

CLYNE CASTLE

Ref number	PGW (Gm) 47 (SWA)
OS Map	159
Grid ref	SS 613 905
Former county	West Glamorgan
Unitary authority	City and County of Swansea
Community council	Mumbles
Designations	Listed buildings: Clyne Castle Grade II*; Clyne Chapel Grade II; Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Gm 464, Gm 475
Site evaluation	Grade I
Primary reasons for grading	A large and very attractive public park, formerly private and for a long time in the hands of the extremely wealthy and locally prominent Vivian family, in a beautiful situation overlooking Swansea Bay. The park contains an outstanding assemblage of choice and rare mature trees and shrubs, in particular rhododendrons, some of which are original introductions. The park remains more or less intact, although slightly encroached on by university buildings. The wilder Clyne valley, to the north, retains most of its historic layout and some ornamental planting. It is of particular interest for its industrial remains and plantings of choice rhododendrons.
Type of site	Public park; pleasure grounds; ornamented woodland
Main phases of construction	1800-30; 1860-1912; 1912-1952

Site description

Clyne Castle is a two-storey castellated mansion, built of randomly laid local sandstone with Forest of Dean stone dressings. It is situated on rising ground on the west side of Swansea Bay, at Black Pill on the outskirts of Swansea, and is orientated north-south, with the original entrance front on the south, facing the bay. The entrance is now to the north of the house, off Mill Lane. The main south front is symmetrical and slightly bowed out, with polygonal turrets flanking the three central bays, canted bays outside them, and on the corners thin cylindrical turrets. All windows are mullioned and transomed. The house is built in two almost separate halves: the original block on the south side and a similar three-storey block of the same size to its north. A modern university residential block lies to the west, orientated north-south.

The earliest house on the site of Clyne Castle was a simple but substantial classical house built for Richard Phillips (died 1798), who had bought 27 acres here in 1790. The house, called Woodlands, was begun in 1791 and the architect was one

Wyatt. A sketch of Woodlands by 'T.E.' shows it to have been a plain, three-gabled, two-storey house. The next phase of development was during the ownership of George Warde, who had bought the property in 1799. Colonel Warde, although from Squerryes Court, Kent, had mining interests in Glamorgan. He spent heavily on acquiring land, expanding the estate to 330 acres, and on extending and rebuilding the house, which by 1800 was being called Woodlands Castle. In 1800 Warde, to his own designs, extended the house to the north. A drawing of c. 1818 by Thomas Baxter shows a castellated facade with arrowslits tacked on to the existing house, with a castellated court in front. In 1811 Warde built the east stables and coachhouse, which remain, and in 1817 the west stables, which have gone. A further domestic and office range was added in 1818 but was demolished later in the nineteenth century. The main south block was remodelled in 1819-20 and most of this work survives. Its original appearance is shown in a lithograph of 1824 and in a photograph of 1841-55, which show that the house then had gothic windows, that the side bays were not canted out and that the main entrance was in the centre, with a lawn and turning circle in front.

In 1830 George Warde died, heavily in debt and Woodlands Castle was bought in 1832 by Benjamin Hall of Llanover Hall, Monmouthshire for his sister, Charlotte Berrington, who was married to a Swansea man, Jenkin Davies Berrington. During their tenure Warde's north wings were demolished as too expensive to maintain. In 1859 the Berringtons moved to Pant y Goytre, Monmouthshire, and in 1860 the property was sold to William Graham Vivian (1827-1912).

The period of Vivian ownership, from 1860 to 1952, was the heyday of Clyne Castle, as it became. The Vivians were a Cornish family who first arrived in Swansea in c. 1800, when John Vivian established the first copper works there. The family's business flourished and the Vivians and their industrial enterprises were to dominate Swansea for the next century and a half. William Graham Vivian was a younger son of John's son John Henry. He bought Clyne as his widowed mother continued in residence at Singleton, which he might otherwise have lived at, until 1886. William Graham Vivian, reclusive bachelor, millionaire, brilliant businessman, transformed the house. Soon after 1860 he built a new north wing, replaced the gothic windows with square ones and added the bays on the south front. Extensive remodelling took place inside, and soon after the extensions were complete, in c. 1870, he renamed the house Clyne Castle. It was now an opulent mansion, suitable for entertaining the grand shooting parties that it became famous for. Both Queen Victoria and Edward VII were friends and visitors. A large conservatory was built on to the west end of the south front before 1881, when it is shown on a painting. This was a single-storey building with ridged glass roof. By 1956 (aerial photograph) it had been demolished.

