

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HARLAXTON MANOR

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**HARLAXTON MANOR**

Name:	HARLAXTON MANOR
County:	Lincolnshire
District:	South Kesteven (District Authority)
Parish:	Harlaxton
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.884616 Longitude: -0.67513066 National Grid Reference: SK 89247 32728 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000982 Date first listed: 24-Jun-1985

## Details

A mid C19 park and gardens with garden buildings by William Burn form the setting for a mid C19 house.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Sir Daniel de Ligne (d 1656), a Flemish refugee, purchased Harlaxton Manor in 1619 (Murden 1976) and was knighted in 1620. By 1758 George de Ligne Gregory had inherited the Manor. When he died in 1822 his nephew, Gregory Williams (1786-1854), who had travelled in Europe attached to various Embassies and who collected works of art, inherited and became Gregory Gregory. Gregory commissioned Anthony Salvin to design the new house and in 1838 William Burn and his partner David Bryce were employed. Edward Blore was also consulted. Many garden features were designed by Burn. Gregory Gregory's distant relative was Prince Charles Joseph de Ligne (1735-1814) who designed many European gardens and he may have been an influence in the planning of the new gardens (Mason and Webb c 1993). The old house was demolished in c 1850 (Murden 1976). During the First World War the 11th Division and then the trench warfare school were stationed at the Manor. The Gregory family remained at the Manor until 1937 when the estate was sold by Major Philip Pearson-Gregory. It was purchased by Mrs Violet van der Elst who renamed the site Grantham Castle but this later reverted to Harlaxton Manor. In the Second World War the Manor was used by the 1st Airborne Division. The Society of Jesus bought the Manor and its surrounding estate in 1948. The Manor was later leased, first from 1966 by the University of Stanford, California and then from 1971 by the University of Evansville, Indiana who subsequently purchased it and in whose ownership it remains (2000). The parkland remains in separate private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Harlaxton Manor, surrounded by grounds comprising c 170ha, lies 4.5km south-west of Grantham, 1.25km east of the village of Harlaxton, and 1.6km east of Belvoir Castle (qv) in the Vale of Belvoir. The Manor is set into the base of a ridge with the garden terraces on the steep slopes above it to the south, with Harlaxton Wood extending north-east to south-west to the rear of the Manor. The parkland slopes very gently downwards to the north-west. The north-west boundary follows the line of the A607 with the north-east boundary overlooking arable land. The eastern and southern boundaries are marked by perimeter belts of trees from the north-east end of Harlaxton Wood to

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**HARLAXTON MANOR**

Swinehill Plantation in the south-west corner of the park. The western boundary abuts the Swine Hill road south of Harlaxton village then continues north along the east side of the village housing to meet the north-west boundary at the junction of the road from the village and the A607. The setting is rural. The old manor house (outside the boundary here registered) lay south of Harlaxton village, 1.25km west of the present Manor.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance to the park is from the north-west corner of the site, off the A607 and is marked by a gateway with a screen wall (c 1832-44, probably by Salvin or Burn, listed grade II\*) built of ashlar with a segmented arched gateway. The drive leads south-east for 350m, crosses a bridge over the lake then continues to the gatehouse (Salvin c 1832-8, listed grade II\*), built of ashlar in Tudor-Revival style with a carriage opening. Stone-coped walls run on either side of the gatehouse. The drive continues 400m to the forecourt on the north-west front of Harlaxton Manor. Other minor entrances to the site are by a footpath from Harlaxton village which joins the main drive and a back drive on the south-east boundary of the site, 180m south-east of the Manor.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Harlaxton Manor (listed grade I), standing toward to the south-east boundary of the site and set into the hill, is built of Ancaster stone and brick with gabled and hipped roofs in Elizabethan-Revival style with baroque elements. It is of two storeys with basements and attics and is eleven bays by five bays. The Manor was designed by Anthony Salvin (1799-1881) in 1831 and building began in 1832. In 1838 William Burn (1789-1870) and his partner David Bryce (1803-76) were called in to replace Salvin and to complete the building. Edward Blore (1787-1879) was also consulted. Burn and Bryce added baroque elements to the original design and the building was completed in 1854. Attached to the south-west corner of the Manor is a single-storey, ten-bay conservatory. The forecourt gateway and screen (c 1840-54, listed grade I), probably designed by Gregory Gregory in collaboration with Burn and Bryce, is a combination of the Jacobean and Baroque style. It has a central doorway with large lodges extended by screen walls on either side.

