

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ELVETHAM HALL

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Name:	ELVETHAM HALL
County:	Hampshire
District:	Hart (District Authority)
Parish:	Hartley Wintney
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.303376 Longitude: -0.88439096 National Grid Reference: SU 77868 56619 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000250 Date first listed: 31-May-1984

Details

A park of C14 origin which was landscaped in 1591 to provide a setting for the Elvetham Entertainment for Queen Elizabeth; it was extended, improved, and planted in the C18 and early C19, possibly with assistance in the late C18 from the designer William Emes, and then, from the mid C19 to early C20, given extensive formal and ornamental gardens by S S Teulon and William Goldring, to accompany the building of the present house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Henry Sturmy, whose family had held the manor of Elvetham from the mid C13, was granted permission in 1359 to inclose land to make a park, which was further enlarged by his nephew William in 1403. William's grandson, John Seymour, inherited in 1464. Elvetham passed to his grandson, Edward Seymour, in 1536, who used it as a summer residence for his children. Edward was created Earl of Hertford and later, in 1547, Duke of Somerset, but following his execution for treason in 1552, his estates were forfeited. Elvetham was returned to his son, another Edward, who was created Earl of Hertford in 1558-9 (VCH 1911). In 1591, Queen Elizabeth visited Elvetham and was entertained by the Earl 'in magnificent style' which entailed the erection in his small park of buildings to accommodate the Queen's retinue and the creation of a new landscape for her entertainment comprising a crescent pond set with three ornamented island pavilions (Earl of Hertford 1591).

The Earl died in 1621 and his successor, his grandson William, sold Elvetham in 1650 to Sir Robert Reynolds, whose daughter married Reynolds Calthorpe. The estate passed to the Calthorpe family, a descendant, Henry, being created Lord Calthorpe in 1796. The house was remodelled by the family in 1740, the series of garden enclosures and formal canal shown on a plan of 1791 possibly dating from this period (Inspector's Report 1988). In 1792, the landscape designer William Emes (1730-1803) took a twenty-one-year lease on Elvetham and lived there at least until 1796 and possibly until 1802. He altered the form of the park (ibid) and may have carried out landscape works. J C Loudon's Encyclopaedia of 1822 records Emes as having 'laid out the park', but although memoranda (HRO) record planting activity in the park at the end of the C18, there is no clear evidence that Emes was involved. The Calthorpes continued planting and landscaping into the C19 (Elvetham Papers) and by 1871 (OS) had canalised a section of the River Hart, constructed a lake on its course, enlarged the park with the addition of the New Park (north-west of the house), and planted a grand Wellingtonia avenue. The house was destroyed by fire in 1840 and rebuilt, with

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a formal terrace, to a design by S S Teulon (1812-73) between 1859 and 1862 (CL 1970). A further formal terrace was added in 1911-12, as was an azalea garden, to designs by William Goldring (1854-1919). In 1953, Elvetham Hall and its surrounding gardens were bought from the Calthorpe family by ICI, from whom Sir Emmanuel and Lady Kaye in turn bought them in 1965. The house and gardens have been run since then as a conference centre while the registered parkland, part of which is laid out as a golf course, remains (1999) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Elvetham is situated immediately south-east of the A30, Camberley to Hook road, on the east side of the village of Hartley Wintney. The 140ha registered site, comprising c 10ha of formal gardens and pleasure grounds and 130ha of parkland, farmland, woodland, and a golf course, occupies the broad floor of the shallow valley of the River Hart which runs south to north-east through the centre of the site, the valley sides rising to low crests either side. The site is largely enclosed by hedges and agricultural fencing and is bounded on the north-west and most of the south-west sides by the main A30 and A323 roads. The minor Home Farm Road forms the eastern boundary while on the north side the park abuts farmland. The surrounding landscape is predominantly one of mixed farmland with plantation woodland, with the village housing of Hartley Wintney abutting the west corner and the M3 running within 0.5km of the south-east corner.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The entrance to Elvetham Park lies 300m south-west of the Hall, midway along the A323. A drive enters at white timber gates set back from the road behind an island of trees and follows a wide north-easterly sweep alongside the canalised course of the River Hart. The drive is flanked by broad grassed verges planted with exotic trees, including mature conifers, and islands of shrubbery. Beyond these on the east side lie the largely C18 buildings of Lodge Farm (Lodge Farmhouse, Granary, Cart Shed and Lodge Cottages listed grade II, Barn and outbuildings listed grade II*). The drive then skirts the Water Tower (Teulon c 1860, listed grade II), the west and north walls of the kitchen garden, and the north-west front of the Hall before arriving at a grassed turning circle on the north-east, entrance front. The present entrance and drive were established between 1822 (Enclosure map) and 1839 (Tithe map), when the present length of the A323 running east was re-routed south from its former course along the north side of Lodge Farm. An aerial photograph suggests the lines of three straight drives to the site of Hall, from the south-west, south, and south-east, the southern one lying on the axis of the Hall and running past an oak tree said to have been planted by Queen Elizabeth (Antiquity 1982). These may have been avenues forming the approach to the Tudor house (Inspector's Report 1988). Two other approaches across the park to the Hall survive from the late C18 and early to mid C19 (OS drawing, 1792; OS 1871). The approach from the north-east, now (1998) a track, had gained its present entrance lodge by 1871 (listed grade II as North Lodge) and had been re-routed southwards to accommodate the new lake. The drive from the south-east corner of the park, also now a track, enters beside South Lodge (C17/C19, listed grade II).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Elvetham Hall (listed grade II*) stands on a low crest above the east side of the Hart valley with its main views south-east and north-west over the park. Built in a High Victorian Gothic style, described by Mark Girouard as 'acrobatic Gothic' (CL 1970), in red brick with stone dressings and with stripes and decorations in black brick, the Hall combines both single- and two-storey blocks and a tall entrance tower. The various sections of roof, topped by tall chimney stacks, have mansards or hips with gables and dormers. The main portion of the Hall was built from 1859 to 1862 by the architect Samuel Saunders Teulon for the fourth Lord Calthorpe and replaced a former house on the same site, destroyed by fire in 1840. This earlier building, which was given a Georgian front in 1740, may have incorporated the structure recorded as Lord Seymour's summer residence in the C16 (Inspector's Report 1988). The porte-cochère on the entrance front of the present house, from which there is an axial view north-west along the Wellingtonia avenue, was added in 1901, with further additions being made, in the Teulon style, in 1911-12. Some 20m from the Hall and forming a visual group with it are, to the north-east, the stables (listed grade II), also by Teulon and built in a similar style to the Hall; and to the east, the church of St Mary (listed grade II). The church was built by Henry Roberts in 1840-1 in the Norman style, of flint with stone dressings, although its spire was probably added by Teulon. The whole building complex, including the church, is now (late C20) in use as conference accommodation.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The principal area of formal gardens and pleasure grounds lies to the south-east and south of the Hall, with further ornamental planting to the west and north, either side of the River Hart.