The remaining two Vivian occupiers, Dulcie Charlotte Vivian, William's spinster sister, and Algernon Walker-Heneage Vivian, William's nephew and heir, made few alterations to the house. Dulcie lived here from 1912 to 1921. The period of Algernon Walker Heneage Vivian's ownership, from 1921 to 1952 was an important one for the grounds, but not for the house. On his death punishing death duties forced the sale of the house and 76 acres to Swansea Town Council, who opened the park to the public in 1954. The house and immediate surrounds were then sold to the University of Swansea in 1955. Since then the house has been used as a university hall of residence. A modern residential block was built in 1968.

The former stable block and other outbuildings lie to the north of the house, next to the Mill Lane entrance. From the entrance a short tarmac drive leads to a rectangular forecourt. The stable block, built by George Warde and finished in 1811,

lies to the west of the entrance. Of the same rubble stone construction as the house, with dressed stone window surrounds, it is a plain two-storey block with pitched slate roof, mullioned windows and three arched entrances. An entrance to Mill Lane next to the stables, which is flanked by Cornish granite piers, is blocked. To the west is a further range of two-storey, stone stables, with a brick extension on the north end. A well stands on the west side.

To the east of the entrance is a single-storey rubble stone building with a hipped slate roof. Immediately to the south of it is a tall, rubble stone, circular clock tower. It has a narrow door, a slit window and the top is castellated and corbelled out.

The grounds of Clyne Castle fall into three separate areas today. First, there are the gardens immediately around the house, now owned by the University of Swansea and separated from the remainder of the grounds. Secondly, to the south of the house there are the extensive former pleasure grounds, now a public park, Clyne Gardens. The division of these two areas is artificial, as they were originally one, but they will be described separately. They are bounded by Mill Lane on the north and Mayals Road on the south. Thirdly, to the north of the gardens and grounds, north of Mill Lane, is Clyne Valley. This is an area of woodland that was developed as shooting cover and ornamental woodland in the first half of the twentieth century.

The area of Clyne Gardens public park covers 50 acres to the south-east, south and south-west of the house. The highest ground is at the west end of the park; from here it slopes down eastwards to Swansea Bay and southwards to the Brock Hole valley, which runs west-east along the southern side of the park. The park can be divided into two main areas, the Brock Hole valley and the remainder. The valley is largely wooded, with an underplanting of choice rhododendrons and other ornamental shrubs and herbaceous plants. The remainder has more the character of landscape parkland, with open meadows, belts of trees and further ornamental planting. The park is noted for its outstanding botanical interest. It contains many original rhododendron plantings of introductions by Frank Kingdon Ward, George Forrest, Joseph Rock and Reginald Farrer. Rhododendrons from the collections of Lionel de Rothschild and the Edinburgh and Kew Botanic Gardens were also planted and the park holds three National Collections of rhododendrons - the *falconera* subsection, the *triflora* subsection and the *grandia* subsection. It also contains the National Collections of *Enkianthus* and *Pieris*.

The main entrance is in the middle of the east side of the park, at Black Pill. William Graham Vivian made a new drive from here to the house in the 1860s, the original entrance having been off Mill Lane. Square piers with three projecting horizontal bands, vermicullited on the outside, flank simple iron gates, with a pedestrian gate on the south side. Inside, north of the drive, is a Victorian lodge built in the same style and at the same time as the north extension to the house, in the 1860s. It is of roughly coursed sandstone blocks, with mullioned and transomed windows, a pitched roof with elaborate barge boards and a single-storey porch on the south side. The lodge's garden is surrounded by wooden picket fencing. A large oak tree stands outside the gates on the north side and a *Parrotia persica* stands south of the entrance. The drive, now a tarmacked walk, curves up the park, running west and then north-west to a forecourt on the east side of the house (access is now blocked by a gate near the house on the park/university boundary). Half way up the slope it crosses a former mill leat, now partly a dry ditch flanked by an earth bank and partly converted into a sunken footpath. Further up it is flanked by a row of oaks on the north and beyond by a further row on the south.

