

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

GREAT RISSINGTON MANOR

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

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Name:	GREAT RISSINGTON MANOR
County:	Gloucestershire
District:	Cotswold (District Authority)
Parish:	Great Rissington
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.852159 Longitude: -1.7194299 National Grid Reference: SP 19422 17100 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000766 Date first listed: 28-Feb-1986

## Details

C20 formal terraced garden by Falconer, Baker and Campbell, with adjacent woodland area.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1571, the Sandys family sold Great Rissington Manor to Edmund Brag of Great Barrington. The present (2000) building was begun in the C17. It was a farm rather than a manor house, but was on the site of the principal messuage, recorded in 1309 (VCH 1965; Verey 1970).

Great Rissington Manor remained part of the Barrington Park estate (qv) until 1920, when C T R Wingfield, whose family had inherited both properties in 1860, sold it to Major W J P Marling (d 1940), already of Great Rissington. By 1927, the architects Falconer, Baker and Campbell had designed and laid out the formal gardens around the Manor (Cane 1927). The Manor itself was rebuilt and enlarged in 1929, incorporating C17 farm buildings and a granary. It was probably at this time that it changed its name from Manor Farm to Great Rissington Manor. In 1957, Major Marling's widow sold the Manor to a Mr Desmond Godman. In 1988, it was purchased by the present (2000), private owner.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Great Rissington Manor stands at the west end of the village of Great Rissington, c 3km north of Great Barrington village (and Barrington Park) and 4km south-east of Bourton-on-the-Water. The c 2ha site (as here registered) lies on ground that slopes gently to the west, towards the River Windrush, 1km away. The main views from the house are in this direction. A stream runs along the southern boundary of the gardens. Wrought-iron railings stand at the top of the stream's south bank and continue around the west end of the gardens. After a short stretch of post and rail fencing west of a small lake, the wrought-iron railings continue along the north side of the gardens, to a ha-ha situated 60m west of the Manor. The area north of the Manor is enclosed to the north by a ha-ha topped by a low stone wall (which increases in height as it continues westward); to the west by a low stone wall with a Cupressus hedge below, to its west; and to the east by the stone wall and hedge of the graveyard of the church of St John the Baptist (listed grade II\*), the tower of which is visible from most parts of the gardens. The area around the drive is enclosed by a Cupressus hedge to the south, a stone wall to the east, and the churchyard wall to the north.

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**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The approach to the Manor is via the drive that leads west to its east face. Some 100m east of the Manor, C20 wooden gates stand between two square, c 2.5m high, ashlar piers with ball finials. From each pier, a 2m high wall of coursed rubble continues west for a few metres then turns away from the drive, the north wall merging with that of the churchyard. A straight drive runs west between rows of pleached limes, with a small grass paddock to the south and the churchyard to the north. Before reaching the Manor it broadens into a forecourt which is separated from a small garden east of the house by wooden railings between stone piers with ball finials. A service drive leads north from the forecourt to former farm buildings north of the Manor.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Great Rissington Manor (listed grade II) is a former farmhouse, built from the mid to late C17, probably in two phases, and extended and restored by the Marling family in 1929. It is a two-storey (with attics) building of limestone rubble with a stone slate roof. The main body of the house is L-shaped (C17) and the south wing was added c 1929. The wing to the north-east of the main body was originally a range of farm buildings, including a barn, and was added to the main house c 1929.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** At the east front of the Manor, wooden railings, standing on a low wall of coursed rubble and divided at regular intervals by seven stone piers with ball finials, separate the forecourt from a garden compartment in front of the house. Three semicircular stone steps lead down from the centre of the balustrade to the garden, which consists of two unequal areas of lawn divided by a flagged path running from the steps to the front door of the Manor. Stone-edged herbaceous borders lie along the west and south sides of the garden compartment. A gravel path runs along the east face of the Manor, east of the herbaceous border. At the south-east corner of the garden is a rectangular gatehouse (1920s, listed grade II with adjoining stone wall, garden seat, and pergola to the south and piers and railings to the north), built of coursed squared and dressed limestone with a stone slate roof and double width archways in the east and west gable ends. Built onto its south side is a c 2.5m high coursed stone wall. Incorporated in the west side of this is an alcove for a semicircular wooden garden seat. A date-stone in the alcove is inscribed '19M22' (Marling). To each side of the alcove are niches containing a column with a crown at the top, then the head of a king or queen, and then a heraldic shield. A stone-flagged pathway leads west from the seat, under a pergola which is attached to the south-west corner of the gatehouse. The pergola, of paired, rubble-built cylindrical columns supporting a heavy timber framework was reduced to c 20m in length in the late C20 but originally ran west for c 50m, to a thatched gazebo of coursed squared and dressed limestone (built c 1920 for Major Marling, listed grade II), designed by Falconer, Baker and Campbell. A terrace wall raises the pergola above the lawn to the south.

To the west of the Manor is a series of three rectangular terraces, enclosed to the south by the raised walk that links the garden seat to a gazebo. The top terrace is enclosed to the north by a pillared garden room, at the west end of which is a gateway between c 2.5m high piers with ball finials. The terrace contains a lawn, c 13m by 15m, with herbaceous borders along the wall of the Manor and shrubs at the south end. An old stone well-head stands at the north-east corner of the terrace. A large expanse of this terrace was formerly paved and a round stone fountain by Falconer, Baker and Campbell stood at its centre (Cane 1927). Stone steps lead down from the centre of the terrace's west side to a second terrace, c 2m below the first. This is divided into two lawns by a central stone path. At its north end is a yew hedge with a stone wall beyond. There are quarter-circle beds at the corners of the east edge of the lawn, each containing a young birch tree. The path continues, down stone steps, to a third terrace, c 1m below the second. The stone path also divides this terrace into two lawns and another path runs along the west edge of the terrace. Narrow herbaceous borders run along its east side. At both ends of the terrace small rectangular lawns extend west. At the south end of the terrace, stone steps lead up to the gazebo. Semicircular stone steps lead from the west side of the bottom terrace down to a c 20m wide lawn, enclosed by low drystone walls to its north and south. A stone ha-ha c 1m high separates the lawn from pasture to its west.

