

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL
GREAT MAPLESTEAD**

DYNES HALL

TL 805 331

Remnants of C17 terrace walk, with grounds remodelled in mid C18 and further modified in C19.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The name of the estate derives from the Dyne family, who held the manor from the late C13. After intermediate owners, Dynes was bought in 1575 by William Deane who married his former employer, the widowed Lady Maltravers of Gosfield Hall. He rebuilt the house, and after the death of his wife in 1580 he made Dynes his residence. Morant states that he 'planted a handsome avenue of elms', most of which blew down in the gale of 1703. Rush (Seats in Essex, 1897) quotes a History of Essex relating that William Deane 'was about a year with horses, teams and men, making the dam of the great pond at Dynes, which then formed the reservoir to turn a water-mill that stood just below it'. This mill-pond was the origin of the later piece of ornamental water. Dynes remained with the Deane family for another three generations, and sometime before 1650 'a fayre terras walk overlooking two fayre gardens' was constructed, as described in 'A Particular of Dynes Hall in Essex' (Essex Record Office: D/DAC 158). This same document also refers to the elm avenue as 'a pleasant walk to ye house, with great elms on either side', and to the 'impaled ground for park or warren near the house conteyning about 80 acres'. An associated document (D/DAC 159) specifies the dovehouse (built c 1600, demolished 1924) and 'gardens orchards courts yards with severall fishponds'.

Three years after this report, Dynes was sold in 1653 to Colonel Sparrow of Gestingthorpe, but his son John had to sell the estate in 1667 to cover serious financial losses, and it was bought by Mark Guyon, son of a wealthy Coggeshall clothier. Guyon pulled down the greater part of Deane's house in 1689 and built what is the main portion of the present house. He died in 1690 before the building was finished, and his only son died young the following year, leaving Dynes to his two sisters. Rachel, wife of John Bullock of Faulkbourne Hall, bought out her sister and the couple took up residence at Dynes shortly after 1720 (letter from Bullock of April 1720 'thank you for the favour you intend me when I am settled at Dines Hall'. Essex Record Office: D/Y 1/1/49). A survey of c 1730 (Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS C.441,112) describes the house and 'one courtyard. A very good garden, both enclosed with a brick wall. Good fruit and kitchen garden, two orchards and a drying ground'. John Bullock died in 1740, leaving Dynes to his daughter Rachel, at whose death in 1766 it was sold to Henry Sperling of Chigwell.

Sperling did not make extensive alterations to the house, but considerably improved the grounds, which are clearly recorded on Chapman and André's map of 1777. Although it has been claimed that the piece of water was made from the mill-pond in 1825 (Sperling in Transactions of Essex Archaeological Society, 1933), it appears on Chapman and André. Henry Sperling also established the new approaches to the house, and made, or altered, an ornamental plantation in the park north of the house, reached by a path bordering the lake which crossed the water shortly before entering the wood.

Henry Sperling was succeeded by his son John, who married Harriet Kilpatrick in 1789. They lived mainly in London but at the same time started building an ambitious mansion in Sussex called

Hammerwood, until the failure of a family business necessitated financial retrenchment. In 1795 John Sperling's widowed mother died and the young couple returned to live at Dynes, either selling or leasing Hammerwood. Life at Dynes in the early C19 is delightfully recorded by Diana Sperling in a series of watercolours, including a few garden scenes.

On the Ordnance Surveyors' Drawings of 1799 the single long thin sinuous pond shown on Chapman and André had become three separate pieces of water. The Tithe Map records another long pond, lying parallel to and east of the original (possibly the pond said by Sperling to have been created in 1825), and by 1874 on the first edition OS these two ponds had been amalgamated into the form still surviving. A chain of three islands lie along the east side, and a mount is enclosed within the two 'spanner-head' arms of water on the south. The higher northern pond was apparently very silted up in 1874, but by 1896 (second edition 25" OS) the whole sequence of water had been reinstated.

The kitchen garden, which in 1777 on Chapman and André is shown lying parallel to the south façade of the house, occupying a prominent position below the entrance court, by c 1840 (Tithe map) has lost the northern end but has been slightly extended to the south. This form is recorded on the first edition 25" OS (1874), but within the next twenty years the old kitchen garden has been adapted for use as an enclosed ornamental garden, with flights of steps leading down to the lower level and a new kitchen garden built adjoining it to the south. At some stage the high wall was reduced to its present form of a terrace wall, possibly at the same time as the steps were made. The old kitchen garden has now lost its northern wall and been fully integrated into the gardens.

The house was leased to the Goslings in the 1920s, but the long association of the Sperlings with Dynes only came to an end when the estate was sold to the Harts. In 1978 it was bought by Mr. Thomas Hunnabell, and still remains in the family.

REFERENCES

- P Morant, *History and Antiquities of Essex*, ii, 1768
P Muilman, *A New and Complete History of Essex*, ii, 1770
J A Rush, *Seats in Essex*, 1897
C F D Sperling, 'Dynes Hall, Great Maplestead' in *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, second series xx, 1933

Maps

- Chapman and André, *Map of Essex*, 1777
Tithe map, c 1840 (Essex Record Office: D/CT 231b)
OS 6" to 1 mile scale first edition, surveyed 1874
OS 25" to 1 mile scale first edition, surveyed 1874
second edition, revised 1897

Archival Items

- Survey of the Manor of Dynes c 1590 (Essex Record Office: D/DGd M5; copy D/DGd Z1)
Particulars of the estate of Col. Sparrow, 1650 (D/DAc/158). Gives field names, tenants and valuations, and some information on the house and park.
Conveyance 1766 from John Bullock to Henry Sperling, giving details of park.

Pictorial Evidence

- Engraving from *A New and Complete History of Essex*, 1770
Watercolours by Diana Sperling, early C19

'Garden Scene' and 'The Temple of the Waters', reproduced in Mrs. Hurst Dancing (Victor Gollancz, 1981)

View from the Dining Room, Dynes Hall, 1833. Sold at Christies, November 1997

Researcher: Fiona Cowell