

EYARTH HALL

Ref No PGW (C) 51
OS Map 116
Grid Ref SJ 127 541
Former County Glyndwr
Unitary Authority Denbighshire
Community Council Llanfair Dyffryn
Designations None
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Survival of garden terraces probably contemporary with the Tudor house; water features and unusual rockwork.

Type of Site

Terraced garden; ornamental spring and pond

Main Phases of Construction

Late sixteenth century - early seventeenth century; nineteenth century.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Eyarth Hall is a substantial, mainly timber-framed house situated on an eastward-facing slope south-west of Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd. It is a two-storey house orientated east-west, with a gabled two-storey entrance porch on the north side. Over the main door is the date 1606, and the initials 'R.W.' (probably Robert Wynne); the same date and initials appear carved in plaster on the upstairs landing, and over the hall mantelpiece is a date of 1599. The upper, west end of the house, built into the slope, is smaller and built of stone. This is probably the oldest part of the house. The main part was added by Robert Wynne at the end of the sixteenth century. The house then was of three storeys, altered to two when the east end of the house was partly rebuilt after a fire, the date of which is not known (probably during the nineteenth century). The timber framing was added at this time.

To the west of the drive and forecourt is a stone outbuilding, the former coach house, with the date 1769 and initials E.P. on the front wall. A group of farm buildings stand on the slope to the north-west of the house. Most are built of stone, ranged around a square court. There are also some more modern concrete ones. The date of the stone buildings is unknown, but they appear on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map.

Eyarth Hall is approached from the north up a drive off a minor road in the valley bottom. At the entrance is a small half-timbered single-storey lodge and stone walls topped by large blocks of water-worn limestone. This rockwork is a feature of the garden, found on top of walls, over doorways, on gate piers, and in flowerbeds. It comes from the limestone pavement on the ridge to the west of the house. The drive is bounded by stone walls and is flanked on the west by an area of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland with laurel underplanting, which at one time formed an outlying informal part of the garden. The drive leads to the farm buildings and also to simple iron gates on the garden boundary, and a

small roughly circular forecourt in front of the entrance porch of the house. There is little garden to the north of the house, and what there is is mainly informal, with mixed trees, shrubs, and a rockery bank on the west side of the forecourt. To the north-east of the house is a small ruined stone building whose ruinous walls have been converted into a garden feature. Above the forecourt, to the west is a back drive bounded by a *Lonicera nitida* hedge on the east and by the coach house on the west.

The garden lies mainly to the south of the house, on ground sloping steeply to the east. This part of the garden is terraced, with the main terrace on the level of the house. This is built out over the slope and retained at its southern end by a substantial stone revetment wall. Above is a further, sloping terrace, with traces of a level path along the top. Above this, now outside the garden, is a sloping field which may originally have been part of the garden, perhaps an orchard. It is shown as wooded, with a path running north-south through it, on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map. Features that suggest its inclusion include stone steps up to the entrance gate on its east side, and low stone walls along its west, south and part of its north sides.

At the bottom of the garden, below the main terrace, is a gently sloping grass path which was originally a drive, leading up to the north side of the house. At its south end is an iron gate into the field, where the line of the drive is visible in the turf, curving round to a simple gate on the road to the east.

The steep banks between the terraces are ornamented with waterworn limestone rockwork, and are planted with mixed trees and shrubs. The main terrace is largely lawn, with a gravel path along its west side, and with a stone baluster sundial in the middle. In the middle of the west side is a semi-circular alcove, and to its north stone steps lead up to a narrow straight path leading to a gate into the field. Over the path are iron hoops at intervals forming a narrow tunnel arbour for climbers (there are some roses trained on it). At the south end of the terrace is a small enclosure formed by a small stone utilitarian outbuilding, the boundary revetment wall and a box hedge.

At the northern end of the upper terrace is a small enclosed brick yard, with stone walls topped by rockwork, and with rockwork over a doorway leading to a small sloping grass area above the forecourt, bounded by laurels on the east and a stone wall on the west. This may have had a utilitarian function such as a drying green. Steps lead down to the back drive.

There are features in the pasture field below the house and drive that suggest that it may originally have formed part of the garden. At the top of the field, below the north part of the garden and the upper end of the drive, is a stretch of terrace slightly built out over the slope. Half way down the drive is a gate flanked by stone gate piers topped by large chunks of waterworn limestone. From this a track is visible in the turf leading down to a further gate, and doubling back to run northwards to the field edge at the drive. At its upper end this is flanked by large blocks of stone. Below it is a spring enclosed in a rectangular stone basin over which is an arched turf-covered stone alcove. On top of this is the stump of a large tree. Below is a narrow stone-lined rill leading north-eastwards down the slope to a small narrow ornamental pond. This is lined on the east by a straight brick wall and the field wall and on the west by a curving wall of large stone blocks with a central semi-circular projection on top of which is a large beech tree. Very clear water runs from the spring basin to the pond, which still holds water. The field is shown as wooded on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map, with a small building in a walled enclosure on its east boundary, to the north-east of the house.

