National Trust

Dyffryn House and Gardens, Vale of Glamorgan

Conservation Management Plan




prepared by

Teasdale
Environmental Design

20 August 2014

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Dyffryn House and Gardens are owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council but, since 2013, have been leased to and managed by the National Trust. A house has existed on the site since the 17th century when it was built by the Button family, the Lords of the Manor of the medieval Worleton estate. For a while, the old Worleton Manor house and the new house at Dyffryn co-existed but gradually Dyffryn became the manor house and the name was adopted for the estate. The story of Dyffryn exemplifies the fortunes of many South Wales gentry-owned estates. Of medieval origins and supported for centuries by a feudal system of agricultural tenancies and dues, in the mid-18th century the Dyffryn estate passed into the ownership of an industrialist, Thomas Pryce and henceforth was supported by the profits of trade and industry. Substantially re-built in the early 19th century by Pryce's son-in-law, William Booth Grey, the house took on a Georgian character. It was re-modelled again in the 1890s by John Cory and transformed into the French Second Empire style mansion that is seen today. It was at this point that Dyffryn's status shifted from being a pleasant, if unremarkable gentleman's country seat to becoming a property of some splendour: a statement of success for one of the region's wealthiest businessmen.

However, it was John Cory's talented but modest youngest son, Reginald, who wrought the changes that make Dyffryn, even a hundred years later, still stand out as an exceptional place. Reginald Cory began his adult life by studying law at Cambridge and becoming director in his father's coal, railway and shipping business. But he quickly developed a passion for horticulture, architectural design and town planning. Clearly an aesthete at heart, he used his share of his family's wealth to collect beautiful artefacts and by the early years of the 20th century – and evidently with support of his parents – he began developing the gardens of Dyffryn. The Corys appointed Thomas Mawson, initially, to design a garden village to be known as Glyn-Cory and to be built some 2½ miles north of Dyffryn at the outer fringes of the John Cory's estate. Mawson quickly became involved with Reginald's embryonic plans for the gardens at Dyffryn itself and was appointed to prepare a master plan. Cory and Mawson developed a liking and respect for each other's skills and the emerging plan was the product of their collaborative relationship. The result was the creation of a garden with a strong structure driven by Mawson's style of formal garden planning, tempered by Reginald Cory's enthusiasm to create numerous imaginative but idiosyncratic display spaces for his broad range of plant collections and favourites. To describe the gardens as merely an excellent example of Edwardian garden design is to understate their significance. What makes Dyffryn so outstanding is not only the scale, variety and sheer curiosity of the designed gardens but the role that their creator, Reginald Cory, played in promoting horticultural excellence at the highest levels. He achieved this not only through his gardens but also through his wide-ranging, often anonymous philanthropy and his self-effacing hard work and activities in the interests of horticulture, channelled through – among others - the Royal Horticultural Society, Linnaean Society, National Dahlia Society, Cambridge University Botanic Garden and through his numerous contacts with the great and the good of the horticultural world of the time.

Following the death of Reginald Cory and his sister Florence – who owned Dyffryn after their parents' death – the house and gardens of Dyffryn passed into the management control of Glamorgan County Council and then, through local government reorganisations, came to be managed and later owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Used as a training centre and then as a conference centre, the condition of the mansion fluctuated. In the early 1980s

it was refurbished and the service ranges were modified and extended to add a conference dining room and a delegate accommodation suite. Unfortunately, the success of this venture was short-lived. The mansion and conference centre closed and became redundant in the mid-1990s and suffered a rapid decline. The gardens were similarly at the mercy of the fluctuating economic climate for the twenty years from the late 1970s to '90s.

Despite this, the significance of the property was recognised in the 1990s when Dyffryn House was listed by Cadw in 1992 as Grade II* and the gardens were registered as Grade I. Since the late 1990s, several substantial funding grants, particularly from the Heritage Lottery Fund, have assisted with rescuing and restoring significant components of the mansion and the gardens, pulling them back from the brink of irredeemable decline. However, much still remains to be done to restore substantial and significant parts of the gardens, parklands and house interiors. To this end, the National Trust entered a lease agreement with the Vale of Glamorgan Council in 2012 and assumed management control of the property in 2013 with the aims of addressing the backlog of repairs, protecting and enhancing the property, and enabling local and wider communities to rediscover its value.

1.2 Current status of care, management and presentation

Today, the Dyffryn estate occupies approximately 90 acres and comprises the mansion, related outbuildings, the gardens, an arboretum and parkland. Following major repairs to the building fabric of the mansion including a new roof, and restoration of a number of the most important reception rooms within, in 2013 the house was re-opened to the public for the first time for 17 years. It is now opened daily throughout the year and is manned by an enthusiastic team of volunteers who steward the rooms, arrange topical exhibitions and share in furthering the research about the history of the property. Although unfurnished, the showrooms are impressive and popular with the visiting public. However, behind the scenes, much of the mansion and its linked service buildings remain closed to the public and are in poor, even dilapidated condition and still need major internal repairs.

The restoration and subsequent care of the gardens has been similarly uneven. A substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled two phases of activity. The first, in the late 1990s, concentrated on restoring the ornamental main gardens around the mansion and the gardens designed by the Mawson/Cory collaboration. The second phase continued this work by restoring the productive gardens and rebuilding the largest glasshouse, but also provided new visitor facilities – a reception, shop, tea room and toilets - and a new educational centre in part of the former estate yard. These projects have been successful and popular with visitors but, as in the house, so also in the gardens; the more peripheral areas have never been restored and attract only limited maintenance. The garden team is led by a Head Gardener, supported by the equivalent of eight gardeners, including a recently-recruited specialist in plant propagation. The gardeners are also helped by between 40 and 50 volunteers, who individually give an average of 2½ hours per week. The primary focus of the team is on maintaining the arrival areas, formal approaches to the mansion, main ornamental gardens and kitchen gardens.

The challenge for the future of Dyffryn over the coming years will be to:

- continue to address the backlog of repairs to the mansion and its associated service buildings;
- extend visitor access within the mansion to other interesting and attractive rooms as they are restored;
- find new uses for a significant proportion of the mansion which, without furnishing and significant decorations, would be of limited interest to visitors and so could be used in different but appropriate ways;
- conserve and restore other significant parts of the gardens created by Reginald Cory that are now degraded or lost;
- restore a parkland character to all of the former parkland areas within the management of the National Trust; and
- strengthen the awareness and understanding of significance of Dyffryn as the home of Reginald Cory, an important horticultural benefactor and collector of the early 20th century.

1.3 Purpose of the Conservation Management Plan

In October 2013, Teasdale Environmental Design was appointed to prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the mansion, gardens and parkland of Dyffryn.

It is probably worthwhile to briefly explain the purpose of a Conservation Management Plan. The process of preparing the Plan follows a sequence of stages. The essential first step is to identify what it is that gives a place its value and significance in both the past and the present. It is then necessary to bravely consider the future by defining an ideal, long-term vision for the place and its components. This achieved, it becomes possible to develop an appropriate framework of objectives that will provide for not only preservation but also renewal of the place so that it can be passed on to future generations in good condition and, importantly, with its significance undiminished. Finally, detailed practical steps are identified that should be taken in the short and medium term towards achieving these goals.

The National Trust intends that this Conservation Management Plan will provide a reference document for all those who are involved in the future conservation and management of Dyffryn. It sets out:

1. a brief summary of the history of Dyffryn, how the mansion and its immediate grounds were established and developed, but also of their place within the wider contextual history of south Glamorganshire;

2. a brief analysis of the physical fabric of the mansion, its outbuildings, gardens and parkland, considering how they developed and the influences upon that development;

3. a summary of the natural characteristics and wildlife habitats of Dyffryn and their significance within their wider south Glamorganshire context;

4. a review of modern-day uses of Dyffryn, how people experience and enjoy it, and the values that they ascribe to it;

5. a distillation of the findings of steps 1 to 5 into a summary statement of significance;

6. an analysis of the prevailing issues across the property which need to be addressed in order to conserve Dyffryn for future generations, making the whole house and its landscape accessible, enjoyable and safe to visit;

7. a vision for the future conservation and presentation of the property, explaining approaches to be adopted to tackle the various issues raised in the preceding analysis; and

8. a policy framework setting out detailed, practical measures to be taken, that will lead towards achieving the long-term vision for Dyffryn. When physical alterations or changes to the management of any part of the site are being considered in the future, they should be reviewed to ensure that they are in accordance with this policy framework.

1.4 Guidelines and methodology followed

There is no single, definitive guide on the preparation of conservation plans, but a number of papers and guidance notes exist. In particular, the following guidance documents have been consulted during the preparation of this Plan:

Heritage Lottery Fund, 2012. *Conservation Plan Guidance*. Outline guidance

Heritage Lottery Fund, 2008. *Conservation Management Plans.* Detailed guidance

The National Trust, 2008. Guidance Note: Conservation Management Plans and Conservation Statements

Semple Kerr, J., National Trust of Australia, 2004. *Conservation Plan. A guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural significance*. 6th edition.

Australian Heritage Commission, 2005. *Protecting Heritage Places.* Website www.heritage.gov.au/protect.html

English Heritage, 1999. *Conservation Plans in Action. Proceedings of the Oxford Conference*

These guidelines give framework advice rather than prescriptive formulae for preparing a Conservation Management Plan. The Heritage Lottery Fund guidelines also provide check-lists to ensure that nothing substantive is inadvertently missed.

1.5 Information sources

Information from the following repositories has been collected and studied in order to research the history of the Dyffryn estate:

1. National Trust, Dyffryn - previous studies, reports and management documents, correspondence and copies of historic documentary information;
2. Glamorganshire Archives: historic publications and archive information about Dyffryn St Nicholas but also other properties owned by the Bruce Pryce family including the Duffryn Aberdare and Llanblethian estates;

3. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth – RCAHMW inspection records for Worleton Moat and aerial photographs of Dyffryn Gardens and surroundings;
4. RHS Lindley Library – paintings of Dyffryn Gardens by Edith Adie;
5. Cambridge University Botanic Gardens – photographs and published papers about Reginald Cory's horticultural activities and benefactions;
6. Cardiff Central Library – brochures and publications for Dyffryn Gardens, dated between the 1950s and the 1990s;
7. Vale of Glamorgan Libraries – publications on local history and newspaper archive.

1.7 Consultations and acknowledgements

Meetings, site visits and informal conversations have been held with a range of people who know and work at Dyffryn, both professionally and for pleasure and interest.

Particular thanks go to the following people who have provided professional guidance about the current management of the property, advice on the history of the landscape and buildings, the site ecology and have given their views on the special qualities of Dyffryn:

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Pat Jones	NT Volunteer – Research Team member

2. Dyffryn: brief history of the estate and its landscape context

2.1 South Glamorgan: early history

There has been human activity in the Vale of Glamorgan around Dyffryn since earliest times. Mesolithic finds have been discovered on the estate. Prehistoric burial chambers survive nearby: a Neolithic chambered long cairn at Maesyfelin to the east (ST 1009 7230) and a Bronze Age long cairn at Tinkinswood (ST 0921 7331) to the north. (See Appendix A, Figure 2.) Evidence suggests that Neolithic settlement patterns in Glamorgan were made up of small family units rather than any kind of tribal or larger groups. However, there are some doubts about this, partly on account of the existence of these relatively large and elaborate tombs. Their construction would have required the organised effort of a substantial number of people: it has been estimated that to get the capstone of the Tinkinswood chamber in place would have required the involvement of no less than 200 able-bodied people.[1]

The locality of Dyffryn would have been an attractive place for Early Neolithic activity or settlement[2], with water supplies close by, soil suitable for cultivation, and with a variety of locally available lithic materials. There is limited evidence for how Neolithic people survived but it is thought that subsistence would have been provided by mixed farming.[3]

From the early '40s AD, south Wales was increasingly coming under the influence of, initially, the Roman military and then Roman civilian administration. At this time, the area that would become Glamorgan was part of the territory of the Silures, a Celtic British tribe that flourished in the Iron Age. Their territory extended eastward to include the areas that would become known as Breconshire and Monmouthshire. The Silures had hill forts throughout the area, at Caerau hill fort (Cardiff), Rhiwsaeson (Llantrisant), and Y Bwlwarcau [Mynydd Margam, south west of Maesteg). They also built cliff castles along the Glamorgan coast.

During the period c. AD 55-60, the Roman frontier advanced significantly into south Wales and there were related troop movements in the south-west of England. The Roman fort at Cardiff was probably the first fort to be established within the Glamorgan region. The fort was located near the lowest crossing point of the River Taff, which provide harbourage on the north side of the Bristol Channel. Between AD 55 and the late 70s, there were Roman advances and retreats into the Silurian territory, culminating in campaigns between 74 and 78 AD by the governors Julius Frontinus and Julius Agricola, who overcame both the Silures and the Ordovices, completing the conquest of Wales.[4]

This conquest was followed swiftly by the construction of forts and roads, to establish a tight control over the native population. In addition to establishing a strong military presence, there was a conscious fostering of the Roman way of life. At the centre of the drive to Romanisation were the towns - especially the *civitates* - that formed the capitals of the new tribal administrations. Carmarthen and Caerwent were the major towns of Roman south Wales, but the coastal strip between these two capitals was

1 Grimes, W.F., 1984 *Glamorgan County History*, Vol 2. Ch III. *The Neolithic Period*, pp 129- 130
2 Cadw, 2013. http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/daysout/tinkinswoodburialchamber/?lang=en
3 Grimes, W.F., 1984 *Glamorgan County History*, Vol 2. Ch III. *The Neolithic Period*, p131
4 Webster, P.V., 1984 *Glamorgan County History*, Vol 2. Ch VII. *The Roman Period*, pp282 - 283

probably the most Romanised part of the area. Another urban settlement was established at Cowbridge. Elsewhere the coastal strip appears to have had a range of rural settlements including villa-farmsteads and also farmsteads of essentially pre-Roman pattern. A number of Roman farmsteads and villas are known in the region, including at Whitton Lode (2 km SE of Dyffryn), Ely (4 km north of Dyffryn) and Llandough (7 km east of Dyffryn). There is also evidence of the re-use of pre-Roman hill forts, generally as the centre of small farms. In addition to farming, there was iron smelting and lead mining at a number of Roman sites in the region and also a certain amount of bronze manufacture.[5]

The transition from the war-like Silures to the peaceful Romano-Silurian culture seems to have been relatively swift, achieved over a period of about three generations. The influence of the Roman communications network on the region was profound. The road from Cardiff to Neath, which passes through St Nicholas, appears to be largely Roman in origin.[6]

In the 6th century, the region became an independent petty kingdom known as *Glywysing*. At some date before AD 640, the manor of Worleton in Glamorgan (which, 1000 years later, became the Dyffryn estate) was reputedly granted by King Judhail to Bishop Oudaceous and to his successors as Bishops of Llandaff. The gift is said to have been made as thanks for saving the King when he fell from his horse. However doubtful this story may be, there is general agreement that the manor was in episcopal hands from early medieval times.[7]

2.2 South Glamorgan: medieval context

The name *Morgannwg* or *Glamorgan* ('territory of Morgan') is thought to derive from the 8th-century king Morgan ab Athrwys, otherwise known as "Morgan Mwynfawr" ('great in riches') who united *Glywysing* with the neighbouring kingdoms of Gwent and Ergyng, although some have argued for the similar 10th-century ruler Morgan Hen.[8]

In the early 10th century, King Hywel Dda had established a precarious authority over all Wales, except for Morgannwg. No great natural frontier ran from north-south between Wales and England, although the 8th century Offa's Dyke bordered the central mountain ranges of Wales. So, when the Norman marcher lords progressed westward into Wales, they did so mainly along the great rivers and the southern coastal routes, where the land was low-lying and fertile. Morgannwg was the second part of Wales, after Gwent, to fall under the control of the Normans.[9] The lordship of Glamorgan was, for practical purposes, the creation of Robert Fitzhamon who invaded Wales in the last decade of the 11th century. From him, it passed to the Earls of Gloucester (marcher lords) until the early 13th century. The marcher lords had inherited the regal powers of the Welsh kings that they had supplanted. For several decades the English crown struggled to subdue these giant lordships and, only after the Despenser War in 1321-1322, did marcher independence become less important. The Despensers held the region intermittently

5 Webster, P.V., 1984 *Glamorgan County History*, Vol 2. Ch VII. *The Roman Period*, pp290 - 301

6 Webster, P.V., 1984 *Glamorgan County History*, Vol 2. Ch VII. *The Roman Period*, p309

7 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Inventory. Vol 3. Pt 2., *Worleton Moat*, p106

8 Wikipaedia, 2013. Glamorgan

9 Wikipaedia, 2013. Glamorgan

during the second half of the 13th century and during the 14th century until 1400. For much of this period, Glamorgan was politically a part of England. It then passed to the Beauchamps.[10]

During these centuries, the manorial system was firmly planted in Glamorgan with its characteristic Norman churches, castles and nucleated farming villages.[11] In 1184, *Geraldus Cambrensis,* or Gerald of Wales, a talented 12th century scholar and theologian became a royal clerk and chaplain to King Henry II of England. He was selected to accompany the Archbishop of Canterbury, Baldwin of Forde, on a tour of Wales in 1188, the object being a recruitment campaign for the Third Crusade. His account of that journey was recorded in his *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1191). He also wrote *The Description of Wales*, in which he described the southern part of Wales as *'particularly attractive, because of its flat fields and long sea coast'*.[12]

The Vale of Glamorgan was traditionally the classic corn-growing country of the manorial open fields. Parishes were small and compact, with nucleated villages geared to the effective production of corn. Each parish usually had one main cluster of dwellings grouped around a church, manor house, parsonage and inn. These were usually located somewhere near the centre of the great open fields, meadows and fallow land on which the life of the whole community depended. Gerald of Wales briefly described the agricultural activities of the Welsh, saying "*One cannot say here, as elsewhere, that 'the farmer's toil is one long round' "* [Virgil]. *"They plough the soil in March and April for oats, a second time in summer, and then they turn it a third time while the grain is being threshed. In this way, the whole population lives almost entirely on oats and the produce of their herds, milk, cheese and butter. They eat plenty of meat but little bread."*[13]

In 1320, the Spenser Survey - a reassessment for Hugh de Despenser, Lord of Glamorgan – was prepared to enable him to make the most of his rights over ploughlands in the county. The survey showed that the coastal areas of Glamorgan were well established as arable land but that in the parish of St Nicholas, with poor quality glacial gravels and clay, less than a quarter of the land was under the plough.[14]

Wealth lay in land and this was now in the hands of the Norman lords, the Church and the native Welsh. Native Welsh freemen held land collectively, as kinsmen, in *gwely* or resting-place tenure. By the 14th century, this system was starting to break down and pressure was mounting for the acquisition and consolidation of individual estates. By the 15th century, seigniorial control had weakened and opportunities arose for middling farmers, English and Welsh, to build up their estates. By the end of the century there were many gentry estates, some substantial.

The new order of land ownership of the 16th century was, in barest essentials, similar to that of England. The major landowners tended to be identifiably Welsh, but there were

10 Holmes, G.A., 1972. *A History of Medieval Glamorgan*. Morgannwg Transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 16, pp 11-14.

11 Elwyn Jones, Gareth, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p3

12 Gerald of Wales, 1191. *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, Book I, Ch 7. *The fertility of Wales and its attractiveness.* Pub. Penguin Books 1978, p230

13 Gerald of Wales, 1191. *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, Book I, Ch 8. *The manners and customs of the Welsh*. Pub. Penguin Books 1978, p233

14 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, p25

also Norman and English landowners, particularly in the lowland areas. Following the dissolution of the monasteries, the amount of crown land (former church land) on the market increased substantially. Monastic land was not sold off immediately and crown land was on the market throughout the century.[15] Although some open fields still survived, by the 16th and 17th centuries, enclosure was increasing apace. In his manuscript *Morganiae Archaiographia* written in 1578, Rice Merrick (c.1520-87) of Cottrell recorded valuable observations of the people, buildings and landscape of Glamorganshire. He stated that the highway, or Portway, that runs from Cardiff through the village of St Nicholas and on to the western towns divided the Vale of Glamorgan into two equal parts. He described how old men could remember stories of the time when cattle "for want of shade" had run all the way from the Portway to Barry, a distance of four miles.[16] Merrick made this point because, by 1578, much of the landscape had been enclosed.

Forty years earlier, Leland had described the Vale as '*A very principal good corn ground*' and Merrick thought '*the plains fruitful and apt for tillage, bearing abundance of all kinds of grain'*. However, this was a region of mixed farming and Glamorgan's plains were as famous for their excellent livestock as for their grain. The 15th century Welsh poets praised the strength, size, weight and healthy appearance of the Vale's cattle.[17]

Although the manor had long since broken down as an economic unit, it continued to prevail as a legal and tenurial institution, on which much of the local life was still centred. Landowners continued to be the possessors of this or that manor or lordship, and the boundaries of the manor and the parish in the Vale usually coincided. Ordinarily, a manor might expect to have a single lord; but in c.1600 the manor of St Nicholas had three – the Earl of Pembroke (the most powerful landowner in Glamorgan by this date), the Buttons of Worleton and the Merricks of Cottrell.[18] In most cases by the 16th century, lords' desmesnes were no longer farmed directly but were rented out in a variety of ways. Some might be *en bloc* to a single farmer or a group of substantial farmers. Or the desmesne lands might be divided up into smaller parcels of varying sizes and rented out by lease, copyhold, yearly letting or tenancy-at-will. It was possible for a tenant to hold two or three parcels of desmesne under different tenures.[19]

Economic activity quickened in Glamorgan during the 16th century partly as a result of, and in response to an increase in population. The Vale of Glamorgan was well-suited to meet the increased demands for foodstuffs but external demand also created a market. Butter, malt and oats were in constant demand from Ireland. The call for timber was increasing for domestic building, shipbuilding and, particularly, for ironworks. Fairs flourished in places such as Cardiff, Cowbridge and Kenfig, near to all the main estates in the county. Sea trade was also flourishing by the latter part of the century. By the 1580s, 1050 tons of coal was shipped each year from Swansea, Burry Haven and Neath

15 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp4-5

16 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, p26

17 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, Ch 1. *Glamorgan Society, 1536 – 1642*, p6

18 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, Ch 1. *Glamorgan Society, 1536 – 1642*, p10

19 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, Ch 1. *Glamorgan Society, 1536 – 1642*, p12

to Bristol, Cornwall, the Channel Islands and France. Iron, coal, wheat, butter, bacon, rawhides and tallow were exported from Cardiff.[20]

Prior to the industrial revolution, the industry that involved most people in Wales was the woollen industry. Cattle- and sheep-rearing were the basis of the Welsh economy and cloth manufacture was the staple industry, producing flannel and generally rough, course cloth. Until the second half of the 16th century, the Welsh woollen industry was located largely in the boroughs – Cardiff and Carmarthen were staple towns and Carmarthen, until the second half of the 16th century, was a major cloth-exporting port. Welsh cloth supplied the local markets but also was exported to Brittany, Flanders, Spain and Portugal in medieval times. In the 16th and 17th centuries it was sent mainly via Bristol and London to France, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands.[21]

Wales was rich in coal deposits, with extensive fields in the north-east and the south. In Glamorgan it was mined as early as the 13th century. Outcrop coal was mined from shallow pits and was used for domestic fuel. There was increased trade in coal in the Tudor period, with coal exported from a variety of Welsh ports as well as from the great port of Bristol. It was carried in 20- to 32-ton ships particularly to Ireland, western England and France.[22]

2.3 Worleton Manor (the medieval house) and Dyffryn: Middle Ages – 18th century

The medieval manor house of Worlton stood about 500 metres to the south-west of the present Dyffryn House. The moat (SAM GM069) that surrounded the house survives, located to the immediate south-west of Doghill Farm, in the hamlet of Dyffryn.

The 'Tref Gulych' or 'Tref Gulich' of 1136-54 implies an early settlement at or near Worleton.[23] A fair was held at Worleton on St Laurence's day (10 August).[24] Dyffryn Golych later became synonymous with Worleton Manor. The extent of the manor lands is uncertain but most, if not all of the parish of St Lythans lay within the manor. However, the moated site lies just within the parish of St Nicholas. Both parishes lay within the Hundred of Dinas Powis. Writing in c.1596, Rice Lewis stated that *Columbar* (i.e. the Worleton manor house) was *'holden of the Buishop of Landaphe ... but hath no church for it standeth in the parishe of St Nicholas'*. In the absence of any known alternative manor house site in the Dyffryn Golych (the Dyffryn valley) and St Lythans parish, it is almost certain that the moat at Doghill Farm enclosed the medieval seat. In 1332 John, Bishop of Llandaff, signed a document '*apud Worleton*'.[25]

20 Jones, Gareth E., 1974. *Tudor Glamorgan and the historian*. Morgannwg Transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 18, pp 18-19.

21 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp12-13

22 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p17

23 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Vol 3. Pt 2: Medieval Non-defensive Secular Structures. *Worleton Moat*, p104

24 Merrick, Rice, 1578. A Book of Glamorganshire Antiquities, p115

25 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Vol 3. Pt 2., *Worleton Moat*, p106

According to the RCAHMW, the Button family obtained a lease of Worleton Manor in the 16th century, or possibly earlier.[26] According to Shepherd, the Button's association with the Worleton estate may have begun much earlier in about 1350, through the marriage of Thomas Button to the heiress Cecil, daughter of Sir Guy de Bryan.[27] Rice Merrick, writing in or soon after 1578, named fifteen fish ponds in the region, nine of which were clearly adjuncts of great houses. He recorded that a fish pond existed at Worleton but, although he also lists properties with dove houses, he does not include Worleton among them.[28] Presumably, a pigeon-house was built at Worleton at some date after 1578, to give rise to the alternative name, Columbar (i.e. *Columbarium*). Rice Merrick used this alternative name later, when referring to the manor in 1596. There is no visible trace of either the pigeon house or the fish pond, or any early settlement, in the area of the moat.[29]

Although some historians have suggested that the first house on the present site of Dyffryn may have been built as early as c.1571[30] possibly by Miles Button, the RCAHMW states that the Buttons moved their family seat from Worleton to Dyffryn in the mid-17th century. Dyffryn is not shown on the 16th or early 17th century maps of Saxton (1578 - see Appendix A, Figure 5a), Speed (1610) and Blaeu (1645). However, in 1648 during the Civil War, members of the Button family fought for the Royalist cause and lost. The family suffered severe financial penalties as a consequence which resulted in the loss of much of their property during the following years. So it seems probable that the new house at Dyffryn existed before 1648. However, the first documentary reference that has been found is the 'Rowle of the Commissioners subscription' taken on 8 November 1661, which records that Thomas Button Esquire of St Nicholas (taxed on 10 hearths) contributed £10; and his son Martin Button Esquire (taxed on 12 hearths) contributed £5. Which hearths went with which house is unclear, but it seems likely that Martin Button (the son) was living in the new house at Dyffryn; his father may still have been living in the old manor house of Worleton. Whichever way round, houses with ten or twelve hearths would have been substantial houses. The Glamorgan hearth tax list of 1670 records 14 hearths at Cardiff Castle and 24 hearths at Wenvoe Castle.[31] It also reveals that only approximately one household in a hundred had seven hearths or more. 80% of households had only one or two hearths.[32]

The 17th century house built by the Button family at Dyffryn was presumably the house that was bought by Thomas Pryce in 1749. Thomas Kitchen's map of Glamorgan of 1759 shows both Worleton and 'Duffrin' as place names, and also shows a house symbol beside Dyffryn, indicating that the house was of some size and note. The map gives the name of Button as owner of both properties but this would have been out-of-date; the estate had been sold 10 years before the date of the map. This may have been an inadvertent mistake arising from the fact that map-makers often copied the maps of others. Although the map shows parks in the county, there is no park shown at Dyffryn.

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26 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Vol 3. Pt 2., *Worleton Moat*, p106

27 Shepherd, C.F., 1946 *Local History: Sidelights on some Glamorgan Parishes*, p. 72.

28 Merrick, Rice, 1578. A Book of Glamorganshire Antiquities, p114

29 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Vol 3. Pt 2., *Worleton Moat*, p106

30 Shepherd, C. F.,1946. *Local History: Sidelights on some Glamorgan Parishes*, p73

31 Parkinson, E (ed.), 1994. *The Glamorgan Hearth Tax Assessment of 1670*. South Wales Record Society, 1994

32 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, Ch 7. *The Economic and Social History of Glamorgan, 1660-1760*, p316

2.4 South Glamorgan agriculture and industry: 17th – 18th centuries

In lowland Glamorgan, farming typically was mixed, with an emphasis on cultivation of wheat, barley and oats. In the 16th century, herds of cattle were often 30 to 80 strong, complemented by upwards of 500 sheep. Dairy cattle for breeding and the production of milk, cheese and butter, were remunerative. Store cattle were also important. Small numbers of horses, pig and poultry were kept. Oxen were kept as draught cattle although, in the 17th century, horse breeding became more important as horses started to replace oxen for ploughing. On larger estates there were orchards for fruit, vegetables were cultivated and deer herds were maintained (although the latter probably not on the Buttons' estates).

Welsh agriculture remained conservative, both in implements and techniques, but from the 1750s agricultural societies were established in several counties including Glamorgan. The coastal areas saw some experimentation in the four-year rotation of crops – turnips, clover, barley, wheat – and in cross-breeding and pedigree herds. The wealthier landowners stood to benefit most because they could best afford to try out the new ideas.[33] However, minor gentry tended to be more conservative and did not insist on advanced farming methods in tenants' leases.[34]

The Welsh metal and coal industries had their origins in medieval times but there had been a substantial increase in metal-working in the 16th century. Under Henry VIII, a commission appointed to survey likely sites for metal-working in Wales listed thirty-three, the majority in Glamorgan. The king needed home-manufactured guns, cannon and shot, to reduce his dependence on continental sources. By the end of the 16th century, there was a network of furnaces and forges in Glamorgan, particularly the Taff valley, which laid the foundations for expansion during the following centuries. Production was still on a small scale and gentry families were often associated with these enterprises as they realised the value of the minerals on their estates.[35]

Well before the disruption of the iron industry by the Civil War of the 17th century, there was apprehension over the amount of timber that was being felled to provide charcoal fuel. Charcoal remained the fuel of the blast furnace until the mid-18th century, but coal was used increasingly for forging iron which led to a gradual shift in the location of forges towards the coalfields. Glamorgan remained a prime area for iron-working. The Radyr-Pentyrch works were restarted in 1740 and the Melingruffyd iron and tinplate works were started in the mid-18th century in the lower Taff valley. These prospered due to the demands arising from the American Civil War of Independence and the French wars.[36]

By the early 17th century, concerns about the denuding of forest areas for industrial charcoal, combined with a decline in prejudice against coal as a domestic fuel in towns, led to an increased demand for coal. In south Wales, the most important areas for mining were around Neath and Gower, from which the astute gentry profited. By the 1670s about 10,000 tons of coal were exported from the Neath mines annually. By the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Neath was one of the most important centres of coal industry in Wales. Although timber-lined mines started to be sunk deeper in the 16th and

33 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p11

34 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p12

35 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp14-15

36 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp15-16

17th centuries, drainage of the mines remained a constraint until mechanical pumps came into use in the 18th century.[37]

Even in mid-18th century Wales – at the date when Thomas Pryce bought the Duffyrn estate - there were still no obvious signs of an approaching industrial revolution. Yet, by the end of the century expansion was dramatic. Since the 1750s, Britain's wars had contributed significantly to the demand for copper, lead, zinc iron and tinplate. Significantly, many of the gentry who were closely involved in these industries were supporters of the colonial Seven Years' war and the American War of Independence.[38]

The growth of the metal industries stimulated coal production and transport improvements, with experiments in waterways and tramways. Iron production expanded dramatically from the 1760s. With iron-ore available along the northern rim of the South Wales coalfield, it was logical that the industry should move northwards. The earlier iron industry of south Glamorgan had benefitted iron masters such as Thomas Pryce. During the second half of the 18th century, when iron works were established at the heads of the South Wales valleys, families such as the Bruces at Aberdare began to benefit. William Bruce, who had bought his Dyffryn Aberdare estate in 1750, became a founder member of the Dowlais Iron Company in 1759.

