

CRAIG-Y-NOS CASTLE AND COUNTRY PARK

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| Ref No | PGW(Po) 16 (POW) |
| OS Map | 160 |
| Grid Ref | SN 842155 |
| Former County | Powys |
| Unitary Authority | Powys |
| District | Brecknock |
| Community Council | Tawe-Uchaf |
| Designations | Listed Building: Castle Grade II, Theatre Grade I. National Park: Brecon Beacons. S.S.S.I.: Craig y Rhiwarth. |
| Site Evaluation | Grade II* |
| Primary reasons for grading | Spectacular and romantic setting in a secluded upland valley; remnant high Victorian garden; arboricultural interest in garden and park; house of the internationally famous opera singer Madame Adelina Patti d.1919; Patti gardens laid out and glasshouses designed by well known park designer, William Barron c. 1878 on. |
| Type of Site | Castellated house; conservatory; terraced garden; parkland with pools; walled kitchen garden |
| Main Phases of Construction | House c. 1841 and earlier; Patti extension and theatre c. 1890. Gardens from at least c. 1878. |

SITE DESCRIPTION

Craig-y-Nos Castle sits on the edge of a steep drop, high up in the Tawe valley on the east of the A 4067 underneath the Carreg-goch and Cribarth mountains, overlooking the River Tawe. The steep sided Tawe valley encloses the towered Castle, creating a highly romantic situation.

The site has an ancient history. The surrounding hills bear many Bronze, Iron Age

and Roman remains. The ancient Brecknock Forest lay to the east. It is believed that the first house on the site of the present castle was the manor of an important, local Welsh prince in the early medieval period.

The first known house on the site, Bryn Melin, was built for a Rhys Davis Powell in about 1841-43 by T. H. Wyatt, using limestone from the opposite Craig y Rhiwarth mountain. The drawings were exhibited at the Royal Academy. This house incorporated part of an earlier Jacobean house, from which wood carvings still survive, and formed the core of the later castle. Wyatt created a mock Scottish Tower House in local stone with an embattled porch, gabled pyramidal roofs and a tourelle tower on the south.

The building costs of the castle bankrupted Rhys Davis Powell and following his death in 1861 the estate entered Chancery as he had no heirs and a surviving relative, Llewellyn Powell, could not raise sufficient funds to buy. Instead the castle and land was sold in 1874 to Morgan Morgan for £6,000.

In 1878 the famous opera singer Adelina Patti bought part of the estate, including the castle, from Morgan and had the house extended to the north in pink Crai sandstone. A clock tower was also erected at this time. On the east side of the building a conservatory, an aviary and, by 1890, the winter garden was also constructed and attracted the attention of Theophilus Jones while he was compiling his county history. The Morgans moved across the road to Pentre-cribarth farm which was still in their possession.

Craig-y-Nos became one of the premier stops on the Victorian country house circuit and Patti entertained leading figures from Society and the Arts, including royalty. For convenience she had a private station built nearby at Penwyllt on the Neath and Brecon railway. By 1890 a small classical, highly ornamented theatre, seating 150 people, had been built on the north-west of the castle. Here Patti sung to her guests, surrounded by an ornate painted interior executed by Jackson & Sons of London. The south front of the theatre, within the forecourt, is similarly ornately decorated with stone friezes and sculptures.

Patti married three times. Her second husband, Ernest Nicholas (who altered his name to Ernesto Nicolini), took a great interest in the Craig-y-Nos estate, maintaining it to a high standard. After his death in 1898, and Patti's third marriage, the estate began to gradually decline. Land sales were contemplated, one in 1901 reached an auction but there was no sale. In 1917 Patti decided to give the winter garden to Swansea, but it remained on site until after her death in 1919 when her widower sold off the estate. The castle and 48 acres of land was bought by the Welsh National Memorial Association.

The castle's conversion from a private house into a hospital began during the Great War when it was used as an officer's wound dressing station. In the early 1920s it was opened by the Welsh National Memorial Association, first as a tuberculosis sanatorium, at which time open balconies were constructed on the north-eastern side

of the buildings, and then later as a National Health Service geriatric hospital. Both of these institutions witnessed the destruction of most of the castle's interior. The hospital closed in the early 1980s before being offered for sale by the Secretary of State for Wales in 1986.