The Brock Hole valley runs the full length of the park and is an area of exceptional botanical and horticultural interest, having been planted with choice specimens since the mid nineteenth century. The stream rises on Clyne Common to the west, entering the park near the south-west corner. A network of paths runs through the valley, with simple bridges over the stream at intervals. At the east end a curving tarmac path leading westwards from the entrance is an old mail road that was taken into the park in the nineteenth century. To its south is a private chapel, built by W.G. Vivian in 1907 (opened in 1908). It is a substantial, gothic, stone building with angled buttresses in the corners, a bellcote and a porch on the south side. To its south is a Second World War memorial surrounded by cypresses. To the west is a nursery for the park.

The east end of the valley is densely planted, with a particular emphasis on smaller rhododendrons and azaleas. Of particular note is *Rhododendron taranto* next to the stream. Water from a series of small pools to the south of the main stream flows into a subsidiary one, running eastwards, in this area. Working upstream, the next area is one of large-leaved rhododendrons, grown together under tree cover which includes fine specimens of Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). In the heart of this area, reached by several paths, is a cylindrical stone tower c 5 m high, with an anti-clockwise spiral stair of concrete steps and iron railings up it. At the top is a battlemented viewing platform. The tower was built by Admiral Walker-Heneage Vivian in 1928 as a vantage point from which to view his rhododendrons. Nearby is a particularly fine clump of *Rhododendron loderi* King George, a cross dating to 1911.

The tree canopy in the valley is mainly of oaks, birches and conifers. A broad tarmac path winds up the valley, but most paths are of gravel, edged with rounded stones. A network of paths that originally existed on the north side of the valley has not been opened up but is still visible. Pipes in the stream are part of an irrigation system for the rare rhododendrons in the valley. A substantial mill leat runs along the north side of the wooded area and another, higher one, runs up the valley to just above a concrete bridge.

Upstream from the tower, on the south side of the valley, there is a plantation of conifers, including *Picea abies*, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, Lawson's cypress, Scots pine and Douglas fir, which was planted as a windbreak in the 1920s. Before this area had been an orchard and it was then ploughed up in the First World War. The Mayals Road boundary is a low stone wall topped by a thorn hedge and modern, aluminium fencing. Half way along the boundary is an entrance with municipal iron gates, with a Victorian lodge to its west. This is a two-storey building of random stone with a pitched tiled roof and ornamental barge boards. Its garden is bounded by a wall and fence. Below are further rhododendrons, *Gunnera manicata* and a white-flowered *Magnolia campbellii* thought to be the tallest in Britain. Upstream, a number of springs on the south side of the valley make the ground very damp and a bog garden has been developed in a natural amphitheatre, under an oak canopy. Candelabra primulas, rodgersias, hostas, skunk cabbage and other damp-loving plants are planted here. A concrete-topped tank, from which a strong spring emerges, marks the position of the mid nineteenth-century Blackpill waterworks. Further west there are windbreak conifers along the south boundary, then the trees thin and there is an open grass slope south of the stream. In the stream is a small concrete weir and a neighbouring area of bamboos.

At the head of the valley, in the south-west corner of the park, is a faintly Japanese area. This is heralded by a Japanese bridge, which takes the main path over the stream. It is wooden, with red-painted rails and white finials. A random stone-paved path with pairs of steps at regular intervals leads south from it and a flight of steep stone steps leads up the slope to the north. Next to the bridge is a fine Dove, or Ghost Tree (*Davidia involucrata*). Above the bridge is an irregular, but naturalistic, roughly rectangular pond, retained along its east side by a straight, concrete dam. At the west end the inlet is piped and then canalised between brick walls, after which the water runs over a fall and then divides into two partly stone-lined branches, one of them with a silt trap. The west end of the pond is overhung by a weeping willow. Between the Japanese bridge and the dam is a steep, naturalistic cascade of steps and pools, built of large rocks. Below the bridge is another, with rocks protruding from it.

