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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

NOTGROVE MANOR

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Name:	NOTGROVE MANOR
County:	Gloucestershire
District:	Cotswold (District Authority)
Parish:	Notgrove
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.876723 Longitude: -1.8469775 National Grid Reference: SP1063119806 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000775 Date first listed: 28-Feb-1986

Details

Early C20 formal gardens and pre C18 park around C15-C18 Cotswold manor house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Notgrove Manor was a possession of the bishops of Worcester from Domesday until the Reformation, when it was held successively by the Rodboroughs and Brownings. It was acquired by the Whittington family on the marriage of Sir Guy de Whittington to Cecilia Browning. Alexander Whittington may have been the first of the family to make his home at the manor house, probably in the mid 1500s. By 1608, the manor was held by his grandson, John Whittington. John died without issue and the Manor eventually passed to Joseph Pyrke (ne Watkyns) who held it by 1779. It was later owned by two Oxford colleges (Christ Church, then Corpus) and run as a farm. In 1908, it was bought by Cyril Cunard who, with his wife, laid out the pre-1914 formal gardens around the Manor. It was then occupied by the Anderson family, before being purchased by the present (1999) owners in the 1970s.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The village of Notgrove lies 14km east of Cheltenham and 6km west of Bourton-on-the-Water. Its northern part is 0.5km from the A436, from which it is approached via a minor road. The Manor stands to the south of the village, c 50m west of the church of St Bartholomew. The registered area consists of c 5ha of formal garden and woodland, to the south, west, and north-west of the Manor, and c 20ha of parkland to the south, south-west, and south-east. The gardens and park are bounded mainly by low drystone walls and occasionally by post and wire fences. The ground rises gently to the west of the Manor and has been terraced. To the east, the ground falls steeply, down to a wooded valley (Fish Pond Coppice), then rises again to a wooded summit (Shrubs Coppice). To the south of the Manor, the ground falls away steeply then rises sharply up to Coronation Covert. From the Manor there are extensive views across the park to the south and south-east, the south-west part of the park being obscured by a belt of trees running north/south.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES A gravel drive enters the park c 350m west of the Manor, passing through wrought-iron gates and overthrow, between tall ashlar piers with ball finials. A two-storey Cotswold stone lodge (the first lodge on the site, built 1910), with a dovecote incorporated into the gable, stands to the north of the drive. The drive runs east for 300m, between

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an avenue of mature beeches and just north of a ha-ha, then turns north-west and passes between two ashlar piers with ball finials, c 20m east of the Manor. These piers have probably been moved slightly since 1914, to cater for the change in the position of the front door. The drive to a gravel forecourt between the church and the Manor then continues north-west, between yew hedges, to the tree-lined back drive which leads between the stone farm buildings (outside the registered area), to the village.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Notgrove Manor, a three-storey house with three wings and a principal south facade, is built of roughly coursed, squared Cotswold stone with stone slate roofs. Some parts may date to the late C15, but it is mostly of the C17 and C18. The west wing was added in 1908, by A N Prentice, for Cyril Cunard, and was partly built on old foundations. Some rebuilding of the Manor took place after a fire in the mid C20 and the front door, originally in the east side of the south wing, is now in the south side of the east wing.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Notgrove Manor stands in the north-east corner of its gardens. Three square garden compartments to the south of the Manor are edged by a low drystone wall (1908-14) to the south, and divided from each other by low walls, steps, and herbaceous borders.

The gravel forecourt is enclosed by the east and south wings of the Manor and, to the east, by the low stone wall of the church of St Bartholomew (C12 and C14, listed grade I), the spire of which is an important eyecatcher from the garden. The front drive enters between ashlar piers in the south-east corner of the forecourt and leaves, between semicircular yew hedges with topiary ball finials, at its northern edge. South of the forecourt is a rectangular lawn (c 18 x 13m) with a central circular pond and fountain (post 1970s) in stone and a small clipped box in each corner. A low drystone wall, with stone capping, runs around the east, south, and west sides of the compartment. A flagged stone path leads south, from the south-east corner of the south wing of the Manor, along the western edge of the lawn, to the Orchard, an area of grass with late C20 planting of fruit and nut trees. A low stone wall supports the Orchard along its southern edge and separates it from the drive.