Between 1988 and 1994 the castle had two private owners and operated as a restaurant for a short period between 1991-93. In 1994 the castle and 8 acres of garden were bought by the present private owners and the Dame Gwyneth Jones Patti Trust was established with the intention of restoring the castle and gardens. It is intended that the castle will be conveyed to the Trust to be used as a teaching establishment for professional opera within a setting where opera, and other music, can be performed in the theatre and outside in the garden.

In 1976, following a feasibility study carried out in 1971, the grounds and the walled kitchen garden were opened as a Country Park by the Brecon Beacons National Park Committee.

On the south side of the entrance forecourt Wyatt constructed a service range in a similar style to the main house in c. 1840. It is of local stone and comprises three separate, but connected, buildings. In the south-east corner there is a large, two-storeyed, four square building with a hipped slate roof. This appears to have been staff quarters. In the south-west there was a second, longer and lower building which is now the castle office. Connecting the two is a gatehouse, with a Gothic arch, which leads into the what was originally the stable court behind.

The stable court is now an enclosed, partly covered courtyard, dating from the time of the hospital. The original layout of this area is unclear as both Patti and the hospitals remodelled the area, particularly on the south. Of the original stables a pair of carriage arches survive on the west side of the courtyard, connecting to what appear to have been loose boxes behind, and a stone stab floor.

At the eastern end of the court a raised, timber and glass covered walk way runs from buildings on the south, against the east wall, to what was Patti's private chapel on the north. This passage was used by the servants, on their daily visit to the chapel, and was later used by the hospital staff as a connecting corridor. The tower of the chapel survives over the side entrance into the court. Set into the wall, below the walk way there is a simple stone doorway which connects into the conservatory area beyond.

A courtyard, built in c. 1840, lies to the west of the castle. It is enclosed on its western side by a high stone wall containing a wide, formal gateway with lantern ornamented, square, gate piers of about 2.5m high. This entrance has been remodelled, having originally had curving walls flanking a recessed entrance. The entrance contains a pair of modern ornamental iron gates. The courtyard covers an area of about 1.6 acre. It is asphalted, concrete path edging marking the line of an old path to the north off what was a turning circle. The turning circle itself is marked by a depression. In the centre of the turning circle there is a circular fountain basin which is surrounded by a narrow flower border, edged in dressed stone. In the centre of the

basin there is an ornate nineteenth-century fountain which is still occasionally used. Climbing plants ornament the walls each side of the formal castle entrance porch which is on line with the fountain. Along the walls of the south face of the theatre and the west face of the castle there are some composite stone planters.

A high, capped stone wall with a central gateway, containing a nineteenth-century iron gate, separates the courtyard on the north from the garden area beyond. The wall is partly hidden beneath Russian Vine. The path is the continuation of the path line marked from the site of a turning circle. In about 1900 square box-edged flower beds were recorded in photographs on either side of this path.

The layout of the courtyard is similar to that of Patti's period but the general arrangement does not seem to have changed from about 1870 when an early photograph records the Powell's courtyard containing a gravelled turning circle around an area of grass. The fountain was Patti's addition. It is unclear when the entrance was remodelled, possibly after 1920 when traffic on the road increased. The gates appear to be later. The northern wall of the courtyard appears to be an original build. The gate could be mid-nineteenth century.

The historic Craig-y-Nos park, now the Country Park, lies to the north and south of the castle gardens and opposite the castle on the western bank of the river Tawe below Carreg-lwyd. It covers approximately 40 acres and includes the fish pond, the far lake, a pavilion lawn, pine woods, beech woods and three meadows; the Main, the Small and the Hay in addition to the walled kitchen garden. The river Tawe bends through the centre of the area in a south-easterly direction, following its confluence with the river Llynfell about 12m to the east of the walled kitchen garden.

The park is used by visitors for recreation and education, and contains seating and picnic areas. The different areas are linked by a path system, believed to be on the lines of Victorian paths. A raised path runs along the western bank of the Tawe to the west of the beech wood. Between the Far Lake and the River Tawe within the Beech wood, to the south of the Small Meadow, there is an overgrown series of leats and associated simple, stone features. It is believed that this area was laid out after 1905 as it does not appear on the contemporary Ordnance Survey map. It is possible that it was some kind of wild garden.

