

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

CARCLEW

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Name: CARCLEW

District: Cornwall (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Mylor

label.localisation: Latitude: 50.203559
Longitude: -5.1091052
National Grid Reference: SW7823138354
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1000544
Date first listed: 11-Jun-1987

Details

C18 and C19 formal terraced and water gardens, together with C18 parkland.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In the medieval period Carclew belonged to the Daunger family, from whom it passed by marriage in the C15 to the Bonithorns. This family continued in occupation until the end of their male line in 1677, when the estate was inherited by Samuel Kempe. Kempe built a new house and planned extensive new formal gardens, but died before either could be completed (Lake 1870). In 1749 Carclew was sold to William Lemon, a self-made industrialist and mine owner, who employed Thomas Edwards of Greenwich to enlarge Samuel Kempe's late C17 house; this house is shown in an engraving of 1758 by William Borlase. William Lemon died in 1760 and was succeeded by his grandson, also William, who was created a baronet in 1774. In the early C19 the house was surrounded by 'a fine shrubbery and beautiful gardens', walks and ponds, which were described as being 'remarkable for a combination of natural and artificial beauties' (Gilbert 1820); an extensive park contained a large herd of deer (Shirley 1867). Sir William Lemon died in 1824 and was succeeded by his tenth child, Sir Charles Lemon (c 1784-1868). Sir Charles, MP and a founder-member of the Royal Horticultural Society of Cornwall, developed the gardens in the early C19, planting new hybrid rhododendrons and plants introduced both by Cornish sea captains and Sir Joseph Hooker's (1817-1911) Himalayan expedition of 1848-51, of which he was a sponsor. Sir Charles appointed William Beattie Booth (c 1804-74), an expert on the cultivation of camellias, as head gardener in 1830; Booth remained at Carclew until 1858. Sir Charles Lemon died without issue in 1868, leaving the estate to his nephew, Colonel Tremayne, son of John Hearle Tremayne of Heligan, Cornwall (qv). The gardens were described in the *Journal of Horticulture* in 1874.

In 1934 the house was gutted by fire and was not rebuilt. In the mid C20 the estate was broken into several holdings, and today (2000) the site remains in divided private ownership.

A new Carclew House was built on a fresh site adjacent to the early C19 terraced gardens by Jack Siley in 1963 (Pett 1998). Outbuildings associated with the C18 mansion were converted to domestic use, and a further mid C20 house, Trevorick, was constructed adjacent to the ruins of the mansion. Other mid and late C20 domestic properties have been constructed to the west of the gardens.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Carclew is situated c 6km south-west of Truro and c 1km east of Perranarworthal, to the south of the River Kennall. The c 145ha site comprises some 10ha of gardens and pleasure grounds, and c 135ha of parkland and ornamental plantations. The site is bounded to the north by the River Kennall, while to the west the boundary is formed by a minor road which runs south-east from Perran Wharf to join a further minor road which forms the southern boundary of the site; this latter road leads south-east to Mylor Bridge. The western boundary of the site is marked in part by a stone wall and to the south-west by a belt of evergreen shrubbery planted beneath mature trees. This belt extends along the southern boundary of the site and is separated from the road by a stone wall which incorporates a large quantity of white quartz. Mid and late C20 domestic properties have been constructed within the southern shelter belt. To the east the site adjoins agricultural land. The site is undulating, with a general fall in ground level from the south to the River Kennall to the north. Streams flow north and north-east through two combs which thus divide the site into three parallel ridges which fall from south to north. There are views north from the site across the River Kennall and the Carnon River to the north-east towards Devoran and Carnon Downs. Ornamental planting including evergreen shrubbery and mixed plantations behind rustic stone and quartz walls to the west of the road form the western boundary of the site, and further plantations to the south have common historic origins and form part of the setting of the site.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Carclew is today (2000) approached from the minor road which forms the southern boundary of the site, at a point adjacent to its junction with the minor road forming the western boundary, c 530m south-west of the site of the house. The entrance is marked by low quadrant stone walls under granite copings, which support a pair of low granite gate piers. To the east of the entrance and immediately within the site stands Upper Lodge (listed grade II), a late C19 picturesque stone structure comprising a single storey and attic under a pitched slate roof with decorative pierced bargeboards. The lodge was built in 1871 for Col Tremayne and was extended to the east in 1985. The tarmac drive leads c 50m north-west through an area of mixed plantation and shrubbery, before sweeping north-east and north across the park for c 450m; the drive is separated from the park by late C20 fences. The drive passes to the south-west of the ruins of Carclew House (listed grade II*), and to the east and north of the late C18 coach house and stables (listed grade II*), and the late C18 barn, coachman's house, and stables (listed grade II*) which form a group around a yard to the south of the gardens. These buildings are today (2000) partially in domestic use. The drive continues west and north-west beyond the stables to serve a group of mid and late C20 domestic properties, including the present Carclew House, which are situated to the west of the gardens.

