

holding offices in the Art Workers Guild and a member of the Quarto Imperial Club, his ideas were closely aligned with his confrères in the Arts and Crafts Movement. Members of this loosely affiliated group thought that house and garden should be thought of as a unit and should be inter-related.

His first garden was designed in 1896 for Antony Gibbs of Tyntesfield in North Somerset. Gibbs had considerable holdings in Devon and had employed Walter Cave for The Stores at Exwick, Devon, in 1893 and Queen Victoria's Jubilee Memorial at Ottery St Mary in 1896. The gardens at Tyntesfield were separated from the house by a short walk. Known as the Lady Garden and the Jubilee Garden they were adjacent to the walled kitchen garden just as was to be done at Sidbury Manor a few years later. Such gardens were intended as the final delight at the end of a stroll. Within the Lady and Jubilee Gardens were included an Orangery, a Loggia, a Bothy, garden offices and a range of glasshouses. The latter were supplied with Beard's Patent non-conducting panes and grooved panel metal glazing bars by W.G. Smith and Company of Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk.

Walter Cave's first Devon garden at Sidbury Manor was for a Rose Garden, separate from the house, but built on terraces on the slope below the already in place kitchen gardens. The latter were walled and contained substantial glasshouses and a range of workshops, offices and bothies. Though only the footings of the glasshouses remain the walls still stand and remarkably the office range is still in use. For the Rose Garden the hard landscaping materials of brick and Ham Hill stone relate to those of the house and those previously used to build the earlier kitchen gardens. The lowest terrace designed by Cave had a bowling green and a tennis court, followed by the Rose Garden terrace. These additional terraces fit into the sequence ascending the slope to the walled kitchen garden.

**Sidbury Manor**, Sidbury, Devon, was developed by Walter Cave's parents, Sir Charles Daniel Cave and his wife, Edith Harriet, from the late 1870s after the death of Sir Stephen Cave who began the works. It is now owned by Sir John and Lady Cave. The site of the house was moved from its former position to the present one to take full advantage of the views down the valley. The house was designed by David Brandon and built in 1879 of brick and Ham Hill stone as are the Stables. A stone built conservatory remains on the south west corner of the house. It has beds and a pool. The approach road winds up the valley in a sweeping curve from the main entrance which is defined by Ham stone pillars. Half way up and to the left is a dramatic cascade pouring from a series of small lakes. Below the house are paved and grassed terraces the lowest of which has a brick and Ham stone balustrade. In front of the house is an iron-gated, gravelled forecourt surrounded by railing topped walls. The garden, as opposed to the park, consists of twenty acres and includes the arboretum which curves up from below the Rose Garden in a wide arc past the terraces and walled gardens, along their northern edge and down to the Head Gardener's House. There is a collection of magnolias (e.g. *Magnolia campbellii* and a variety called 'Sidbury' - a cross between *M. campbellii* and ssp. *mollicomata*, which occurred some years prior to 1946) among deciduous and coniferous trees, including a Blue Cedar, a vast eucalyptus, Swamp Cypress, Wellingtonia and a rare and large Montezuma Pine.

Walter Cave (then R.I.B.A.), one of the younger sons of Sir Charles Cave, was asked to make designs for a Rose Garden in 1899, the original signed and dated drawings for which are all in the house. He mentioned the gardens at Sidbury in a profile in the *Architectural Association Journal*.<sup>1</sup> They consist of the following: a complete plan of 'Alterations to the Garden' dated February, 1899 which shows a bowling green, steps and

## Walter Cave, FRIBA and his Two Devon Gardens

Judith Patrick

Walter Frederick Cave (1863-1939) designed two gardens in Devon both of which were for family members. A third garden has associations with a family friend but was not designed by him. He was articled to Sir Arthur Blomfield and, as an architect

flanking yews, paving, a sundial, more steps either side of a terrace with a wall at its back on which there is a lettered inscription, 'C.D.C. and E.H.C.', and a set of steps going beyond the wall supporting the potting sheds. Of the same date a cross-section shows the walls and piers and the concrete supports. It specifies the use of Portland stone for paving, Ham Hill for walls and piers and marble to line a basin. A cross-section of wall, coping and water supply pipes from a spring is dated 1899 but the month is unclear. April, 1899 is the date of the drawing of the overflow and standing waste system for the basin. A drawing of 8 May, 1899, of the stone wall of the basin and its marble interior is numbered 124 and stamped with a large blue Order M. v. S. 4755. All the stone was supplied by The Portland Stone Company, a firm used by Walter Cave on other sites.