High above the pool, on the steep slope to its north, is a small, single-storey pavilion of random stone with a red tiled pitched roof., window openings on the east and west a wider doorway on the north and two narrower ones on the south. It stands on a random stone-paved platform. This is Joy Cottage, built in the early years of the twentieth century by Admiral Walker-Heneage Vivian as a playhouse for his daughter. Until c. 1970 it remained in its original condition, with glazed windows and a cooker. After that it was used as a rangers' hut and in the early 1990s it was restored as a pavilion. On the south side, one step lower, is a rectangular platform which juts out over the slope. This is bounded by a stone revetment wall with a low parapet wall topped by irregular stones set in concrete. On its west side three steps lead to the grass slope and on its east similar steps lead to a narrow unsurfaced path running diagonally down the slope. In the centre a gap in the parapet leads to further steps to the grass slope.

Above Joy Cottage is a steep grass slope, at the top of which is a line of oaks, pines and purple acers. A large oak on a raised mound must pre-date the pleasure grounds and is probably a relict field boundary tree. Two further oaks nearby grow on similar but smaller mounds. Beyond, to the north-east, is an open grass area, sloping slightly to the east, planted with a few young trees. The view eastwards from this grass area is spectacular, taking in a wide sweep of Swansea Bay. The open area is fringed with deciduous trees, mainly oaks, and continues eastwards down the spine of the park. A row of copper beeches bounds the west side. To the north is an area of open woodland with shrubs along the edge. The trees are mainly oaks, with some pines. The wood is bounded by a ha-ha. This is a low dry-stone wall with a flat grass top and no visible external ditch. Parts are obscured by vegetation and parts are tumbled. The ha-ha diminishes towards the east and then becomes a scarp with a path on top. At one point there is a short stretch of slightly battered dry-stone revetment wall, with a bench in front, which may be a remnant of the ha-ha.

The west boundary is tree-fringed. At the south end is a belt of Corsican pines. To the north of the meadow is a quarry, to the north of which are the remains of a dog kennel, now reduced to rectangular earth banks. The woodland here is open and mainly of Turkey oaks (*Quercus cerris*), with bluebells beneath. To the north is a drive to an entrance on St Catwg's Walk. Next to this is a pets' cemetery with small headstones in three rows, dating to 1928-47. Most date to the 1930s. To the north is a further quarry hole, reached by a path from the south-east. It has a tender camellia - *Camellia reticulata* Captain Rawes - planted in it.

Along the north side of the park, to the north of the open grass area and west of the house, is a sloping grass area planted with specimen trees and shrubs. This is

part of the original arboretum and contains many fine specimens, some of which are tender. These include a row of Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*), *Cunninghamia*, *Cryptomeria*, evergreen oaks, rhododendrons and other conifers, including fine wellingtonias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*). There was originally an ornate iron gate at the north-east end leading into the kitchen garden. The path which skirts the western woodland curves around through this area, branching into two paths just before reaching a small octagonal gazebo. The gazebo is a two-storey building, its lower half of random stone, its upper half of dressed stone. The first floor has mullioned windows, with small triangular windows above them in the pitched slate roof. The roof has overhanging eaves and is topped by a simple pinnacle. At ground level there are no windows but a door on the east side. Concrete steps with iron railings lead up the west side to a door on the first floor. The building's upper floor was used as a summerhouse and gazebo, its lower as a tool shed. To the south is a fine *Acer palmatum_atropurpureum*. To the south, on a steeper slope, is a modern planting of heather beds.

The ha-ha continues along the north side of the park, and in places is better preserved than on the west side, with a slight external ditch visible. Large trees, including beech, are planted on or below it, with rhododendrons, trees and other shrubs inside it. It disappears at a corner, to the south-west of the house. On the north boundary of the garden is a high stone wall, with a section of iron railings towards the east, after which the wall picks up again at a slightly different angle.

