

ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTERED GRADE II

BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL
GREAT SALING
GD1350

SALING HALL

TL699 259

A late C17 walled garden beside further gardens laid out from 1936 onwards, initially by Lady Carlyle and since 1970 by Hugh Johnson.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

According to Morant (1768), the first Lord of the Manor at Great Saling was Sir Baldwin Wiscart in the time of Henry I. From his son John it passed into the hands of the Bibbesworth family who lived at Great Saling for four generations until it was purchased in 1487 by the widow of John Maxey. It was the Maxey family who, in c 1570, built the core of the present hall. Anthony Maxey sold the property in 1665 to Martin Carter and it was his son, also Martin, who 'made great alterations and improvements in the House and Gardens here in 1699' (Morant 1768). Carter faced much of the house with red and blue bricks and added leaded window panes, while bricks in the walled garden bear the date 1698. The 'moat' or fishpond to the east of the Hall may have been formalised at this time since no earlier garden activity is documented. The manor was sold in 1717 to Hugh Raymond, whose son Jones Raymond installed a wine cellar. Saling Hall passed from the Raymonds to their relations the Burrells. In 1790 the Burrells put the property up for sale and it was purchased by John Yeldham. Yeldham already owned the nearby Saling Grove (qv) and in 1795 he sold them both to Bartlett Goodrich, a native of Virginia. Goodrich rebuilt Saling Grove which he lived in and relegated the Hall to the role of a dower house where two of his daughters lived. They divided the property in two, adding two front doors sometime after 1795. Following the death of Goodrich in 1828, Saling Grove was sold and Saling Hall was left to the two daughters who were married to two sea captains: Captain Dobbie and Captain (later Admiral) Dick. The Dobbies continued to live at the Hall throughout the C19 and by 1890 Anna-Maria Fowke was the last of the Dobbie line to be in residence. By 1917 the property had passed into the hands of Villiers de Sausurre Fowke who let it to William Duckworth. By 1926 Duckworth owned the property but it soon changed hands again, to become the property of Sir Robert and Lady Carlyle. The Carlyles lived abroad, Sir Robert being a member of the British Government in

India. He died in Florence in 1934. Lady Carlyle returned to England and in 1936 moved into Saling Hall, where she began to lay out a garden, planting yew hedges, pleached limes, and a Long Walk, as well as creating the Water Garden and laying out the walled garden as it is today (2000). In 1970 the property was purchased by Hugh and Judy Johnson who began a programme of restoring and enlarging the Carlyle gardens. The site remains (2000) in single private ownership.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

Saling Hall lies at the northern end 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 5ha site occupies generally level ground, with a slight slope down to the north-north-west towards the course of Pods Brook, and is bounded to the north by a minor country road, to the east by the main village street, and to the south-west by St James' church, Hall Farm buildings, and agricultural land. Great Saling is a small village in a rural setting and the grounds of the Hall are screened along the road boundaries by plantations.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Saling Hall is approached from the south-east, off the main street, along a gravelled drive which sweeps north-west through lawns to arrive at the south-east front of the Hall. The drive is shown in this position on the 1838 Tithe map. The entrance courtyard is enclosed to the south-east by a clipped yew hedge, the drive encircling a lawn. The south-west side of the courtyard is formed by a line of Lombardy poplars which extend all along the south-west boundary; these were planted by Lady Carlyle in 1936 to line a walk to the church from the Hall in the north and from the village in the south. The north-east boundary of the courtyard is enclosed by a row of pleached limes, also planted by Lady Carlyle.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Saling Hall (listed grade II*) is a small timber-framed country manor house, faced with red and blue brick under a red-tiled roof. The two-storey building has five bays facing south-east with flanking and projecting wings to east and west. The structure has a long early history but the core of the present house was built by the Maxey family in c 1570 and was given its present character and brick facings by Martin Carter in 1699, since when little has been altered apart from the addition of two front doors at the end of the C18. A conservatory was added to the west façade in 1980.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

The garden surrounds the Hall on all sides. South-east of the Hall and flanking the drive are lawns planted with a variety of ornamental trees, many planted by Lady Carlyle between 1936

and 1959, in an area known as the Front Park. Beyond the drive to the south is an informal pool called the Duck Pond (the village horse pond prior to C18 enclosures), set in the lawn and planted on its eastern bank with a mix of trees and shrubs. The lawn extends the vista from the Hall to the south-east tip of the gardens.

On the south-west side of the Hall is a garden compartment enclosed by high red-brick walls (listed grade II) erected in the late C17 by Martin Carter. The Walled Garden is entered through a gate from the entrance court and is laid in a formal arrangement. Deep borders at the base of the walls are filled with herbaceous and shrub planting and clipped cypresses. These are divided from lawns planted with apple trees by a perimeter path. Through the centre of the garden a brick path with central pergola and statue, aligned on the Hall, is flanked by box-edged borders. The garden was laid out in this pattern by Lady Carlyle in the early C20, the planting having been substantially developed by Hugh Johnson since 1970.

Beyond the north-west wall of the Walled Garden lies the old orchard, now (2000) divided by yew hedges into four compartments each with a different use: a tennis court, swimming pool, drying ground, and valley garden all created since 1977. Beyond these compartments lies the Arboretum planted by Hugh Johnson since 1970. It contains a great variety of trees and shrubs and is cut through with paths and rides which divide the Arboretum into garden areas with individual characteristics.

Beyond the old orchard, paths lead through the Bacchus Glade planted with a collection of roses, to the north-east of which runs a long straight path from the top end of the Walled Garden into the heart of the Arboretum. Within the planting on the east side of the path is the small Hidden Garden. At the end of this path the western half of the Arboretum opens into a large open lawn overlooked by a Japanese Garden created out of a disused C19 gravel pit. Within the lawn, c 200m north-west of the Hall, is a pond created, like the Japanese Garden, in 1979, close to the Temple of Pisces (late C20) which lies on the northern boundary of the gardens, facing south-east across the open lawn.

The eastern half of the Arboretum is more densely planted and contains features from the first half of the C20. Paths cut through the trees lead from the Temple back towards the Hall, through an Oak Glade and from here via the Long Walk, planted in 1959, to a sunken Water Garden, also created in 1959 and located c 60m north of the Hall. At the north end of the Long Walk is a natural Welsh granite obelisk set in a yew-hedged 'chapel' (1999). Leaving the Water Garden the path divides to encircle the Hall, that to the east emerging on a lawn below the north-east front, beside a long canal c 30m east of the Hall. Known as The Moat, and possibly of C16 origin, the canal has a cascade at the south end. The lawn, together with the banks of The Moat, are planted with a collection of unusual trees.

KITCHEN GARDEN

On the south-west side of the Walled Garden is the kitchen garden which was created by Lady Carlyle in the early C20. It continues to be used for the production of fruit and vegetables but since 1970 has been reduced in size by grassing down part of the area.

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Maps

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

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1881
2nd edition published 1898

OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1897
1954 edition

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