A further signed drawing, dated 1903, is for a proposed fountain and pool for the lowest terrace below the house. This was built, as specified, of brick on a concrete base. All external facings were to be Ham stone as were the balusters and piers, and the basin was to be marble lined. The marble linings are in store as they were badly cracked and had to be removed; but the rectangular basin with hexagonal ends has been relined and holds water. There is a lead statue of a boy holding what looks like a salmon or possibly a codling.



Pool at Sidbury Manor

The Rose Garden faces south on terraces below the walled fruit and vegetable gardens. The first terrace has a bowling green and a new tennis court replacing the original grass court. At the west end is a twentieth-century thatched summer house walled, with half-sectioned scantlings put up for the present owner's mother. The green is backed by borders, walls and yews clipped into an arcade defined by slim wrought iron arches. These probably originally supported rambler roses. A set of central steps (1899) leads up to the next terrace.



Steps leading to the Rose Garden steps, Sidbury Manor.

Originally a gate crossed the bottom of the steps but this was sent for scrap in World War II. The next terrace had rose beds set in grass to the west and east. Though the roses have gone the beds are

marked out by longer grass like miniature meadows, an idea carried out after parch marks in a hot summer revealed their outlines. In the centre, surrounded by paving laid into octagonal patterns, is a rectangular tank (1899).



The tank in the Rose Garden with the sundial to the left-hand side, Sidbury Manor.

This too has had to be relined as the marble was so damaged. As specified in the drawings, piers and balusters are of Ham stone. It is all still very beautiful, but when new the effect of the tones of white marble, pale buff Portland stone, golden Ham stone all backed by apricot brick walls must have been exquisite. A little bronze spigot acts as the outlet from the basin and looks of ancient design, perhaps acquired on travels in Italy. In the panel below this outlet the date 1899 is carved in low relief. Any overflow was designed to fall into a shallow stone tray.

On the wall behind, surrounded by white *Wisteria japonica*, is a low relief carved commemorative shield and banner and the initials C.D.C. (1899). Between the wall and the basin is a sundial of stone standing on an octagonal base around which there is a Latin inscription as follows: 'C.D.C. + 1899 + E.H.C. + HORAS + NON + NUMERO + NISI + SERENAS' (roughly translated as 'Without peace of mind the passage of the hours counts for nought'). To the west there was a wrought iron tunnel of arches for roses which is now planted with young laburnum. The final steps mount up through a low brick wall capped with terracotta coving and lead to the long range of the potting sheds and the terraces of glass-houses.

In 1907 Walter Cave designed his second Devon garden. This was at **Sherwood** at Newton St Cyres for a cousin, Adrian Cave, and his new wife, Christina. Site, house and garden are closely related to each other. Drawings for Sherwood were exhibited by Cave at the Royal Academy in 1918. Michael Cave, grandson of C.J.P. Cave confirms that Adrian Cave was the second son of Laurence Trent Cave of Ditcham Park, Hampshire, and younger brother to C.J.P. Cave. Sherwood is currently owned by Sir John Quicke who bought the house in the 1960s from Chrissie Cave, Adrian's widow. He remembers both of them from when he was a child. There is a brief mention of Sherwood in *Buildings of England: Devon*,<sup>2</sup> dating it to 1918 rather than to 1907. It has a very fine garden originally developed by the Caves and subsequently increased in scope to make an exceptional woodland garden.