The sloping lawn to the south of the house was originally part of the gardens, bounded by a curving wall which ran c. 3 m south of the present path which now skirts this area. The wall was originally ornamented with statuary and is now visible in dry weather as a parch mark. The present tarmac path is flanked by cone-shaped yew bushes, originally part of a hedge. It leads to a slightly raised stone bridge - the Italian bridge. This is a narrow, single arched bridge with splayed ends terminating in dressed stone piers with plain recessed panels. The parapet walls are of random stone with bevelled dressed stone coping. A rectangular pool, now dry, with dressed stone retaining walls, lies partly to the north of the bridge and partly under its arch. A concrete-topped platform extends from the bridge piers under the arch. On its south side a square pillar of random stone stands next to the middle of the bridge. Its top, which is the same height as the parapet, is of moulded marble and was probably the base for a statue or vase. Below are two pinnate-leaved, multi-stemmed trees and to the south-east is a large bush of *Viburnum tinus* 'Clyne Castle'.

The Italian bridge was originally part of the Italian garden, a formal area ornamented with running water and statuary, which ran down the centre of the slope below the south front of the house. The unevenness of the lawn and parch-marks in it, above the bridge, testifies to its existence. The garden was flanked by rows of poplars. Water ran from the pool down to a cistern of Cornish granite lower down the slope. This still exists.

The path over the bridge leads eastwards and joins the former drive near the north boundary. The northern side of the park is planted with a mixture of ornamental trees and shrubs. A notable shrub to the north of the drive is *Rhododendron elliottii* (KW 7725) which won a Royal Horticultural Society silver cup in 1937 and again in 1987. Running roughly parallel with the old drive, to its south-west, is a double row of old oaks, the ground slightly sunken between them. This has the appearance of a former track or road that was incorporated into the park. The park is bounded on the north by a rubble stone wall, parts of which have been rebuilt. Towards the east end a

high, simple iron gate with fluted, ball-topped iron piers, is set between rebuilt walls. To the east the wall drops to a lower pedestrian gate, then curves down and ends. The boundary continues as a bank.

Towards the east end of the north side is a rectangular pavilion with a pitched slate roof and brick walls with stone pillars set into them at intervals. It has a concrete-topped stone platform on its east side. This building has seen a number of uses, its present one being as a parks department depot. It began life as a tennis pavilion, with open sides between the stone pillars. When Clyne became a public park the sides were bricked in and the building was used as tea rooms. It was later converted to its present use and now has a park entrance to it north-east, with a tarmac parking area to its east. In front, to its south, are two grass terraces, the upper one with a *Trachycarpus fortunei* on it. A grass lawn below is the site of the former tennis courts. It is tree and shrub fringed, with bamboos on the east, and is bounded by scarps on the east and west.

The third area of ornamental grounds is the Clyne Valley. This is a more extensive area, of 110 acres, in the wooded valley of the Clyne River, to the north of Clyne Castle and Mill Lane. The woodland is predominantly of oak, with some birch, beech and sycamore, mostly planted in the early twentieth century. Many of the older trees were cleared during the Second World War and some felling has continued since. The previous agricultural landscape of the woodland area is shown by remnants of field boundaries and sunken tracks. After a long period of neglect, the valley was acquired by Swansea City Council in 1980, since when it has been opened up as a country park, with old paths cleared and some new ones created.

The woodland has two main layers of historical interest: the extensive industrial remains, dating from the Tudor period onwards, and the ornamental planting of the 1920s and 1930s undertaken by Admiral Walker-Heneage Vivian. The area appears to have been wooded since at least the mediaeval period, but was only enclosed as a named wood - Clyne Wood - in the early eighteenth century. The path system mostly predates the 1920s and relates to the valley's industrial and quarrying use, although it was subsequently converted to serve the ornamented woodland. Admiral Vivian developed the wood for shooting purposes with the planting of coverts of common rhododendron (*R. ponticum*). He also planted ornamental trees and shrubs, including Douglas fir, Himalayan pine, Chilean pine and hybrid rhododendrons, throughout the woodland. Many of these remain today, the rhododendrons now grown to giant size. Although most of the trees in the valley are twentieth-century there are a few older ones and it is known that conifers were first planted here by W. Graham Vivian in the later nineteenth century, when the area was developed for shooting purposes. Much felling took place after 1953, when the wood was sold to timber merchants.

