

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

SLAUGHAM PLACE

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**SLAUGHAM PLACE**

Name:	SLAUGHAM PLACE
County:	West Sussex
District:	Mid Sussex (District Authority)
Parish:	Slaugham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.036170 Longitude: -0.20379214 National Grid Reference: TQ 26037 27847 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001215 Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

## Details

A late C16 to early C17 walled enclosure, with minor late C19 or early C20 additions, which forms the site of a former garden which surrounded a C16 house demolished in the mid C18, the ruins of which now form part of the garden landscape.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Slaugham Place was in possession of the Covert family by 1495, Richard Covert owning an iron furnace at Slaugham on his death in 1579. On inheriting, his son, Sir Walter Covert, built the present house and garden enclosure, the house standing on the site of, and perhaps incorporating parts of a former dwelling (Shopland 1996). Following Sir Walter's death in 1631 and that of his last succeeding great nephew, Sir John Covert, the male line of the family came to an end and in 1735, the last remaining descendent sold her share in the property to Thomas Sergison of Cuckfield Park. Slaugham appears to have remained in this family until the early C20 (Sussex County Mag) being owned subsequently by the Blundells during the 1930s and 1940s, by the Easticks in the 1960s and by Sir Alan Urwick in the 1970s. It remains (1997) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Slaugham Place is situated 0.5km west of the main A23 London to Brighton Road, to the immediate south-east of Slaugham village. The high, coursed stone and brick walls of the rectangular, 1.5ha garden enclosure form the site's boundaries to the south-west, north-west and north-east while along the south-east side the boundary comprises a clipped yew hedge. The site lies on the level valley floor of the upper course of the River Ouse, which to the north-west, north and east of the site forms a landscape of pasture and woodland. The gardens of the adjacent Moat House abut the site to the south-west while to the south-east, beyond the narrow course of the Ouse, the steeply rising, wooded valley side forms part of the gardens of Slaugham Manor.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The site is approached by a drive off the south side of the minor road which runs east from Slaugham village to the A23. The drive runs east of the site and then south along the valley to serve both Slaugham Manor and the Moat House, which stands at the immediate south-west corner of the site and from the paved apron of which the site is entered. In the C16 and C17, prior to demolition, the formal entrance to the walled enclosure and the house was through a forecourt on the main, north-east front, entered through the present wrought-iron gates and gate piers in the east wall. These are

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**SLAUGHAM PLACE**

flanked to north and south (approximately 20m distant from the gates) by a pair of octagonal brick towers (listed II\*), roofless since at least the mid C20 (CL 1940), which define the corners of the forecourt on the north-east side. Along its north-west side, between the northern tower and the north-east corner of the former house, the forecourt is enclosed by a line of yew hedge niches, several planted up in the 1990s with roses. From the gates, an axial grassed walk leads through an avenue of Irish yew trees, some mature and others replaced in the 1990s, to the north-east front of the former house.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The remains of the house at Slaugham Place (listed grade II\*), which consist largely of foundations and wall bases rising to an average of 1m, stand in the centre of the south side of the garden enclosure. Built around four sides of a courtyard, the house was entered on its north-east front through a c 4m high, five-arched loggia of rusticated masonry, three arches of which survive. The central courtyard, now laid to grass, is enclosed on the south-east side by the two-storey walls of the former kitchens and on the north-west side by the foundations of the former great hall and adjoining apartments. On the north-west elevation and facing into the garden, the remains comprise a further loggia, of the Doric order and with three, c 4m high, elaborately coffered arches, their keystones carved with the crests of the Coverts and other families with whom they were linked through marriage. Of the original five arches, four still stood in 1858 (Shopland 1996) although these appear to have been reduced to three by the 1930s. The house seems to have been built from c 1590 by Sir Walter Covert to a design by John Thorpe (drawings survive), the detailing and execution probably being carried out by local craftsmen. It was demolished in the mid C18 and some of the material used to build the Moat House (dated 1742 on a chimney breast). Some restoration of the arches took place at the end of the C19, while the most recent work, to the whole house, was undertaken during the 1990s by Mr Arthur Shopland under the supervision of English Heritage.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie within the walled enclosure, to the north-west and north-east of the ruined house and within its walls and north-east entrance forecourt. From the Moat House, a flagged path, bordered by narrow strips of lawn planted with bulbs and enclosed by a clipped yew hedge on its south-east side, runs the length of the south-east wall alongside a broad moat. Shown on the OS 1st edition of 1874, the moat, which is overlooked at its south-west end by a small stone pavilion with a Horsham slab roof (built by 1874), appears to have been extended to incorporate two former isolated ponds at the far north-east end and to have been given its present straight edge and path by 1909 (OS 3rd edition). Midway along the path a timber bridge crosses the moat to a gated entrance leading into the south-east range of the house and the walled enclosure. A number of the walls are planted with rock plants and aromatic shrubs while the floors of former rooms are laid to grass and massed bulbs with occasional mature trees growing from the stonework, tree cover now (1998) being much reduced from that in the early part of the C20.

North-west and north-east of the house, the garden is laid to open grass, the north-east area shown similarly in the late C19, the north-west area being planted as an orchard. Along the north-west boundary is a raised grass walk, retained by a drystone wall topped by a massive yew hedge clipped to form a regular series of bastions. The walk is terminated at its north-west end by a tile-roofed cottage (shown, with the raised walk, on the OS edition of 1874), and at its north-east end and built into the corner of the enclosing walls, by an open-fronted pavilion with a Horsham slab roof and with steps leading down from the walk into the main garden. The pavilion was built between 1874 and 1909.

#### REFERENCES

Country Life, 87 (16 March 1940), pp 269-71; 135 (9 January 1964), pp 70-3 Sussex County Magazine 4, (1930), p 386 I Nairn and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (1965), p 607 A Shopland, *Slaugham Place Ruins*, (unpublished research paper 1996) [copy on EH file]

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874-5, published 1879 2nd edition surveyed 1895-6 3rd edition published 1912 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874 3rd edition surveyed 1909, published 1911

Description written: February 1998 Amended: January 2000 Register Inspector: VCH Edited: June 2000

#### Legal

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
*SLAUGHAM PLACE*

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.