

Woodlawn Church & Graveyard

Woodlawn Church was built in 1874 by Frederick Mason, the second Baron Ashtown. It was designed by Kempster, who also designed the refurbishment of Woodlawn House. A War memorial on the south wall remembers those from the parish who died serving during the First World War. The western window was erected in memory of the 2nd Baron Ashtown who died in 1880. Services are held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

Trench's Monument

The mausoleum consists of a tower, set within a large circular enclosure which is surrounded by a tall crenelated wall and arched entrance gateway. It is built of coursed rubble limestone with cut stone dressings and set on an elevated site overlooking the family demesne. The mausoleum is privately owned with burials and commemorations of the Trench family dating back to Frederick Trench 1796 and his wife Mary Trench (nee Sadlier) 1819. Built on an earlier enclosure, the ditch of which can be seen to the south and along the entrance. Entry is by appointment; Contact Tom 086 8528466

A Gothic style folly entrance gateway with crenelated parapet over pointed central arch and lower flanking arches, c.1790 is located adjoining the roadway.

Windmill Pump in Monaveen and reservoir at the back of the mausoleum

Water from Tommy Madden's well was pumped around the locality via a pump powered by a windmill. The site of the reservoir is just visible amongst overgrowth to the north of the mausoleum.

Further Reading:

Technology and the Big House in Ireland c.1800 – c1930 Charles Carson
Cambria Press
www.archaeology.ie

Galway County Community Heritage Website: galwaycommunityheritage.org
Or contact us on our facebook page www.facebook.com/woodlawnheritage
or ring 086 1003888

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WOODLAWN HERITAGE GROUP

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THE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE OF WOODLAWN

Walk & Talk

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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Introduction

Woodlawn House was built in the late 1750s, on lands purchased by the Dean of Raphoe in early 1700s. Re-designed in 1860s by Kempster, the mansion was transformed into a fashionable Victorian villa. Woodlawn House and estate not only was a statement in authority, but a development intelligent in its design. This was a highly functional house with all the mod cons of the era, laid out in a practical, yet stylish manner. The provision of exotic fruit and veg from greenhouses, refrigeration of meats, poultry, game and fish created a lifestyle all the more elaborate as the seasons were no longer restricting. The effects of its prosperity would affect the wider community, and bring with it more employment and opportunity.

‘Technology is the application of human knowledge to practical requirements... water, food, heating and lighting.’ (Carson, 2009)

Woodlawn Railway Station

George Willoughby Hemans designed the station at Woodlawn. It was built in 1851. Comprising the signal cabin, station masters house, waiting rooms and various stores this was a hive of activity up to the sixties and early seventies. The station itself would bring people from all parts of Ireland to Woodlawn to work as railway clerks, porters and station masters. Many locals worked here too. The signal cabin was manned at all times and the lines had to be kept clear of debris and overgrowth.

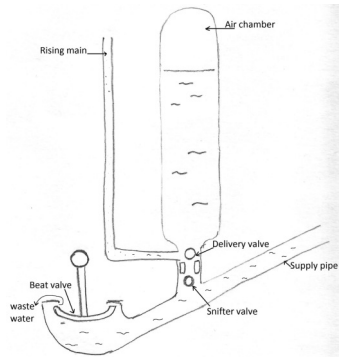
May Craig’s café/shop was a little hut where people could buy cigarettes, papers and magazines and a cup of tea while you waited for the train. This was a corrugated iron shed with a door and two small windows. It was located between the two pillars, still standing within the northern wall adjacent to the car park.

The goods store at Woodlawn on the northern side of the track, re-roofed by Woodlawn Heritage Group. It holds a crane that was used to unload large cargo.



Sketch drawing of a ram pump, which was located under the western most arch of the grand bridge at Woodlawn.

The lake around Woodlawn House was more than a pretty garden feature. It had its practical uses too. Before a pump was installed a water wheel was used on the front lawn. Water would have been pumped to the house for use in the wash rooms, kitchen, laundry, and also distributed to the glass houses where they grew their (then) exotic fruit and vegetables.



Laundry Room

A building to the rear of the house was the laundry room. This was purpose built with deep sinks along the outer wall for washing the clothes and linen. Rows of wooden hangers on rails were used to hang the clothes. The laundry had its own heating system which ensured a swift drying/airing of the linen before they were brought into the main house again for re-use.



The Ice House



Strategically located close to the lake at a remove from the house the ice house at Woodlawn is deemed as one of the best preserved in County Galway. This can be seen from the public road along the Golden Mile. It would have been used as we use our refrigerators today, storing food and of course, ice for the drinks on the lawn in Summer.

Census 1901 names the game-keeper as John Graham (from Scotland) and his wife Elizabeth. Two sons James Murray and Walter William are recorded as game-keepers also. Daughters Janet and Elizabeth are registered as scholars at the ages of 21 and 16. Five under game-keepers are registered in a separate house, born in Tipperary, Limerick, Kilkenny and King's County (Offaly).



An interesting feature, the bee bole, within the walled garden of the gamekeeper's house. The name comes from Scotland, meaning hole in a wall. Honey and beeswax were in great demand at a time when sugar was scarce and candles were the main source of lighting.