From Clyne Castle the valley is reached by an unornamented entrance opposite the stable yard. This leads to a track running northwards up the west side of the valley, which passes the ruined remains of an arsenic and copper works, on the slope below the track, which were in operation between 1837 and 1860. At the top of the works is a circular, roofless stone building known as the Ivy Tower. This was the former chimney stack of the works and has an arched flue entrance at its base. Various features suggest that it was adapted in the nineteenth century as a gazebo: its top has been castellated, it has steps up the inside of the wall and a round-arched window has been inserted at first-floor level. To the west of the Ivy Tower is a small pond, probably natural, and on the hill above is a group of three monkey puzzle trees

(*Araucaria araucana*). Two tracks lead northwards, the upper one past an underground reservoir and a disused quarry to a small tributary valley running west-east. To the north of the reservoir, within the woodland, is a closely planted block of hybrid rhododendrons, c. 40 x 40 m in size. This is one of Admiral Vivian's trial beds for newly introduced hybrid rhododendrons, of which there were several in the valley. Other rhododendrons are planted within the woodland, such as a large bank of *R. Cynthia* and some *R. lucium*. The side valley was once planted with many ornamental species, some of which remain. The track continues northwards to Keeper's Cottage.

The lower path runs more or less parallel to the upper. Above the path is an area of 'bell pits', holes dug from the fourteenth century onwards to reach a coal seam close to the surface. In a nearby mound, above a small lake, is an air shaft for Clyne Wood coal level. Below the path are further hybrid rhododendrons. Further north are more rhododendrons and another block of trial hybrids. A sunken track leads to another quarry, below which is a hollow way. In the valley below is some ornamental planting of hamamelis, snake-bark maples and hybrid rhododendrons in a thicket of rhododendrons (*R. ponticum*). To the north the path crosses the tributary stream over a well built, curving, rubble stone bridge with a narrow arch. Two large *Rhododendron falconeri* stand either side of the bridge and a rare fern, *Blechnum chilense*, grows at its foot. To the north of the tributary valley is a further block of hybrid rhododendrons and some exotic trees, including Douglas fir.

In the floor of the valley is the winding Clyne river, some former industrial and ornamental features. A tarmac cycle track follows the old railway line down the west side. Some planting has been carried out by the Council adjacent to this track, including a stretch which is flanked by flowering cherry trees and heather. Half way down the valley is a small, linear pond, originally of industrial use, to the west of the former line. On the west side of its south end is a coal level. The pond was converted to ornamental use either in the nineteenth century or the 1920s. A mill leat runs down the west side of the valley, around the west side of the pond (where the water now runs northwards), past the arsenic works to the site of Blackpill Mill at the south end of the valley. On the east side is the line of a former tramway (1804), which follows the contour at the foot of the steep valley side. At the south end of the valley is a former lodge, now a private dwelling. It is two-storey, built of stone in gothic style, with a castellated roof and two towers.

The ornamental grounds at Clyne Castle were mainly developed by William Graham Vivian and Algernon Walker-Heneage Vivian, from the 1860s onwards. However, some work on the grounds accompanied the building of Woodlands (Castle) by George Warde, in 1800-1820. In 1805 the gardens to the rear were being laid out and a purchase of land in 1825 enabled Warde to expand the parkland to the north and west. A lithograph of 1824 shows the new gothic house set in informal parkland, with an expanse of grass in front and ornamental trees planted to the east and west. A photograph of c. 1841-55 shows a gravel turning circle in front of the house. After Warde's death in 1830 no major changes took place until 1860, when William Graham Vivian bought the property. Vivian began an extensive programme of improvements to house and grounds. The large conifers on the lawn in front of the house were planted soon after 1860 and the gardens to the west of the house were laid out to accompany the new north wing. A photograph of this in 1952 shows ornamental trees and shrubs and a small pool where the 1950s student accommodation block now stands. Many exotics were planted in the grounds, including arbutus, camellia and eucalyptus. A large conservatory was built at the west end of the south front, next to

the long drawing room. The general appearance of the gardens soon after W.G. Vivian's death is shown in an aerial photograph of 1919. This shows the area south of the house laid out with three large, slightly overlapping, circular flowerbeds planted with formal bedding and ornamented with sculptures. Cattle graze on the lawned area to the east. In a photograph of 1910 the lawn in front of the conservatory has woodcock on it.

