

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BURTON MANOR

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

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Name:	BURTON MANOR
District:	Cheshire West and Chester (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 53.257133 Longitude: -3.0303005 National Grid Reference: SJ 31364 73843 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001422 Date first listed: 19-Apr-1999

Details

Formal gardens by Thomas Mawson and Beresford Pite begun in 1906 associated with a gentleman's residence built for one of Gladstone's sons. Beyond is a C19 landscape park.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1753 the manor of Burton was leased by the Rev Richard Congreve from the Bishop of Lichfield. On Congreve's death in 1782 the lease passed to his younger children Richard and Marianne (d 1871), and in 1806 the former purchased the manor outright. On his death in 1857 Burton passed to his son William (d 1864), who was succeeded by his son, also William. The year after his death in 1902 the estate was sold by his son Walter to Henry Neville Gladstone, the third son of W E Gladstone (d 1898), Liberal politician and Prime Minister. A successful businessman, Gladstone also ran the family's Hawarden estate, 8km to the south. Burton's proximity to Hawarden made it a suitable location for a substantial house in which H N Gladstone and his wife Maud, daughter of the armaments manufacturer Lord Rendel, might live and entertain on a grand scale. Over the following decade there was heavy investment in house and gardens at Burton, but in 1915, following the death in action of W G C Gladstone, the Gladstones moved to Hawarden. Burton was offered for sale in 1921, and in 1924 was sold to a consortium of property speculators led by Herbert Maples, a Liverpool estate agent. Thenceforward the Manor was let out, until 1948 when it was compulsorily purchased by Liverpool Corporation and converted to a residential adult education college, which it remains today (1998).

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The village of Burton lies 15km north-west of Chester, 3km south of the A540 from Chester to Heswall. Burton Manor stands off the south side of the village's main street, looking west across Gayton Sands and south, across the Dee estuary, to the distant Hawarden. The registered area is bounded to the north by the village street, and to the east by the minor road from Burton to Puddington. Otherwise it abuts open countryside.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main, splayed entrance (listed grade II) to the Manor's grounds with trilithon-style side wickets is on the village street north-west of the Manor. It was opened up as a part of the Gladstones' improvements at Burton c 1903. A back drive leads south-west around the east side of the kitchen garden. Before 1903 the Manor was approached via curving drives across the park from lodges at the west end of the village and on the road from Burton to Puddington. The

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former lodge (Sunny Corner), of stone and C19, still survives little if at all modified. The latter, believed to be the first building designed by H S Goodhart-Rendel (d 1959), one of Mrs Gladstone's nephews, apparently does not.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING In 1805, the year before he purchased the manor, Richard Congreve began to construct a gentleman's residence in Burton, necessitating the demolition of up to ten properties on the south side of the village's main street. This, Burton Hall (listed grade II), was almost completely rebuilt by H N Gladstone and his wife in the years after 1903 to plans by Sir Charles Nicholson (d 1949) and his then partner Hubert C Corlette as Burton Manor. The old L-plan building was enlarged into a large square house, the outer walls of which are encased in locally quarried sandstone. The hipped roof is of green Cumberland slates. The grand entrance is on the north side, with the Gladstone family arms incorporating a slave's head recalling the derivation of the family's wealth from slavery. The main, garden front is to the south. Off the former dining room (now a common room) at the south-east corner of the building is the former orangery (now a dining room), added a few years after 1903 by Beresford Pite (d 1934).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS In 1906 Thomas Mawson (d 1933) was brought in to design gardens which might be constructed over several seasons by Burton's own staff of gardeners, then about a dozen strong. Mawson was introduced to the Gladstones by the Liverpool industrialist W H Lever (later Lord Lever, d 1925), for whom he had already worked. He laid out what was apparently a relatively simple garden south of the Manor: 'a broad, paved terrace descending on to a simply-disposed lawn along the south front. Thence towards the west a naturally treated section with rock-set slopes was reached, while to the east was an ascent to pergolas and to a sunk garden. From the raised path that surrounds the latter four sets of segmental steps of red sandstone descended to its lower level, composed of paved ways dividing the quarters where rose-beds were cut out of the turf' (CL 1912, 496). A few years later Beresford Pite was brought in to add some features to the garden: to him can be attributed the stone-edged lily pond and probably sunken beds and yew-hedged enclosures on the south lawn, possibly that in the North Garden, and perhaps the pedimented arch at the top of the East Ascent and the garden house beyond. The gardens which were created at that time survived little altered in 1998.

At the core of the Manor is the Fountain Court, a small internal courtyard (c 8m in diameter) with ground-floor loggia along the north side. It is paved with chequerboard black and white paving; the centre fountain has been infilled.

