

GREGYNOG

Ref No	PGW (Po) 33 (POW)
OS Map	136
Grid Ref	SO 085976
Former County	Montgomeryshire
Unitary Authority	Powys
District	Montgomeryshire
Community Council	Tregynon
Designations	Listed Building: House Grade II* S.S.S.I: Great Wood.
Site Evaluation	Grade I
Primary reasons for grading	One of the most important gardens and parks in Powys dating from at least 1500. William Emes produced proposals in 1774 and some of them were carried out. In 1920 it became the home of the artistic patrons Gwendoline and Margaret Davies. H. A. Tipping worked on the gardens 1930-33 and Dame Sylvia Crowe in 1972.
Type of Site	Formal and informal woodland garden, incorporating various historic overlays. Fine wooded park including part of the ancient Great Wood of Tregynon.
Main Phases of Construction	<u>c.</u> 1500 on. House rebuilt <u>c.</u> 1830 and <u>c.</u> 1880. Landscaping/garden making: William Emes <u>c.</u> 1774, Late Victorian formal garden, including parterre <u>c.</u> 1888, H. A. Tipping <u>c.</u> 1930, Dame Sylvia Crowe 1972.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Gregynog is approached through parkland and garden along a drive which enters the site on the north-east, to the south of Cocos Mill. The angular, high house is set on a level terrace, facing roughly south-east, with a gravel walk and wide lawn before it, from which it is separated by a wide flower border. The house is an elaborate late nineteenth-century neo-

Jacobean house of brick, over which is moulded concrete, painted black and white to appear as timber framing. The three-storey E-plan house has an additional attic storey with gabled dormers. It has seven windows on the south-east front and a Victorian stone porch on the centre ground floor which is hidden beneath ivy. Above the dormers the steeply pitched roof rises to a high ridge which has apparently lost its moulded brick stacks. A *Magnolia grandiflora* grows against the south-east front. To the east of the house is the music room, which is a single-storey extension with three large mullioned and transomed stone windows set on the garden/ south-east side set in timber-framed gables. This is connected to the house by a two-storey stone faced corridor, the upper storey of which is set back as a balcony. Attached on north side of the house there are two red brick and white rendered service wings, and, on north-east, flat roof university buildings, including the refectory, which date from the 1960s.

Gregynog has ancient origins. The earliest reference to a house on the site occurs in the twelfth century when it was connected to the Princes of Powys. From the fifteenth century it became the seat of the Blayney family, following the marriage of Thomas ab Evan Blayney and Margaret Herbert of Maesmawr. The house was celebrated for its hospitality in contemporary Welsh poetry which included 'The Eagle of Gregynog'. This hospitality continued down the years and was still celebrated enough for Pennant to remark on it in his Welsh Tour in the 1770s. It appears that a new house was built in the late sixteenth century: a 'fair new Hall' is mentioned on the occasion of David Lloyd Blayney's promotion to High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire in 1577. A contemporary poem by Lewys Dwnn also recorded that the windows of the house contained 'thick glass', an illustration of the family's wealth. The house is thought to have stood several hundred metres to the north of the existing house. There is a Moses Griffith watercolour of c. 1775, showing a two-storey U-plan brick house in mid seventeenth-century style, of nine bays, including outer two-bay wings, a slate roof, a pedimented doorway and an enclosed rectangular court at the front.

The Blayney family were Royalists and during the Civil War and they gave Charles I hospitality in September 1645, three days before his defeat at the battle of Rowton Moor. On the death of Arthur Blayney in 1795 the estate passed into the Hanbury Tracy family, from 1838 the Lords Sudley via Blayney's cousin Susannah Weaver. They retained it until 1894 and during their tenure the house was replaced with the present high, Jacobean timber frame style house in painted concrete. The actual date of the new house is unclear but it appears that the initial rebuilding, which included the cellars and stables, was carried out in the late 1830s and the east front concrete 'timber' detail later still by 1872 when it was recorded in Nicholson's Annals. It is attributed to Charles Hanbury-Tracey, son and heir and an enthusiastic amateur architect. In 1877 W. E. Nesfield published designs for further alterations for the house but there is no evidence to show that any of this work was carried out.

