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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

Glen Andred Garden

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Glen Andred Garden

Name:	Glen Andred Garden
County:	East Sussex
District:	Wealden (District Authority)
Parish:	Withyham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.101031 Longitude: 0.18236446 National Grid Reference: TQ 52896 35790 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1001709 Date first listed: 10-Dec-2009

Details

A private informal, compartmentalised, garden laid out by EW Cooke from 1866-80 on rocky sandstone outcrops, designed to compliment a grand country house, designed by Norman Shaw in his domestic 'Old English' style. Features from an early-mid C20 garden also remain.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In December 1865, the marine artist, geologist and landscape designer, Edward William Cooke leased a piece of land at Bulls Wood near Groombridge on the Hamsell Estate, an undeveloped rocky site with imposing views owned by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners. Cooke, living in Kensington at the time, was keen to expand the scope of his gardening activities and sought, 'a pleasant spot where I can have a garden and grow conifers and roses to my heart's content without London smoke' (Munday 1996). After initial discussion with architect friends Anthony Salvin and Decimus Burton, Cooke approached Norman Shaw to design his new house (originally called Rockhurst). Shaw created a level platform for the house (with lodge and stables), the land dropping steeply on the south and east to give dramatic views across the surrounding countryside. In writing to the Liberal WE Gladstone, Cooke described his house as, 'a thoro' Sussex or rustic Elizabethan structure surrounded by wonderful masses of rock and woods of oak, fir, holly and yew [...] a rapid brilliant trout stream running through'. Once built, Cooke changed the name of the house to Glen Andred as a reference to Andrede's Wolde, the ancient forest that covered that part of Sussex.

As well as being a celebrated artist, Cooke was also an expert on ferns and geology, having earlier advised James Bateman on the development of the rocky landscape at Biddulph Grange (1842-1850s, Grade I Registered Park & Garden). Bateman, Harry Veitch and William Robinson (plantsman and editor of *The Garden*) are among those recorded as having visited the site and advised on its layout. The resulting landscape was created by tree felling, rock clearing, excavating and blasting as well as the replanting of trees, shrubs and rock plants (many from the Veitch Nursery). Cooke's diary refers to a walk with Harry Veitch to visit the 'Arboretum and stumpery, Ward's Rock and mount, Glen, Eagle Rock, Scotland, Crinkum Crankum, Wildeness, Bellosguardo and lawn'. Cooke's painting of the scene from the drawing room window over the rocky valley with enclosing

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trees and a pool at the bottom was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1877. Work in the walled kitchen garden to the north and the extensive glass range adjoining the house was also described.

Cooke sold Glen Andred in 1880 and subsequently the house had a succession of owners. Land was gradually sold off for development until World War II, when the Canadian army occupied the house and grounds. In 1949, the house was divided into two dwellings internally and the lodge, stables and walled kitchen garden were sold. The site remains in multiple private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Glen Andred stands on a natural rocky prominence above a tributary of the River Medway with views south-east across the valley to the sandstone ridge of Harrison Rocks and the Birchden Woods beyond. The c.5ha site is set back from the east side of Corseley Road which runs north from Withyham to Groombridge, approximately 3km south of Groombridge and 10km south-west of Tunbridge Wells. The main Uckfield-Tunbridge Wells road (A26) is c2.5km to the east. The site is bordered on the west by the Corseley Road, on the east by the Uckfield-London railway line and on the north and south by woodland.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Glen Andred is approached from the east, off the road leading north from Withyham to Groombridge. The entrance is through a gateway set within a picket fence which borders the garden along the Corseley Road. On the north side of the gate is a C19 two-storey, red brick lodge with tile hanging on the first storey and a tiled roof, with a C20, single-storey extension. The front door of the lodge faces south onto a rolled gravel drive, on the south side of which is the lodge garden, comprising mixed beds around a pond and a children's play area. The drive continues east for 20m, through a set of wooden gates, between two pairs of redwoods with views on the north side into a gully where a series of small pools and streams descend west-east to a rock garden. At the entrance to the gully, the drive turns sharply south and continues for 20m to the forecourt of Glen Andred, which is bordered by lawn, tree and shrub plantings. On the west side of the forecourt, low iron fencing forms the property line between Glen Andred East and Glen Andred West, the latter accessed by a drive which enters at a point 20m south of Glen Andred Lodge.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS There are currently three buildings within Glen Andred. The principal house is the Grade II* listed Glen Andred, built in 1866-1867 for Cooke, which lies centrally in the garden, overlooking the steeply dropping land on the south and east. It is a two-storey, red brick house built to a design by Norman Shaw. The ground floor is red brick with tile hanging on the upper storey and five gables under a tiled roof. The central two-storey porch has a Gothic doorway with a wooden oriel window above. Additionally, Glen Andred Lodge (Grade II listed) and Conyer Lodge, are situated to the north-west of Glen Andred, on the border of the park with Corseley Road. Glen Andred Lodge, also by Norman Shaw and of 1866-1867, is of two storeys with a red brick ground floor and tile hanging on the upper storey, under a tiled roof.