The history of the garden is uncertain, but it is probable that the terraces, and possibly the spring in the field below, are contemporary with the house, which dates to the end of the sixteenth century. At a later stage, probably in the nineteenth century, the curving drive was added, and the garden was embellished with rockwork. The drive is shown on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map.

Sources

Information from owners

PEN-Y-LAN

Ref No	PGW (C) 52
OS Map	117
Grid Ref	SJ 329 411
Former County	Clwyd
Unitary Authority	Wrexham Maelor BC
Community Council	Ruabon
Designations	None
Site Evaluation	Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Early nineteenth-century landscape park in fine, unspoilt scenery of the Dee valley, surviving in its entirety, and still managed as a park.

Type of Site

Landscape park; informal garden

Main Phases of Construction

c. 1811; 1895-1920

SITE DESCRIPTION

Pen-y-lan is a compact, square stuccoed and castellated house situated on high ground overlooking the Dee valley to the south. Originally it was a brick house with basement and pitched roof, built, it is thought, in about 1690 by Euble Lloyd, of Leaton Knolls near Shrewsbury. Mr Lloyd was a quaker wool merchant and founder of Lloyds Bank. This house is depicted in a print of 1798 in the house ('The view of Pen-y-lan across the Dee'), which shows that the main entrance was on the east side. In 1830 the house was rendered, castellated, and given new windows, doors and a flat roof, thus turning it into a Regency villa. The main entrance was moved to the north side. Later in the nineteenth century a large extension was built in the same style to the west, but it was mostly demolished in the 1950s.

During the eighteenth century Pen-y-lan belonged to the Lloyd family. In 1792 Edward Lloyd sold the estate to Roger Kenyon of Cefn Park, Wrexham, and from 1796 to 1837 it belonged to Edward Lloyd Kenyon (who changed his name to Lloyd Lloyd), who made the park and altered the house. In 1854 the estate was sold to Thomas Hardcastle, of Bolton, who married an Ormrod; it then passed to his brother-in-law, and has been in the Ormrod family ever since.

The stable yard and farm buildings lie to the north of the house, and are reached from the forecourt and from a back drive from the north. The buildings are of brick. The stable courtyard is entered under an imposing arch on the north side, over which is a clock and a bellcote topped by a weather vane. Parts of the two-storey buildings around it have been converted to housing. To the west are further brick farm buildings with a brick-walled yard to their south. The north end of the westernmost building is a dovecote.

The 1778 survey of the estate for Ann Lloyd of Cesail Gyfarch, Caernarfon, shows the outbuildings, but not the stable yard, which may be contemporary with the alteration of the house in 1830.

Pen-y-lan has a medium-sized landscape park on the north side of the Dee valley. The house is set towards the west boundary. The northern part of the park is on the gently rolling plateau above the valley, the southern part on the steep slope down to the river. Two drives lead to the house from the north boundary of the park; the back drive from Back Lodge south of Pen-y-lan village, and the main drive from the north-east corner of the park. The first part of this drive, from the former lodge, is disused. The drive winds along the lip of the Dee valley to the small gravel forecourt on the north side of the house. A further drive winds down the steep slope above the river from the house to a small lodge (Bridge Lodge, now converted to a modern house) and bridge over the river. A farm track winds up the far side of the valley. It is thought that this was intended to be a third entrance to the park, but it is unclear if it was ever used as such. It is now only used as access to Bridge Lodge. The bridge has a wide span, and stands on large round stone piers with conical tops, two on either side and one in the middle. The original iron bridge was of carriage width, but had decayed to the extent of being dangerous and was recently replaced by a footbridge. Parts of the old bridge remain at either end, where there are also heavy iron gates.

The park is largely open pasture, with occasional isolated trees, and areas of planted woodland. The northern half of the park is also broken up by small spinneys. A row of oaks flank the west side of the southern end of the back drive, and just to the east of the garden, north of the main drive, is a closely set narrow double row of eight large-leaved limes. The 1778 survey shows a plantation, called the 'nursery', in this area, and it may be that these trees are all that is left of it. The rows are too closely set to be part of an avenue, and there is a further lime offset from them.

The 1778 survey shows no evidence for a park, nor does the 1798 print. However, by 1853 (Sale Particulars, 13 July 1853) a park had been made, with the same perimeter as today. The making of the park can be narrowed down to the beginning of the nineteenth century through pencilled amendments to the 1778 survey dating to 1828 (tenements 'cleared for the park'), through the Ordnance Survey resurvey of 1836 which shows the park, and through tree-ring counting of felled and fallen trees which indicates an average date of planting of about 1811. This makes it clear that it was Edward Lloyd Kenyon (Lloyd) who created the park, giving it the basic configuration of open ground and woodland that it retains today.