On the sale in 1894 the estate was bought by Lord Joicey who sold on again in 1913-14 to an unknown owner. In the late 1890s a new music room, in real timber frame and stone, was erected, probably by W. Scott-Owen, on the north-east front. This was altered again by E. S. Hall in about 1925. H. R. Ricardo was also commissioned to make some alterations to the east front for Lord Joicey in the mid-1890s.

After the First World War the estate was bought by the sisters Gwendoline and Margaret Davies, grand-daughters of David Davies of Llandinam, who became great philanthropists and patrons of the Arts. Gregynog became a major centre for the Arts through music and the foundation of the Gregynog Press in the early 1920s. It also attracted politicians through the sisters' brother, Lord Davies who was involved with the League of Nations. Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin holidayed at Gregynog in 1936. Following the death of Gwendoline, Margaret bequeathed Gregynog to the University of Wales in 1960, staying on as a tenant until her own death in 1963. At this time the sisters' internationally renowned collection of French and English Impressionist paintings and sculpture went to the National Gallery of Wales, Cardiff. Inside the house a portion of the seventeenth-century house survives in the Blayney Room, the main reception room, which is lined with deep carved oak panelling which was commissioned by the Blayney family. It is dated 22 June 1636 and is believed to have been executed by Dutch craftsmen. The most recent buildings are those of the University, a flat roofed range attached to the north-west of the house, by Alex Gordon in about 1967.

An east-facing red brick stable court lies to the east of the house. It is believed to date from about 1830, when the house was rebuilt. The court has been partly remodelled for its present use as offices and accommodation for the university. It is composed of four two-storey ranges with high pitched slate roofs and key-stone detail over the doors and old carriage doors; the main east range has seven bays set with dormers. The ranges surround a cobbled yard which has been partly replaced by brick sets and ornamented with planters. On the centre east front of the west range a new high glass arch porch and reception area has recently been constructed. In design this echoes the actual gate arch into the court which stands opposite, on the west range. In the north-west corner of the yard is the office and work shop of the Gregynog Press.

The Gregynog Press was founded by the Davies sisters in the early 1920s in the Arts and Crafts tradition. Limited editions of Welsh poetry, song and history were produced to the highest standards. The renowned bookbinder R. A. Maynard and the engraver George Fisher both worked here. The press started to decline in the 1950s. It was relaunched by the University and Welsh Arts Council as Gwasg Gregynog in 1975.

To the north-east of the stables on the north side of the service drive there is a charming 'doll's house' service building. This small brick building faces south with a door set between symmetrical windows on its eastern front. A high pitched slate roof rises to a large oversized brick stack which falls the depth of the full 1 1/2 storeys which the building reveals on its northern side. A set of stone steps and a lower north entrance door connect to the upper storey. The purpose of this building is unclear. It is used as a grounds store but it was possibly used by a nightwatchman. Below this building on the north a branch of the service drive, which connects to the Skew drive in the east, heads west further down the slope into the valley to the north of the house. In the valley there is a modern water tank and treatment works.

The Skew drive continues to the north-east, passing, within the garden, a series of brick, slate roof and other prefabricated and more modern, service buildings. The age of the brick buildings is unclear but they appear to date from about 1900. They include an oil store and

boiler house, a workshop, a garage and a stable. All are screened from the car park above by the laurel planted bank on the north side of the drive.

The park lies to the north-east and south-west of the house. In the north-east it covers about 35 acres and in the south-west about 40 acres. The park is set between large areas of plantation and wood which define the boundaries and cover at least another 200 acres between them. In the north-east the park slopes down to the north-east from the main drive. In the centre of this area there is a long rectangular field, fenced off from the surrounding pasture, lying on a south-west/north-east alignment. Between Great Wood and Upper Plantation, to the north of the house, the ground slopes down to the south-east towards the house and garden, which lie above it, from the respective west and east sides of these plantings into a small valley. In the south-west the park runs along a wide shallow valley, the Wern, set between two wooded ridges.