The North Garden lies c 20m north of the main entrance to the Manor, on the opposite side of the drive. Steps lead up to a roughly square area, c 25m in diameter, with buildings along its north and east sides and a wall to the west. At its centre is a square, 6m diameter, flagstone-edged lily pool, around which is a lawn with a gravel path around its edge.

To the south of the Manor a paved terrace fills the angle on the south side between it and the orangery. To its south a broad gravel path runs across the head of the South Garden, with access between the two via semicircular steps on the central north/south axis and at either end of the path, the latter giving access to gravel paths down the east and west sides of the garden. At the centre of the lawn, overall c 60m east/west by 30m north/south, is a rectangular lily pond, aligned north/south, and with columnar conifers at either end of its long sides. Other conifers stand near each of the four corners of the lawn. To either side of the lily pond are two, roughly square, yew-hedged compartments arranged north/south; beds within their interiors, originally stone edged and sunken, were later raised to ground level. To the south the garden is bounded by a low wall with balustrading to the centre, over which there are views south across the park and towards Hawarden. The balustrading is broken by a gateway on the central north/south access giving access to a narrow, lower enclosure, through which there is access to the park.

Off the centre of the east side of the garden a short, straight, sunken border leads east to an apsidal stone bench seat. North of this flights of steps, the East Ascent, lead to the pedimented entrance with latticed wooden door to the East Garden, a sunken lawn parterre overhung with mature trees. The parterre, which is quartered by flagged paths with a central circular bed (originally perhaps for a fountain), is today a lawn.

In 1912 it was described how from the east side of the garden a 'broad green way stretches its length between ample herbaceous borders and up to a temple-like garden-house with domed roof sheltered on each side by a high segmental wall' (CL 1912, 497). In the mid to late C20 this part of Burton's grounds was sold off and incorporated into the grounds of an adjoining house, and although the temple survives the border has disappeared. In front of the temple is a pool, possibly of later date.

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Down the west side of the South Garden is, to the north, a yew hedge, and to the south a continuation of the wall which bounds the garden to the south. A gateway at the south-west corner of the garden leads down to a lower terraced lawn (originally the Croquet Lawn), down the west side of which is balustrading. From this there are views eastward, to a shrubbery with specimen trees. From the south-west corner of the terraced lawn a curving cobbled path leads through the south side of that shrubbery, through Mawson's rockery work, to steps down into a rock-cut grotto, converted from an earlier icehouse. North of the shrubbery is a lawn with a small number of old fruit trees, on the east edge of which is a two-storey residential block of c 1970.

In the C19 there was a lawn to the south of the Manor and shrubberies with walks to east and west.

PARK The park is largely permanent pasture with large numbers of mature parkland trees, many grouped in large clumps. There is a belt of woodland, including Bath Wood, arcing round the south side of the park, within which is a 200m long lake. A park was presumably laid out around Burton Hall at about the time it was built in 1805, and was extended westward when the parish was enclosed in 1817. In 1889 the park was said to be well timbered. The Gladstones began to improve their surroundings as soon as they arrived at Burton. The wood west of the lake was extended, Bath Wood, below Hampston's Well, was widened, and a new wood planted at the bottom of Priestway Lane. The park lake was excavated to provide fishing and a refuge for wildlife.

KITCHEN GARDEN An irregularly shaped walled kitchen garden stands north-west of the Manor, adjoining the village's main street. The walls are tall, up to c 4m, and are of brick on a sandstone base. Although the garden was presumably not constructed until 1805 or thereabouts the bricks look older, perhaps suggesting the use of second-hand materials. There is an arched entrance on the south side of the gardens. In 1998 the interior, including glasshouses in the northern part of the garden probably installed by the Gladstones c 1903, were largely abandoned.

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 11/06/2020

REFERENCES

Country Life, 32 (12 October 1912), pp 490(7 T H Mawson, *The Life and Work of an English Landscape Architect* (1927), p 125
P H W Booth, *Burton-in-Wirral: A History* (1984) P de Figueiredo and J Treuherz, *Cheshire Country Houses* (1988), pp 220(2
Maps Redrawn Burton Tithe map, 1848 (at Burton Manor 1998) Redrawn Burton enclosure map, 1817 (at Burton Manor 1998)
OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1871-2, published 1872 2nd edition surveyed 1897, published 1899 OS 25" to 1 mile:
2nd edition surveyed 1897, published 1898 3rd edition surveyed 1909, published 1912

Archival items [not seen] Drawings by Pite are held by the RIBA; the Gladstone papers are held at Hawarden.

Description written: July 1998 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: October 1999

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.