

East Riding Historic Designed Landscapes

CAVE CASTLE, SOUTH CAVE

Report by David and Susan Neave March 2013

1. CORE DATA

1.1 *Name of site:* Cave Castle, South Cave

1.2 *Grid reference:* SE 916312

1.3 *Administrative area:* South Cave Civil Parish, East Riding of Yorkshire Unitary Authority

1.4 *Current site designation:* Not registered. The grounds of Cave Castle are in a Conservation area.

2. SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Parkland with irregular lake laid out by William Emes c. 1787, a typical example of the work of a landscape gardener who executed commissions for many prominent landowners in England and Wales.

3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

3.1 *Estate owners*

The manor of 'South Cave alias East Hall' was purchased by Sir Thomas Danby in 1582. It was sold to Francis Harrison in 1649, to John Idell in 1720 and to Leuyns Boldero in 1748. In 1769 the latter assumed the surname Barnard in accordance with the will of his great-uncle, Dr Henry Barnard. His son, Henry Boldero Barnard, built the house known as Cave Castle where the family lived until the 20th century. This house and the surrounding park were sold to the Carmichael family in 1937. There have been several other changes of ownership from 1950 onwards, and Cave Castle is now a privately-owned hotel and country club. (Allison, *VCH Yorks ER IV*, 43-4)

The owner chiefly responsible for the landscaping was Henry Boldero Barnard (1783-1815). Some further improvements to the grounds were reported in the 1830s when the estate belonged to his son, Henry Gee Barnard.

3.2 *Early history of the site*

A manor house was mentioned in the early 16th century; in 1672 the Harrisons,

then owners of the manor of East Hall, South Cave, had a house with 14 hearths. (Allison, *VCH Yorks ER IV*, 44). A plan drawn up in 1759 shows a small manor house (East Hall) set within formal grounds of c. 10 acres. The plan shows a short avenue of trees running north of the hall to a small boundary plantation, with a similar avenue running south towards a canal which lay on the opposite side of the road in Bull Pasture. (HCC, BD/4/31)

3.3. *Chronological history of the designed landscape*

3.3.1 **late 18th century**

The open-fields and common lands of South Cave were enclosed in 1785-7, vigorously promoted by Henry Boldero Barnard who had succeeded to the East Hall (later Cave Castle) estate in 1783. He already owned a large block of enclosed land to the east of the house, but enclosure gave him a substantial additional block to the north and east. In the area south of East Hall he exchanged lands with the vicar of South Cave (the vicarage was relocated to Market Place), closed a footpath across his grounds, and moved the road so that it ran south of the canal. (Neave & Turnbull, *Landscaped Parks*, 26) St Helen's well, once a roadside well or spring, now lies within the parkland.

Barnard apparently commissioned William Emes to landscape the grounds immediately after enclosure in 1787. (Hall, *South Cave*, 61) The park was extended northwards, with an arm going eastwards to the Weighton Road, where a lodge was built. Another lodge was built near the church, on Church Hill – both are shown on the mid 19th century OS plan.

The parkland was surrounded by narrow bands of plantations, a feature characteristic of the work of Emes. An area known as the Wilderness was created to the north of the house, with winding paths.

Henry Gee Barnard recorded in his weather journal or 'register' that in the summer of 1793, 'a remarkable dry one', most of the newly planted trees in the 'young plantations' had died for want of rain, particularly beech, larch and Scotch fir. References in 1794 and 1795 respectively to elm and horse chestnut probably refer to trees in the park. (Barnard, 'Register')

The mid-19th century and later OS maps also show a small oval pond with a lawned area north of the house, with the kitchen garden beyond, and an ice house nearby. In Barnard's weather journal there are references to filling the ice house.

To the south of the house the old formal canal was enlarged and transformed into an irregular lake with a small island, with trees at either end, another feature typical of an Emes' landscape. The new road, south of the canal, was in a hollow giving an uninterrupted view from the house towards the Humber across Bull Pasture, which had been converted to parkland. (Neave & Turnbull, *Landscaped Parks*, 26)

Barnard is said to have enlarged and partly rebuilt the manor house c. 1791, after the new park had been created. A painting by William Burgess probably made soon after this date shows a couple, presumably Mr and Mrs Barnard, in the parkland in front of this house. At the bottom left hand corner is part of the lake, with a pair of swans. (www.christies.com - Ven House Sale 21-22 June 1999, lot 680)

By 1794 Barnard was calling the house 'Cave Castle', although the house shown in the late 18th century painting had no castle-like features. Alterations to the rebuilt house took place 1802-9 when it was made to look like a Gothick castle with turrets and battlements. (Pevsner & Neave, *Yorkshire: York & ER*, 702)

In May 1803 a local newspaper reported that Cave Castle 'is now one of the most improved places in the East Riding. The plantations that surround it, are disposed in the most picturesque style.' (*York Herald*, 14 May 1803) Several early 19th-century images of the house and parkland exist.