The main drive enters the site and the park in the north-east, on the south-west of the village of Tregynon to the south of Cocos Mill (outside of the registered area) and Mill Lodge. It runs south-west for about 1/2 km, partly along a rock-cut terrace, before it is intersected from the south-east by the 'Galloping Drive' which enters the site off the Tregynon/Newtown road. The drives merge and continue to the east towards the house, through a short length of oak avenue, to the garden boundary at Middle Lodge. The drive continues for about another 200m through the pleasure grounds, between high banks of evergreens set beneath woodland, before reaching the east side of the stable block. To the north of the drive at this point is the visitor car park. A service track, which becomes a walk, breaks off the drive to the south-east of the house and continues around the south side of the landscaped valley, the Glen, into Blackhouse Wood and the south-west pleasure grounds. At the entrance to the stable court a second service drive cuts back to the north-east, on the north of the car park. As it leaves the garden area it passes a number of service buildings on its north. This drive proceeds through the park to the north-east where it reaches a lane at Skew bridge, which forms the north park boundary. In the south-west a drive enters the site to the south of Bwlch-y-Ffridd lodge and proceeds up and around the south-west and south side of farmland for about 1 km before entering the park area for another km almost opposite the walled kitchen garden on the north side of the valley. This drive continues to the north-east where it becomes the Ladies Walk and service track in the garden. On the opposite side of the valley a continuation of the service track/drive, which runs to the north of the walled kitchen garden, exits the site above the village of Bwlch-y-Ffridd through a simple farm gate. This track is also about 2 km long.

In the northern park there is a natural triangular pond. This drains into the Bechan brook which passes beneath and to the south-west of the old Agent's house, Rhyd-y-gro, which lies beyond the registered area. The brook flows from the north-east, entering the park underneath the north lane by Skew Bridge. Other field drains occur throughout the park. In the park the plantations are either commercial soft woods, ancient woodland or mixed woodland, which dates mainly from 1850 on. The most important area of ancient woodland is Great Wood which lies to the north of the house. To the west of the wood, Wood Cottage, a genuine Welsh longhouse farm with small adjacent areas of relict orchard, is still worked. The commercial areas of woodland are Upper and Lower plantation and the woods which lie on either side of the Wern. The area of the Warren is also managed commercially.

Blackhouse Wood is split between the park and the garden; the park wood, as said, is commercial, the garden area, known as the Panorama, ornamental. Along the north boundary of the park laid and mixed thorn hedges dating from the late nineteenth century occur. The open parkland is characterised by many fine broadleaf or conifer trees, isolated or planted in small groups. Two disused quarries also occur on the south boundary of the park.

The early history of the park is unclear, although Pennant believed that a Roman road passed through the site to the south of the house. The area was certainly heavily wooded, as the Great Wood testifies, and it would have gradually been cleared for agriculture. No references to deer in the park have been found. A substantial warren, which probably dated from the medieval period, existed in the south-east of the park until at least 1884, on a hill which still bears the name. The first significant changes and 'improvements' to the park occurred under Arthur Blayney in the late eighteenth century. This 'backwoods squire', as he was known, was a benevolent landlord, unusually keen to improve the conditions of his labourers and cottagers. Estate improvements included the construction of an estate village at Tregynon and raising the labourers wages, an unpopular move among neighbouring landlords.

