

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

LUDSTONE HALL

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Name:	LUDSTONE HALL
District:	Shropshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Claverley
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.545703 Longitude: -2.2960286 National Grid Reference: SO8002294247 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001129 Date first listed: 01-Dec-1986

Details

Moated C17 manor house with formal topiary gardens in C17 style and a small park, both created c 1900.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In the C17 and later Ludstone was the seat of the Whitmores, and c 1607 the Hall was completely rebuilt for Sir John Whitmore (d 1649) within what is presumably a medieval moat. In 1867, after a long period when it was let to farmers, Ludstone was sold by the Whitmores. In 1872-3 it was purchased by Joseph Round Cartwright (d 1910), a recently widowed Sedgley firebrick manufacturer, under who the house was restored, service ranges constructed, and new gardens and a small park laid out. The Hall remained in private hands in the late 1990s.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Ludstone Hall and its ancillary buildings dominate the small hamlet of Ludstone, which lies in a subsidiary north/south valley north of the Danford Brook. Ludstone is in the parish of Claverley, a substantial village c 2km to the south-west, with which it is linked by an unclassified road. Bridgnorth lies 9km to the west. The registered area (c 27ha) is partly bounded by local roads, the boundary otherwise following field edges.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Since the 1870s the main approach to the Hall has been a short, broad and straight gravel drive bordered with clipped yews on the south side, past a brick, Jacobean-style lodge (listed, as are gate piers, grade II) of the 1870s designed by Robert Griffiths, which leads to a gravel court across the south front of the Hall. Of the same date are the gates and flanking walls (also listed grade II). Until the 1870s the main approach was from the east, through the service area and stables court and across the moat via a stone bridge with low brick lodges with pyramidal roofs (one ?C17, the other C20) on the inner edge of the moat. That remains as a secondary approach.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Ludstone Hall (listed grade I) is a brick house with stone dressings built within an existing moat for Sir John Whitmore c 1607. It is an elaborate and tall H-plan building, the south, entrance front having curvilinear gables and a projecting semicircular bay in the middle of the recessed centre section. The Hall was extensively restored in the later C19 under the architect Robert Griffiths of Stafford.

East of the Hall, outside the moat, are various farm, stable and ancillary buildings including a squash court. Incorporating C18 and C19 fabric, most are of the 1870s.

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GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens lie both within and outside the square moat which surrounds the Hall. This itself, which has brick- and stone-lined sides, forms one of the main features of the garden, and is crossed by three bridges. To the south is that which supports the forecourt, to the east that carrying the drive through the stables court. The third bridge is in the centre of the west side. Of brick, that bridge was probably built in the 1870s.

To either side of the main approach drive are 1m high ashlar walls (garden walls listed grade II). Rising above these are tall and dense hedges, outgrown from rows of specimen evergreens, largely hollies. Behind the east hedge is the Knot Garden, comprising four groups of box-hedged parterres, each in turn quartered. The designs are various, and include playing card suits. East of the Knot Garden is an orchard. West of the main drive, and extending up the outside (west) of the west moat, is a lawn. A gate in the wall up its west side gives views across, and access to, the park. At the north end of the lawn is a small formal terrace, occupied in the late C19 by a conservatory (now gone). Another lawn, with a small summerhouse at its south-east corner, lies within the moat to the east of the Hall.

Behind, north of, the Hall, a small lawn with shrubs and specimen trees slopes gently down to a roughly square pool which forms a northward extension of the moat. Running around its west and north sides is a broad belt of shrubs and specimen trees. Within this, west of the pool and on a bank, is a line of sweet chestnuts. Most are late C19 or C20 but two, at the south end of the bank, are massive veterans, presumably of c 1700.

PARK In the 1870s J R Cartwright created a small park around the Hall, removing the existing field boundaries (mostly medieval strip boundaries fossilised in the ?C17 at inclosure) and planting specimen trees. The park survives; the western part, overlooked from the gardens down the west side of the Hall, was in arable cultivation in 1998, the remainder was permanent pasture. The roughly rectangular fishpond opposite the main gates, said in many accounts to have been another creation of the late C19, was already present in 1840.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden, surrounded with walls and hedges and with box-edged paths, lies outside the east arm of the moat. A greenhouse, probably the vinery mentioned in the 1910 sale particulars, runs along most of the north wall. The garden is dominated by a pigeoncote with clock tower which rises above the south-east corner of the garden. At least in this form, the garden was made in the 1870s. It remains in production.

REFERENCES

Country Life, 111 (11 January 1952), pp 92-5; (25 January 1952), pp 222-5 P A Stamper, Historic Parks and Gardens in Shropshire. A Compendium of Site Reports Compiled 1994-1997, (Shropshire County Council 1996) P A Stamper, Historic Parks and Gardens of Shropshire (1996), pp 8, 85,100-2

Maps Tithe map for Claverley, 1840 (Shropshire Records and Research Centre)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1882, published 1886 3rd edition published 1928 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1882, published 1883 2nd edition surveyed 1901, published 1902

Illustrations J H Smith, watercolour of Ludstone, early C19 (Shropshire Records and Research Centre)

Archival items Sale particulars, 1872, including contract etc (1496/341, 343, 359), (Shropshire Records and Research Centre)

Sale particulars, 1910 (1391/1), (Shropshire Records and Research Centre)

Description written: November 1998 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: February 2000

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.