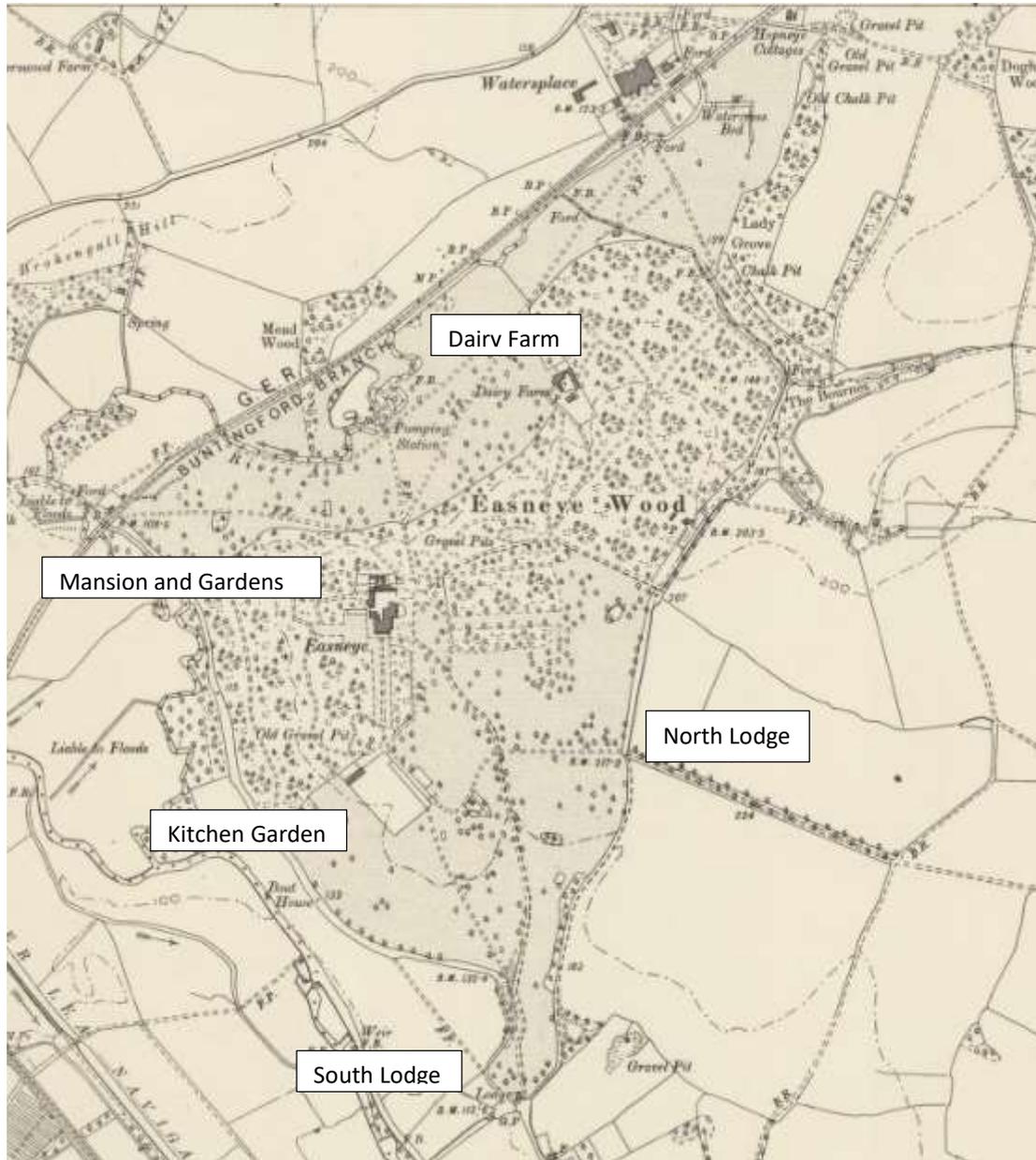


Easney Park

Grid Ref: TL381134

Parish: Stanstead Abbots



Easney Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition Sheet XXX.SW Publ 1899

History:

The early history of Easney as a deer park (1332 – c. early 16C) has been detailed by Anne Rowe in *Medieval Parks of Hertfordshire* (UH Press 2009) and *Tudor and Early Stuart Parks in Hertfordshire* (UH Press 2019). Although its extent is not clear, it could have covered 200 acres.