Census 1901

The estate of Woodlawn had up to forty people working here through the turn of the century. The census in 1901 shows in Woodlawn House along with the gentry lived a butler, footman, hall boy, housekeeper, cook, kitchen-maid, 3 housemaids, still room maid, 2 nurses and a nursery maid. In various other houses lived coach-men, groomsmen, engine driver, foreman gardeners, journeyman guard, land steward, gamekeeper and forester. Some lived with their wives and children. The majority of workers lived in groups in houses around the estate and locality. A lot of the people working on the estate came from Scotland, England and various other parts of the country as far away as Wicklow and Wexford. Local people were also employed as herds, labourers, gardeners, stable hands, and housemaids.

WATER

Woodlawn Estate, like most estates had their own water features. As well as being attractive and a source of entertainment the lakes and ponds served as reservoirs, sources of food (lake and fish pond) and power. Even a small river has momentum from which power can be harnessed. In winter the lake would freeze and provide ice for the ice-house.



A crane still stands inside the store at Woodlawn Station. Heavy goods such as sugar beet, cars and large cargo were lifted off the trains and into the storage sheds. The southern side of the track was used for loading cattle/livestock.

To the north of the station are three stone cottages, commonly known as 'The railway cottages'. They were originally built as semi-detached houses for workers on the estate and would enhance the view for the passers-by.

Surrounding Bogs

Turf sheds were located along the railway walk. The bog to the north of the railway was cut for turf. A tunnel was dug under the railway line to allow the easy distribution of the turf from north to south of the line.

Milled peat was used for bedding horses and was milled on the estate. Railway tracks were used for transport between the estate and Deely's land, where there were large sheds for storage.

Cloggers Hut

Clogs were worn on the feet in wet/hot conditions and worn over the shoes/boots. Ancestors of Sean Raftery from Ahascragh were cloggers and came to Woodlawn on a seasonal basis. This was a winter job, and the alder, the hard wood required was sourced in Woodlawn. The finished product was then railed to Dublin via Woodlawn Station and used as footwear in the mills in England.

Lime kiln

Lime kilns have been used from prehistoric times, the earliest discovered in Iraq dating to the Bronze Age. Generally constructed of stone, the stone was burned at a very high temperature to produce quicklime, (calcium oxide) a raw material used for a variety of purposes.

Limestone (calcium carbonate) is a sedimentary rock produced largely in the marine environment from the shells of sea creatures over geologic time periods. When heated (or “burnt”) the limestone is converted to quicklime (calcium oxide) and a gas (carbon dioxide). Quicklime will react with water to give “slaked lime” (calcium hydroxide). The burning of lime actually made the kiln waterproof and stronger.

Lime is a common name for many products which was and is still used

- on agricultural land to break up clay soil and ‘sweeten’ the grass
- as a mortar in building
- as a flux in iron and steel-making
- for white-washing house walls making them waterproof and to brighten and disinfect the interiors
- to prevent foot rot in livestock (found in heaps at field-gates),
- as a medicine,
- as a bleach in paper-making,
- for removing the hair from hides in leather making (probably its first use in antiquity),
- in cesspits [The effect of quicklime in contact with moisture also made it useful; its caustic action killed off germs and helped decomposition.]
- slug and snail repellent
- ant killer
- frost protection for stored potatoes
- to disinfect wells

Gas Wood

Carbide was brought into the estate and when mixed with water a gas was produced. This gas was used for the lights/ lamps on cars and bicycles. A gas pit/ works was located in the woods, hence the name ‘Gas Wood’.



The Gardener’s House was built in the early twentieth century. Census 1911 lists a number of gardeners including William Porterfield (Scotland), Thomas Leggett (Co. Wexford), Charles Faulkner (Co. Louth), John Laurie (England) and his wife Elizabeth (Galway).

Game keepers house ‘The Castle’ (Recorded Monument GA086:239)



The game keeper’s house can be seen at a distance from Woodlawn. Thought to be an original ‘castle’ its location on a slight rise within this somewhat flat landscape and viewing the building from a distance would give the impression of a castle, with its round tower. The round tower itself is intriguing but the fabric would suggest a later date. Red brick is visible within the construction although some of the stone may have originally been re-used from an earlier building. The main building is most definitely later. Bee-hive boles within the walled garden ensured a supply of honey and beeswax. Traces of a wall which would have fenced in ‘the game’ is visible along the (now open) field.

Weighbridge

A lot of materials would have had to be weighed leaving/coming into the estate.



Time keeping

The bell that was once heard throughout the estate and beyond denoting starting times, finishing time and breaks was located on the gable end of one of the out buildings. The bell is now in New Inn Vocational School. A second bell was hung at the back door of the big house which rang for meal-times for the gentry. A blacksmiths forge was located to the left of this outbuilding.



The Mill

There were four bays in the mill at Woodlawn House. A tall red brick square shaped chimney (still standing but now covered with overgrowth) created the heat to power the steam engine which drove the drive shaft inside the mill. A steam engine within the mill at one time ran a generator for electricity. Amongst the items milled were peat (for bedding the horses) corn, and saw milling also took place here. During the 2nd World War the mill was a busy place when commercial timber was scarce.

Above the workshops in the mill were rooms in which workers lived. Dances were frequently held in these upstairs rooms which could be accessed from the ground floor inside the yard. Police officers were also accommodated in the mill rooms.

Horses

The horse was the main power used in the fields and also for transport. Carriage horses, working horses and hackney horses had to be fed, stabled and bedded. The clydsdale would have been a horse of choice for their strength and gentle character.



Clydesdale Horses, a typical working horse in Galway originated in Scotland.



The hackney horse seen here bringing the gentry through Woodlawn Estate on a fine day (courtesy of Roderick Trench)

Sketch map of Woodlawn's Industrial Heritage (NOT TO SCALE)