Since the iron industry was now located in the most inaccessible part of Wales, improved access to the sea was becoming crucial. Road transport of goods through Glamorgan and, indeed the whole of Wales, was mainly by packhorse which was slow, inefficient, hazardous and expensive until well into the 18th century. The condition of the roads in Wales was extremely bad. The best roads had been built by the Romans but they were few. This was one of the main reasons that the land-locked parts of the South Wales coalfield, with its iron deposits, were not exploited to a greater degree sooner. By the mid-18th century gentlemen estate owners and industrialists were increasingly convinced of the need for action, but this was centred mainly in the iron- and slate- industry areas. Anthony Bacon transformed the track between Merthyr and Cardiff into a road in 1767.

The first turnpikes were begun in Wales in 1752 but the process was slow and involved a localised, piecemeal approach to road improvement, often under-funded. By the 1760s, five turnpike trusts had been established in Glamorgan but the standard of road building was mixed. However, a voluntary organisation surveyed the major east-west road in South Wales and put pressure on parishes, including St Nicholas, to improve it. By the end of the 18th century, coach services had been established between Milford, Cardiff, Bristol and London but, in general, the roads remained highly inadequate for the kinds of demands being made on them.

Canal building began in the 1790s, to meet the needs of the iron industry. The growth of the metal industries stimulated all aspects of economic activity in South Wales – agriculture, shipping and coal – resulting ultimately in the transformation of Welsh society and politics. [39] Until the 19th century, the most efficient and economical method of transport was by water: river and sea and, latterly, canal. The quickest and most used routes to England were not by land but by sea. Glamorgan was an important trading

37 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp17-18

38 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p22

39 Jones, Gareth E, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., p23

county and links with Bristol were vital. In 1600, Bristol was the largest city in western England with a population of 12,000 and, in itself, was a major consumer of produce from south Wales. Until the railways were built to South Wales, the natural line of communication was across the Bristol Channel.

2.5 South Glamorgan harbours and shipping

From the early 18th century, the harbours of Glamorgan played an essential role in the economic life of the county. Glamorgan's growing industrial output of the 18th century relied heavily on seaborne carriage of raw materials and manufactured produce. The estuaries of the rivers Taff, Neath, Tawe and Loughor provided safe havens, at least for small vessels of up to 100 tons. However, the tidal range of the Bristol Channel ports was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, relatively large vessels could enter the harbours on spring tides, but departure could be hindered by the ensuing neap tides.[40]

Glamorgan was, in a very real sense, part of the hinterland of Bristol; and Bristol was extremely important as the trans-shipment port for a great deal of Welsh iron, copper and tinplate destined for more distant overseas markets. The physical development of the Glamorgan ports was accomplished slowly and needed the spur of inter-port competition and a vastly increased foreign trade in three staple products: copper and coal in the west and iron in the east. The development of the ports of Cardiff and Swansea were testament to the enterprise of coal and shipping entrepreneurs, and to the quality and demand for Welsh steam coal, which overtook iron as the Glamorgan's most important export. Between 1830 and 1914 at least £15 million was spent building dock facilities in Glamorgan.[41]

Until the very end of the 18th century, Cardiff only had a modest harbour, comprising little more than a quay and a wharf. The growth of the iron industry in the hinterland was the main stimulus to the development of the port. The principle iron masters of the region initiated development when they resolved to build a canal from Merthyr to Cardiff: the Glamorganshire Canal. It was originally to have its sea outlet near Roath but, in the event, the waterway was extended down the River Taff and terminated in a canal basin and a sea lock, completed in 1798.[42] This provided a rudimentary wet dock but it was only suitable for use by small craft and quickly became inadequate for the rapidly increasing iron trade, resulting in congestion. In due course, the ironmasters were faced with the necessity of chartering numerous small ships to convey freight to Bristol or Liverpool for trans-shipment. Little could be done to improve access for shipping to the Glamorganshire because the lock and basin had been constructed too far from deep water to accommodate the larger vessels now being deployed for the iron trade. The extension of the sea lock and construction of a new basin was dependent on acquiring land owned by Lord Bute who, by the 1820s, was contemplating his own plans for port improvement.[43] These plans were developed and then put into action in 1834, when work began on building a new dock – Bute West Dock - which was completed in 1839.

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40 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p465

41 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, pp466-467

42 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, pp470-471

43 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p472

By the 1830s, the nearby port of Newport had grown and was competing with Cardiff to attract increasing numbers of vessels to load iron.

In the meantime, the ironmasters had promoted the formation of the Taff Vale Railway (See Figure 13). After prolonged negotiations with Lord Bute, it was agreed that the Taff Vale Railway would lease quays on the eastern side of Bute West Dock. The coal trade continued to grow rapidly, tapped into by extensions to the Taff Vale Railway. Trade through the Bute Dock surged ahead in the mid-1840s and, once again, the size of the dock and the depth of the water became inadequate for the larger vessels now carrying coal to ever more remote foreign coaling stations. In response, Cardiff docks continued to be expanded incrementally, with the Bute East Docks being build between1855 and 1859. Relations between the Taff Vale Railway and the Bute trustees were often strained owing to the perception that charges levied on goods passing through the Bute Dock were excessive and preferential treatment was given to other operators with a significant Bute interest. Ultimately the Taff Vale Railway set out to establish an independent outlet to the sea. Initially this was achieved by the formation of the Ely Tidal Harbour and Railway Company; a new tidal harbour was completed in 1859. While this was happening, a decision was also taken to construct an entirely new dock at Penarth, which was opened in June 1856. The projects were united under one enterprise as the Penarth Harbour, Dock and Railway Company. In 1862, the whole enterprise was leased to the Taff Vale Railway Company, despite vigorous opposition from the Bute trustees.[44]

Even before the plans for the Penarth Docks had been formulated, the Bute trustees were exploring possibilities for further extensions to the docks at Cardiff. An initial stepping stone was to be the construction of the Roath Basin, pending the building of a much larger dock. However, work was delayed in the mid-1860s, when the iron industry was depressed, largely as a consequence of the American Civil War, which affected the confidence of the ironmasters and the colliery owners. Construction of the Roath Basin finally went ahead in the early 1870s; it was opened in 1874. [45]

Despite the caution of the 1860s, congestion and delays to shipping became ever more serious and, by the late 1870s, David Davies, who owned extensive collieries in the Upper Rhonda, became the spokesman for a number of colliery owners who complained about the excessive congestion at Cardiff and what they considered to be excessive terminal charges. Delayed plans to build a dock at Roath, and then proposed higher charges, spurred Davies and his associates into seeking an alternative outlet for their coal trade via Newport. When this proved unviable, they developed a plan for building a new port at Barry which had good access to the sea and prospects for deeper water. The scheme was promoted by the Rhondda, Ogmore and Llynfi valley coal owners. The Barry Dock and Railway Company was established and a bill was promoted in 1882 for the construction of the dock and associated railways. This had widespread support in the Rhondda Valley and also from the Cardiff Shipowners' Association (of which John Cory was a member) and the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce. In May 1883, the Bill was passed through the House of Commons but was fiercely contested by the Bute interest, who succeeded in getting the Bill rejected six months later by the House of Lords.

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44 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, pp473-475

45 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p476

A parliamentary battle ensued, which cost both sides a total of about £160,000, but the Barry Dock Scheme finally secured legislative approval in 1884.[46]

The Bute trustees fought back again and, in the end, went ahead with the new Roath Dock, opening it in 1887. While this dock was being built, there was a series of negotiations for the Barry Company to purchase the Bute interests at Cardiff. These were unsuccessful and, in an effort to meet the threat posed by the Barry dock, the Bute trustees sought to unite with the Taff Vale Railway. An agreement was drawn up and a bill submitted to Parliament in 1885, but stipulations made by the Lords' Committee rendered the agreement unacceptable and the unification was abandoned.[47]

Having gained parliamentary approval, work on the Barry docks began in November 1884 with a sense of urgency. The plans had been drawn up by John Wolfe Barry and H.M. Brunel. T.A. Walker, the contractor for digging the Severn Tunnel, was awarded the contract for building the dock. The new Barry docks were completed and opened in 1889, triggering a protracted rates war between the Barry Company and the Taff Vale Railway which continued for twenty years.[48] The latter suffered from the competition while the Barry Company thrived and grew rapidly, due in part to the continuing growth of the coal trade and in part to the continuing discontent of shippers with the facilities offered at Cardiff. John Cory became involved with the scheme in 1883. In due course, he came to hold a large interest in the Barry Docks and Railway Scheme and became vice-chairman of its company.

The success of the first Barry dock soon led its directors to consider a second. After a period of uncertainty in the early 1890s, the construction of a second dock began in 1893 and the new dock was opened to traffic in January 1898.[49] The special feature of this port was a deep-sea lock which was unique in the Bristol Channel and enabled vessels to enter and leave at half-tide, thus accelerating the turn-round of ships. Speed of loading and discharge were of critical importance to ship-owners, eliminating idle time of ships in ports. Rapid turn-round was of equal significance to colliery enterprises because of the high cost of large numbers of idle rolling-stock; most wagons were owned by the collieries rather than the railway companies.[50]

In the 18th century, ship-owning had not been one of the most important forms of economic activity in Glamorgan, although there were ship-owning communities of some size at Swansea and Neath. Before 1800, only two Cardiff-owned vessels measured more than 100 tons and most vessels registered at Cardiff were, in fact, owned at Newport where many had been built. The creation of Newport as a separate port was one factor that contributed to keeping the Cardiff fleet very small until the 1820s.[51] Cardiff's ship-owning expanded rapidly in 1855-6 and then plateaued until 1878. Until the 1870s, Cardiff's sailing ships were mainly engaged in the transatlantic timber trade, but sailing ship numbers declined as steam was substituted. Steam shipping established itself early in Swansea but grew slowly in Cardiff until 1878. The reason for this was at

46 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p479
47 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p477
48 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p478
49 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p480
50 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p486
51 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, pp496-497

least partly explained by the trades in which the vessels owned in the two ports were employed. The growth of Cardiff's fleet was bound up with the dynamics of the coal trade and iron industry. After 1878, investment in shipping at Cardiff was overwhelmingly devoted to screw steamships designed to carry bulk freight, often bought by Cardiff colliery proprietors and ship-owners, such as Cory Brothers and Co. Adjuncts to the coal export trade were important home-bound freights of pit wood and iron-ore.

The growing requirements of steam ship bunkering stations and railway systems in most parts of the world led to a huge outward trade of coal to a wide variety of destinations. Cory Brothers derived great advantage from this trade. [52] John Cory established one of the earliest coal depots in 1869 at Port Said in Egypt, taking advantage of the Suez Canal, which opened in November of that year. By 1908, Cory Brothers had 118 coal depots around the world, on all major shipping routes to India, China, South Africa and South America. The company was the leading supplier of steam coal for shipping.[53]

2.6 Dyffryn: 1800 – 1840

Thomas Pryce bought the Dyffryn estate in 1749 and so presumably came to own the house that had been built by the Button family a century earlier. Pryce appears to have been a young man of 23 when he bought the Dyffryn estate. Relatively late in life he married his second wife, Frances Pigot and the couple had two daughters, Frances (b.1780) and her younger sister Elizabeth. When Thomas Pryce died in November 1789 at the age of 63, his daughters were still children. He left a detailed will giving instructions for how his property should be left, including instructions about to whom the property should pass, in the event of both his daughters remaining childless:

> *" . . . . I do hereby direct that upon the death of both my daughters and failure of issue of the Bodies of the said, Thomas Bruce and his issue or such other person next in remainder who doth respectively come in possession of the said several estates . . . . "*

Frances Pryce married William Booth Grey in 1802. William Booth Grey appears to have enjoyed undertaking building projects and seems to have substantially altered or rebuilt the house at Dyffryn St Nicholas. There is conflicting evidence for exactly when the majority of this rebuilding took place but comparison of the 1811 Ordnance Survey map and Greenwood's Map of Glamorgan, Brecon and Radnor of 1831 (but surveyed in 1826-27) appear to indicate that the house at Dyffryn was altered considerably at some point between those dates. (See Appendix A, Figure 6.)

The house was set in parkland of a slightly different configuration from the parkland of the later 19th century. In 1811, it included an additional field to the west, but did not extend beyond Dyffryn Lane to the east. By 1826-27 the parkland had been extended beyond Dyffryn Lane. The parkland appears to have been planted informally with trees. A drive entered the parkland from the north-east, at a point similar to that of today's lodge and gate. On the 1811 map, the drive appears to have followed a course similar to that of today but, as it neared the main house it split and then completely

52 Craig, R., 1980 Glamorgan County History, Vol 5. Ch X. *The Ports and Shipping*, c. 1750 – 1914, p506

53 Williams, J, 2004, 'Cory, John (1828–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004

circumnavigated the building. Where it passed the house on its west side, the drive ran through the area that is now occupied by service buildings. To the west of this drive, the map faintly shows a large rectangular enclosure which may correspond to the position of the larger kitchen garden that exists today. Two outbuildings are shown lying to the north-east of this rectangular enclosure.

On the map of 1811, a second drive is shown entering the park from the east, passing to the north of the house and then joining the north drive. A third drive approaches the house from the south. By 1826-27, the east drive had been extended to run through the extended parkland and a new eastern gateway had been created off St Lythans Road.

At some date between 1811 and 1837, the house was substantially altered or rebuilt but no documentary information has been found to date the house precisely. The 1811 and 1826/27 maps both show an L-shaped house. A quite different footprint, no longer L-shaped, appears on the St Nicholas tithe map of 1841. (See Appendix A, Fig 8.) The tithe map shows the house in the same position as the mansion of today. The footprint now comprised a main linear block, orientated approximately east-west, with two short wings extending northward, and service ranges and a number of separate outbuildings arranged at the west end of the house. It is possible that the service ranges of this early 19th century house incorporated parts of the previous house.

A few photographs survive from the 1870s – '80s which tell us that the house was a rather plain, classically designed building. The principal section of the house appears to have been at the east end, with a portico entrance on its north side. The house may have been extended westwards incrementally, in distinct sections with different roof heights. A south-facing room with long windows and a canopied veranda appears to correspond with the morning room of the house that exists today. (See Appendix F, page 2.)

In 1816 William Booth Grey was having building work done in the area of a kitchen garden. He appears to have retained the old kitchen garden but had a second enclosure built to the immediate east of the first, and new sheds and glasshouses built along the north walls of both enclosures. An account of 1816 rendered to the Right Hon. Booth Grey by William Griffith records building works to some kitchen garden structures. Unfortunately, the account does not give any indication of the location of this work, but it seems likely that it was at Dyffryn, as this appears to have been the Booth Greys' main residence. (It seems probable that Booth Grey would have built much of his new house first, before going on to build new garden structures.)

The account for building work in the kitchen garden, dated 12 May 1816, records measured items of work on a greenhouse and a back shed, alterations to walls to accommodate flues and work to walls and paths.[54] The items include taking down the walls for flues, cutting ground for the store, a considerable amount of work by masons including work at a quarry, making gutter stones, work on walls in the hothouse, building stairs, laying pavings and making 5 stoves. An account of measured works included:

40½ perches of walling for the hothouse under the Break;
88½ perches at the back shed;
68 feet of stairs;

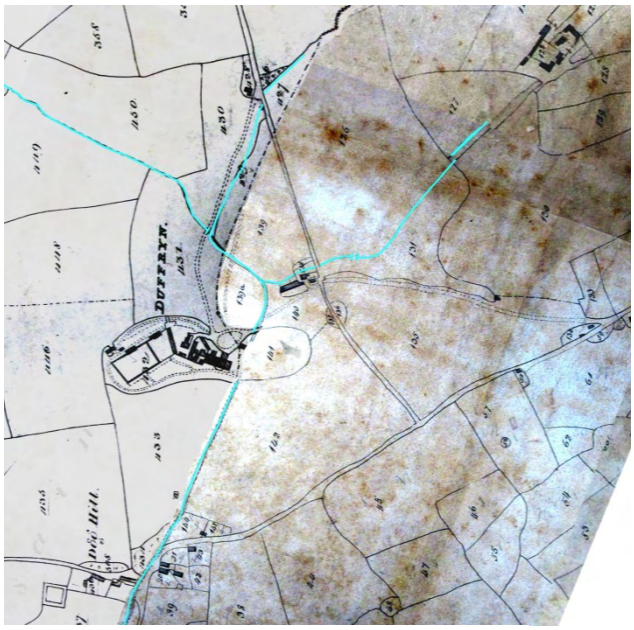
54 Glamorgan Archives, ref. D19/22/37. Account for rendered to W. Booth Grey, dated 12 May 1816

59 yards paving laid and jointed;
20 feet of stone cill for hothouse; and
making of 5 stoves.

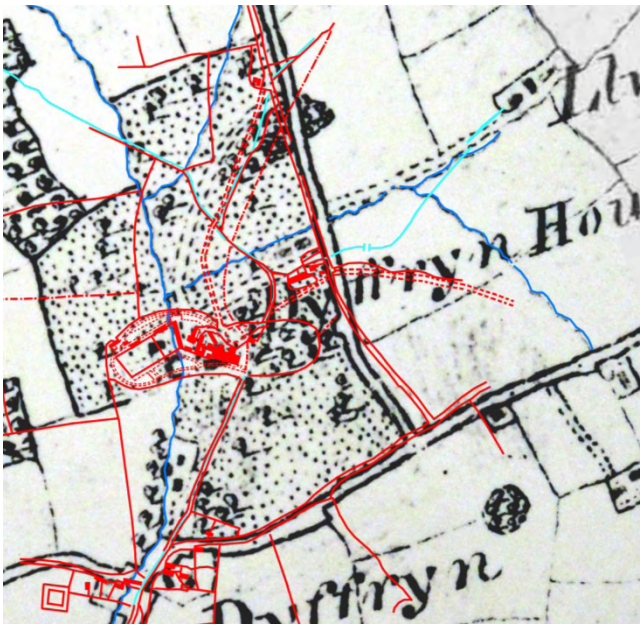
The exact measurement of a perch could vary from between 16 ft (≈4.9m) and 25 ft (≈7.7m) and so it is hard to be sure of exactly what the true extent of the walling was.

The mansion, immediate outbuildings and productive gardens were, in their turn, all set within an inner private landscape or pleasure ground. This area was lozenge shaped with the long axis running east-west and appears to have been enclosed within some kind of wall – possibly a low ha-ha wall, or a wall with a fence or balustrade above.

1811 Ordnance Survey drawing



1841/1839 tithe maps (assembled)



Outline of tithe maps superimposed on 1811 map

In addition to extending the parkland, William Booth Grey also appears to have made other quite extensive changes in the grounds of Dyffryn House. Between 1811 and 1841, the course of the River Waycock and its tributary streams were re-aligned. The 1811 Ordnance Survey map shows the river running north-south down the western edge of the parkland and passing directly between the old house and the outbuildings and kitchen garden. Greenwood's map of Glamorgan, Brecon and Radnor (surveyed 1826-27), although drawn at a very small scale, also appears to show the river running directly southward from the house. By 1841, the St Nicholas tithe map shows that the river had been re-routed to cross the northern parkland on a NE-SW alignment and then turn SSW, passing to the east of the house, but in culvert so that it ran beneath the lozenge-shaped pleasure grounds and emerged above ground again in the parkland to the immediate south. However, this apparent re-alignment could have been simply the reinstatement of an earlier course, as it brought the river - at least partially - back to the line of the parish boundary. When parish boundaries were originally established, existing features such as the lines of streams were frequently adopted to provide a clear definition of where the boundary lay. Given the rather broad floodplain of the river, it seems quite possible that the water course through this valley may have been braided, or have shifted naturally, or have been deliberately re-routed at different times over the centuries.

Greenwood's map of Glamorgan, Brecon and Radnor, 1831 appears to show an L-shaped house in much the same position as on the 1811 Ordnance Survey drawing but also shows another building immediately to the south and a third building (also L-shaped) in the southern parkland, fairly close to the hamlet of Dyffryn. It must be born in mind that this map is drawn to a very small scale. When enlarged to examine the map in more detail, the general shape and arrangement of the Dyffryn estate is quite distorted, in itself and relative to its surroundings. So, it is probably fair to say that the exact positions and sizes of buildings depicted by this map may be inexact. The building shown in the south parkland may correspond to a pair of cottages shown on the St Lythans tithe map 10 years later.

By 1839, the parkland to the east of Dyffryn Lane (now owned by John Bruce Pryce) had reverted to farmland and was divided into fields. The parkland around the house was separated from the grounds of the house by some form of wall, possibly a ha-ha. A cow house and pigsties, with small yards around them, had been built on the site of today's East Lodge, suggesting that the fields of the parkland were used for grazing.

2.7 Glamorganshire in the 19th century

In his agricultural survey of 1796 submitted to the Board of Agriculture, John Fox states that the Vale of *Glamorgan 'commands a prospect of a wonderful large tract of land, partly cultivated and partly divided into fine fertile pastures, delightful to behold, and affording large crops of corn, with abundance of hay as well as exceeding rich pasture . . .* ' During the 18th century, the population of the Vale was fairly stable, with most of the inhabitants engaged either in agriculture or as craftsmen servicing the needs of a rural community. This pattern remained until after 1831, when higher wages offered in the industrial areas of South Wales led to many of the Vale inhabitants leaving agricultural labouring. However, their loss was made good by the arrival of farm workers and

craftsmen from the depressed agricultural parishes of England such as Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset and Devon. In the 1840s, famines in Ireland led to mass immigration of Irish families; this also had an effect on farm labour in the Vale. The arrival of a significant immigrant population started to have a profound effect on the use of the Welsh language. Church services began to be held in English rather than Welsh because a sizeable proportion of the congregations could not speak Welsh.[55]

In 1818, the Highways book records the parish of St Nicholas rather conservatively as measuring 1,521¾ acres. The 1838 tithe apportionments for the parish record an estimate of 1,800 acres of productive land in the parish, divided as follows:

Arable: 726 acres

Meadow and pasture: 999 acres

Woodland: 75 acres

As the proportion of meadow and pasture indicates, stock-rearing was an important part of the agricultural economy, with some farming families regularly showing their stock at Royal Show meetings in Cardiff, Bristol and Taunton. The rich harvests from the farms had to be processed and this resulted in a chain reaction of occupations for local inhabitants. Many new ideas for agricultural implements were put forward as a result of the findings and experiments of the Glamorgan Agricultural Society. Because of the increased interest in expanding the growing of root crops and general improvements in cereal growing, farmers realised that mechanisation was vital. In 1808, special premiums were offered by the Agricultural Society to persons who could invent new implements. Vale of Glamorgan craftsmen became eager to accept these challenges. David Hopkins of St. Nicholas became a 'noted swing plough maker' and was awarded second prize of £4 for the 'best and most useful implement of husbandry' at the September meeting in 1844. Another successful competitor, also from St. Nicholas, was Benjamin Wright, who was a carpenter by profession and was awarded a number of premiums over a period of some years between 1809 and 1840, including for machines for thrashing by water and horse power. He also exhibited horse rakes, and mangold and turnip drills.[56]

Little information has been found about Thomas Pryce's activities with regard to his Dyffyn St Nicholas estate and whether he took any active interest in his agricultural tenants' activities. However, in 1822 William Booth Grey described himself in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as a 'Welsh farmer and Proprietor'. His obituary in the Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian stated that he '*was, for very many years, the zealous and popular President of the Glamorganshire Agricultural Society'*.[57] Undoubtedly Booth Grey will have known Benjamin Wright, and probably David Hopkins too, and it seems probable that he would have bought some of their implements or encouraged his tenants to do so.

55 Scourfield, E., 1988. *Rural Society in the Vale of Glamorgan*. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, ChXI, pp225-227

56 Scourfield, E., 1988. *Rural Society in the Vale of Glamorgan*. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, ChXI, pp229-230

57 Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, 20 March 1852. *Death of the Hon. W.M. Booth Grey*

2.8 Dyffryn: 1840 to 1890

It seems likely that the house shown on the 1838 St Nicholas tithe map is the house that John Bruce-Pryce inherited in 1837. This arrangement remained for the next 40 years, although the 1878 Ordnance Survey plan reveals that a few alterations (demolitions and extensions) were made to the service ranges during that time. (See Appendix A, Figure 11.) The kitchen gardens – which are clearly visible on the 1838 tithe map – remained intact between 1838 and 1878, although glasshouses were added and there were some alterations to the gardeners' sheds.

The footprint of the 19th century house corresponds closely with the footprint of the present house, suggesting that John Cory's mansion was built above the basements of the early 19th century house.

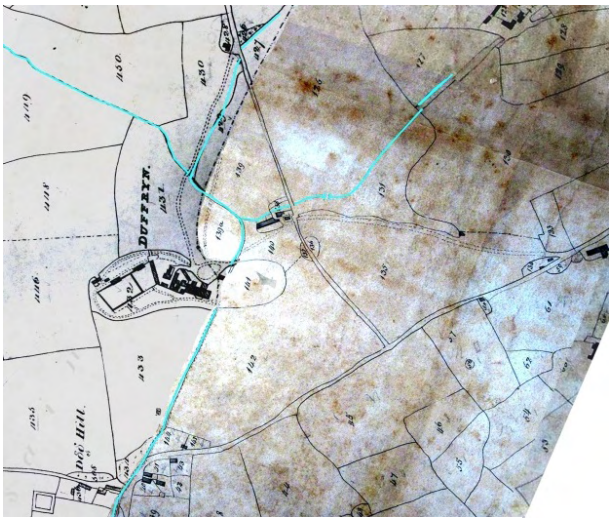
The Tithe Plans of 1838 and 1841 and the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map of 1878 give the clearest evidence of the earlier footprint from which the present house has developed. This 19th century house had a stable courtyard, cottage and service wing, which still exist today although some parts appear to have been rebuilt. The house itself was altered between 1841 and 1878. Interestingly, rather than being extended, parts of the house and service range appear to have been reduced or demolished. In 1841, the house had two bays extending out from the north front. By 1878, the more westerly bay appears to have been removed. Similarly, a quite crowded arrangement of service buildings at the west end of the house seems to have been simplified by 1878 by the removal of some structures.

The 1838 Tithe map shows that the northern and eastern drives had both been realigned to approach directly towards the house; both now entered an egg-shaped carriage circle immediately outside the north door to the house. The south drive had been removed, leaving the re-aligned River Waycock to flow more-or-less centrally through the south park down towards Dyffyn hamlet and Dog Hill Farm.

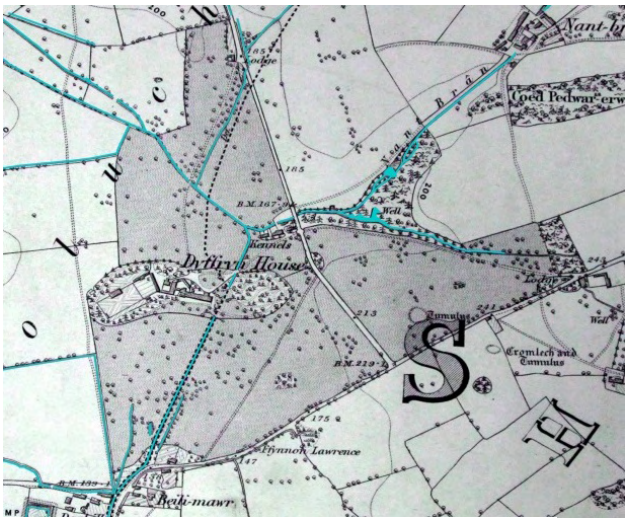
Over the course of the 19th century, the shape of the parkland changed. In 1811, the parkland was arranged around the house and extended south to St Lythans Road and east as far as Dyffryn Lane but not beyond. By c.1840, the parkland had been divided into fields and appears to have been used as farmland, probably for grazing. During the ownership of the Bruce-Pryce family, the parkland was reinstated. Cruchley's County Map of Glamorgan of 1866 reveals that John Bruce Pryce had reinstated the parkland to the east of Dyffryn Lane. A small building is shown at the extreme SE corner of this area which may have been the East Lodge. The north-east field had reverted to farmland by 1878, although trees survived that had lined a track that had run through the north of this area, connecting North Lodge to Nant-brân Farm; the track itself had gone. Other parkland trees also remained.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1878 shows parkland to the north and south of the mansion and its curtilage, but not extending to the west. To the east, only one field lying in the NE angle between Dyffryn Lane and St Lythans Road was now parkland. A drive ran through this area connecting the (original) East Lodge to the mansion. The east drive that survives today is the western remnant of this much longer 19th century drive. The 1878 OS map shows the parkland planted with single trees, clumps, and old hedge-line trees, particularly to the south and east of the house. On the site of the

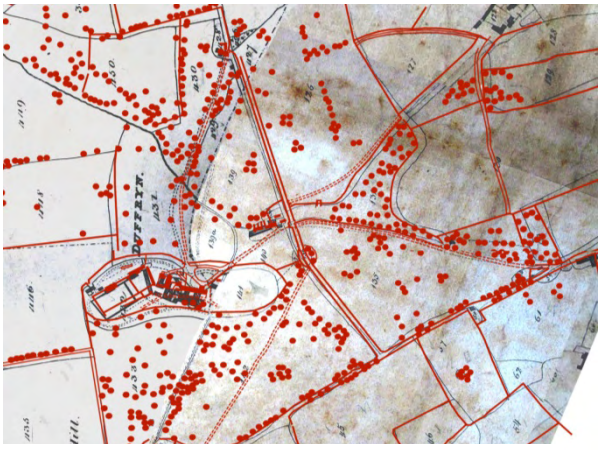
modern-day East Lodge, the cow house and pigsties of c.1840 had now been replaced by kennels, suggesting that the Bruce-Pryce family may have enjoyed hunting.
The house curtilage and gardens still occupied the relatively compact, lozenge-shaped area that had been created by William Booth Grey in the early decades of the century. The gardens comprised an informal arrangement of lawns planted with deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubbery; informal paths wandered through these areas. The kitchen gardens were much the same as in the time of Booth Grey, with only minor alterations to the glasshouses, outbuildings and neighbouring spaces. There were glasshouses in both kitchen garden enclosures but also free-standing glasshouses to the immediate south of the smaller kitchen garden and also in the east garden, a little way to the north-east of the house. This last may have been a conservatory. The east garden also contained two fountains and informal paths winding between the trees.