W.G. Vivian extended the park to include all of the present parkland except the Brock Hole valley. In the 1860s the Mill Lane entrance was replaced with a new drive from an entrance at Black Pill village, which he bought, and a lodge was built next to the entrance, now the main entrance to the public park. By the time of his death in 1912 the Clyne estate extended to over 2,600 acres, divided mainly between Clyne Castle and Parc le Breos on the Gower peninsula. It was managed largely as a sporting estate and was famous for its shoots.

The next main phase of development took place between 1921 and 1952, during the tenure of Admiral (from 1927) Algernon Walker-Heneage Vivian. The Admiral's keen interest in horticulture and botany led to the planting at Clyne of one of the most outstanding collections of rhododendrons in the country in the 1920s and 30s. He subscribed to many of the collecting expeditions to China and the eastern Himalayas and there are many rhododendrons at Clyne which are labelled as first introductions. It was during this time that the Brock Hole valley was developed as part of the pleasure grounds. Clyne Valley was also planted during this period and disused industrial features within it were converted to ornamental use.

The last phase of development came after 1953, when the house and 76 surrounding acres were bought by Swansea Town Council. 50 acres of the park were tidied up, after neglect during the Second World War, and opened as a public park in 1954. In 1955 the university bought the house and inner core of the garden, thus cutting it off from the remainder of the grounds. An aerial photograph of 1956 shows the state of the university's area soon afterwards: the conservatory has gone and a residential block has been built on part of the gardens to the west of the house. The three circular beds in front of the house have been replaced with a lawn and flagpole. The horticultural interest of the park has subsequently been maintained and increased, with the addition of new areas such as the bog garden. The rhododendron collection remains one of the most important in the country.

The grounds immediately around the house have been separated from the park since the house was bought in 1955 by the university. Although this is an artificial boundary it will be convenient to describe this part of the grounds separately from that part which is now a public park.

The grounds lie to the south, east and west of the house. They are laid out mainly informally and are planted with many choice trees and shrubs. The present entrance is off Mill Lane, to the north of the house. The rubble stone wall which bounds the garden along Mill Lane curves inwards (the east side rebuilt) to square piers with splayed concrete tops. To the south of the house there is a narrow border and terrace in front of the house and then a lawn, which dips down slightly below the terrace to a levelled area with a scarp along its north and west sides. Railings divide the lawn on the public park boundary. Three tall trees on the lawn - a *Sequoiadendron giganteum* and two *Cupressus macrocarpa* - lie just on the park side of the railings. They were planted by W.G. Vivian soon after 1860. The lawn is flanked on the west by trees and shrubs next to the substantial, high rubble stone garden boundary wall, which runs north and then west to join the east wall of the kitchen garden, which lies

to the west of the pleasure grounds. On the east the lawn is bounded by hedges flanking the former drive which curves up from the east, but which is no longer in use. A branch leads to a simple iron gate and side pedestrian gate, flanked by square piers and the boundary wall, on Mill Lane. The hedge on the north side of the drive replaces a former camellia hedge. The garden is bounded on the north-east by a rubble stone wall on Mill Lane.