GARDEN AND PLEASURE GROUNDS From the east side of the house there is access, via four brick steps up to a south-facing, raised terrace on two levels. From the terrace there are views east to a C19 rock garden and dell, west to the former C20 formal gardens and south across a sandstone ridge to the surrounding countryside. Steps south lead down from the lower terrace to an undulating lawn with several large rocky outcrops, below which, to the south-west, are hillside shrubbery walks, as shown on maps from 1874. On the south side of the lawn, there is a steep drop from the ridge marked by low groundcover shrubs. From the east side of the house there is also a path that leads south to wide rock steps down to a lower grass terrace and the shrubbery walks. From the bottom of these steps, to the east and north-east, lie the rock and dell gardens, designed around the 150m sandstone ridge that runs north-east from the east end of the house. Here are the intact remains of Cooke's landscape including gorges, boulder ranges, a rhododendron dell, pools, native and exotic trees, including among others bamboos, *Fagus sylvatica pendula* (weeping beech) and *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Wellingtonia).

On the south and west sides of Glen Andred are the ruins of Cooke's extensive range of glasshouses, the roughcast walls and rocks of a fernery and pineapple garden still intact. A grass terrace walk at right-angles to the west side of the house extends south-west from the house, its original 250m length reduced to 100m in 1949 when the adjoining land was sold. A mid C20 herbaceous border has been reinstated immediately below the walk, but the terraces of flower beds running across the slope parallel with the walk and shown on mid C20 illustrations are in disrepair. Approximately 50m along the walk from the house,

on the south side, a C20 sunken garden, once used as tennis and croquet lawns, is reached down a broad flight of 15 stone steps. The terrace walk terminates at the end of the sunken garden in woodland, a serpentine walk returning north-east through woodland towards the house.

KITCHEN GARDEN An irregularly-shaped, C19, brick-walled kitchen garden is located 50m north of the house, the west side and entrance gate bordering the Corseley Road. Shown in 1874 as rectangular (c80m x 40m) and formally laid out with tree-lined paths, by 1898 it had been enlarged on the north side and a greenhouse added. The wall is partially collapsed, in the area of the former greenhouse. The ground is cultivated as an ornamental garden with fruit trees, which follow the lines of the 1898 tree-lined paths. The age of some of the existing trees may indicate that they are original. The brick bonds of the remaining wall section are an interesting mixture of styles and would suggest that the work was done as a 'sampler'.

LAND BEYOND THE SITE BOUNDARY RELEVANT TO THE HISTORIC INTEREST OF THE SITE Glen Andred was subdivided in the first half of the C20, and not all of the original garden has retained its historic character. The 1920 OS map shows walks and paths leading through the woodland to Hodges Wood and across farmland to Old Birchden Farm. These areas have been excluded from the designated area as they are considered to be too altered in form.

SOURCES Girouard, M, 'Creating the 'Old English' Style. Early Norman Shaw Commissions II', *Country Life* (6 September 1973), 614-618 Hayden, P, Transcript of E.W. Cooke's diary (1985), Lindley Library Ref 999(4b) BID Munday, J, Edward William Cooke 1811-80 a man of his time, Woodbridge: Antique Collector's Club, (1996), 253-366, 308 Nairn, I & Pevsner, N, *The Buildings of England. Sussex* (2003), 512 Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry for Cooke, Edward William [webiste http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6160?docPos=29](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6160?docPos=29) accessed 11 Dec 2009 Saint, A, Richard Norman Shaw (1976), 36-45, 405 Simms, B, Glen Andred, Groomsbridge, East Sussex - A report prepared for Wealden District Council and the Sussex Gardens Trust (June 2004)

Maps Ordnance Survey 25" to 1 mile (sheet 6/15): 1st edition published 1874, 2nd edition published 1898 and 3rd edition published 1910.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Glen Andred is designated at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: * a relatively intact survival of an informal, compartmentalised garden, laid out from 1866-1880 by the marine artist and geologist Edward William Cooke; * it provides the contemporary setting for the Grade II* country house designed by Norman Shaw; * Cooke was well-regarded as a geologist and his work at Biddulph Grange (Grade I Registered Park and Garden) had established his reputation for the erection of dramatic rock gardens; * as well as Cooke, the well-known nurserymen and horticulturists Harry Veitch and William Robinson visited and advised on the garden's creation; * Glen Andred was documented in the contemporary gardening press and was influential both locally and nationally; * features of interest from an early-mid C20 garden also remain.

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.