

## ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTERED GRADE II

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**GREAT SALING**  
**GD1735**

**SALING GROVE**

**TL703 253**

Park and pleasure ground for which Humphry Repton produced a Red Book in 1791, with subsequent mid C19 and late C20 additions.

### **HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

The land on which Saling Grove was built by John Yeldham in 1754 was part of the property of Park's, one of the reputed manors of Great Saling. Writing in 1771 Muilman records that the park extended south beyond the Onchor's and Park's farm complexes and included a grove with a cut vista and half-moon clearing from which 'to enjoy the view', planted level with the two farms. Perhaps because of its scale, Chapman and André's county map published in 1777 shows John Yeldham's house set in a simple landscape scattered with trees and does not record the grove. In 1790 Yeldham commissioned Humphry Repton (1752-1818) to lay out a park which was completed before Yeldham died in 1795 (Red Book, dated 1791; current location unknown). The estate – and subsequently most of the village – was purchased in 1795 by Bartlett Goodrich, whose father, a Virginian loyalist, had settled in England in c 1785 following the American Revolution. A map drawn up at the time of this purchase (ERO) shows the landscape immediately after Repton's involvement and records the diversion of the public road, the construction of a new kitchen garden and offices, the creation of a pond, and the establishment of numerous plantations. It also shows the south park now terminating at the grove beside the two farm complexes. After Goodrich's death in 1827 without male heirs, the property was sold to William Fowke, although Goodrich's trustees retained much of the estate including Park's Farm and Onchor's Farm. The 1838 Tithe map shows that although Fowke bought a reduced area of park to the south, he also owned the grove and had a tenant grazing the narrow strip between it and his park boundary, whilst the land to the east and west of the strip and beyond the grove was in different hands. The Fowke family extended the house to the east and remained at Saling Grove until 1919 when it was put up for sale. The sale catalogue of this date records that by this time the grove had disappeared, and the land between it and Goodrich's park boundary had been taken into

Park's and Onchor's Farms. Between 1933 and 1937 Mrs W Steele was in occupation at Saling Grove. The site remains (2000) in private ownership.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

### **LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING**

Saling Grove lies on the south side of the village of Great Saling, which itself sits to the north of the A120 Braintree to Bishop's Stortford road, c 9km north-west of Braintree. The c 15ha site occupies virtually flat ground, bounded to the north by the main village streets, to the west by the minor road connecting Great Saling to the A120, and to the east and south by farmland. Great Saling is a small village in a rural setting and the park is screened along its road boundaries by thin plantations.

### **ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES**

The mansion at Saling Grove is approached by two entrances. The main entrance on the western boundary enters the park through a gateway (listed grade II) of brick support columns and iron gates, flanked by curved side railings. The drive passes West Lodge (listed grade II), a single-storey cottage of gault brick and slate, and runs north-east through lawns planted with large specimen trees to arrive at the entrance court on the north front of the house. The West Lodge and drive do not appear on the 1795 estate map but were both in place by 1838 (Tithe map). From the village green, on the northern boundary, the two-storey, red-brick and tile North Lodge (listed grade II) marks the second entrance, which stands beside an extensive range of stabling, carriage houses, and outbuildings (all listed grade II). The north drive passes through iron gates hung on red-brick piers and then runs south through lawns studded with large trees to join the west drive on the north front of the house. This entrance and drive also appear for the first time on the 1838 Tithe map.

### **PRINCIPAL BUILDING**

Saling Grove (listed grade II) stands to the north of the centre within its small park. It is a large Georgian house of plastered brick, built in three storeys with a grey hipped slate roof and raised parapet. The main entrance stands in the centre of the north façade flanked by stone dogs on either side of the portico. To the east is a gault-brick extension, to the rear of which is a large clock tower, also of gault brick. The south façade faces formal gardens and looks out over the park. Saling Grove was built in c 1754 by John Yeldham and was extended in the mid C19 by William Fowke.

### **GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS**

The grounds to the west and north of the house are laid to lawn planted with a variety of trees and shrubs, some of a great age, and are cut through with meandering paths. An

informal pool created by Humphry Repton in 1791 stands c 150m to the west of the house (estate map, 1795). The main area of gardens and pleasure grounds lie to the south and east. An axial path from the south front leads south for c 50m between rows of clipped yew to a terrace planted with a scroll parterre. The division between the parterre terrace and park is marked by a low hedge, the centre of which extends into the park in a semicircle containing a circular path. The axial path is flanked by lawns which are bordered to east and west by wooded pleasure grounds, planted during the mid C19.

#### PARK

The park at Saling Grove lies primarily to the south of the house. It remains principally under grass (2000) and retains some mature parkland trees of mainly C19 origin. A tennis court has been erected to the south of the eastern wooded pleasure ground. The boundary plantations proposed by Repton to the west and north survive, while the eastern boundary is defined by a dense plantation of more recent origin. Although Repton's influence on the landscape may have stretched as far south as the boundaries of Onchor's and Park's farms (estate map, 1795), the area of the park associated with Saling Grove was soon afterwards contracted to half its size (Tithe map, 1838; OS 1881), the southern boundary being moved much closer to the house. The area of parkland shown in the 1838 Tithe map and OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 6" (1898) has remained little altered since.

#### KITCHEN GARDEN

The walled kitchen garden, which was moved here by 1795, probably following advice from Humphry Repton, lies c 200m to the east of the house. It is laid to lawn, divided into six compartments by gravel paths lined with clipped box hedges, and has scrolled and square box patterns along the northern boundary. One of the compartments contains a circular dipping pool. The gardens are linked to the house by a walk through the eastern pleasure ground wood. A small mid C19 red-brick gardener's cottage stands on the outside of the north-east corner of the garden. Beyond the north wall is a large lawn planted with orchard trees.

#### REFERENCES

P Muilman, *A New and Complete History of Essex I*, (1771)

T Wright, *History of Essex* (1836)

D Stroud, *Humphry Repton* (1962), p 54

G Carter *et al*, *Humphry Repton* (1982), p 151

F Cowell and G Green , *Repton in Essex* (2000), pp 131-3

#### Maps

J Chapman and P André, *A map of the county of Essex from an actual survey ...*, 1777 Road diversion map, 1792 (Q/RHi 3A-8v), (Essex Record Office)

*A plan of the freehold estate ...purchased by Bartlett Goodrich esq, c 1795 (4958), (Essex Record Office)*

Tithe map for Great Saling parish, 1838 (D/CT 308 A and B), (Essex Record Office)

OS 6" to one mile:	1 <sup>st</sup> edition published 1881
	2 <sup>nd</sup> edition published 1898
	3 <sup>rd</sup> edition published 1922
OS 25" to one mile:	2 <sup>nd</sup> edition published 1897
	1954 edition

### **Archival items**

The whereabouts of Repton's Red Book for Saling Grove is not known, although its production is recorded in Repton's account books for the year 1790-1.

Aerial photographs (EXC 16977/09), (NMR, Swindon)

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