1841/1839 tithe maps (assembled)



1878 Ordnance Survey map (assembled)



1878 outline superimposed on tithe maps, showing very little change

In 1886, Alan C. Bruce-Pryce and his son George Lewis Bruce applied to be registered as joint proprietors of the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate. This now comprised freehold land in the parishes of St. Nicholas, St George's, St Lythans, Llancarfen, Pendoylan and Wenvoe.[58] In December of the same year, Dyffryn House was advertised as available to be let, with or without 57 acres of pasture land. The advert went on to say that shooting rights over 1700 – 2000 acres could also be arranged.[59] Evidently the Bruce family no longer wished to live at Dyffryn. The estate appears to have been let. The 1891 census records that Henry Ellis Collins (described as a Banker) was the head of the household that was living at Dyffryn just before it was sold. In fact, Collins was a Director of the National Bank of Wales and was instrumental in a fraud at the Bank which led ultimately to its downfall. Two other directors were embroiled in this, one of whom was John Cory's brother, Thomas. John Cory – the future owner of Dyffryn St Nicholas - was also implicated but was exonerated.

58 Western Mail, Cardiff, 15 March 1886

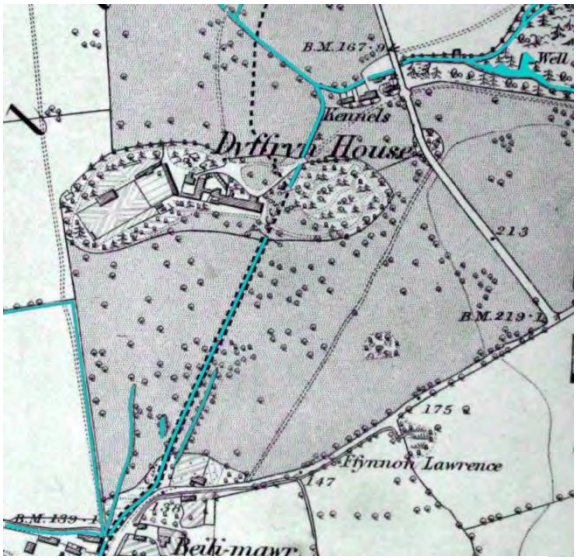
59 Western Mail, Cardiff, 28 December 1886

2.9 Dyffryn: the early Cory years

In 1891, the Dyffryn estate was bought John Cory (1828 - 1910), a wealthy ship- and coal-owner. From the information contained in Alan Cameron Bruce's letter, it seems that Dyffryn House had significant structural problems and so it seems likely that Cory bought the property with the expectation of making substantial repairs and/changes.

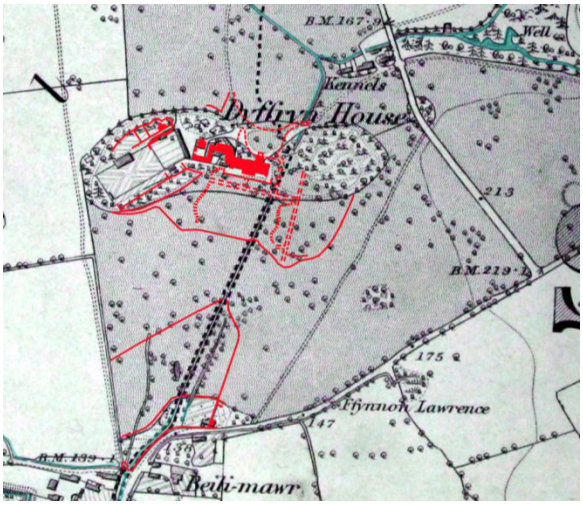
In 1893, Cory appointed the architect, E. A. Lansdowne to design substantial alterations to the old house; the first stage in what became a sequence of alterations made to the building over the following years. By the early years of the 20th century, much of the main structure of today's mansion had been completed, although more modest alterations continued until up to about 1920. The history and development of the mansion are described in more detail in Chapter 4, and analysed in Appendix F.

A comparison of the Ordnance Survey maps of 1878 and 1898 shows that changes were made to the grounds of Dyffryn House in the intervening years. It seems probable that these changes were made at the instigation of John Cory, after the Corys moved to Dyffryn in late 1894. In essence the lozenge-shaped curtilage to the house, dating from the early 19th century, was retained but modified.



1878 Ordnance Survey map

1898 Ordnance Survey map



Outline changes made between 1878 and 1898, superimposed on 1878 map

To the north of the mansion, the wall that defined the inner grounds was partially swept away. The shape of the carriage circle was altered slightly and the whole area was gravelled. The walled gardens were retained and additional areas to north and south of the main gardens were enclosed. The glass houses in the main walled garden were extended and other small outbuildings were added or altered in the other spaces. The cottage now used as the property office was built, presumably as a gardener's cottage.

To the east of the mansion, the woodland garden was retained although the network of small informal paths appears to have been removed. A formal terrace outside the south front of the mansion now overlooked a new lawn to its immediate south. The ha-ha wall that had encompassed this part of the grounds was demolished and re-built following an irregular line to the south of the new lawn. The culvert that carries the River Waycock was extended beneath this new area of garden and now emerged to the south of the new defining wall.

Towards the south end of the south parkland, the 1898 map shows that the canalised river was now dammed to create an informal lake of moderate proportions and irregular outline. Tree belts had been planted around its east and south sides presumably to create a sense of enclosure and privacy, so that passers-by using the public footpath that ran through the parkland to the east, and travelling along St Lythans Road would not be able to see into this area.

In 1903 John Cory commissioned Thomas Mawson to develop designs for gardens on a scale and of a quality that would complement his fine new mansion. Although John Cory commissioned the design, it seems probable that it was in fact Reginald Cory who took the role of client right from the start. This was the beginning of a strong and successful collaboration where Mawson's design abilities, combined with Reginald Cory's horticultural knowledge, cultivated interests and aesthetic sense. The two men worked together to create extensive gardens of a richness and variety, exceptional in South Wales. The development of these gardens and their history up until the present day are described in Chapter 5. A summary analysis of the dates of the different parts of the gardens and parkland is presented in Appendix A, Figure 49.

When John Cory died in 1910, Dyffryn was bequeathed to his daughter Florence, in trust for Reginald to inherit following Florence's death. After his father's death, Reginald took over the running of the estate. He and Florence both remained living at Dyffryn for much of the remainder of their lives, but Reginald married in 1930 and subsequently moved to new home at Wareham in Dorset. He died suddenly in 1934. Little is known about Florence but it is thought that she lived at Dyffryn for the rest of her life and died in 1936.

1898 Ordnance Survey map

1919 Ordnance Survey map

Changes made between 1898 and 1919 superimposed on 1898 map

2.10 Glyn Cory

Many changes had taken place in the pattern of land ownership in the Vale of Glamorgan during the 19th century. Until the last quarter of the century, ownership had remained fairly stable, but during the early years of the 20th century there was a demand for land suitable for residential development. This resulted particularly from the growth of industry and the improved road and railway communications to the rural villages of the Vale. It also reflected the large number of business people – like the Corys – who had acquired substantial residences for their families and households and were exploring the opportunities for the development of dormitory suburbs.[60] One of the landowners who particularly exploited these opportunities in the Vale was Lord Wimborne, who presented a number of dual-purpose schemes for both industrial development and housing for his estate lands around Barry, only a few miles to the south of Dyffryn. His residential proposals were clearly commercial in intent. He also implemented plans for the growth of Sully village, by the coast to the east of Barry, which was designed to take advantage of the railway link with Cardiff. However, there was only limited growth in the Sully parish population between 1901 and 1911 and development there did not take place on the scale that had been presented in the original plans of 1896, although the village did grow later.

John Cory must have been aware of this project and so it is perhaps not surprising that he, too, began to consider the possibilities of residential development in the early years of the 20th century. He was almost certainly influenced in this by Reginald, who had become interested in the Garden City/Village concept as promoted by Ebenezer Howard who published *Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898, re-issued as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* in 1902. Reginald became one of ten directors of First Garden City Limited – the pioneer company established in 1903 that created Letchworth Garden City - alongside Ebenezer Howard and other philanthropic businessmen such as Edward Cadbury of Bournville. The company was granted its first building lease in Letchworth, Hertfordshire, England in 1904 and the concept subsequently spread around the world.

It is not known how the Corys first came to approach Thomas Mawson to become their designer. In the late 1890s, Mawson had been employed by John, the third Marquess of Bute (owner of Cardiff Castle) at Mount Stuart on the island of Bute at the mouth of the Firth of Clyde.[61] The Corys may have been aware of this. However, Reginald's growing interest in architecture and gardens had probably also brought him into the company of other men knowledgeable in the field who may have made the recommendation. Mawson had studied the principles of town planning and become an exponent of garden suburbs and villages, but it is not certain whether he had yet been given opportunities to put his theories into practice. Reginald Cory recognised '*the desirability of providing an example of town planning, on a rural area*' which was '*unspoiled by the encroachment of ordinary suburban development with its cramped and monotonous rows of dwellings*'.[62] It seems likely that he had come to this view in the light of seeing the suburbs that had grown up around nearby Cardiff but particularly around Barry, only a few miles to the south.

Cory funded a plan to create a garden village, to be called Glyn-Cory and located within the northern fringes of the Dyffryn estate, just to the south of Peterston-on-Ely (*Llanbbedr-y-fro*). The Western Railway's Cardiff & Ogmore branch line connected (and still connects)

60 Scourfield, E., 1988. *Rural Society in the Vale of Glamorgan*. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, ChXI, pp237

61 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, pp87-88

62 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, p35

Peterston to Cardiff. (See Appendix A, Figure 13.) This was a bold concept, of a kind still very new to South Wales.

The master plan for Glyn-Cory was designed by Mawson to occupy a 300-acre site 'of beautifully undulating and well-timbered land'. Some 1,400 houses were to be built on just over half of this area, providing homes for 5,000 - 6,000 people. A glossy brochure was produced, liberally endowed with quotations from John Ruskin and William Morris, the leaders of the Arts and Crafts movement, and claiming that the village would be a model answer for a 'dishomed nation'. It would provide 'healthy, adequate and artistic housing' with 'preservation of existing natural features' and 'ample recreation space', all at 'rents comparable to those paid under existing crowded conditions'. The site was to be provided with good drainage and a gravitational water supply from a 250,000 gallon reservoir. This was constructed and can be found today concealed by trees, just south-east of Homri Farm.[63]

Reginald Cory's vision was for this housing to be made available to lower middle class people (artisans, clerks and warehousemen) who would appreciate and benefit from the more refined environment that the garden village would offer. The Corys were known for their strong Liberal nonconformity. The Glyn-cory estate was an attempt to replace speculative, ill-planned urban growth with benevolent, scientifically-based development. The master plan was intended to ensure that the village was well-planned in advance, would have a limited number of houses per acre, would preserve significant proportion of attractive open spaces and control the character of the buildings. The site was chosen for its 'dry and healthy atmosphere . . . free from smoke or fogs.' 60 acres were reserved for allotments and a further 80 acres for a golf course. There was also provision for chapels, social institutes, a library, schools, a lecture hall, gymnasium and a reading room but, of course, no licenced premises.[64]

By 1907 Thomas Adams, an early pioneer of the modern planning movement, had taken over the supervision of the construction of Glyn-Cory while Mawson was lecturing in America. He made several modifications to the plan, moving the houses well above the flood level, foreshortening the promenade and realigning and extending other roads.[65] In his will, John Cory bequeathed £10,000 to be invested so that the work there could continue. However, the grandiose plans were never fully realised and only 24 houses had been built by the outbreak of war in 1914. A few of the houses were designed in 'Moorish' or maybe 'Modernist' style; their design is credited to Thomas Adams. If intended to be Moorish, then they probably shared their source inspiration with the Moorish courtyard at Dyffryn, which was built around the same time. Some 50 years after these early houses were built, the estate was acquired by Wyndham Radcliffe and renamed Wyndham Park. Most of the present houses were built in the 1970s.[66]

Despite the rather modest achievement at Glyn Cory, it may have sown the seed for later more successful attempts. Other Garden Villages - mainly begun before the outbreak of the First World War - were built at Rhiwbina near Cardiff (1913 onwards), Town Hill Estate, Swansea (1913) and Barry Garden Suburb (1915).[67]

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63 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, p36

64 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, pp37-38

65 Wyndham Park Residents Association. *In the beginning*. http://wyndhamparkra.org/In-The-Beginning.php

66 Wyndham Park Residents Association. *In the beginning*. http://wyndhamparkra.org/In-The-Beginning.php

67 Hilling, J.B., 1988. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6. Ch XIX. *Architecture in Glamorgan*, p405

2.11 Dyffryn from 1937 - present

Following Reginald Cory's sudden death in 1934 and the death of his elder sister, Florence, two years later in 1936, the Dyffryn estate was put up for sale. At the date of its sale in 1937, the estate comprised the house and gardens, 2,275 acres of land with 20 farms, 30 additional cottages and the Glyn Cory garden village.

The 1937 sales particulars for the estate described 'The Dyffryn' as being suitable for use as a school, institution or country club. It was presumably with this in mind that the estate was bought by Major (later Sir) Cennydd Traherne (subsequently a Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan) of the neighbouring Coedyrhydyglyn mansion. Part of the proceeds of the sale (Reginald's share) went to the Cambridge University Botanic Garden as a bequest. The vast farmlands of the Dyffryn estate now became part of the Traherne estate, but having no need for either the house of the garden, Major Traherne offered them to the Glamorgan County Council on a 999-year lease for a peppercorn rent of one shilling per year. This offer was made with the proviso that the House would be used for educational purposes or for furthering the interests of horticulture and botany, and that the gardens would be maintained for the education and enjoyment of the public. Sir Cennyd Traherne (1910-1995) later became the founder member and president of the Friends of Dyffryn Gardens Society, established in 1983.

1919 Ordnance Survey map

1940 Ordnance Survey map

Changes made between 1919 and 1940 superimposed on 1919 map

During the Second World War, through the goodwill of the County Council and the donor, the house was made available to the Police and Civil Defence Authority for use as a reserve Police Headquarters and Training Establishment for Police, Wardens and other ancillary ARP services. This continued until 1946, after which the training centre was moved to the Bevin Hostel for Miners at Bryncethin. Some refresher courses were still run at Dyffryn for police officers who were re-joining the service after demobilisation from the Armed Forces. However, this could not go on indefinitely. The Education Act of 1944 had meant that the responsibilities of the Education Authorities had extended and so Dyffryn was needed for other purposes.[68] Throughout this period the gardens suffered from neglect and deterioration was inevitable.

In 1948, the County Council established a residential education centre at Dyffryn, running courses for teachers, sixth form pupils and members of youth organisations. During the 1950s and '60s, the gardens were restored after the neglect of the Second World War years. Some areas were simplified and some of the garden structures were altered or renewed. Reawakened pride in the property led to parts of Mawson's master plan, which had never been implemented during the Cory years, being carried out now, in spirit rather than strict accordance with the original plan.

During this period, several new structures were built in the grounds including a circular café (1960), a palm house (1965) and glasshouses in the kitchen garden (1967). These were demolished when the gardens were restored in the 1990s. In c.1970, Dyffryn was being developed as a training/conference centre and some modern accommodation blocks known as the 'Morgannwg Suite' were built to the west of the house to provide accommodation. These have also been demolished.

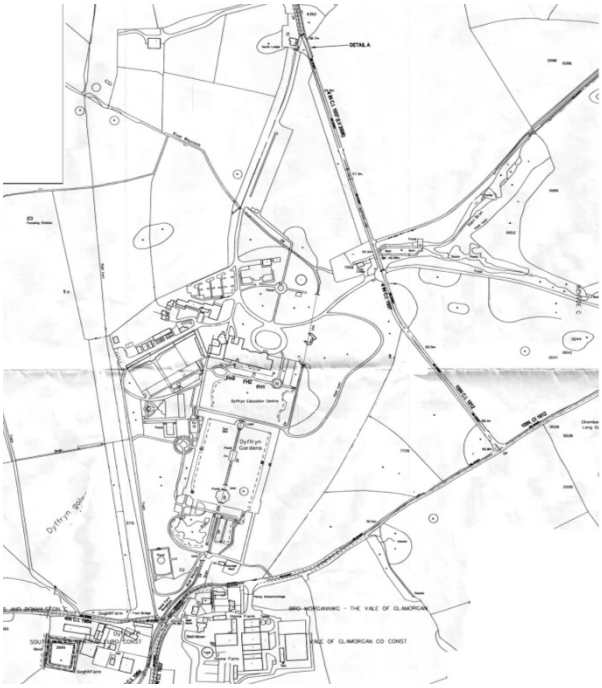
During the harsh economic climate of the early 1980s, Dyffryn became an expensive burden to the Mid and South Glamorgan Councils and a Joint Dyffryn Committee was established to consider how an economically viable future could be secured for Dyffryn. The result of their deliberations was to put forward a proposal to develop the house as an all-year-round residential conference centre. A brochure entitled *Dyffryn House Conference Centre* produced in c.1982 describes its facilities as "100 single bedrooms in modern purpose-built accommodation", "full dining facilities...seating over a hundred delegates", "3 function rooms...together with six attractive syndicate rooms", "a magnificent oak-panelled 19th Century billiard room" for informal recreation and a "licensed bar".

The Traherne Suite and accommodation block were designed by H. M. R. Burges & Partners and implemented between 1983 and 1985.[69] This entailed the conversion of the stable block and stable yard cottage and building a new extension northwards, which blocked off the old entrance to the stable yard. The Traherne Restaurant was built within the courtyard at the west end of the main house, facing the south garden. The kitchens were installed in the building along the east side of the small service courtyard to the immediate north.

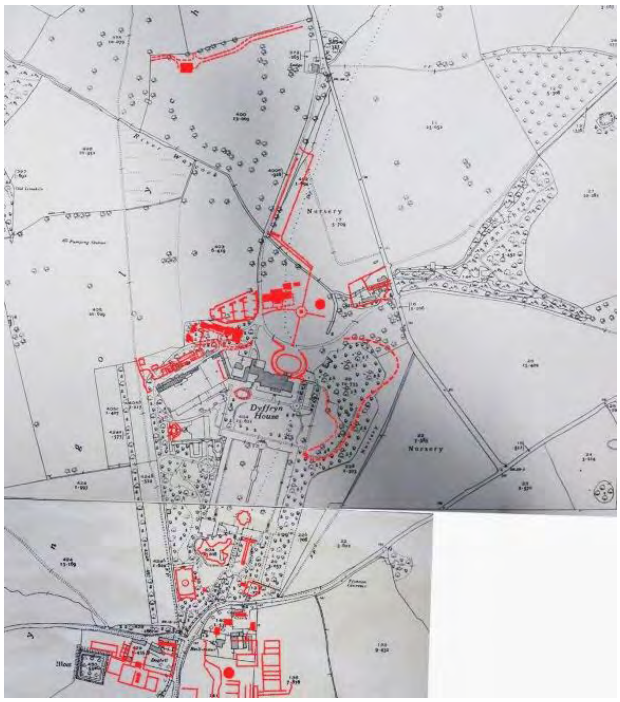
68 St Nicholas Village website, 2013. *Dyffryn*

69 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2008. *Dyffryn House Conservation Statement*, p5.

1940 Ordnance Survey map



1990 Ordnance Survey map



Changes made between 1940 and 1990 superimposed on 1940 Ordnance Survey map

By the early 1990s, the quality and overall significance of the Dyffryn gardens was beginning to fade and another period of economic recession meant that the conference centre was not proving profitable. Sir Cennydd Traherne died in 1995 and in 1996 - a year of local government re-organisation - the Vale of Glamorgan Council negotiated with his son, Councillor Rhodri Llewellyn Traherne, to purchase the freehold of the house and gardens for the sum of £300,000. This transfer of ownership was completed in August, 1996.

Between 1997 and 1998, in partnership with *No Ordinary Hotels*, the Council sought to convert the house into a luxury hotel. The project was commenced but not completed, leaving the interiors in the state of partial disrepair and alteration; this still remains partly the case today. After this abortive attempt to find a new use, in 2003 the Council again sought to dispose of the house but, despite developing a planning brief and commissioning a business plan, it failed to attract any serious interest. Finally, in 2006 there were discussions with Prime Cymru, representing the Prince of Wales' charities in Wales, to explore the feasibility of using the house as a base for the Prince's charities and as an educational, training and conference centre. However, in parallel with this, the Council started to prepare a submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund for grant aid to undertake restoration works.[70]

On the 5th March 1997, the Vale of Glamorgan Council submitted its application for a £3.25 million grant for restoration works from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the application was successful. Work to restore the gardens in accordance with Mawson's original designs, particularly in the garden rooms, began in earnest in 1998. In addition to specific restoration projects such as restoring the swimming pool, there were general repairs such as tree work, repairs to the statue collection, improving pathways and the improvement of visitor facilities. The production of the brochure *Gerddi Dyffryn Gardens: A Garden of Excellence, Diversity and Beauty* (2006) celebrates and promotes the newly restored gardens for the Vale of Glamorgan Council. In 1999, a further grant of 2.9 million was secured.

In 2000, the significance of the gardens was recognised when they were registered as Grade I in the *Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales* produced by Cadw/ICOMOS UK.

In 2005, one final application was made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for grant aid to complete the garden restoration works. The application was successful and a grant of £2,893,000 was awarded. In 2006, construction of new visitor and education facilities began. The existing East Lodge (19th century kennels) was adapted to accommodate visitor toilets on the ground floor and offices and a meeting room above. To the immediate west, a new visitor reception building with shop and tearooms was built.

A new education facility was built in the former estate yard to the north of the walled gardens and named the Cory Education Centre. Opened in August 2006, it provides space for the equivalent of two visiting classes and can seat 70 people, lecture style. To the west of the Cory Education Centre, the existing horticultural compound was almost completely rebuilt with substantial new storage sheds and workshops and compound

70 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p14

areas. These provide facilities for the maintenance and propagation of botanical collections and historic plants.

More recently, much work has also been done on the restoration of the Walled Garden and a substantial new glasshouse range was built in 2011, with different zones to display exotic plants such as orchids and cacti, and to house varieties of heritage fruit and vegetables. Two dipping ponds discovered by archaeologists have also been reinstated at the heart of each of the two kitchen gardens.

In September 2007, work began on repairs to the mansion. A £1.4 million investment from the Vale of Glamorgan Council funded essential work on replacing the original 1893 roof and restoring the exterior stonework of the mansion. A further grant of £50,000 awarded by Cadw in 2009 went towards a scheme of works to repair and refurbish the principal rooms of the house. This was supplemented by another grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2011, for a further £600,000. This was described as "*the final piece in the jigsaw of the restoration project at Dyffryn*". The new award was spent on refurbishing the main rooms of the mansion as well as helping to employ an interpretation and learning officer, and trainee volunteers.

As part of an on-going education programme at Dyffryn House, in 2011 a new Observatory for Cardiff Astronomical Society was built near the fringes of the Dyffryn Gardens site, beside the Cory Education Centre car park. Designed with a roll-off roof, the new shed-like building houses a computer room and an observing area with telescope.

3. Dyffryn: brief history of the people

3.1 The Button family: mid-1500s - 1749

The manorial lords and gentry of Glamorgan came from a diversity of backgrounds, including the families of well-established Norman or English immigrants such as the Stradlings of St Donat's and the Mansels of Margam (the most important families in Glamorgan by any standards). Others, such as the Lewises of Y Fan and the Mathews of Llandaff and Radyr were of old Welsh stock. A few were newcomers attracted into the county by 16th century opportunities, such as the Herberts, Vaughans and Aubreys, all of whom had made successful marriages with Glamorgan heiresses.[1] The 16th century was a period when land-hunger had become a universal characteristic in both England and Wales and competition to acquire land was intense.

Below the county gentry came a large number of lesser families of gentry, the minor or parish gentry. Because they appear less frequently in the records than do the county gentry, we know a good deal less about them. However, glimpses suggest that some of them were attractive and influential figures in their own locality. In most cases, they could boast a pedigree at least as long and honourable as the county gentry and they were usually intensely proud of their origins.[2] The Button family was a member of the minor gentry and fitted this description. An outstanding example of a gifted and cultivated man of minor gentry origins was Rice Merrick or *Rhys Amheurug* of Cottrell. Merrick was an attorney and scholar, who wrote a work which he called '*A Booke of Glamorganshires Antiquities'* in 1578. It is a work that is still of great importance to all students of the medieval lordship and 16th century Glamorganshire.[3] By the date of Rice Merrick's death in 1587, he owned freeholds in the Manors of Cottrell and Trehill that comprised all the western portion of the parish of St Nicholas, the greater part of Bonvilston and small portions of Llancarfen and Pendoylan. His land neighboured the lands of the Manor of Worleton.

According to the RCAHMW, the Button family obtained the lease of Worleton Manor in the 16th century, or possibly earlier.[4] According to different sources, the Button family's association with Worleton may date from as early as the twelfth century initially as tenants [5] or, according to Shepherd, from about 1350, through the marriage of Thomas Button to the heiress Cecil, daughter of Sir Guy de Bryan.[6] Prior to this, the Manor of Worleton had remained in the possession of the Bishops of Llandaff for nearly 900 years.[7] The family's original name is thought to have been Grant. A member of the Grant family fought for the Black Prince at Poitiers where he captured a banner of 'three butts or tuns argent'. In honour of the occasion, Grant adopted these insignia as his arms and from then on the family was known as Button. The Buttons appear to have acquired other

1 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, p11

2 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4, Ch 1. *Glamorgan Society, 1536 – 1642*, p11

3 Hopkins, T.J., 1964. Rice Merrick (Rhys Meurug) of Cottrell. Morgannwg, Vol 8 (1964), p5

4 RCAHM Wales. Glamorgan Vol 3. Pt 2., *Worleton Moat*, p106

5 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2012. *Dyffryn Gardens and Arboretum, Management and Maintenance Plan*. Summary, para. 16

6 Shepherd, C.F., 1946 *Local History: Sidelights on some Glamorgan Parishes*, p. 72.

7 St Nicholas Village website, 2013. *Dyffryn* – source The Glamorgan Village Book, by Glamorgan Federation of WI

property, including the Cottrell estate, in addition to the manor of Worleton. At the beginning of the 18th century, the properties of Charles Button, Esquire of *Columbar* are described as '*purchased estate partly intermixed with antient estate'* of his family.[8]

By the 16th century, the gentry played a central role in the local government of Glamorgan. The chief county family (typically Earls) provided the lord lieutenant, while lower down the social scale came the offices of sheriff and justice of the peace. James Button was Sheriff of Glamorganshire in 1556; his son Miles served in the same office in 1564-5, 1570-1 and 1589.[9] In this last year Miles' eldest son, Edward, was undersheriff but his fourth son, Thomas (c.1570 - 1633) - who became one of the most notable members of the family - held a minor office in the shrieval court in the 1590s, along with two of his brothers.

Thomas Button began his career as a common soldier in the 1590s, joining the Naval Service of the Queen in 1592.[10] In due course he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Walter Rice of Newton (Dinefwr) and benefited from the patronage of her uncle, Admiral Sir Robert Mansell. In the early 17th century as plain Captain Button, he cleared the seas of pirates in his area of Irish command; the merchants of Bristol were particularly grateful for his exploits.[11] Importantly, he also discovered Hudson's Bay and then, in 1612, he commanded an expedition to seek the North West passage. The expedition was unsuccessful, although he did explore the whole of the western and northern coasts of Hudson's Bay. After his return in 1613, he was appointed 'Admiral of the King's ships on the Coast of Ireland' by King James I.[12] (See Appendix A, Figure 5c.) In the late 1620s he was forced to mortgage his Cottrell, St. Nicholas estate and at his death in 1634 he was impoverished and had been accused, for the second time, of harbouring a pirate and also having relinquished his command without authorisation.[13]

In the centuries between the Acts of Union (1535 and 1542) and industrialisation, the economic resources of Wales were dominated by the gentry. There were few members of the aristocracy. The Earl of Pembroke was the largest landowner in Glamorgan; he was lord of six boroughs and thirty-six manors.[14] The gentry was a far from homogeneous class. Those who owned large estates - and commensurate prestige - included the Herberts of Cardiff and the Mansels of Margam. At the other end of the scale there were gentry worse off than yeomen. Overall the Welsh gentry remained generally poorer than their English counterparts although Glamorgan could boast some fifteen families with estates that yielded £1,000 per annum in 1670: a comparable income to that of a first-rate English estate. The wealthiest Welsh gentry at this date – for example, the Morgans of Tredegar – could expect an annual income of £3,000 to £4,000 per annum. The Button family, however, were Royalists and it is thought that they incurred substantial debts while supporting King Charles I. In 1632, in old age and poor health, Sir

8 Glamorgan County History, Vol 4. Ch 7. *The Economic and Social History of Glamorgan, 1660-1760*, p312

9 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p6

10 Miller Christy, 1897. *Admiral Sir Thomas Button, Kt., of Cardiff.* Cardiff Naturalists' Society Report and Transactions, Vol XXIX, p10

11 Shepherd,C.F., 1934 *St. Nicholas: A Historical Survey of a Glamorganshire Parish*, pp.50-51

12 Miller Christy, 1897. *Admiral Sir Thomas Button, Kt., of Cardiff.* Cardiff Naturalists' Society Report and Transactions, Vol XXIX, pp12-13

13 Shepherd,C.F., 1934 *St. Nicholas: A Historical Survey of a Glamorganshire Parish*, pp.50-51

14 Jones, Gareth Elwyn, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp4-5

Thomas Button addressed a petition to the King beseeching him to save him and his family from ruin by a payment of £358 due to him since 1627 and £311 due since 1629. In response, the Lords of the Admiralty formulated 10 flimsy charges against him for neglect of duty, fraudulence, etc. probably as a pretext for withholding his pay. Sir Thomas gave a spirited, categorical denial of the charges but died soon after, probably of a broken heart.[15] He lies buried in St Lythan's Church.

During the Civil War, the Button family remained royalists. In May 1648, two members of the family, Captain William Button and Miles Button took part in the Battle of St Fagans. A hastily assembled Royalist army gathered at St Nicholas in readiness to meet a Parliamentary force travelling south-west from Brecon. On 4 May, the Royalist army took up a high ground position near Cottrell, Miles Button's house. On 8 May, the 8000-strong Royalist army headed towards St Fagans, meeting and fighting the Parliamentarian force until mid-morning. The Parliamentarians, although fewer (5,000) in number, had superior cavalry, arms and discipline and won the day. The Royalists retreated in some disorder. An estimated 3,000 prisoners were taken including some gentlemen and officers and there were some executions. The Royalist leaders were singled out for punishment and seven officers, including Captain William Button, were condemned to death. Miles Button was exiled for two years and fined about £5,500, a sum far in excess of his annual income. The Buttons' estates suffered badly as a consequence, resulting in mortgage and ultimately the loss of much of their property in the years following the war,[16] although the Button family remained at Worleton and Dyffryn for another century.