A further drive, in the C19 the principal approach to the house (Gilbert 1820), enters the site from the minor road which forms its western boundary, at a point c 240m east of the bridge which carries the road over the River Kennall. An entrance in the stone boundary wall provides access to a short, fragmented avenue of sycamores which leads c 50m east to a pair of tall stone gate piers which are surmounted by ball finials. To the south of the gateway stands a late C19 or early C20 lodge which comprises a single storey and attic under a pitched slate roof. Beyond the lodge the drive, which is today (2000) an agricultural track, extends c 200m east through a deciduous plantation and evergreen shrubbery before entering the park. The drive follows a level course through the park, passing east and south-east round a spur of high ground and revealing views north and west across the River Kennall towards Devoran. The drive continues south-south-east through a small plantation, to enter the pleasure grounds c 400m north-west of the ruins of Carclew House; at this point the drive is bordered by the remains of late C19 metal deer fencing. The drive passes to the west of Wheel Pond, and then turns south-east to pass above Wheel Pond and below Upper Pond, before following the north and east boundary of the garden to approach the ruins of Carclew House from the west. It is separated from the gardens by a stone wall, and from ornamental planting around Wheel Pond by late C19 arched, wrought-iron railings. Gilbert described the north-west drive as 'an avenue, nearly a mile in length, shaded with lofty foliage [chiefly evergreen], and lined on each side with a hedge of laurel' (Gilbert 1820); these features survived in 1874 (J Horticulture), but do not remain today.

A third drive, today (2000) a track, leads east-north-east from the ruins of Carclew House across the park to reach a farm, Carsawsan, situated beyond the eastern boundary of the park and the registered site. From the farm the drive leads south to join the road leading to Mylor Bridge.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The ruins of Carclew House (listed grade II*) stand in the well-timbered grounds of a mid C20 residence, Trevorick, towards the centre of the site. The ruins comprise a mid C18 Ionic portico which formed the central feature of the south facade, and extensive adjoining walls to the west; these rise through two storeys above a basement and are constructed in granite ashlar. To the west a mid C18 clock tower surmounts the remains of a single-storey west pavilion which was added to the original structure by Thomas Edwards. The eastern half of the building was extensively damaged in the fire of 1934 but elements of the internal arrangement and even decoration survive.

Carclew House as built by Samuel Kempe c 1720 comprised an approximately square block of two storeys above a basement constructed in granite ashlar. This building was completed for William Lemon by Thomas Edwards of Greenwich c 1750, and was extended by the addition of colonnades linking east and west pavilions to the original structure; the south portico was also added by Edwards for William Lemon. The appearance of the house in the mid C18 is recorded in an engraving of 1758 by William Borlase. The house was further extended in the late C18 and early C19, these additions being constructed in stuccoed granite rubble. The house was gutted by fire in 1934; its previous appearance is recorded in photographs published by *Country Life* in 1916 (reprinted 1934).

The late C18 chapel (listed grade II*) survives c 130m north of the ruins. The chapel is constructed in granite ashlar and sandstone, with a hipped slate roof and a polygonal roof covering the altar recess to the rear. The structure retains significant interior details including a plaster ceiling which mixes classical and gothic motifs; it was converted to domestic use during the Second World War and is today known as Cordy's Close.

A single-storey stone house, known today (2000) as Carclew House, is situated c 350m west of the ruins of the original building. Built in 1963 by Jack Siley, this house stands within the early C19 gardens west of the former mansion.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds are situated principally in the valley to the west of the ruins of Carclew House, with early and mid C19 formal terraced gardens running down the east-facing slope to the north-west drive. Areas of informal pleasure grounds comprising principally evergreen shrubbery planted beneath mature specimen trees and conifers are situated to the north and west of the ruins of the mansion, and on the margins of Wheel Pond c 190m north-west of the site of the house.

The terraced gardens are approximately rectangular-shaped on plan, with a further approximately rectangular area lying contiguous on the floor of the valley to the east. The gardens are entirely enclosed by C18 and C19 brick and stone walls (listed grade II); the walls incorporate some C16 and C17 bricks and stone work. The east-facing slope is cut into four principal terraces which are retained by stone and brick walls, and which are sub-divided by further brick walls (all walls and steps listed grade II). A mid C20 stone terrace extends below the east facade of the mid C20 house, below which a sloping lawn flanked by ornamental trees and shrubs descends to a stone-coped retaining wall. Centrally placed stone steps flanked by a pair of C19 cast-iron torchere descend to the second terrace, which is long and narrow on plan and laid out with tile-edged rose beds separated by a gravel walk running from north to south. A wrought-iron gate at the north end of the terrace leads to a small garden with a late C20 informal pool, from which a path leads to an informal camellia walk. The south end of the terrace is closed by a brick wall, while stone steps ascend south-west to a further terrace which is planted with trees and shrubs; this was the site of a late C19 greenhouse, the foundations of which survive. This terrace connects with two further terraces to the south-west linked by stone steps; these terraces are today planted with C20 ornamental trees and shrubs.