In the eastern area of the park, beyond the river, the Main Meadow and the Beech wood are separated by a low, stone wall. The history of this feature is unclear, its date and its purpose, whether old field boundary or a simple flood defence, is unknown.

This land was part of the Powell estate and is believed to have been farmed prior to Patti's purchase of the castle in 1878. Rhys Davies Powell actually sold part of his land, including a field to the north of Patti's fishpond, to finance the building of the original castle. This land remains in private ownership, beyond the park boundary.

The fishpond was created in 1883, the far lake was a later addition, post 1888, and was excavated primarily to attract wild game. By 1905 three bridges and a set of

stepping stones had been constructed across the river. Photographic evidence from about 1901 shows that the areas of the main and small meadows were still managed as hay pasture well into Patti's time, when this area was known as 'the far park'.

The beech woods that run along the eastern bank of the Tawe appear to be long established, although not native, being recorded on a tithe map of about 1840. By 1888 these woods contained a rustic summer house which has since been lost. The pine woods, where Patti traditionally walked, and the ornamental plantings on the main meadow, do not appear in early photographs and so are believed to have been planted soon after 1901.

To the south-east of the castle lay the Pavilion lawn on which there was a croquet and tennis courts, in addition to an ornamental pavilion at the western end which has been restored. To the north of the croquet lawn there was a circular rose garden which itself was bordered on the north by a water leat. These features all declined after 1920, the rose garden grassing over. In the 1970s ornamental trees were planted in the area of the rose garden. An illustration in *The Gardener's Chronicle* of 1882 records a rustic summer house in the north-west of this area, but no trace of this survives.

South of the Pavilion lawn, separated from it by a boundary of mature lime trees, there is the Hay Meadow which is managed for wildflowers. Patti used this area as a paddock for her horses. The meadow contains the site of the third bridge of the Patti estate. The bridge and all traces of abutments were swept away in a flood over 50 years ago. Along the eastern edge of the meadow, above the river, trees are planted. One of these, an oak, has an inscribed stone beneath it commemorating its planting in 1914. A fine nineteenth-century iron foot gate connects the Pavilion lawn to the Hay Meadow. During its recent restoration it was found that the manufacturers were Bolton and Paul of Norwich.

The Tawe is the principal water feature of the site. It curves around through the park to the south-east. The river channel is not very wide, about 8 -10m across, but this increases the speed of the water, creating rapids and, in winter, flooding. The river is also noted for fishing. The confluence with the Llynfell creates an exciting additional feature. This point is crossed by a wide, modern wooden foot bridge which has replaced an earlier one which lay about 4m upstream. Only the anchor bases of this Victorian bridge survive, on both banks. The bridge connects to the triangle of land between the Tawe and Llynfell rivers, right on the confluence. Patti acquired this piece of land and planted spruces on it, which survive.

The rivers regularly flood and along the eastern bank of the Tawe there are various flood defences. Some large rocks near the Pavilion lawn date from Patti's time and are believed to have served a dual function as fishing platforms. The Hay Meadow bank has been recently reinforced. On the eastern bank, west of the Beech wood, a raised flood defence was constructed in the 1980s by Welsh Water. This also serves as a raised walk. Between the present foot bridges the eastern bank of the river is partly retained by a high quality stone wall. This was constructed, partly as a flood defence, by 1882.

Patti had the shallow, stone edged fishpond excavated in 1883 for use as a boating lake. Her second Head Gardener, a Mr Hibbert, is credited with undertaking the work. It covers approximately 1 acre, is set in tree planted areas, and has a footpath around it. On the west there is an area of woodland, which abuts the western boundary, through which water leats run which appear to have had an ornamental as well as a practical purpose. Some quality brick and stone lined channels survive. The pond has two islands and a boat house, while a timber bridge crosses a leat on the western side. The present timber boat house is a replica of Patti's but has the addition of a concrete floor to permit access for visitors. Some of the tree planting on the east side of the pond appears to date from Patti's time.