Despite their straitened circumstances, the Button family maintained its place amongst the gentry of South Glamorgan. This is reflected by the number of times that a member of the family served as the Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1639 (Robert Button), in 1666 following the Restoration (Martin Button) and in 1727 Martin's grandson Martin. Both the Martins were described as being 'of Dyffryn'.[17] The last date when a member of the Button family served as a Sheriff was 1759, ten years after Dyffryn had been sold by the family.[18]

In the 18th century, traditional methods of estate expansion – purchase, lease, exchange, engrossment, judicious marriage – continued and there was an increasing tendency for small estates to be absorbed into larger ones. But there was also a remarkable transformation in gentry ranks, caused by the failure in the male line in numerous families. In 18th century, the age of gentry marriage became far later than in the previous two centuries and families were smaller. As a result, the male line failed in about half of Monmouthshire gentry families in the 18th century; in Glamorgan it failed in ten out of the twelve leading families by 1780. The Buttons were one such family. Many estates were then taken over by families with no previous Welsh connections, although at Dyffryn this was not the case.[19]

15 Miller Christy, 1897. *Admiral Sir Thomas Button, Kt., of Cardiff.* Cardiff Naturalists' Society Report and Transactions, Vol XXIX, pp16-17

16 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, pp27-28

17 RCAHM Wales. *Glamorgan: The Greater Houses, p.346. [57] Dyffryn House, St Nicholas*

18 RCAHM Wales. *Glamorgan: The Greater Houses, pp.22-25.*

19 Elwyn Jones, Gareth, 1994. Modern Wales: A Concise History. 2nd ed., pp9-10

3.2 The Pryce family: 1749 - 1837

The Dyffryn estate passed out of the ownership of the Button family following the death of Martin Button, who left the estate to his heir at law, Robert Jones of Fonman. The estate had been mortgaged and may have still been in financial difficulties. In 1749, according to one account, the estate had been mortgaged to Truman Harford, a Bristol merchant. It would appear that Harford foreclosed in that year, probably forcing a sale.[20]

In 1749, the Dyffryn estate was sold by Robert Jones to Thomas Pryce of Cwrt Carnau, an early iron master from West Glamorgan and member of the local gentry. Around this date, the estate became known as Dyffryn St Nicholas (also often spelled Duffryn St Nicholas). Thomas Pryce was born around 1725. He was the son of Mathew Pryce of Cwrt Carnau, a grange of Neath Abbey. Mathew Pryce had married Mary Popkin, daughter of Thomas Popkin of Fforest, (Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1718). The Pryce and Popkin families, along with the Mackworth's of Gnoll, all had sizeable interests in the coal, iron and copper industries of the Neath area.[21] Thomas Pryce is recorded as a coal owner in the 1750s and an iron-master in 1758-60. He was also an important shot founder and gun maker, supplying munitions to the British Government during the Seven Years' War. Between 1758 and 1760, shipments of shot and ordnance (88 tons in one shipment alone) were transported from Pryce's works to Woolwich in south-east London[22], Britain's principal ordnance manufacturing facility from the early 18th century. It is likely that Pryce's fortune was made through his business and he left a 'large fortune'.[23] His will describes a considerable estate and a cash legacy of £24,000.

Clearly, Thomas Pryce had the means to re-build the house at Dyffryn and he may well have had the status to fuel such an ambition. He became Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1759 and therefore had an important position in the county. It is possible that his friendship with the Mackworth family of Gnoll was influential. Sir Herbert Mackworth is described in Pryce's will as his 'trusty friend'. Herbert's father, Sir Humphrey Mackworth, was not only a pioneer of Neath's development as a centre of copper-smelting and lead working, but was also an important patron. Three generations of Mackworth's were interested in landscape design and architecture; Sir Humphrey and his son Herbert laid out the 'most extensive and varied landscape garden in the county'[24] and Humphrey's grandson, also Herbert, remodelled the house in 1776-8 to the designs of John Johnson of Leicester. However, despite witnessing these activities by his friend, there is no evidence that Thomas Pryce ever followed suite by rebuilding the house at Dyffryn.

Another of Thomas Pryce's friendships, as evidenced by the terms of his will, was with William Bruce, a businessman who became a founding member of the Dowlais Ironworks in 1759. Such a friendship would not have been surprising. The two men moved in the same circles and there were few trades so imbued with the spirit of corporate unity as the iron trade. The British iron industry was dominated by sprawling, federated family

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20 Glamorgan Archives, ref. D/19/24 Thomas Pryce's will, 10 July 1788

21 Rhys Phillips, D. 1925. *The History of the Vale of Neath*.

22 Rhys Phillips, D. 1925. *The History of the Vale of Neath*.

23 Wilkins, Charles, 1888 *The History of the Coal Trade in South Wales*

24 Newman,J. *The Buildings of Wales*: Glamorgan, p. 461

partnerships. The perception of the iron trade as an 'interest' was manifested in the quarterly meetings of ironmasters which came to be convened in a number of provincial centres in the second half of the 18th century.[25]

Thomas Pryce died at the age of 64 on 16 November 1789, at his own seat, known as Dyffryn Place.[26] He had lost the sight of both eyes and died of a lingering disease and was buried at the parish church of St Nicholas on 24 November. His two wives – Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Owen of Orielton, Pembrokeshire and then Frances, daughter of the Rev. William Pigot of Edgmond, Shropshire – had pre-deceased him. Frances died in childbirth in March 1782 aged 32; she had given birth in Bath.[27] On Thomas's death his estates, which included Monknash (near the coast, SW of Cowbridge) and Dyffryn St Nicholas passed to his daughters Frances Anne, aged 9 (born 7 April 1780) and Elizabeth, aged 7. It would appear that the girls were taught by a French tutor. An entry in the diary of William Thomas, a schoolmaster and clerk in the nearby parish of Michaelston-super-Ely, of September 1787, records *'A base child was born in St Nicholas to Sarah, late Dyffryn's servant maid, from the Frenchman that teach at Dyffryn'.*[28]

In April 1802, now aged 22, Frances married the Hon. William Booth Grey (1773-1852), second son of the Earl of Stamford.[29] (See Appendix A, Figure 7.) His mother was Lady Henrietta Bentinck, daughter of William Bentinck, Duke of Portland. In September of the same year, Frances' younger sister Elizabeth died and was buried in the Portland family vault in Marylebone, London.

Little more is known about Frances Pryce although she appears to have been a person of charity and integrity. In 1833, she is mentioned as the benefactor of the school in St Lythans.[30] William Booth Grey (1773-1852) was an interesting figure. He grew up in London and at the family seat, Dunham Massey, Cheshire. His maternal grandmother, the Duchess of Portland, was an important collector and an enthusiastic gardener. One of her close friends was Mrs Mary Delaney whose important collection of 'paper mosaics' of flowers is now in the British Museum. Interestingly, William Booth Grey not only had a collection of his own – fourteen 'capital pictures' were sold in 1836 from his London town house at 43 Charles Street, near Berkley Square, London – but also created his own collection of 'paper mosaics', some of which are now in collections in New York, including the Metropolitan Museum and the Yale Center for British Art. It has not known whether he undertook or kept any of this work at Dyffryn but it is clear that he had a keen interest in botany.[31]

For a short time, around 1807, Booth Grey was MP for Petersfield in Sussex but, in general, he seems to have settled into the life of a Welsh landlord. In 1808 he was appointed Sheriff of Glamorgan but was excused, allowing John Miers of Cadoxton juxta Neath to

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25 Evans, C., 1990. '*Gilbert Gilpin: A Witness to the South Wales Iron Industry in it ascendancy*.' Morgannwg, Vol . 34, p35

26 Shepherd,C.F., 1934. *St. Nicholas: A Historical Survey of a Glamorganshire Parish*, p.19

27 Thomas, William, 1781. *The Diary of William Thomas, 1762-1795*

28 Thomas, William, 1787. *The Diary of William Thomas, 1762-1795*

29 Cobbett's Annual Register, 10 April 1802

30 Lewis, Samuel, 1833. *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*.

31 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p9

take his place. However, he did serve as Sheriff in 1814. In June 1818, Booth Grey stood for election as the MP for Glamorgan.[32] Despite being favoured among the landlords of the eastern part of the county he was unsuccessful, and a second attempt in 1820 lead to the same result. Two years later he described himself in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as a 'Welsh farmer and Proprietor'. His interests remained varied. His obituary in the Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian stated that he '*was, for very many years, the zealous and popular President of the Glamorganshire Agricultural Society'*.[33] In 1830 he was a member of the provisional committee for the General Cemetery Company; the Kensal Green cemetery was opened in 1833 as one of Britain's first and most important private cemeteries. Following the enactment of the New Poor Law in 1834, he was the first Chairman of the Board of the Cardiff Union.[34]

William Booth Grey appears to have enjoyed undertaking building projects on his properties at Dyffryn St Nicholas and Monknash. He seems to have substantially altered, if not rebuilt the house at Dyffryn St Nicholas. A letter written in 1836 by Frances Booth Grey to John Bruce Knight (the future John Bruce Pryce) in anticipation of her own death and his approaching inheritance, refers to "*Mr Grey's love of building*". Frances emphasizes that William had been an "*excellent husband for the estate building, planting & spending much money without a thought of the future for himself . . .* "[35]

Although no specific plans or accounts survive for his re-building of the house at Dyffryn, records do survive of extensive building works on kitchen garden structures that were carried out in 1816, for Mr Grey. William Booth Grey also appears to have also extended the park.

There is further mention of William's hot house in various newspaper articles published in 1830, when a spate of threatening letters were sent to various Glamorganshire farmers who used machinery. These letters were signed "Swing".[36] An article published in the Liverpool Mercury recorded that a "Swing" letter had been sent to the Hon. Mr Grey of Dyffryn near St Nicholas and was followed by acts of incendiary. On two separate occasions, hay ricks were set on fire and then Mr Grey's hot house was broken open and his valuable vines cut to the ground. The gardener was alarmed and fired a shot at a man that he saw in the garden, but missed. Initially, a vagrant called Henry Hill was taken into custody on suspicion of being the author of 'these diabolical proceedings'.[37] However, a month later a neighbouring farmer David Morgan, who lived in Dyffryn village, was charged with writing a threatening letter to William Booth Grey.[38]

Under the terms of her father's will dated 1788, if both Frances and her sister remained childless then, after their deaths, the estates that they had inherited were to go to '*Thomas Bruce and his issue or such other person next in remainder'*.[39] Frances' sister Elizabeth had died young and in 1836, anticipating her own approaching death,

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32 Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet & Plymouth Journal, 27 June 1818

33 Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, 20 March 1852. *Death of the Hon. W.M. Booth Grey*

34 *Ibid.*

35 Glamorgan Archives ref. DBR/E/157/2 Letter from Frances Booth Grey to John Bruce Pryce, 1836

36 The Bristol Mercury, 21 Dec 1830

37 Liverpool Mercury, 31 Dec 1830

38 Berrow's Worcester Journal, 20 January 1831

39 Glamorgan Archives D19/1/13. Will of Thomas Pryce of Dyffryn

Frances Booth Grey met her distant cousin, John Bruce Knight, the nephew of Thomas Bruce. They evidently discussed Frances's wishes regarding provision for some of her loyal servants and tenants, what might be done with the two estates after her death and what provision should be made for her husband William, possibly in the form of an annuity. Following this meeting, she wrote to John Bruce Knight reiterating her wishes, acknowledging that he was not bound to follow them but voicing her confidence that he would. Some of Frances's writing is difficult to read but she appears to have suggested that the Dyffryn estate had been expensive to run and was only affordable with the assistance of William Booth Grey's own money. William had laid out considerable sums on the estate, carrying out building and planting works and "*spending much money without a thought of the future for himself – more liberal than provident, but you will reap the benefit ....*". She suggested that it might be wiser to sell the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate, saying "*I think that the house & estate round Duffryn would sell well – the estate at Monk Nash pays better than this ...*" She also sketched out a suggestion that John Bruce Knight might build a house at Monknash which had been a dream of her husband's; he would have loved a house by the sea. She wrote "*I am told that at Monk Nash there is a pretty vally fit for building .... perhaps it would be worth your while ....*" Although John Bruce Knight did not take Frances' advice about selling the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate, he did build a house near the sea at Monknash named *Blaen-y-cwm*, within the pretty valley that Frances had described.

Following Frances' death in the summer of 1837, the estates of Dyffryn St Nicholas and Monknash passed to John Bruce Knight. Under the terms of Thomas Pryce's will, John Bruce Knight was required to adopt the name of Pryce: he became known as John Bruce Pryce, dropping the use of Knight (his original surname). Following his wife's death, William Booth Grey left the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate. In September 1837, a notice under the heading of 'Fashionable Changes' in London's Morning Post informed the reading public that William had removed to Dyffryn Castle. In due course, he was married again to the Hon. Frances Somerville, daughter of John, 15th Lord Somerville. He died at his house in Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London on 11 March 1852.

3.3 The Bruce family: 1747 – 1891

In 1747 - two years before Thomas Pryce bought the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate - a Scotsman named William Bruce decided to acquire an estate in Glamorgan. Born in 1705, William Bruce was a descendant of an old Scottish family but, until middle age, had lived much of his life in London. Undoubtedly influenced by his first marriage with Jane Lewis of Llanishen, William Bruce looked to Glamorgan for a country estate and, in due course, bought the estate of Duffryn Aberdare (described as a 'wild mountain parish'). William was singularly fortunate to be able to rely on his wife's uncle, Thomas Lewis of Newhouse, to act as agent on his behalf. Lewis corresponded regularly with William, who was in London, throughout the purchase negotiations which were protracted. In late December 1749, just as William was finally about to secure the Duffryn Aberdare estate, his wife Jane died. However, on 17 January 1750 the deed of purchase of the Duffryn Aberdare estate was executed. William went on to buy neighbouring properties, still through the agency of his wife's uncle, and by 1751 he had acquired a considerable estate in the Aberdare valley, but his investment in landed

property did not stop there.[40] From Aberdare, he now looked to the Vale of Glamorgan and the Llanblethian estate of the Wilkins family, near Cowbridge. He purchased this property in November 1751, shortly before his marriage to Mary Turberville. During his first marriage he had lived mainly in London but after his second marriage in 1752, he lived for the next 16 years at the Great House Llanblethian and, from this base, directed the management of his Aberdare estate.

The niche in Glamorgan society won by his marriage to Jane Lewis and, later, to Mary Turberville secured William a speedy social acceptance as a member of the Glamorgan gentry.

In the three years leading up to 1752, William had spent £4,825 on the acquisition of his Glamorgan estates. The immediate financial returns were relatively meagre. However, Bruce was a shrewd businessman and, in 1759, became a founder member of the Dowlais Iron Company: a move that brought him considerable wealth. Around this time, William Bruce and Thomas Pryce moved in the same circles. Both derived their wealth from the iron industry. Both served a term as Sheriff of Glamorgan: Bruce in 1756[41] and Pryce in 1759. Judging by the terms of Thomas Pryce's will, the two men must have been friends.

William Bruce and his first wife, Jane, had two daughters, Margaret and Jane, and one son, Thomas. When these children grew up, Thomas took holy orders and became rector of St Nicholas. Under the terms of William's will, the Revd. Thomas Bruce inherited the Duffryn Aberdare and Llanblethian estates. When he did so, Thomas's activities at Duffryn Aberdare were centred upon extensive tree planting, which provided an enduring legacy for his descendants.

Thomas' sister, Margaret married John Knight of Fairbridge in Devon and had a son, John (II) Knight (1784 – 1872). When Thomas Bruce died in 1790, he bequeathed his property to his nephew, John Knight (aged 6 at the time) on condition that John assumed the patronymic of Bruce when he came of age. (Although the estate-centred gentry of Wales had accepted the Anglo-Norman naming system of surnames in the 16th century, the much older, distinctive Welsh system of patronymics, or abbreviated genealogies, survived into the 19th century.) Until young John Bruce Knight attained his majority, the property was managed by his father, John Knight. Knight's period of guardianship was active and efficient. He added more property to the estate but emergent industry in the region offered new potential and added a new dimension to his guardianship. By the 1790s the great ironworks of Merthyr and Aberdare were in production. When the Company of Proprietors of the Aberdare Navigation Canal held their first meeting in May 1793, John Knight was one of the principal shareholders.

40 Thomas, Hilary M., 1977 Duffryn Aberdare. *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 21, pp13-19*

41 RCAHM Wales. *Glamorgan: The Greater Houses, p.23. The Sheriffs of Glamorgan, 1716 - 1760*

John Bruce Knight (later John Bruce Bruce; finally John Bruce Pryce) (1784-1872)

John Bruce Knight had grown up at Llanblethian, was educated at Cowbridge Grammar School, then Sherborne and finally Exeter College, Oxford. At 17, he entered the Royal Glamorgan Light Infantry Militia at the rank of lieutenant. In 1805, he came of age and took control of his property at Duffryn Aberdare bequeathed to him by his uncle. He became known as John Bruce Bruce. John's parents had moved to Bath in 1797 and, as a young man his activities centred on Bristol and the West Country. In 1807, he married his first wife, Sarah Williams Austin, daughter of the rector of St Augustine's, Bristol. The couple went on to have five sons and seven daughters. John quickly developed a fondness for his Glamorgan inheritance and began actively to manage the estate even before his marriage. Three years after their marriage, in 1810, he and his wife took up permanent residence at Dyffryn Aberdare. Within a few years of moving there, J.B. Bruce was acquiring additional farms and extending his estate.

By the second decade of the 19th century, three generations of the Bruce family had consolidated an estate in the parishes of Aberdare and Llanwonno, based on the Duffryn demesne.[42] This had involved considerable expenditure and some transactions had strained the family's financial resources. However, financial embarrassment was only temporary. In 1837, John Bruce Bruce inherited again, following the death of his distant cousin Frances Booth Grey. This time he inherited the Dyffryn St Nicholas and Monknash estates and, once again, was required to accept another patronymic: Pryce. Henceforth, he was known as John Bruce Pryce. This inheritance raised the family's fortunes and provided welcome contrast to the austerities of the Duffryn Aberdare estate.[43] However, the returns from the Duffryn Aberdare estate changed dramatically when the immense steam coal resources of the Aberdare valley were exploited. After 1840, the impact of this on the estate was shattering, transforming the emphasis of its management and hugely transforming its character.

The exploitation of the mineral resources of his Duffryn Aberdare estate would provide John Bruce Pryce and his descendants with a sudden substantial accumulation of wealth but, according to Hilary Thomas, it was the spectre of industrialisation and the transformation of the countryside around Duffryn Aberdare that drove John to leave his beloved home there.[44] His wife Sarah died in 1843 and this, too, may have had a bearing on his decision to leave. In 1844 he was married again to Miss Alicia Bushby and went to live at Dyffryn St Nicholas.

In 1843 a combination of circumstances had resulted in John's second son, Henry Austin Bruce Pryce (later Lord Aberdare) deciding to leave London and take up residence at Duffryn Aberdare. Here, the old house in its wooded setting was a world apart from the industrial turmoil immediately beyond. Possibly anticipating his second marriage, John Bruce Pryce now decided to settle Duffryn Aberdare on Henry, who would now live there and manage the estate. He also had a settlement drawn up leaving the Dyffryn St

42 Thomas, Hilary M., 1977 Duffryn Aberdare. *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 21, pp26-30*

43 Thomas, Hilary M., 1977 Duffryn Aberdare. *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 21, p30*

44 Thomas, Hilary M., 1977 Duffryn Aberdare. *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 21, p30*

Nicholas estate to his eldest son, John Wyndham Bruce (also a lawyer, practising in Lincoln's Inn in London) and his descendants.[45]

In addition to his preoccupation with the Duffryn Aberdare estate, John Bruce Pryce had involved himself in many aspects of local public life including politics or county business, and ecclesiastical or benevolent purposes. In 1829 he was appointed stipendiary magistrate for Merthyr Tydvil. In 1832, he anonymously supported and supervised the production of a new Tory newspaper, *The Glamorgan, Monmouth, Brecon Gazette and Merthyr Guardian*, which ran for nine years but only with a struggle.[46] In 1837 John Bruce Pryce was awarded a Grant of Arms and acquired a Bruce Pryce family coat of arms.

In March 1843, there was a colliers' strike in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire; over 4000 workers were thought to have walked out. The collieries affected included Gellygaer, Pont-y-fridd and the Duffryn Aberdare works, which were brought to a standstill. Some of the strikers became violent and threatened strike-breakers brought from elsewhere. Some of the ringleaders were arrested and brought before the local magistrates in special session; one of the magistrates was John Bruce Pryce.[47]

After he had inherited the Dyffryn St Nicholas estate, John Bruce Pryce soon became active on his new estate, on parish matters and also served as a magistrate on the bench of St Nicholas. In 1842, he opened a stone quarry on the Dyffryn estate to provide stone for the making of a new road from Dyffryn to Llancarvan, but also with the intention of deliberately creating work for the men. He and other neighbouring landowners were creating work for many men who were losing work in the ironworks further north in the county.[48]

John Bruce Pryce was evidently a man of character, described in his obituary as '*kind hearted and benevolent; but his benevolence was of a discriminating kind …. Work, self-reliance and providence might be said to be the three cardinal virtues with him. It was from his firm faith in the advantages of thrift among the humbler classes that he gave his aid in the establishment of the Cardiff Savings Bank, …*' [49]

John Bruce Pryce had an elder sister (who out-lived all her brothers) and two younger brothers, both of whom also had distinguished careers. William Bruce Knight (d.1845) became Archdeacon of Glamorgan and also Dean of Llandaff. Sir James Lewis Knight Bruce (d.1866), became the Lord Justice of the Court of Appeal in Chancery.

In the last few years of his life, John Bruce Pryce and his wife moved to Bath for the benefit of his health and spent much time there. (See Appendix A, Figure 10.) On 21 March 1872, John's wife Alicia died at Dyffryn St Nicholas. John had become frail by this time and died only 7 months after Alicia on 18 October 1872 at the age of 88, also at Dyffryn St Nicholas. He left a personalty of £160,000. John's eldest son, John Wyndham Bruce had died in Italy four years earlier in 1868 and so the estate passed to John Wyndham Bruce's eldest son, Alan Cameron Bruce. John Bruce Pryce's other sons were Henry Austin Bruce (by now Home Secretary and MP for Renfrewshire), William (late

45 Glamorgan Archives ref. D19/25/1

46 Rees, R.D., 1959. *Glamorgan Newspapers under the Stamp Act.* Morgannwg Vol 3, p72

47 The Morning Post, London. 22 March 1843

48 The Hull Packet, Friday 7 January 1842

49 Cardiff Times, 19 October 1872. *Death of Mr John Bruce Pryce of Dyffryn*

Rector of St Nicholas and Canon of Llandaff), Robert (Colonel of the 2nd Queen's Royal Regiment and later inspecting officer of reserve forces for the Western district); and Lewis Knight (a county magistrate).[50]

Henry Austin Bruce-Pryce (1815-1895)

John Bruce Pryce's second son, Henry Austin Bruce-Pryce trained as a lawyer and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1837. He practiced for only 6 years and then, in 1843, partly due to ill health and now invested with the responsibility for managing the Duffryn Aberdare estate, he decided to leave London and live there. In many ways the years 1843-52 marked a watershed in Henry Austin Bruce's life and career. He involved himself in the management of the estate but also, like his father before him, with the official business of the county but enjoyed a period of quiet transition between early scholastic and legal apprenticeship and later public eminence.[51] (See Appendix A, Figure 12b.) He became Police Magistrate of Merthyr Tydvil and Aberdare from 1847 until 1852, when he then became MP for Merthyr Tydvil. He lost his seat in the General Election of December 1868 but a month later, in January 1869 was returned Member for Renfrewshire. Later the same year he was appointed as Home Secretary in Gladstone's Cabinet. In 1873, he was raised to the peerage, taking the title of Lord Aberdare.[52] This proved to be the end of his political career. In 1874, the Gladstone administration was defeated and Lord Aberdare found himself free to devote himself to his special interests, particularly in social and educational fields.[53]

Lord Aberdare's interests and support led to honorary roles in several organisations. In 1876 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was also president of the Royal Horticultural Society (1878-92); president of the Geographical Society (1881); first president of University College, Cardiff (1883); first chancellor the University of Wales, 1884; and G.C.B. (1885).[54] Arising out of his presidency of the Geographical Society, he was asked to be the governor of the National African (afterwards Royal Niger) Company (1882-95).

Lord Aberdare knew Welsh and translated some of the poems of Taliesin ab Iolo (Taliesin Williams) and Owen Gruffydd in English.[55]

Henry Austin Bruce-Pryce died on 25 February 1895 and was buried in Aberffryd Cemetery, Mountain Ash close to his home at Duffryn Aberdare.[56]

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50 Cardiff Times, 19 October 1872. *Death of Mr John Bruce Pryce of Dyffryn*

51 Thomas, Hilary M., 1977 Duffryn Aberdare. *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society, Vol 21, p30*

52 Yorkshire Herald, 16 Feb 1895. Obituary for Lord Aberdare.

53 Rees, James F.. *Bruce, Henry Austin (1815-1895)*. The National Library of Wales: Welsh Biography Online

54 www.interactive.ancestory.co.uk *Bruce, Henry Austin, first Baron Aberdare (1815-1895)*

55 Rees, James F.. *Bruce, Henry Austin (1815-1895)*. The National Library of Wales: Welsh Biography Online

56 www.findagrave.com *Henry Austin Bruce*

Alan Cameron Bruce-Pryce (1836-1909)

Alan Cameron Bruce-Pryce inherited Llanblethian House and Dyffryn St Nicholas in 1872, on the death of his grandfather. In 1873, he married his second wife, Anna Mary Synnot Maunsell in Dublin. (See Appendix A, Figure 12a.) His first wife, Louisa (née Slade) and two children had died in 1868 and been buried in the St Lythans churchyard.[57]

In 1877, Alan C. Bruce-Pryce put Llanblethian House up for sale. The property comprised a stone-built house - 'Llanblethian House' - with coach house, stable and outbuildings, orchard, meadowland, cottages and gardens.[58]

In 1880, Alan C. Bruce-Pryce's younger brother, Commander John Bruce R.N. was drowned. He was commander of the coastguard station at Berwick and, while visiting stations down the Northumberland coast in the course of his duties, the boat in which he was sailing sank. His body was washed ashore on the beach opposite Holy Island.[59] His body was brought back to St Lythans for burial. He left a young wife and a young family.

From some date in the 1880s, Alan C. Bruce-Pryce moved to Cheltenham and appears to have lived there for the rest of his life. Photographs of a family wedding party taken outside Dyffryn House in 1884 - in which Alan C. Bruce-Pryce and his wife are prominent - suggest that Alan C. Bruce Pryce and his family may have still been living there, at least periodically, at that date. (See Appendix A, Figure 12.)

In December 1886, Dyffryn House was advertised as available to be let, with or without 57 acres of pasture land. The advert went on to say that shooting rights over 1700 – 2000 acres could also be arranged.[60] Evidently the Bruce family no longer wished to live at Dyffryn. The estate appears to have been let soon after.

Alan C. Bruce-Pryce died in 1909 and his body was brought back to Glamorganshire and buried in the churchyard at St Lythans beside the grave of his first wife.[61]

3.4 1891 – 1910: John Cory

In 1891, the Dyffryn estate was sold by the Bruce Pryce family to John Cory (1828 - 1910), a wealthy ship- and coal-owner. (See Appendix A, Figure 16.)

The Cory family had originally come from Cory Barton in Cory West Putford, Devon[62] and had started modestly enough. John's father, Richard (1799-1882) ran a small trading vessel between Cardiff, Bristol and Ireland. In 1838 he opened a chandlery and provisions store in Cardiff, taking advantage of the rapidly growing shipping industry. In the early 1840s, the business was moved to the new Bute Dock and ship-broking and coal agency were added to its activities.

57 Cardiff Times, 22 May 1909. *Late Mr A.C. Bruce*

58 Western Mail, Cardiff. 28 June 1877

59 Cardiff Times, 29 May 1880. *Funeral of Commander Bruce*.

60 Western Mail, Cardiff, 28 December 1886

61 Cardiff Times, 22 May 1909. *Late Mr A.C. Bruce*

62 Cadw,1996. Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, ref. PGW (Gm) 32 (GLA). Dyffryn.

Richard and his wife Sarah had five sons. The two eldest sons, John (1828-1910), later of Dyffryn) and Richard (1830-1914) joined their father's business in 1844.[63] From 1856, the family traded as ship-owners, brokers, coal exporters and colliery agents, under the name of Richard Cory and Sons. In 1856 Richard (snr) disposed of his provisioning business and then retired in 1859. Up until this time, the company's offices had been at 106 Bute Street in Cardiff but in 1857, as the business continued to grow, the offices were moved to the corner of James Street and became known as 'Cory's Corner'.[64]

John and Richard now traded primarily as coat exporters and ship-owners under the name of Cory Brothers and Co. Their business increased steadily and, in the light of the universal demand for South Wales steam coal, John Cory decided to establish coal depots, offices and agencies in all major overseas ports. One of the earliest was a depot at Port Said in Egypt, opened in 1869 to take advantage of the Suez Canal, which was opened in November of the same year after 10 years of construction work. By 1908, two years before John Cory's death, the Cory business had 118 coal depots around the world, on all major shipping routes to India, China, South Africa and South America. The company was the leading supplier of steam coal for shipping.[65]

In the late 1860s, Cory Brothers began to acquire collieries in the South Wales valleys. Initially they bought the Resolfen and Pentre collieries in the Rhondda valley and floated them in 1873 as the Cardiff and Swansea Smokeless Steam Coal Company. This led to some financial difficulties when the coal boom of the early '70s collapsed and there was slump in share values. Some disappointed shareholders even made half-hearted accusations of fraud. However, the company's fortunes revived and it went on to acquire the Gelli and Tynybedw collieries in the Rhonnda in 1884, Aber colliery in 1893, Dunraven in 1896 and Penllwyngwent in 1906.

From the 1870s John Cory maintained overall control of the company's activities from his office at Oscar House in Cardiff, where the day began with the partners and heads of departments meeting for prayer. In 1889, new offices were built for Cory Brothers at the corner of Bute Place and Bute Street in Cardiff. Cory Brothers became a limited company in 1893, but it still remained entirely in the hands of the family, with John Cory serving as chairman.[66]

When Cardiff's Bute Docks proposed increasing their rates by 1d per ton, an ambitious scheme for a new dock and railway – Barry Docks and Railway scheme – was devised by David Davies, who owned extensive collieries in the Upper Rhonda. The scheme was promoted by the Rhondda, Ogmore and Llynfi valley coal owners - including John Cory, from 1883 – and became known as 'the dock built for a penny'. The first (No.1) dock opened in 1889. A second dock, to the east, was completed in 1898. Extensive railway sidings served coal hoists at the quaysides. The Barry Docks rivalled the docks of Cardiff.

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63 John Cory of Dyffryn is not to be confused with John Cory, owner of John Cory & Sons shipping company trading from Cardiff and transporting coal worldwide. The two men were friends, dealt with each other's business with sons named Herbert, also in the family business. Much documentation relates to the other John Cory. This John Cory lived nearby at Peterston – Super – Ely.

64 Cardiff Times, 29 January 1910. Obituary for John Cory.

65 Williams, J, 2004, 'Cory, John (1828–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32577, accessed 22 Nov 2013]

66 Williams, J, 2004, 'Cory, John (1828–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32577, accessed 22 Nov 2013]

The peak of the coal exporting trade was reached at Barry in 1913, when over 11 million tonnes of coal and coke passed through the port.[67] By this time, the docks had overtaken Cardiff as the country's largest coal-exporting port. John Cory came to hold a large interest in the Barry Docks and Railway Scheme and, in due course, became vice-chairman of its company.

The range of the productive and commercial interests of Cory Brothers in the coal trade was considerable. The company had interests in several of the railways that had been constructed through the South Wales valleys and so the claim that Cory Brothers were the largest private railway waggon owners in Britain, before 1914, was probably true.