The stables (c 1838-44, probably by Burn, listed grade II with the adjoining screen wall) lie 150m north-east of the Manor. Now known as Manor Cottages, they are built of ashlar stone with gabled and hipped roofs in Renaissance-Revival style and are used as university residences.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens, on seven levels, lie to the south-east and south-west above the Manor, divided from the wooded pleasure grounds by a track. The track which forms the boundary between gardens and pleasure grounds has a drystone wall on its northern edge. This track was part of a rail track used to carry building stone and part of the tunnel which connects it with the Manor is still extant 50m north-east of the house.

The gardens can be entered either through the Manor and the conservatory on the south-west front or by stone steps from the forecourt on the north-west front. From the conservatory, a gravelled path leads along to the south-east front. To the south-east of the path is the Lion Terrace (Burn c 1838-44, listed grade II\*). This terrace, known as East Fountain Terrace in 1906 (CL), comprises an open loggia with flanking walls with low flights of steps on either side. Flanking the steps on pedestals are two pairs of stone lions which were brought from Witley Court (qv) by Mrs Van der Elst in 1938. The steps lead up to the top of the terrace to a further terrace, now (2000) a tennis court. North-east of the tennis court is a double yew walk. From here, the path leads upwards and south-westwards to the highest of the seven terraces on which is planted a stand of cedar of Lebanon. From here there are views of Harlaxton Manor to the north-west and over the Vale of Belvoir to the west. The path continues along the ridge south-westwards with views north-westwards of an ornamental canal 100m south-west of the Manor and eastwards of the serpentine yew hedge, 110m south of the Manor. From the ridge, steps (c 1838-54, probably by Burn, listed grade II) lead eastwards to the south-east corner of the Italian Garden, 100m south-east of the Manor.

The Italian Garden has a pair of garden pergolas (c 1838-54, probably by Burn, listed grade II with the steps and trough to the south-east) built of ashlar in Renaissance-Revival style with square piers and plain lintels on scroll brackets. The pergola to the north-west has a single bay and the one to the south-east has a double rectangular bay and adjoins a flight of steps with balustraded walls with a square trough, ornamented with a lion mask, set against the south-west wall of the garden. In the north-west corner of the Italian Garden is a two-storey Gazebo (c 1832-44, probably by Burn, listed grade II\*), built of ashlar with a slate roof to a hexagonal plan. A flight of steps leads up to the first floor on the south-west side of the Gazebo. From the Italian Garden a double flight of steps (c 1838-44, probably by Burn, listed grade II) leads north-westwards to a path which

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**HARLAXTON MANOR**

continues to the north-east end of the ornamental canal, with a line of yews along its north-west bank. At the north-east end of the canal stands a mid C20 statue (listed grade II) set on a mid C19 pedestal. From here steps lead down to the south-west terrace and the Conservatory. A short flight of steps leads north-west to the lower terrace, 50m north-west of the Manor, with gazebos (c 1838-54, probably by Burn, listed grade I with terraces, garden walls, and steps) at either end. Twelve stone benches (c 1838-54, probably by Burn, listed grade II) are set around this terrace which is grassed with a gravel path. From the terrace a double flight of steps leads down to the forecourt.