The Far Lake is a longer, linear body of water set on the eastern side of the eastern park. The lake is fed by a channel from the upper Tawe and a spring issuing from Craig-y-Rhiwarth and issues back into the river by a second channel to the south. There is a central island. A partial stone dam is constructed across the southern end of the lake. A leak in the south-east corner has been recently plugged by sand bags and back fill. The lake is enclosed with denser planting and undergrowth. A central island is overgrown, acknowledging the lake's purpose as a nesting ground for wild fowl, encouraged for shooting. Photographic and map evidence suggests that the Far Lake was created between 1895 and 1905.

In the north-west of the eastern park there is a formal stand of Scots pine. These are a post 1905 planting as they do not appear on the Ordnance Survey map of that time. Tradition has it that Patti used to walk among the trees inhaling the scent to clear her voice.

To the east of the Tawe on the west of the eastern park there is an area of beech wood separated from the meadows beyond by a low stone wall/boundary and enclosed on the west by a raised walk/flood defence. It appears that there was a wood in this area from at least 1840 when it was recorded on an early deed map. Some of the beech presently in the wood could possibly date from that time.

In the centre of the main meadow there is a planting of ornamental trees which include a mulberry, walnut, acacia, oaks and eucalyptus. It is believed that most of these trees were planted before 1920, but after 1905 as they do not occur on the contemporary Ordnance Survey map. The eucalyptus was planted in the 1980s.

North of the pavilion near the croquet and tennis lawns, set on a level terrace, a circular rose garden or rosery appears to have been laid out. The garden would have resembled a wheel the beds divided by narrow, gravelled paths, similar to spokes. A similar path ran around the periphery of the garden. The layout of the garden is visible in summer as parch marks, the gravel paths survive underneath the turf. The garden is believed to have been created during Patti's time but no photographs or illustrations have been found of it and so its actual appearance, whether it contained arches or pillars for instance, is unknown.

To the east of the rose garden the ground rises to a low bank on the west of the

riverside path. Mature trees including Lawson cypress and thuja grow here, suggesting that it may have functioned as a 'screen' between the rose garden and the path.

The gardens lie to the north-west, north and east of the castle and cover about 4 acres. The north-west and north gardens are now lawns, enclosed to the west by the western boundary wall and the north by the southern wall of the kitchen garden, through which there are two connecting gateways. A path runs north from the courtyard, between the western wall of the theatre and a raised lawn on the west. Two sets of stone steps connect this path to the lawn. This path continues to the gateway in the kitchen garden wall. To the north of the theatre the path branches to the east, along the length of the theatre before heading south to run along side the eastern theatre wall. Abutting the kitchen garden wall on its south side are the foundations of unidentified buildings (thought to be a summer house, probably rustic).

The northern area of the garden is enclosed on the east by a path backed by an evergreen hedge which runs north-east from the corner of the castle to a gateway in the kitchen garden wall. To the east of this path is a hanging woodland which descends the steep slope to a lower garden area. East of the hedge the path descends down a flight of stone and brick steps on to a wide, straight terrace walk that runs north/south below the castle. At the northern end the path splits, one branch ascending the steps above, the other, an overgrown path, descending, in a series of zig zags, through the hanging wood to the lower garden.

A terrace runs along the length of the east front of the castle. This proceeds from the north-east corner and surrounds the principal garden buildings - a glass and iron conservatory, an aviary and a large hospital day room built on the site of the Winter Garden. The terrace varies in width and is flagged in concrete slabs around the day room. An iron balustrade runs along the eastern side of the terrace, separating it from a steep grass bank which descends to the terrace walk below. Two sets of steps connect the upper terrace with the lower path. At the foot of these steps on the terrace walk there are a pair of composite deer statues.

To the east of the terrace walk the ground descends steeply in a series of large, steep sloping grass terraces of which there appear to be seven. At the bottom of the slope there is a wide, semi-circular terrace, above an area of tree planted lawn. A relict path runs along the western edge of this terrace beneath a mature Atlas cedar which grows upon it.

Above the southern end of the terrace walk is the site of the Winter Garden which was removed in 1920. At this point the upper terrace is about 3m above the level of the path. In the centre front of the hospital day room there is a steep flight of dressed stone steps which disappear below the level of the path showing where the ground level appears to have been raised by the hospital after 1920.