John Cory married Anna Maria Beynon (*d*. 1909), daughter of the Monmouthshire coal owner John Beynon, of Newport on 19 September 1854. They had three sons, Herbert (1855 – 1926), Clifford (1859 – 1941) and Reginald (1871 – 1934) and one daughter, Florence (1857 – 1936). The Cory family seem to have moved at fairly regular intervals. The 1861 census shows them living at Finchley House in Roath Road, Cardiff. By 1871, they were living at Haswell Terrace in Cardiff. The 1881 census reveals that they had now moved out of town to St Mellons, north-east of Cardiff, and were living at Vaendre Hall, a large but generally rather plain house which had been built for them, distinguished by curious Dutch gables. It is not known why the Corys decided to move to Dyffryn from their home at Vaendre Hall, St. Mellons (they also had a London home at 4, Park Crescent, Portland Place, Regent's Park[68]). However, they appear to have already known Dyffryn before they came to buy it. Various newspaper articles of c.1891 indicate that that Anna Cory knew the Bruce Pryce family - including Lady Aberdare - and that the younger members of the family mixed socially with members of the Bruce Pryce family. Lady Aberdare (1827 – 1897) was a proponent of women's education and took an active part in ecclesiastical, social and educational matters, so it is probable that she and the Corys met each other regularly through their respective involvement in public good works.

Clearly, as the Cory Brothers business continued to prosper and grow, John and Anna Cory were able to enjoy their wealth. However, in choosing how to spend their money, the Corys seem to have conformed to the pattern of behaviour of wealthy Victorian industrialists in the region. As a class, they tended to move into or build substantial houses around Cardiff, they sent their sons away to school and they bought land, but the overall impression is not one of ostentatious living. Holidays seem to have been more characteristically spent at Tenby than Nice; in the Cory's case, Folkestone was a holiday destination. In their leisure pursuits they were more likely to cultivate flowers than breed race-horses. In their private lives, there was a notable absence of scandal and, although the Cory family was affected by scandal, John and Anna Cory disapproved of it. In many cases this was probably a simple reflection of Nonconformity which, in effect, demanded high levels of conformity of behaviour.[69]

Away from his business, John Cory dedicated much of his time to public office and philanthropic activities. He was an alderman of Glamorgan County Council,

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67 CBHC/RCAHMW Coflein website: Barry Docks, Barry. www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/34234/.../BARRY+DOCKS,+BARRY/?

68 Court Circular', *The Times*, 5 May 1892

69 Williams, L.J., 1988. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6. *Capitalists and Coalowners*, p123

representing Barry and Cadoxton in 1889.[70] He was also a member of the Cardiff School Board. The Cory family – Richard and his sons - had embraced Methodism and John Cory had become a Wesleyan, his brother a Baptist. John supported evangelical causes in the Salvation Army, Cardiff Infirmary and the YMCA. He was one of the first to sign the pledge and became one of Cardiff's leading advocates of temperance. John Cory was keen to use his wealth for useful public purposes and financed local building projects for the community. These included the Maendy Hall at Tonypentre for the Salvation Army and the Cory Hall in Cardiff, which was opened on 9 September 1886. This was designated a temperance hall during the 1890s. It was demolished in the 1980s.[71] Cory also funded the building of numerous sailors' homes: he seems to have supported disabled or disadvantaged sailors rather more than former miners. Anna Cory - also a devout Christian - appears to have been particularly hard-working in support of her husband's good works, often paying for furnishing of the institutional buildings that John Cory had funded. Prior to her death, she was President of the local YWCA in Cardiff.

In the early years of the 20th century, Cory became interested in the Garden City/Village concept as promoted by Ebenezer Howard, although his interest may have been fuelled by his son, Reginald Cory. He funded a project for a garden village (Glyn-Cory) on his estate, though Reginald largely supervised the project. The plan, although slightly patronising, was intended to provide good housing for lower middle class people (artisans, clerks and warehousemen) in a healthy, leafy environment. In addition to providing village houses there would be chapels, social institutes, a library, schools, a lecture hall, gymnasium and a reading room but, of course, no licenced premises.[72] In his will, John Cory bequeathed a further £10,000 to be invested so that the work on Glyn-Cory could continue.[73]

In 1906, a few years before John Cory's death, a bronze statue of him made by Sir William Goscombe John was erected in Gorsedd Gardens (within Cathays Park, Cardiff) with an inscription *'John Cory: Coalowner and Philanthropist'*. This could be regarded as representing the paradox whereby men who made their money though the toil of others were, by giving some of that money back to community, able to command respect as men of virtue.[74]

In 1909, Anna and Cory – both in poor health – visited Dover but while they were there Anna fell ill. She recovered sufficiently for them to move to Folkestone but then her health failed again. She died at Folkestone in August 1909.

Following Anna's death, John returned to Dyffryn. John was also in poor health and, at Anna's funeral, he had caught a chill. After a partial recovery, he relapsed and died only a few months after his wife, in January 1910 at the age of 81.[75]

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70 Griffiths, R., 2010. *The Entrepreneurial Society of the Rhondda Valleys, 1840-1920*, p.106

71 Williams, J, 2004, 'Cory, John (1828–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32577, accessed 22 Nov 2013]

72 Walklate, N., 2012 *St Nicholas: A Glamorganshire Parish*, pp37-38

73 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p11

74 Griffiths, R., 2010. *The Entrepreneurial Society of the Rhondda Valleys, 1840-1920*, p106

75 Faithfull, N. T. www. evangelical times.org/archive/item/6165 – John Cory

At his death, Cory left the Dyffryn house and estate in trust to his daughter Florence, but in trust to Reginald after Florence's death. (As Florence was the elder by some 13 years, he assumed that she would die first.)[76]

Cory left more than £798,777. Just as he had given consistently and lavishly to public causes during his life, he continued to do so by bequeathing more than 10% of this money to thirty-five separate legacies. The largest bequest was to the Salvation Army (£20,000), in three separate donations for its foreign, general, and rescue work. He also left significant gifts of £1000–£5000 to home and foreign missionary societies, Bible societies, the YMCA, Cardiff Infirmary, orphanages, and sailors' rest houses in various ports. In his will, he also requested that his children should continue to give at least 10% of their income from his legacies to charities, as a matter of honour and affection to their father.[77]

3.5 E.A. Lansdowne, Architect

When John Cory bought the Dyffryn estate in 1891, he quickly set about having the mansion remodelled and creating gardens of a scale and style to provide a suitable setting for his new house. The mansion was designed by Edward Augustine Lansdowne and was constructed on the footprint of the previous house. Lansdowne was a Newport Architect. Lansdowne - whose name was originally spelt without the 'e' - grew up in Bath and began his career there. He was a competent water-colourist but established himself as an architect in Wales after 1861, adding an 'e' to his surname around the same time.

Lansdowne's early work was largely designing schools, chapels and churches, located almost exclusively in Monmouthshire. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 led to the construction of thousands of new schools in England and Wales by 1880. This enabled architects like Lansdowne to flourish.

In 1882, Lansdowne won first prize in a design competition for a new Town Hall for Newport (for which there had been 38 entries from across the country). He was asked to work with the runner-up, Thomas Lockwood from Chester, and they were appointed jointly to develop the design further and manage the project. Newport Town Hall was completed in 1885. This seems to have marked the beginning of a new stage in Lansdowne's career, with commissions coming from civic authorities, business and private clients. While continuing to design school buildings, he also went on to design the Westgate Hotel, Newport (1886), the Blaenavon Workmen's Institute (built 1894) and the Institute and Mission Hall in St. Nicholas which, together with the Tea House opposite, was funded by Florence Cory.

Lansdowne was runner-up in a design competition for John Cory's business headquarters in Butetown, Cardiff. Despite his failure to win that commission, he must have impressed Cory. He was appointed to design Cory's new mansion at Dyffryn in 1891-'92. It has been suggested that none of Lansdowne's buildings could be described as being of *special* architectural interest. Cory may have deliberately chosen

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76 Cory, John - Will. 31 March 1910. Copy held by The National Trust, Dyffryn

77 Williams, J, 2004, 'Cory, John (1828–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32577, accessed 22 Nov 2013]

to avoid using an architect of renown on account of his own non-conformist background and beliefs.[78]

Sadly, none of Lansdowne's drawings, specifications, buildings accounts or correspondence with John Cory have come to light, so the evolution of the designs for Dyffryn House and thinking behind them remain shrouded.

On 27 September 1893, Lansdowne placed an advert in the Western Mail, inviting tenders from building contractors for '*certain alterations and additions to The Duffryn, St Nicholas.*'[79] In 1894 it was reported that John Cory had stipulated that only 'total abstainers' would be employed on the erection of his new mansion.[80]

On 28 October 1895, the Western Mail reported that '*Mr and Mrs Cory and family have left Porthkerry and are now in residence at 'The Duffryn, St. Nichola*s'. In fact, only two of their children – Florence and Reginald - moved there with John and Anna. Their elder sons, Clifford and Herbert, were both married and already had homes of their own. They both remained involved with the family business.

3.6 Reginald Cory

Reginald Cory was the youngest child of John and Anna Cory, born in 1871 several years after their other three children. (See Appendix A, Figure 16.) Their next youngest child, Clifford, had been born twelve years previously. Reginald studied at Trinity College, Cambridge but does not appear to have graduated.[81] He was apparently inspired by the university's botanic gardens.[82] Although a Director of Cory Brothers & Co. until 1910, he did not take an active role in the family business and he resigned his directorship only a matter of months after his father's death. The remaining directors were his uncle, Richard Cory (chairman) and his elder brothers, Herbert and Clifford.[83] By 1910, Clifford was running the business and had been made a baronet.[84]

Reginald had wide ranging interests and refined artistic tastes. At Cambridge he had been an excellent oar; music played an important part in his life and he played both the piano and the organ; he collected Chinese porcelain especially of the Kien Lung period; he could draw well and had a good knowledge of birds and butterflies; he was an able botanist and his understanding of plants was profound. However, he was modest and quietly generous in his sharing of knowledge and support of horticultural endeavour.[85] In addition to residing at Dyffryn, Reginald had properties in London (No. 1 St James' Place) and Cambridge.

Reginald Cory gained a deserved place in the forefront of the horticultural world of eminent amateur gardeners in the early 20th century. Writing about him in 1926, Thomas Mawson described Cory as '*a member of the council of the Royal Horticultural Society,*

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78 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p12

79 Western Mail, Cardiff. 27 September 1893

80 Western Mail, Cardiff. 11 May 1894

81 Smith, J., Archivist Trinity College. Sept 2013. E-mail addressed to Jean Reader, Welsh Historic Gardens Trust

82 Cory Society, 2013. Corys of London & Cambridge. http://margaret.simbobx.net/page14.html

83 Cardiff Times, 5 November 1910 Resignation of Mr Reginald Cory

84 Torode, S.J., 2001. *The Gardens at Duffryn, St Nicholas Glamorgan: The Creation of Thomas H. Mawson and Reginald Cory.* Gerddi. Vol III (2000/2001) p55

85 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor.* The Garden, February 1993, p82

a liveryman of the Ancient Guild of gardeners, a well-known writer on horticulture, and an experimenter whose researches have greatly enriched our store of knowledge . . .'[86] Cory's friends and correspondents included Lawrence Johnston of Hidcote, E A Bowles of Myddleton House, Miss Ellen Willmott of Warley Place, J E Williams (Reginald's neighbour from Llandaff), Lionel de Rothschild, F C Stern, H J Elwes, Collingwood ('Cherry') Ingram and plant hunters such as George Forrest, E H Wilson and Frank Kingdon Ward.[87] He developed a particularly warm and jovial friendship with Humphrey Gilbert-Carter, who took up the post as first director of the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens in 1921. (See Appendix A, Figure 16.)

In 1901, Reginald had travelled to America and, while there, had visited the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University at Boston.[88] This had strengthened his love of trees and is likely to have fired his enthusiasm for creating extensive new gardens at Dyffryn. When Thomas Mawson was commissioned to design the new gardens for Dyffryn House, he and Reginald collaborated closely. In 1905, they visited Italy together.[89]

While Mawson developed the overall master plan for a 20 hectare (50 acres) garden, Reginald took an active part in designing many of the detailed garden rooms. (This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.) He was also the driving force in selecting the trees and shrubs. Many of these were almost certainly original introductions; the planting dates are within a couple of years of E. H. Wilson's expeditions and finds. When the new gardens were being laid out and planted at Dyffryn between 1907 and 1914, the *Gardeners' Chronicle* reported that '*the Pleasure Grounds include many species recently introduced from China and not at present in cultivation generally*'.

Although Cory and his gardeners maintained records, dismayingly, the majority were destroyed, probably after Cory's death. Nothing survives except a tree record made at the time of his death when the value of his plants were assessed for probate.[90]

Cory was acutely aware of the burgeoning interest in horticulture of the Edwardian period and keen to make a contribution to recording the many new plant species and varieties that were coming into circulation in the gardening world. He had the foresight to instigate recording of every detail of the Royal International Horticultural Exhibition of 1912, the first international horticultural exhibition to be held in Britain since 1866 and the forerunner of the Chelsea Flower Show. He personally financed *The Horticultural Record* and worked closely with R. Hooper-Pearson on its production. This not only described the exhibition but also its attendant banquets and lectures. All the horticultural articles were written by leading authorities on their subjects.[91]

Reginald Cory was an enthusiastic collector. In 1912 he was considered to have the largest collection of bonsai in private ownership. He also had a huge collection of pots and vases which had been brought from all over the world but particularly from the Orient.

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86 Mawson, T., 1926. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, 5th Edition

87 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor*. The Garden, February 1993, p82

88 Linnaen Society. Proceedings, 146, pp151-3

89 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes*, p45

90 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor*. The Garden, February 1993, p83

91 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor*. The Garden, February 1993, p82

Cory was particularly fascinated by new plant introductions, and unidentified or curious plants. He acquired and also personally collected a number of seeds of original introduction. He supported plant hunting expeditions including to South America, Asia and the Far East in his customary unpublicised manner. He supported Reginald Farrer (1880-1920), who undertook plant hunting expeditions in Japan, Sri Lanka and Europe and popularized 'alpines'.[92] He sponsored two of George Forrest's plant hunting expeditions to China in 1917-20 and 1921-23. As part of the 'Andes Syndicate' (a group of aristocratic gardening enthusiasts) he contributed to H.F. Comber's plant hunting expeditions to the Andes in 1925-26 and 1926-27. Cory also went on a number of expeditions of his own. In 1927, he travelled to South Africa with Lawrence Johnston, Collingwood Ingram and George Taylor on a trip that furnished the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh with a particularly valuable collection of succulents. He also travelled to the West Indies in 1931 and to the Atlas Mountains in 1932.[93]

Reginald Cory was exceptionally generous with both money and the sharing of information and plants. Unfortunately, only scraps of his correspondence survive, but a letter written in 1921 by Cory to Gilbert-Carter at the University Botanic Garden in Cambridge reads '*Just a line to enclose 8 packets of seeds from the last consignment of Forrests and a few acorns (Quercus agrifolia) from J C Williams. Hoping you'll have luck with the lot*.' Another letter written in May 1926 by his private secretary, J Jeffery, says '*Mr Cory desires me to send you the enclosed box of packets of seed which he has had forwarded to him from Edinburgh & he will be obliged if you would be so good as* [to] *let Mr Johnston of Hidcote Manor have half, as before*.' Reginald's letters refer to other seeds that he received and distributed and it seems likely that he received and shared plant material constantly with his gardening friends and, in particular, with Cambridge.[94]

Those who knew him spoke of Reginald Cory as a cheerful, good companion, compassionate, courteous and always in good spirits and a supporter of the temperance movement. He had a distaste for publicity which means that much of his philanthropy was not realised until after his death in 1934 and much remains unrecorded. Reginald's preference for privacy extended to directing, in his will, that any private correspondence of his found in his rooms at St James' Place or Dyffryn should be burnt and destroyed unread.[95]

During the First World War, Cory was not accepted for military service but supported many appeals and fitted out and manned his own fleet of ambulances. He was also active in connection with the Old Boys' Corps in London.[96] It may have been in recognition of this war-time work that he was made a Freeman of the City of London in November 1917.

Reginald Cory served the Royal Horticultural Society continuously and extensively throughout the first three decades of the 20th century. He unfailingly attended the shows, served on an array of committees and was elected as a Council Member from

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92 Torode, S J, 2001. *The Gardens at Duffryn, St Nicholas, Glamorgan: The creation of Thomas H. Mawson and Reginald Cory.* Gerddi, Vol 3. 2001, p71

93 Day, Juliet, Feb 2006. Reginald Cory, Benefactor of Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Curtis's Botanical Magazine, Vol 23, Issue 1, p123

94 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor.* The Garden, February 1993, pp83-84

95 Will of Reginald Radcliffe Cory. 6 Jan 1932. Copy held by The National Trust, Dyffryn

96 The Linnean Society of London. Proceedings 1933-1934, p153. *Reginald Cory (1871-1934)*, obituary

1922 – '24 and from 1929 – '30. In 1923, he gave The Cory Cup to the RHS, which became the Reginald Cory Memorial Cup after his death. It was – and is – awarded to the raiser of a hardy plant that is the result of an intentional cross, and of which one parent is a species.

In parallel with serving on the RHS Council, Cory also served on the Council of the Linnean Society from 1926 – '28, and on both the Audit and Library Committees of that Society. The fine presidential chair at the Linnean Society was given by him anonymously at the time. Throughout all this work, he never took the Chair but preferred to play a supporting role. The exception to this was his presidency of the Dahlia Society. This came as an accolade for the unprecedented work that Reginald and his head gardener, Arthur Cobb, had undertaken on dahlias at a time when their popularity as purely garden plants had declined. Nurserymen and head gardeners tended to concentrate on growing dahlias for exhibition only and the modern garden varieties had become increasingly disappointing. Reginald and Mr Cobb organised 'The Cardiff Trials', which were hosted at Dyffryn in 1913; a comprehensive trial of 'garden' varieties set up under the joint auspices of the National Dahlia Society and Royal Horticultural Society trial.[97] Contributions were invited from dahlia growers in Britain and some on the Continent. The response considerably exceeded expectations with between 7000 and 8000 plants being sent to Dyffryn, representing nearly 1000 varieties of dahlia. Arthur Cobb and his team potted up and then methodically potted on all the plants, before finally planting them out, taking care to ensure that the conditions were as consistent as possible. Given this experience, and influenced by Reginald Cory's particular fondness for dahlias, it is not surprising that Arthur Cobb became an authority on the subject of growing dahlias. He also appears to have had a good eye for planting design and colour arrangement, so that the trial plantings were arranged particularly attractively, producing quite a different effect from that of most plant trials.[98] The plants were judged by the Dahlia Society and the RHS. A second trial was undertaken the following year, reaching its peak in August of 1914 and Cory presented a cup for 'The Best Garden Dahlia'.

The trials stimulated interest among the gardening public and brought the dahlia back into fashion as a garden plant.[99] Sadly, of the 1000 cultivars trialled, only two varieties, '*Glow*' and '*Tommy Keith'* have survived.[100] In 1921, a few years after the trials, a dahlia raised by Cheal and named 'Reginald Cory' won the RHS Award of Merit.[101] Another variety raised in the 1920s by the Cardiff nurseryman, William Treseder, and named 'Bishop of Llandaff' is now widely available again. Reginald Cory was awarded a Gold Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society for his work with dahlias.[102]

Cory's name is most closely associated with the Cambridge University Botanic Garden. In the early 1920s he made them a substantial financial gift and paid for the publication of a Guide. Between 1919 and 1934, he continued regularly to make up shortfalls in the

97 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 12 Dec 1914. '*Florists' Dahlias and the Duffryn Trials*, p380

98 *Ibid.*

99 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor*. The Garden, February 1993, p84

100 Thurlow, M., 2013 *RHS Chelsea Centenary – Reginald Cory*. www.shootgardening.co.uk

101 Royal Horticultural Society, 1922. RHS Journal, Vol XLVII, Part 1

102 Nicholas Pearson Associates, 1996. Dyffryn. *Historic Landscape Survey and Landscape Proposals*, p11

Garden's running costs.[103] Between 1924 and '26, he funded the building of a new house for the Director within the Botanic Garden, which became known as Cory Lodge. Reginald was a very 'hands-on' donor; Gilbert-Carter and he were in almost constant correspondence as they planned its position and design. Gilbert-Carter wrote that Cory 'was a man who liked to see things done well'.

Reginald met his wife Rosa (née Kester), a botanical assistant at the Botanic Garden, in Cambridge and they were married in 1930. In due course, they moved to a new home at Arne just outside Wareham in Dorset and started to make a new garden there. Sadly, Reginald died suddenly in the midst of all his activities, on 12 May 1934. He was buried in the churchyard of the nearby village of Church Knowle. At the time of his death, Reginald did not own Dyffryn. According to the terms of his father's will, it had been left to him in trust, following the death of his elder sister Florence. However, he owned effects at Dyffryn and other property in London, Cambridge and elsewhere. Following his death, the Cambridge University Botanic Garden was the chief beneficiary of his will. His bequest enabled the development of the eastern part of the botanic garden in the 1950s, in particular the Limestone Terraces.[104]

Reginald had adored books and collected an extensive library which overflowed the library in Dyffryn House and also his rooms in London. His collection was particularly rich in rare botanical works, many with sumptuous coloured plates; it also included the original plates for Ellen Willmott's '*The Genus Rosa',* a highly regarded set of botanical illustrations. Following his death, these were bequeathed to the RHS's Lindley Library; it is the largest single bequest of books ever given to the Lindley Library.[105] As a result many rare books, some on vellum, found their way back into the library. These included five albums from the Reeves Collection, a set of early 19th century 'lost' albums containing Chinese botanical watercolours, originating from Canton and Macau. They had been sold by the Society during hard times in 1859. A further three albums were purchased in 1953, using money from Cory's bequest.[106]

Much of Reginald's stunning collection of porcelain was bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge [107] but he also bequeathed 81 objects to the British Museum. These were mostly Chinese porcelains including some top quality Kangxi 'famille verte' pieces. There were also some Canton enamels and hard stone objects, and 35 snuff-bottles.[108]

Reginald's property in Cambridge – houses and land – was bequeathed to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which suggests that the houses may have been old and of some historic merit.[109]

In an article written for The Times in 1935, Seward described Reginald Cory as 'a man of attractive personality, with wide and often unusual interests, who with singular modesty

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103 Cory Society, 2013. Corys of London & Cambridge. http://margaret.simbobx.net/page14.html

104 Lacey, P., 13 Jan 2013. *Beginnings: first steps in the Garden*. http://connectingwithcollections.wordpress.com/tag/cambridge-university-botanic-garden/

105 Reader, J., 10 March 2014. Personal communication

106 British Museum website. *Reginald Radcliffe Cory (Biographical details)*

107 Cory Society, 2013. Corys of London & Cambridge. http://margaret.simbobx.net/page14.html

108 British Museum website. *Reginald Radcliffe Cory (Biographical details)*

109 Will of Reginald Radcliffe Cory. 6 Jan 1932. Copy held by The National Trust, Dyffryn

and self-effacement, contributed not only to the advancement of the science [horticulture] which he loved and practised but also to many other good causes.'[110]

3.7 **Thomas Mawson** (1861-1933)

Thomas Hayton Mawson was born in 1861 in Nether Wyersdale in Lancashire, the second son of four children of John William Mawson, cotton warper and his wife Jane Hayton. Thomas was educated at the local church school and at the age of twelve joined a builders' business in Lancaster. In the 1870s, after John Mawson's death, the family moved to London where Thomas gained experience of the nursery trade and started experimenting with his ideas of design. During the 1880s he returned to the north-west of England and set up a business with his two brothers, Mawson Brothers, establishing a nursery and contracting firm in Windermere. From designing local private gardens, the firm progressed to undertaking contracts in all parts of the country not only for private gardens but also for the design of public parks and town planning schemes.[111]

In 1900, Thomas left Mawson Brothers to begin a separate career in landscape design. He achieved great success and was soon the most sought-after garden and landscape designer of the day. He could name crowned heads of Europe as his clients and friends, as well as self-made industrialists. His clients included Queen Alexandra, the maharaja of Baroda, Andrew Carnegie and the first Viscount Leverhulme.[112]

He completed over two hundred garden commissions in England, Scotland and Wales. Strongly influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, his gardens typically had a strong formal structure near to the house and informal layout beyond, leading towards the surrounding countryside. He was also content to design quite modest gardens for the less well-off. His public works included Haslam Park in Preston, Hanley Park in Stoke-on-Trent and Broomfield Park at Southgate in north London.[113]

In 1903, Mawson found himself unexpectedly at the junction between park making and town planning. He and Patrick Geddes were both invited by the Carnegie Trust to prepare competition designs for a park at Pittencrief, Dunfermline. In his design, Mawson explored the potential for interaction between the new park and the development of the city of Dunfermline. Although the competition foundered, with neither entrant winning the commission, there were unexpected results for Mawson when his published report on Pittencrief led to a new adventure designing parks and settlements across Canada.[114]

Mawson published two main works: *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* (1900) which ran to five editions and *Civic Art* (1911) in which he discussed the principles of town planning. From 1910, he lectured regularly at Liverpool University's School of Civic

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110 Day, Juliet, Feb 2006. Reginald Cory, Benefactor of Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Curtis's Botanical Magazine, Vol 23, Issue 1, pp130-131

111 Jordan, H., 2009. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. *Mawson, Thomas Hayton (1861 – 1933)*

112 Jordan, H., 2009. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. *Mawson, Thomas Hayton (1861 – 1933)*

113 Jordan, H., 2009. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. *Mawson, Thomas Hayton (1861 – 1933)*

114 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, pp192-195

Design. Mawson was elected an honorary member of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1903 and became a member of the Art-Workers' Guild in 1905. Over the years he continued to be awarded a number of honorary positions. In 1921 he became a fellow of the Linnean Society. In 1923 he was elected president of the Town Planning Institute and in 1929 he became the first president of the Institute of Landscape Architects. From 1923 he suffered from Parkinson's disease which ultimately caused his death at his home in Lancashire in November 1933.[115]

3.8 **Florence Cory** (1857 - 1936)

Florence Cory remains a rather enigmatic figure about whom relatively little is known. On 2 June 1890, there had been a short news item in the Western Mail stating that a marriage had been arranged between Florence and a certain Sir George Walker, Bart, of Castleton. However, this was promptly denied and a subsequent item appeared in the following day's paper giving an 'authoritative denial'.[116] In the way of unmarried Victorian daughters, she continued to live at home and in 1893, at the age of 35, she moved with her parents and Reginald to Dyffryn.

Florence seems to have been involved in local life and, certainly in her younger days, the pattern emerging from newspaper articles suggests that she accompanied her parents to events and helped her mother at many charitable bazaars. As she grew older, she developed her own charitable activities and interests. She seems to have been particularly involved in the Welsh Industries Association (WIA) which was established in March 1898. It was an organisation largely concerned with reviving textile production in Wales, with a view to relieving rural poverty. Despite its title, the WIA Executive Committee was based in London, and meetings were held at the London homes of the upper-class ladies who were committee members. Local committees, made up of local gentry and upper class women, were formed for each Welsh county and these organised fairs and bazaars to raise funds throughout the various counties.[117] Several newspaper articles in 1898 and '99 mention Florence attending meetings, in London and at the 'Cardiff depot'.

Possibly taking inspiration from the activities of her father and her brother, Florence funded some small building projects such as the construction of a Tea House, which stood opposite the Mission Hall in St Nicholas village. In 1910, after John Cory died, Florence was invited to succeed her father as president of the Cardiff and District Band of Hope Union.[118] She also took a great interest in the Christian Association for Women and Girls, and also the Young Men's Christian Association. She left bequests to local branches of both in her will.

Miss Cory is mentioned several times in John Ward's excavation report of Tinkinswood, published in 1915 in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. Without her generous funding, the

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115 Jordan, H., 2009. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. *Mawson, Thomas Hayton (1861 – 1933)*

116 Western Mail, 2 and 3 June 1890. *Forthcoming Local Fashionable Marriage*

117 Talbot, K., 2011. Llanelly Pottery – A Welsh Metonum. Interpreting Ceramics, Issue 13. http://www.interpretingceramics.com/issue013/articles/01b.htm#b032

118 Cardiff Times, 12 March 1910. *Band of Hope Work*

excavation of the Tinkinswood long cairn might never have taken place. The Prince of Wales Hospital for Limbless Sailors and Soldiers in Cardiff was opened 1918 and, to mark the occasion, a stone folly was built in the front garden. This was donated by Florence Cory; the extraordinary folly is none other than a miniature of the Tinkinswood long cairn.[119]

The death of both their parents within only a few months of each other, must have made a considerable difference to both Reginald's and Florence's lives. They found themselves, in effect, master and mistress of a substantial mansion, gardens and estate. It is clear that they undertook some further re-modelling of the house to suit their own tastes and wishes. But it is probable that Florence was involved in the gardens. Indeed, the article published in The Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly on 7 October 1911 states that '*Both Miss Cory and her brother are enthusiastic amateur gardeners, and the development of the grounds has been carried out under their personal supervision, and many of the features which make it most unique in the county of Glamorgan, have been designed by Mr Reginald Cory himself*'. It is possible that this article may be attributing the creation of the gardens to Florence as well as Reginald out of courtesy. However, it seems unlikely that Reginald who, by all accounts, was a courteous and considerate man would not have consulted his sister on her wishes for the gardens too. It seems highly probable that she would have taken an active interest and played some part in the creation of the gardens. The same article also describes the organ in the Great Hall as being '*much used, as both Miss Cory and her brother are very musical*'. It sounds as though Florence and Reginald had similar tastes and interests, which would explain their presumably peaceful co-habitation and sharing of 'the Dyffryn'.

John Cory's will shows that Dyffryn had been left to Florence in trust and would have then passed to Reginald following Florence's death. In effect, John had ensured that Florence and Reginald would both own the property, but in turn and without risk of ever needing to divide the property. In the event, they both continued to live at Dyffryn for twenty years following their father's death and so presumably Reginald contributed financially to the creation and upkeep of the gardens and possibly to the running costs of the house. Following his marriage to Rosa Kester in 1930, Reginald moved away from Dyffryn. Florence appears to have continued living at Dyffryn after Reginald's departure, until her own death in 1936. On Reginald's unexpectedly early death, she was obliged to make a new will. She now decided to leave the Dyffryn estate to her middle brother, Clifford.[120]

3.9 **Arthur Cobb** (Head Gardener at Dyffryn, c.1908 - 1919)

Arthur John Cobb was born in 1874 in Sapperton, Gloucestershire.[121] He began his gardening career working for Lord Bathurst at Cirencester House, where extensive landscape gardens had been created in the 18th century. Much of the village and land of Sapperton lay within the Bathurst estate, so it seems likely that Arthur's parents were tenants.

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119 Tinkinswood Community Archaeology website, 12 Jan 2014 *A city centre mini-megalith*.

120 Cory, Florence Margaret - Will. 29 May 1934.

121 1901 and 1911 census.

By the age of 27, the 1901 census records Cobb living at the Gardeners Bothy, Poulton Priory, Fairford. Poulton Priory appears to have been a substantial property owned by Major James Joicey, a farmer, landowner[122] and horse-breeder. Arthur Cobb is recorded as the head of the household, living in the Gardeners' Bothy with another gardener, which suggests that Cobb was the head gardener.

