

= Linton Park =

Linton Park , formerly Linton Place or Linton Hall , is a large 18th @-@ century country house in Linton , Kent , England . Built by Robert Mann in 1730 to replace an earlier building , the house and estate passed through the ownership of several members of Mann 's family before coming into the Cornwallis family . The house was enlarged to its current size in 1825 .

The house sits in a prominent location , part way down a south @-@ facing slope which provides excellent views of the grounds and the Weald beyond . Gardens close to the house contain formal walks laid out in 1825 with specimen trees planted then and later .

The house is a Grade I listed building and the garden and park is listed Grade II \* . Other buildings and structures in the park are also listed .

Linton Park is now the corporate headquarters of Camellia plc , an international agricultural company .

= = History = =

From the late 14th century , a house by the name of Capell 's Court stood on the site of Linton Park . It took its name from a family of local landowners named de Capell who held the property from the late 14th century to the mid @-@ 15th century . It was then sold to the Baysden family who held it until the late 16th century , when it was sold to Sir Anthony Mayney . Mayney 's grandson sold the estate to the judge Sir Francis Wythen . Wythen 's daughter , Catherine , inherited the estate and , following her second marriage to Brigadier @-@ General Sir George Jocelyn , the estate was sold to London merchant Sir Robert Mann .

Around 1730 , Mann demolished Capell 's Court and built the first part of the present house . On his death in 1751 , the house passed to his son Edward Mann . Edward Mann died in 1775 without children and the house passed to his brother the diplomat Sir Horace Mann . Sir Horace had taken the name of the estate as his territorial designation when made a baronet in 1755 , but was permanently resident in Florence . Sir Horace Mann was a friend and long @-@ time correspondent of Horace Walpole . After a visit to Edward Mann at Linton Park in 1757 , Walpole wrote to Sir Horace in Florence that : " the house is fine and stands like the citadel of Kent ; the whole county is its garden . " On the death of Sir Horace in 1786 , the baronetcy and the house passed to his nephew , Sir Horatio Mann MP , of Boughton Place in nearby Boughton Malherbe .

Sir Horatio died in 1814 and the house was inherited by James Cornwallis , Bishop of Lichfield , who was the widowed husband of Mann 's older sister , Catherine . Cornwallis became the fourth Earl Cornwallis on the death of his nephew Charles Cornwallis , 2nd Marquess Cornwallis in 1823 , but died himself in 1824 . The estate passed to his son James , the fifth Earl . On the fifth Earl 's death in 1852 , the property was inherited by his daughter Julia . In 1862 , she married William Amherst , Viscount Holmesdale ( later , after her death in 1883 , the third Earl Amherst ) .

By 1888 , the estate was in the possession of Fiennes Stanley Wykeham Cornwallis MP ( created 1st Baron Cornwallis in 1927 ) , grandson of the fifth Earl Cornwallis 's other daughter Jemima Isabella Mann . He owned the house until his death in 1935 . His first son , Captain Fiennes Wykeham Mann Cornwallis MC , was killed in an IRA ambush near Gort , Galway in 1921 , and so the first baron was succeeded by his second son , Wykeham Stanley Cornwallis . The second baron sold the house in 1937 and it became the property of Olaf Hambro , a member of the Hambro banking family . Following the death of Hambro in 1961 , the house was sold to the Daubeney family . The house and its nearest surrounding land were sold to the Freemasons in 1974 and were briefly operated as a school before passing into corporate ownership .

= = Buildings = =

Robert Mann 's original 1730s house was a two @-@ storey brick building seven bays wide with a break front . This was extended for the fifth Earl Cornwallis in 1825 by Thomas and William Cubitt . The Cubitts ' alterations included adding a third storey to the original house and building two @-@

storey wings four bays wide on each side . The house was also refinished with stucco render . Its hipped roof is covered with slates .

The entrance to the house is on the north side through a single storey portico . The north façade features tall sash windows on the ground and first floors of 12 panes ; the second floor windows to the central section are shorter and of nine panes. moulded stucco cornices run above the ground and first floor windows . The east and west façades are five bays wide with a two @-@ storey projecting bay on the east end and a single @-@ storey projecting bay on the west end .

Due to the slope of the site , the south façade , which overlooks the main part of the grounds , stands on a raised and terraced platform with the ground floor raised to first floor level and the basement becoming the ground floor . Above the terrace , the façade has the same general arrangement as the north façade , but the wings project slightly past the central section , which has a two @-@ storey pedimented portico . Each wing previously had a single @-@ storey bay at its centre but these have been removed .

Internally , a number of rooms feature period wall and ceiling decorations including the entrance hall , which dates from the original 1730s building and features moulded panelling and cornices , a marble fireplace and ornamental plaster ceiling and an arabesque frieze . The stairwell is lit from above with a roof light and features a cantilevered stair with iron balusters from the 1825 adaptation with a later brass handrail .

To the north @-@ east of the house is the estate 's former stable building . This was built around the time of the fifth Earl 's extension of the house and is aligned on a north @-@ south axis . The building comprises three three @-@ storey gable @-@ fronted pavilions separated by a pair of two @-@ storey wings . The façades are of brick , with the west façade painted white and the east unpainted . The roof is of slate with a clock tower in the centre of the east side of the central pavilion . Close to the stables is an underground brick @-@ built ice house accessed by a vaulted tunnel . The ice house dates from 1788 .

The main house is a Grade I listed building and the stables and the ice house are listed Grade II .

= = Park = =

Approached across parkland along a tree @-@ lined drive from a lodge to the north , the house sits in a landscape of approximately 132 hectares ( 330 acres ) of parkland , woodland and farmland part way down a south facing greensand slope overlooking the valley of the River Beult . Although now simplified without the intensive planting used in earlier centuries , elements remain of the formal gardens designed by John Claudius Loudon in 1825 that were previously arranged on the north , south @-@ east , south and west sides of the house .

Immediately to the south of the house is a wide 100 @-@ metre ( 330 ft ) long terrace with a stone balustrade . From the centre of this , aligned with the central portico of the house , stone steps descend in three flights over grass covered terraces to an oval lawn around the perimeter of which runs a gravel path and from which paths run to the east and west . In the centre of the lawn is a sundial . A wide lawn to the south @-@ east of the house is ringed by paths and divided by another on a north @-@ south access . This is interrupted by flights of steps and a fountain pond . Two small temples are positioned amongst trees part way down the slope .

To the west of the house Loudon laid out a flower garden . Later in the 1860s this was replanted with roses , but it is now lawns . At the south end of a walkway through this section of the garden is a water and rock garden known as " Jacobs Well " . From the north end of the walk an avenue of giant sequoias planted in 1864 runs north @-@ west towards the parish church of St Nicholas . Other Giant Sequoia are planted around the gardens . Close to the church , at the end of a paved walk is a small Gothic folly designed by Richard Bentley . South of the avenue is a grass amphitheatre cut into the slope . The southern perimeter of the formal garden is formed by a Ha @-@ Ha . To the south , beyond the formal gardens , the steepness of the slope reduces and the estate continues as open parkland with a tree @-@ fringed lake about 500 metres ( 1 @-@ 600 ft ) south of the house .

The gardens and parkland are listed Grade II \* , with a number of features in the garden also

individually listed for their group value with the house and park . The north lodge , the steps to the south of the house , the sundial on the oval lawn and the folly are all listed Grade II .

The estate is private property and is not open to the public , but the Greensand Way long distance walk crosses the parkland east @-@ west to the north of the house and a public footpath crosses the southern parkland close to the lake on a similar alignment .