To the east of the Winter Garden site the path descends down the ground slope to the south-east after first curving away to the south-west. The path becomes narrower, up

to 1m, and is edged with rough, mossed stones. To the east of the path the steep ground slope is hidden under over grown shrubs and bramble. Downhill the path proceeds back to east underneath trees and overgrown laurel. Along the north side of the path there is a stone lined water leat. After about 60m the path enters the woodland above the pavilion lawn and continues to the south. At this point a simple stone bridge crosses the leat and a wooden farm gate leads north into the lower garden.

The lower garden comprises tree-planted lawns which slope towards the river in the east. The trees are mainly mature and coniferous. The area could be described as an arboretum and it is thought that a large number of trees were planted here to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. In the southern part of the area there are two large overgrown areas of shrub planting which could have been island beds. In the north-east, facing the terraces, there is a simple timber chalet-style, garden building which seems to have been repaired. A wide hard core path runs along the western bank of the river connecting the kitchen garden area to the Hay Meadow.

In the area between the rear of the chalet and the walled kitchen garden and beneath the hanging wood there is an abandoned rock garden. This feature is quite extensive, and includes empty pools among the large stones. To the north of the rock garden there is a rectangular fish hatchery.

The gardens which survive are generally accepted to have been created during Patti's tenure. It is unclear what, if any, ornamental gardens the Powell's may have had on site. No evidence has been found. Owing to the education and travel of Rhys Davies Powell it is possible that there was a garden, possibly to the north of the courtyard behind the dividing wall. Wyatt may also have given some landscape advice.

Patti commissioned William Barron (1800-1891) to lay out the garden to the east of the castle. Barron was resident in Sketty, Swansea, at this time and was a noted designer, having been a pupil of Paxton's at Chatsworth and Head Gardener at Elvaston Castle for the Earls of Harrington between 1830-1865. Barron is principally credited with creating the grass terraces and planting the conifers in the lower garden, features characteristic of his work elsewhere. Apparently Barron had a reputation for transplanting mature trees, replanting them on a raised mound, but there is no evidence to suggest this happened at Craig-y-Nos. Period illustrations record the trees as being immature.

Early photographs, before the theatre was built, record a formal garden to the north of the courtyard, areas of planted lawn laid out between two principal hedge lined paths, one connecting to the kitchen garden, which survives and the second running east, centrally across the garden to connect with the terrace walk.

By 1895 the garden was credited with being a model of the Victorian style, a combination of the formal and the wild. The additions to the garden, the conservatory and Winter Garden being completed by this time. Patti's position in society meant that she would have probably been aware of the changes in garden style and possibly,

after 1900, moved away from the intricacy of the high Victorian period to the wild gardens of the new century. The rock garden, the area of leats and small stone structures in the park and the introductions of Asiatic exotics such as rhododendrons and azaleas may show this. However, no record of the involvement of any noted garden designer of the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries has been found.

Patti's gardens were labour intensive. During her tenure three head gardeners passed through; Mr George Taylor, until about 1883, who was followed by Mr Hibbert and his son, Con, who was head gardener at the time of the 1920 sale. In 1909 four full time gardeners were employed, with additional local staff who worked on a daily or seasonal basis. The gardens were irretrievably changed in 1919 when Patti's third husband dismantled the Winter Garden and after the sale in 1920 they declined.

The large iron and glass conservatory lies on the south-east of the castle and is connected to it by the east terrace, internally through the stable court and, originally, from the house. A glass corridor proceeds from the conservatory's southern corner to the south hospital buildings, this originally connected to the Winter Garden. The building has a lozenge-shaped east front, divided into glass panels by elaborate iron work. Beneath the roof line there is a border of red and blue stained glass. Its dimensions were recorded in 1882 as being 80 x 27ft, the iron work was supplied by Beestons. Between 1920-86 the conservatory was used as an operating theatre and as a ward. A linoleum floor covered over red floor tiles, which are now partly visible, and wainscoting installed along the west wall.