To the west of the first compartment is a second, with a slightly smaller rectangular lawn edged by narrow herbaceous borders on its north, east, and west sides and with flagged paths along its north and south edges. The low wall which forms the southern boundary of the compartments bows out into a semicircle here, reflecting the shape of bay windows on the ground and first floors of the Manor. Two steps lead up to a gap in the wall in the centre of the semicircle, through which the Orchard can be accessed. The Orchard slopes gently uphill from east to west and is retained by the southern boundary wall.

The axial paths along the north and south edges of the second compartment continue west, up short flights of steps, to a third compartment, separated from the second by a herbaceous border running north/south. Its northern third is a flagged-stone sitting area, enclosed by the Manor walls to the north and east. In the corner where these walls meet is a late C20 wooden conservatory. A raised bed, supported by drystone walls, runs along part of the northern edge of the compartment, against the Manor wall. Halfway along, a bronze snake fountain (probably late C20) discharges water into a small raised stone pool below. The southern two-thirds of the compartment are a rectangular lawn, with flagged paths to its north, east, and west and herbaceous borders to the south, east, and west. A drystone wall runs behind the western herbaceous border and an ornamental stone seat stands in a gap in the border, halfway along this wall.

Stone steps lead from the south-west and north-west corners of this compartment, west to a c 80m long, rectangular lawn to the south-west of the Manor. This is bordered to the north by a drystone wall, to the west by a yew hedge, and to the south by a belt of trees. To the south-east it is open to the Orchard. The lawn slopes gently upwards, from east to west, and five broad grass steps, running north/south, terrace its eastern third. A pergola (1908-14), with paved paths and steps beneath, once ran around the north, west, and south sides of the grass steps area, but most of this structure was removed in the 1970s. Only two pairs of square piers (random rubble with heavy wooden beams) remain, at the northern end of the top grass step. These are covered by an old wisteria. The western part of the lawn is dotted with young specimen trees and was once edged to the north and east by peony beds, put in by the Cunards but removed in the late C20. A ditch remains to show their position.

Post-1970 stone steps lead north from the end of the central grass step to an informal area of grass and trees, dominated by a mature copper beech, north-west of the Manor, at the south-east corner of the kitchen garden. There are clipped box hedges against the west wall of the north wing of the Manor. The lawns here are on two levels, linked by a grass slope, with the highest lawn to the north. A two-storey stone gardener's house (present by 1871, Deeds) with stone slate roof to the north-east is linked

to the Manor by a semicircle of stone wall which is pierced by a gateway, beyond which steps lead down to the back drive. Cyril Cunard's octagonal, thatched, ornamental dairy (listed grade II), seen through the gateway to the east, forms a visual part of the garden scheme. A rectangular swimming pool (late C20) with flag-stone surround lies to the east of the gardener's house, south of the potting sheds in the kitchen garden. The position of a former field gate is marked by a 1m high stone gatepost, c 10m from the south-west corner of the swimming pool.

Some 5m from the north-west corner of the pool is a gateway into the kitchen garden. A path between yew hedges (c 2.5m high) leads west south of this gate, round a corner of the kitchen garden wall, to a raised walk (c 1.5m above the lawn to its south) along the length of the south wall of the kitchen garden. A wide herbaceous border runs along the wall, to the north of a gravel path, and is divided into six compartments by yew hedges and topiary. To the south of the path is a long strip of lawn with a line of pear-drop-shaped clipped golden yews. Stone steps at the east and west ends of the walk give access to the lawn which it overlooks.

Yew hedges at the west end of the lawn separate it from an area of mixed woodland, c 100m west of the Manor. This runs for about 150m, from the north-west corner of the kitchen garden, south to the drive. There has been some late C20 planting but most of the trees date from c 1914. A central mown grass path leads south through the wood. A post and rail fence along its western margin divides it from a c 3ha grass field edged by mature deciduous trees, which is used by the cricket club.

The structure of the pleasure grounds (walls, grass steps, and compartments) was laid out by the Cunards, 1908-14. Late C20 alterations have altered, but not obscured, the original design.