The wooded pleasure grounds extend on both the south-west and north-east sides of the Manor, backed by a perimeter belt of trees. Ornamental trees are planted south-east of the Manor. Loudon in 1840 said that Mr Gregory 'would gradually unite the highly artificial garden scenery with the picturesque woods already existing, harmonising the woods with the artificial scenery by the introduction of foreign plants'. He continued, 'in the natural woods of Harlaxton, Mr Gregory had introduced masses of rhododendrons, holly, periwinkle, tutsan, laurel and other evergreen shrubs; and a great many sorts of herbaceous plants, including bulbs and Californian annuals' (Boniface 1990).

**PARK** The park extends north-westwards from the Manor on either side of the main drive. Harlaxton Wood which extends down the eastern side of the park was present at least by 1798 (Enclosure map). Charles Greville, who visited Harlaxton in January 1838 with a party from Belvoir Castle noticed that the Manor had 'no park around it, very little wood and scarcely any fine trees' (guidebook 1992). A lake runs from south-west to north-east across the north-west section of the park crossed by a bridge (c 1822-38, probably by Salvin, listed grade II\*) built of ashlar with five segmental arches. In the record of his visit of May 1840, Loudon describes the main drive thus, 'From the public road it first gradually descends more than half its length to the bottom of a valley, in which a lake of great extent might readily be formed' (Boniface 1990). There are playing fields north-west of the stables, to the north-east of the main drive, while the majority of the parkland is now (2000) under the plough with a scattering of trees.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden (c 1832-44, probably by Burn, listed grade II\*), with ornate brick walls with stone coping, is located in the centre of the site, 500m north-west of the Manor and adjacent to the north-east side of the main drive. The main part of the garden, a half-hexagon with an inner and outer wall, has its longest wall abutting the main drive. Set into the centre of this wall are ornate iron gates flanked by clairvoies allowing views into the garden. The gardener's house lies to the north-west of the garden within a separate walled enclosure. Free-standing C20 greenhouses stand in this enclosure. The gardener's house is shown flanked by greenhouses in the 1880s (OS); these are no longer extant.

#### REFERENCES

E Turnor, Collections for the History of the Town and Soke of Grantham (1806) *Country Life*, 20 (13 October 1906), pp 522-32; 82 (9 October 1937), pp 374-9; 121 (11 April 1957), pp 704-7; (18 April 1957), pp 764-7 *Grantham Journal*, 26 November 1949; 8 January 1965; 12 April 1979; 27 October 1989; 2 July 1993; 27 May 1994 H Thorold and J Yates, Lincolnshire, A Shell Guide (1965), pp 75-80 J Murden, Harlaxton Through the Ages (1976) Anon, Harlaxton College, the British Campus of the University of Evansville, Indiana, A Brief Survey of the Design and Architecture of Harlaxton Manor (1977) *Nottingham Evening Post*, 16 May 1980 N Pevsner et al, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire* (2nd edn 1989), pp 362-7 P Boniface, In Search of English Gardens: The Travels of John Claudius Loudon and his wife Jane (National Trust Classics 1990), pp 190-5 Harlaxton Manor, guidebook, (Harlaxton College 1992) A Mason and M Webb, Harlaxton Manor Gardens, guide leaflet, (c 1993) *Lincolnshire Life*, (July 1994) G Cook, Harlaxton College, The Manor, A Report on the Condition of the Garden Structures (1998) Sir C G E Welby, A Note on the Manor of Harlaxton and its History (typescript 1937, amended 1977) [copy on EH file]

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1906 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1888, published 1889

Archival items Harlaxton Manor, nr Grantham, Catalogue of the Contents of the Mansion, Sale catalogue, Messrs Foster 1937 (Lincolnshire Archives) J Murden, Collection of Harlaxton Papers Deposited in Lincoln County Archives 1066-1981 (nd), (Lincolnshire Archives)

Description written: April 2000 Amended: April 2002 Register Inspector: CEB Edited: May 2002

## 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.