In 1889 All Saints church was built by James Ormrod, in memory of his wife, at the south end of Pen-y-lan village. A straight gravel path was made from the north end of the garden to the church, but this has now been grassed over.

A second major phase of development was during the ownership of Peter Ormrod, between 1895 and 1920, when much tree planting took place. A wide variety of trees were planted, including walnut (1), red oak, sweet chestnut, American pin oak, hornbeam (2), beech, sessile oak, larch, Corsican pine, and horse chestnut, some planted singly, some in groves (horse chestnut). Conifers were planted in groups and perimeter belts. Much planting took place in 1910: Prince's Planting (named after the forester who planted it), a belt of mixed planting running into the park from the north boundary (originally possibly a semi-natural woodland); Park Belt; Park Spinney (sessile oak); Boat House Spinney (sessile oak with yew around the small lake, once used for boating); Lea's Spinney

(originally beech and sessile oak); and The Grove, at the eastern end of the main drive, planted in 1900-10, when existing oaks planted at the beginning of the 19th century were supplemented with ornamental species, especially horse chestnut.

Both new and replacement tree planting is being continued by Colonel Peter Ormrod, the present owner, while maintaining the original overall configuration of the park.

Just north of the farm buildings, on the edge of Hall Wood, is a much overgrown ice-house. It has a circular earth-covered dome and an entrance, now mostly bricked up, on the east side.

The garden is entered through low simple iron gates flanked by openwork iron piers and pedestrian gates to the east of the house. The drive leads to a small roughly circular forecourt on the north side of the house. A back drive leads from it under a castellated arch into the stable yard.

The gardens lie to the north and south of the house, the two areas being of different character. To the north is an informal area of lawn, shrubbery and pond, bounded by an iron fence, with a few large trees, including a yew, two beeches and a lime. There were formerly two tennis courts on the lawn. To the south is a sloping lawn down to a ha-ha on the garden boundary, with a formal area in front of the house. This is a sunken horse-shoe shaped area reached by a flight of stone steps at the north end, in which six rectangular rose beds are set around a modern sundial on a stone plinth. The east side of the garden is bounded by an iron fence. From this part of the garden there is a fine view out over the park to the Dee valley and beyond.

To the west of the house are the remnants of two large Victorian conservatories, added when the house was extended in the late nineteenth century. That nearest the house has a high brick wall with turrets at the corners, in front of which is a raised platform reached by two stone steps. The further one is larger, backed by a brick wall on the north side, and bounded on the south by a low stone revetment wall ornamented with the bases of octagonal piers, and with two flights of steps up. In its centre is a modern pond surrounded by stone paving, with two rectangular beds on either side. An original tiled path runs along the north side, a wide gravel path along the south side. Along the east side is a brick wall with blocked windows - a remnant of the wing demolished in the 1950s. Along the west side is a high brick wall with a crenellated top and small turret on the south-west corner of the conservatory.

The present garden was created in the early nineteenth century, when the park was made, by Edward Lloyd Kenyon (Lloyd). The 1778 survey shows a very different garden. On the east side of the house was a small forecourt, with entrance gates. To the south were two terraces, and a small building in the south-west corner. To the north the present pond was there, with a plantation to the south and east, called the 'nursery'. To the south of it was 'a small croft', with a building near the east end. The only remains of this era are the pond and the lime trees just outside the garden. There is no sign of the buildings.

Edwardian photographs show the garden much as it is now, except for the existence of the tennis courts to the north, and much more elaborate flowerbeds to the south. The garden at that time was adorned with statuary, but this has all been sold.

The kitchen garden lies on a south-facing slope to the north of the house and farm buildings. On the 1778 survey its site is occupied by an orchard. In its present form it is presumed to be nineteenth-century in date. The garden occupies a roughly square area, with a wall along its

north side only. This is c. 3 m high, of brick on the inside, stone on the outside, and is built in facets, thus curving inwards slightly. The outside has shallow stone buttresses at intervals. Except in the central section there are large coping stones on the top. At the east end is an arched doorway, beyond which the wall curves down to c. 0.5 m, at which height it continues, with a ragged top, along the east side. There is a lean-to bothy in the centre, against the outside of the wall. Inside, the centre of the wall is whitewashed, with brick footings in front indicating a former glasshouse. Along the south side are the remains of iron fencing and iron gates on the path to the farm buildings.

Any internal layout has gone, except for a grass track leading to the farm buildings, and lengths of very overgrown box edging indicating former paths. The northern end is largely grass, with some old espaliered fruit trees, and the steeper slope in the southern half is planted with Scots pine and Norway spruce (planted in 1958).

