



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

Selby District Historic Designed Landscapes Project

Hazelwood Park

Report by Susan Kellerman and Dick Knight [June 2018]

1. CORE DATA

1.1 Name of site

Hazelwood Park

*NB. The house known today as Hazlewood Castle, together with its historic park and estate, have undergone a number of variations in name and spelling over the last eight centuries. For the purposes of this report on the designed landscape, **Hazelwood Park** has been adopted, in line with the Historic Environment Record. Direct contemporary references will remain as in the original.*

1.2 Grid reference

SE4488339770

1.3 Administrative area

Selby District of North Yorkshire (current), West Riding of Yorkshire (historic)
Parish: Stutton with Hazlewood; Leeds

1.4 Current site designation

Not on the Historic England *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England*

2. SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Hazelwood was the seat of the Vavasour family for over 800 years, from the time of Domesday until the estate was put up for sale in 1907 (Figures 1, 2). At that time, the estate of 3806 acres (1540.234 hectares) comprised Hazelwood Castle, St Leonard's Chapel, gardens, parkland, woodland, farms, farmland (arable and livestock), cottages, etc. In addition to Hazelwood, the Vavasours owned manors and land across Yorkshire and in Staffordshire. Failing to find a buyer in 1907, the Castle and the reduced estate of 1065 acres was again offered for sale in 1908. Subsequent changes of ownership led to further break-up of the estate, and culminated in the Castle itself becoming a hotel in 1997. It is now owned by Ashdale Hotels, with gardens and woodland totalling 77 acres (31.16 hectares).

The Vavasours were a Catholic gentry family who retained their faith throughout their time at Hazelwood, intermarrying with prominent Catholic families in Yorkshire and beyond – Fairfax, Gascoigne, Fauconberg, Constable, Langdale, Giffard. As recusants, from the late sixteenth century until the early nineteenth century they were subject to imprisonment and penal laws, and barred from public office, which inevitably restricted their public influence and their finances, since they could not benefit from public office and concomitant benefits. Their support for the King during the Civil War led to subsequent sequestration of their estates and harsh fines during the Interregnum. The survival of the chapel, and Catholic worship there, throughout these difficult times, attests to the family's resilience.

The second half of the eighteenth century saw a relaxing of constraints on Catholics, and Sir Walter Vavasour 6th bt made significant improvements to the house, and to its park and gardens; these were laid out in the style made fashionable by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, probably based on a plan by Anthony Sparrow, who had worked as surveyor and foreman for Richard Woods and Thomas White at Harewood.

The family's recusancy must inevitably have impacted to a greater or lesser extent, at different periods, on the extent to which they could 'improve' their park and gardens, compared with other landowners. Efficient management of a Catholic estate was vital if it was to survive, and it is for this aspect of its history that Hazelwood is of particular interest.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

3.1 Estate owners

Hazelwood was home to the Vavasours from the time of the Norman Conquest to the early twentieth century. Vavasour, a Norman French name, 'vassal of a vassal', denotes a rank immediately below baron. At the time of Domesday (1086), Malger Vavasour was the sub-tenant of William de Percy, and owned four other manors in Yorkshire; Hazelwood became the seat of the senior line of the family.

It was after the sacking and burning down of an earlier house in c. 1264 that **William, first Baron Vavasour** (1265–1313), built a fortified manor house, obtaining licence to crenellate from Edward I in 1290. It has been assumed that the house and a new chapel (c.1283–85, dedicated to St Leonard) were rebuilt on the same site.

The Vavasours flourished until the sixteenth century, owning land across Yorkshire and beyond, but as Catholics, their fortunes declined after Henry VIII's break with Rome. **Sir William** (1514–66), JP, Sheriff of Yorkshire, and member of the Council in the North, was the last Vavasour to hold high public office, and enjoy the lucrative benefits this brought, until the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. Following the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity in 1559, generations of the family suffered persecution as recusants, with fines, double land taxation, spells in prison, sequestration of property and farming out of land. Sir William's son **John** suffered particularly in the reign of James I. He was convicted of recusancy in 1609, and died shortly after, with no issue. Hazelwood then passed in quick succession to John's brother, **Ralph**, to his son **William** (also convicted of recusancy, spending five years in Newgate Gaol), and then to his son, **Thomas**, who succeeded in 1626.

The accession of Charles I in 1625 heralded a brief spell of lighter enforcement of anti-Catholic laws, and **Thomas** was created the **first Baronet Vavasour** in 1628. Nevertheless, he was still paying an annual fine of

£150 for recusancy (many thousands of pounds at today's values); and his son, Walter (1614–79), still a minor on his father's death in 1632, was convicted at the Old Bailey for recusancy in 1635, the year he succeeded to the title.

Sir Walter, 2nd bt and his brother fought on the side of the King in the Civil War, and were forced to flee to Holland in 1644. They were assisted in this by the Earl of Essex and Lord Fairfax, both Cromwell's men – despite their religion and politics, the Vavasours clearly had friends in high places, and importantly, Hazelwood was not molested. The estates were leased, however, to John Troutbeck, Surgeon General of the Northern Brigade, who is recorded as having spent £80 to make Hazelwood 'wind and water tight', and paid annuities to Sir Walter's brothers. In 1652, the estate was forfeited to the Commonwealth for Treason (WYL245/1092; Clay, 116–17). Sir Walter eventually regained his estates after the Restoration.

Sir Walter, 3rd bt (c. 1644–1713) succeeded in 1679, and he soon embarked on rebuilding work. An advantageous marriage in 1676 to Jane Crosland, daughter of Sir Jordan Crosland of Newby, may well have provided the impetus for this activity. However, Sir Walter died in 1713 without issue, and his cousin **Fr Walter**, a Jesuit priest, succeeded to the estate, with the title of 4th bt assumed by his brother, Peter. Again, with Fr Walter having no son, the estate and title passed in 1740 to his nephew, **Walter, 5th bt** (1711–1766), whose second wife was Dorothy, daughter of Lord Langdale of Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, E Riding.

The threat of papist plots and then the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 continued to cause problems for Catholics: Sir Walter was summoned to court for refusing to swear the Oath of Allegiance, and his home was searched for arms and ammunition (York Minster F2/3/4/10, 23). On his death in 1766, he was succeeded by his 22-year-old son, also **Walter, 6th bt** (1744–1802).

With the Jacobite threat now long past, the young Walter could commit to a period of some 30 years or so of building and improvement at Hazelwood. But he remained a single man until 1797, when, at the age of 52, he married Jane, only daughter and sole heiress of William Langdale of Langthorpe, Esq. Jane was already in her forties, and the marriage produced no heir. In 1802, Sir Walter offered the house and 58 acres, at a very favourable price (£12,000), as premises for a new Catholic seminary, in the wake of the closure of Catholic colleges in France. But he died almost immediately after the agreement for purchase was signed. His brother and heir, Thomas, interned in France during the French Revolutionary Wars, returned in 1803, and by mutual agreement, the sale was cancelled (Milburn, 100–03). Sir Walter's widow, Lady Vavasour, remained at Hazelwood till her death in 1824.

Sir Thomas, 7th bt died unmarried in 1826. He named as his heir his cousin, **Edward Marmaduke Stourton**, son of 17th Lord Stourton of Allerton Mauleverer, North Yorkshire. Edward changed his name to Vavasour, and was created a baronet in 1828, becoming **Sir Edward Vavasour, 1st bt (2nd creation)** (WYL/245/180). Edward had married Marcia, daughter of James Lane Fox of Bramham Park, in 1815. The marriage produced eight children, but Marcia died in childbirth in 1826. Sir Edward, a soldier and magistrate, pious, generous, and widely respected, appears to have been a good manager of the estate, but he never really recovered from his wife's death. In 1846 he set off on pilgrimage for Rome, but died en route in France in March 1847 (Stourton, 631–32). His death brought a problem for the family: his eldest son succeeded as **Sir Edward Vavasour, 2nd bt**, but he had acquired a fever in Rome some years earlier, and, in the parlance of the time, had been declared a lunatic, so his younger brother **William Joseph** took over the management of the Hazelwood estate (WYL245/158).

It was during William's time that Hazelwood Hall became known as Hazelwood Castle (1851 census). William managed Hazelwood until his death in 1866. His son, William Edward Joseph, who served in the papal Zouaves and fought against Garibaldi, eventually inherited the title, as **Sir William, 3rd bt**, after Sir Edward's death in 1885. But financial difficulties eventually led to the estate being put up for auction in 1907. With only some of the lots finding buyers, a second sale took place in 1908, when **Edward Overend Simpson**, a Leeds solicitor, bought the Castle and its grounds.

The house was used as a maternity hospital during WWII, and in 1953, **Eric Fawcett**, owner of White Quarry Farm (a former Vavasour property), bought the Castle, chapel, gardens and woodland. The property was again sold in 1960 to **Donald Hart**, and in the late 1960s he invited Carmelite Friars to use Hazelwood as a retreat. During this period, some internal alterations were made to the house. The **Carmelite Friars** took full possession in 1972, and remained until 1997, when the property was again sold and became a hotel. It is currently owned by **Ashdale Hotels**.

Key owners who made changes to the designed landscape:

- Sir Walter Vavasour, 5th bt, b. 1711 (1740–1766)
- Sir Walter Vavasour, 6th bt, b. 1744 (1766–1802)
- Sir Edward Marmaduke Vavasour, 1st bt (second creation); b. 1786 (1826–1847)

3.2 Early history of the site

Note: all references WYL are from the West Yorkshire Archive Service (Leeds)

A deserted medieval village sited SE and E of the Castle (NGR SE 4510 3970) had all but disappeared by 1650 when a Parliamentary survey noted few inhabitants (*Historic Environment Record*; MacNab 2002, 14). A segment of the Roman road from Doncaster to Tadcaster (known as Roman Ridge, Scheduled Ancient Monument) runs just to the west of Hazel Wood, from Nut Hill on the (former) Great North Road towards the eighteenth-century Leeds–York turnpike (present-day A64). One stretch formed part of the estate boundary until the early twentieth century.

Early records refer to a chapel at Hazelwood in 1189 (Oswald, 1381). In 1204 Robert le Vavasour obtained free warren (i.e. exclusive rights to hunt lesser game, such as hares, rabbits, game birds, foxes, badgers) for his Wharfedale lands and the right to create a park at Hazelwood. It is from Robert's time that we have records of the quarrying of magnesian limestone on the Hazelwood estate: in 1225 a charter granted York Minster 'free passage in Thevesdale [quarry]' for stone (Oswald, 1380). This was the same stone used by Sir William, the 1st baron, to rebuild both the chapel and house, towards the end of the thirteenth century, on an elevated site commanding views across the surrounding countryside. There is archaeological evidence for a courtyard behind the manor house from early medieval times: a wall, possibly C13, ran north along the western side of the present-day courtyard. This was later extended (possibly C15), and stables and store rooms built (York Archaeological Trust, 1998, 5–10).

Sir William's son Henry founded a chantry (Our Lady) in the chapel in 1333; and a second chantry was established in 1452 (Oswald, 1380–82). This may have been on the site of the present-day C18 octagonal tower, sometimes known as 'The Chantry', and is probably the origin of the name of Chantry Lane, which leads eastwards from the chapel. The towers at the south-west corner of the house were added in the

fifteenth or early sixteenth century; the E wing appears to be early seventeenth century (Leach and Pevsner, 325).

