

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

MYDDELTON HOUSE

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**MYDDELTON HOUSE**

Name:	MYDDELTON HOUSE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Enfield (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.675730 Longitude: -0.061373343 National Grid Reference: TQ 34142 99219 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000243 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

## Details

Developed as a garden in early C18 and early C19, and from late C19 to mid C20 as a renowned plantsman's garden by the owner, E A Bowles.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1724 Michael Garnault (d 1746) purchased an Elizabethan red-brick property known as Bowling Green House. This building was associated with the bowling alley belonging to Elsyng Palace (demolished mid C17), the site of which is now part of the Forty Hall (qv) estate to the south-west. The property was cut through by the New River, established by Sir Hugh Myddelton and completed in 1613, which took water from Hertfordshire to the New River Head in Clerkenwell. The property stayed in the Garnault family until on the death of Daniel Garnault III (1773-1809) in 1809, the property passed to his sister Anne (1771(1812), who had married Henry Carrington Bowles in 1799.

The property is shown on an estate plan of Eliab Breton's property at Forty Hall in 1785. The land is just to the north-east of the Forty Hall park fence and is marked as belonging to 'Danl Garnault Esq'. A building is shown at the northern boundary of the ground, which abutted a lane. Daniel Garnault had intended to rebuild the house and name it Myddelton House in honour of Sir Hugh Myddelton but his plans were not realised, and it was his brother-in-law, H C Bowles, who demolished the old house and built the present villa in 1818.

The property stayed in the Bowles family until it was inherited by Henry Carrington Treacher through the female line in 1852, on the condition that he assume the surname of Bowles. Edward Augustus Bowles (1865-1954) resided at his father's house and from the 1890s began to develop the gardens there. From 1895, his brother, Henry Ferryman Bowles (1858-1943) lived at Forty Hall, which had been purchased for him in that year by his father. H C Bowles died in 1918 and E A Bowles inherited the property.

Bowles died in 1954 and the gardens and house were transferred jointly to the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine and to the University of London's School of Pharmacy. The gardens were managed under the guidance of a Gardens Advisory Committee chaired by the garden writer Frances Perry. In 1968 the gardens and house were sold to the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, who use it as their headquarters. The School of Pharmacy Department retained the kitchen gardens and the

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Royal Free Hospital retained the fields, to be used as sports pitches. Since 1984 many of the garden areas have been restored by the garden team in the style of Bowles, with a restoration date of c 1920.

**DESCRIPTION**

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Myddelton House gardens, c 2ha, are located to the north-east of Enfield Town and south-west of the junction of the A10 with the M25, in Bull's Cross, in the London Borough of Enfield. The gardens are bounded by the Forty Hall estate to the west and south, Bull's Cross (the A105 road) to the east, and Myddelton Farm to the north. The gardens are on very gently sloping ground falling from north to south. The fall is greater in the meadows at the southern end of the gardens. There are views from the higher ground, southwards over to Forty Hall. The boundaries of the gardens are marked by a mixture of brick walls and fences. The red-brick west wall (listed grade II) which runs from the entrance to the south-east corner of the gardens is late C18.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The approach to the House is from the east from the A105 (Bull's Cross). The drive passes a lodge 100m south-east of the House and then sweeps north-west before branching ( south-west (to the forecourt to the east of the House), west (to a car park to the west of the House), north (to the stables), and north-east (to the public car park).

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Myddelton House (listed grade II) is located in the south-east quarter of the registered site, overlooking the gardens to the east and south. It was built in 1818 by George Ferry and John Wallen, for Henry Carrington Bowles (1763-1830). The stock brick villa was built on the site of an earlier house. The entrance (east) front has five bays, with a recessed Ionic porch, and has two storeys and an attic. There are late C19 extensions to the north and west fronts. The south front has a bow window on the east side, facing south over the garden. A conservatory is angled south-east from the centre of the south front, a reduction of the original early to mid C19 conservatory. It contains two early C18 lead ostriches from Richard Gough's house (Patteware in Forty Hill, Enfield), which were originally located in the gardens, on either side of the iron bridge. The early C19 stock brick stable block (listed grade II) to the north of the House has three bays and two storeys, with one-storey pedimented wings. The stables have a circular clock turret of wood on a square base, with a weather vane and two clock dials (facing south and east).

An early C19 building at the southern end of the range of offices, behind (west of) the stables, housed part of Bowles' collection of artefacts and was known as the 'Museum'. The collection was dispersed after Bowles' death and a small raised brick terrace, supported by a wooden verandah, was removed mid C20.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The landscape at Myddelton House is rectangular in shape formed of four quarters of roughly equal size with two additional rectangular portions on the southern end. Of the four quarters, the House and garden occupies the south-east quarter, and the remaining three quarters (to the west, north-west and north of the gardens) are fields. To the south of the fields and main part of the gardens and on the other side of the course of the New River, are two further areas of the garden: the kitchen gardens to the south-east and the Alpine Meadow to the south-west.

The gardens consist of a series of garden areas, with different designs or planting themes. These are loosely divided and are connected by lawns or paths. The overall design, pond, paths and much of the structural planting pre-date Bowles' work (OS 1867) and survive today. Bowles was responsible for the planting and detailed design of the different garden areas. Bowles, a very keen plant-hunter and collector, was responsible for raising or introducing a large number of plants, especially bulbs.

