

COLOMENDY

Ref No PGW (C) 70
OS Map 116/117
Grid Ref SJ 200 623
Former County Glyndwr
Unitary Authority Denbighshire
Community Council Llanferres
Designations None
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Small late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century park and garden, with picturesque woodland walks, rockwork tunnel, walled garden and fine views to Moel Famau mountain. The artist Richard Wilson spent the last year of his life here.

Type of Site

Landscape park; informal garden and pleasure grounds; walled garden.

Main Phases of Construction

late eighteenth century to mid nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Colomendy is a substantial house of eighteenth-century or earlier origin situated on rising ground to the east of the Alyn valley and the Clwydian Range. Moel Famau is a prominent landmark from the grounds. The house faces west, and is approached by a sweeping drive from the south. It was rebuilt as a Regency villa in 1810-11 for Catherine Jones, who lived here from at least the 1770s until her death in 1786. The house has two storeys and a hipped roof, with projecting cross-wings at either end. On her death Catherine Jones left Colomendy to her god-daughter, Catherine Jones Garnons, who lived nearby and let the property to her brother, Richard Garnons, who also owned Leeswood Hall (leased to Hope Wynne Eyton). Colomendy passed to Catherine's sister-in-law, Dorothea Garnons, who died in 1853, and then to Captain Bryan George Davies-Cooke, then a young boy. It remained in the Davies-Cooke family until they sold the property in about 1920.

The stable block lies to the north of the house, and is reached by back drives from the north and south, which lead from its east side to a small forecourt on its west. It is a single-storey stone building, with cross wings at either end and a central two-storey block. Stylistically it is similar to the house, but it is slightly later, dating to 1839-71 (it does not appear on the 1839 tithe map in its present form, but does on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map).

To the east of the back drive, on higher ground above the house, there are some ruined stone farm buildings. The main operational farm buildings lie to the north of the stables, on the west side of the back drive. Here there is a complex of mainly stone buildings of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century date. They include an interesting barn with tall brick pillars standing on U-shaped stone bases.

By 1839 a small park had been laid out to the west of the house, probably by Catherine Jones. Apart from encroachment by school buildings it is still in existence. It occupies a roughly rectangular area of rolling ground to the south of the Mold to Llanferres road (A 494) and the river Alyn. The main entrance is at the north end of the park, off the A494, and is flanked by curving stone walls. Inside, on the east side, is a small single-storey lodge. The drive runs south and curves eastwards around a wooded bluff to arrive at the front of the house. By 1839 the back drive was also in existence: this is a track running south-westwards from an entrance further east on the A494, leading to the farm buildings, stables, and back of the house. Between 1841 and 1851 a further drive, the 'Lilac Drive' was added just below the back drive. It had a separate entrance just to the west, with a lodge wedged in between the drive and the public road. It then ran south-westwards, along the western side of the kitchen garden, and south to join the main drive in front of the house. This is now an overgrown track, and the lodge has gone.

Apart from the drives the park was little ornamented: there were some isolated trees dotted about, and a small wood near the south-west corner. The wood, of deciduous trees, survives, but most of the isolated trees have gone. From the grounds there is a fine view westwards across the park to Mill Wood on the ridge beyond, and north-westwards to Moel Famau and the Clwydian Range. It is known that Richard Wilson was fond of Colomendy; that he was brought here in 1781 by the Jones family, who were cousins, and that he lived here until his death the following year. During the nineteenth century the surroundings were considered 'romantic' and picturesque, with the park described as 'pleasing and homely; the well-kept meadows, in which sportive lambs frisked about, being dotted with knolls on which grew daffodils and other flowers in luxuriance' (CRO NT/977). The woodland to the east of the park was fenced off from it, and will be considered as the pleasure grounds.

