

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

RENISHAW HALL

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

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**RENISHAW HALL**

Name: RENISHAW HALL

County: Derbyshire

District: North East Derbyshire (District Authority)

Parish: Eckington

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.300578  
Longitude: -1.3493633  
National Grid Reference: SK4345978378  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1000683  
Date first listed: 04-Aug-1984

## Details

Gardens and a park of the late C19 and early C20 with C17 origins which were laid out by Sir George Sitwell.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Sitwell family appear in records of 1301 when they were resident at Ridgeway, c 2km from Renishaw. The family settled in Stavely Netherthorpe in the earlier C16 and the site at Renishaw was acquired by Robert Sytwell in the mid C16 when he bought fields and common land. By 1600 it had become the family seat. The family acquired wealth through their ironworks which by the end of the C17 were the largest producers of iron nails in the world. The estate passed through marriage to the Hurt family who changed their name to Sitwell in 1777. Sir George Sitwell (1860-1943), fourth baronet, was responsible for the layout of the formal gardens and wrote *On the Making of Gardens* in 1909. The estate has remained in the Sitwell family since that time and is in private ownership (1998).

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Renishaw Hall lies to the west of the village of Renishaw from which it is divided by a railway line. The village of Eckington lies to the north-west, there are open fields to the north-east and west, and an opencast mine to the south. To the north and west the boundary is formed by Staveley Lane, the B6053, and to the east by the A616. Fencing divides the south side of the park from an opencast mine. The c 100ha site is on land which falls to the east.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance is on the north-east side of the site where gates lead to a drive running south-west from the A616. Some 100m south-west of the entrance there is an early C19 lodge and entrance archway (listed grade II) which was designed by Sir Sitwell Sitwell and moved to this position in the mid C19. The drive turns north-west up a hill and continues westwards to the Hall and stables. An entrance with gates on the north side of the site runs south from the B6053. On the south-west side of the site there is an entrance from Staveley Lane from which a track leads north through Chesterfield Approach Plantation. The track continues north-east from the edge of the Plantation and from this point trees alongside it are the remains of an avenue shown on the large-scale OS map of 1875 which was probably part of a system of avenues shown on an C18 estate map.

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**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Renishaw Hall (listed grade I) was built in c 1625 by George Sitwell as an H-plan house. The building was altered and extended 1793-1808 by Joseph Badger for Sitwell Sitwell, first baronet. Edwin Lutyens (1866-1944) was responsible for interior alterations in 1909. The Hall is in use as a private residence (1998).

Stables (listed grade II\*) by Badger are ranged around a courtyard c 100m north-west of the Hall.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** On the north side of the Hall there are lawns in an area shown on the C18 estate map as an enclosure. There are views north over parkland and agricultural land beyond. Formal gardens lie on the south side of the Hall axially aligned with its south front. They consist of rectangular compartments divided from one another by clipped hedges which are terraced down to the south in three stages, as well as occupying different levels as the land falls to the east. A terrace running along the front of the Hall overlooks a square lawn lined with topiary on the east and west sides which divides it from two smaller lawns called the First Candle on the west side and the Second Candle to the east. Each of these areas has a fountain, the appearance of which gave rise to the name. A bank divides the First Candle from an area of higher ground called Top Lawn where a lime avenue runs north/south along the length of the gardens. This is one of several avenues shown on the C18 estate map and probably represents one of the only surviving features of a layout instituted in c 1698 by George Sitwell which included walled orchards and yew hedges. To the west of the avenue, c 60m south-west of the Hall, there is a gothic temple (listed grade II) which was designed by Joseph Badger in the early C19 as an aviary and is now used as a pet cemetery (1998). A second terraced walk lined with clipped hedges runs east/west across the garden, c 50m south of the Hall. At the east end the walk leads through a gateway into woodland called Broxhill Wood which is marked 'Little Old Orchard' on the C18 estate map. A classical temple of late C20 date lies c 120m south-east of the Hall in the woodland. The walk overlooks a central lawn with a circular swimming pool. In a compartment to the east called Lower Lawn there is a water garden which consists of a central sub-rectangular island with clipped hedges within a rectangular water-filled enclosure. On the west side of the swimming pool an enclosure with lawns is called the Buttress Garden for the buttressed wall which divides it from Top Lawn to the west. Clipped hedges divide these areas from a grass walk running along the top of a ha-ha, c 100m south of the Hall, which runs east/west across the bottom of the garden. This overlooks a central semicircular lawn divided from the park by railings. There are views to the south of the lakes and parkland.

The C18 map shows the Hall surrounded by gardens laid out in geometrical patterns with quartering paths, and the area south of these is marked 'Great Old Orchard'. The layout shown probably represents that instituted by George Sitwell in c 1698. The 1875 OS map shows that apart from a small area on the south-east side of the Hall, the formal gardens had been swept away, and a lawn, divided from the park by a ha-ha and flanked by the lime avenue, is shown on the south side of the Hall.

**PARK** There is parkland on all sides of the Hall. To the north the land falls and the north-east part of the park is laid out as a golf course which was created in the early C20. Old Waterworks Plantation shelters part of the north-east boundary, and North Wood, which is to the west of the drive from Eckington, separates the golf course from parkland to the west. Some 350m west of the Hall is a set of walled paddocks, shown on the 1875 OS map, which probably originated as a stud farm and are now (1998) vineyards. Chesterfield Approach Plantation lies immediately south of the paddocks and in the area between this and the gardens there are the remains of at least one lime avenue, shown on the 1875 OS map, which survives from the formal layout shown on the C18 estate map and runs parallel to the avenue within the garden.

East and south of the Hall the land falls and in the valley there are two lakes. The northernmost is the smaller of the two, and the southern lake, which has an island near its south-east shore, is c 500m in length. Sir George Sitwell was MP for Scarborough and conceived of the scheme to construct the lakes as relief for the unemployed in his constituency and they were duly created by unemployed fishermen in the closing years of the C19. To the north of the lake is Renishaw Wood and Broxhill Wood, and along the east boundary Willowbed Plantation, designed to screen the railway and ironworks. The planting in this and possibly in other areas of the park was directed by William Milner who was employed by Sir George in 1890. The land rises up to the south and west from the lake with Halfmoon Plantation sheltering the south-east boundary. A patch of woodland on the sloping land c 800m south-west of the house is called Milner Plantation.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** Some 200m south-west of the Hall are the remains of a kitchen garden. An orangery entered from the north side from a door with a pedimented doorcase is in ruinous condition (1998), as are the attached walls which have arched

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entrances. A tennis court lies south of the orangery. The 1875 OS map shows the garden with two compartments, the southern of which occupied the tennis court area. Another kitchen garden, also shown on the 1875 OS map, lies immediately west of the stable block. It is walled and has a number of free-standing glasshouses, some of which are probably of late C19 or early C20 date.

## 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.

## Bibliographie

### **Books and journals**

Jellicoe, G, Jellicoe, S (at al), *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, (1986), 519-20

Sitwell, R, *The Garden at Renishaw Hall*, (c1995)

Sitwell, R, *Renishaw Hall*, (c1995)

### **Other**

*Country Life* (14 May 1948), pp 506-11

*Country Life*, 162 (1 September 1977), pp 522-5

*Country Life*, 83 (7 May 1948), pp 476-80

Estate Map, probably early C18 (private collection)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1875

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874-5