

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

BOURN HALL

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**BOURN HALL**

Name:	BOURN HALL
County:	Cambridgeshire
District:	South Cambridgeshire (District Authority)
Parish:	Bourn
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.183211 Longitude: -0.079385276 National Grid Reference: TL3140755623 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000613 Date first listed: 16-Jan-1985

## Details

Landscaped park and pleasure grounds possibly laid out in 1817 by John Adey Repton and Humphry Repton around an early C17 house built on the site of an C11 castle, in which earthwork remains of the fortified site survive.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The present Hall at Bourn was built in c 1602 for John Hagar, occupying the site of an C11 castle built by Picot de Cambridge, the first Norman Sheriff of the shire. The castle was of the ringwork and bailey type, consisting of two enclosures defined by raised embankments within a ditch, the remains of which survive in the park (scheduled ancient monument). It is also possible that parts of the early house were incorporated in the 1602 build (VCH), at which time a small park and formal garden with a yew walk was probably created (Campbell 1998). Baltzar Lyell (an East India merchant) purchased the estate in 1733 and remodelled the house, after which it passed into the De La Warr family when Catherine Lyell married the fourth Earl in 1783. Their son George John, the fifth Earl, succeeded to the estate in 1803 at the age of twelve and in 1813 married Elizabeth Sackville. In 1817 George and Elizabeth commissioned John Adey Repton (1775-1860) to restore and enlarge the Hall, who together with his father Humphry Repton (1752-1818) probably also advised on the layout of the grounds (Pevsner 1970; Kenworthy-Browne et al 1981). Between 1817 and 1819 J A Repton gave the building a Tudor style, making use of material brought from the demolished Haslingfield Hall, while in the grounds a picturesque landscape and ornamental garden was created, although no Red Book survives (Carter et al 1982). A map of the grounds made in 1826 is described as showing well laid out gardens and orchards (Way 1998). In 1843 George took the name Sackville-West following his inheritance of the Sackville estate and Bourn was let to a series of tenants until it was put up for sale in 1871 in separate lots, the Hall and park eventually being sold in 1883 to John James Briscoe. Briscoe undertook alterations to the Hall at the end of the century which were carried out by the architect Norman Shaw, and on his death in 1919 it passed to Sir Alfred Briscoe. Sir Alfred sold the estate in 1921 to Captain W H Ockleston, by which time the sale catalogue described it as having 'sweeping lawns, a rose garden and pergola, tennis lawn, rose borders, parterres, a summerhouse and a fine clipped yew hedge some 300 years old' (Sale catalogue 1920). Captain Ockleston stayed only two years and from 1923 to 1958 the Hall was owned by Major J M Griffin. Following his purchase of Bourn in 1958, Peter King set about restoring the Hall and the stables, although glasshouses, outbuildings and the conservatory

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were removed. In 1979 the Hall and park were sold separately, the Hall and its gardens being established by Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards as an infertility clinic, in which use it remains. Since that time a range of new outbuildings have been added between existing structures. The site remains (1999) in divided ownership.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Bourn village lies c 12km west of Cambridge on the B1046. Bourn Hall is situated on the south-west edge of the village and is set in a c 12ha park developed on a raised but relatively flat site, facing south and south-east over the surrounding farmland. It is bounded to the north-east by Bourn village, to the north and north-west partly by the village and partly by farmland, to the west by the village of Longstowe, and to the south by open agricultural land.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The entrance to Bourn Hall is from the village to the east, along a c 300m tarmac drive to the stable block and car park, located on the northern boundary. The drive also turns south before the stables to arrive at the gravelled north-east entrance front. The serpentine lines of the drive were created in the mid C19, probably following advice from the Reptons, to replace the old straight approach from the village to the north-east front of the Hall. At this time the drive continued past the Hall and ran west through a long block of woodland to emerge at the village of Longstowe on the western boundary, where, at the end of the C19, a lodge was located. The lodge survives but is now (1999) cut off from the remainder of the site and only parts of this west drive survive, as a track in the woods. For a time during the C19 a secondary drive lined with lime left the western woodland drive as it entered the park and ran along the northern boundary to the stable block. Some of the limes survive.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Bourn Hall (listed grade II\*) is a small, square country house built of red brick with stone dressings under a plain tiled roof, in two storeys with attics. The symmetrical north-east front has three gables and five bays with a moulded stone entrance porch on one of the north bays. Rainwater heads dated and initialled '1602 H IF' survive on the north-west wing. The Hall was built for John Hagar at this time, possibly including part of the earlier building, and was substantially removed between 1817 and 1819 by John Adey Repton. An internal courtyard is thought to have been enclosed by the architect Norman Shaw at the end of the C19.