In 1774 Blayney commissioned the landscape designer William Emes to suggest alterations to the park and garden. Although he rarely travelled or courted society, Blayney was familiar, and presumably had been impressed by, Emes's work at Powis Castle, Chirk Castle and possibly Erddig. Emes drew up a plan of alterations which included cutting an almost parallel ride through Great Wood, and what was to become Upper Plantation, from west to east, creating a line of three large ponds in the valley to the north of the house, lining the eastern lanes and approaches with trees, planting an avenue to the north-east of the house and clumps within the open park. All these features would be linked by 'walks through the improvements'. It is unclear how much, if any, of Emes's alterations were adopted but by the late 1770s Blayney was apparently encouraging 'informal' planting in the park. A meadow, but no ponds or lakes, is recorded in the valley to the north of the house on the 1842 tithe map. A second meadow is marked to the south of the garden, in the area which was planted up with ornamental trees from the mid to late nineteenth century. Most significantly a broad grass ride heads straight north-west through Great Wood. This ride was still in existence in 1913 when it was recorded on a photograph included in a magazine article.

A good pictorial record of the early nineteenth century park is a 1827 watercolour by John Parker which views the house from the east. The main Tregynon drive is clearly visible, running across open parkland which is enclosed to the north and south by woodland; Great Wood and the Warren. A track, or ride, is also recorded winding up Upper Plantation hill to the north-west of the house.

In the late nineteenth century many trees were lost from the park through 'wholesale felling' which took place in an attempt to pay off some of the Sudley family debts. In 1884 two small- holdings, Upper and Lower Wern, were also recorded in the area of the Wern. It is unknown when these were lost. When the family were finally forced to sell the 1890s Lord Joicey took over an estate of some 18,000 acres, primarily for its hunting interests. It is unclear what, if any, work he undertook in the park, but he was responsible for planting many of the conifers in the south garden. In 1913 an article in the Gardener's Chronicle recorded a Scots fir in the park at 150 ft and silver firs, one of which had a girth of over 9 ft. 44 ft above

ground level. In the 1913-14 sale much of the estate was sold on to the tenants as smallholdings, but the park area remained intact. When the Davies sisters bought the estate in about 1920 the landholdings had been reduced to about 750 acres. It is unclear what, if any, timber was lost from the park during the First and Second World Wars but since the Ordnance Survey map of 1903 the woodland between Upper Plantation and Great Wood, around Wood Cottage, has gradually been depleted. Between 1903 and about 1960 the Ordnance Survey has reduced the area of the southern park to the field boundary to the south-west of the walled kitchen garden from two boundaries further to the south-west but the first of these fields (the eastern) still retains its park like appearance and so has been recorded as park in this survey. The western field is now marshy pasture.

The Davies's bequest of Gregynog to the University of Wales included the grazing and commercial woodlands of the park area, the lodges, Wood Cottage, a pair of labourer's cottages, Gregynog Cottages, on the north park boundary, and Rhyd-y-gro, which passed out of University ownership in the 1960s.

The formal gardens at Gregynog lie mainly to the south-east and west of the house with areas of wild and water garden lying further to the east along the main drive. On the north the south boundary of the north park lies near to the house, to the north of a walk/drive which runs the width of the garden. From the boundary the ground falls steeply into small valley which separates the garden, and park from 'Great Wood'. The gardens are surrounded by, and include, large areas of ornamental woodland. In total the garden area extends to about 40 acres.

The house is set on a extensive level terrace, which is maintained as lawn. A wide gravel terrace runs along the south-east front of the house, before continuing as a walk to the south-west to intersect a service drive, itself a continuation of the north walk. About 15m to the south-east of the house the land falls into the Glen; a shallow, smooth lawned valley, of varying width, which is the predominant design feature of the garden.

The garden begins in the park to the west of the intersection of the main Tregynon and Galloping drive. To the south of the drive there is the isolated Water Garden which is composed of a large circular pool, surrounded by a walk, fenced off from the surrounding park. Trees, rushes, bamboo and the remains of ornamental plantings grow along the edge of the path and the pond. The pond, which contains a small island, is fed by a stream that enters through a stone-lined channel on the south-west, crossed by a small stone slab bridge. Nearby, to the south of the bridge, there is a small timber summer house which faces east, looking over the water.