Following its disparkment, it appears that the site continued as Easneye or Isneye Wood through the 17th and 18th centuries. No dwelling or park is shown on the early maps, including the 1766 *Topographical Map of Hertfordshire* by Dury and Andrews. The 1822 *Map of the County of Hertford* by A. Bryant shows Easneye Wood Park but no dwelling (Fig 1)

'Easneye Park and Cottage' appears on the 1840 Tithe Map as owned and occupied by Henry Wilkinson. The area covered was just over 133 acres and the cottage was built on the top of the hill. It was approached by a track from the north.

The 3000-acre estate was purchased by Thomas Fowell Buxton in 1866. The Buxtons were noted abolitionists and related to the families of Hanbury (at Poles, Ware), Barclays (at High Leigh, Hoddesdon) and the Frys and Gurneys. The Buxtons were also partners with the brewing firm, Truman, Hanbury and Buxton of the Black Eagle Brewery, Brick Lane.

Buxton commissioned Alfred Waterhouse to build a mansion on the site of the cottage as well as a Lodge on Chappell Lane (now Capell Lane), a Dairy Farm, Easneye Farmhouse, outbuildings and stables to the house and workers cottages This was completed by 1868 (now listed II*).

The Buxton's lived at Easneye until 1971. During World War II it was requisitioned for evacuee babies from January 1940 and the L.C.C. continued to use it as a children's home until 1963, when it was closed. In 1964 a lease was agreed with All Nations Missionary College covering the mansion, the stables, North Lodge and the cricket field at a rental of £250 per annum. In 1971 the property with 9 acres of lands was sold to pay death duties and was bought by the college. An academic block and a hostel were built just behind the house and offices in the woodland to the west. More buildings have since been added and a car park laid out in the parkland beyond the turning circle.

Pleasure Gardens

1st edition Ordnance Survey map show the approach from the Lodge to the south curving round to a large turning circle, with a tazza on a small column in the centre, on the entrance front to the east of the house. By the time of the 1898 map an avenue had been planted leading east towards Hunsdon. This avenue still survives.

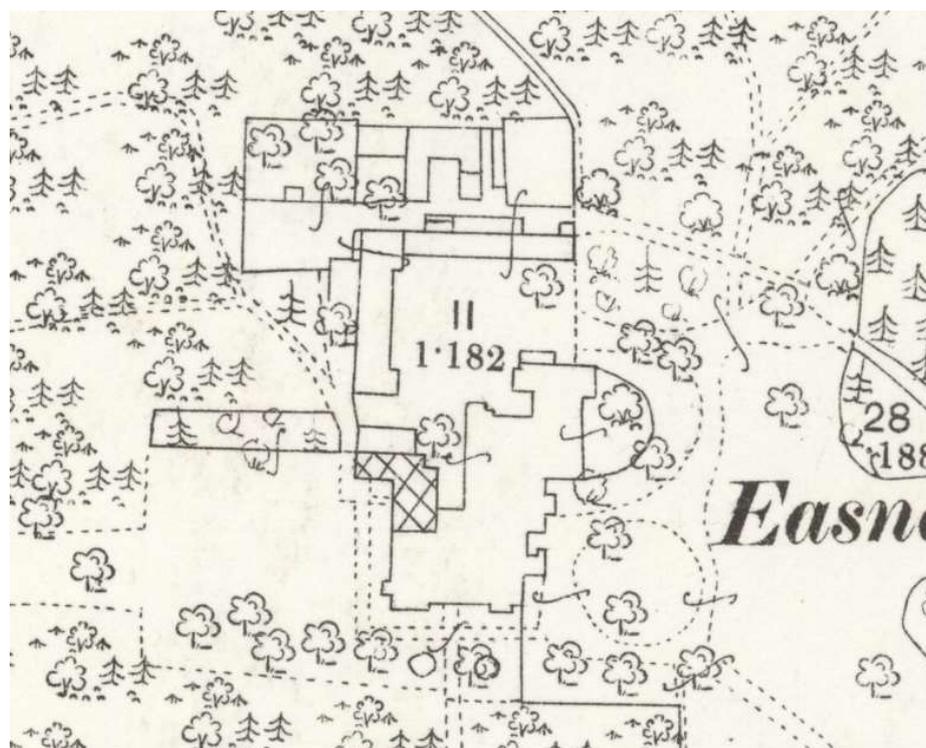
Subsidiary drives then lead to the stables/offices complex on the north of the house and further drives north through the woods to the Pumping Station on the river Ash and north east to join a lane leading south/north.