The early C17 stable block, with C19 and C20 alterations, is situated to the north of the Hall, originally separated from it but now (1999) joined by late C20 buildings associated with the clinic. The red-brick stables are of two storeys, built in a U-plan with embattled turrets at the internal angles, a central archway entrance on the north-east face, and a clock tower and cupola above the south-east face.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens at Bourn lie principally to the south and west of the Hall, with a raised gravel terrace which wraps around from the north-east to the north-west. The north-east front faces a set of steps from the entrance porch down to a circular gravel driveway with central bed, beyond which lies open lawns where the earthwork remains of the bailey survive. Below the gravel terrace to the south-east a grass bank leads to sweeping lawns with a few mature trees running up to the earthworks of the surviving castle moat, at the southern end of which a small pool has been created (late C20). The main garden area lies on the south-west front where the terrace looks onto a level grass platform which was developed as a parterre flower garden in the C19. The platform is defined to the south by an extension of the Hall terrace which terminates at a raised bastion, edged with large yews, located on the bend of the moat earthworks. The raised bank of the moat earthworks defines the western boundary of the site of the formal garden, which until the 1980s had an ancient yew hedge running along it. To the north of this area a small brick bridge crosses the moat and leads to an area of late C20 informal garden planted on the site of the old orchard.

**PARK** The small area of parkland lies beyond the bailey earthwork and is of a flat, open character with a small number of surviving mature oak and lime trees, some dating from the early C19 period of landscaping. Beyond the open park is a long strip of woodland running south-west for c 1km, originally ornamented to take a drive but now (1999) in separate ownership and partly felled, partly managed for timber.

Beyond the moat earthwork to the south-east of the Hall, the park is open to an expansive view across the surrounding farmland. A bridge beside the pool looks towards a path over the fields known as Bandyleg Walk which until recently (late C20) was

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enclosed by a thin strip of woodland (now a simple boundary between agricultural fields). At the end of the C19 this path led to a second walled garden, now a private garden, located just to the west of Vine Cottage.

KITCHEN GARDEN The site of the kitchen garden, which lay on the south-west side of the stable block, has been removed through successive building developments in this area since the early C20.

#### REFERENCES

Victoria History of the County of Cambridgeshire II, (1948), pp16-17 D Stroud, Humphry Repton (1962) p 166 Roy Comm Hist Monuments Engl Inventories: West Cambridgeshire (1968), pp 16-27 N Pevsner, The Buildings of England: Cambridgeshire (1970), pp 307-8 J Kenworthy-Browne et al, Burke's and Savills Guide to Country Houses III, (1981), pp 7-8 G Carter et al, Humphry Repton (1982), p 149 Cambridgeshire Parklands, (Cambridgeshire Record Office 1990), p 42 C Campbell, An examination of the ways land use and management can affect historic landscapes and the effectiveness of the protection available to safeguard them (extract from DipAA, 1998) [copy on EH file] T Way, Cambridgeshire parklands survey, (Internal survey for Cambridgeshire County Council 1998)

Maps Enclosure map of Bourn, nd (Q/RDz9), (Cambridgeshire Record Office) Tithe map for Bourn parish, 1842 (Cambridgeshire Record Office) Sale plan of Bourn Hall, 1871 (87/SP11), (Cambridgeshire Record Office)

OS Surveyor's drawings, 1810, 1836 (British Library Maps) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886 2nd edition published 1903 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886

Description written: February 2000 Amended: December 2000 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: January 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.