The pleasure ground/garden proper begins about 40m back down the drive to the west where the drive crosses a cattle grid set between simple timber gates and park fencing before proceeding to the south-west through a narrow strip of woodland, lined with mature clumps of rhododendron and laurel, towards the house. On the north of the drive at this point stands Middle Lodge. About 20m to the north of Middle Lodge the wood on the north of the drive opens out, extending north to the park boundary. Here the ground slopes down from the drive into a shallow valley which rises up through beech woodland to reach the park boundary. This valley runs to the north-west and contains the remains of a water garden set in woodland.

Stone-lined channels, pools and cascades, which are dry, run along different levels, connected by stone steps. Wild and water planting including Rodgersia and London pride (*Saxifraga urbium*) survive in the grass around. Further up the valley towards the house Japanese acers, magnolias and bamboo also occur, some in curved stone-edged beds. On the north of this feature, just inside the park boundary, there is a timber chalet or bothy and at the north-west end there is a large car park which lies to the north-west of the stable court entrance. The water garden concludes and merges into a small area of mown grass that lies between the north-east end of the main drive and the south-east of the car park.

To the south of the car park and north-east of the stables, a gravelled path loops around the south-east front of the house. Initially this runs along the narrow, shrub-planted north side of the Glen. On reaching the house the path widens into a formal terrace which is separated from the house by a shrub and low-planted border which varies in width. The south-west end of the border is edged with stone and the corner is defined by a simple stone sundial.

From the house porch a path line crosses this gravel to continue over an ornamental, ivied one-arched stone bridge that spans the Glen and connects to the ornamental Panorama woodland, which runs along the entire southern length of the garden. Two low clipped Irish yew stand near the north end of the bridge, to which they are connected by a short, curved length of clipped osmanthus hedge. The bridge stands about 8m above the floor of the valley at its central point. On the gravel terrace, on either side of the bridge, there is a large, ornate nineteenth-century terracotta fountain. On the north face of the Glen, to the east of the bridge, there is an extraordinary topiary feature - a crenellated golden yew hedge - which runs east for about 40m. About 6m east of the bridge two sets of thirteen concrete steps descend from the terrace through the yew hedge to the bottom of the Glen. A narrow path runs along the northern edge of the yew hedge above which there is a long, linear rock garden. Opposite this, on the south side of the Glen there is a substantial area of shrub planting, containing mature azaleas, magnolias and acers, some growing in stone-edged raised beds, which appears to merge into the woodland behind.

On the west of the bridge some tree and shrub planting occurs along the northern side of the Glen with clumps of bamboo on the south. A pair of grass tennis courts are also laid out, end to end, on the valley floor. To the south-west of the house, above the Glen, a narrow path line runs along the southern edge of the west lawn. Between the pathline and the slope down into the Glen traces of a formal planting are revealed in the lawn by a line of circular marks.

A formal path, known as 'the Ladies Walk' runs along the north of the Panorama above the Glen. The walk continues along the length of the woodland to the east before returning towards the stables as a track. From the bridge the Ladies Walk also runs south-west through the ornamental woodland which merges into Blackhouse Wood. Soon the walk becomes little more than a forestry track and continues as such through the park to exit the site to the south of Bwlch-y-Ffridd lodge. To the west of the bridge and north of the path there is a large modern sculpture of a hand. The Panorama, the ornamental woodland is characterised by late nineteenth-century evergreen planting which includes Pacific north-west conifers, larch, Scots pine and laurel.

On the west of the house a wide rectangular lawn extends to a high wooded mound. A set of

fifteen concrete steps, known as 'Jacob's Ladder', runs up the centre of the east side of this mound from the garden. On the top of the mound a path runs from the steps to cross over what is now a service drive by a concrete bridge. This path continues into Garden house wood beyond. In the western part of this wood, to the north of the kitchen garden, another wild water garden was laid out in the 1920s, called the Dingle, but very little of it now survives.

