

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ALDERLEY GRANGE

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Name:	ALDERLEY GRANGE
County:	Gloucestershire
District:	Stroud (District Authority)
Parish:	Alderley
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.617390 Longitude: -2.3354412 National Grid Reference: ST 76872 91005 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000751 Date first listed: 28-Feb-1986

Details

Ornamental walled garden with C17 and C18 elements largely recreated after 1961 with initial guidance from Vita Sackville-West.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1599 marriage with Joan Poyntz brought Robert Hale the manor of Alderley. Thereafter, until the C20, the Hales were the leading gentry family in the Wotton-under-Edge area. In 1608 Hale built a new house in Alderley, later to be called West End House and, after the mid C19, Alderley Grange. On his death the house was separated from the rest of the estate and left to his daughter. Her descendant, William Giles sold West End House to William Springett, a Bristol Quaker merchant. Springett married a daughter of Richard Osborne of Wortley House in 1744, and it was at about this time that the house was largely rebuilt. After Springett's death the house passed to his daughter (d 1799) and her husband, Matthew A'Deane (d 1818) who added to it. Their spinster daughter Margaret died in 1823, bequeathing it to her companions Mary and Anne Burlton. Their heir, Richard Deane Bayly, inherited the property in 1849, and his daughter sold the Grange to R B Hale. Between 1867 and 1894 it was the home of the pioneer ethnologist B H Hodgson (d 1894), and from 1961 to 1975 of the aesthete and diarist James ('Jim') Lees-Milne (d 1997) and his wife Alvilde (d 1994). It was under her, with initial assistance from her friend Vita Sackville-West (d 1962), that the garden was redeveloped and gained the main aspects of its present layout. Since 1975 its development has continued under the present (1999), private, owners.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Alderley Grange stands in the north side of the hamlet of Alderley, c 200m north of the church. From Alderley an unclassified road leads to Wotton-under-Edge, 3km to the north-west. The area here registered, bounded to the west by the Wotton road and to the south by a turning off it to Tresham, extends to c 1ha.
ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The gravelled sweep along the west front of the house is approached along a drive bounded by the property's 2.5m high south stone wall and a 3m high hedge, from a gateway with ashlar piers at the south-west corner of the garden. From a second gateway, at the north-west corner, a service drive runs to the coach house north-east of the house.

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PRINCIPAL BUILDING Alderley Grange (listed grade II*), which has a core of 1608, was largely rebuilt about the time of William Springett's marriage in 1744 as an ashlar house of two storeys and an attic concealed behind a parapet. It is of five bays, the broad central bay projecting slightly forward, pedimented, and with a Venetian window to the first floor. A projecting central porch is slightly later than the main house, and bears a scratched date of 1751. No architect is known, although it is likely he was a Bristol man. Low, two-bay additions to either side were made c 1810.

The former stables and coach house, now garaging and Grange Cottage (listed grade II), is situated 40m behind (north-east of) the house. Of the mid C18, the ashlar building has a pedimented centre bay.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The house faces west, and looks out onto a lawn, with mature yew, holm oak, and birch trees and a beech hedge largely concealing the stone garden wall and the view westward. North of the service drive is rough grassland with trees, including, immediately north of the drive, the Lime Walk, a double row of trees planted c 1961.

A gate at the south-west corner of the house gives access to the gardens behind the house. The first main compartment, occupying the south-east quarter of the registered area, is bounded to the south by the 50m long and 2.5m high stone wall along the southern boundary of the property, largely hidden beneath creepers and climbers, alongside which runs a gravel path. The east boundary is a 40m long and 3m high brick wall with carved stone coping. In the angle of the two walls, looking north-west across the compartment to the house, is a summerhouse (listed grade II) of c 1760 with Doric order and segmental, 'cocked hat', wooden pediment. Most of the east wall is probably of the same date as the summerhouse, although c 10m from its north end the mid C18 fabric is replaced by mid C19 brickwork, part of the works to accommodate the glasshouse which once stood against the east end of the north wall of the compartment, here 6m high and of brick. The rest of the north wall is of stone. Most of the compartment is occupied by a lawn which slopes gently downhill to the house and on which there are several trees, notably a veteran mulberry. Informal beds run along the boundary walls, while against the south side of the house is a more formal scheme, part of the planting of the early 1960s.

A doorway in the compartment's north wall, west of the former glasshouse, gives access to the other main garden compartment. This, c 50m east/west and 30m north/south, is bounded by 3m to 4m high stone walls, and slopes gently downhill from south to north. Against the east end of the south wall is a lean-to stone shed, possibly C18, with flues for heating the former glasshouse. From the doorway into the garden a regularly flagged path runs in a straight line across it, c 10m from its east wall, to a doorway in its north wall. This path is crossed by another, irregularly flagged and with regularly spaced rose arches, which runs in a straight line east/west across the north of the garden, c 10m from the north wall. At the east end of the path is a bench, above which in the wall is a carved plaque installed in the later 1990s, while at its west end is a basin. The path from the south doorway runs between a pleached lime walk as far as the east/west path. To either side are lawns, with regularly spaced 1m square rose beds around their edges. A beech hedge runs down the west edge of the west lawn, screening the narrow vegetable garden down the westernmost 10m of the garden.

To the north of the east/west path across the garden is a complex series of compartments. At the east end of this area, within the angle formed by the paths, is a herb garden with a Union Jack pattern of low box hedges with a central armillary sphere. West of this, towards the centre of the north side of the garden (and it is noticeable that the garden is laid out, deliberately, with only an approximate regularity) is a small rectangular pool, c 5m east/west by 3m, behind which, against the garden's north wall, is a stepped platform with a bench. To either side is topiary and Irish yews. To the west, between a short row of pleached limes and the greenhouse (1990s) at the north end of the vegetable garden, is an area of low topiary.

The doorway in the north wall of the garden leads though to the garden behind (east of) Grange Cottage. From here there are views north, across Ozleworth Bottom, to the wooded slopes of Wortley Hill which rise on its far side.

There was considerable planting of trees at Alderley Grange in the late C19 by B H Hodgson. The walled garden areas south, east, and north-east of the house were largely recreated in the generation after 1961 by Alvilde Lees-Milne with initial advice from Vita Sackville-West. Planting and other development has continued since she left Alderley Grange in 1975.

REFERENCES

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Country Life, 146 (9 October 1969), pp 18-22 D Verey, The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire The Cotswolds (2nd edn 1979), p 82 J Sales, West Country Gardens (1981), pp 27-9 N Kingsley, The Country Houses of Gloucestershire, Volume One, 1500-1660 (1989), p 47 N Kingsley, The Country Houses of Gloucestershire, Volume Two, 1660-1830 (1992), pp 50-1
Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1881, published 1886

Description written: March 1999 Amended: May 2001 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: March 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.