

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL
BRADWELL-JUXTA-COGGESHALL**

GLAZENWOOD

TL 801 222

The home, nursery, and later arboretum of Samuel Curtis, owner of The Botanical Magazine from 1799 to 1846. The garden to the west and south of the house has recently been ambitiously remodelled, but leaving features created in the 1960s and 70s.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Glazenwood takes its name from a wood first mentioned in 1291 (The Place Names of Essex). Joseph Greenwood, a Coggeshall Quaker, acquired the property c 1802 and built a small red-brick house there on a parcel of woodland (Essex Record Office: Q/RP1 1076; Essex Review, xliii pp.24-27). Samuel Curtis, also a Quaker, was paying land tax as Greenwood's tenant from April 1806 to April 1820 (Q/RP1 1094); he appears as owner/occupier in April 1821 (Q/RP1 1095), so probably bought the property in 1820. The delay in purchasing Glazenwood may be explained by the fact that between 1816 and 21 he was mainly at Clumber while he was employed as Land Agent by the Duke of Newcastle. His Genus Camellia was produced while he was there and dedicated to the Duchess.

Samuel was the son-in-law and cousin of William Curtis, founder of the Botanical Magazine in 1787. Through his marriage with Sarah, William's only child, Samuel became the proprietor of the famous magazine, though he was never the editor, as has sometimes been claimed. The article in the Essex Review describes his many daughters hand-colouring the plates for the Botanical Magazine, which was published from Glazenwood from 1827 with the start of the New Series. Curtis sold his rights in the magazine in 1846, six years after he retired to Jersey, leaving his son James to carry on the business at Glazenwood. The estate was bought c 1848 by Charles Liveings; let by him to the Revd. Sir John Page Wood, Bt. and sold c 1868 to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd for a home for fallen women. From 1876 to the Second World War it was owned by the Woodthorpe family and occupied by themselves or other nurserymen, apart from a brief period as private residence 1899-1906 (pers comm. Nancy Edwards, retired Assistant County Archivist for Essex). During the Second World War Glazenwood was used to house children evacuated from London, after which it remained unoccupied for a period and fell into a dilapidated condition. When bought in 1962 by Mr and Mrs Derek Baer, the house had already been renovated by the previous owner, although the gardens were still in a neglected state. The Baers rescued and largely redesigned the grounds, with improvements including planting a rose garden on the west and adapting Curtis' peach packing house as a swimming pool pavilion.

Samuel Curtis was first and foremost a nursery man, having started in business in Walworth in Surrey, where he had been born. As early as 1808 the Society of Arts awarded him a medal for his orchard and for his horticultural writings. The success of his nursery led him to look for a larger property where he could extend the business and include 'knowledge of the best hardy fruit in cultivation, together with a more intimate knowledge of useful and ornamental gardening than had hitherto been practised in England' (Extract from 'Address to the Public who patronize Horticulture' 1831). His search led him to Glazenwood. During his time there he enlarged the house, but above all developed the grounds; in addition to the nursery proper, he planted the pleasure grounds (which were maintained by subscription) with a great number of ornamental trees and shrubs and held an annual floral fete (Illustrated London News, 1843). A plantation of nearly one ha (two acres) on the west boundary is

recorded on a survey of 1847 with the name of 'Australia', and is the subject of one of the engravings in the Illustrated London News, while American plants were concentrated in the 'American Garden' south of the entrance gate. By 1848, 21ha (52 acres) had been planted out as nursery, orchard and pleasure grounds (White's Gazetteer of Essex).

Apart from his work at Clumber, Curtis was appointed to supervise the laying out of Victoria Park in Bethnal Green, 1841/2. The design for the park was by Pennethorne, but the planting was Curtis' responsibility, and in 1845 he submitted to the Commissioners 'a list of trees and shrubs immediately required'. (Minutes of London County Council, quoted by Burleigh.)

Shortly after acquiring the property in 1988, Mr and Mrs Peter Tyrie embarked on large-scale alterations to house and grounds.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM AND SETTING

Glazenwood sits roughly at the centre of 20ha (50 acres) of grounds on level land, with woodland or belts of trees along all boundaries, and is surrounded by agricultural land. Due to the flat terrain, views are contained within the property and focus on features near the house. There is a view south to a recently-created amphitheatre.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The single approach is from the east, off the lane between Perry Green and Bridgehall, about two miles from Braintree. The lodge stands on the north side of the gates, at the top of the straight oak-lined drive, which splits beyond a ha-ha to enclose a large semi-circular lawn edged with old limes. The two arms of the drive rejoin at the entrance forecourt, to make a generous turning circle.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

Following recent alteration and extension, the present building is considerably larger and more imposing than the original unassuming villa of the 1820s. The new detailing includes a balustrated parapet and stone quoins. The coach-house and service buildings lie beyond a courtyard on the north front.

REFERENCES

C Fell Smith, 'Glazenwood' in *The Essex Review*, Vol 43, 1934

A B Burleigh [grandson of Samuel Curtis], article in *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, Vol 58, 1933

Botanical Magazine Vol 86, 1860, extra leaf, issued with no. 877, for February.

Illustrated London News, 1 July 1843

Reference notes by Nancy Edwards for her forthcoming book on the houses of Essex.

J Anderson Fowle, 'Samuel Curtis of Glazenwood' in *Essex Gardens Trust Newsletter*, No. 5. 1998

Glazenwood Guidebook, c 1983. Some of the historical information is suspect, but the 'tour round the garden' describes the 1960s/70s layout.

Maps

Tithe Map 1838 (Essex Record Office: D/CT 45)

Plan from a survey of 1847. Reproduced in Burleigh; location of original unknown.

OS 25" to 1 mile 1st edition surveyed 1875

Archival Items

Land Tax records for 1806 to 1821 (Essex Record Office: Q/RP1 1080-1095)

Papers relating to proposed Lunatic Asylum, 1848 (Essex Record Office: Q/ALc 1)

Pictorial Evidence

William Curtis jnr, drawing of Glazenwood from the Braintree Road (n.d., probably c 1830).

Engravings from Illustrated London News, 1 July 1843

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