The conservatory, 'the most used room in the house', was begun shortly after Patti arrived in 1878. The architect is unknown but was probably relatively local, from Swansea or Cardiff. A contemporary illustration shows the conservatory as a sitting area, with tables and chairs, planting along the western wall and caged birds near the windows. An oriental, iron fountain, identical to another in the courtyard, was located at the northern end. This illustration, and other period photographs, also records a curved glass roof. The iron roof trusses survive but the roof itself was re-roofed in wood at a later date. A false ceiling was put in by the hospital after 1920. After the completion of the Winter Garden in 1890 Patti could walk the length of her house virtually under glass. The conservatory connected to the aviary and Winter Gardens to the south.

Joined to the south side of the conservatory and facing east out over the terrace and gardens there is a small, timber, iron and glass lean-to aviary. The iron work is particularly attractive in a Victorian Gothic style. This aviary was erected by Patti for her collection of tropical birds in the 1880s which were given to London zoo after her death in 1920. The architect is unknown but was possibly the same who was responsible for either/or the conservatory or Winter Garden. There is no record of any birds having been kept after 1920 following the dispersal of Patti's collection. It is possible that it could have been used as an additional sun room by the hospital.

The Winter Garden was removed from the site in 1920 and was re-erected in Victoria Park, Swansea where it survives in a much altered state, known as 'the Patti Pavilion'.

The Winter Garden was constructed around 1890 and was a large, rectangular buildings which faced east. It contained 7,000 ft of glass and was 40 ft high. Inside abutilon, tacsonias, Passion flowers, palms and tree ferns grew. The exotic trees grew at such a rate that their leaders had to be removed to prevent them pushing through the roof. Paths ran around the floor, which were edged in 'rock walls' in which ferns were planted, and staging allowed orchids, begonias and fuchsias to be displayed. A fountain was sited at the centre of a small raised pool which also contained a cascade and 'shoals' of goldfish. The garden was heated by the stoves in the farmyard which abutted the building on the west. Following the removal of the winter garden, hospital buildings, some of which survive, were erected on its base from 1920 onwards.

Craig-y-Nos is noted for its extensive collection of conifers, some of which have since hybridised. The trees, in the lower garden, are believed to have been planted by William Barron who favoured conifers. No known planting plan is known to have survived, it appears as if they were informally planted in sympathy with the surrounding romantic landscape. The sale catalogue of 1901 lists *Picea Normandiana*, *Pinus Austriaca*, Larico, Pondorosa, Sylvestris, Taxus Fastigiata, Wellingtonia, *Abies Douglasii*, *Abies Excelsa*, and varieties of Cerassus, Syringa and Cupressus.

The site of the walled kitchen garden lies approximately 20m north of the theatre, separated from the garden by a high stone wall. The kitchen garden covers about 2 acres and lies on a west/east slope towards the Afon Llynfell. The main access is on the western side off the A 4067. The interior of the kitchen garden is now a car park and picnic area for the Craig-y-Nos Country Park and has been landscaped accordingly.

The western wall of the garden has been removed. A modern, wooden fence with wide central gates has been erected in its place. Walls on the north, east and south do survive but only the northern wall, which is approximately 2.5m high and lined on the south face with a red brick skin, appears to be original. The east and south walls are of stone, up to 1.8m high and show signs of rebuild as they descend in wide steps to accommodate the changes in ground level.

A gateway survives in the centre of the north wall. It is about 1.2m wide and iron gate pins remain in situ. There is no gate. This access is emphasised by modern concrete block paving which directs visitors out of the car park in the direction of the fish ponds to the north. On the east of the gateway on the north face of the wall there is a old bothy, now converted into disabled toilets. A wide southern access also survives but is presently sealed off.

Within the garden site there are five buildings. In the north-west corner there is a modestly sized rendered, two-storeyed house, with three gables, half of which was the Head Gardener's accommodation. It is now offices and a Visitor Centre. The house has been extended to the north to accommodate educational resources. In the centre west of the garden there is a single-storey, slate roof bothy, lying on a west/east line.

In the south-west corner of the garden there are two stone buildings which abut the

garden wall. The most westerly one has three long, chapel windows and is now used as a toilet block. This was the estate laundry. To the east of this building there is a small, square building with a hipped slate roof with a central lantern. This building was a Game Larder. It is presently not open to the public but it retains its internal fittings. Between these two buildings there is a narrow, ornamental gate which connected the garden to the centre of the kitchen garden by a serpentine path. This access is now secure, preventing visitors from having access to the Castle grounds.