The south-east, garden front, with an attached camellia house restored in 1998, opens onto a large square terrace, designed by Teulon in the early 1860s with the new Hall and shown with crescent-shaped beds in a watercolour perspective (private collection) of his architectural proposal for the south front. The terrace is enclosed from the churchyard on the north-east side by a wall and a bank of shrubbery, and on the south-west and south-east sides by a brick retaining wall surmounted by a pierced terracotta balustrade decorated with tazze. The terrace is laid to lawn which is surrounded and quartered by gravelled paths and centred on a circular shrub bed. This current arrangement replaces the complex parterre beds shown on a drawing (private collection) by the designer and writer William Goldring, who was working at Elvetham in 1911-12. A small brick and tile-roofed summerhouse with pebbled paving, added by 1911 (OS), is built into the extreme eastern corner. From the south-east side of the terrace, steps centred on the axial path lead down onto a second, lower terrace, half the width of the upper one, which is laid to lawn and a series of square rose beds with a central rectangular pool surrounded by clipped yew hedging. The design and construction of this lower terrace, shown in its present form on the OS map of 1939 and for which drawings survive (private collection), was also part of William Goldring's work of 1911-12, carried out in association with the extensions to the Hall of that date. The lower terrace is enclosed from the park by a wall with a balustrade similar to that on the upper terrace wall and also contains a brick and tile-roofed summerhouse, built into its north corner.

South-west beyond the terraces are the pleasure grounds, laid out between 1839 (Tithe map) and 1871 (OS) and enlarged to their present extent to the south-east, probably also as part of the 1911-12 improvements, by the construction of a walled ha-ha which continues the line of the outer retaining wall of the lower terrace and separates the ornamental gardens from the park. The pleasure grounds are further enclosed, from Lodge Farm to the south-west and from the kitchen garden to the north, by high red-brick walls, the wall of the kitchen garden (listed grade II) containing two arched openings. An extension south-westwards of the cross-axial path on the upper terrace bisects the pleasure grounds in the form of a broad grassed walk, known as the Long Walk in the early C19 (VCH 1911), which is lined by clipped yew trees and terminates in a timber and tile-roofed summerhouse built in 1901. Either side of the Walk, the grounds are laid to lawns, tennis courts, and a croquet lawn and informally planted with trees of mixed ages and species. On the immediate north-west side of the Walk (some 130m south-west of the upper terrace), a gently hollowed area is planted as a bog garden with a central sundial and surrounding shrubbery mixed with mature yew trees. The OS 1st edition map shows the hollow containing an irregularly shaped pond (which survived up to the late C20), with a further pond, also now gone, on the south-east side of the Walk. Contemporary descriptions and illustrations of the Elvetham Entertainment, subsequent map evidence (Simmonds, 1791; Enclosure map, 1822) and aerial photography indicate that the ponds were the surviving remnants, the north-west and south-east extremities, of the 'goodly pond, cut to the perfect figure of a half moon' built for the Entertainment in 1591 (Inspector's Report 1988). The site was designed and planted as an azalea garden in 1911-12 by William Goldring (drawing and plant lists held in private collection).