In 1907, Cobb left Poulton Priory to become general foreman at the gardens of Hartpury House (now part of Hartpury College), owned by William Canning.[123]. The house had been enlarged and remodelled by Dawber in 1896. The formal gardens were then laid out by Alfred Parsons in the last years of the 19th century, and re-worked by Mawson in 1907.[124]

By 1911 Cobb, now married, had moved again with his wife Marie (née Lowe) to Dyffryn. The couple had married in 1908 and their marriage may have triggered the move. It seems likely that Cobb had heard of an opportunity at Dyffryn through his connection with Mawson, who appears to have been working on the designs for both properties simultaneously. The 1911 census records Arthur and Marie as the only residents of their home at The Garden, Dyffryn St Nicholas.

During his time at Dyffryn, like many other good head gardeners, Arthur Cobb exhibited flowers and produce grown at Dyffryn. He appears to have gone quite far afield to do so. In1911, the Manchester Courier recorded that *' .....the first prize in the third class of onions to Mr Arthur Cobb of Duffryn*' in the Manchester Show.[125] By 1913, presumably in the wake of the dahlia trials, Cobb wrote a paper on 'Garden Dahlias' which he presented at a conference of the National Dahlia Society, held in London in September of that year.[126]

By 1919 Arthur Cobb had gained a reputation as a dahlia specialist, was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, and once again, was, looking to move on. He was recommended by the Parks Committee of Bournemouth Town Council to fill the vacancy of head gardener for the borough's gardens.[127]

During the 1920s (if not sooner), Cobb had starting writing regularly about gardening and horticulture. In 1925, he was writing a gardening column in the *Gloucester Chronicle* and also the *Gloucester Citizen*. From this, he moved on to editing and publishing gardening books. By the 1930s (if not before) he had become senior lecturer in horticulture at Reading University. Evidently he continued to grow and show dahlias. He was one of the First Prize winners at the Dahlia Society's show held at Vivary Park in Taunton in August 1932. In 1936 he was the editor of '*Modern Garden Craft: a Guide to the Best Horticultural Practice Private and Commercial*' and '*The Modern Flower Garden 4: Dahlia*' in which he also wrote chapters on cultivation and propagation.

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122 Gloucester Journal, 11 May 1901

123 Cheltenham Chronicle, 19 July 1919

124 Hartpury parish website. *Places of Interest: Hartpury House*, www.hartpuryparish.org.uk/places.htm

125 Manchester Courier, 14 September 1911

126 Gardeners' Chronicle, 8 February 1913

127 Cheltenham Chronicle, 19 July 1919

In 1940, Cobb moved from Reading University to become the Head of the Horticultural Department at Seal-Hayne Agricultural College at Newton Abbot in Devon.[128]

3.10 John Thomas Smith (Head Gardener at Dyffryn, 1919/1920 - 1938)

J T Smith was a member of the Kew Guild - the association of the members of staff, past and present, and volunteers at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. So he either trained at Kew or was on the staff and left in April 1911. In 1916, he was the head gardener at Caldecote Towers, a girls' school at Bushey in Hertfordshire. (Interestingly, Fred Streeter - who became a BBC broadcaster on gardening in the 1950s - worked at Caldecote Towers before the First World War and so may have known Smith.) By 1920, J T Smith was the head gardener at Dyffryn and it would seem that he was appointed after Arthur Cobb had left. He remained at Dyffryn until the property was sold in 1938. He appears to have remained in Wales.[129]

3.11 Edith Adie (1865 - 1947)

Details about the life of Edith Helena Adie are limited. Born in Balham, London in 1865, she remained unmarried and seems to have lived much of her life with her parents until they died. She trained as an artist in London, at the Kensington School of Art (where Gertrude Jekyll had also previously trained) and the Slade. In the 1880s, although it was still relatively unusual for women to have a formal education, art was one of the more acceptable areas of study. She exhibited her work quite regularly at the Royal Academy (1893, 1909 and 1912), The Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts, Dublin (1895, 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1904), The Fine Art Society (1907 and 1910), The Society of Women Artists (1914) and the Greatorex Galleries, New Bond St., London (1920). She worked abroad periodically near Fiesole in Italy between 1901 – 1910, and again from 1921 – 1922. There is also a record of her exhibiting 'Water Colour Drawings of a Fair Australia'. However, there is no record of her paintings of Dyffryn having ever been exhibited publicly.

In October 1920, at the age of 55, Edith was elected Associate of the British Watercolour Society and, by this date, she was a well-known painter of gardens and landscapes. In the summer of 1923, she was introduced to Reginald Cory at Dyffryn House and Reginald commissioned her to undertake the series of eighteen paintings of his gardens. It has been suggested that the introduction may have been brought about by Reginald's friend, E.A. Bowles, the influential plantsman and writer who was, himself, an illustrator. Bowles inherited Edith's paintings of Dyffryn and, on his own death in 1954, he bequeathed them to the Lindley Library of the RHS. However, Edith Adie was also commissioned to paint the Master's Garden at St John's College, Cambridge (date uncertain). So her work at Dyffryn – or alternatively her work at Cambridge – may have come about through Reginald Cory's close links with, and friendships in Cambridge.[130]

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128 Mockbeggar Allotments, Reading. Minutes of the Small Holdings and Allotments Committee, 19 Feb 1940. Berkshire Record Office ref. R/AC1/3/74

129 Kew Guild Journal, 1944. Geographically Classified List of Members.

130 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2006. *Dyffryn Gardens and Arboretum: Restoration and the Centenary*, 2006. Cardiff Central Library LB77: 712.5 DYF

4. Dyffryn House: brief history

4.1 17th century house

The RCAHMW states that the Buttons moved their family seat from Worleton to Dyffryn in the mid-17th century. It appears that the part of the family continued to use and live in the old manor house, while part of the family – maybe the younger generation – moved to the new house. Precisely when the new house was built is not known, but it is possible to narrow the date. Robert Button, recorded as being of Worleton, was Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1639. In 1648, members of the Button family fought on behalf of the Royalist cause and lost. As a consequence, the family suffered serious financial penalties that led to the mortgaging and loss of a significant portion of their properties. It seems highly improbable that a new house at Dyffryn was built during those cash-strapped years following 1648. The evidence suggests that the new house may have been built already, during the early 1640s. The first known record of a house at Dyffryn is the 'Rowle of the Commissioners subscription' taken on 8 November 1661, which records that Thomas Button Esquire of St Nicholas (taxed on 10 hearths) contributed £10; and his son Martin Button Esquire (taxed on 12 hearths) contributed £5. The records of ten and twelve hearths indicate that both of these houses were substantial. The Hearth Tax return of 1670 records that the house at Dyffryn had 12 hearths so it seems that Martin Button (the son) was living in the new house at Dyffryn. His father, Thomas had died in 1662, leading to the suggestion that the old manor house of Worleton was abandoned by 1670.

Martin Button died in 1692 and the estate passed to his first son who died without a lawful heir but left a legacy to a natural daughter. Martin's second son, Charles, then inherited the property but died in 1715 leaving it to his son, Martin, who was Sheriff in 1727. By this date he was recorded as being of 'Dyffryn', although the older spelling - Duffryn – remained in use until well into the 19th century. Martin died without issue in c.1730 and his heir-at-law was Robert Jones of Fonmon, Glamorgan, whose grandfather, Oliver Jones, had married Mary, daughter of the older Martin Button (d. 1692).[1]

The 17th century house built by the Button family at Dyffryn was presumably the house that was bought by Thomas Pryce in 1749. Thomas Kitchen's map of Glamorgan of 1759 shows both Worleton and 'Duffrin' as place names, and also shows a house symbol beside 'Duffrin', indicating that the house was of some size and note.

There no firm evidence that Thomas Pryce ever rebuilt the house. Notes in the property file for Dyffryn held by the RCAHMW suggest that the present arrangement of the mansion – from the Billiards Room and the Blue Drawing Room in the east to the Staircase Hall and the Morning Room in the west – is almost symmetrical, and could represent a double pile block with an entrance hall to the north and five principal reception rooms and staircase compartment arranged around the hall.[2] The implication is that this would have been a typical arrangement for a mid-18th century house. However, it could as easily be ascribed to a house of the early 19th century, for which there is more supporting documentary evidence.

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1 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p7

2 RCAHMW, National Monuments Record for Wales. *Dyffryn, St. Nicholas, A Short History*, file notes.

An Ordnance Survey drawing of 1811 shows the house at Dyffryn as an L-shaped building located in more-or-less the same position as the mansion shown on the St Nicholas tithe map of 1841. (See Appendix A, Figures 6 and 8.) When the two maps are superimposed, the orientation of the house appears to have been different in 1811 from that of 1841. However, the 1811 map is of a very small scale and so the house orientation may simply be a cartographic inaccuracy. The 1811 map shows the house as being approached by three drives, from north, east and south and being completely circumnavigated by a circulatory drive around it. Interestingly, it also shows the main stream through the valley following an uncomplicated north-south route, and passing quite close to the house on its west side.

4.2 Early 19th century house

During his residence of Dyffryn between 1802 and 1837, William Booth Grey appears to have substantially altered or rebuilt the house at Dyffryn St Nicholas. However, there is conflicting evidence about exactly when the majority of this building work took place.

John Burke, writing about the house at Dyffryn nearly 50 years later in 1852, states that '*this mansion was built many years ago and was at one time the residence of Admiral Button ... and in 1802 it was brought in marriage by Miss Pryce, the heiress of the estate, to the Hon. W. Booth Grey, brother of the Earl of Stamford, who added largely to it in the course of the following year*'.[3] Burke clearly believes that Frances and William Booth Grey extended the earlier house in 1803.

However, comparison of the 1811 Ordnance Survey map and the St Nicholas tithe map of 1841 suggests that the house at Dyffryn was altered considerably, possibly completely re-built, in the years between those dates. The curtilage to the house and the grounds beyond were also altered. The scale of the Ordnance Survey Two Inch map of 1811 is small, so details of the house and its curtilage are limited. The 1811 map shows the house as an L-shaped building. This L-shaped house also appears on Greenwood's Map of Glamorgan, Brecon and Radnor of 1831 (surveyed 1826-27). (See Appendix A, Figure 6.)

The St Nicholas tithe map of 1841 shows the house in the same position as the mansion of today but the footprint is no longer L-shaped; it now comprises a main linear block, orientated approximately east-west, with two short wings extending northward, and what appear to be service ranges and a number of separate outbuildings arranged at the west end of the house. (See Appendix A, Figure 8.)

When comparing these three maps, it is important to remember that the maps of 1811 and 1831 were both drawn to a much smaller scale and so, when enlarged to a scale comparable to that of the 1841 tithe map, their detail cannot be regarded as of comparable accuracy. However, it is fair to say that the old and new houses appear to have been built on the same site and it is possible that some of the basements of the old house pre-dating 1811 were retained, with a new structure built above.

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3 Burke, John Bernard. *A Visitation of the Seats and Arms of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain*, 1852, vol. I, p. 62.

There is one other possible scenario for the sequence of re-building. The 17th century house may have been pulled down and rebuilt by William Booth Grey in 1803, soon after he and Frances Pryce were married. When John Bruce Pryce inherited the property in 1837 he too could have made changes in the early years of his ownership, and before 1841, possibly demolishing the north wing visible on the 1811 and 1831 maps, and then extending the house westward.

An analysis of building plans for Dyffryn House prepared Rodney Melville & Partners [4] shows that the cellars and barrel store that run beneath the Great Hall and Billiards Room in the north-east part of the house are slightly out of alignment with the house above, and extend beyond the house walls to the east and north of the Billiards Room. Rodney Melville & Partners consider the cellars to be of pre-1894 construction. (See Appendix D, House gazetteer rooms B01 – B09.) However, it is just possible that the basements beneath the Great Hall and Billiards Room date could have belonged to the L-shaped house that was in existence in 1811 and 1826/27. The layout of the basements beneath today's house run predominantly east-west but the easternmost basement rooms beneath the Billiards Room appear to be arranged at right-angles to the rest, possibly reflecting that early L-shaped house.

Photographs of this earlier 19th century house show a rather plain, classically designed building. (See Appendix F, page 2). Photographs of a Bruce-Pryce family wedding group, taken in 1884, show the wedding party standing and sitting in front of a portico entrance, probably on the north side of the house. (See Appendix A, Figure 12a). Apparently, a painting showing one end of the house hangs at the nearby house of Coedarhydglan.[5] An analysis of the house and its development is presented in Appendix F.

The stable yard, staff cottage and north-west courtyards of this early 19th century house, which are shown on the 1878 and 1898 Ordnance Survey plans, partially survive in the later arrangements designed for John Cory by E.A. Lansdowne, although parts may have been rebuilt.

Alan Cameron Bruce-Pryce inherited Dyffryn on the death of his grandfather, John Bruce Pryce in 1872. Over the last few years of his life, John Bruce Pryce had spent more time living away in Bath than he spent at Dyffryn. So the house had probably received little attention for some years and was now in poor condition. A letter dated 9 January 1873, written from Dyffryn by Alan Cameron Bruce-Pryce and addressed to his uncle (presumably, but not necessarily, Henry Austin Bruce-Pryce), throws light on the condition of the house:

> *"Since you were here the whole of the stucco on the South front has been removed – to be replaced by Portland Cement – and has disclosed dilapidations far more extensive than I either did, or could have imagined. The crack on the outside in a line with the farthest columns of the drawing room, extends perpendicularly from within two or three feet of the ground to the roof. The whole of that end of the drawing room appears to have grown way more or up(?), and it is hardly to be wondered at looking at the stream of water which has been allowed to flow into the cellars. We have dug down to it & hope to be*

4 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010 *Dyffryn, Glamorgan, Wales: Gazetteer*

5 Anecdotal evidence, Harry Kruger (Head Gardener 1963-1975)

able to divert it and prevent further damage, but the works will be very expensive. ……..” [6]

Although Alan C. Bruce-Pryce was evidently taking to steps to remedy the problems that he had found in the mansion, it is possible that structural problems could have persisted or recurred. So when John Cory bought the Dyffryn estate and mansion twenty years later, it is likely that he did so in the expectation that major works would be needed on the house.

4.3 Dyffryn House from 1893 - 1937

The Dyffryn estate was bought by John Cory in 1891 and two years later, in 1893, Cory commissioned the Newport architect, E. A. Lansdowne, to design his new mansion. In developing his design for the new house, Lansdowne appears to have retained the 18th century stable block, coach house, courtyards and walled gardens to the west of the house. The stable yard cottage may have been rebuilt. As described above, the house was remodelled around the earlier 19th century house and incorporated at least some of its basements and elements of the superstructure up to first floor level.

No design drawings, specifications or building accounts from Lansdowne's office have come to light. In fact, it appears that the building work carried out to Dyffryn House was undertaken in a number of stages between 1894 and 1911 and then, again, just before or just after the First World War. John Cory was the client during the 1890s and early years of the 1900s. Following his death, Florence inherited the property but in trust (it would pass to Reginald next). However, as she and Reginald continued to live at Dyffryn together for the next 20 years, it seems likely that the later alterations made to the property were decided by them jointly.

A notice inviting tenders from building contractors published in The Western Mail on 27 September 1893 invited tenders for 'CERTAIN ALTERATIONS and Additions to THE DUFFRYN, ST. NICHOLAS, Near Cardiff for John Cory Esq., J.P., D.L.' The wording of this notice indicates that the old house was altered but by no means completely replaced. The successful tenderer at this stage was Mr George Rutter, who happened to be President of the Barry District Master Builders' Association. The tender sum was approximately £14,000. Cory probably knew Rutter through his promotion of the Barry Docks and Railway. Rutter was a major contractor on the construction of Barry's infrastructure.[7]

In January 1894, a few months after the construction work had started, a dispute arose because Rutter would not give an allowance to his employees' for 'walking time' spent daily making the 10 mile round trip to Dyffryn and back. The men contended that such an allowance was an accepted custom in the trade and several men 'raised a protest and refused to work on such conditions.'[8] Rutter denied knowledge of this custom and said that it would be unreasonable to expect him to pay for walking for a workforce of

6 Glamorgan Archives, ref. DBR/E/450/15/1. Bruce Pryce family archive. Letter from Alan Cameron Bruce (n.d.)

7 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p12

8 *Western Mail*, 17 Jan 1894

80-100 men employed on a job lasting nine or ten months. It would leave him out of pocket by £800-900 over the entire job.[9] It is not clear how the dispute was resolved.

The alterations and extensions to the house were completed during the same year. Completion and 'opening' of the new parts of the house may have been incremental. On 4 May 1894, the South Wales Star reported that '*the new hall at Dyffryn House, St. Lythan's, has just been completed and opened*' and that a social meeting presided over by the local rector, involving a programme of songs, readings and recitations, had been held there a few days previously. The position of the Great Hall and its imposing entrance reflected the position of an earlier north facing projection, visible on the Ordnance Survey map of 1878 and probably visible in photographs of 1884. (See Appendix A, Figure 12a.)

On 24 August 1894, the Western Mail reported that John Cory would be leaving his home at Porthkerry to move to his new residence, 'the Duffryn', towards the close of the year and that his son Clifford would take Porthkerry. An analysis of the development of the house is presented in Appendix F. It appears that the house was not entirely rebuilt but instead was substantially remodelled at ground floor level. Elements of the early 19th century house survive within the core of the ground floor structure. From the first floor level upwards, the house was probably more completely rebuilt. Comparison of the house footprints shown on the 1878 and 1898 Ordnance Survey plans shows a new projection on the south front, which corresponds to the first floor balcony. The principle bedrooms were (and probably always had been) arranged along the south side of the house. In the Cory's time the main family bedrooms were in the centre and to the east and the principle guest bedrooms were to the west. Other guest bedrooms were along the north side of the house.[10]

By 1898, a sizeable service range had also been built at the north-west of the house, linking across the space between the house and the stable courtyard, resulting in the creation a large courtyard open to the south.

The work carried out during the early 20th century, prior to 1911, seems have been the construction of the Dining Room, White Library and Secretary's room, added as an extension to the north side of the house. Evidence for this is the blocked window at the foot of the main staircase, facing north into the new Dining Room.[11] When described in an article published in the South Wales Weekly News in 1911, the White Library was clearly identified with Reginald and was described as being "*filled mostly with valuable and modern books collected by Mr. Reginald Cory, horticulture and architecture being conspicuously represented*".[12] The basements beneath the Dining Room, White Library and Secretary's room, which include the west access stairs, a boiler room/coal store and long service corridor are thought to have been built at the same time Dining Room and White Library. It would appear that a 'garden room' was also created at the south-east corner of the house around the same time, jutting into the new courtyard.[13]

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9 *Western Mail*, 17 Jan 1895

10 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, pp5-6

11 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p13

12 Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly News, 14 Oct 1911. Welsh Country Homes, XCVI – *Dyffryn*.

13 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, p13

The next phase of alteration took place after the death of John Cory in 1910. The evidence for this is principally derived from a close analysis and comparison of the 1911 descriptions presented in the South Wales Weekly News and those of the sales particulars for the estate, the house [14] and its contents [15] prepared in 1937. The analysis reveals that the White Library was reduced in length by some 7 - 8 feet to accommodate the present axial corridor. Previously, it is thought that the axial corridor was aligned slightly to the south and ran through what is now the Red Library and Morning Room. Rodney Melville and Partners suggest that alteration of the axial corridor and consequent enlargement of the Red Library and Morning Room and reduction of the White Library was made after John Cory's death in 1910. The former access to the basement was from a point either just inside the Red Library or in the south-west corner of the Staircase Hall. This was also blocked when the new axial corridor was made and a new access stair to the basement was created under the main staircase.[16] In addition, the Moorish Courtyard was built, extending out northwards from the new link service ranges that had built about 10 years previously.

After that, Reginald Cory moved into the Red Library and Florence moved her boudoir from the first floor (specifically mentioned in the 1911 article) to the present boudoir next to the Red Library. Around this date, the ceiling of Florence's new boudoir was also lowered and a new Jacobean/Arts & Crafts-style ceiling was installed. It is probable that the room was given its panelling at the same time and that the large mullion and transom windows, with Crittall-style windows, were inserted into the south front. The Blue Drawing Room, The Morning Room, the Boudoir and the Breakfast Room all have similar windows. The window of the Boudoir is shown in a watercolour of the south front of the house painted by Edith Helena Adie, dated 11 July 1923.[17] The windows in the Morning Room, the Boudoir and the Blue Drawing Room all had window seats.

These alterations were almost certainly undertaken by Florence and Reginald to impose their own taste on the house, increase the number of private and domestic rooms and improve the inter-connectivity of the house with their garden. The southern rooms were clearly designed to take maximum advantage of the views out over the gardens and terraces.

4.3 The house interiors in 1911

The house, its interiors and, to a degree, how it was lived in by Reginald and Florence Cory is described in an article published in the South Wales Weekly News on 7 October 1911 as part of a series on 'Welsh Country Homes'. This describes the Great Hall as a stately room, with its upper walls partly hung with 17th century tapestries depicting the history of Titus and Vespasian. It was furnished with elegant settees arranged around the massive fireplace and had an electric-powered 17-stop organ standing opposite the fireplace. This was played by both Florence and Reginald Cory. Other beautiful pieces of furniture were mentioned including an Empire table in mahogany and brass, an

14 John D Wood and Stephenson & Alexander, 9 Dec 1937. *The Dyffryn Estate, St Nicholas* (sales particulars for the estate). Glamorgan Archives, ref. DSA/1/91.

15 Hampton & Sons, July 1937. *Dyffryn House, St Nicholas, Near Cardiff, South Wales* (sales particulars for the furniture, porcelain and pottery, pictures, etc.)

16 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, pp13-14

17 Originals are kept in Lindley Library, Royal Horticultural Society.

exquisite Malachite table and a set of chairs that had been the personal property of the First Napolean.

A second article, published on the 14 October 1911 went on to describe the other reception rooms on the ground floor of the house. The name of each room was given; those names are still in use today. The Dining Room and White Library – both built during John Cory's lifetime – were also decorated in slightly old-fashioned styles. The lavish oak panelling of the dining room and its massive oak chimneypiece with carved figures are described. Again, a painting of 'The Holy Family' by noted 16th century Italian artist, Giulio Romano – a student of Raphael – is remarked upon. The White Library – so-named because of the colour of the bookcase fittings which lined the entire room – is described as being filled mostly with valuable old and modern books collected by Reginald Cory, particularly on the subjects of horticulture and architecture. The article goes on to describe the oak ceiling and high wainscoting of the billiard room and the decorations of the Blue and Red Drawing Rooms, the Morning Room and the Red Library.

4.3 Dyffryn House, 1939 - present

The Moorish Courtyard appears to have been a rather short-lived feature of the Dyffryn service ranges. The Ordnance Survey map of 1940 shows that it had already gone and been replaced by a more modest service courtyard to the immediate north of the corridor range that links the main house to the stable yard buildings. The plans that accompanied the sales particulars of 1937 still showed the Moorish Court (and had not been annotated to indicate otherwise), but in an aerial photograph of 1938 the courtyard appears to have gone.

In 1948 - now owned by Sir Cennydd Traherne and leased to Glamorgan County Council – Dyffryn became a residential education centre, where courses were run for teachers, sixth form pupils and members of youth organisations. Some of today's visitors to the property were among the youngsters who came to stay at Dyffryn to take part in some of the courses. They have described the girls' dormitories as being on the first floor of the house and the boys' being on the top floor. In about 1970, there was a shift in emphasis and Dyffryn began to be developed as a training/conference centre. Some modern accommodation blocks, known as the 'Morgannwg Suite', were built to the west of the house to provide accommodation.

Following local government reorganisation in 1972, Dyffryn became the responsibility of the Mid and South Glamorgan Councils. During the harsh economic climate of the early 1980s, Dyffryn started to become an expensive burden to these councils. A Joint Dyffryn Committee was established to consider how an economically viable future might be secured for the property. A proposal was put forward to develop the house as an all-year-round residential conference centre. This led to the development of new conference facilities and the 'Traherne Suite' accommodation block, which were designed and built between 1983 and '85. The dining/conference hall was built within the courtyard space between the mansion and the stable block, and to the immediate south of an existing service range that had originally contained pantries and rooms for the butler, footmen and housekeeper. This dining hall overlooks the south gardens. The dining hall structure partly conceals the lower part of the mansion's west elevation.

Vestiges of the earlier service range in this area are to be found in the line of the secondary service corridor which runs to the north of the dining hall and in the arrangement of the rooms and modern kitchen. Between 1984-'88, new kitchens were installed within the service range adjoining the courtyard to the immediate north.

The new section of the Traherne Suite was built to the immediate north of the stable block, effectively as a large extension to the cottage on the north side of the stable yard. This resulted in the original north entrance into the stable yard being closing off completely. The interiors of the stable-block buildings were also converted to provide further accommodation with en-suite bathrooms.

A brochure produced to promote the new facilities, entitled *Dyffryn House Conference Centre,* describes "100 single bedrooms in modern purpose-built accommodation", "full dining facilities... seating over a hundred delegates", "3 function rooms...together with six attractive syndicate rooms", "a magnificent oak-panelled 19th Century billiard room" for informal recreation and a "licensed bar".

Sir Cennydd Traherne – who owned Dyffryn and had leased the property to the County Council since 1939 – died in 1995. A year later in 1996, the Vale of Glamorgan Council (now the lessees) began negotiations with Sir Cennydd's nephew, Councillor Rhodri Llewellyn Traherne, to purchase the freehold of the house and gardens. The purchase was completed on the 23 August 1996. The house was then closed to the public and the authority entered a partnership with a hotel company to develop the house as a 5-star hotel, but these plans never came to fruition.

In 2007, the Vale of Glamorgan Council undertook essential work replacing the original 1893 roof and restored the exterior stonework of the house. The overall cost was £1.4 million. In 2009, Cadw announced that it was offering Dyffryn House a grant of £50,000 towards a scheme of works to repair and refurbish the principal rooms of the house.

In 2011, Dyffryn was awarded a further grant of £600,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, towards the costs of repairing and refurbishing a number of the main rooms of the mansion, namely:

- The Great Hall & gallery
- Blue Drawing Room
- Red Drawing Room
- Morning Room
- Billiard Room
- Staircase Hall
- The corridor (ground floor)
- Master bedroom, central to south front

Work to these rooms was completed in 2012, enabling the ground floor and part of the first floor to be re-opened to the public for the first time in 16 years.

5. Dyffryn Gardens from 1891 onwards

(To be read in conjunction with Appendix A, Figures 14 – 49)

5.1 The Gardens between 1891 and 1905

During the first 10 years of his ownership of Dyffryn, John Cory made some changes to the park, notably by taking in two fields to the north-west of the North Drive and the North Lodge. The lozenge-shaped gardens around the house were extended slightly southwards to make room for a large sunken lawn for tennis, possibly contained by a ha-ha wall. However, the gardens remained modest. There was a balustraded terrace along the south front of the house, with formal beds beyond and then the new tennis lawn.[1] The 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898 (see Appendix A, Figure 14) shows an informal lake at the south end of the park, screened from Beili-Mawr Farm to the south by a belt of planting. To the east of the house a formal 'Panel Garden' was laid out. By 1898, the Ordnance Survey plan shows that a long range of glasshouses had been erected along the entire length of the north wall of the larger kitchen garden. These included a large central glasshouse; the whole range was commissioned by John Cory[2]. Until the 1930s, these housed Reginald Cory's collection of tender plants, vines, orchids, ferns and palms.

Some of the garden elements that existed c.1900 were retained by Thomas Mawson and incorporated into his new master plan for the gardens. These elements included the old walled gardens and the long garden to their immediate south, the balustraded terrace along the south front of the mansion together with the formal borders and lawn beyond, the formal Panel Garden to the east of the house and the hilly woodland garden (the Rookery) and shrubbery beyond.

5.2 Mawson's Gardens

In 1903 or 1904[3], Thomas Mawson – one of the great garden designers of the late Victorian and Edwardian era – was appointed to prepare designs for the improvement and extension of the gardens at Dyffryn. However, the gardens that were created were a reflection of the talents of both Thomas Mawson and Reginald Cory. As described in Chapter 2, Reginald Cory had wide-ranging interests and was an extremely knowledgeable plantsman. The collaboration between Cory and Mawson on the gardens of Dyffryn was a close one. The two men worked well together and clearly felt considerable mutual respect. The designs for the gardens were developed and influenced by Reginald Cory's travels and Mawson's confident Arts and Crafts style.[4] Mawson described Reginald Cory as "*a typical example of the British enthusiast for horticulture and arboriculture at its best*".[5]

Mawson's plans for the new garden incorporated all the elements for which his gardens had become known: formality near the house with terraces and vases, lawns and flower

1 Mawson, T.H., 1926. *The Art & Craft of Garden Making*, 5th Ed., p387.

2 12 Feb '14, Information from G Donovan, based on records of Messenger & Co., horticultural builders held at Reading University.

3 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, p100

4 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2008. *Dyffryn House Conservation Statement*, p5.

5 Mawson, T., 1926. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, p.387

beds, progressing through less formal areas further from the house until the garden merged with the countryside at its boundaries.[6] (See Mawson's master plan of 1906 - Appendix A, Figure 15.)

Mawson described the gardens and published a plan of them in the 1926 edition of his book, *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*. Owing to the position of the house within a secluded valley, Mawson's first task was to banish the flat and rather dreary plain in which the house sits, which lacked distant views and a horizon. Below the balustraded terraces, and the tennis lawn created by John Cory a few years before, he set out "*to plan a great lawn extending from the old part of the garden on the south front, the object being to gain a sense of scale, a restful base to the house and a compensating expanse of view from the principle rooms, to make up for the lack of more distant landscape views*".[7] (See Appendix C.)

By excavating the central site, making turf embankments and creating a long stone-edged canal, Mawson contained and defined the huge expanse of the Great Lawn (or 'The Flats') and successfully tied the garden to the house with a strong central north-south axis. The canal was filled with Reginald Cory's superb collection of water lilies, many of them recently bred hybrids. This remains a central and distinctive feature of the garden today. A rectangular pond part-way along the length of the canal provides an axial point, giving a visual link across the Great Lawn between entrances to the arboretum to the east and to the small garden rooms to the west. An octagonal but rectangular pool shown on Mawson's master plan at the south end of the canal was not built, for some reason, during the Cory period. The 1920 Ordnance Survey plan shows the canal terminating abruptly, well short of today's Vine Walk. This may reflect a period of re-thinking after the plans to build a water pavilion to overlook the south lake had been abandoned. In fact, the octagonal pool that exists today was only built in the early 1950s.

Both the existing formal flower gardens created in the 1890s - one outside the south front and the other, larger Panel Garden to the east of the house – were reinvigorated by Mawson. The form of both areas was strengthened by rows of fastigiate Irish yew and the gardens were now punctuated with an array of composition stone figures, oriental vases, an armillary sundial and baskets overflowing with brightly coloured flowers. The balustraded terraces, well-laid out lawns and flower beds represented the quintessential "English country garden" of the late Victorian era.

Mawson also successfully incorporated the long narrow garden that adjoined the kitchen gardens, running the full length of the SE terrace, into his new master plan by creating deep herbaceous borders along both sides. He then added tall iron arches along the south side (later replaced by concrete columns supporting elevated iron arches), to carry a profusion of climbing roses. The planting will have almost certainly been designed by Reginald Cory. The beds were planted lushly. Early photographs show extensive dahlia planting combined with herbaceous perennial plants; later photographs show more mixed planting schemes. On the stone wall at the rear of the terrace, an assortment of shrubs and climbers were planted of which one, a Macartney rose (*Rosa bracteata*) planted in 1912, still survives in fragile old age.