Along the northern side of the west lawn there is a straight formal walk which turns south to pass underneath the concrete bridge, before continuing to the south-west as a service drive. The area contains a second straight walk which runs along the west side of the house, connecting the south terrace and north walk. Where this walk/path intersects the north walk, the later continues to the stables and service area in the north-east as a service drive. To the north of the north walk there is a narrow, partly planted bank, which separates the garden from the park boundary fence. In the north-west of this area, to the north-west of the mound, a new house has been built just inside the garden boundary. On the immediate north-west of the house there is a small area of partly paved formal garden, bordered on the west by the connecting path, to the east of a slightly sunk lawn which was a croquet lawn. This is at a higher level than the west lawn and it descends on to the north walk by two sets of steps, four of stone and eight of concrete. Opposite these is a the boiler house with its small modern lean-to conservatory. The north walk is retained at this point on its south side by a low dry-stone wall which is planted up. This continues to the east for about 4m where it meets a high brick wall which separates the garden from the old service court on the east.

The earliest record of an ornamental garden at Gregynog occurs on the Moses Griffith watercolour of about 1775 which recorded two symmetrical grass plats in a courtyard on the entrance front of the house and a partly wooded hill side behind. Formal entrance courts were a feature of Montgomeryshire gentry houses. A similar, albeit slightly remodelled court, still survives at Vaynor Park. The formation of this level courtyard would have required a certain amount of earth-moving and it is possible that the level area to the west of the house dates from this time. No other records of any ornamental gardens are known until the William Emes plan of 1774, which may have combined existing features with his proposed 'alterations'. This map shows a wide and presumably level area surrounded by some sort of boundary, possibly a wall or a fence, to the south and west of the house in the position of the present lawn and the valley containing a string of five connecting ponds. The valley and garden are partly ornamented with clumps of woodland and the garden boundary ends abruptly on the south of the valley. The central section of the valley, to the south of the house, is also sectioned off by some form of boundary. To the south-west and south-east of the house the plan also records what could have been garden buildings, or pavilions. Of Emes's 'alterations' it is clear that the valley was created, either being excavated wholesale, or redefining an existing natural feature. The map does not record the land form to the west of the house and so it is impossible to tell if the excavated earth from the valley formed the mound, as has been suggested. Some, if not all, of the lakes were also created, as later records from the early nineteenth century record them being drained. Until the middle of the nineteenth century they were known affectionately as 'Mr Blayney's duckponds'. Emes planned to unify the park and garden through a series of walks 'through the improvements'. One of these walks followed the line of what is now the north-west service drive. To the west of the mound this walk/drive passes through a rocky cutting which is crossed by the later

Victorian bridge. It is possible, although unproven, that the cutting was cut or blown out by Emes at this time. In a small valley above the present kitchen garden Emes suggested a 'Dingle', a series of pools and waterfalls which would be embellished by a 'small pasture for sheep' on the north. It is not known if any of this particular work was carried out but this area was developed in this manner, apart from the sheep, in the 1920s. Whatever William Emes may or may not have achieved at Gregynog, Blayney obviously valued his gardeners and groundsmen. His head gardener is recorded as having received £24.3s in pay one year, second only to his comptroller.

A later pictorial record of Gregynog, a 1827 watercolour by John Parker, while of more interest to the history of the park, records the area around the house, which is shown on a seemingly unplanted level terrace with woodland to the front and rear. The form of the park prevents any view of Emes's valley, but a stream is clearly recorded approaching the house from the north-east.

In 1842 the garden was recorded on a tithe map as containing shrubberies and lawns. Few significant developments were to take place until after the house had been remodelled in the late nineteenth century by Lord Joicey. Photographs dating from the 1880s show that the Sudley garden still contained relict woodland plantings; a massive ancient oak was recorded growing to the south-west of the house.

Despite their financial circumstances the Sudleys did make additions to the gardens, notably the north and north-west walk was improved as a carriage drive/service track and a concrete bridge erected across it in 1880. The concrete steps of Jacob's ladder were also installed at this time. Both the bridge and steps could well have been designed by Charles Hanbury-Tracey.