When Henry VIII visited Yorkshire in 1541, the Bishop of Durham showed him the rich Vale of York, and Sir William Vavasour of Hazelwood recorded the event, commenting that 'Very neare ye center of this Vally is seated upon ye rising of a hill ye Mannor house of Hasslewood', surrounded by a wealth of manors, parks, chases, rivers, water mills, coal mines, and iron forges, a countryside offering 'hunting, halking, fishing & fowling' (Oswald, 1426). And he could also boast of the Hazelwood quarries. In 1546, the Great Wood covered 500 acres – this 'Great Wood' certainly included what is now known as Hazel Wood, and possibly extended to include today's Hayton Wood, both medieval or post-medieval woodland. Wingate Wood was 100 acres (only vestiges remain today), Lead Wood was 200 acres, and Bolliyni Wood (now Bullen) was 30 acres (MacNab 2002, 12).

In the mid-1500s, Sir William painted a picture of wealth and good living, and as the holder of high public office, there is every reason to believe that, until his death in 1566, the layout and features of his gardens and park would have been typical of high-status gentry houses in Yorkshire. There would have been formal enclosed courts around the house, formally planted flower gardens (knots) and herb gardens, with paved or gravelled walks, and cut box hedges, arbours and seats. Given the topography of the site, the area most likely to have been exploited would be to the west of the house, possibly with terracing where the ground falls away to the south. A kitchen garden, orchards, dovecote, and fishponds (the latter probably south of the house, where the remains of a lake still survive), would have provided food for the household. It is likely that there would have been a bowling green and summer house, or possibly a banqueting house similar to that which survives at Weston Hall, near Otley, home of a cadet branch of the Vavasour family (Figure 3).

Despite the wealth of parks and chases mentioned above, and the evident high status of the Vavasour family at the time, no hard evidence has yet been found for a medieval deer park at Hazelwood. A document dated 1488 records the death of Margaret, daughter of Sir Henry Vavasour, who broke her neck while hunting in the park at Hazelwood; this suggests she was on horseback, possibly hunting deer, but this can only be speculation (WYL115/F/5/1/21). Deer parks at Stockeld and Healaugh are represented on early maps (e.g. Saxton, 1577; Speede, 1610; W and J Blaeu, 1645) in the standard manner by a picket fence symbol, but no such park pale is shown for Hazelwood (Figures 4, 5). Warburton's map of 1720 does show the house, 'Haslewood', on the edge of a sub-circular enclosure containing trees, but this may represent a later 'country house deer park' or just an enclosed estate. The Jefferys map of 1775 shows a building marked 'Lodge' SSE of the house – possibly evidence of a deer keeper's lodge; and surveys dating from 1791 (Francis White, WYL245/1321) show several gates, Scholar's Gate (earlier form Scolleryate, a shed at a corner), Red Gate and Warren House Gate around the estate – along the Great North Road, Roman Ridge and the Leeds–Tadcaster turnpike; but none of these have any obvious deer associations, and may have been 'beastgates', for managing livestock. And so at present the evidence for a deer park, medieval or later, remains circumstantial and inconclusive.

3.3 Chronological history of the designed landscape

3.3.1 1600–c. 1720

No evidence has come to light in the Vavasour archive – estate plans, accounts, correspondence – to show what the Hazelwood demesne looked like in the seventeenth century. No records have been found, for example, of any remodelling of the gardens to keep up with changes in fashion, no records of gardening activities, or plants grown. Although Hazelwood was not ransacked or damaged in the Civil War, as was the Vavasour property at Woodhall, Wetherby, the estate was sequestered. Between 1651 and 1652 it was leased to John Troutbeck, Surgeon General to the Northern Brigade, who kept the building in repair, but he and other temporary ‘owners’ were unlikely to concern themselves with the gardens (Clay, 116–17). Thus it is possible that they remained substantially unchanged until the Restoration.

Given the penal laws and fines imposed on recusants from the late 1500s onwards, then the disruptions of the Civil War, the subsequent absence abroad of Sir Walter 2nd bt and sequestration of Hazelwood, imposition in 1692 of double land taxation, and then the growing Jacobite threat in the early 1700s, it could be argued that the main focus throughout much of the seventeenth century would always have been efficient management of the estate (Lock, 186–89). That said, it should be noted that between 1695 and 1700, Sir Nicholas Shireburn, a prominent Catholic, was able to spend some £1600, a vast sum, on his gardens at Stonyhurst in Lancashire (Cliffe, 61).

Some evidence for the morphology of the estate in the 1600s comes from published maps, although the accuracy of these must be treated with great caution. On maps by Speede (1610), Blaeu (1645) and Morden (1695), Hazelwood is named, but no park is depicted (defined by a pale) as at other comparable sites in the area (e.g. Healaugh, Gawthorpe, Stockeld). According to inquisitions of Vavasour property taken in 1607/8 in connection with recusancy charges, the estate at this time extended as far south as the Cock Beck, to include Lead Hall (WYL245/1110) (Figure 6). Warburton’s map of 1720 is the first to depict Hazelwood with a park pale: this is shown to the NE of the schematic house, extending east as far as the Old London Road, and northwards almost to the line of the later Leeds–York turnpike, with trees marked inside the pale. Low Park House (shown on 1st edition OS map, 1849) *might* perhaps fall within the pale as outlined by Warburton.

Maps published later, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, show formal tree-lined avenues on the Hazelwood estate which might have been planted in the late 1600s: either north and east from the house (Jefferys 1775; Tuke 1787, WYL115/MA60) or south (Thorp, 1819, WYL115/MA58; Greenwood, surveyed 1817) (Figure 7) – contradictory rather than consistent evidence. Such avenues were typical of the latter part of the seventeenth century, and a very public statement of social status. The post-Restoration years would have presented more optimistic prospects for the Vavasours: recusants were less harshly pursued, the Catholic presence was more open around York, and so a propitious time for planting avenues (Tillott, 198–206).

It was during this period of optimism that Sir Walter, 3rd bt, succeeded in 1679, and we have evidence of substantial changes to Hazelwood. Sir Walter inherited what was a relatively modest house: in 1672, Hazelwood had been recorded as having 20 hearths, compared with 24 at Weston Hall (home of the cadet branch of the family), 26 at Byram, 25 at Ledston and 28 at Healaugh (Hey, 333). Sir Walter had married Jane Crosland in 1676, and there are indications that she brought a generous dowry with her. A farmhouse on Wingate Hill bears the date 1697 on a kneeler, probably recording a new build. The date 1680 appears on the bell-cote of the chapel (Oswald, 1427); and the rain water heads on the S front of the house, with the arms of Vavasour impaling Crosland, indicate alterations to this facade post-1676 (Oswald, 1427).

Remodelling of a house, as appears to have happened during the time of Sir Walter and Dame Jane, often signals redesign of the surrounding gardens. One addition to the house which may have been made by Sir

Walter c. 1700, is the north wing, on the west side of the courtyard. This survived until 1910 when all but part of the ground floor arcading was demolished (*Country Life* proof photos 5460440, 5460442). The dating of this 'new wing' is difficult to establish, but excavations by York Archaeological Trust (YAT) in the Castle courtyard have shown that it was originally constructed over the previous medieval walls of the courtyard, stables and stores (YAT 1997, 1998). The possible date of around 1700 comes from the 1907 sale catalogue: 'In the latter part of the seventeenth or early part of the eighteenth century Sir Walter built the new wing and altered and repaired the old Castle in view of a proposed royal visit' (WYL115/MA/ADD/Box73/13). Presumably this information was supplied when the auctioneers were instructed, but no other evidence has been found to confirm this date of c. 1680–1720, or suggest which royal visitor was expected.

A further version of the 'royal visit' motive for a new wing alleges that the anticipated visitor was King James I, c. 1603 (YAT 1997). (This story is also quoted elsewhere, but it seems questionable, given the recusancy of the Vavasours.) Excavations have revealed that the ground-floor arcading (which can be seen in a photo of c. 1900, Figure 8, and part of which survives today) was built in two distinct phases, the first section (consisting of 6 arches) leaving a gap between it and the medieval tower, and the second phase infilling the space between the north wing and the tower, but no firm date could be attributed to either phase (MacNab 1998, 20; MacNab 2002). On 'architectural' grounds, the arcading was dated to the eighteenth century, thus concluding that a Jacobean dating for the building was unlikely (YAT 1997; MacNab 1998).

A landscape improvement plan of 1768 (Figure 9) shows the footprint of a north wing already in existence, attached to the main castle building, and it is clear that the landscaping proposals around the house took this into account (see discussion of this plan below). The c. 1900 photo, architectural drawings of c. 1890 (WYL245/1326), and a watercolour sketch of c. 1813 (YAS/DD262/5.15.4), show the north wing as a very substantial building; but whether this was the *original* north wing, or a later rebuilding or encasement, cannot currently be determined. Whatever the construction history, such an extension to the original medieval/late medieval core of the house would either have led to alterations to any existing gardens, or to the creation of new gardens, on its western elevation.

A sketch by Samuel Buck of c. 1720 shows the house viewed from the SW: a house with two projecting gabled wings and a central crenellated section with door (Samuel Buck, 324). The simple drawing suggests a principal entrance on the south front but gives no indication of carriage approach or gardens, as seen in some of Buck's other sketches. The accuracy of the representation of the house is also questionable, since it does not show the irregularly-attached late medieval SW corner tower. Buck's more detailed sketches of other gentry houses of this period are useful, however, in giving an idea of the sort of gardens likely to be found at Hazelwood.

3.3.2 1720–1766

The first decades of the eighteenth century again introduced a new threat for Catholics. The 1715 Jacobite rising in Scotland and the persisting threat from Jacobite sympathisers in England in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion led to court appearances and payment of bonds for the Vavasours, with constables searching Hazelwood for arms, weapons, and ammunition (York Minster F2/3/4/7; F2/3/4/9-10; F2/3/4/17; F2/3/4/19). A licence for Sir Walter 5th bt to visit Hazelwood on estate business in 1744 suggests he was not resident at that time (York Minster F2/3/4/14).

A curious comment by Thomas Gent in his *Antient and Modern History of the Famous City of York*, published 1730 (Gent, 33), may provide some evidence of hard times at Hazelwood:

Hesselwood was once a wood indeed, incircling [*sic*] its pleasant edifice with the most delightful groves; but now, being almost cut down, and miserably destroyed, scarce retains its name.

The wood which originally encircled the house was presumably the 'Great Wood', recorded as such in 1546. By 1768 this appears to have been divided, with a considerable gap between Hazel Wood and Hayton Wood (see discussion below in 3.3.3 of the 1768 landscape plan). Gent's comment re the loss of trees may explain this gap, but not the reason for their destruction. It might be inferred that this was due to deliberate felling, since there are instances on estates elsewhere of tree felling on a grand scale when money was short; or it could have been the result of severe storm damage, possibly the Great Storm of 1703.

Sir Walter 5th bt had succeeded his uncle, Fr Walter, in 1740, and in the following year married Dorothy, daughter of Lord Langdale of Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, his second wife. There are some records of building activity over the following years. Lodge House, a 'new house at the lodge', was built in 1762 and leased to Richard Brown, husbandman; it had a garth, two acres of arable land, and 11 closes containing together 227 acres. Sir Walter reserved rights of hunting, fishing, fowling and hawking, certain rights of way, and the right of enclosure, and the rent was £79.5s (WYL245/1076). The stables may also have been built around this time: they are shown on the Sparrow plan of 1768 (see Figure 9). Oswald suggests c. 1750, but his attribution to James Paine is unlikely (Dr Peter Leach, personal communication).