The garden lies to the south of the house, and the pleasure grounds to the west and north. They were made in two main phases. First, probably in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the pleasure grounds were established to the west of the house, with a boundary (probably a fence) along the west side, running from the track south of the house north-westwards past the house and through the wood to the road on the north boundary. In front of the house was a wide open area, possibly with a few trees in the middle. This layout, without any paths, is shown on the 1839 tithe map. By 1871 the small enclosed garden had been added to the south of the house, and the fenced area extended southwards to include the wooded knoll. More trees were planted in the open area north-west of the house, and many winding paths have been made through the woodland. By 1871 the south end of the kitchen garden has also taken on its present form, with a central approach path from the south and a sunken path alongside it.

The small garden to the south of the house has a low wall around it, and curving steps of tile and brick leading to the boundary in the south-east corner. The garden is laid out with an informal lawn and flowerbeds, a rockery, and in the centre of the lawn a square pillar memorial to a dog, dated 1865. This garden and monument are described in NT/977, at which time Gwendolen Davies-Cooke, the owner's daughter, cared for the gardens.

The pleasure grounds lie to the west and north of the house. In front of the house is an area of sloping lawn with some isolated low shrubs and yews clipped into low domes flanking a branch of the drive. Beyond is the wooded knoll. It is a mixed deciduous woodland, mainly of seedling deciduous trees, interspersed with some mature ornamental trees, including Scots pines, sweet chestnuts, sycamores and conifers, with a single large cypress on the eastern edge. This woodland extends

northwards along a steep north-west-facing slope, and then eastwards between the north boundary (A494) and the back drive. The west end, near the house, is laid out with several winding paths which run along the contours and climb to the top of the hill. In places they are built up over the slope with low revetment walls, edged with large stones, in places they are rock-cut, and the steepest parts have rock-cut steps. Occasional outcrops of rock next to the paths, and the steps, help to make them highly picturesque. Most are still passable, although very slippery in places. The paths continue to the north through the woodland, although beyond the knoll there are fewer. On top of the knoll is a modern bird hide with stone footings of an earlier building just outside it.

Immediately north of the house are some limes, a large sycamore, and box, holly and laurel screening. To the north-west is the open area, a sloping lawn with some large isolated conifers, including wellingtonia, and outlying school buildings. On the north side of the area a short path and shallow rustic stone steps lead up to an ornamental gateway leading to the central path of the kitchen garden. This is a short stretch of wall of dressed stone with tapered coping. The shallow-arched doorway has a Gothick cast-iron gate of simple overlapping pointed arches. Inside the gate is a clapper bridge of two large limestone slabs over a sunken alleyway to the boundary wall of the kitchen garden. The bridge is flanked by low steel railings, made recently to replace earlier iron ones, in the same style as the gate. There is a row of widely spaced yew trees along the outside of the sunken alleyway.

The sunken alleyway is a narrow trench, now heavily filled in and overgrown, which is revetted with a stone wall on the south, and is bounded by the kitchen garden revetment wall on the north. It runs westwards from the south-east corner of the kitchen garden, where a line of water-worn limestone rocks lining the present path into the kitchen garden suggest that there may have been some kind of rockwork entrance (? an arch). At the other end of the sunken walk, at the south-west corner of the kitchen garden, recent uncovering of a tumbled heap of water-worn limestone rocks has revealed a short tunnel, with a curving entrance and exit. From the exit there is a fine view of Moel Famau, suggesting that the tunnel was a device for obscuring and then revealing the view dramatically.

The 'Lilac Drive', to the west of the kitchen garden, was part of this picturesque layout, as from it there were also magnificent views out over the Alyn valley to the Clwydian Range and Moel Famau beyond. Next to the kitchen garden the drive is lined on its outer side by a low wall topped by large boulders, with a steep drop below. Jubilee Tower on Moel Famau, built at the same time as the house was remodelled (1810-12), would also have been visible. The narrow ledge along the outside of the kitchen garden, between it and the drive, on to which a blocked doorway from the kitchen garden leads out, is probably only the original ground surface into which the 'Lilac Drive' was cut, with a stone revetment wall against it. At its north end are some large yews and wellingtonias outside the north-west corner of the kitchen garden.