Following his purchase of the estate in 1894 Lord Joicey began to create a late Victorian garden with his head gardener, Mr J. Jackson. Nearly all the ornamental trees, introductions from the Far East and north-west America, were planted in the Panorama to the south of the valley during Joicey's tenure. The 'Ladies Walk' also probably dates from this time. The valley, now known as 'the Glen' was further ornamented by Jackson's ornate golden yew hedge, which bordered twenty six compartments, all planted up, in 1913, with hybrid-tea roses between and tea-roses in a long border above. Three large star-shaped cut rose beds lay on the opposite bank from the hedge, each one planted up in a single colour. By 1913 Jackson had also created strange narrow curving and small circular beds of bedding and heathers along the sides of 'the Glen'. On the upper south side a serpentine border of shrubs and rhododendrons had been also been created by 1913, the favoured rhododendron being 'Pink Pearl'. The fountains of the terrace were bought by Joicey and many other 'fountains and figures' were recorded around the gardens by the Gardener's Chronicle in 1913. In the west area of the garden a 200 yard long hedge of sweet briar was also noted as were a group of 'fine old yews', one of which had a canopy 50 yards around.

Aerial photographs of the garden have also revealed an ornate Victorian formal layout on the west and north-west lawns. Two parterres, with paths and circular features, were apparently laid out here. To the south-east of the house a pair of wide, angled walks ran from the terrace to the north edge of the Glen, enclosing the terracotta fountains. No documentation

concerning this layout, is known to have survived. The date of this lay-out is also unclear, as although the fountains are thought to be additions made to the site by Lord Joicey, the gardening articles of 1913 do not record any such formal garden. The parterres probably date from the mid nineteenth century, created by the Sudley family, and may have well have already been dismantled by the time of the sale in 1894. The only possible remaining planting of this layout could be the Irish yews to the north of the bridge.

With the arrival of the Davies sisters in 1920 the garden developed again, being restored from a gentle decline during the First World War, which saw the grassing over of many of the ornamental beds. Gwendoline was a keen gardener and an admirer of such gardeners as William Robinson and A. T. Johnson. The sisters, unusually, appointed a woman, Miss Gwen Clark, as their first head gardener. She, with her assistant Miss Daisy Durrant, set about replacing the rose border above the golden yew hedge with a rock garden and increasing the garden's Asiatic introductions. During the 1920s they created the Water Garden, to the south-west of the main garden, using local contractors to excavate the pond and erect a summer house and boat house, which stood there. Gwendoline's interest in wild gardening and introductions was probably aided by the sister's artistic and political friendship with *Country Life* architectural writer and garden designer H. A. Tipping, who had become a noted exponent of this type of gardening and who collaborated on the garden from 1930 until his death three years later.

In 1930 Miss Clark retired and was succeeded by George C. Austin, who remained head gardener until 1969. Miss Durrant stayed on as Austin's assistant. Tipping and Austin worked together to create the Dingle, to the north of the kitchen garden, and the Dell and woodland garden, to the east of the stables. Both areas used many of Tipping's favourite plants which included trilliums, candelabra primulas, rodgersia, bamboo, astilbe and gunnera. Between 1930 to 1939 the garden staff increased from 16 to 23. The kitchen garden and the Dell had their own staff, the Dell staff lived in the small timber bothy on the garden boundary. The garden was at its peak in 1937-39, combining woodland and more formal areas of planting. A photograph of 1938 records large beds of lupins and other perennials on the north-east side of the bank, above the north garden path.

From about 1940 the gardens gently declined as staff levels decreased. In 1972 the University of Wales commissioned Dame Sylvia Crowe to report on the gardens and this resulted in the 'Landscape Report on the Grounds and Gardens of Gregynog' which recommended drawing a greater distinction between the garden and the woodlands and creating simpler forms of planting. As a result of this report and the involvement of the Department of Forestry at the University of Wales, Bangor, new paths have been created in the south-east and south woodlands.

