

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

WELL HALL

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

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Name: WELL HALL

County: Lincolnshire

District: East Lindsey (District Authority)

Parish: Claxby St. Andrew

County: Lincolnshire

District: East Lindsey (District Authority)

Parish: Ulceby with Fordington

County: Lincolnshire

District: East Lindsey (District Authority)

Parish: Well

County: Lincolnshire

District: East Lindsey (District Authority)

Parish: Willoughby with Sloothby

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.237844
Longitude: 0.16084685
National Grid Reference: TF4430973380
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1000992
Date first listed: 24-Jun-1985

Details

Parkland of early C18 origins, surrounding the possible remains of an early C18 garden which forms the setting for an early C18 country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The estate at Well was held at the time of Domesday by the Well family. It then passed to the Willoughby family, Robert, the twelfth Baron Willoughby de Eresby being created first Earl of Lindsey by Charles I in 1626. During the Civil War of the 1640s the Earl of Lindsey, a Royalist, was forced to sell Well to a Parliamentarian, Colonel William Wolley who occupied the

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estate. After the Restoration in 1660 the Wolleys kept their land but sold it in 1695 to Anthony Weltden, an explorer-trader who had worked for the East India Company. His son Anthony had succeeded by 1715. James Bateman, second son of Sir James Bateman of Shobden Court (qv) acquired Well c 1720, possibly from his future father-in-law Sir Robert Chaplin who had been ruined by the South Sea Bubble in 1720 (CL 1972). James Bateman's only child, Anne married Samuel Dashwood in 1744 and they were given Well in 1752 when James Bateman moved to a smaller house in Claxby. Anne and Samuel's son, Francis Bateman Dashwood (d 1825) inherited in 1793. Debts forced his heirs to sell the estate in 1836 to the Right Honourable R A Christopher Nisbet-Hamilton, MP who purchased the manor and several other estates. The Hall was being let by 1856 (White) to Thomas Turnell Cartwright. Mr Christopher Nisbet-Hamilton's daughter, Mrs Hamilton Ogilvy inherited in 1876 and sold Well in 1914 to Major Walter H Rawnsley who had rented Well Hall for several years. Major Rawnsley's son, John Chaplin Rawnsley married Susan Reeve in 1925. John Chaplin Rawnsley's widow died in 1974 and the estate passed to their nephew, John Reeve. The Hall was then sold and became a school, in which use it (2000) remains; the grounds are in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Well Hall lies 0.5km south of the village of Well, 2.5km south-west of Alford, 2.75km north-east of the village of Ulceby, and 6km north-west of the village of Willoughby, with the Hall and its grounds comprising c 280ha. The western part of the northern boundary abuts farmland and continues through Well village along the line of an unclassified road; it then skirts south of Grove Farm to follow the line of a track to the north-east corner of the site. The eastern boundary follows the line of a track to where it joins the road from Alford (B1196). The southern boundary abuts farmland to the south extending along boundary plantations. The western boundary follows part of the unclassified road from Ulceby to its junction with the A1104 and the north-west part of the boundary abuts farmland. The site follows the line of a valley, Well Vale, with low hills within the site. The setting is rural.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The present (2000) entrance to Well Hall is along the north drive from Well village. The tarmacked drive passes from the village over a cattle grid and through farm gates and leads south between an avenue, mainly of beech trees, then south-westwards past the brick-built Coach House (c 1733, altered C19, listed grade II). Passing between two lakes lying east/west, the drive continues westwards along the south bank of the west lake, then turns south-eastwards to the west front of the Hall. The north drive is shown on the estate map of 1839 and by 1868 (Sketch map) the line of the drive is shown planted with an avenue of trees. The drive entered the grounds from the village by a lodge, a rendered brick building with a wooden porch and gate which is marked on the map of 1839 but is now (2000) gone. A double avenue of trees is shown joining the north drive west of the walled garden on the 1839 map but had gone by 1891 (OS).

The west drive, now (2000) disused apart from farm traffic, enters the grounds from the Alford Road (now the A1104) by Ulceby Lodge. The drive curves through the wooded Well Vale then runs eastwards to meet the north drive and arrive at the west front of the Hall. This was the main entrance drive from at least 1839 (Estate map) until the end of the C19 (CL 1972). On the 1839 map the two drives unite before making a wide semicircle leading to the turning circle below the west front. This wide semicircle had gone by 1880 (Parish map) at which date the drives led directly east from the junction to the west front.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Well Hall (listed grade II*), which stands in the north-east corner of the site, has eight bays and two storeys plus attics built of red brick. It is now (2000) a school. The Hall was built in the early C17, remodelled c 1730 for James Bateman and extended in the late C18 for Francis Dashwood. The south front was partly gutted by fire in 1845 and rebuilt in 1925 by Guy Elwes (Pevsner et al 1989).

The stables and other outbuildings abut the north-west end of the Hall and the north drive and are built of brick with slate roofs.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens are enclosed within a brick ha-ha which forms a square enclosure. Within the ha-ha there is a garden to the east and two rectangular enclosures south of the Hall. The main garden lying below the east front is entered down a short flight of steps from a centrally placed door. A lawn slopes down towards the west end of the east lake. The edges of the lawn are planted with shrubs. A cedar of Lebanon stands in the south-east corner of the lawn on the lake's edge.