Anyone who has seen the site chosen by his parents for their new house at Ditcham Park, where he had spent formative years, would at once understand the appeal of the position of Sherwood for Adrian. In particular, the approach drive, curving up ever-rising wooded slopes with breaks in the trees revealing extensive views to valleys and distant hills, is redolent of the north approach drive constructed by them at Ditcham. The house is eventually revealed through a veil of trees and richly

planted understorey, seated on a platform near the head of a valley. Adrian and Chrissie Cave asked his cousin, Walter, to design their new house. There was an existing thatched cottage orné in the valley below, built of rendered cob and dating from around 1880. The cottage windows had slim glazing bars and gothic frames angled at the top. Only the central portion remains and it is currently used for storage.

The new house at first glance seems to be square, with four façades of equal size. In fact 'the east and west façades are slightly larger than the north and south façades in the ratio of 23:20'.<sup>3</sup> This ratio was used in other parts of the house. A local firm from CREDITON, Messers Dart and Francis (Ecclesiastical Art Workers), constructed the building. This firm is still in business at 127a, The High Street, CREDITON. From the outside Sherwood looks larger than it is because there is a paved central courtyard admitting light and air to the core of the building and providing privacy and a sheltered environment for delicate plants. Over the round headed entrance porch there is a date of 1907.

In the possession of the current owners is a small, casual looking document with Walter Cave's name upon it and written in his hand. It enumerates the costs of the initial acquisition of Sherwood, including all the different parcels of land such as Whitestone Wood which was bought from 'Mr Gibbs. Banker, Exeter'. The price of timber and land was negotiated separately with the sellers and their agents by Walter who received a 'fee as per scale' of £165 on the final amalgamated price of £7,500. This final price was less than that asked for by the agents acting for Mr Gibbs and the Reverend Onslow Parsons. On the same sheet of paper was written the 'Tender for Proposed House at Sherwood' of £4,500. Alternative estimates were added for central heating, different types of stone, slate or wood, tiling as against plastering and steel casements as against deal. There is a little note at the bottom written in a different hand and signed C.C., so presumably by Chrissie Cave, which added 'Delabole Grey Slates used'. This signature has been confirmed by her grandson, Adrian Cave.<sup>4</sup>

The garden immediately to the east and south of the house is closely integrated to it and looks as though it was part of the design of 1907. A paved terrace runs beside the east and south sides of the house. Beyond this, to the east, is a small raised terrace with beds and a grass plat. To the south are larger grass plats with a rectangular pond surrounded by paving in the south-west plat; and close to the house yews are clipped into flat-sided cones which are proportional to the gables on the house. Other yews are clipped as cones and cubes.



Sherwood

The main feature of the original Arts and Crafts garden lies to the south and is reached by a flight of straight steps leading to

a yew hedged, paved, raised courtyard. The paving is cross shaped with an urn at its centre and four corner beds.

From this courtyard a path leads southwards towards the head of the valley, now planted with ornamentals and exotics. Judging from the indicative flora this was ancient woodland. These native flowers and herbs have been kept and nurtured and form the bottom storey of a woodland garden. The top storey of mature trees shelters a wide range of camellias, magnolias, rhododendrons and other acid loving exotics.

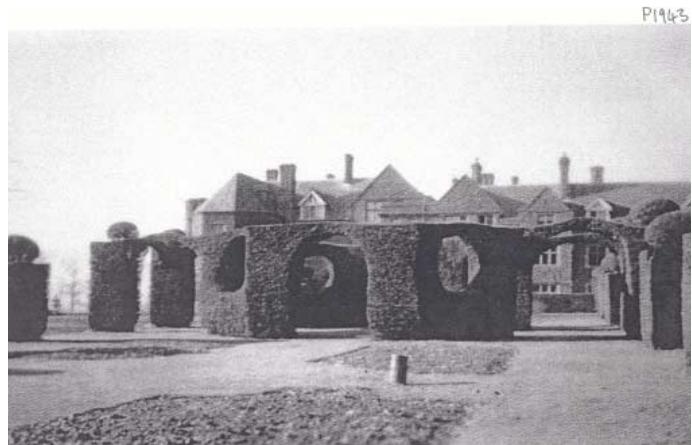


Rectangular pool at Sherwood.