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6 Torode, S J, 1993. *Dyffryn – An Edwardian Garden designed by Thomas Mawson*, p5

7 Mawson, T., 1926. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, p.388

To the south of the herbaceous terrace, Mawson's master plan included a complex suite of small hidden gardens, separated by hedges and walls, but interconnected via doorways, pathways and winding flights of steps. As discussed later in Chapter 7, Reginald Cory undoubtedly contributed to the design of these spaces. Mawson and Cory also took a trip together through southern Europe and returned to England with ideas for the gardens at Dyffryn. The gardens are secretive, surprising and idiosyncratic in character, adopting themes from European history and culture and providing display spaces for numerous garden artefacts and a huge array of Reginald Cory's favourite plants brought from all corners of the globe. Describing these smaller garden compartments in his diary, Mawson wrote that "*we felt at liberty to indulge in every phase of garden design which the site and my client's catholic views suggested*". Each area of the garden was designed with an eye to creating settings for the plants that particularly interested Reginald. Extensive collections were amassed of succulents, bulbs, rambler roses and, of course, trees and shrubs. There was also a renowned collection of bonsai in the Theatre Garden.[8] Reginald planned some parts of these gardens himself, including the Paved Court. His head gardener, Mr Cobb, played a key role from c.1908 to 1919 in maintaining a high standard of horticultural excellence.[9] There are reports of the lilies in the gardens reaching 3.5m (12ft) height and bearing 50 blooms.[10] By 1920, the head gardener was J T Smith, who continued to garden at Dyffryn until after Florence's death and was described as 'an admirable' man by Knox-Shaw, Cambridge University's Treasurer.[11]

The small gardens were laid out gradually. The Pompeian Garden has a date of 1909 carved in the lintel above the NW entrance, giving an indication of when this and some of the other gardens in this general area were laid out. By 1911 it is estimated that 30 of the eventual 55 acres of gardens had been developed. An article describing the house and its gardens, published in the 7 October 1911 issue of the South Wales Daily News, lists the existence of a formal rose garden, paved court, fountain court (= Pompeian Garden), swimming pool, cloisters and herbaceous garden.

In 1910, Reginald commissioned Neame Roff of Walmer in Kent to take a series of photographs of the gardens. One of the photographs shows that the area to the immediate south of the herbaceous terrace was still a simple grassy bank with large islands of shrub planting. This is consistent with Mawson's master plan of 1906. The Dutch Garden that lies close to this area was built later. In 1910, several other elements of the Mawson-designed gardens, particularly towards the south end of the site were not yet realised.

The eastern area of the gardens was laid out as a nursery for young trees and shrubs, many of them bought from the Veitch nurseries in Devon.[12] The tree collection almost certainly comprised a significant proportion of wild-sourced introductions and includes an extant *Acer griseum* grown from seed collected by E. H. Wilson on his 1901 expedition

8 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor.* The Garden, February 1993, p83

9 Cadw,1996. Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, ref. PGW (Gm) 32 (GLA). *Dyffryn*

10 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor.* The Garden, February 1993, p83

11 Day, Juliet, Feb 2006. Reginald Cory, Benefactor of Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Curtis's Botanical Magazine, Vol 23, Issue 1, p126

12 Nicholas Pearson Associates,1998. Dyffryn Gardens: Arboretum Management Plan, p2

and planted at Dyffryn in 1911.[13] According to Torode, the east side of the garden was originally intended to be a nursery for growing on young plants and the west side of the garden was going to be the arboretum.[14] However, during the years of the First World War, when progress on the gardens was disrupted, the young trees already planted on the east side became established and so were allowed to grow on to maturity. The east side of the garden became formalised as the Arboretum.

In 1913 Reginald, who was already an enthusiast for dahlias, offered to arrange a comprehensive trial of 'garden' dahlias at Dyffryn and invited the cooperation of the National Dahlia Society. The Royal Horticultural Society also gave its support. Garden dahlias had suffered a decline in popularity. Good floriferous varieties suitable for growing in borders had become neglected while growers concentrate on producing new exhibition varieties.

Seven thousand plants - spanning 1000 cultivars – were sent to Dyffryn for the trials by foreign growers as well as British. These were potted up and subsequently planted out in grouped beds as in a flower garden. All the suitable borders and other areas of the Dyffryn gardens were, apparently, '*planted up to the very last foot*'. The effect was outstanding, with splendid displays of bright colour provided by the single and Collerette types. According to an article in *The Gardeners' Chronicle* '*if one type showed up better than all the others it was the Collerette, for it flowered as freely as the singles …* '. What contributed to the '*gorgeous yet artistic effects*' was that '*first, the garden is specially suited for dahlia cultivation, and second, that the numerous plants were grouped in all the beds of a complete flower garden ….. Mr Cobb's grouping in the variously-shaped beds left nothing to be desired'*.[15] (See Appendix C.)

As at hundreds of other large houses and estates, the war years were damaging to the gardens at Dyffryn. The younger male staff left to enlist. The remaining members of gardening staff were unable to keep up the former horticultural standards. Contributing to the war effort, Reginald himself and his remaining gardeners concentrated their efforts on productive crops. The beds and flower borders were used to raise seedling vegetables, of which many hundred thousands were distributed free to the cottage gardeners and allotment holders in a dozen parishes in and around the estate.[16] Coal was unobtainable to heat the greenhouses and the winter of 1917 was particularly severe. By 1918 much of the magnificent orchid collection was dead as well as many of the precious and newly-introduced woody plants and shrubs. Amongst those that did survive however, was the much-cherished hybrid cordyline, *Cordyline bansksii,* that had been raised at Dyffryn, as well as the fine collection of forest cacti (*Epiphyllum*).

By 1920, the gardens laid out by Reginald Cory were largely complete and so, once again, Cory commissioned more photographs to be taken by Neame Roff, some taken from the same positions as in 1910. These photographs are particularly atmospheric in their representation of the gardens and provide an invaluable record of how the gardens looked at that date. An article published in The Gardeners' Chronicle in 1920 described parts of the gardens in glowing terms. (See Appendix C.) However its closing

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13 Day, Juliet, Feb 2006. Reginald Cory, Benefactor of Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Curtis's Botanical Magazine, Vol 23, Issue 1, p124

14 Torode, S J, 1993. Dyffryn. *An Edwardian Garden designed by Thomas H Mawson*

15 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 12 Dec 1914. *Florists' Dahlias and the Duffryn Trials'*, p380.

16 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 3 July 1920. *The Duffryn*, p7

paragraph referred to all the people who had known the gardens at Dyffryn in "*the piping times of peace*" and how they would '*feel a hope that before long, improved conditions of labour will enable Mr. Cory and his capable gardener, Mr. J. T. Smith, to restore them to their former beauty and interest'*.[17] Evidently the gardens had not yet fully recovered from the adverse effects of the First World War. However, in 1923 the artist, Edith Adie, was invited to Dyffryn and commissioned to paint a series of views of the gardens, suggesting that by this time the Corys felt that they had now been restored to their pre-war standard of beauty.

The south end of the garden was the last area to be developed. It was originally intended that a water pavilion would be built at the end of the central axis overlooking the lake. The water pavilion was never built but an observation tower, probably designed by Reginald Cory, was built at one corner of the Lavender Court by 1914, with the intention of overlooking the planned lake and a rock and alpine garden.[18] The tower is a round, red-brick structure with ramparted arches to either side of it. In addition to providing a viewing platform at the top, it had an unusual second flight of steps, leading to a chamber beneath the tower. This was intended to be an underwater viewing chamber to view the fish in the proposed lake. A lake had already been created at some date before 1898, but presumably was now being re-modelled. However, work on the lake halted when the First World War began. On the 1921 Ordnance Survey map (surveyed in 1915) it was not shown. In 1920, the lake was described as 'only partly complete'[19] and a Neame Roff photograph showing Lavender Court and the view through the arches along the south side does not reveal standing water. At this date, the area was still being used by Cory as a nursery for growing his own strains of seed-raised dahlias.

It is not known exactly when the lake was completed and filled, but a painting made in 1923 by Edith Adie, looking across part of Lavender Court and through the arches, shows an area of blue water. So this may have been the moment when Reginald Cory had finally completed and filled his lake. Unfortunately, when it was filled with water, it was found that the house cellars simultaneously flooded, probably due to water backing up along the main culvert that carries the River Waycock. As a consequence, the lake appears to have been abandoned quite quickly and was drained.

Following this, other gardens appear to have been created in the area of the lake bed. The 1937 Sale Particulars for Dyffryn mention several gardens - Water, Paeony and Bog gardens[20] - suggesting that, having drained the lake, its soggy bed may have been turned to advantage by creating wetland gardens. These gardens described in the Sale Particulars no longer exist.

The recurring difficulty of a high water table and periodic flooding at Dyffryn crops up in letters written by Reginald Cory in the 1920s. In a letter to a Mr Preston dated 9 January 1925, he mentions that "*the land* [at Dyffryn] *is like a quagmire and it's no fun digging*". On 13 May of the same year, in a letter to Humphrey Gilbert-Carter (Cambridge UBG) he writes "*Thank all the powers that be for the change of weather, I was nearly drowned*

17 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 3 July 1920. *The Duffryn*, p8

18 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 3 July 1920. *The Duffryn*, p8

19 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 3 July 1920. *The Duffryn*, p8

20 Cadw,1996. Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, ref. PGW (Gm) 32 (GLA)

the other weekend at Dyffryn!" Another letter in October of the same year, from Carter to Cory mentions a flood at Dyffryn.[21]

Some other parts of Mawson's designs for Dyffryn gardens never came to fruition. His plan for an informally planted park-like area to the north of the mansion, with an axial double avenue of trees aligned on the forecourt and main entrance to the house was never implemented. However, in the 1950s, a formal garden was laid out in the area 'in the style' of Thomas Mawson.

In 1923 the watercolour artist, Edith Adie, painted the gardens of Dyffryn. She produced eighteen paintings beautifully portraying the gardens in high summer, showing them in exuberant full bloom. Adie may have been introduced to Cory by E. A. Bowles, the influential plantsman and writer. However, she also undertook some work for the University Cambridge and so the connection may have been forged through Cory's own links with Cambridge, where he also had a house. After Reginald Cory's death, the paintings by Adie were left to Bowles who, in turn bequeathed them to the Lindley Library at the Royal Horticultural Society, following his death in 1954. They still repose there today.

Eventually the gardens covered 36.4 hectares and occupied the whole of the park to the south of the house and the area to the east of the house extending as far as Dyffryn Lane. Apparently, in the end, the total cost of creating the Mawson gardens reached £300,000.[22]

In 1930, Reginald married Miss Rosa Blanche Kester of Cambridge. The couple may never have lived at Dyffryn. A memo of Messenger& Co. Ltd (horticultural builders) dated October 1930, records Florence Cory's acceptance of a quotation for works to the palm house and fernery [23], suggesting that Florence may have been assuming more direct control of the gardens at Dyffryn, in Reginald's absence. In 1931, Reginald and Rosa moved to a new home just outside Wareham in Dorset, where they started to build a new garden. Sadly he died suddenly on 12 May 1934. At the time of Reginald's death, Florence was still living at Dyffryn but would have been in her late 70s. She died just two years later in 1936. Following Florence's death the estate was put up for sale. The gardens at Dyffryn went downhill quickly. Under the terms of Reginald's will, a substantial proportion of his estate, including the proceeds from the sale of his part of property at Dyffryn, were bequeathed as a trust fund for the benefit of the Cambridge University Botanic Garden (CUBC). In 1937, Humphrey Gilbert-Carter, Director of the CUBC got wind of this and wrote to the University Treasurer, Knox-Shaw, in the mistaken belief that Cory had left his plant collection to the Botanic Garden. He voiced his concern, saying that the collections *'include a number of succulents and other greenhouse plants. I hear on good authority that the gardener at Dyffryn has been forbidden to use fuel. I do not know whether the executors are aware of this fact. In the event of hard weather these indoor collections would suffer heavy casualties.*' In his reply, the Treasurer referred to a visit that he had made to Dyffryn with a representative of Cory's executors, saying that '*Mr Brook said that he would see that the necessary supplies were forthcoming. There certainly are very fine and valuable plants in the*

21 Cambridge University Botanic Gardens (8:7:13)

22 South Glamorgan County Council, 1975. *Garden Party: Dyffryn House and Gardens*

23 Messenger & Co. Ltd. 29 Oct 1930. *Record of quotation accepted by Miss Cory.*

'succulent' house. I am very sorry for the Head Gardener who struck me as an admirable man. He now only has four men and a boy to work under him, and he has an impossible task to keep the lovely gardens in order.'[24]

5.3 1937 – 1980s

Following Reginald Cory's sudden death in 1934 and the death of his elder sister, Florence, two years later in 1936, the Dyffryn estate was put up for sale. The moveable contents of the estate were sold first over a four-day period commencing on 26 July 1937. Unfortunately the items sold included 'garden ornaments, seats and outdoor effects'. As a result, the huge collection of pots and vases carefully collected by Reginald Cory from all over the world, but particularly from the Orient, and which helped to give the garden rooms their particularly special characters, were now dispersed and largely gone for ever. Selected items from the catalogue included:

'1686 A Japanese bronze circular flower bowl, with flower badges in low relief and reptile handles (26 in.)

1687 A Japanese bronze incense burner with dogs of Fo and bamboo branches in relief, and the grey marble slab (43 in.)...

1690 A pair of Japanese bronze cisterns with elephant trunk mounts and panels of birds and flowers (15½ in.)...

1697 A pair of Oriental barrel-shaped garden seats with dark blue glaze (19 in.), and a pair of large coloured pottery vases and stands.'

The estate was bought by Major (later Sir) Cennydd Traherne of the neighbouring Coedyrhydyglyn mansion. Reginald's share of the proceeds of the sale went to Cambridge University Botanic Garden as a bequest. Having no need for either the house of the garden, in 1939 Major Traherne leased them to the then Glamorgan County Council on a 999 lease for a peppercorn rent of one shilling per year. Forty-four years later, in 1983, Sir Cennydd (1910-1995) became the founder member and president of the Friends of Dyffryn Gardens Society.

During the Second World War, the house was made available to the Police and Civil Defence Authority for use as a reserve Police Headquarters and Training Establishment for Police, Wardens and other ancillary ARP services. This continued until 1946 and, throughout this period the gardens suffered from neglect. In 1948, the County Council established a residential education centre at Dyffryn, running courses for teachers, sixth form pupils and members of youth organisations.

During the '50s and '60s, much was done to repair the damage and deterioration that had occurred during the Second World War, and also to enhance the gardens and plant collections. Works to the gardens went beyond mere repair and included enhancing existing areas, 'finishing' elements of Mawson's master plan that had not been implemented previously and even creating some completely new areas of garden. An interpretation of Mawson's proposals for a tree avenue extending away from the porte cochere on the north front was implemented. A central footpath was

[24] Day, Juliet, Feb 2006. Reginald Cory, Benefactor of Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Curtis's Botanical Magazine, Vol 23, Issue 1, p126

built running the length of the avenue and crossing into the field beyond the River Waycock via a small new pedestrian bridge. A second E-W path was also built, crossing the first at a centre point where a fountain was placed.

Under successive head gardeners there was the, probably inevitable, desire to create new horticultural features and areas in the gardens. In the 1950s a large new rockery was built on the west-facing slopes of 'The Rookery', the wooded hill to the north of the mansion, possibly extending replacing an earlier, smaller rockery. A hedge at the south end of the Great Lawn was replaced by balustrading similar to that at the lawn's north end. The rectangular pool at the south end of the central canal – which had never been completed previously - was now built, although again, not exactly to the design shown on Mawson's plan.

In the area of the former lake, new sunken gardens were created. The eastern area had a design of serpentine rockery-edged streams, bordered with miniature planting. The stream beds still survive today. Small garden shelters were built. In 1967, a new rose garden was created within the old kitchen gardens. In the 1970s the arboretum was extended to take in an area that Reginald had used as a nursery. An extensive heather garden was also planted on sloping ground to the south of the East Drive. By 1977, a new garden was created in the area to the west of the Theatre Garden (now the Physic Garden), with low raised beds and intermediate paths.[25]

During the 1950s, the Honourable Grenville Morgan generously donated four impressive oriental bronze statues to the gardens. Originally, all four pieces were sited outside the south front of the house. They include a large statue of the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tse seated on a water buffalo (positioned on the island bed at the west end of the south front parterre), a Dragon Bowl (now set at the centre of the central canal), a Wind God and a Rain God. The Wind and Rain God statues were moved into the newly built glasshouses in the walled garden in 2013.

On 5 August 1960, Dyffryn was visited by Queen Elizabeth and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. They attended a garden party hosted by Henry Brooke, Minister of Welsh Affairs. The occasion was reported in *The Cardiff Spectator*.

In the 1960s, the north lawn became the focus for a number of new visitor facilities and attractions. These including a circular café (1960) and a palm house (1965). New glasshouses were built in the kitchen garden in 1967. These deteriorated in condition and were closed in 1999 and eventually demolished in 2000. In c.1970, Dyffryn was being developed as a training/conference centre and some modern accommodation blocks known as the 'Morgannwg Suite' were added to the west side of the house to provide accommodation. These have also been demolished. The Traherne Suite and accommodation block were added in 1986, enclosing two courtyards to the west of the house.[26]

Under the re-organisation of local government in 1974, Dyffryn Gardens became the responsibility of Mid and South Glamorgan County Councils. The occasion was marked by a garden party, which was commemorated subsequently by the publication of a brochure, *Garden Party Dyffryn House and Gardens, 10th July 1975*.

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25 Glamorgan County Council, 1977. *A Guide to Dyffryn Gardens*. Garden plan.

26 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2008. *Dyffryn House Conservation Statement*, p5.

6. Dyffryn House: possible design influences

6.1 Architectural context: design styles favoured by wealthy Victorians

John Cory was one of a group of wealthy Victorian industrialists who, having risen from modest beginnings, applauded diligence and hard work and espoused strong evangelical and social causes. Like his father, John Cory embraced Methodism and become a Wesleyan. He was one of the first to sign the pledge and became one of Cardiff's leading advocates of temperance. While Cory and his wife, Anna, appear to have had a strong belief in the importance of 'giving back' - albeit in the manner of visible philanthropy typical in Victorian society – they also seem to have been content to enjoy their wealth. In due course, this led to their deciding to move up from owning a large villa standing in its grounds to acquiring a gentleman's estate with scope to build themselves a mansion to their personal taste.

Numerous parallels can be found amongst the newly wealthy of late Victorian society. In his book '*The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*', Mordaunt Crook dismisses the notion that newly successful men bought Gothic Revival architecture; that is 'new money dressed up in the trappings of antiquity'. It is true that some did. Examples of 'new men' who built Gothic mansions including William Crawshay II, ironmaster, who built Cyfarthfa Castle in Merthyr Tydfil in 1824; John Arkwright, grandson of the industrialist Richard Arkwright who remodelled Hampton Court in Herefordshire in the 1830s and '40s; the successful merchant William Gibbs for whom the extravagant Gothic Revival house at Tyntesfield in Somerset was created; William Graham Vivian, a Swansea-based industrialist who partially remodelled Clyne Castle near Swansea in Gothic style after 1860; and G.T. Clarke, manager of the Dowlais Ironworks who acquired Talygarn House and its estate in 1865 and was engaged in enlarging and decorating the house until his death in 1898. However, many of the greatest 'Goths' among the Victorians were, in fact, representatives of old families. Examples of their mansions include Margam Castle in Glamorgan, designed for Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot by Thomas Hopper in 1830-5; Cardiff Castle (1866 onwards) and Castell Coch (1872 onwards), both designed for the 3rd Marquis of Bute by William Burges; and Eaton Hall, Cheshire designed for the 1st Duke of Westminster by Alfred

Cyfarthfa Castle, Methyr Tydfil

Hampton Court, Herefordshire

Tyntesfield, Somerset

Margam Castle, Glamorgan

Waterhouse in 1870-83. All these men were able to implement their building projects through the new riches of mineral exploitation and property development, but they came of families that were hardly *parvenue*.[1]

Similarly, there are examples of new mansions in Tudor and Jacobean styles, such as Hendrefoelan, Sketty, Swansea which was Tudorized by Pugin[2] and Tŷ-to-maen, a Tudor Gothic mansion at St Mellons. However, such houses were a minor percentage of the total list of houses owned by Victorian millionaires. What, then, was the millionaire style? The great majority of Edwardian millionaire houses in England and probably Wales (Scotland was a different matter) turn out to be Classical. Mordaunt Crook offers several explanations.[3] Classicism had urban connotations and new money was money made in town. Classicism was also a European language, perhaps a symbol of wealth that crossed national divides. By contrast, 'Jacobethan' may have seemed too stridently and nationalistically English; and Gothic – thanks to the Ecclesiologists – too specifically Anglican. However Renaissance or Neo-Classical, or what the Victorians called Italianate, remained the Establishment style. By the 1840s, for bourgeois patrons, Italianate had become a badge of upward mobility. Hereditary millionaires of a higher social level inherited Classical seats. With increasing wealth, they simply embellished these old houses, so augmenting the old taste.

An instant way of acquiring the status that only Classicism could bring was to buy a major Georgian seat. Alternatively, the newly wealthy industrialist or tradesman could buy a minor Georgian house and then turn it into a major one; all the better if the house had already been owned by a notable local family. In England, examples abound but it was the country house proper which remained the ideal. Colston Bassett Hall in Nottinghamshire was converted to an oversized villa - stuccoed and Italianate - in the 1870s for a Lancashire millionaire coal owner, Robert Millington Knowles. Sir James Horlick, 1st Bt, the malted milk magnate, bought Cowley Manor, Gloucestershire - designed by G. Somers Clarke in 1855 – and, in 1890, transformed it into an Italianate extravaganza.[4] Interestingly, in Wales, very few of the great houses were built in a neo-Classical manner during the 19th century; of those that were, the best were built during the early decades of the century.[5] In Glamorgan, they included Dowlais House rebuilt in 1819 in plain Georgian style for the Guest family; Aberaman House, Aberdare was re-fronted in Neo-Greek style, probably for Crawshay Bailey, another famous ironmaster; Llanrumney Hall near Cardiff was rebuilt around 1825 with a low over-hanging roof and Doric portico;[6] and, of course, the Dyffryn House of the Booth Greys was re-modelled at some date between 1803 and 1837.

1 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp40-41

2 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p101

3 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp42-43

4 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp47-49

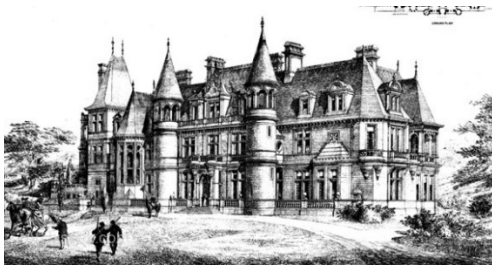
5 Hilling, B. J., 1975. *Plans and Prospects. Architecture in Wales, 1780-1914,* p7

6 Hilling, J. B., 1988. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, Ch XIX. *Architecture in Glamorgan*, p403

However, although newly-rich millionaires turn out, on the whole, to have been stylistically conservative some favoured a more exotic form of Classicism, the French château style. If Doric columns proved too plain or understated for the palate of the newly rich, there was always the ultimate model of mixed classic ostentation: the French château. The Classicism of the French Court did not disappear with the Revolution. Its styles survived to supply the Second Empire and its rivals with suitable symbols of hierarchy. The Channel was no barrier and, between the 1880s and 1914, French Classicism reconquered England as the style of the *Entente Cordiale*. Thus, Classicism in all its chameleon forms, has generally been the vernacular of the ruling classes.[7]

The château or French Renaissance style of architecture offered a combination of ostentation and flexibility. Chronologically, the style ranged all the way from Renaissance to Beaux-Arts; from François Premier to Second Empire.[8] It is a style that seems to have been particularly popular among bankers and financiers. In 1871-4, Edward Middleton Barry (the 3rd son of Sir Charles) built Wykehurst in Sussex: the exterior is a highly competent recreation of a 16th century French château. The Rothschilds went a stage further with their château at Waddesdon in Buckinghamshire, designed by the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur and built between 1874 and 1889. The design of the house owes debts to Chambord and numerous other châteaux of the Loire valley.[9]

A similar style of architecture was also embraced for large city or institutional buildings. Among the schools and colleges that did not follow the Gothic pattern was Wellington College, Berkshire designed by John Shaw and built in 1856-9. John Bowes had made a similar design stipulation when he endowed the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle in 1869.[10]



Wykehurst, Sussex

Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire

Wellington College, Surrey

Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

Kinmel, Denbighshire

7 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp44-45

8 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, p60

9 Dixon, R. and Muthesius, S., 1985. *Victorian Architecture*, pp43-44

10 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, p60

By the 1860s, pure 'Classical' architecture was too restrained for the tastes of many and the vague eclecticism of 'Old French' had become a symbol of something more showy and extravagant. In Wales, Wynnstay near Ruabon was an early example to be built in the style 1861 by Benjamin Ferry, although the vertical emphasis of the centre and end bays was too pronounced to be convincing.[11] Between 1870 and 1874, W.E. Nesfield began the reconstruction of Kinmel, Denbighshire for Hugh Hughes, the Welsh copper magnate. Here Nesfield brought together several styles by designing brick façades reminiscent of Wren's Hampton Court and adding touches of Dutch and Jacobean. Kinmell is one of the earliest manifestations of the Queen Anne Revival in country house architecture. Two storeys of the red brick façades are topped by a coved cornice surmounted by steep mansard roofs containing bedrooms that are lit by pedimented dormers, also giving the house a slightly French air.[12] In a sense, Nesfield had Anglicised 'Old French' for the British domestic market.[13] Dixon and Methusius describe Kinmel as having '*a fresh, airy urbane quality that is very different from the moral earnestness of the great Gothic houses*.'[14]

From the 1870s to the early years of the 20th century, Cardiff grew rapidly and the many architects were busy creating buildings of a bewilderingly eclectic range of architectural styles. This led to the town being dubbed the 'Chicago of Wales'. It is in this relatively *laissez-faire* architectural climate, that John Cory aspired to build his own new mansion at Dyffryn.

6.2 John Cory's choice of architect and design style

Through both his business life and his philanthropic activities, John Cory must have had regular dealings with architects. He was keen to use his wealth for useful public purposes and financed local building projects for the community, such as the Maendy Hall at Tonpentre built for the Salvation Army. He funded the building of Cory Hall in Cardiff, which was designed as a temperance hall by the Cardiff architects Messrs. J. P. Jones, Richards & Budgen and opened in 1886.

Cory Hall & YMCA, Cardiff, c.1912

It would appear that Cory favoured using local architects for all his projects. According to Newman, from the 1870s to the early part of the 20th century, 'the growth of Cardiff attracted architects like moths to a flame'.[15] Presumably Newport, growing at a similar rate, attracted numerous architects too. For much of this period,

Municipal Buildings, Newport

11 Hilling, B. J., 1975. *Plans and Prospects. Architecture in Wales, 1780-1914,* p7

12 Dixon, R. and Muthesius, S., 1985. *Victorian Architecture*, p55

13 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp60-61

14 Dixon, R. and Muthesius, S., 1985. *Victorian Architecture*, p55

15 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p104

Cardiff's architects seem to have shared the commissions between them without much competition from outside. This was rudely shattered, however, in 1897 (a few years after Cory had remodelled his new house) when the commissions for the Town Hall and Law Courts were won by a newly emerging London firm, Lanchester, Stewart and Rickards.[16]

So, when choosing an architect for his mansion, Cory may have felt that he had an ample choice of architects in Cardiff without looking further afield. Quite reasonably, he may have regarded it as an advantage to employ a local firm who would be on-hand not only to design but also to supervise the project closely. Given his Non-conformist beliefs, Cory may have shunned the ostentation of bringing in a highfalutin architect of national repute.

In 1882, A.E. Lansdowne had won first prize in a design competition for the new Town Hall for Newport. He was then appointed jointly with the runner-up, Thomas Lockwood, to develop the design further and manage the project. Newport Town Hall was completed in 1885. He went on to design the Westgate Hotel, Newport (1886). Presumably John and Richard Cory were impressed by these new buildings and Lansdowne was invited to compete for the design of Cory Brothers' new business headquarters in Butetown, Cardiff. He was unsuccessful; the commission was won by the Cardiff architects Bruton & Williams and the new building was opened in 1889. Despite his failure to win that commission, evidently John Cory still wished to employ him. Lansdowne was appointed to design Cory's new mansion at Dyffryn in 1891 – '92.

By choosing an architect who would have been regarded as obscure at anything beyond a local level, Cory was by no means unusual. According to Mordaunt Crook '*of the two hundred men who left more than a million pounds between the 1820s and the 1920s, the great majority – particularly those with new money – proved extraordinarily obtuse in their choice of country house architect'*. He cites Lord Leverhulme's long but curiously undistinguished list of architects. Those employed by the Rothschild family, spread over dozens of houses in the home counties, were even more numerous and only slightly less obscure. However, obscurity does not necessarily mean mediocrity and Mordaunt Crook acknowledges that the result, on occasion, was surprisingly impressive.[17] However, the bulk of millionaires' country house architects form an unexciting crew. Mordaunt Crook closes his analysis by quoting Margot Asquith: "*Rich men's houses are seldom beautiful, rarely comfortable, and never original. It is a constant source of surprise to people of moderate means to observe how little a big fortune contributes to Beauty .... Money has never yet bought imagination*."[18]

16 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p105

17 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, p75

18 Mordaunt Crook, J., 1999. *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches*, pp76-78

6.3 Dyffryn House – design style

It seems probable that the design of Dyffryn House emerged from a combination of design brief from the client and the accumulated design experience and style of the architect. Requirements for the house such as the Great Hall and a billiards room must surely have come from John Cory. Retaining, or reincorporating the pretty, sunnier rooms along the south side of the house and, indeed, some of their characterful features such as some columns and the curving walls also seem likely to have been a client stipulation. The external design style adopted for the house presumably went hand-in-hand with their choice of architect. Rodney Melville and Partners regard John Cory's choice of A.E. Lansdowne as surprising, given his relative inexperience in domestic architecture and conservative design style.[19] One can only conclude that Cory saw Lansdowne's work, liked it and was content to have something similar.

The Great Hall and porte cochere of the Dyffryn's north front

Most of Lansdowne's early work was in Monmouthshire and it was almost exclusively ecclesiastical. In the 1870s and early 1880s construction of new, and enlargement of existing schools came to dominate his work. In the wake of winning the design competition for the Municipal Buildings and Town Hall, Newport, Lansdowne was winning other larger commissions from civic authorities, business and private clients. Like many architects, Lansdowne developed a palette of design details that he liked and found useful to repeat. Elements of the external design of the Westgate Hotel re-appear in the design of Dyffryn House, notably the roof detailing.