The lines of former terraces can be seen on the east lawn. These terraces, together with the ornate gate piers moved in the late C20 to the kitchen garden entrance, may have been part of an early C18 formal layout (CL 1972). The rectangular enclosure

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south of the Hall is surrounded by high yew hedges and now (2000) contains a tennis court. An adjacent enclosure, possibly early to mid C20 and also enclosed in high yew hedges, contains a small orchard.

PARK The park lies predominantly to the south of the Hall, with two serpentine lakes to east and west formed by the damming of Well Beck which flows from west to east through the parkland north of Low Wood. A path on the line of a Saxon road, Barton Street, enters the site through Park Farm Strip, a boundary plantation 1.25km south of the Hall, and runs north-westwards through the site; it then continues north-westwards as Well High Lane outside the site here registered.

The south parkland lies south-west, south, and south-east of the Hall. Extending into the south parkland south-east of the gardens are the school playing fields comprising 1.75ha. Low Wood lies east of the eastern lake. At the south-west corner of the Wood lies Osier Holt and south-east of the Holt is a square patch of woodland which continues south-westwards as the thinner strip of Belt Plantation. This plantation extends south-westwards to the southern tip of the park as Park Farm Strip. Some 900m south-east of the Hall stands Park Farm (Claxby Grange). A strip of woodland extends south-westwards from the Farm to Rigge Wood. The woodland continues south-westwards, then northwards as a belt alongside Handkerchief Piece Lane to Forest Wood which lies c 950m south-west of the Hall. North-east of Forest Wood is Badger Hill and Church Wood, at the north-east corner of which stands the church of St Margaret (1733, altered late C18, 1959, listed grade I), set on a hill and aligned with the front door of Well Hall. Built in the form of a Palladian temple with a boarded bell cupola, the church is of red brick with painted ashlar dressings and stucco and Westmorland slate roofs. There are views from the church to the Hall.

James Bateman acquired Well Hall and its estate c 1720 and purchased the neighbouring manor of Claxby from Lord James Cavendish in 1729 (CL 1972). Well village was probably moved to its present position at the edge of the park at the same time and the park laid out with two lakes. A drawing by F Massingberd of 1780 shows the east lake little changed from its present form (ibid).

By 1839 the north-east park had to a large extent been created, the process having been completed by the late C19 (Parish map, 1880). The boundary of the north-east park was a belt of woodland running north-westwards then south-westwards to abut the orchard north-east of the walled kitchen garden (Estate map, 1839).

What became the south park is shown on the 1839 estate map as divided by field boundaries. The line of Barton Street is shown cutting across the south-east corner of the large south-west field. By 1891 (OS) the land south of the Hall is marked as parkland, and by 1906 the area north-east of Park Farm (Claxby Grange) had been taken into the park.

Well Vale, which lies west and north-west of the Hall, is a wide area of woodland running west from the church then northwards and continuing north-westwards. The planting is now (2000) young sycamore and conifers with older beech. The Vale had been laid out by 1839 (Tithe map) but tree planting continued into the 1860s (Sketch map, 1868).

KITCHEN GARDEN The walled kitchen garden lies 300m north-east of the Hall in the north-east corner of the site and forms part of the northern boundary. An area of woodland, formerly an orchard (Estate map, 1839) lies north-east of the garden. The kitchen garden is entered from the north parkland through ornate iron gates flanked by decorated ashlar gate piers (c 1730, listed grade II). The gate piers are in the form of obelisks with circular bases, with lion heads carved on the sides and pineapples on the top. They formerly stood in the forecourt and were moved in the late C20 (CL 1972). A gravelled path leads along the west wall and into the garden. There is a series of lean-to and frame greenhouses on the south-facing north wall of the garden. The rest of the garden is laid out with herbaceous plants and shrubs. The south wall of the garden is curved and yew buttresses have been planted against it. In the south-east corner of the garden a 1960s two-storey wooden house is built into part of the wall. A paved area with raised brick beds is laid out on the south side of the house.

On the 1839 estate map the walled garden is shown as an enclosure with an orchard abutting the north and east boundaries. The glasshouses against the north wall had been added by the late C19 and the early C20.

REFERENCES

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Maps J Speed, *The Countie and Citie of Lyncolne described with the Armes of them that have bene Earles thereof since the conquest, 1610 Plan of an Estate situate in the Parishes of Alford, Rigsby cum Ailby, Well, Claxby, Willoughby and Ulceby cum Fordington in the County of Lincoln, 1839 (MCD 1029), (Lincolnshire Archives) Sketch of Well Vale, 1868 (HIG 1/28), (Lincolnshire Archives) Plan of the Parish of Well in the County of Lincoln the property of The Honourable Lady Mary Christopher Nisbet-Hamilton, 1880 (HIG 1/28), (Lincolnshire Archives)*

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1887, published 1891 2nd edition published 1904-5 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1906

Description written: September 2000 Amended: April 2002 Register Inspector: CEB Edited: June 2002

Legal

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.