PARK The park, c 20ha of pasture with scattered trees, clumps, and small woods, is divided from the gardens and pleasure grounds by a stone ha-ha (repaired late C20) which runs south of the main drive. It is an approximate rectangle, with its long axis running east/west and three projections of land extending southwards. Its western edge is bounded by a minor road which connects the A436 to the village of Turkdean, c 2km south of Notgrove. The fields in the west of the park and all the woodland areas are fenced off.

There is a narrow strip of mature beech trees along the western boundary of the park. An area of 11ha to the east of this is divided into three fields by post and wire fencing. Two small wooden barns with tiled roofs (possibly sheep-houses, post-1883, OS) stand on the main north/south fence.

Remains of an avenue of horse chestnuts (planted after 1883, OS) starts c 150m west-south-west of the Manor and runs south for c 300m. In the late C20, clumps of mixed deciduous trees were planted at its ends (by Hal Moggridge) with the aim of creating a vista between the two clumps when the avenue trees finally die or are removed.

The section of park to the east of the avenue is visible from the Manor, has more planting of clumps than the western part, and is not divided into fields. Only the woodland areas are fenced off. Coronation Covert (c 3ha) was probably planted for Edward VII's coronation in 1901. It is a mixed wood, with dense ground cover and a central track, at the southernmost point of the park. Its northern end is c 300m south of the Manor. Its boundaries follow those of former fields. Fish Pond Coppice, in a valley c 100m to its east, extends from the northern to the southern boundary of the park and is similar in character to Coronation Covert but contains three stream-fed ponds. Part of its southern end (c 1ha) is older than the rest of the wood and was present before 1883 (OS).

To the east of Fish Pond Coppice, the ground rises up, through c 4ha of pasture, to Shrubs Coppice, a mixed wood of c 3.5ha which lies along the eastern boundary of the park. This wood was planted after 1883 (OS), except for c 1ha at its southern end which is of an earlier date.

The central part of the park, between the avenue and Fish Pond Coppice, contains many earthworks. These run east/west along the slopes and may be the remains of medieval lynchets and trackways (one trackway is indicated on the Inclosure map of 1776). Several clumps, some mature, some late C20, have been planted in this area.

The park was present by 1669 (estate map) and had already been divided into fields at this time. By 1871 it was known as 'The Manor Farm' (Deeds). Field names in 1871 include 'The Conygree' (warren), in the area later occupied by the kitchen garden.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden, a sub-rectangular enclosure which comes to a point in its south-east corner, lies 50m north-west of the Manor. The garden walls (probably early C19, listed grade II) are of random rubble with concrete capping and

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range from 3m to 4m in height. There are three sets of ornate wrought-iron gates (listed grade II), between piers of limestone rubble with squared and dressed quoins, moulded cappings, and ball finials. The west gate is dated 1830 and the south-east gate 1898 (with the initials JGSA and EGA: presumably of the Anderson family). The plainer gate on the south wall is probably of a later date. A small wooden gate pierces the wall in the north-west corner of the garden, where small windows in the garden wall indicate that there must once have been a shed. A large solid wood gate in the south-east wall leads to the back drive.

The western two-thirds of the kitchen garden are a fenced-off horse paddock. The eastern third, used for vegetable-growing, has two irregularly shaped beds, divided and surrounded by wide gravel paths. Single-storey stone potting-sheds run along the eastern end of the southern wall. A fence closes off a small private garden in the south-east corner, adjacent to the gardener's house. A row of old greenhouses along the south-east wall was removed in the late C20 but parts of their stone walls remain. Several brick and stone cold frames remain, in a dilapidated state (1999).

REFERENCES

Country Life, 36 (21 November 1914), pp 678-83 D Verey, *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire The Cotswolds* (1970), pp 345-7

Maps Map of Notgrove Manor, 1669 (1072), (Gloucestershire Record Office) Inclosure Map, 1776 (466[L]), (Gloucestershire Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1882-3, published 1883 2nd edition revised 1900, published 1903 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1883, published 1884

Archival items Deeds of Notgrove Estate, 1871 (D1 82 111/148), (Gloucestershire Record Office)

Description written: September 1999 Register Inspector: TVAC Edited: April 2003

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.