The house had a large conservatory to the west overlooking a square lawn. Flowerbeds are not depicted on the map but a photograph (no date) shows lawns at the approach to the house dotted with flower beds in the usual Victorian style. The garden itself was not extensive, scattered trees lead into thicker mixed woodland intersected by paths, and appears to be partly surrounded by a low wall (Cussans illustration).

The article by Davies states that only one gardener was employed, though he may have been assisted by garden boys. The simplicity of the pleasure gardens would not have required a large staff to maintain them.



Garden Front showing conservatory 1904



House and offices/stables, Conservatory and Gardens. Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile 1st edition 1880



Easney Entrance Front n.d



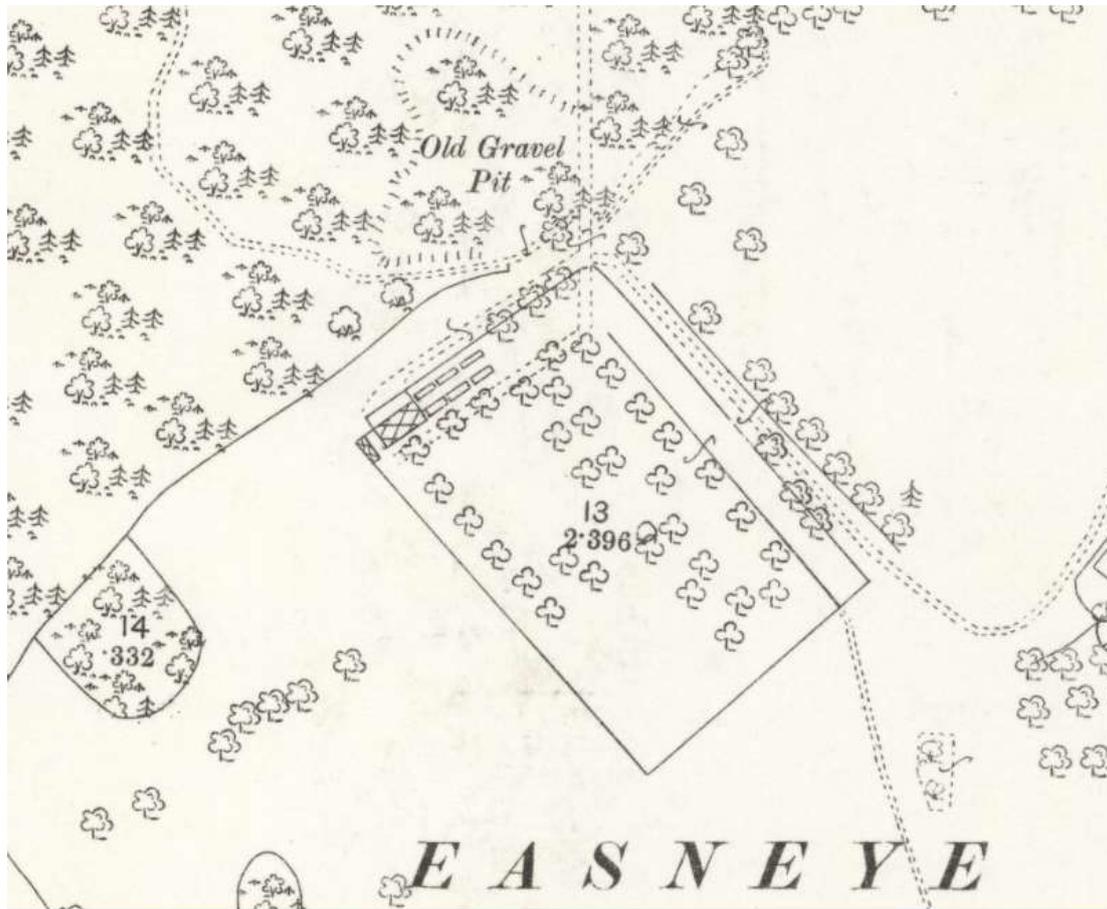
Easney Park, Stanstead Abbots, Hertfordshire for Thomas Fowell Buxton Esq.; perspective

Illustration for J E Cussans, History of Hertfordshire Volume I (1870-73)



Aerial View Looking West 1930s

Kitchen Garden



Easneye Kitchen Garden . 1st Ed. Ordnance Survey Sheet XXX.9 Surv 1878, Publ 1880 Sacle 25":1 mile (not to scale)