Bowen's map of the 1750s shows a similar park pale to the Warburton map of 1720: it is difficult to know whether this records an absence of changes at Hazelwood, or just constitutes a rehash of the earlier map. Perhaps the best indication we have of the designed landscape at Hazelwood in the mid-1700s is the Jefferys map, published 1775 but surveyed in the late 1760s, marking 'Hasslewood Hall' as the property of 'Sir W. Vavasor B^t', which gives limited but notable information. Hazelwood is shown with two prominent tree-lined avenues, the first running ENE from the house towards Cockbridge (along the line of today's Chantry Lane), and a second running N then NW to join the Leeds–York turnpike (today's Paradise Lane). Such avenues were typical of the second half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and a prominent avenue observed by a surveyor in the later 1760s could have been planted some 80–100 years earlier. Tuke's map of 1787 (WYL115/MA60) shows avenues of trees very similar to Jefferys, but less detail overall. Of other features on Jefferys, 'Lodge' is probably Lodge House, built in 1762 (mentioned above, and today's Lodge Farm); and Warren House is now Warren House Farm. Hazel Wood is shown but not named as such; and Red Hall to the south must surely be Lead Hall. A road or drive is shown branching off from the Great North Road north-eastwards towards the S front of the house (also marked on Tuke) – later named South Approach on the 1st edition OS map in 1849.

The lack of detail shown by Jefferys may be connected with relatively inadequate surveying in this particular area (for discussion of this, see Jones 1981, 358, 369 and 376–77; Jefferys, *Introduction*). But it may be a true representation of a not very well-developed or remarkable landscape – the time of the surveying coincides with a plan for improvement at Hazelwood dated 1768 (see discussion below). Compare the detailed representation of neighbouring Bramham Park, which was by then a well-established, well-visited and well-recorded site. By contrast, no mention of Hazelwood has been found so far in any of the many late C18 travel journals. This Catholic gentry family did not have the high political and social profile which attracted the tourist, and nor would it have had the income to lavish on its gardens that Anglican landowners had access to.

3.3.3 1766–1802

It was with the succession of Sir Walter, 6th bt, in 1766, aged 22, that substantial building and improvement of the landscape is clearly evident. He had youth on his side and fashion to keep up with. Anti-Catholic laws were less stringently enforced (Lock, 191), and the official recognition of the Hanoverian dynasty by the Pope (1766) probably contributed to a more secure environment in which Catholics could build for the future and ‘come in’ from the fringes of society. Sir Walter was a keen huntsman of both foxes and hares (cf. the paintings ‘Sir Thomas Gascoigne and Sir Walter Vavasour, with the Priest, the Vicar and Hunt Servants’ at Lotherton Hall; ‘Ringwood’, a stallion hound bred by Sir Walter Vavasour, at Bramham Park: Nick Lane Fox, personal communication); he bred and raced horses, and socialised at race meetings (WYL245/1059, WYL245/1041). He travelled to France in 1784 (WYL245/232, WYL245/1041), and possibly also to Italy in 1788 (‘Vavasour Milan’ recorded by Ingamells). He became a freemason in 1768 (Peter Aitkenhead, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London: personal communication), and was Provincial Grand Master for Yorkshire, 1780–84 (Johnson, 10–11).

It is generally agreed that it was the 6th bt who remodelled the chapel (Leach and Pevsner, 325), and gave the house its Georgianised south front, with battlements added on the two projecting wings, and an entrance doorway with Tuscan columns and pediment (Oswald, 1428; Leach and Pevsner, 325). The interior of the Great Hall was modernised with a grand Doric order, and the dining room decorated in the ‘Adamesque’ style typical of the period. All of this has been attributed to John Carr, although no documentary evidence has been identified (and Hazelwood is not attributed to Carr by Wragg and Worsley, 2000). However, Dr Ivan Hall identifies much of the architectural detail as typical of Carr (personal communication); and Carr was working for neighbouring estate owners around this time (e.g. at Bramham, c.1763–73; at Stapleton, c. 1762–64; and Parlington, 1772), and for Catholic kinsmen of the Vavasours (Constable at Burton Constable, 1760; Langdale at Holme Hall, c. 1756–66) (Wragg and Worsley, Catalogue, 103–235).

Considerable building and estate improvements are recorded: payments for well-sinking at Hazelwood, May–June 1776, and ‘Paving the kitchen court’, 13 July 1776 (WYL245/6); farm buildings and lodges were built or developed (WYL245/1077, WYL245/726); and the estate of Woodhall was sold (c. 1790, WYL245/1041). Leases for Cockford farm in 1784 (WYL245/1083) and pasture in 1785 (WYL245/1077) reserve to Sir Walter Vavasour ‘royalties and mineral rights’, woods and timber, and rights of hunting, hawking, fishing and fowling. A small octagonal tower, castellated Gothic, sited at the junction of Chantry Lane and Paradise Lane, just outside the Castle courtyard, almost certainly dates from c. 1770 (Figure 10). It is sometimes referred to as ‘The Chantry’, and was built from recycled stone, possibly from an old chantry chapel, or from St Leonard’s Chapel when it was Georgianised (Jones, 367; Kellerman, 14). A ‘foundation stone’ carved with ‘Mary and the baby Jesus in swaddling clothes’ is said to lie buried about two feet deep ‘on the nearest corner of the octagonal to the road’ (letter to author from Adrian Evans, Head Gardener, 1998).

The most important document relating to the gardens and park at Hazelwood comes with ‘A Plan For the improvement of Haslewood, The Seat of S^r Walt^r Vavasour, By A. Sparrow, 1768’ (see Figures 9, 11–13; WYL245/1325). This must be Anthony Sparrow, a land surveyor who was working at Harewood at the time. In 1764 Sparrow had worked as foreman for the landscape gardener Richard Woods at Wardour, Wiltshire

(Lord Arundell), and then moved up to Harewood with Woods. When Thomas White took over from Woods at Harewood, Sparrow stayed on as his foreman, and was later employed directly by Edwin Lascelles (Cowell, 157–58, 202-03, 231; Lynch, 76–77). He remained working at Harewood until at least 1774. During this time, he supervised staking out and planting, had sufficient expertise to contradict White's recommendations (Turnbull, 104–05; Lynch, 76–77), and in 1774 drew a plan for a water course (WYL250/3/Map/42a). An 1822 guide book to Harewood states that the 'celebrated' gardens and pleasure grounds were 'partly laid out by Mr. Launcelot Brown of Hampton Court, part of them by Mr. Sparrow, another part by Mr. White' (Jewell, 36). Sparrow was described as 'Land Surveyor' and 'of Harewood' when he married in Leeds in 1768, and again when each of his five children was baptised between 1768 and 1782 in the Roman Catholic chapel of St Mary's, Knaresborough. Sparrow was also commissioned to produce a survey at Hawksworth Hall (W. Riding) in 1768 (YAS, DD193) – where Thomas White drew up an improvement plan the following year; and an improvement plan for Lartington Hall (formerly N. Yorkshire, now Co. Durham, c. 1765) has been identified as his (Dr Fiona Cowell, personal communication). The commissioning of Sparrow at Hazelwood is therefore significant. Sir Walter was planning to follow the fashion in Brownian landscaping of the time. While not in the same 'premier league' of landscape gardeners as Lancelot Brown, Richard Woods or Thomas White, his work for Woods and White on major landscape projects such as those at Wardour and Harewood demonstrates his familiarity with current fashion in landscape design.

How did Sparrow get his commission at Hazelwood? His employment at Harewood coincided with that of John Carr of York, the architect largely responsible for the house there. This might lend some further credence to the claims that Carr worked at Hazelwood, c. 1770. There are also Sir Walter's horse racing connections, which almost certainly included Edwin Lascelles.

But there is another possible explanation for Anthony Sparrow's commission at Hazelwood, and that is a Catholic connection. Sparrow and Richard Woods were both Catholic, and many of Woods's clients were Catholic (including Lord Arundell at Wardour; Cowell, 7–11). The Maire family at Lartington Hall was Catholic. Thomas White, for whom Sparrow worked at Harewood, produced plans for improvement in 1768 for the Langdales at Houghton Hall, near Market Weighton, and the Constables at Burton Constable (Turnbull, 434) – both Catholic families, both related by marriage to the Vavasours (Sir Walter's mother was Dorothy Langdale of Holme Hall, East Riding). Was White behind the approach to Sparrow? Like other Catholic families, even when the penal laws were relaxed in the later eighteenth century, the Vavasours routinely employed Catholics as servants, and did business with other Catholics, as shown throughout surviving Vavasour accounts and correspondence. The strong Catholic connections between Yorkshire gentry families might also suggest an alternative to John Carr as architect for Hazelwood, namely Thomas Atkinson, a Catholic convert. Atkinson was retained as architect c. 1765 by the Langdales of Houghton Hall; the Cholmeleys of Brandsby, 1767–70 (friends of Sir Walter: WYL245/1064); and in the 1770s, the Stapletons of Carlton Hall and the Constables of Burton Constable (Colvin, 83) – all Catholics. Atkinson also designed the Gothic gatehouse at nearby Bishopthorpe Palace and remodelled the house in Gothic style, in the 1760s (Colvin, 83).

The coloured (but faded) Sparrow plan, measuring 53 in. x 36½ in. (1.3 m x 0.9 m), at a scale of 1 in. to 2 chains, was a presentation plan, prepared for Sir Walter. Regrettably, there is no key to the letters which designate specific features on the plan itself, nor any 'Explanation' which was typical of such plans – and included on Sparrow's other plans. The key and any accompanying explanation must therefore have been in a separate, lost or undiscovered document. No memorandum or instructions to a foreman (who would supervise implementation of the plan) have been found – this would have included, for example, details as

to style and colour of fencing shown. However, there are a number of 'pencil' markings on the plan, amending or adding features, which suggest it was used as a basis for discussion.

The plan extends eastwards to just short of today's White Quarry Farm on Chantry Lane, and westwards to 'The Great Wood' (today's Hazel Wood). To the south, the plan runs beyond the edge of the park, showing the northern edge of Hayton Wood (now separated from Hazel Wood). To the north, the plan does not extend as far as the Leeds–York turnpike. It shows gardens abutting the western side of the house and pleasure grounds to the NW, beyond a large walled garden; parkland with scattered trees and clumps; a lake to the south of the house; plantations to the west and south; fields down the eastern side; and drives and paths, fences, a ha-ha (F) and hedges. Importantly, the house is shown as having a substantial north wing, the 'new wing' (see Figure 9 and discussion above), and the layout and planting to the west is clearly based around it. Although the older south front of the house commands a prospect of parkland, rooms on the principal floor of the N wing would have a view west towards the Great North Road along a substantial avenue of trees which is a striking feature of the plan (see Figures 11, 12). There would quite possibly be a return view of the house for travellers on the road. There is, though, no drive shown along the avenue, with the three main approaches to the house coming (as shown on earlier maps) from the south west, north and east. The drive from the Great North Road approaches the house from the south west, following the edge of the Great Wood, i.e. Hazel Wood, until the house comes into view across the parkland (see Figure 12). Such an approach is somewhat typical of Richard Woods. The eastern approach, Chantry Lane, has informal groupings of trees at regular intervals (see Figure 13). The north approach appears to be lined with hedge and trees as it nears the house. Rides run through Hazel Wood, one curving close to its western edge over the entire length from north to south (and accessible from the stables behind the house) and two others crossing it roughly east–west, south of the great avenue (which within the wood may itself be a ride). At one crossing of rides there is a rondpoint.