The walled kitchen garden lies to the north of the house. It is a rectangular area in two unequal compartments, the southern one being the larger, with farm buildings along the east side. The rubble stone walls stand to their full height of c. 2.5 m on the north and west sides, and are built of rough rubble on the outside and small squared rubble on the inside. The north-west corner is gently curved. The cross wall stands c. 3.5 m high and is topped by large overhanging coping stones. It has been raised by about a metre to its present height at some stage. In the middle is a wide gap, extended on the east side. Holes in the wall on the north side reveal brickwork around old flues within it, and a brick back

wall added to the south side shows that there was once a glasshouse here. In front are its brick footings. The west wall also shows signs of having been raised, and has flat coping stones on top. In the middle of the wall in the southern compartment, at the end of the former cross path, is a blocked doorway leading to the narrow ledge and 'Lilac Drive' beyond. The south side is different. It is only c. 1.3 m high, butting up against a slightly higher wall of c. 2 m at its east end. On the outside this wall stands on an earlier revetment wall. The upstanding wall is in poor condition, and has odd features like tile drains embedded in it, and slate and bitumen on the top. This suggests that it may have been built, or rebuilt, perhaps in the late nineteenth century. The interior of the garden is largely grass, and there is no sign of the former internal layout of central, cross, and perimeter paths in the southern part. The northern part appears never to have had any paths, had a glasshouse in it in 1871, and was probably partly at least the frame yard.

In the south-east corner of the garden is a small annexe extending eastwards, which was probably not originally part of the garden. It contains the bases and rear walls of two glasshouses next to each other. Both back walls have flues.

The history of the kitchen garden is complex. It was drawn schematically as a simple square on the 1839 tithe map. This was the southern compartment, built at the same time as the west range of farm buildings. By 1871 the garden had assumed its present form, with an extension to the north of the smaller compartment. The south side has obviously been remodelled several times, with the addition of the sunken walk and ornamental entrance, and with the addition of the low wall on top of the revetment wall. This may have been in connection with the levelling up of the south end of the garden, which took place in 1959 when farming of the garden restarted.

Investigation of the garden in 1993 by Rosemary Jones and Rosa Baker led to the discovery in the kitchen garden of a small wrought-iron gate made by Robert Davies of Bersham. It is a simple gate with an ornamental top, and was probably brought here from LLanferres church, possibly when it was rebuilt in 1843. It was probably placed initially in the arch between the two compartments of the walled garden, which was widened in 1959. It was then moved to a gateway in the south-east corner of the garden, and was again moved when that gateway was widened.

Sources

Primary

1839 tithe map

Secondary

Leslie, C.H., Rambles round Mold (1869): Clwyd Record Office (Hawarden), NT/977.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p.212.

PERTH-Y-MAEN

Ref No PGW (C) 71

OS Map 116

Grid Ref SJ 126 807

County Clwyd

District Delyn BC

Community Council Llanasa

Designations Listed building: Perth-y-maen Grade II*; Doorway to walled garden Grade II*

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

A seventeenth-century walled garden with fine entrance doorway and unusual slotted walls.

Type of Site

Walled garden

Main Phases of Construction

c. 1643

SITE DESCRIPTION

Perth-y-maen is a substantial two-storey stone farmhouse situated on a slight rise to the north-east of the village of Trelogan. Perth-y-maen was for long the home of the Parry family. An estate map of the 1730s shows the house with a courtyard and the walled enclosure.

To the south of the farmhouse is a range of stone outbuildings.