The walled kitchen garden at Gregynog lies nearly 1 km to the south-west of the house along the service drive which becomes the upper Wern track. The garden lies on the south of the track on a south-east slope looking out over the Wern below. The 1 acre garden is triangular in shape descending down from a narrow north wall which was the site of an extensive greenhouse. On the north side of this wall, from the east, a two-storey brick bothy, with a rendered ground floor and slate roof, and a 20m long single-storey bothy stand. To the west of the second bothy are the footings of another building containing a flume which shows that

this part of the north wall was heated. Doorways open into the garden on the north-west, north-east, centre south and south-east. All are blocked up with the exception of the south entrance which still contains a rotten wooden door. A new service entrance has been made to the east of the two-storey bothy. The walls of the garden are of stone-capped red brick and they rise to between 2 m, on the south, and 4 m on the north. The top courses of the south-east corner have fallen away and a lot of the capping has been lost. The interior of the garden is derelict. The brick and mortar footings of the greenhouses survive, extending out by about 4m into the garden. Terracotta rope-edged path edging also survive in small piles in the long grass. Most of the centre of the garden is planted up with Christmas trees. A few mature overgrown fruit trees survive against the west and east walls.

To the south of the garden there is a formal slip garden. This continues the line of the west and east walls outwards until it meets the park boundary. Nineteenth-century iron fencing runs along this southern edge. The slip garden is now planted up with Christmas trees. On the west of the garden there is a relict orchard of old standard fruit trees in a formal enclosure. To the north-west of the garden a small stone-lined water culvert and bridge runs between the west wall of the garden and the orchard. On the south-east of the garden are the remains of a stone-walled pit, possibly a leaf mould pit. This is set into a high earth bank which stands above the garden by about 3m. Yew trees grow along the top of this bank.

About 30m up the service track to the east, set back and above the drive, is a pair of semi-detached brick and tile-hung two-storey early twentieth-century cottages. These face south, looking out over the Wern and both are set within a small area of garden reached from the house by a porch set on the west and east respectively. These are the 'Garden Cottages' and they were built by the Miss Davies to house their lady gardeners in the 1920s. A hedge of overgrown laurel and rhododendron separates them from the drive below.

The earliest known reference to a kitchen garden at Gregynog occurs on the William Emes plan of 1774, on which he recorded a pair of adjoining rectangular enclosures to the west of the house. However, it is unclear if these were an existing feature or among his suggested alterations. By 1842 the present garden had been constructed on the present site, including the orchard and southern slip garden, which was recorded on the tithe map as a second orchard. By 1884 internal cruciform paths ran around and across the garden. A circular central feature, probably a dipping pool, was also recorded on the Ordnance Survey map. The central north/south path continued beyond the main garden through the southern slip garden. At this time an additional square area lay to the east of this. In 1913 the *Gardener's Chronicle* favourably remarked on the extensive greenhouses within the garden, which included a heated vinery which was about 30ft long. A peach house was also recorded as well as highly productive frames and plant houses. 'Flowering bulbs and plants', carnations, begonias, orchids and geraniums were all noted. In the sale of 1920 on the sixth day the contents of the plant house were sold, including 200 potted carnations, 4 dozen ivy and scented geraniums, 18 pots of lily, pots of fern, asparagus, 8 palms, 2 dozen potted hydrangea, 1/2 dozen aspidistra, 1/2 dozen begonias and assorted plaster pedestals. The contents and fittings of a conservatory, somewhere on the north-west of the house, were also sold.

The garden was maintained until at least the Second World War with the numerous staff the

Davies sisters employed. The kitchen garden staff lived in the bothies along the north wall. The garden began to decline after the Second World War and especially after 1963, as the University did not have a use for it. The glasshouses eventually deteriorated and were demolished, but it is unknown at what date this took place. Christmas trees have been grown in and around the garden since at least 1980.

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