To the east of the House there is a large lawn, with island beds and scattered mature trees, underplanted with bulbs. A collection of artefacts, including a petrified tree in a bed of stones and a well bore from the White Webbs (New River) Pumping Station, are grouped at the northern end of the lawn, on the edge of the shrubbery adjoining the entrance drive. A path leads around the west side of the lawn and then divides to circuit the garden. Leading east through the Bowling Green Lawn there are standard roses along the path, with Tom Tiddler's Ground (for plants with silver or gold variegated foliage and purple-leaved plants) to the south and the Eremurus bed to the north. The path then sweeps south, with the West Wall (in reality on the east boundary of the garden, but west facing) to the east and the Lunatic Asylum to the west. This garden was laid out by 1914 as a garden for Japanese plants (now in one corner) and for contorted and unusual forms of plants.

The main path leads westwards, past a series of three gardens, to the west of the Lunatic Asylum. These gardens are connected by smaller paths running north/south through the gardens and west/east across and between them. Most of the paths through

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these three gardens are laid in York stone paving slabs. The first garden is the Wild Garden, with the Fern Garden at its northern end. The next garden reached is the Rose Garden (laid out by 1914, restored late C20), with a summerhouse at the northern end, with an adjoining wall, known as the 'Irishman's Shirt', terminated to the west by a diamond-shaped brick pier from Gough Park, Enfield. The Rose Garden consists of a formal arrangement of rose beds with box edging, with the old Enfield Market Cross (listed grade II) in the centre, on which *Rosa laevigata* 'Anemone' is grown. To the north of the Market Cross, there is a cross path with views to the west through the Pergola Garden and over to the pond and Pond Terrace beyond. The Pergola Garden (laid out by 1914, restored late C20) consists of a path running north/south, crossed by three further paths running west/east, all of which are lined with a pergola constructed from unsawn oak. Hardy vines, wistaria, golden hop, clematis and climbing roses are grown over the structure.

To the west of these gardens is the pond, with planting on the edges and in the water. In the early C19 the pond was semicircular and surrounded by an early C16 yew hedge. By the mid 1860s (OS) the pond had been extended at its northern end to its current shape (an inverted 'Y') and size. The Terrace (listed grade II, restored late C20) to the west of the pond has balustrading and a flight of steps down to the water's edge. To the west of the Terrace is a conservatory (erected in the 1990s) which is used to display information, grow tender plants, and for plant sales. There is a small area of field beds behind the conservatory. From the back of the Terrace a path leads north back to the House, or south to the New River lawn. The early C17 course of the New River ran through the gardens and the water channel was retained in 1859 when the New River was diverted. In 1962 the channel was filled in and the wrought-iron footbridge at the west end of the gardens was removed. The course of the New River is now a curving lawn, with a few yews from the C16 hedge remaining on the north side.

The path crosses the lawn and leads south-west to the Alpine Meadow and naturalised snowdrops, fritillaries, crocuses, and daffodils. Along the north side of the Alpine Meadow was the Rock Garden (started in the 1890s) and Cactus Bank. The Rock Garden was abandoned after Bowles' death and Bowles himself gave up on the Cactus Bank because the situation and climate were not suitable for the succulents. Bowles built a small summerhouse and a bench next to the Cactus Bank, which no longer survive.

Returning back to the New River lawn and following eastwards, past the southern end of the pond and Pergola Garden, two further garden areas are reached. On the north side of the lawn (backing onto the Rose Garden and Wild Garden) are the Iris Beds, which were restored in the late C20 and now (1998) house the National Collection of Bearded Iris, planted under some of the remaining yew trees from the old hedge. On the south side of the lawn is the Tulip Terrace (restored late C20), formed by E A Bowles's father in the late C19, with beds edged in box. The terrace overlooks the kitchen garden, which is at a lower level. To the east of the New River lawn and the gardens is an iron bridge (listed grade II), dated 1832, which is planted with a massive wisteria, wrapped around the trunk of the largest of the remaining yew hedge trees.

**OTHER LAND** The fields to the west, north-west and north of the gardens are now (late C20) used as sports pitches. They contain a few remaining mature trees and boundary tree belts to the north and east. A sports pavilion (1960s) is located in the south-west quarter, to the west of Myddelton House, with tennis courts to the west of the pavilion. Between the House and the north field is a line of late C20 cypress trees, which block the views in that direction. In the C18 the fields were known as Reynold's Field and Kenney Land and were part of Bull's Cross Farm. They were taken into the Myddelton House property (probably following the sale of Forty Hall in 1787) and were laid out as 'open park scenery of about twenty acres of well-wooded and undulating ground' (Keane 1850).

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen garden is located in the south-east corner of the gardens, to the south of the House and gardens. The C19 glasshouses were demolished in the 1960s. It is now a Pharmacognosy Garden (for studying drugs of plant origin) and is laid out with beds, containing trial plants, set in grass. There are hedges and shrubberies around the borders and scattered mature trees.

#### REFERENCES

W Robinson, *History and Antiquities of Enfield 1*, (1823), pp 268-70 W Keane, *Beauties of Middlesex* (1850), pp 72-3 E A Bowles, *My Garden in Spring* (1914) E A Bowles, *My Garden in Summer* (1915) E A Bowles, *My Garden in Autumn* and

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Maps Estate map of Eliab Breton's estate at Forty Hall, 1785 (Enfield Local History Unit)  
OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1867 2nd edition published 1896 3rd edition published 1913 1935 edition  
Description written: December 1998 Amended: March 2000 Register Inspector: CB Edited: May 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.