3.3.2 19th century

Henry Boldero Barnard died in 1815 and his son, Henry Gee Barnard, succeeded to the Cave Castle estate. He took less interest in it, and was often non-resident (Neave, *South Cave*, 2). However, on 26 July 1836 the local schoolmaster Robert Sharp noted in his diary 'It is said that Mr Barnard wants to let, or has let the manor for shooting, but not the castle, as it seems he is not for leaving it yet, he is making some improvements (or alterations) about the Grounds in forming flower beds, gravel walks etc. (Crowther & Crowther, *Diary of Robert Sharp*, 531). A few days earlier he had noted that Mr Barnard was going to build a wall or high fence on the plantation by the road side to keep out of the park 'the idlers who cut the trees, with which he is much vexed.' (ibid. 530)

A local guidebook, published in 1841, gave the following account of Cave Castle and its grounds:

'The present elegant edifice occupies a much larger site than that of the old building, and the park, gardens and pleasure-grounds have been equally enlarged, and improved. The east and west entrance, to the Castle are both very neat, and the latter will no doubt especially attract the attention of the stranger. The Church tower on the left shews itself though the trees, considerably elevated, the lodge entrance overhung with lofty elms is directly before you, and the road to the right winds through the thick shade of elm trees which meet overhead..... On the east side of the Castle, the beach [sic] walk is a wide and beautiful promenade, it is adorned with several noble trees on each side which stretch out their branches over your head, to a great extent. From this spot there is a very beautiful view of the conservatory which stands at the northern extremity, and in which there is a choice specimen of plants and flowers. The flower garden is a lovely spot, and in a shrubbery, not far from it is an excellent aviary, stocked with white pheasants, the beautiful golden hood pheasant, &c. The path in which these

are placed is a portion of a most retired walk through the plantation extending along the whole northern side of the park, terminating at the lodge gate at the eastern end.' (Allen, *Stranger's Guide*, 82-3)

A great storm on Whit Monday in 1860 caused much damage in the parkland: '300 trees near the hall and on the grounds were torn up, one the pride of the family, and a really noble tree both in height and circumference, for which £100 would not have been taken, was torn out of the earth'. (*York Herald*, 2 June 1860). In May 1878 various trees 'fallen in or near the Park, on the Cave Castle estate', were offered for sale. These included 129 elm, 81 beech, 38 oak, 14 birch, 16 alder, 11 ash, 1 chestnut, 1 poplar, 2 acacia, 1 cherry, 7 sycamore, 1 lime and several small large and spruce poles. (*York Herald*, 1 May 1878)

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 LOCATION

Cave Castle lies at the west end of South Cave, a large village lying about 11 miles west of Hull, 8 miles south-west of Beverley, and just over 3 miles north of the Humber estuary.

4.2 AREA

Present area about 50 acres (20 ha). The area of the gardens and parkland in the late 19th century was 89 acres (36.5 ha).

4.3 BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the historic parkland are Castle Covert to the north, the A1034 (Station Road) in part, and the grounds of properties on the west side of that road in part, to the east, Church Street to the south (with Bull Pasture south of the road included in the parkland) and Church Hill to the west. Modern housing now covers much of the park to the south and east, and the area of pleasure grounds and kitchen garden north of the house are no longer associated with Cave Castle.

4.4 LANDFORM

Cave Castle grounds lie on the lower edge of the west facing scarp slope of the Yorkshire Wolds. The land rises from around 25 m AOD at the lake in the south west to 43 m AOD in the north-east corner of parkland.

The bedrock of the parkland consists of bands of clays, shales, sandstone and limestone running north-south. The surface deposits through much of the parkland are silts and clay (Glaciolacustrine Deposits Devensian) with some sand and gravel in the north-east corner of the park.

4.5 SETTING

South Cave is in East Riding Landscape Character Type II Yorkshire Wolds: Jurassic Hills Farmlands. The grounds of Cave Castle have a setting of open farmland to the north and north west, and the close-built large village of South Cave immediately to the south and east.

4.6 ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The approach to East Hall in the early 18th century was from Church Hill. When the park was created following enclosure of the open fields in 1787 a second entrance was made on what is now Station Road (A1034), at the north-east edge of the park. The mid 19th OS plan shows a lodge (East Lodge) at this point, with a track leading across the parkland to Cave Castle. Another lodge (West Lodge) is shown on Church Hill, just south of the church.

