

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

CROWE HALL

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

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Name:	CROWE HALL
District:	Bath and North East Somerset (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.374049 Longitude: -2.3460856 National Grid Reference: ST 76007 63945 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000548 Date first listed: 08-Aug-1991

Details

C19 to early C20 formal villa garden, including works by William Carmichael for Henry Tugwell in the mid 1870s.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Crowe Hall was built c 1760 for Brigadier Crowe, and a late C18 sketch by Thomas Robins (Courtauld Institute) shows it set in informal parkland. In the early C19 the estate was bought by George Hayward Tugwell, who rebuilt the house and laid out the basic framework for a formal terraced garden. During the 1870s, under the ownership of Henry Tugwell, both house and garden were remodelled. In 1874 Henry Tugwell appointed William Carmichael (c 1816-1904) as head gardener, who was responsible for a series of alterations to the gardens. Carmichael was trained at the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens, and had previously been head gardener to the Prince of Wales at Sandringham, Norfolk (qv) in the 1860s. Crowe Hall remained the property of the Tugwell family until 1919, when it was sold. It then changed hands several times before being purchased by Sir Sydney Barratt in 1960. The latter developed the garden further.

The site remains (2001) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Crowe Hall, an irregular hillside site of c 3ha, occupies the west-facing slope immediately above St Thomas à Becket's church and Widcombe Manor (qv) in the south-eastern outskirts of Bath. To the south-west its boundary is formed by Church Lane and to the north by Widcombe Hill. To the east the site is enclosed by fields. Crowe Hall's position on a hillside offers exceptional views across the valley to Prior Park (qv) to the south and over Bath to the west.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The site is entered off Widcombe Hill road to the north. Here a set of cast- and wrought-iron gates, hung between ashlar piers surmounted by vases topped with pineapple leaves (listed grade II), gives access to a short drive that leads to the east front of the Hall.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Crowe Hall is a classical villa (listed grade II) built of Bath stone and is situated in the north part of the site. Since it was rebuilt in the early C19, it has been continuously remodelled, in particular under the ownership of Henry Tugwell in the early 1870s. In 1926 the west front was completely rebuilt following a fire which destroyed a large portion of the Hall including the conservatory. The orangery attached to its west end dates from the 1880s.

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GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Opposite the levelled area to the east front of the Hall is a bank which is set with local stone boulders to form a rock garden, with a wall-fountain in the centre. The rock garden was created by William Carmichael in the late C19 (Laurie 1989). The statue of Neptune, bought from a sale at Brownsea Island, is a later addition (late C20). The rising land to the east is informally laid out as a meadow with a hard tennis court, replacing an earlier grass court, set into the hillside.

The main garden area is entered via a gate through the screen wall which extends south from the Hall. The gate opens onto the top, stone-paved terrace. To the south steps lead down to a level lawn set with a small formal pool. The raised walk along its eastern edge replaces rockwork of the 1870s by Carmichael. The main terrace of this garden is pre 1885, but the simple layout of grass and pool dates from the late 1930s and occupies the site of the flower garden designed by Carmichael, which took the form of a series of twelve grass terraces with flower beds and a fountain (ibid).

The top terrace and formal gardens are supported by substantial retaining walls. To the south, paths wind down the steep slope, through the Victorian grotto, rockery, and water garden. Several roughly parallel paths form woodland walks along the hillside above the churchyard. The uppermost, overhung by old plantings of yew, leads to the late C18 coach house (listed grade II) c 90m to the south-east of the Hall and an area of mid C20 gardening, and to the Gothic Cottage (listed grade II), standing c 180m south-east of the Hall in the far south corner of the site, built in 1854 to house the head gardener.

KITCHEN GARDEN Below the balustraded terrace on the west front of the Hall, a long straight walk leads to the walled and terraced kitchen garden, which occupies the north-west end of the site between Church Street and the high wall which borders Widcombe Hill. Part of the kitchen garden is occupied by a private dwelling introduced in the late C20. Some of the once extensive ranges of glasshouses remain, one of them bearing the date 1852.

REFERENCES

J Horticulture & Home Farmer, 53 (11 October 1906), pp 342-3 J Sales, West Country Gardens (1980), pp 143-6 Inspector's Report: Crowe Hall, (English Heritage 1984) Inspector's Report: Crowe Hall, (English Heritage 1989) S Harding and D Lambert, Parks and Gardens of Avon (1994), pp 87, 114

Maps Thomas Thorpe, Map of Bath, 1742 (Bath City Guildhall Archives) Cotterill, Map of Bath, 1852 (Bath City Guildhall Archives)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1882/3, published 1885/6

Illustrations Thomas Robins, Widcombe House and Church, C18 (Hohler Collection, Courtauld Institute)

Archival items Crowe Hall Sale catalogue, 1919 (Bath City Guildhall Archives) Crowe Hall Sale catalogue, 1932 (Bath City Guildhall Archives)

Description rewritten: September 2001 Amended: October 2001 Register Inspector: FDM Edited: January 2004

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.