The garden and pleasure grounds are dealt with in considerable detail. There is planting, presumably shrubs, close to the walls of the house on the west and on the north side of the chapel. The inner courtyard has a lawn planted with a specimen tree. One feature that is missing from this plan is the octagonal tower at the junction of Paradise and Chantry Lanes, which points to it being built post-1768. The large walled kitchen garden, divided into two, is positioned northwest of the house (somewhat closer to it than the kitchen garden shown later on OS maps). A further open area adjoining the walled garden on its western side, and similarly depicted, might possibly be a flower garden (a possible influence from Woods) or a slip garden for field vegetables, etc. West and north of the walled garden is an area of trees and/or shrubs with a network of drives or paths. Other areas around the walled garden seem to be productive rather than ornamental.

The park is shown principally west and south of the house; possibly north of the pleasure grounds; and a small area east of the house. The eastern park boundary is formed by a sinuous hedge running south from a section of the ha-ha (F) which curves around E and SE of the house – the extent of the park in this area is not clear. The woodland fringe to the west of the park is also extremely sinuous. The line of the ha-ha denotes that those areas of the park beyond would have contained livestock. Barely discernible straight lines, with some individual trees along them, running south from the lake and aligned on the south front of the house, might indicate an avenue which is to be removed.

A lake in the park south of the house is shown as about 120 m W–E by 80m N–S at its widest points. Sparrow proposes trees of a pendulous nature for planting around the water: probably weeping willows. It is most likely that this lake was intended to hold fish: there could well have been a series of fish ponds on this same

site, possibly dating back to medieval times, although no earlier map survives showing them. On 3 September 1805, Sir Thomas, 7th bt, sent 15 'fine carp' to William Vavasour to stock a pond at Weston Hall (WYL639/398); and the lake is named as 'Fish Pond' on the 1895 OS map.

One anomaly of the Sparrow plan is the apparent absence of any ornamental buildings or features – garden seats, arbours, temples, eye-catchers – typical of the period. Sparrow was certainly aware of such features, since small Gothic follies are illustrated on his Lartington plan 'for hiding disagreeable objects'. There is also, evidently, no ice house. The one feature which Sparrow does depict is the medieval cross in the chapel graveyard.

Unfortunately, no archival records documenting the implementation of Sparrow's overall plan have been found. A 'Brownian' parkland was apparently well established by the first decade of the C19: a watercolour of c. 1813 portrays the house in a setting which would fit the Sparrow proposals some 40 years on (YAS/DD262/5.15.4). It is possible to overlay the plan on C19 OS maps, and on Google Earth, and find a good fit with some surviving field boundaries, drives, and other features. It is of course possible that some of the features on the Sparrow plan predate 1768.

Some 25 years after Sparrow, the name of Thomas White, landscape designer and arboriculturalist, crops up again, this time in direct connection with a Vavasour: payments of £234.18s and £239.7s were made to White's Drummonds bank contra account in 1793 and 1794, 'Vavasour on Child' (i.e. Child's bank; Turnbull, 656). No further information can be discovered concerning these payments. Although the Vavasour in question is not further identified, it is most likely that it is Sir Walter at Hazelwood, rather than William Vavasour at Weston Hall, or Henry Vavasour at Melbourne Hall (E Riding). These are considerable sums, far in excess of providing an improvement plan, for example – White was charging between 20 and 50 guineas for surveys and improvement plans in the 1790s (Turnbull, 127) – and would represent extensive work. Although working almost exclusively in Scotland at this time, it might be that White, known for his 'planting skills', was supplying trees (Dr Deborah Turnbull and Dr David Neave, personal communication). His one known engagement outside Scotland at this time was at Fryston Hall, just a few miles further down the Great North Road, where he was employed on 'major planting' by Richard Slater Milnes (Turnbull, 334–35).

Apart from the Sparrow plan and payments to Thomas White, there are very few other records for the gardens and park at Hazelwood in the later 1700s. Sir Walter's name is among the subscribers to *A Treatise upon Planting, Gardening and the Management of the Hot-House* by John Kennedy (1776), head gardener at Sir Thomas Gascoigne's neighbouring Parlinton Hall. There are entries in a Vavasour account book for the purchase of 'garden seeds, plants, trees, &c' from Mr Telford (nurseryman, York): £10.10.0 on 3 July 1775, £13.2.0 on 6 July 1776; and several payments were made for quickwood (for hedging) from February 1775 onwards (WYL245/6). The estate supplied wood for Gascoigne collieries (Lock, 234).

Several surveys by Francis White (WYL245/1321), the first dated 1791, record Sir Walter's claim to land on Bramham Moor (to the N and NW of the Hazelwood estate); this was clearly subject to much negotiation, given the many handwritten additions and changes on the plans over the following 3 years. Much of the land was used for netting rabbits. It would appear that Sir Walter's claim was largely successful, since this area of land was included as Lot 18 in the 1907 sale (WYL115/MA/ADD/Box73/13).

3.3.4 1802–1826

Sir Walter's death in 1802 left his brother Thomas as the 7th and last baronet. There are no records in the Vavasour archive relating to the garden and park during this period. A diary entry by William Vavasour of Weston Hall hints that Sir Thomas and Lady Vavasour (Sir Walter's widow) had some interest in gardens, for in August 1805 they visited the Dutch (ornamental) Farm at Carnaby, E Riding (WYL639/398).

A watercolour painted about 1813 by the Revd Richard Hale, vicar of Harewood, shows Hazelwood from the SW in a typical 'Brownian' landscape park setting, so by that date, many of the landscape design principles originally proposed by Sparrow in 1768 had been implemented (YAS/DD262/5.15.4). Open parkland sweeps down from the front of the house to the south and south west, with individual broad-leafed trees, and sheep grazing. A shrubbery is shown on the SW corner of the house, and large trees behind the N wing (near the site of the kitchen garden). The carriage drive approaching the south front of the house appears to sweep across from the eastern edge of Hazel Wood, as shown on C19 maps (see below); its final approach to the house is not from the SE, as suggested by Sparrow. York Minster can be seen in the distance. It is possible to identify the spot where the artist sat, near a present-day public footpath.

However, it must be said that Hale is primarily concerned with the house in its setting rather than a detailed representation of gardens and park. In addition, it only records one part of the landscape. To discover a wider picture, it is necessary to go to maps published in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, although their scale prohibits much detail and inevitably makes interpretation difficult. Greenwood (surveyed 1817, corrected 1834) has been judged to set a new standard of accuracy overall (Jones 1981, 396–99). It shows large plantations (today's Hazel Wood and Hayton Wood) to the west and south of 'Haslewood Hall' (see Figure 7). A road or drive approaching the house from the SW, from the Black Horse on the Great North Road, cuts through the southern tip of the woodland (i.e. Hazel Wood) to the west of the house and then joins, east of the house, roads or drives from the north (from the Leeds–York turnpike) – Paradise Lane – and east (from Warren House and the Old London Road) – Chantry Lane. Another road or drive leads from the latter directly south to Newstead – this survives today as a public footpath. An avenue of trees, or the remnants of an avenue, runs south from near the house (hidden under lettering), in the direction of what is now Bullen Wood. A water course runs eastwards from somewhere south of the house (again, obscured by the word 'Hall') – possibly from a lake as suggested on the Sparrow plan – towards Cock Beck. (This water course is clearly shown on the 1947 1" OS map, Figure 14.) Other features marked on Greenwood are Ullet Hall (probably today's Hayton House), Lead Hall, and a building labelled 'Cross Roads', at the intersection of the Leeds–York and Great North Roads. This is the 'newly erected capital messuage at the cross roads on Haslewood Common (commonly called Bramham Moor)' recorded as being leased in 1799 and again in 1807 with 'the coachhouses lately converted into a school, a garden, stables, cottages, half of a grainary and part of a barn, with several closes of land on Haslewood Common comprising 80 acres in all' (WYL245/732, WYL245/1081). It survives today as Cross Roads Farm.

A map by Thorp (1819–21, WYL115/MA58) shows much the same features as Greenwood, including the avenue leading south from the house, with an additional drive across the park from the N tip of Hayton Wood (not named). It also marks 'Bar' (Headley Bar) on the Leeds–York turnpike. A map by Franks (1838) has less detail than Greenwood and Thorp, but also clearly shows an avenue of trees running south from the house. The building labelled as 'Bar' on Thorp is here labelled 'Hall'.

What all these maps have in common is the formal avenue of trees leading south from Haslewood Hall. On the Sparrow plan, the only hint of such an avenue is some individual trees which follow a lightly indicated (pencilled?) line. Did Sparrow recommend that an existing avenue should be felled, since it did not accord

with the more natural look for a park, typical of the period, but Sir Walter and then Sir Thomas decided the avenue should remain?

3.3.5 1826–1908

Edward Marmaduke Stourton inherited Hazelwood in 1826, changed his name to Vavasour (WYL245/180), and was created Sir Edward Vavasour, 1st bt (second creation) in February 1828. From accounts of his family life and public profile, it appears that over the next decade or so, Sir Edward played an active role in the management of his estates (Stourton, 628–31). He sat on the committee of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society, and won prizes for his boars and ewes (1838–39; *Transactions of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society*, 1838).

Although Sir Edward's wife Marcia had died just before the move to Hazelwood, his mother, the Dowager Lady Stourton, ran the household (Stourton, 628), and so the gardens probably played an important part in the lives of the six children. There is, again, no documentation relating directly to the gardens, and so it is maps which provide information throughout the remaining years of the nineteenth century.

An undated 'Plan of the Hazelwood Estate, Parishes of Tadcaster and Holme, West Riding of York, the property of Sir E. M. Vavasour', from the Vavasour archives, shows the estate *after* 1828, i.e. after award of the baronetcy (WYL245/1324; Figure 15). The plan can also be dated to *before* 1845–47, since Backhouse Farm on Paradise Lane is not shown. (The farm appears for the first time, albeit unnamed, on the first edition 6" OS map, surveyed 1845–47.) The plan is essentially utilitarian, showing acreages of fields, woodland and park, and matches the first edition 1849 6" OS map in many respects. The area of the kitchen garden is given as just over 1 acre.

No details are shown of the pleasure grounds, but there are other features of interest, similar to those which might have originated with Sparrow. The western avenue of trees appears to survive, but only to the eastern edge of 'Hazelwood', which is given as 181 acres. The approach from the SW, skirting the southern edge of 'Hazelwood' (Sparrow's Great Wood) is similar, if less sinuous. Divisions within the park S and SW of the house reflect the line of the ha-ha and a fence. The unidentified features to the NE of the lake, labelled 'L' on Sparrow, are shown here as buildings, but the lake now has a sharp, straight eastern edge.

With the publication of the 1st edition OS 6" map (1849) we can see in some detail how 'Hazelwood Hall' and its parkland looked during the years preceding Sir Edward's death in 1847 (Figure 16). Pleasure grounds are shown to the immediate west of the house: lawns planted with some specimen trees and shrubs, not the thickly planted shrubberies shown on Sparrow. To the north of these, the walled rectangular kitchen garden, with rounded corners on the south side, is divided into eight compartments, formally planted; buildings attached to the outside of the N wall are probably bothies, potting sheds, and similar. Paths lead around the pleasure grounds, around the kitchen garden, and beyond to a wooded area further north. No avenue of trees leading west from the pleasure grounds can be discerned, and there is no trace of the formal avenue of trees leading south, as shown on maps of the early 1800s. A garden is shown in front of the Presbytery, NE of the kitchen garden. No planting is shown in the courtyard between the house and stables. The octagonal tower is marked at the junction of Chantry Lane and Paradise Lane.