From the second terrace centrally placed stone steps descend through the retaining wall to the third terrace; the lower (east) end of the flight of steps is flanked by a pair of stone piers which rise through the full height of the retaining wall, and which are surmounted by ball finials. The third terrace is approximately square on plan and is laid to lawn with a centrally placed early C18 stone baluster which supports a square, four-faced sundial and finial (listed grade II); this may have been relocated from elsewhere on the site in the mid C20. The lawn is flanked to the north by C20 ornamental trees and shrubs, while there are gravel walks separating it from borders to the west and south. The retaining wall to the second terrace is planted with mature wisteria, and the remains of a stone bench seat stand at the southern end of the terrace. Steps ascend north to the informal camellia walk, and south to the mid C20 'Italian Garden'.

Stone steps at the north-east corner of the terrace descend to the fourth terrace which is similarly laid out with an approximately rectangular lawn surrounded by gravel walks which separate it from adjacent borders planted with ornamental shrubs. A circular depression in the centre of the lawn corresponds to a pool shown in a late C19 engraving; glasshouses shown on this terrace do not survive (J Horticulture). Golden yews flank an entrance in the south wall which is adjoined by piers surmounted by ball finials; this leads to the mid C20 'Italian Garden' which comprises two linked terraces. The lower terrace, which is enclosed by brick walls to the south, east, and west, is laid out with crazy-paved paths and a central circular fountain pool. The upper terrace, which is approached by stone steps, is planted with yews, conifers, and ornamental flowering shrubs. An entrance in the north wall allows access to the third terrace.

Stone steps with a C19 wrought-iron hand-rail descend from the north-east corner of the fourth terrace to reach a mezzanine terrace on which stands a stone bench; from here steps ascend north to the camellia walk, while a further flight of steps descends to a sloping area which is planted with mature early and mid C19 rhododendrons, beneath which are the remains of a C19 rockery composed of randomly placed quartz stones. Informal walks pass through this shrubbery to reach the Upper Pond, a formal rectangular pool which occupies the floor of the valley. The pond is edged with concrete flags, with shallow steps descending into the water at the north end flanked by a pair of low stone piers. Grass walks surround the pond on all sides, and to the north a stone retaining wall forms a dam; below this wall is a single line of mature limes. The pond is ornamented with a pair of C19 stone fountains in the form of mermen (listed grade II). These are placed to the north and south of an off-centre rectangular island planted with willows. The fountains were probably introduced to the site in the mid C20. On the east side of the pond a semicircular flight of crazy-paved steps ascends from the water to an early C20 tempietto comprising six Ionic columns linked by stone benches, which support an open-work wrought-iron dome. The west-facing slope above and to the east of the Upper Pond is planted with further mature specimen rhododendrons, and ornamental trees and shrubs; an informal quartz-edged gravel walk extends through this planting, parallel to the eastern boundary of the garden, to reach an area to the south of the Pond which is laid out with a small C19 rockery and an elliptical bed edged with quartz. This rockery is screened from the Pond by mature rhododendrons.

An informal walk descends to the north-west of the Pond, leading to a pair of C19 wrought-iron gates which give access to the north-west drive, and to the informal pleasure grounds around Wheel Pond. This pond is approximately rectangular on plan, and is also retained by a dam to the north, below which is a C19 cast-iron water-wheel which formerly pumped water to the house (listed grade II). Wheel Pond is surrounded by evergreen shrubbery, specimen conifers, and scrub.

The terraced gardens and pleasure grounds were developed in the early C19 by Sir William Lemon and his son, Sir Charles, who inherited the estate in 1824. The basic layout survives from this period, together with significant planting, particularly of rhododendrons, introduced by Sir Charles between 1824 and his death in 1868. A late C19 engraving published in the *Journal of Horticulture* (1874) shows formal bedding schemes which do not survive today. Other planting and some structural features date from the mid C20 when the gardens were cleared after a period of neglect following the destruction of the house in 1934. **PARK** The park surrounds the site of the house on all sides and is today (2000) in mixed agricultural use, with areas of pasture remaining to the west and south-west, and areas of arable cultivation to the east and north-east; these areas have been divided by C20 hedges and fences. The park is enclosed to the west and south by stone-faced banks and walls, while mixed plantations and evergreen shrubberies screen the north-west, west, and south boundaries of the park. In the early C19 Gilbert (1820) noted that the park was divided into an area for deer, and further areas for grazing cattle and sheep, while in the mid C19 Shirley (1867) commented that the park contained a herd of 150 fallow deer. The park appears to have been enclosed in the mid C18, presumably as part of the improvements undertaken by William Lemon after his acquisition of the estate in 1749.

KITCHEN GARDEN Today (2000) no separate kitchen garden survives at Carclew. In the C19 the terraced gardens, which are today entirely in ornamental cultivation, included areas of productive garden. These appear to have comprised the smaller enclosures, including the 'Italian Garden', which lie to the south and parallel to the four principal terraces. A small area of orchard planted with standard apple trees survives to the south of the mid C20 Carclew House.

REFERENCES

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Maps J Norden, *Speculi Britanniae*, surveyed c 1597, published 1728
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Archival items The Lemon family papers, including plans, estate records, and accounts are held in the Cornwall Record Office (WH, WH(2), BY, CF, A(2) 161).
Description written: September 2000 Amended: October 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.