In the south-east corner of the kitchen garden there is a walled off work yard which has a line of brick bothies running along the west face of the eastern wall. The bothies and the yard are in good condition and appear to be used as storage, workshops and mess room for the Country Park ground staff. The bothies were originally kennels, housing Nicolini, Patti's second husband's, hounds.

Against the south face of the north wall on its eastern side there is a grass bank. This, together with traces of whitewash on the brick work, iron nails and nail holes suggests that a glasshouse, or range once stood here. The eastern section of the garden, which lies at a slightly lower level than the car park area above, has been grassed over, creating a picnic area.

The kitchen garden appears to predate the tenure of Adelina Patti, but its actual date is unclear. Mr Taylor, Patti's first head gardener, had trouble establishing a garden on this site due to run off. Eventually drainage was installed and a garden of river sand and bought in manure began to be productive. However, Taylor appears to have experienced problems with fruit trees in the garden, either those he had inherited or had planted, as in 1895 his successor, Mr Hibbert, was recorded busy replacing the 'poor quality' fruit trees in the garden which had been 'neglected'. Taylor did not live on site, the head gardener's house was lived in by the game keeper during the period up to 1884.

From photographs that appeared in the 1901 sale catalogue it appears that this was a typical, highly productive and labour intensive Victorian kitchen garden. A central path, apparently bordered by cut flower beds, ran from the west to east. An extensive, curved glass range, a peach and nectarine house, covered the eastern end of the north wall.

After Patti's death in 1919 the kitchen garden began to decline but remained a useful asset to the hospital during the Second World War. The eastern part of the peach house was removed to be replaced by a simpler range. This and the remains of the peach house are recorded on a photograph from about 1950. It is unclear when the glasshouses were finally removed but it was probably around the time of the transfer of the park to the National Park in 1976.

The gardener's house was originally smaller, an extension to the north was added in the early 1900s. After the dispersal of the garden staff this building became nursing accommodation for the hospital. During the mid-1980s it was converted into a visitor centre and offices for the Country Park and was further extended to the north-east in

1992.

The construction of the car park and the conversion of the surviving garden buildings occurred around 1976. The western wall was removed at this time to create a wider, safer entrance.

The kitchen garden was supplemented by a frame yard which lay to the west of the Winter Garden and covered a 1/4 acre. This area was improved by Patti's second head gardener, Mr Hibbert, but Barron designed the frames. Hibbert's foreman, Mr Jones, ran a productive yard which included a stove house, a melon pit (Blenheim Orange and Hero of Lockinge, being favoured, according to the *Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener*) a tomato house, a coleus house, a carnation house and vineries. A photograph from about 1900 records vineries, one of which was 96ft long, a second long range and at least two lines of pits and frames. According to an article of 1895 the bunches of muscat grapes often reached 3 1/2 lbs in weight. A second photograph from about 1900 records long benches inside one of the single-span, single-aisle greenhouses, covered in potted geraniums.

The frameyard was destroyed after 1920 when hospital buildings were erected on site; only a stone and brick, slate roof bothy, which was subsequently used as a hospital store, survives in this area.

Sources

- Primary**
- 1840 title and deed map - Royal Commission for Ancient Historic Monuments in Wales
 - Sale Catalogue, 1901. National Library of Wales
 - Period photographs held at Visitor Centre and Craig-y-Nos Castle
 - Period photographs, north view and east front, c. 1900/1901 Royal Commission for Ancient Historic Monuments in Wales
 - Anon. Engraving of the clock tower, copied from The Graphic, (1888) 1LN/ 257/E/1
 - Anon. Engraving of the east front of the castle and of Patti, c. 1900. Powys Archives, B/D/CL/1/333
 - Edna Clarke Hall, three pen and ink sketches of Craig-y-Nos and interior of Winter Garden, (1888) 24.517 (unframed). National Gallery of Wales.
 - Anon. A pair of oil paintings of the west front of the castle and the east garden (1896), Brecon Museum, (presently uncatalogued).
 - Photograph of the interior of one of the glasshouses c. 1900, private collection.
- Secondary**
- Brinn, D., Adelina Patti - A brief account of her life, (1988)
 - 'Craig-y-Nos Country Park', (c. 1990), guide
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