A new drive called North Approach (from the Leeds–York road) cuts through Hazel Wood – this continued to be the entrance from the A64 until the end of the twentieth century. South Drive leads through Hazel Wood

from the Great North Road, and joining North Approach, sweeps eastwards across the park to the front of the house. The number of paths or rides shown through Hazel Wood suggests recreational use, and several are named: Broad Walk and Granger Walk (E–W), Appletree Walk N–S. A school – Hazelwood School – is shown N of Black Horse Plantation on the W side of Roman Ridge.

The lake to the S of the house has the same straight edge as on the undated plan described above, and looks nothing like the size or shape proposed by Sparrow.

Hayton Wood is approximately the same size as on the earlier undated plan; but Bullen Wood has been extended to the south east, towards Newstead, and Hazel Wood has acquired an additional area of planting in the NW, across Roman Ridge, at the point where the new North Approach leads off the Leeds–York road. Of the buildings marked around the estate, Hazelwood Lodge is probably ‘The Lodge’ on the Jefferys map; New Stead, linked to Hazelwood Hall by a footpath, has a moat shown, planted with trees; Hayton House is probably the Ullet Hall on Thorp’s map; the ancient Lead Hall on the banks of Cock Beck has a complex of buildings. Other estate buildings and farms are Woodhouse Grange; Black Horse and ‘Nut Hill or Nipsalp’ on the Great North Road; Filbert Grove or White Hart Inn (the ‘newly built messuage at the cross roads on Haslewood Common’ in 1799); White Smithy; Warren House; Wingate Hill; White Quarry House; and Low Park House. Backhouse Farm on Paradise Lane is shown but bears no name.

At the eastern end of Chantry Lane, by Wingate Hill, a cross is marked. There is a cross at the same spot today (Figure 17). In 1855, this was described as ‘a large massy stone cross’, the ‘lower part of the shaft of the cross is ancient and the upper part modern’. At that time, it bore ‘representations of the crown of thorns, and the nails’, and had recently been restored by the Lord of the Manor – probably Sir Edward Vavasour (WYL245/1085). Nothing more has been discovered about this cross. It is not shown on the 2nd edition 6" OS map of 1891.

The 40 years between the publication of the 1st edition OS map and the 1885 OS 1" map corresponds to the time when Hazelwood was managed first by William Joseph (son of Sir Edward, 1st bt) and then after 1860 by his son, William Edward Joseph, on behalf of the heir, Sir Edward Vavasour, 2nd bt (WYL245/158). The estate had both arable and livestock farming: a tithe map of 1848 shows Wingate Hill Farm growing wheat, barley and oats (TA 375 S); and in 1855, William Joseph won 2nd prize for a heifer at Wetherby Agricultural Show (*York Gazette, Leeds Times*). The 1851 census records Christopher Scott as gardener at Hazelwood.

By 1860 the gardener at Hazelwood was a Mr T Conaty (*York Herald*). At the Wetherby Floral and Horticultural Society, the Hon. Mrs Vavasour and her gardener, Mr Conaty, won first prizes for Cape heaths, orchids, ferns and lycopods (*Leeds Intelligencer*, 25 August, 1860). Payments were made for garden wages, and to Irish workers for haymaking (WYL245/1273). An advertisement in the *Gardeners’ Chronicle* in 1884, from a head gardener, age 30 and single, may be a sign of financial problems:

F. Pring is at liberty to engage with any Nobleman or Gentleman requiring the services of a thoroughly practical man, with a good knowledge of Forestry. Un-exceptional references from Chatsworth, Bramham Park, and the last 4 years Head Gardener at Hazelwood Castle. Left through a reduction in establishment. F. Pring, Bramham Park, Tadcaster, Yorks.

The same journal announces, four years later, that Mr T Waller has been appointed Gardener. And again, in 1891: ‘Wanted for Hazlewood Gardens, a Youth, with some experience, to work in the Houses, attend to Fires, and live in Bothy. Apply to Thomas Conaty, Nut Hill Farm’ (*Gardeners’ Chronicle* 1891, 542).

By the time the OS 1" map is published in 1885, Hazelwood Hall has become 'Hazelwood Castle' (first recorded as such in 1851 census). There are some changes to the names of farms: Hazelwood Lodge is now Lodge Farm, Nut Hill has lost its alternative 'Nipsalp', White Smithy is Home Farm. Hazel Wood has been extended into the far north-western corner of the park, and the eastern edge of the wood has become straighter. The lake is now surrounded by trees.

In 1898, the Hazelwood estate comprised 3,677 acres. In addition, Sir William owned 939 acres on his estate at Holme-on-Spalding-Moor and 3,886 acres at Draycott, Staffordshire (Stourton, 636). What Hazelwood looked like in the final years of the Vavasours' tenure, shortly before the estate was put up for sale in 1907, can be seen on the 1891 6" and 1908 25" OS maps. There is also a coloured version of an OS 25" 1892 edition in the Vavasour archive (Figure 18; WYL245/1323), which differs slightly from that published in 1908: e.g. the Hazelwood estate is coloured pink, and some buildings near the house are identified. Both these large-scale maps show exceptional detail, and so both are used here for the purposes of recording the estate at this time.

The woodland to the west of the house has encroached further towards the pleasure grounds, up to the walls of the kitchen garden. In this woodland is a maze. The conifer icon would suggest yew, typical for maze hedges, and that is confirmed by the sad remnants of the lanky, bare trees that survive today. Similar conifer icons can be seen around the pleasure grounds – and these also accord with the yew trees and hedges extant in this part of the garden. Outside the SW corner of the walled garden is what might be interpreted as a rockery. Leading westwards from the rockery, and narrowing as it progresses, is an avenue of conifers: this runs parallel but somewhat further north to the avenue suggested by Sparrow. The exact line of the trees differs slightly between the coloured 'Vavasour' 25" map and the 25" OS 1908 map, but both mark embankments along which the rows of trees are planted. This is significant, since these may be the remnants of formal terracing, pre-eighteenth century landscaping. These embankments can be seen today.

Reading the OS maps in conjunction with the 1907 sales catalogue (WYL115/MA/ADD/Box73/13), we can see that the walled kitchen garden, with an entrance from the gardens to the south, is lined with fruit trees. There are several glasshouses shown: along the centre is almost certainly the 142' vinery listed in the sales catalogue, and another lean-to against the N wall (which would have been heated) may be the lean-to vineries listed in the sales catalogue. In a further kitchen garden, or frameyard, to the north (presumably the second kitchen garden mentioned in the sales catalogue), structures built against the wall – such as potting sheds, bothies, boiler house – have been extended against the N wall of the original garden, and there is an additional glasshouse and pond. This second kitchen garden area is already suggested on late C19 OS maps, and was presumably needed because the original kitchen garden (just over one acre) would have been inadequate for the larger household of Sir Edward Marmaduke and his family after 1826. A hexagonal aviary stands to the N of the stable area. The octagonal tower is named as 'Observatory', and a little further east along Chantry Lane, a pond and well are marked.

At the entrance to the estate from the Great North Road stands Hazelwood Lodge. The South and North Approaches remain as before, but at their conjunction on the edge of Hazel Wood, a 'stone' is marked. The 'Fish Pond' (0.763 acre) is surrounded by deciduous trees and conifers. There are several quarries and gravel pits sited in the park west and south-west of the house; and on the edge of Hayton Wood is 'Hazelwood Brick & Tile Works (disused)'. The brickworks were still operational in 1903 when Sir William prepared the text of an advertisement for a bricklayer (with cottage accommodation) for publication in the *Yorkshire Post* (WYL245/1289). A 'willow bed' is marked on the edge of Bullen Wood. Of the estate farms and other

buildings, Lodge Farm has a pond attached to it; Wingate Hill farm has acquired a very large, industrial-style building (possibly the soap works operated by Sir William 1905–07?); Cross Roads Farm has an extensive complex of buildings; the farm on Paradise Lane, shown on the 1st edition OS, is now named as Backhouse Farm. A school is marked on Chantry Lane, near the cross. Peggy Ellerton Wood, SE of the house, has a keeper's house, pheasantry, and retting ponds (for flax processing: Yvonne Boutwood, personal communication) set within trees. A map dated 1900, apparently prepared for a sale of land at Hazelwood, marks 'poultry farm' at Peggy Ellerton (WYL245/1320). The name Peggy Ellerton derives from the estate gamekeeper's wife (date unknown; Tom Tate of Castle Farm, personal communication).

There is very little documentary evidence of direct relevance to the gardens in the final years of the nineteenth century. A pre-1910 photograph shows the inner courtyard with no planting, only grass, paths and railings (see Figure 8). Orders for 'pipeing', etc. for the 'hothouse installation' and for strawberry plants were made (WYL245/1289). But correspondence, bills, and invoices in the Vavasour archives for the opening years of the 1900s all point to financial problems, with many demands for non-payment of bills (WYL245/1289). Sir William's bankruptcy led to an initial auction, under instructions from mortgagees, in 1907: 3,806 acres in total, including (Lot 19) the Castle, 'well-timbered Park', White Smithy, Nut Hill and Beck House farms, Hazel and Hayton Woods, amounting to 1065 acres (Figure 19). In addition to the park, the following are listed: 'Pinetum, Maze, Rock Garden, Plantation, Pleasure Gardens, well-stocked Rose Garden, 2 walled Kitchen Gardens with excellent Fruit Trees'. The kitchen gardens include a forcing house (62'), vinery (142'), hothouse, 2 lean-to vineries, and a gardener's cottage. The rent roll was given as £4000 p.a. (WYL115/MA/ADD/Box73/13).

Only some of the lots attracted buyers, so a further auction was needed in 1908 (equivalent to Lot 19 on 1907 sale map; see Figure 19): 1065 acres in total, comprising the Castle, its grounds and park (192 acres), together with some farms, cottages and woodland (WYL115/MA/ADD/Box73/15).

3.3.6 1908–2016

When the new owner of the Castle and its grounds, Edward Simpson, took possession, the mansion was in a poor state of repair (see Figure 2; *Historic Homes of Yorkshire*, HLS05889). Simpson was responsible for demolishing the upper floors of the 'new wing' and building the raised terrace between the projecting wings on the south front (Oswald, 1429). A photo of c. 1916 shows the house with the new terrace, and sheep grazing in the parkland (*Historic Homes of Yorkshire*, HLS05888). Anthony Blackmore (personal communication), who lived at the Castle as a boy in the 1930s and 1940s, remembers playing in the overgrown maze; and 'between the pinetum and maze' were three piles of stones, about 5' high; these were possibly the remnants of a rockery. The kitchen garden was still in use for growing vegetables, with peaches on the S facing wall; and during WWII, five land girls lived in the bothy.