On the west side of the lawn a straight gravel path running north is flanked by rose beds backed by clipped mixed shrub hedges in which *Viburnum tinus* predominates. Concrete steps at the north end lead up to a platform backed by a rubble stone cross wall with a round-arched opening in the middle, flanked by two gothic mullioned windows with dressed stone surrounds. This is the site of the conservatory, but the wall was built after it was demolished. A *Magnolia grandiflora* grows on the west wall of the house. Behind the cross wall is a modern covered walkway and flight of steps leading to the residential block to the north-west. Beyond this is a rock-covered slope with some Portugal laurels growing on it and a narrow flight of stone-edged steps up it. Above is a narrow lawn flanked on the north by a sloping stone-edged border. A modern, concrete-paved path leads to a further flight of modern steps leads up the slope. At the east end of the lawn is a stone wall in which there are three large rectangular recesses, partly rendered. A similar recess lies adjacent to them in the north wall, behind the border. Along the north side of the area is a rubble stone wall in the middle of which is a circular turret c. 4 m high. To the west of the turret the wall is topped with an ornamental band of opposing semi-circular tiles sandwiched between smooth dressed stone copings. Behind the wall is a large magnolia. In front of the wall, on either side of the steps, are two ornate sandstone piers, reaching to just above wall height. They stand on rougher stone bases and are four-sided, bulging towards the top then narrowing to a neck below a flat top. The upper part is ornamented with swags and the tops of the corners are carved. The flat tops were probably used to stand flowerpots or statues on. The steps are flanked by square concrete piers, c. 1.5 m high, with diamond panels and splayed tops. The wall to the west of the turret is more modern in appearance than that to its east and it is probably contemporary with the cross wall to the south. The east wall and east end of the north wall are probably all that is left of the conservatory. The diamond-panelled piers mimic the older ones flanking steps further north.

To the north a concrete-paved path runs parallel with the house, flanked by lawn on the west and a narrow strip of grass and bank of shrubs against the house. A path branches off to a flight of steps, flanked by low parapet walls, up to a door into the house. At the foot of the steps are low, square stone piers with diamond panels.

The western end of the gardens is now isolated from the rest of the grounds by the 1960s residential block. It is roughly semi-circular and is laid out to lawn, planted with choice trees and shrubs, including rhododendrons, and with a fringing belt of trees and shrubs. A flight of steps, with stone rises and concrete treads, flanked by a similar retaining wall, leads to a stony semi-circular path that skirts the outer belt of planting. Other paths lead from it. This part of the gardens was once famed for its very choice rhododendrons, and indeed there are a few left. There are also a number of large specimen trees, including a *Magnolia campbellii* and a *Pinus nigra caramannica*. The upper part of this area is now taken up by a recently built university residential block, below which is an artificial scarp.

The kitchen garden lies to the west of the house and garden, on ground sloping to the east. It is bounded on the north and west by 4 m. high brick walls and on the

east by a high, curving rubble stone wall, with a blocked arched entrance. On the outside this is c. 4.5 m high, a tarmac drive to student accommodation having been built along its foot, lowering the ground level slightly. Holes and nails in the wall indicate that there was once a glasshouse against the outside of the wall. The west end of the north wall has been rebuilt. The interior is now partly grassed over and partly used as nursery beds by the parks department. Along the foot of the west wall is a slightly raised terrace, bounded by the remnants of a stone revetment wall.

Four three-quarter-span glasshouses, built by William Richardson & Co., Darlington, run down the slope against the north wall. They have wooden superstructures on brick bases, their back walls are wired and their ventilation systems are intact. Most of the staging has gone. Now disused, they are becoming derelict, although most of their fish-scale glazing remains in place. The west one is in the poorest condition, with part of its roof destroyed by a seedling sycamore. At the east end of the north wall is a small stone and brick bothy, with a brick chimney. This is a potting shed and boiler house, the disused diesel boiler being in a sunken pit. Behind the bothy the perimeter wall is of brick.

The kitchen garden dates to the 1860s and is shown on the 1877 map. This shows no division in the walled area to the west of the house, with a lawn and wooded pleasure ground next to the house and a simply laid out kitchen garden to its west. This had perimeter and parallel north-south paths and two glasshouses against the west end of the north wall. There was a further one at the east end of the wall, near the house. None of these survive. The four remaining glasshouses date to the 1880s. An aerial photograph of 1919 shows these and two free-standing ones, one parallel to the existing ones and one at a slight angle, to the south-east. A further aerial photograph of 1956 shows the freestanding glasshouses gone and a simple layout of cross and perimeter paths. The western end of the ornamental gardens is shown as a vegetable area, possibly developed during the Second World War, with ranges of glasshouses at the west end, one against the wall. A university hall of residence was built on this area in 1968.

Sources

Primary

Information from Mr Ivor Stokes.

Secondary

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