North of the Manor is a yard with a central lawn, enclosed by the churchyard wall to the east, a barn (late C18/early C19, listed grade II) to the north-west, and stables east of the barn. West of the yard is a larger rectangular lawn with a 1.5m deep stone ha-ha to its north and deciduous trees along its northern edge. At the west side of the lawn, a limestone rubble wall (listed grade II) runs north/south, dividing a small yard to its east from the gardens to its west. The wall incorporates a dovecote and garages (formerly an open-fronted store), probably built c 1929 by Falconer, Baker and Campbell. A path leads through a wooden gate

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in a 2m high drystone wall west of the lawn to a rectangular garden compartment, c 50m north-west of the Manor. It is enclosed by a 2-2.5m high stone wall to the north and to the west by a beech hedge, behind which is a low stone wall, with a high leylandii hedge behind. The middle section of the leylandii hedge is lower, giving a view to the west. Just north of the entrance gate is a stone seat, set into an alcove in the wall. Semicircular stone steps lead east from the seat, down to a semicircular lawn with stone-edged beds to its north-west and south-west. A raised walk, covered by a wrought-iron pergola, runs along the east side of the compartment above the lawn, leading south up to another compartment containing the lower of two formal pools. Here the walk continues as a winding gravel path.

East of the lower pool is a small, rectangular, stone-edged pool in a compartment enclosed to the north and east by outbuildings. A path from its south-east corner leads to the lowest of the main terraces. The east wall has a built-in dovecote. To the north of the pool, a wooden pergola is supported to the north by a building wall and to the south by three round stone piers. East of the pool, the ground is terraced by broad stone steps. The water leaves the pool at its west side and flows through a series of small waterfalls and pools before coming to the second rectangular pool, set in a square lawn, north of the lawn which lies at the bottom of the main terraces. Steps lead down from the top pool to the bottom pool, along their north edges. A contorted Phoenician juniper grows on a rocky bank between the two pools. In c 1957, a rock garden was replaced by the pools, the upper of which was originally a swimming pool (Inspector's report, 1986).

South and south-west of the Manor, the gardens are informal and consist of lawns and a woodland area (The Ornamentals) of c 1ha. A stone-edged rill starts c 50m south-west of the Manor and continues west for c 40m to a small oblong lake 100m south-west of the Manor. The edges of the lake are planted with deciduous trees including alder and oak. Its western end is raised up by a grass dam from which the stream continues west, no longer contained in a rill, to the western boundary of the gardens.

A curving low stone wall is set into the slope c 10m south of the eastern end of the rill. The wall and a curving yew hedge to its south form a circle, across which occasional stone steps are set, leading up to a wooden bridge (late C20) over the stream which forms the southern boundary of the gardens. A wrought-iron gate at the south end of the bridge leads to a late C20 plantation and arboretum (outside the area here registered). The registered area south of the lake and west of the stone and hedge circle is known as The Ornamentals (OS) and is planted with stands of mature trees. Near the gate to the arboretum, the stream gully is planted with beeches and oaks and a belt of leylandii. In the southern corner of The Ornamentals is a stand of Scots pine and larch. South of the lake, in a lawn at the centre of The Ornamentals, stands a circular, stone-edged raised bed, surmounted by an iron pergola. The Ornamentals have been planted from 1965 onwards and now contain over 250 species of trees, bushes, and ferns (Inspector's report, 1986).

The terraces west of the Manor were designed by Falconer, Baker and Campbell, architects, in the mid 1920s, for Major Marling. Parts were altered c 1957 for Desmond Godman who also began the planting of The Ornamentals in 1965.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** East of the gatehouse, a gap in a privet hedge leads to the kitchen garden which lies c 40m south-east of the Manor. This is divided into two separate areas. The first, consisting of a gravel yard with garden buildings, lies just south of the gatehouse and is bounded by a 2m high stone wall to the south, a privet hedge (with an archway leading west to the pleasure grounds) to the west, a high stone wall to the north, and a wire fence to the east. A stone potting shed, with a C20 greenhouse attached to its west face, stands on its north side. A large fruit cage and polytunnels stand along the south side of the garden compartment (2000). A gap in the south-west corner of the compartment leads to a second area of kitchen garden, used for growing fruit and vegetables. This rectangular area is enclosed by a c 2m high, capped stone wall to the south; a low drystone wall to the east; and by hedges to the north and west. A small stone garden building with a pitched slate roof is built into the southern wall. A gravel path divides a central rectangular bed from other beds around the edges of the garden. A gravel path leads through a gateway in the eastern wall to the Manor Farmhouse beyond.

#### REFERENCES

P S Cane, *Modern Gardens, British and Foreign* (1927), pp 70-2 D Verey, *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire The Cotswolds* (1970), pp 263 Cotswold Life, (February 1978), pp 24-6

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1881-4, published 1885 1923 edition

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Archival items Great Rissington Women's Institute, A history of the village within living memory, 1857-1957 (33402, SR642), (Gloucester Local Studies Library) Strutt and Parker, Sale catalogue, 1988 (RR249.1), (Gloucester Local Studies Library) Oblique aerial photographs, 1999 (NMR, Swindon)

Description written: March 2000 Amended: February 2001 Register Inspector: TVAC Edited: April 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.