In 1953, the property was again divided, with Eric Fawcett (owner of White Quarry Farm) buying the Castle, chapel, gardens and woodland (*Tablet*, 1955). Photos from 1957 (Oswald, 1429; *Country Life* proof pictures 5460437–39, 5460449–50, 5460452–3) show that the garden NW of the house was enclosed by high yew hedges; low box hedging surrounded a small pool with a statue at its centre (a pool that was enlarged at some point in the following decades); and flowerbeds were planted with summer bedding. Two praying stone figures, formerly at the start of the 'back drive', were now standing on the 'terrace', overlooking the garden. A venerable yew stood in the centre of the lawn: in the 1950s this measured 100 yards in

circumference and covered 800 square yards (Fawcett, 9) but has been felled in recent years. The inner courtyard was rough grass. Restoration work (repointing) on the octagonal tower took place in the late 1950s. Chapel, hall and gardens were open to the public daily.

Ownership changed again in 1960, and more changes were made to the exterior and interior of the house. A sale in 1962, resulting from demolition of the east wing, included 26 lots of 'garden ornaments', among which were 'an important and handsome pair of Adam fluted lead urns with domed covers terminating in acorn finials; lion-masks supporting swags of drapery', and 'a beautiful pair of lead vases, decorated with winged angel masks, the double handles in the form of scrolled male figures', as well as stone and lead statues, bird baths, benches, and troughs (*Hazlewood Castle, Sale Catalogue, 1962*).

In the late 1960s, the Carmelite Friars were invited to use Hazelwood as a retreat and Pilgrimage Centre; this was subsequently designated Shrine of Our Lady and Forty Martyrs. The chapel was restored. The Carmelites bought Hazelwood, and took full possession in 1972. It seems that land in Hazel Wood, to the west of the maze, was affected by earth removal for road construction purposes in the late 1970s when the A64 Tadcaster by-pass was built.

In the following decades, the Carmelites restored the rock garden, and two shrines, to Our Lady and Padre Pio, were sited where the gardens merge with woodland. The woods were managed again: eight acres were replanted, and oaks and beech planted in the main woodland; specimen trees were put in; and a nature trail was established through the woodland. Perhaps the most distinctive feature in the garden was the Rosary Way, with a shrine to the Carmelite saint, St Therese of Lisieux. Along the Rosary Way were The Mysteries of the Rosary, painted by Adam Kossowski, a Polish-born, war refugee artist, notable for his works for the Catholic Church in England (Clough and Cooper; Carmelite guide). Many of these features were removed when the Carmelites left in 1997.

The Castle was sold again in 1997, to become a hotel.

4 SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 LOCATION

Hazelwood is situated in the parish of Stutton with Hazlewood, some 5km WSW of Tadcaster.

4.2 AREA

The present Castle, gardens and woodland occupy 77 acres (31.16 hectares). In 1907, prior to auction, the Hazelwood estate comprised 3806 acres (1540.234 hectares); in 1908, the Castle was sold with 192 acres (including immediate associated buildings, gardens, park, and plantations).

4.3 BOUNDARIES

The historic Hazelwood estate (prior to 1907) was situated within the SE quadrant formed by the intersection of the Great North Road and the Leeds–York turnpike. The boundary to the S and E was demarcated by the Cock Beck. To the north, the estate was bordered by the Leeds–York turnpike (current A64), with a small parcel of land extending further north onto Bramham Moor. To the west, the estate abutted the Great North Road and the Gascoigne’s Parlington estate. After the break-up of the estate in 1907–08, and subsequent sales, the land around the house and chapel has been greatly reduced to some 31 hectares, comprising graveyard, courtyard, former walled garden, and gardens and woodland (part of Hazel Wood) to the west.

4.4 LANDFORM

The estate lay on a ridge running north–south through the Southern Magnesian Limestone National Character Area, which stretches from Thornborough in the north to Nottingham in the south. The geology influences many aspects of the landscape, including a limestone resource for building material; and the ridge, and the drift deposits covering much of it, has produced light, freely-draining fertile soils, with herb-rich limestone pastures and lime-rich deciduous woodland. Traditionally, the estate was arable and pasture, and former estate land is still farmed and managed in this way.

4.5 SETTING

The Castle has an elevated position (70m above mean sea level) on a ridge running north–south through the magnesian limestone area. The house enjoys extensive views, particularly out to the south. The land slopes down from the house towards Cock Beck to the south; to the east, the ground is gently undulating; that of the current Castle gardens and woodland to the west is level. Plantations (Hazel, Hayton and Bullen Woods) frame the estate from the NW to the SE.

4.6 ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Current access to the hotel is from the Leeds–York road (A64), via (former) White Smithy Farm and then looping round through the northern part of Hazel Wood. The route from the main road has been much altered in recent years. In the C18, the northern entrance from the Leeds–York turnpike also led past White Smithy Farm but then ran directly south (Paradise Lane) into the courtyard, and round to the S front of the house. In the C19 the principal North Approach (labelled as such on OS maps) ran from the point where the Roman Ridge met the Leeds–York road, cutting through the woodland (Hazel Wood), and then turning east across the park. The earlier C18 approach also remained, but perhaps with a more agricultural function.

From the C18 the approach from the east has been along Chantry Lane, which leads from Stutton and the Old London Road, and Tadcaster and York beyond. Chantry Lane probably existed for centuries before, leading into the medieval courtyard. From the southwest, a carriage drive led in the C18 from Black Horse

[Farm] on the Great North Road, round the southern boundary of Hazel Wood; this approach then cut across the park towards the south front of the house. The exact route changed over the years, running later in the C19 as South Approach through Hazel Wood. The coloured 1892 25" OS map shows 'Hazelwood Lodge' at the Great North Road entrance, but no lodge building or gates survive here or at other entrances to the former estate.

4.7 PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

4.7.1 Hazelwood Castle [Grade I]

The core of the building dates back to the late C13 (licence to crenellate 1286). Additions and alterations were made during the C15 and late C17; and by c. 1770 remodelling of the house had given it the appearance of a low, castellated Georgian mansion (Leach and Pevsner, 325) of local dressed magnesian limestone. John Carr of York is routinely suggested (e.g. *Historic England*) as the architect for the remodelling (but no evidence other than stylistic). Demolition of some C18 and later additions took place after its sale in 1908 and again in 1962; further restoration and alterations took place c. 1960 and during the 1980s. Further developments have been carried out from the late 1990s, after the house became a hotel.

4.7.2 Roman Catholic Chapel of St Leonard [Grade I]

East of and detached from the house, the original chapel was founded 1167; the present building dates from c.1283–85 for Sir William Vavasour. Dressed magnesian limestone, almost complete in its medieval form externally. Later additions and alterations dated 1680 (bellcote,) and refurbishment c.1770 attributed to John Carr.

4.7.3 Cross in churchyard of St Leonard's Chapel [Grade II]

Probably C15, later base. Magnesian limestone ashlar. The cross is a prominent feature on the 1768 Sparrow plan.

4.7.4 Stables and wall adjoining [Grade II]

Northern side of courtyard, approx. 30m N of house. Mid-late C18 (footprint shown on 1768 plan by Sparrow), attributed to John Carr (*Historic England*). Dressed magnesian limestone, pedimented gable.

4.7.5 Groom's house and stable, and walls adjoining [Grade II]

Approx. 20m N of house, in north-west corner of courtyard. Former groom's house and stable, now residential. Mid-late C18 (shown on 1768 plan by Sparrow), magnesian limestone ashlar, attributed to John Carr (*Historic England*).

4.7.6 Octagonal folly tower [Grade II]

Approx. 80m NE of house, on intersection of Chantry Lane and Paradise Lane, formerly within the Hazelwood estate. Mid/late C18, and attributed to John Carr (Historic England). Dressed magnesian limestone, castellated parapet, trefoil-headed (blocked) windows and entrance, 'Gothick' style. Sometimes referred to as The Chantry, and identified as 'Observatory' on early 1908 25" OS map. It is likely the stone used had been recycled.

4.7.7 Crossroads Farmhouse [Grade II]

Recently a farm, now unoccupied. Formerly part of Hazelwood estate. Rubble stone. Built 1798 by Sir Walter Vavasour, 6th bt (WYL245/732): stables, cottages, granary, barn, etc; coachhouses later converted into a school (1807: WYL245/1081). By 1st edn OS map, the names of the buildings are given as Filbert Grove and White Hart Inn.

4.7.8 Chapel of Saint Mary, Lead [Grade II*]

C12–C14, with later repairs. Magnesian limestone coursed rubble with stone slate roof. Formerly part of Hazelwood estate.

4.7.9 Lead Hall (now Lead Hall Farm)

Part of the Hazelwood estate from 1607 or earlier, until the 1907 sale.

4.7.10 Backhouse Farm

Located on Paradise Lane, probably built 1830s (map evidence). The triangular-pedimented building can be clearly seen from the Leeds–York road.

4.8 GARDENS AND PLEASURE GARDENS

Hazlewood Castle Hotel retains a narrow area of land immediately to the south and south-east of the house: essentially a drive and grass, within a boundary fence, along the south elevation; and the chapel graveyard. Until division of the estate in the early 1900s, the park would have swept down to the south from the steps at the main entrance door here. The courtyard to the north, with stables and other buildings along its northern and western sides, has been landscaped over the last 15 years or so, with modern planting and areas of lawn. The formal canal and present location of the kneeling statues post-date 1957.

The gardens, with lawns, specimen and flowering trees, and yew hedges, are laid out immediately to the west and north-west of the hotel, bounded by the walled garden to the north and woodland to the west.

Although nothing is known of earlier gardens, prior to the 1768 improvement plan, it is likely that this level area was the location of gardens from late medieval times on, possibly with south-facing terracing down the slope which later became part of the 'natural' landscaped park. The marked presence of yew in this area, especially the vast, ancient tree at its centre that was felled after the Castle became a hotel, might suggest that this area of the garden had always been associated with topiary.

The 1st edition OS map shows that the gardens proposed by Anthony Sparrow, abutting the west elevation of the N wing, appear to have been pushed out further west into the park by the 1840s. The pleasure grounds proposed by Sparrow to the north and northwest of the kitchen garden appear to still be in existence on the 1st edition OS map, but from the mid-nineteenth century on, the woodland to the west seems to have gradually encroached further eastwards towards the house. A maze in this area of woodland predates 1891 (shown on 1895 6" OS map). Woodland walks are shown around the yew maze on the 1908 OS map, but this relatively open woodland seems to have become much denser over the following years. The maze survives in a very neglected state, almost lost now among the trees.

The 1908 OS map shows what appears to be a large rockery at the SW corner of the walled garden. There have been rockeries in approximately this spot ever since, with religious statues during the residence of the Carmelite Friars, one still surviving today. The Rosary Way, created by the Friars c. 1980, ran along the southern wall of the kitchen garden. Only traces of the Mysteries of the Rosary by Adam Kossowski remain.

4.9 WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN

The red brick walls of the main kitchen garden still stand, but the ground is now asphalted over, in use as a car park for Hazlewood Castle Hotel. The land to the north, the second walled garden referred to in the 1907 sale, is not owned by the hotel.

First evidence for a walled kitchen garden on this site comes from the 1768 Sparrow plan, where it is rectangular in shape, with a central N–S division. It is not known if this was the site of an earlier kitchen garden. The 1849 OS map shows the walled garden slightly further from the house, with cropped southern corners. In 1907, the sale catalogue referred to two walled kitchen gardens with 'excellent Fruit Trees' – the second smaller garden presumably that shown adjoining the northern wall of the existing garden on the 1885 and 1909 OS maps; the 1909 edition shows two hothouses in the larger garden and one in the smaller. (This smaller garden now covered by hard tennis court; under separate ownership.) Orders for piping for the 'hothouse installation' in 1903 may refer to the second garden. Further details of the hothouses were given at the time of the sale: 'a forcing house (62'), vinery (142'), hothouse, 2 lean-to vineries'. Fruit trees and other produce were grown in the walled garden throughout the 1930s and 1940s, with land girls occupying the bothy during WWII.