The walled garden is situated to the south-east of the house, on ground sloping to the south-east. A narrow by-road runs between house and garden. The garden is four-sided, its west side running along the road, and is bounded by pale grey rubble built limestone walls c. 2.5 to 3 m high. The interior surfaces have horizontal parallel slots all around them, from close to the top of the walls to near the bottom. They are quite shallow, and their purpose is obscure. No parallels have been found for this treatment of garden walls. However, as the garden was probably an orchard they may have been used in some way for fixing wall fruit and/or netting to the walls. The doorway is situated in the middle of the west wall, opposite the house. It has a shallow arch with an inscription 'E.P. 1643' over it. This inscription appears in situ, and is taken to date the garden. 'E.P.' would have been a member of the Parry family. Inside the doorway a flight of stone steps leads down to ground level. The only break in the walls is a hole in the north-east side made to allow animals into the interior. Much of the stonework from the gap lies on the ground.

The interior is now grassed over, but stone edgings protrude from the turf indicating a layout at one time of paths. The garden is marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as an orchard, and this is its probable original use.

Sources

Primary

Map of land belonging to Thomas Longueville Bt at Trelogan, c. 1730s:
Clwyd Record Office (Hawarden), D/DM/136/4.

ROSEHILL

Ref No PGW (C) 72
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 349 427
County Clwyd
District Wrexham Maelor BC
Community Council Erbistock
Designations None
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Landscape park in picturesque location overlooking the river Dee, surviving in its entirety. House and garden in fine situation overlooking the park and river, with the unusual survivals of a box-edged Edwardian parterre and a well preserved and fully productive walled kitchen garden.

Type of Site

Landscape park; formal garden; walled kitchen garden.

Main Phases of Construction

Late eighteenth to early nineteenth century; early twentieth century.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Rosehill is a substantial late Georgian brick house situated on elevated ground to the west of the river Dee. From the east front of the house there are panoramic views over the park to the river Dee and beyond. The house is approached from the north by a drive and forecourt. The main entrance on the north side has a pedimented porch, and in front of the central window on the east side is a small two-column portico. The three-bay centre of the house is three-storey, the flanking wings two-storey. The service court lies to the north-west of the house. Rosehill has long been a property of the Kenyon family, and was the home of the renowned archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon. It is now divided into flats.

The former stables are situated to the north of the west end of the house, to which they are joined by a brick arched arcade open to the east. The stables are a compact two-storey brick building with a blocked archway on the west side and a blank Venetian window in an arched recess on the east side. They appear contemporary with the house. To the north a high brick wall extends for a short distance, dividing the front drive from the service area. The wall ends at a small square two-storey brick pavilion set at an angle to the stables. Steps lead up to a first-floor door on the west side.

To the west of the house is a range of outbuildings of brick and stone. The north end, now used for garages and storage, is of brick and appears younger than the stone south end, which appears to have been a small cottage at one time. It is now used as an outbuilding.

Ranged along the minor road which bounds the property on the west side is a fine long barn. Its north end is of stone, the rest is half-timbered and brick. It is set in an enclosure bounded by a low stone wall.

Rosehill has a small landscape park situated on a rolling slope on the west flank of the Dee valley. The house stands on the western edge of the park, at its highest point, with fine views out over the park to the river Dee and the countryside beyond. The park was probably made at the same time as the house was built, in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Many of the trees in the park are mature, and could date from this period.

The park is square in shape, bounded by roads on the north, east and west sides, and by a belt of deciduous woodland in a small valley on the south side. A path originally ran through this woodland from the garden to the river at Overton bridge, but it is now disused and mostly impassable. The park is bounded by a stone wall of rubble construction along the A539 on its east side and east end of its north side, with iron railings on a low stone wall in the north-east corner. There are narrow belts of mixed woodland along the west boundary, and at the west end of the north boundary, but the rest of the park is open unfenced grassland dotted with single mature trees. These include two large cedars, sweet chestnuts, horse chestnuts, oaks, sycamores, beeches, and pines. The park is separated from the garden by a simple iron fence, in places replaced by a modern fence.