West and north of the Hall, the River Hart, which was canalised to its present (late C20), smooth curve between 1839 (Tithe map) and 1871 (OS), is flanked by level lawns planted with trees of mixed ages and species and, on its west bank, opposite the west wall of the kitchen garden, by a rhododendron garden which also appears to date from the C19. Laid out with a central feature of Douglas firs and with a system of informal paths, restoration of the overgrown garden began in the early 1990s.

Some 100m to the north-east, the river is crossed by a red-brick bridge framed by gate piers hung with wrought-iron gates (Teulon 1859-62, listed grade II) while east of the bridge, and parallel to the south bank of the river, is the site of a formal canal, possibly dating from the mid C18 (Inspector's Report 1988) and filled in in the mid C19.

PARK The park is divided into two by the River Hart, Elvetham Park lying to the south-east and the New Park to the north-west. Both are (1999) largely under arable cultivation and are open in character. Elvetham Park contains occasional mature individual trees and several mid to late C20 blocks of plantation woodland while immediately north-west of the river are a number of clumps, a grove of oaks, and several small mixed woods. The north-west third of the New Park is laid out as a golf course. A 300 acre (c 122ha) park is recorded south of the gardens at Elvetham from 1348 (Survey notes, HCC) and a licence to enclose was granted in 1359 (VCH 1911), but the boundaries are unknown. It was apparently still small, less than two miles (c 3.2km) in circumference, in 1591, the year of the Entertainment (Antiquity 1982) and the oak tree standing to the immediate south-east of the garden boundary is said to have been planted by Queen Elizabeth on her visit (ibid). Simmonds' survey of 1791 shows a

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ELVETHAM HALL

park extending south-east from the house to the present south-east boundary. By c 1800, the date of the OS surveyor's drawing and the period when William Emes was possibly still occupying Elvetham, a small extension had been made north-west of the river and tree planting here and on the park's fringes generally is shown. Further extensions were made by 1839 (Tithe map) and the park planted with scattered tree clumps which were incorporated into the denser planting pattern shown established by 1871 (OS). This pattern survived into the mid C20. North-east of the Hall, the lake on the River Hart, constructed by 1871, is now (1999) heavily invaded by vegetation; a bypass channel and weir were dug along its west side in the 1980s to permit dredging. The New Park, laid out between 1839 (Tithe map) and 1871 (OS), is bisected by a 1.2km long avenue of Wellingtonias, largely complete in the stretch planted by 1871 which runs 1km north-west from Teulon's bridge. The north-west end of the avenue, which is now (1999) incomplete, was added between 1871 and 1897 (OS), this also being the period during which the golf course was established. The course is planted with groups and a scatter of trees and was extended further south-eastwards into the park in the late C20.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden stands to the immediate west of the Hall and is enclosed by high red-brick walls (south wall, brick garden building, and gardener's cottage in Gothic style by Teulon in the south-west corner all listed grade II). Shown with roughly similar boundaries on the Enclosure map of 1822, the majority of the garden occupies level ground and is laid to grass, with a car park and a range of garden bothies in the northern half. At the eastern end, the ground rises in a steep bank to a level grassed terrace, shown laid out in 1896 with a range of glass and, by 1939 (OS), with a central fountain (both now (1999) gone).

REFERENCES

The Right Honourable the Earle of Hertford, The Honourable Entertainment given to the Quenes Majestie, in Progresse, at Elvetham ... (1591) [reprinted by Hatchards, nd] J C Loudon, An encyclopaedia of gardening (1822) The Garden, 36 (3 August 1889), pp 95-6 Victoria History of the County of Hampshire IV, (1911), pp 74-6, 79 N Pevsner and D Lloyd, The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (1967), pp 260-2 Country Life, 148 (31 December 1970), pp 1282-6 Antiquity 56, no 216 (March 1982), pp 46-7 B Elliot, Victorian Gardens (1986), pp 128, 205, 217 Inspector's Report: Elvetham Park, (English Heritage 1988)

Maps Francis Simmonds, A Sketch of Elvetham Park and Parts adjoining, 1791 (Hampshire Record Office) Enclosure map, 1822 (Hampshire Record Office) Tithe map for Elvetham parish, 1839 (Hampshire Record Office)

OS Surveyor's drawing, surveyed c 1800 (British Library Maps) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1871, published 1871 2nd edition published 1897 3rd edition revised 1909, published 1912 1939 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1896 3rd edition published 1911 1939 edition

Illustrations S S Teulon, Watercolour perspectives of the south front of the Hall, c 1859-62 (private collection) William Goldring, Plans and planting lists for the upper terrace and azalea garden, 1911-12 (private collection) [copies at RHS Lindley Library]

Archival items The Elvetham family papers are held at the Hampshire Record Office. Memoranda in Elvetham Papers (26M62 Box 23), (Hampshire Record Office) Unpublished survey notes, (Hampshire County Council, nd)

Description written: February 1999 Amended: May 2000 Register Inspector: VCH 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.