

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

PENJERRICK

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Name: PENJERRICK

District: Cornwall (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Budock

label.localisation: Latitude: 50.135224
Longitude: -5.1075253
National Grid Reference: SW 78027 30753
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1000513
Date first listed: 19-Apr-1990

Details

A mid C19 informal valley garden with an extensive C19 collection of sub-tropical plants and early hybrid rhododendrons.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Penjerrick was leased as a farm by George Croker Fox in 1765, and passed to his nephew, Robert Were Fox I (1768-1848) at his death in 1781. The property was occupied by Robert Were Fox's sister, Mary, who died in 1839. In the same year, R W Fox's son, also Robert Were (1789-1877), purchased the freehold of the estate.

The Fox family were Quakers who had originated in Wiltshire and acquired property in Cornwall through marriage with the Kekewich family of Catchfrench (qv). The family had shipping interests in Falmouth, and an interest in a foundry. In 1837 Robert Were Fox's son, Robert Barclay Fox (1817-55), began farming at Penjerrick, and in 1839 began to develop an ornamental landscape with pools, rockwork, and a new drive. Robert Barclay Fox predeceased his father in 1855, and in 1872 Robert Were Fox retired to Penjerrick from his previous home at Rosehill, Falmouth. R W Fox II had already planted exotics at Rosehill, and this was continued after his move to Penjerrick. The *Gardeners' Chronicle* noted in 1871 that, 'Mr Fox receives seeds from all quarters, and buys anything he thinks will grow at Pengerrick'; at this time there were 180 different conifers growing in the garden. In 1874 the same publication noted that Penjerrick showed 'the effect of landscape gardening carried out with the most exquisitely cultivated taste' (*Gardeners' Chronicle* 1874).

Robert Were Fox II died in 1877, leaving Penjerrick to his daughter Anna Maria, who continued to develop the gardens until her death in 1897 (Pett 1998). Samuel Smith, appointed gardener in 1889, planted many rhododendrons, and developed new hybrids in the garden in the late C19 and early C20. The original house, which had been developed from existing cottages by Robert Barclay Fox in the 1840s, was demolished and replaced with a new structure in 1935. Today (2000) Penjerrick remains in private ownership.

Penjerrick has group value with Glendurgan (qv) and Trebah (qv), two of a group of mid C19 gardens developed in the vicinity of Falmouth by members of the Fox family, with which Penjerrick shares many characteristics of design and planting.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Penjerrick is situated c 2km south-west of Falmouth and c 1km south of the village of Buddock Water; the coast at Maen Porth lies c 1.25km to the south-east. The c 10ha site is divided into two unequal areas by a public road, Penjerrick Hill, which crosses the site from north-east to south-west; the road is sunken

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and crossed by a timber footbridge connecting the two areas of garden. To the north the site adjoins a minor road, No Mans' Land Road, while a further minor road forms the boundary to the west. The area of garden to the south-east of Penjerrick Hill, known as the Wilderness, adjoins agricultural land to the south-west, south, and east. The site occupies a valley which drops from north-west to south-east, allowing distant views of the sea. A stream in the valley to the south-east of Penjerrick Hill has been dammed to create ponds. The upper edges of the valley are planted with mixed shelter belts.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Penjerrick is entered from Penjerrick Hill to the north-east, at a point adjacent to its junction with No Mans' Land Road. An early or mid C19 single-storey stone lodge stands to the north of the entrance which is closed by contemporary wrought-iron gates. The tarmac drive descends gently west and south-west for c 400m through an area of parkland to reach the north side of the house. The drive was laid out by Robert Barclay Fox in 1840.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The present house was constructed in 1935 on the site of an early C19 two-storey villa which was adapted c 1839 by Robert Barclay Fox from existing cottages.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The informal gardens lie principally to the east and south-east of the house. A terrace walk below the south-east facade of the house allows views down the valley, across the gardens, towards Falmouth Bay. The terrace leads past the remains of a mid C19 covered fernery. Constructed by Robert Were Fox in the mid C19, this structure comprised a 'cave-like passage' which led from one of the principal rooms in the house to an 'underground grotto', which, lit by a skylight, accommodated filmy ferns; further ferneries were located to each side of this grotto, one being heated and another devoted to tree ferns (*Gardeners' Chronicle* 1871). Winding walks lead off the terrace, passing through the extensive plant collection; specimen trees and shrubs, including significant early hybrid rhododendrons raised by Robert Barclay Fox and Samuel Smith, are planted informally in grass. The plant collection was begun in the 1840s by Robert Barclay Fox, and continued after his death in 1855 by his father, Robert Were Fox, who specialised in sub-tropical planting and the scientific study of plant acclimatisation in Cornwall.

Below the terrace a lawn or glade falls away to the south-east and the boundary above Penjerrick Hill; at the southern corner of the glade, beneath a large copper beech, a rustic timber bridge crosses the road to reach a further area of gardens. The glade was formed by Robert Barclay Fox in 1839 when existing trees were felled to create 'a beautiful vista of the meadows below' (*Barclay Fox's Journal*, 28 September 1839).

The valley garden below and to the south-east of Penjerrick Hill is known as the Wilderness. A stream flowing through the valley has been dammed to form a chain of four pools. The upper pool is adjoined by rockwork and a grotto; these were constructed by Robert Barclay Fox in January and February 1840 (*Journal*). Paths extend along the valley sides, providing informal walks through the ornamental planting; this is concentrated on the northern side of the valley, with a more open glade running from north-west to south-east, and a narrow belt of ornamental planting to the south-west. The remains of a C19 avenue of tree ferns survive, flanking one walk. To the east of the upper, or Tregedna Pond, is the site of a mid C19 house which was built by Robert Were Fox's brother, Joshua, who farmed the adjacent property of Tregedna (Pett 1998). After Joshua Fox's death in 1877 this house was demolished and its grounds were absorbed into the Penjerrick gardens.

PARK The park lies to the north and north-east of the house and gardens, and is situated on a south-east-facing slope to the north and south of the drive. Today (2000) the park remains pasture with scattered mature specimen trees including pines planted on the upper slopes, and to the south-west of the lodge; the trees help to frame views south and south-east across the site towards the sea. The park was developed from farmland in the mid C19 by Robert Barclay Fox as a setting for his new drive which was constructed in 1840.

REFERENCES

Gardeners' Chronicle, ii (1871), p 1490; i (1874), pp 308, 375; ii (1889), p 749; i (1901), pp 309-10, supplement *The Garden* 55, no 1 (1899), p 31 P M Syngé, *The Gardens of Britain I*, (1977), pp 113-15 R L Brett (ed), *Barclay Fox's Journal 1832-44* (1979) *The Cornish Garden*, 23 (1980), pp 17-20; 25 (1980), pp 47-50 D E Pett, *The Parks and Gardens of Cornwall* (1998), pp 121-3, 318-19

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1934 edition

Illustrations Engraving, *View in the Grounds, Penjerrick, Near Falmouth* (published in *Gardeners' Chronicle* 1889)

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Archival items Photographs, early C20 (published in *The Garden* 1899; *Gardeners' Chronicle* 1901)

Description written: September 2000 Register Inspector: JML Edited: October 2001

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.