4.10 PARK AND PLANTATIONS

Today, the former park at Hazelwood is under separate ownership. The area to the immediate south of the house is now used for gallops; beyond that, and to the SE, the land is now pasture and arable. The lake (named Fish Pond on later OS maps) has all but dried up. The ha-ha is still in evidence.

Hazel Wood and Hayton Wood

Both present-day Hazel Wood and Hayton Wood are medieval or post-medieval in origin (MacNab 2002, 18). They probably formed part of the original **Great Wood** in the park at Hazelwood, recorded in 1546 as 500 acres (MacNab 2002, 12). By 1768, the Great Wood is depicted on the Sparrow plan as separated from Hayton Wood. If this recorded the status quo rather than a proposal (an unlikely one), then there is evidence to suggest that the division had taken place before 1730 (see discussion, 3.3.2, re Gent, 1730). By c. 1828, Hazel Wood covered 181 acres and Hayton 110 acres, and the land between was arable or pasture. The sale catalogues of 1907 and 1908 gave Hayton Wood as 125 acres; its shape on plans of 1768 and c. 1828 are recognisable today. The 1st edition OS map shows walks or rides through Hazel Wood, some of them named (e.g. Broad Walk), and these remained with minor variations throughout the rest of the century.

By the early C20, woodland (both deciduous and coniferous) had come closer to the gardens and pleasure grounds. The sales catalogues refer to a Pinetum, probably the area SW of the kitchen garden (with conifers shown clearly on the 1908 OS map). At some time prior to 1891 (OS 6" edition) a maze was planted in the woodland west of the kitchen garden. An avenue of coniferous trees, running westwards from the house towards the Great North Road (similar to the avenue proposed on the Sparrow plan) can be discerned on later C19 OS maps.

Bullen Wood

Bullen Wood ('Bolliyni Wood') was 30 acres in 1546 (MacNab 2002, 12). The c. 1828 plan of the Vavasour estate shows Bullen at 16 acres, but by the time of the survey for the 1st edn OS map, i.e. 1845–47, the plantation had been extended further SE towards Newstead, across the field shown on the c. 1828 plan (a further 6 acres). Between 1947 and today, Bullen was extended further to the NE, possibly adding another 16 acres.

Wingate Wood

This was recorded as 100 acres in 1546; today, woodland around Wingate Hill is not named on the current OS map.

Lead Wood

Recorded as 200 acres in 1546 (MacNab 2002, 12), but no C18 or early C19 maps indicate a plantation at Lead, and today nothing remains on the site of Lead Hall itself (only a patch of trees on Crow Hill).

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Figure 1

Hazelwood Castle and St Leonard's Chapel, from the SE

Photo: Dick Knight (2016)

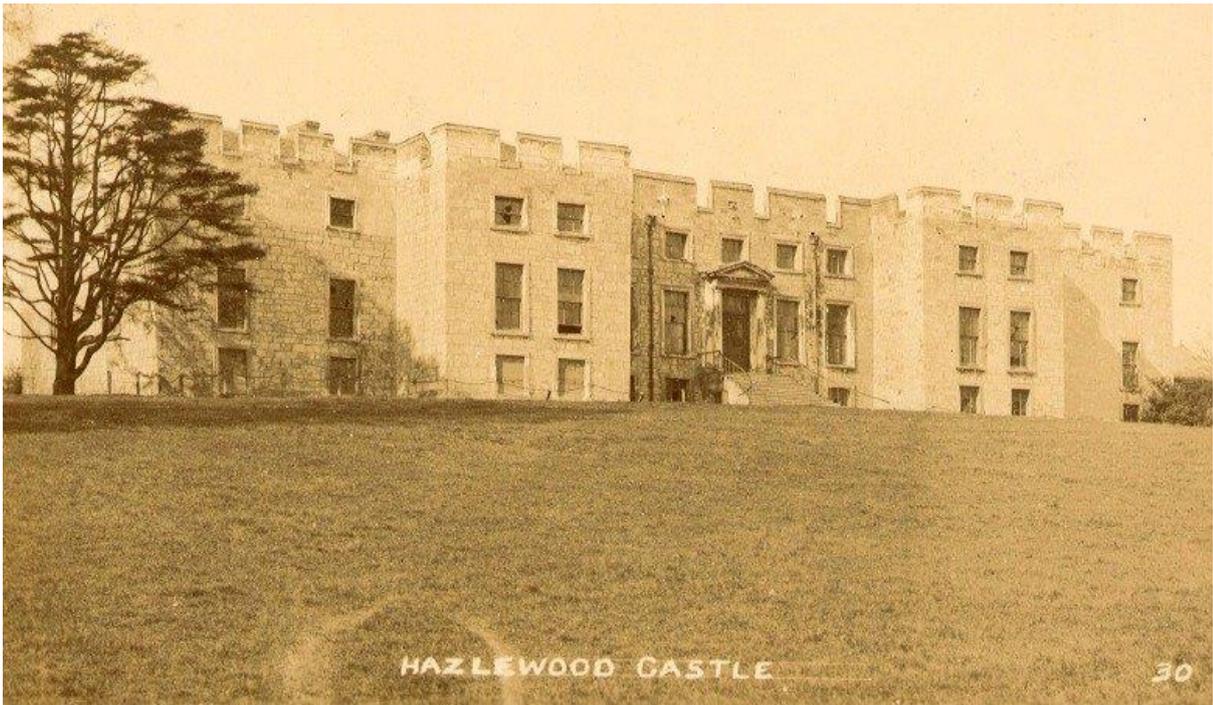


Figure 2

Hazlewood Castle, from a postcard, pre-1908 (card dated 1916)

Tadcaster Community Archive, Tadcaster Library



Figure 3

The Banqueting House, Weston Hall, built c. 1600, for Sir Mauger Vavasour

Photo: Dick Knight (2001)



Figure 4

John Speede, 1610, *West Riding of Yorkshire*

By permission of Sheffield Local Studies Library: Picture Sheffield www.picturesheffield.com



Figure 5

W & J Blaeu, 1645, *West Riding of Yorkshire*

By permission of Sheffield Local Studies Library: Picture Sheffield www.picturesheffield.com



Figure 6

Lead Hall, nr Tadcaster, 1877

Courtesy Tadcaster Community Archive, Tadcaster Library



Figure 7

Christopher Greenwood, 1834, *Yorkshire* (surveyed 1817, corrected 1834)

By permission of Sheffield Local Studies Library: Picture Sheffield www.picturesheffield.com



Figure 8

Photo, c. 1900, anon., showing the courtyard with (from the left) the Chapel, N elevation of Castle, the 'new' N wing, groom's house and stables

Courtesy Carmelite Friars

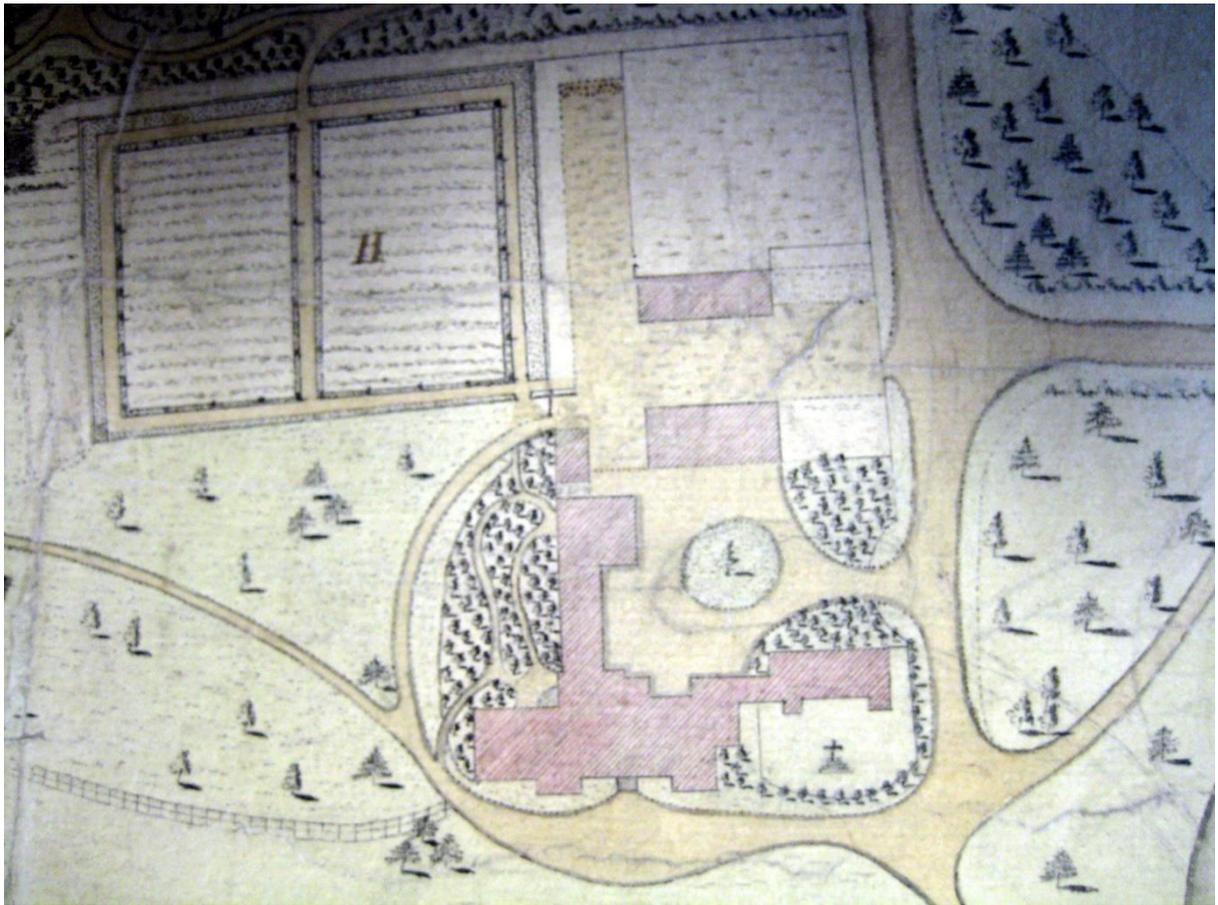


Figure 9

'A Plan for the Improvement of Haslewood' by A. Sparrow, 1768 (detail)

By permission of WYAS Leeds, WYL245/1325



Figure 10

The octagonal tower, c. 1770 (Grade II)

Photo: Dick Knight (2015)



Figure 11

'A Plan for the Improvement of Haslewood' by A. Sparrow, 1768 (detail)

By permission of WYAS Leeds, WYL245/1325



Figure 12

'A Plan for the Improvement of Haslewood' by A. Sparrow, 1768 (detail)

By permission of WYAS Leeds, WYL245/1325



Figure 13

'A Plan for the Improvement of Haslewood' by A. Sparrow, 1768 (detail)