The entrance is on the west side, through simple wooden gates, with a winding gravel drive leading to a small forecourt on the north side of the house. The drive divides near the entrance, the west fork leading to the service area. There is a grander entrance, now disused, on the A539 on the east side of the park. It is set back from the park wall by curving walls of dressed stone, and consists of square stone piers flanking simple iron gates. A drive originally wound across the park to the forecourt, but it is now disused and grassed over, visible in places where it is sunken. Near the entrance it is flanked by deciduous trees. Just inside the entrance, to the north of the former drive, is a small pond.

The garden lies mainly to the east and south of the house, on gently sloping ground that has been levelled into shallow terraces. In its present form the garden appears to be of Edwardian character, although the terracing may be earlier.

To the north-west of the house the drive is flanked by an area of horse chestnuts underplanted near the house with evergreen shrubs such as holly and laurel. The drive leads to a small rectangular gravel forecourt. To the west of the house and outbuildings is a small pond of utilitarian character.

The garden east of the house is bounded on the north and east sides by a yew hedge. The garden and park are separated by a simple iron fence (replaced partly by a modern fence). An iron gate in an archway cut in the north hedge, with topiary over it, leads to a gravel terrace along the east front of the house. This is bounded by a grass bank down to a rectangular lawn. A flight of stone steps leads down from the terrace opposite the central window to the lawn, at the south end of which is a large cedar tree. The terrace continues along the south front, where it is wider. The terrace extends west of the house, backed on the north by a high brick wall, in front of which is an area of stone paving. The garden south of the house is divided into several small areas of different character linked by a central north-south gravel path. This starts with a flight of stone steps down the grass bank bounding the terrace. Below the terrace is a level rectangular lawn cut into the slope at its west end. In the corners of the west end of the lawn are two topiary yews clipped into domes. To the west is a small area of specimen trees, including cypresses, beeches, and a sweet chestnut, beyond which is a bank of rhododendrons, flanked by a gravel path, along the garden boundary. The

path joins a gravel path along the south side of the lawn, which leads to a door in the kitchen garden wall.

The central gravel path leads via a flight of stone steps down to the next compartment, which consists of a formal parterre. The steps are flanked by a pair of clipped yew domes. The parterre is a rectangular area laid out in formal box-edged beds with narrow gravel paths between them. It is divided into two parts by the north-south gravel path. The west end has a diamond-shaped bed in the middle, the east end an oval bed. The beds are planted with small shrubs, roses, and herbaceous plants. There is a cypress in the south-east corner and another on the south side, to the west of the path. At the east end of the parterre a flight of stone steps lead down to an earthen path to a small iron gate into the park. The central path leads to a lower sloping area via stone steps under an arch in a topiary yew, and there is a similar arch over the gravel path along the south side of the parterre. The north-south path continues through an informal area of rough lawn and shrubs, bordered by rhododendrons on the east and the kitchen garden on the west. It passes between another pair of clipped yew bushes and then winds to a disused gate into the woodland bounding the south side of the park.

Rosehill has a well preserved walled garden, situated on sloping ground to the south of the house and garden. It is probably contemporary with the house, dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The garden is square, with brick walls standing to their full height of c. 3.5 m (c. 4 m at the lower, south end) and topped with stone coping. There are two doors in the north wall, the east one leading to the garden, the central one to brick lean-to outhouses standing against the outer side of the wall. A door at the south end of the east wall leads to a former path to the park and woodland.

The interior is laid out with perimeter earth and gravel paths and a central north-south path. All these paths retain their box edging. Near the north end of the central path is a stone baluster sundial c. 1.7 m high, standing on a circular plinth. Against the north wall is a brick-based glasshouse without its glass, and with a ruinous superstructure. The vine inside, however, survives. To its east are several brick cold frames.

The garden is still in productive use, and no part of it is derelict. There are some old fruit trees trained on the walls, and one or two isolated fruit trees. The central path is flanked by old espalier apples.

Sources

Secondary

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p. 160.