This was located to the south of the house and approached by a branch from the main drive. It was 2.6 across in extent, rectangular and aligned on a southeast-northwest access. Two glasshouses, one freestanding and the other against the southwest wall were site in the slip to the north west along with several frames in the frameyard. The slips also continued along the north east side. The garden contained fruit trees laid out in a regular but incomplete pattern. No watering facilities (such as pumps or wells or ponds) are shown and no other productive garden is shown on the maps. A small Building, perhaps the Gardener's Cottage, is shown in a wooded enclosure to the east. By the 1898 map, additional greenhouses and back sheds had been added, together with a smaller enclosure on the north side of the approach drive. Further glasshouses had been added by 1919 and more by 1938. There is nothing left of the garden today and only the approach drive is visible on LiDAR.

Parkland

The land to the northwest the gardens is largely laid to woodland with some farmland extending beyond the woods to the river Ash. The Victorian park lay south and east of the house, including the kitchen garden, and was laid to pasture with scattered trees.

It was noted that a small lake in the River Ash is in the shape of a “B” for Buxton, with beer barrels containing plants at various points in the water.¹ This is not clear on modern day maps and may have disappeared.

Estate Buildings

The Lodges are contemporary with the house as is the Dairy Farm and Farmhouse, and designed by Waterhouse in 1866/69.

North Lodge, a double lodge, lies to the east of the mansion and is Grade II listed, The South Lodge lies on Cappell Lane and is also Grade II. The farmhouse and dairy lie to the northeast of the house, also Grade II



Easneye South Lodge, Cappell Lane

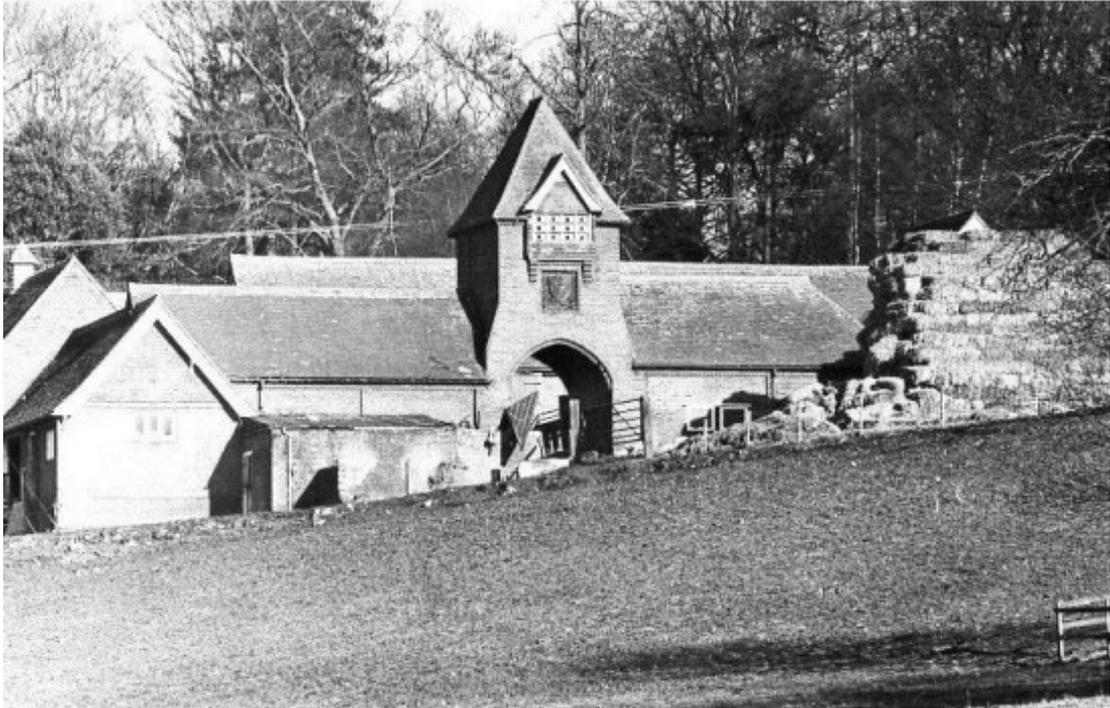
¹ Davies R 2006



Easney South Lodge, Cappell Lane



Easney North Lodge



Easney Dairy Farm 1902



Easney Farmhouse 1902



Easeneye Dairy Farm and Farmhouse

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Kate Harwood, Hertfordshire Gardens Trust, December 2021