Sources

Primary

1778 'Map of Pen y Lann Demesne': Clwyd Record Office (Hawarden)

DD/PL/143.

Pencil sketch by Moses Griffith, c. 1812, of house in setting: National Library of Wales, drawings vol. 38, no. 69c and d.

1853 Sale Particulars: Clwyd Record Office (Hawarden) DD/PL/165 (2).

1872 Ordnance Survey 6" map.

Secondary

Pratt, D., and A.G. Veysey, A Handlist of the Topographical Prints of Clwyd (1977), nos 317-18.

Hedley, R.J.St G., Landscape proposals for the Pen-y-lan estate, Clwyd (unpublished MA thesis, University of Wales, 1992).

RUTHIN: NANTCLWYD HOUSE

Ref No PGW (C) 53

OS Map 116

Grid Ref SJ 123 582

Former County Clwyd

Unitary Authority Glyndwr DC

Community Council Ruthin

Designations Listed building: Nantclwyd House Grade I
Gazebo (grade II); walls (grade II)
Conservation Area: Ruthin

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Survival of the garden of an important town house, with late medieval walls and a seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century gazebo.

Type of Site

Walled town garden

Main Phases of Construction

Late fifteenth century; seventeenth - early eighteenth century.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Nantclwyd House is a substantial timber-framed hall house on the west side of Castle Street, in the centre of Ruthin. It is a two-storey gabled house of an irregular reversed L shape. On the street side is a timber-framed porch, the upper storey supported on posts. Inside, the hall is undivided, and has a gallery around two sides. Excavation in the floor has revealed post-holes of an even earlier building. The basic house is mediaeval, but has undergone many alterations and additions of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The garden of Nantclwyd House occupies an L-shaped area behind the house, bounded on all sides by walls, and with a two-storey gazebo on the north side, between the inner and outer parts of the garden. The outer, western part of the garden is larger than the inner part, and is considerably built up over the slope. To the north of the garden is a lane, housing, and a bowling green, while to the south are further private gardens. Below the western end of the garden is a narrow lane, beyond which are the grounds of Ruthin Castle, which can be seen from the outer garden. From the garden, and particularly from the gazebo, there are fine views to the north over the town and to the north-west and west over the Clwyd valley.

In front of the house, on Castle Street, a narrow area on either side of the projecting porch is enclosed by a low stone wall topped with wooden railings.

The high stone garden walls probably date to the late fifteenth century, although some parts may be as early as the late thirteenth century. The walls at the west end of the garden are partly revetment walls, with steps inside the middle of the west wall down to a door in the wall

leading to the lane below. The southern part of the outer garden is bounded on its east side by the brick wall of neighbouring gardens, against one of which is a brick two-storey gazebo.

As the house has been lived in as a private home until recently (c. 1985) the garden has undergone much change over the centuries, and all trace of any mediaeval or seventeenth- to eighteenth-century layout has gone. The present layout is no older than the late Victorian or Edwardian period. The inner garden is mostly occupied by a lawn, with long borders flanking the walls, a grass path down the south side and a gravel one down the north side. Next to the house are the filled-in remains of a twentieth-century swimming pool. In the south-west corner of the inner garden is a raised platform with a curving edge, about one metre high, bounded by large blocks of stone, and with the remains of brick steps up on the east side. The purpose of this is unknown, but it appears to be relatively recent, and does not appear on the 1880s OS map, which shows a layout of cross paths in this area. A low stone wall with a gap through in the middle divides the inner and outer parts of the garden.

The gazebo is probably of seventeenth or early eighteenth-century date. Certainly it was in place when the Buck brothers made their drawing of the south-west view of Ruthin Castle in 1742, as it is clearly shown in the background. It is a small two-storey building, the lower storey stone, the upper pebble-dash over timber framing. It has a pyramidal slate roof and a small chimney on the north side. Stone steps in two flights on the east side lead to a small landing with a brick parapet and a door on the east side. The upper floor has windows (boarded up) on the north, west and south sides. The ground floor has a window on the south side, and a door under the landing. On the west side is a lean-to stone bothy.

The outer part of the garden slopes gently to the west. It is laid out mainly with a rough lawn and informally planted ornamental trees and shrubs, including holly, laurel, yew, lime, oak and walnut. Around the outside is a perimeter cinder path. The 1874 Ordnance Survey map shows the area laid out with cross and perimeter paths. The remnants of other garden features are visible, including some box edging flanking paths and turfed over formal flowerbeds. Near the north end is a raised rectangular platform which formed the base of a twentieth-century summerhouse, and a ruined greenhouse still containing a vine stands in the centre of the area.

Sources

Secondary

Pratt, D., and A.G. Veysey, A Handlist of the Topographical Prints of Clwyd (1977), no. 395.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 278-79.