The raised, paved courtyard at Sherwood.

By the time Walter Cave came to design Sherwood he had had a great deal of experience in the design and integration of house and garden. In 1901 the plans for Warren Mount, Oxshott, Surrey, show a small walled garden on three sides of the building overlooked by a loggia incorporated into the house.<sup>5</sup> At Littlecourt, Farthingstone, Northamptonshire, built in 1904,<sup>6</sup> and Ewelme Down, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, built in 1905,<sup>7</sup> there are extensive terraced, walled and paved gardens by Cave. It is also likely that the so-called Italian Rose Garden at Ditcham Park in Hampshire was built to a design by cousin Walter. This was begun by 1905 and a series of photographs by Adrian Cave's older brother, Charles John Philip Cave, who had inherited the estate, show its planting and development. It is now beneath a sports hall but the photographs show angular beds cut in grass surrounded by yew hedges with clipped ball tops and a central exedra of yew pierced by clipped arches. Beyond was a raised walk with a pillared gazebo from which the spectacular southerly view across the South Downs to the Isle of Wight could be admired.



Rose garden, Ditcham Park (Charles Cave)

There is a third garden in Devon with a connection with the Cave family, though neither house nor garden was designed by Walter Cave. The Caves were friendly with the Halswelle family

who owned Stoner Hill House, near Petersfield in Hampshire. In his diaries the artist Keeley Halswelle occasionally mentions visiting the Cave family at Ditcham Park. His sons, Gordon and Wyndham, shared interests in shooting, photography, motor cars and racing with Adrian Cave: they went to the first aviation show held at Rheims in 1909 and to Newmarket, and enjoyed evenings of conversation, games and what Gordon in his diary called 'uproarious rags'. Adrian had been best man at Gordon's wedding and Gordon and his wife, Ethel, visited Sherwood regularly. Indeed it was on one such visit in 1910 when they had borrowed Adrian's car (a De Dion Bouton) that they found the site for their own new house, **Wylmington Hayes**, on three hundred acres near Honiton in Devon. The cost for the land was £3 per acre and the house was designed by James Ransome an old friend of Gordon's. Gordon was responsible for the garden as is clear from his obituary of 1935, which described him as painting 'a multitude of pictures and call[ing] it a garden'.<sup>8</sup> Many of the plants came from cuttings and exchanges with Adrian and Chrissie at Sherwood.<sup>9</sup>

Walter Cave's work was not restricted to gardens. It included hospitals, banks, retail premises and concert halls. He fulfilled ecclesiastical commissions and designed war memorials. He was Surveyor to the Gunter Estate in Fulham and Consulting Architect to the Whiteley Village Trust. Besides this he designed furniture and found time to act as President of the Architectural Association in 1907 and Vice President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, of whom he was a Fellow dating from 1906, from 1917-1921. His Devon gardens should, therefore, be seen within the wider context of his architectural practice. Cave was happy to develop an existing garden, as at Sidbury Manor, for example, where the Rose Garden was added to an earlier garden; or to integrate a new garden with a new house, as at Sherwood. He continued to design both types: at Hatherop Castle, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, and Kneesworth, Royston, Hertfordshire, he was commissioned to design additions to the gardens;<sup>10</sup> and examples of garden designs integrated with the house are Blackbrook Cottage at Fareham, Hampshire,<sup>11</sup> High Wall at Headington, Oxfordshire,<sup>12</sup> and Littlecourt at Farthingstone, Northamptonshire.<sup>13</sup> Hitherto no garden designs have been found later than 1911. The Devon gardens are particularly interesting as each typifies Walter Cave's two approaches to garden design while remaining within the parameters of Arts and Crafts ideals.

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