The lodges were apparently rebuilt in the late 1870s as part of the alterations that took place at Cave Castle to the designs of the Hull firm of Smith & Broderick. Both are constructed of yellow brick with stone details. East Lodge (now the entrance to a modern housing estate) has a broad gateway with a tower to the south and a turret to the north. The curved walls either side having piers topped with sitting bears, the crest of the Barnard family. West Lodge, on Church Hill, also castellated, has the family coat of arms set into one of the towers. (Pevsner & Neave, *Yorkshire: York & ER*, 701-2)

Both lodges are listed Grade II.

4.7 PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

4.7.1 *Cave Castle* Listed Grade II

Henry Boldero Barnard is said to have enlarged and partly rebuilt the manor house known as East Hall c. 1791, and renamed it Cave Castle. Major alterations to the rebuilt house took place 1802-9, to designs by Henry Hakewill, making the house actually look like a Gothick 'castle'. The house was enlarged by Smith & Brodrick in the 1870s; this work included the addition of a large range of service rooms on the north side which were demolished in the 1870s. (Pevsner & Neave, *Yorkshire: York & ER*, 702).

4.7.2 *Stables* Listed Grade II

Gothick brick stable block with the central three bays projecting and embattled, the middle one of three storeys with cupola. Lower wings either side with blank pointed arches.

4.8 GARDENS AND PLEASURE GARDENS

There is little information about the pleasure grounds, apart from the references in 1836 and 1841 (see above) to flower beds, gravel walks, a conservatory,

shrubbery and aviary. In 1856 Cave Castle was said to have extensive pleasure grounds and neat gardens. (Sheahan & Whellan, *History of York & ER II*, 535)

4.9 *KITCHEN GARDEN*

Henry Gee Barnard's weather journal (1794-1815) contain numerous references to fruit and vegetables that must have been grown in the kitchen garden, which lay beyond the small pond north of the house, east of Castle Farm. Mention is made of asparagus (both forced and 'from the natural ground'), salad crops such as radishes and cucumbers, and soft fruit including strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries and black currants. Apples, pears, plums, cherries, melons, filberts and walnuts were also grown, and there was a mulberry tree. Kidney beans and grapes came from the 'hot house'. There are several references to the peach house, where peaches and nectarines were grown, but there were also apricot and peach trees on the 'open wall'. (Barnard, 'Register') In 1853 Barnard, whose gardener was Mr Call, won 2nd prize at the Horticultural and Floricultural Exhibitions at York for ten nectarines, presumably grown in the peach house. (*York Herald*, 6 August 1853)

The larger scale OS plan published 1909 shows a series of glass houses within the kitchen garden.

A wood and glass conservatory with iron roof backed onto the exterior of south wall of the kitchen garden. A modern bungalow now stands on its site, with the old kitchen garden area lying behind. This land is no longer associated with Cave Castle.

4.10 *PARK*

4.10.1 *Open parkland*

Almost half the park has been built on, and a golf course has been laid out on much of what remains, but there are still scattered trees within it.

4.10.2 *Plantations*

The plantation known as Castle Covert, which runs north-east of the house and along the northern perimeter of the late 18th century parkland, still exists. There are plantations south of the lake, and a narrow strip of trees screen what remains of the open parkland from the modern developments that have encroached on the south-west.

4.11 *WATER FEATURES*

4.11.1 *Lake*

The large, irregular lake or fish pond south of Cave Castle, with planting around its perimeter, survives. It was part of the landscaping carried out by William Emes c. 1787. A boat house on the north bank is marked on the large scale OS map of 1909.

4.11.2 *Small pond*

To the north of the house the small oval pond set within a lawned area still exists, but is no longer part of the grounds of Cave Castle.

5. REFERENCES

Books and articles

R. Alec-Smith, 'Cave Castle', *Transactions of the Georgian Society for East Yorkshire*, v. 4, pt. 2, 1956-8, 50-60

J. Allen, *The Stranger's Guide to Ferriby, Welton, Elloughton and South Cave* (1841)

K.J. Allison (ed.), *Victoria County History, Yorkshire E. Riding*, IV, 1979

J.E. & P.A. Crowther, *The Diary of Robert Sharp of South Cave*, 1997

J.G. Hall, *History of South Cave*, 1892

D. Neave (ed.), *South Cave*, 1984

D. Neave & D. Turnbull, *Landscaped Parks and Gardens of East Yorkshire*, Georgian Society for East Yorkshire, 1992

N. Pevsner & D. Neave, *Buildings of England: Yorkshire, York and the East Riding*, 1995

J.J. Sheahan & T. Whellan, *History and Topography of York and the East Riding*, II, 1856

Primary sources

H.B. Barnard 'A register of the Barometer, Thermometer, Wind, Weather, Seasons etc kept at Cave Castle' [1794-1815] (manuscript journal at Hull History Centre)

Newspapers (*York Herald*)

Maps

Manuscript:

Plan of South Cave, 1759 (Hull History Centre, DDBA/4/31)

Printed:

Ordnance Survey maps published 1855-2012