ogee roofs and square cupolas. The north-east and south-east facing sides are of ashlar blocks whilst the remaining sides are of rubble. The top storey of the house was remodelled in the eighteenth century. This is quite obvious on the north-east front where the pediments are built of a honey coloured sandstone as opposed to the grey of the rest of the house. The gable on the south-east was apparently curvilinear too, but now has three plain gables, and a single gable on the south-east and south-west ends.

The stables and farm buildings lie to the north-west of the house. It is likely that these utility buildings were erected at the time of the remodelling of the house in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, or perhaps were remodellings of existing buildings. The stone stable block has three rounded archways reaching to the full height of the building. The central block which advances slightly from the other two has a brick pediment which contains a dovecote. The outer archways have been filled in with brick panels. A building similar in design, but

without a pediment, lies just opposite. It has the same archways, two of which are panelled with brick.

It is doubtful if there was ever a scheme for a park, mainly due to the fact that family attendance at Plas Teg was fairly sporadic right from the moment it was built. Long periods were spent at court in London, and as a result of marriage Glynde in Sussex was to become the chief family seat. During much of its life Plas Teg has been tenanted, or left empty.

Nineteenth-century drives remain to the north and south of the house, but the lodge, formerly at the north entrance, was demolished when the A541 was widened.

To the north-west of the house is a wooded area which has a small ha-ha around it. At some time many of the trees appear to have been coppiced. Some specimen oaks and limes are scattered throughout the area to the south-west, north-west, and south-east of the house. There are also some mature sycamores. Aligned on the north-east front of the house are the remains of a lime avenue stretching to the A541 Mold-Wrexham road. This is shown on a late eighteenth-century estate map, but the present trees are younger, indicating that the avenue has been replanted. The ground is generally very wet and as a result there is quite a high percentage of silver birch.

There are two ice-houses at Plas Teg. The first lies to the north-west of the house just north of the site of a pond, now covered by a farm building. It is stone built with a stone vaulted interior. The second lies just off a line to the centre of the house on the far side of the road. It is stone built and various local stories state that a secret passage runs under the lime avenue to this ice house.

Very little survives of any garden at Plas Teg. An eighteenth-century drawing shows that there was an entrance courtyard on the north-east front of the building with two pavilions, one at each outer corner, with a pillared gateway in the centre. The two side walls of the court are shown joined by a wall capped with fretted stonework, in the centre of which, aligned with the front door, is a gateway entrance with arch over. On the arch is some type of carved stonework, perhaps a coat of arms. The drawing also shows walled enclosures on each side of the pavilions, and to the front. The south-east pavilion survives with fragments of walling and there are fragments of the other pavilion to the north-west. The pavilion is single-storey, built of stone with a pyramidal slate roof. It is open on the north-west and part of the south-west sides, with a simple column in the corner. A late eighteenth-century estate map shows the walled courtyard at the front of the house, and to the north. The area labelled garden extends to the south side of the house.

The ground behind the house is steeply sloping, and directly behind the house is a stone retaining wall. Immediately to the south of the retaining wall and to the south-east are the remains of a nineteenth-century shrubbery largely overtaken by gorse, but with some azaleas and rhododendron remaining. This area is bound to the north-west and south-east by stone revetted ha-has. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (25") indicates meandering paths and a small pond. A small oval glasshouse, possibly a conservatory, is also shown to the south-east of the house but this does not survive.

The small stone built walled garden lies to the south-west of the house on sloping ground above it. The garden is almost certainly nineteenth-century, not being indicated on a late eighteenth-century map of the house and surrounding land. The walls are about 3m in height, with thick coping slabs which slightly overhang the wall. The southern end of the

garden has a wide and deep stone revetted ditch instead of a wall, with the remains of a scooped out wall on the garden side. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows a greenhouse on the north west wall.

Sources

Primary

Late eighteenth-century book of Trevor Estate maps including Plas Teg, found in solicitor's office, Birch Cullimore, Wrexham. No ref.

Secondary

Smith, P., 'Plas Teg', Trans. Flintshire Hist. Soc. 18 (1960), pp. 157-62.

Girouard, M., 'Plas Teg', Country Life, 19 July 1962, pp. 134-37.

Pratt, D., and A.G. Veysey, A Handlist of the Topographical Prints of Clwyd (1977), no 838.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 376-78.