

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

DODDINGTON PLACE

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

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**DODDINGTON PLACE**

Name:	DODDINGTON PLACE
County:	Kent
District:	Swale (District Authority)
Parish:	Doddington
County:	Kent
District:	Swale (District Authority)
Parish:	Newnham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.283395 Longitude: 0.78664766 National Grid Reference: TQ 94430 57494 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000398 Date first listed: 01-Nov-1988

## Details

Gardens designed in c 1875 by Markham Nesfield, with an extension in 1909 by John Dyke Coleridge, surrounding a country house and set in a late C19 park.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In the mid C19 the Croft family owned the Doddington estate and lived in a house known as Whitemans which stood below the church and vicarage in Doddington village. In c 1870 Sir John Croft commissioned the architect Charles Brown Trollope to build a new house on the high ground c 350m to the north-east of Whitemans. Markham Nesfield was called in in 1874 to provide a design for the gardens around the house and the plans he prepared survive (private collection). At the same time a small park was created to surround the new house. At the beginning of the C20 the Croft family sold the Doddington estate to General and Mrs Douglas Jeffreys, who shared the house with Mrs Jeffrey's father, Sir Richard Oldfield. Mrs Jeffreys commissioned the garden architect John Dyke Coleridge to extend the gardens and he added an Italianate sunken garden to the south-east of the house, the plans for which are dated 1909. A rock garden was added during the same period. The gardens have been continually developed throughout the C20 by the Oldfield family. The site remains (2004) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Doddington lies in the northern part of the county of Kent, midway between Maidstone and Canterbury and close to the southern edge of the M2. The c 36ha site is bounded to the south and south-east by the main street between Newnham and Doddington, to the west by Church Hill, and to the north and north-east by woodland. The house stands in the centre of the site, on the edge of a level plateau from which the ground falls southwards down to the public road along the southern boundary of the park. The landform suggests that this road was moved southwards

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from an earlier line. From the house there are views across the valley to the south, and from the eastern edge of the gardens there are views out over the park to the east.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main drive enters the park c 450m from the house, through the balustraded brick wing walls which accompany the early C20 lodge on Church Hill, at the north-west corner of the site. The drive is partly lined with horse chestnuts and crosses the park in a straight line running south-east, leading through a gateway at the western edge of the gardens to the gravelled forecourt below the north front of the house. A second drive enters from the south boundary, c 400m to the south-east of the house; this winds north-west through the park, continues north of the coach house and other outbuildings (listed grade II), and joins the main drive below the north front.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The red-brick and tile Doddington Place (listed grade II) is built to an irregular plan with projecting gables and an asymmetrical service wing. The two-storey building has attics, rusticated quoins, and stone mullioned windows with gothic details. It was built c 1870 by Charles Trollope for Sir John Croft and was extended in the early C20.

A range of single-storey outbuildings lies immediately to the north-east of the house. Built of red brick and tile at the same time as the house, they are arranged around a courtyard.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** A low terrace wall (listed grade II), part of Nesfield's scheme, supports the lawn beneath the south front, and a gravel walk that leads to the main gardens which lie to the east. The low, brick terrace walls of the sunk garden (listed grade II) below the east terrace surround a central lily pond and provide for level grass walks and borders. To the south a short flight of brick steps leads to a narrow band of rockwork laid out in 1910, through which runs a series of small pools. Beyond this, to the south, lies the park.

North-east of the house and outbuildings, beyond one of several large yew hedges, is an informally arranged woodland garden. Developed since the 1960s beneath the existing tree canopy, it includes a Wellingtonia avenue. Next to it is the Pond Walk, which forms a straight vista from the house north-east towards an informal pond which dates from the 1950s, and the Spring Garden and a hydrangea walk.

Beyond the gravelled forecourt below the north front is a car park and tennis courts beside a small orchard.

**PARK** The park surrounds the house to the east, west, and south and is laid to grass. It was laid out when the house was built in the 1870s, incorporating existing plantings from an earlier park, many of which were lost in the storm of October 1987. The most notable trees to survive are a range of horse chestnuts along the southern boundary which may predate the house.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** An existing walled garden attached to Whitemans in the south-west corner of the site (outside the area here registered), on the edge of Doddington village, was used as a kitchen garden when Doddington Place was built in the mid C19.

#### REFERENCES

Survey of historic parks and gardens in Kent, (Kent County Council nd) Inspector's Report: Doddington Place, (English Heritage 1988) Doddington Place gardens and park restoration scheme, (Doddington Place 1989)

Maps M Nesfield, Plan of details for the proposed general arrangement of gardens, 1875 (private collection) John Dyke Coleridge, Doddington Place, Kent proposed layout of grounds for Colonel P D Jeffreys, 1909 (private collection)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1872 2nd edition published 1898

Description rewritten: March 2001 Amended: March 2001; February 2004 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: November 2003

## 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.