By permission of WYAS Leeds, WYL245/1325

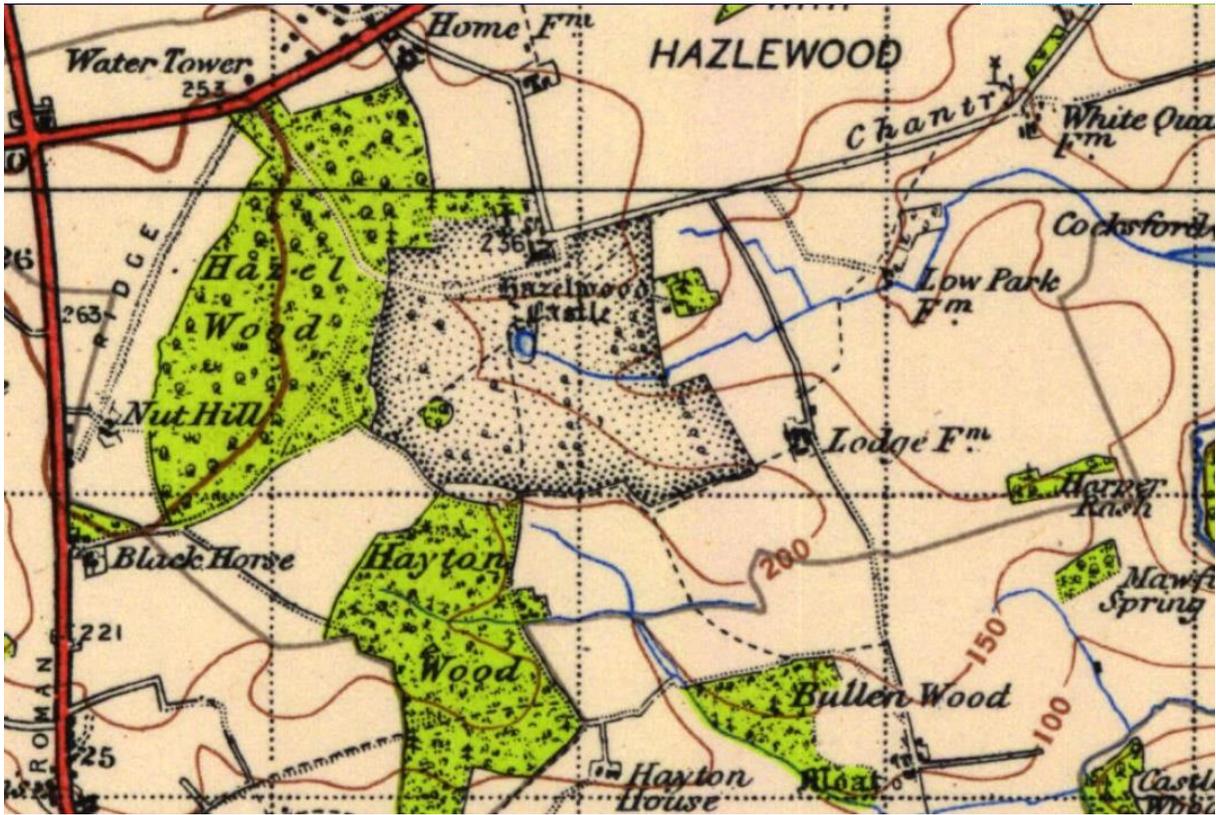


Figure 14

1947 1" New Popular Edition Sheet 97, York (detail)

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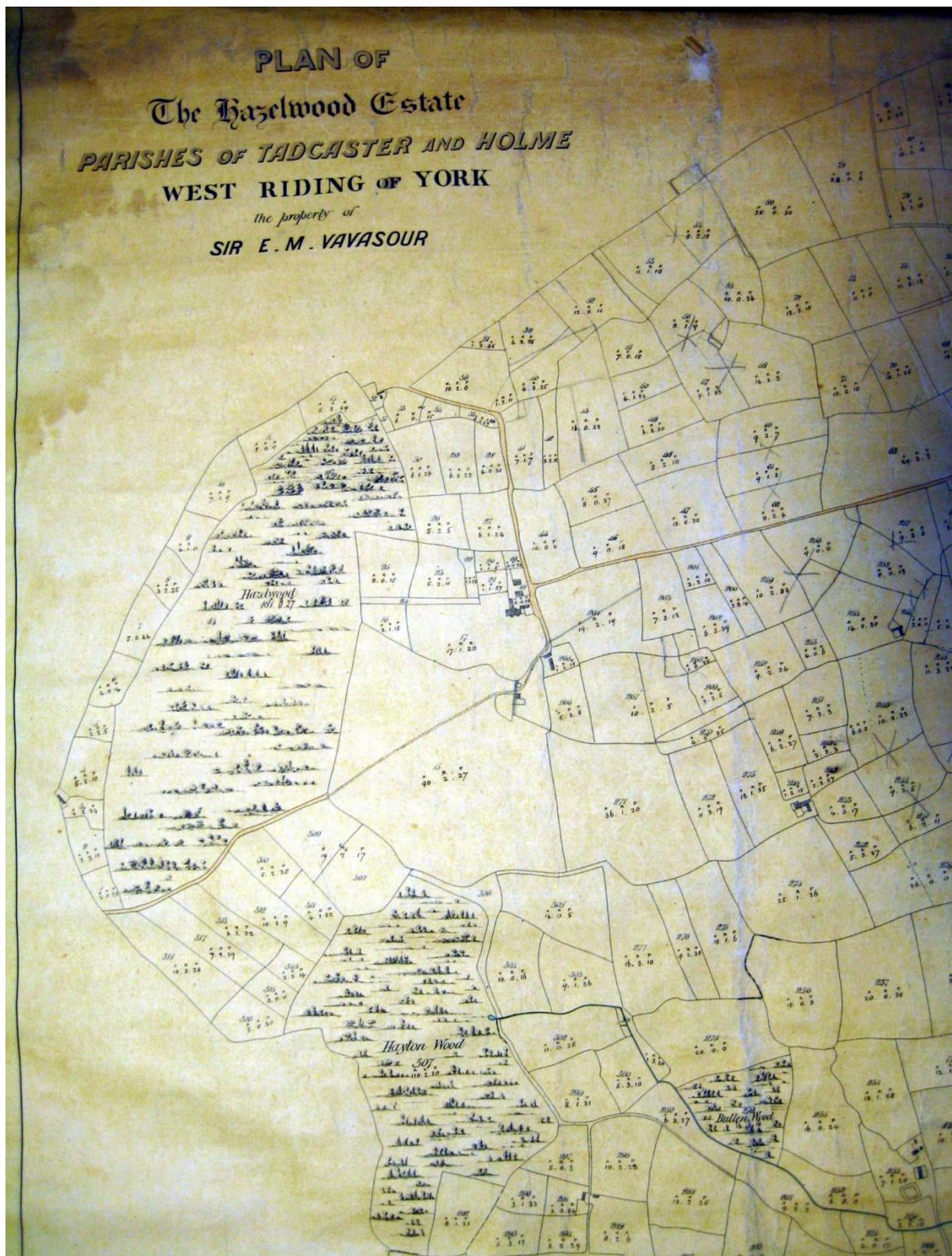


Figure 15

'Plan of the Hazelwood Estate, Parishes of Tadcaster and Holme, West Riding of York, the property of Sir E.M.Vavasour', n.d. (but between 1828 and 1833)

By permission of WYAS Leeds, WYL245/1324



Figure 16

OS 6" 1st edn, 1849 (surveyed 1845–47); sheet 201 (detail)

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Figure 17

The 'large massy stone cross', as described in 1855, at the eastern end of Chantry Lane, by Wingate Hill.

Photo: Dick Knight (2016)



Figure 18

From a coloured 1892 edn of 25" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map (detail)

By permission of WYAS, Leeds, WYL245/1323

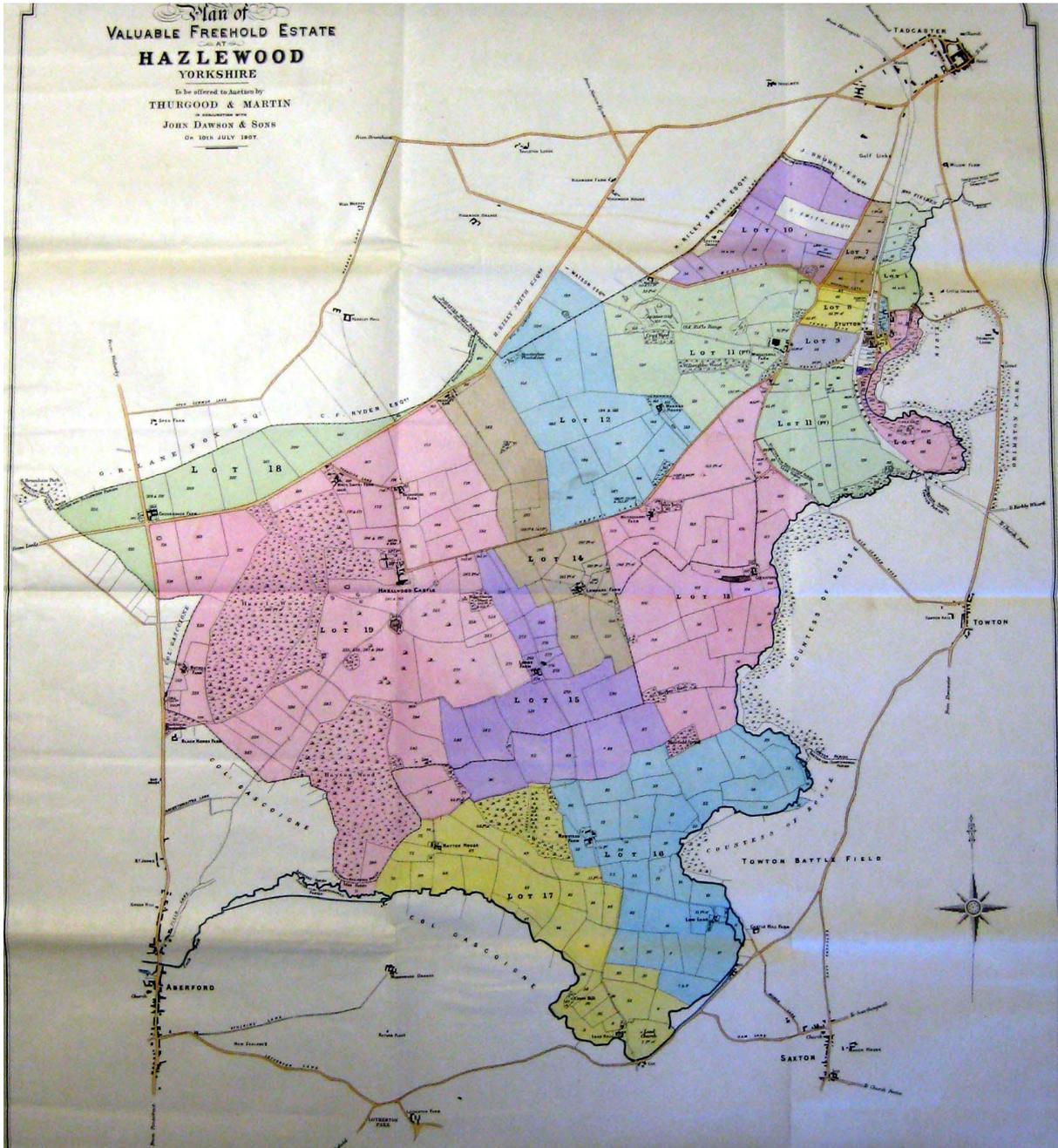


Figure 19

Plan of Valuable Freehold Estate at Hazlewood, Sale Catalogue 1907

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