Westgate Hotel, Newport today

Hilling describes Dyffryn House as of 'the *French Second Empire style but lacks the vitality and voluptuousness usually associated with the mode, indeed the tall chimney and roof dormers and the attenuated chimney stacks, all rather coarsely detailed , are very anglicized, while the Doric colonnade across the south*

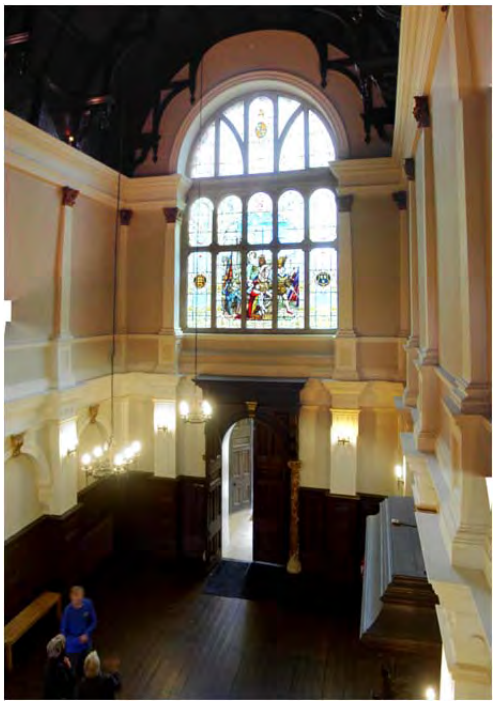
Dyffryn House, showing the similarity of roof, dormer window and chimney designs to those of the Westgate Hotel.

19 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan*, pp11-12

front is quite un-French.'[20] Dyffryn House has also been described as an eclectic mix of French Renaissance and English Baroque styles. The former is seen in the mansard roof and in the style of some of the windows; the latter in the Great Hall. As discussed above, this approach of mixing design styles, both outside and in, was by no means unusual for architects and their clients in the later decades of the 19th century.

The south elevation of the house is the climactic façade, intended to be seen at advantage as a fine, formal architectural statement in views from the south. By and large, the design is not overstated. The temptation to add grand towers has been resisted; instead the north and south elevations are terminated by stunted towers and the whole is unified by balustrading. The principal rooms and bedrooms are arranged along the south side of the house and, from their windows, the dramatic vista is enjoyed to the full. The main rooms are designed in a wide variety of styles and reflect the interests and rather opulent tastes of the Corys.

The single most important room - entered on arrival – is the Great Hall which has echoes of important 16th century houses (such as Hampton Court and Burghley) but seems more likely to have been influenced by some of the extraordinary Gothic interiors created in houses and mansions closer to home around Cardiff. Externally, the Great Hall is the one grandiose element of the building and rises to a lofty height which, although impressive, is slightly disproportionate to the rest of the house. Its height may have been dictated by a requirement to accommodate the huge tracery window containing a stained glass depiction of Queen Elizabeth I at Tilbury, which is inserted into the north gable end. The Great Hall is thought to be intended as a reminder of the notion that Dyffryn was at the heart of an ancient manor. The subject of the Great Hall window may have been conceived as another visual link between the Corys new mansion and the 16th century Button family. The window is believed to have been commissioned by John Cory.



Dyffryn's Great Hall

20 Hilling, John B, 1973. Cardiff and the Valleys Architecture & Landscape

6.4 Dyffryn House – interiors

Where did John and Anna Cory's tastes for designing the interiors come from? During the second half of the 19th century, the use of salvaged elements from older buildings for internal decoration was on the increase. Many architects took advantage of a glut of architectural elements, panelling or chimneypieces readily purchased from hundreds of old buildings, particularly religious, that were now in decay. It was often cheaper to buy salvaged ready-made features than to have them designed and made new. The mid-19th century also saw the emergence of the decorator as a professional.[21]

The fittings of the great hall - in particular its fireplaces and those in other rooms - have a flavour of some of the features, albeit more lavish, installed in Cardiff Castle some thirty years previously. The built form of the castle was magnificently transformed by William Burges for the young Marquess of Bute between 1868 and 1881 when Burges died. Within the castle, Burges designed each room thematically with complex, idiosyncratic iconographies, which called for the combined efforts of sculptor, painter, joiner, metal-worker and stained-glass artist.[22]

The castle was a private world and, unless any city dignitaries were ever invited there, the Corys are unlikely to have seen the interiors. However, many illustrations appeared in the architectural press to give an inkling of the exotic splendours within.[23] It is possible that E.A. Lansdowne saw these pictures and then showed them to, and discussed them with the Corys. While it seems highly improbable that the Non-conformist Corys would wish to ape the sheer sumptuousness of the Cardiff Castle interiors, the creation of a great hall of Tudor proportions must surely have been a stipulation made by John Cory to his architect. Lansdowne was given the task of marrying that extraordinary part of the house in sympathetically with the more classical proportions of the other parts of the building; arguably he achieved this more successfully on the inside than the out.

Insole Court, Llandaff – dining room

Tŷ-to-maen, St Mellons

21 Harris, J., 2007. *Moving rooms: the trade in architectural salvage*, p69

22 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p101

23 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p101

According to Newman, two country houses close to Cardiff that show the most earnest efforts to ape the design style of Burgess, particularly in their interiors, were Insole Court, Llandaff and Tŷ-to-maen, St Mellons. The latter, designed by E.M. Bruce Vaughn in 1885, was a Tudor Gothic house which contained mighty hooded chimneypieces in two rooms and stained glass by *Campbell & Smith* (a company also used at Cardiff Castle). The Corys lived at Vaendre Hall in St Mellons at the time that Tŷ-to-maen was built and it seems quite likely that they would have visited the house. This, then, could have been a more likely source of ideas, influencing on their taste.

Another possible source of inspiration may have been the house of William Graham Vivian, a member of a prominent family of Swansea-based industrialists who specialised in the processing of copper. Vivian bought Clyne Castle near Swansea in 1859-60. It had already been extended and remodelled in a simple castellated style. To this, Vivian added a Tudor-style Great Hall and north wing. The ceilings of the rooms were modelled after Knole and Holland House. The Great Hall is dominated by a pink Rosso di Verona marble hooded and consoled Italian late 16th century chimneypiece. Many of Vivian's glorious salvaged features had been brought from Italy but also from France.[24]

Cory's salvaged features are no less glorious but tend to be of English or northern European provenance, possibly reflecting personal preferences. In his book 'Moving Rooms', John Harris suggests that the conventional Lansdowne could hardly have been expected to have access to, or indeed sympathize with the astonishing fireplace salvages that came Cory's way. The fireplace in the Great Hall is a compilation of several features: a fine late C17th white marble cartouche of arms in the centre, and life-size wooden Mannerist figures of Ceres (l.) and Prudence (r.), both carrying baskets of fruit on their heads, one on either side of the fireplace. These are German or Netherlandish early 17th century ecclesiastical carvings of stunning quality. The upper walls of the

Clyne Castle

Wooden statue of Prudence on one side of the Great Hall fireplace

Great Hall showing the plaster relief tondi over the doorways

24 Harris, J., 2007. *Moving rooms: the trade of architectural salvage*, pp69-70

Great Hall were adorned with tapestries of similar date, showing the history of Titus and Vespasian. These are thought to have gone to Llantarnam Abbey (owned by Sir Clifford Cory) when Dyffryn was sold.

Despite the fireplace and tapestries, the general architectural style of the Great Hall is of the late 17th – 18th century, with two tiers of pilasters, rising above a high panelled dado, with Corinthian capitals and a deep dentil cornice. The minstrels gallery across the south end of the hall is carried on large curved brackets. Beneath this, the doorways to the Billiards, Blue Drawing and Red Drawing Rooms are surmounted by circular, plaster, bas-relief, tondi set in timber frames with strapwork mounts, again of a style more typical to the 17th or 18th centuries.

In the Dining Room (built maybe 10 years after Cory's initial remodelling) is another composite fireplace this time with a carved oak canopy and bizarrely flanked by six-winged cherubim standing in cross-legged pose that were probably made originally to adorn confessionals.

The Red Drawing Room and the adjacent Blue Drawing Room contain two magnificent and related Jacobean alabaster and coloured marble chimneypieces with overmantles. One design represents peace and other war.[25] The painted inscriptions on them for Curzon and Zouche give a clue to their provenance: they were removed from Scarsdale House, Kensington, London that belonged to the Curzon family (the Lords Zouche). However, this was not their original home. They were first installed at some date after 1600 in the west wing of Losely, Sir George More's country seat; Harris considers them likely to have once ornamented a long gallery. [26]

To these salvaged features were added many new decorative details, again of eclectic style and subject. Other rooms - such as the Red Library and what became Florence Cory's Boudoir - had fireplaces which were newly made[27], but to design styles reminiscent of the 18th century.

Early 17th century fire surround in Blue Drawing Room

Late 19th century fireplace in Red Library

Blue Drawing Room ceiling

25 Harris, J., 2007. *Moving rooms: the trade of architectural salvage*, p71

26 Rodney Melville & Partners Ltd., 2010. *Dyffryn: Conservation Management Plan Gazetteer*, p34

27 Newman, J., 1995. *The Buildings of Wales. Glamorgan*, p341

The ceilings of the Blue and Red Drawing Rooms were decorated with paintings by T. W. Hay. Hay is best known for his tapestry designs for The Old (Royal) Windsor Tapestry Manufactory, one of only two tapestry works established in England in the 19th century. Both ceilings show allegorical scenes. That of the Blue Drawing Room shows a floating goddess accompanied by cherubs, all carrying trailing handfuls of flowers. The ceiling of the Red Drawing Room shows a goddess on a chariot being drawn by two swans, the reins of which are held by a standing winged cherub. Behind these, two other cherubs frolic and doves fly in the sky above. The border is neoclassical in style decorated with swags and drops with pairs of cherubs in the corner roundels.

Harris comments that "*what strikes one in both Clyne and Dyffryn is the use of salvages as an amateur intervention of a decidedly Victorian sort, an inappropriateness in the construct of the ensemble caused by the variety of salvages imported into the rooms, whether French, Flemish, German or Italian*."[28]

28 Harris, J., 2007. *Moving rooms: the trade of architectural salvage*, p72

7. Dyffryn gardens: possible design influences and design intent

7.1 Garden design: local context

When John and Anna Cory first bought Dyffryn in 1891, their youngest son Reginald was a young man of twenty and still studying at Cambridge. His real life's interest may have barely started and it would appear that the early years of remodelling the garden at Dyffryn were entirely a reflection of John and Anna Cory's tastes and interests. Their initial remodelling of the garden was simple and conventional, with a balustraded south terrace, beds of formal floral display and a tennis lawn. The kitchen garden – an essential functional element of any large house country house – appears to have been overhauled and brought up to standard.

When the Corys decided to appoint Thomas Mawson, in 1903 or '04, to design more extensive gardens for Dyffryn House, Reginald Cory was probably still in his formative years as a horticulturalist and was just developing his own ideas about garden design. His later wide network of eminent friends and contacts in the horticultural world was probably only just starting to be formed. So we cannot know how many other gardens he had visited that were designed in the Arts and Crafts manner of garden rooms. However, given his love of books, he must have seen numerous illustrations of contemporary gardens in horticultural and architectural publications. Moving in the upper echelons of Cardiff and Glamorgan society, he will almost certainly have visited the larger and better gardens of the region and have taken away ideas from some of these.

Formal gardens in the locality that slightly pre-dated the new gardens of Dyffryn include the fine Victorian - Edwardian garden at Insole Court. These gardens were created by Violet Insole who was a passionate horticulturalist and an expert on alpine plants and irises. The garden had formal terracing and balustrading and even a flight of steps with reclining lion figures to either side. It contained extensive rockwork providing a setting for Violet's collection of alpines and rock plants.[1]

At St Donat's Castle there are extensive terraces and walled gardens of Tudor date which, in themselves, must have been magnificent. Within this strong framework, two Edwardian layouts were implemented: a Rose Garden and a Blue Garden. A small garden house of mildly Italianate design still survives.

Edwardian pavilion built within the terraced gardens of St Donat's Castle

1 Parks & Gardens, UK website. *Insole Court, Cardiff, Wales*, July 2007 http://www.parksandgardens.org

George Clark had purchased Talygarn, only a few miles from Dyffryn, in 1865. He did not commence any substantial work on the house or garden until 1879 when a flower garden was laid out. In 1893, a rose garden was added, the north lawn was widened and a large lake was created. Clark was a prominent horticulturalist and was elected Vice-President of the Royal Horticultural Society in 1877. He grew bananas and vines at Talygarn. He finally sold the property in 1923.[2] It seems likely that he and the Corys (both generations) would have known each other and Reginald is likely to have visited his gardens.

Yew Walk at Talygarn

Adams Well, Talygarn

St Fagans Castle has historic layers of landscape design dating from several periods. However, between 1898 and the 1930s, Robert George Windsor-Clive and his wife Alberta undertook a 'restoration' which contributed a substantial Edwardian layer to the gardens, notably creating an Italian garden laid out in Arts and Crafts style.[3]

Another garden of quite different style was developed during the early years of the 20th century by Llewellyn Edmund Traherne (father of Sir Cennydd) at neighbouring Coedarhydyglyn. Working within the context of an early 19th century Picturesque landscape park, Traherne created informal woodland gardens including a woodland dell with a Japanese flavour.[4]

7.2 Garden design: regional context and published examples

Beyond the Severn estuary, Somerset was particularly richly endowed with some superb Edwardian gardens contemporaneous with Dyffryn. According to Tim Mowl, all the major designers of the period are represented – Edwin Lutyens (Hestercombe and Ammerdown), Gertrude Jekyll (Hestercombe and Barrington Court), Harold Peto (several including Wayford Manor and Iford Manor), Reginald Blomfield (Tyntesfield), Alfred Parsons, Walter Cave (Tyntesfield), Henry Avary Tipping (Wootton House near Glastonbury), Hugh Mackay Baillie Scot, Francis Inigo Thomas (Barrow Court) and, of course, Thomas Mawson (Barley Wood).[5] We cannot know how much Mawson and Cory were influenced by the contemporary work of these other designers. In 1904-'05, a number of these fine Somerset gardens were not yet built. In any event, by this date

2 Parks & Gardens, UK website. *Talygarn, Mid Glamorgan, Wales*. July 2007 http://www.parksandgardens.org

3 Parks & Gardens, UK website. *St Fagan's Castle, Cardiff, Wales*. July 2007 http://www.parksandgardens.org

4 Parks & Gardens, UK website. *Coedarhydyglyn, Cardiff, Wales*, July 2007 http://www.parksandgardens.org

5 Mowl, T., Mako, M., 2010. *Historic Gardens of Somerset*, p188.

Mawson's own design approach was tried, tested and confident, and he had published his own book on the subject. Also Mawson and Cory may not have had the time (particularly in Mawson's case) or opportunity to visit other interesting new gardens in the region, although they were likely to have read descriptions and seen photographs published books and articles. Among the publications most likely to have influenced them were J D Sedding's '*Garden-Craft Old and New'* which came out in 1890 and advocated the adoption of the 'architectural garden'. Reginald Blomfield had published his '*Formal Garden in England*' illustrated by Francis Inigo Thomas, in 1892.[6] Cory owned a copy of J.A. Hughes' '*Garden Architecture and Landscape Gardening*' published in 1866. His annotated copy now resides in the RHS Lindley Library.[7] Between 1899 and 1918, Gertrude Jekyll also became a prolific garden writer, publishing 13 books which illustrated the rich relationship between attractive planting and strong garden architecture.

During his early years of practice from the mid-1880s to the early 1900s, while still developing his own design approach and building his reputation, Mawson had worked with some talented architects of the Arts and Crafts movement. These including Dan Gibson with whom he was in partnership for a few years, Hugh Mackay Baillie Scott (at Blackwell in 1902), C.F.A. Voysey (at Moor Crag beside Lake Windermere) and Charles Edward Mallows, who became one of the illustrators of *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*.[8] Successful collaboration with architects of this calibre must surely have helped to mould the designer that Mawson became. When Mawson brought out his own book in 1900, *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, it brought him wider acclaim and led to many new commissions beyond the north-west of England.

In common with other Edwardian garden designers such as Peto, Dawber, Lutyens and Belcher, Mawson's design style reflected a return to formal or architectural gardens, but he did not believe in a 'slavish adherence to style or tradition'.[9] Early on in his design career, he had developed an admiration for Ruskin who had finally settled at Brantwood on Coniston Water in 1872. Ruskin had urged the restoration of local crafts and rural industry and Mawson embraced this concept wholeheartedly. His gardens were to abound in good craftsmanship: dry stone walls with careful planting; stone stairways linking terraces, stone paving round pools, wooden trellises for roses and wooden gates with their half circle tops; intricate brick and tile designs in walls; topiary shapes, avenues lined with trees, formal beds close to the house and displays of horticultural expertise in the borders.[10] However, Ruskin's view of the natural was one of awe and admiration; it did not need re-arranging by man. He disliked topiary and hated brightly coloured flowers.[11] Clearly, Mawson did not follow Ruskin's likes and dislikes to the letter either.

In the manner of the new Edwardian garden designers, near the house Mawson considered 'a formal treatment the one most likely to give satisfactory results'. In many of his designs he laid out strong formal spaces at the approach and across the main garden front of the house with strong axes where the site would permit. He often

6 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, p15

7 Reader, J., 16 Mar 2014. Information sent by e-mail to the author

8 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, pp28-44

9 Mawson, T., 1900. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, 1st Edition, preface, p xii

10 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, p24

11 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, p24

created smaller subordinate garden spaces to the sides of the house or to the sides of the main garden axis. At Dyffryn, we have the advantage of Mawson's own description of his main design purposes and also an indication of how much his client, Reginald Cory, was involved.

7.3 The choice of Thomas Mawson as designer

A number of factors probably interacted to inspire and stimulate the creation of the wonderful gardens that exist today. John Cory's interest in the development of a garden village appears to have been sparked somewhere around 1900, possibly at Reginald's suggestion and certainly with his enthusiastic involvement. Maybe Cory recognised that his youngest son needed a project or a direction. Precisely why the Corys chose Thomas Mawson as the designer for their garden village project is uncertain because, in 1903, Mawson was only at the beginning of his career in town planning. In fact, Glyn Cory must have been one of his first commissions to design a settlement rather than a pure public park or garden. However, Mawson's reputation as a landscape architect was well established, his book *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* was in circulation and he was in demand as a designer. He also already contacts in the region. In the late 1890s, he had been employed by John, the third Marquess of Bute (owner of Cardiff Castle) at Mount Stuart on the island of Bute at the mouth of the Firth of Clyde.[12] Mawson had also designed two public parks in South Wales – both at Newport – during the last decade of the 19th century. The first of these was Beechwood Park to the east of Newport and then, in 1891, he had gone on to win a design competition for Belle Vue Park to the west of Newport with a design called 'Seabreeze'.[13] The land for the park was given to the town by Lord Tredegar; the park was completed and opened in 1894. Mawson's only other known commission in south Wales before 1901-'02 was a garden design for St Mary's Lodge, Newport for Sir Edward Watson, in 1900.

By 1903, having lived at Dyffryn for nearly 10 years, the Corys – particularly Reginald - may have begun to regard the landscape beyond their existing gardens as something of a blank canvas waiting for a strong new design. The landscape that the house sits in offers no dramatic panoramas or eye-catching external focal points. The broad shallow valley extending away to north and south of the immediate gardens must have presented a peaceful but simple pastoral scene of parkland dotted with mature trees and farmland beyond. The only features of any drama were the limestone outcrop of the Rookery and the recently-created lake towards the southern end of the park.

It seems reasonable to suppose that Mawson's work at Glyn Cory gave John and Reginald Cory confidence that he would be the right designer to create their new gardens at Dyffryn, and so he was appointed.

12 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, pp87-88

13 Waymark, J., 2009. *Thomas Mawson. Life, gardens and landscapes*, pp188-191

7.4 Design intentions and results

7.4.1 Approach to the north front of the mansion

Mawson describes the work of planning the grounds at Dyffryn as beginning '*with the improvement of the approach roads and the design of a carriage court supported by a balustraded wall with wrought iron gates on the park side; the east side of the court supported by a high wall architecturally treated, and the west side by the service wing …*'

Evidently Mawson envisaged creating a highly formal entrance courtyard, reminiscent of important houses of the 17th and 18th centuries. It is interesting that the Corys never implemented this part of the master plan. Given the extent and complexity of the gardens that were laid out to the south and south-west of the house, building a relatively simple forecourt and axial drive – the latter flanked by a double avenue of trees - seems a relatively straight-forward exercise which could have implemented quite quickly. So why wasn't it?

On his master plan for Dyffryn of c.1906, Mawson appears to have either fudged the shape of the mansion, or anticipated the construction of future extensions to the house that may have been described to him by the Corys in outline; possibly a bit of both. The plan accurately anticipates the future service yard which was built as the Moorish Courtyard. It also shows the Dining Room and White Library extension which may have already existed by this date. Interestingly, it does not show the secretary's office. This raises the question of whether the secretary's office was built at the same time as the Dining Room and White Library, or whether it was built later. At the east end of the house, the footprint on Mawson's plan extends well beyond the existing footprint, appearing to anticipate another extension. Had this been implemented, it would have made the north front of the house much closer to symmetrical, but it would have affected the established symmetry of the south front.

Mawson's master plan clearly seeks to impose a stronger symmetry on the north front of the mansion and its approach. Whether the extensions to the house shown on his plan were being considered by the Corys (some may have already existed), or whether they were suggestions that Mawson was keen to promote is unclear. However, when considering Mawson's design for the north approach to the house, it is important to be aware of his perception of how the house itself might look in the future. In the event, the 20th century extensions to the north front were only built to the west of the great hall and the house remained strongly asymmetric on that side.

Mawson's formal entrance courtyard, which he described in the 1926 edition of '*The Art and Craft of Garden Making'* would have represented a substantial new feature in front of the house. It would have obscured the ground floor level of much of the building and it is debateable whether this would have been an improvement. A sketch below shows the effect that Mawson's proposals would have had. (The tree avenue is not shown.)

Existing view of the Dyffryn House as it is approached along the North Drive

The same view with a notional version of Mawson's formal entrance courtyard ghosted in

Possibly this was a little too grand for the Corys. Despite the stature of the Great Hall, the design of the rest of the house is somewhat understated. When Mawson prepared his designs, the mansion had only been re-modelled some 10-12 years earlier and presumably the Corys were pleased with it. Mawson's carriage court would have obscured the lower part of the north front and it seems likely that the Corys preferred the house to remain fully visible. They probably found the oblique carriage drive approaches attractive and had no wish to change them. Today the view of the house from the north drive – particularly of the Great Hall elevation - is obscured by two large cedars and other smaller trees planted in the 1950s.

7.4.2 Design of the axial south gardens

From the south front, Mawson needed to address the rather broad, low-lying valley landscape which - when he saw it in the early 1900s - would have been a parkland bisected by the River Waycock and punctuated by a number of old parkland trees. While respecting the established formal walk and tennis lawn (labelled on his master plan as a croquet lawn) in the foreground of the view, he set out to give the middle distance view a stronger structure. In Mawson's own words, the object was *"to gain a sense of scale, a restful base to the house and a compensating expanse of view from the principal rooms, to make up for the lack of more distant landscape views."*[14] He approached this in his usual style by establishing a structured axial layout to the gardens.

14 Mawson, T., 1926 *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, 5th Edition, p388

He formalised the tennis lawn that had already been created by John Cory and then, beyond it, created the Great Lawn. This was defined by making it slightly sunken relative to raised walks along the north, east and west sides and he gave further emphasis to the west and east sides with formal hedges (which appear to have never been planted). Mawson gave the lawn a strong central axis by designing a long central canal terminating in a lily pond at its south end. At the far end of this, there was to be a water pavilion providing a mid-distance focal point and then, finally, there was to be a lake beyond. The southern portion of this scheme appears to have foundered, presumably when the lake was dammed and filled causing flooding problems upstream, including in the cellars of the main house. The shape of the terminal lily pond was excavated (although not quite to the shape designed by Mawson) but it was not built until some fifteen or twenty years after Reginald Cory's death, when the gardens were managed by Glamorgan County Council.

We cannot know what the water pavilion might have looked like, or whether Mawson prepared any sketches. However, in order to make sufficient impact, it would have needed to be a substantial feature. Mawson's plan shows the pavilion spanning the full width between the outer limits of the existing pair of small pavilions. Examples of garden pavilions designed by Mawson's practice are shown below; they show a similarity of style, with hipped roof, deep architrave and colonnaded shelter below. Perhaps a version of this style is what Mawson had in mind for Dyffryn.

Kearnsey Court

Boveridge Park

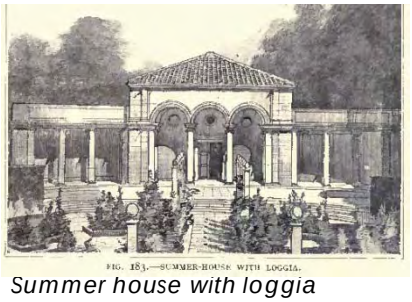


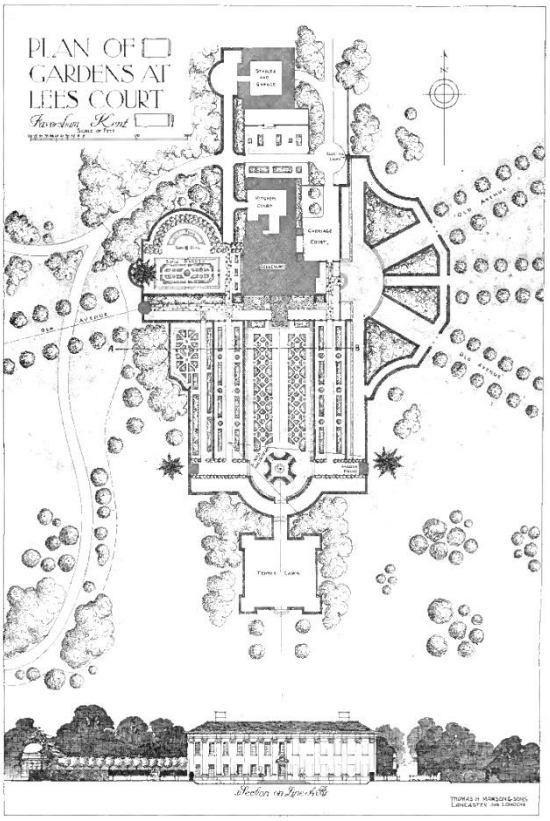
FIG. 183.—SUMMER-HOUSE WITH LOGGIA.

Summer house with loggia

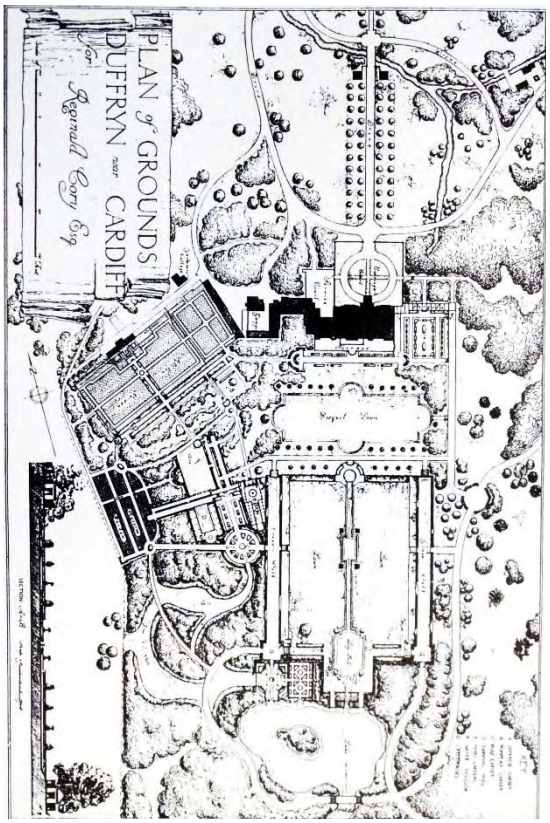
In the main view from the central rooms of the Dyffryn House, might Mawson's vision for the water pavilion have looked something like this?

7.4.3 Design of the garden rooms

In many of Mawson's garden designs there was a strong geometric hierarchy. The dominant, central garden spaces were often arranged to complement the main house. Secondary garden spaces were then arranged along lateral axes, frequently but not always at right angles. This strong geometry gives Mawson's gardens coherence in plan, which then translates into an easy legibility when walking through his gardens on the ground. The layout at Dyffryn, however, does not conform to this 'norm'. The small garden rooms are all positioned to one side of the great lawn and are arranged in a manner that looks curiously awkward on plan and can be confusing to the new visitor.



Mawson's design for Lees Court, showing the strong geometric balance favoured by Mawson (1908)



The master plan for Dyffryn (1906), showing a curious imbalance of the garden rooms all arranged to one side of the main axial lawn

The arrangement was probably dictated in part by the existing spatial relationship between the mansion, service ranges, kitchen garden and established south garden. Also the rising ground to the west of the great lawn allowed advantage to be taken of level differences between the garden rooms, offering greater opportunity for seclusion and surprise as one moves from room to room. However, it is clear that the garden design for Dyffryn was an active collaboration between Mawson and Cory and it seems likely that the rather lop-sided arrangement of the smaller gardens - all to one side of the main lawn and almost hugger-mugger in their relationship to each other - may have rather more at Cory's instigation than Mawson's. In '*The Art and Craft of Garden Making*' (5th edition) Mawson felt the need to say something about this cramped juxtapositioning:

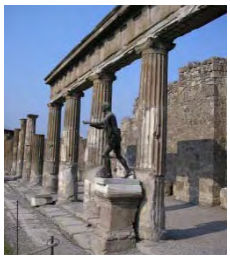
> "*It is true that there are startling contrasts and surprises, but as each garden is enclosed in its own screen of architecture or foliage, it seldom clashes with its neighbour.*"

The variety of the designs for the garden rooms probably also reflect the client's brief. Reginald Cory appears to have been keen to have a series of themed spaces in which a variety of plant collections could be arranged and shown off. Again, Mawson explains their joint approach by saying that "*we felt at liberty to indulge in every phase of garden design which the site and my client's catholic views suggested*".

In order to collect ideas, Mawson and Cory went on a trip to southern Europe together. Their itinerary is not known but the names given to the Pompeian Garden and Italian Terrace, together with other smaller elements of architectural detailing, suggest that their main destination was Italy. The Italian influence is easy to see in Mawson's design for the Pompeian Garden.

Pompeian Garden, Dyffryn

House of Vettii, Pompeii



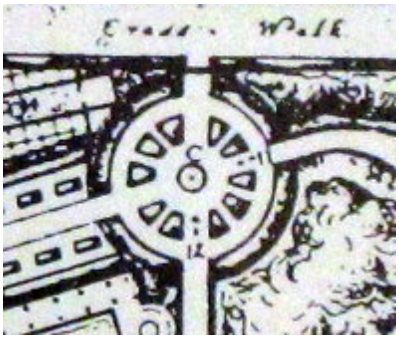
Temple of Apollo, Pompeii

Why did southern Europe hold an appeal? Clearly Reginald Cory's growing interest in horticulture fuelled his enthusiasm for looking at and collecting plants from southern Europe. But the draw of Italy may have been coloured by a prevailing perception of cultural values. Italy and Greece were exceptional in the British estimation in that they were foreign countries where the graces of superior civilisation were acquired rather than imparted. Here the British saw themselves as pupils rather than teachers, and would travel to these parts of Europe to absorb lessons in art and architecture.[15]

The Pompeian Garden is an unusual - almost innovative - style of garden for Mawson to have designed. At this stage in his career he had not travelled abroad and his design approach was still firmly rooted in the genre of the Arts and Crafts movement. The other garden room at Dyffryn which is distinctive and, again, clearly responds to a specific client brief is the theatre garden. No obvious design precedents suggest themselves and it would appear that this garden was a pure invention of Mawson's, based on the concept of a theatrical stage. A painting by Edith Adie of 1923 reveals that the stage did not extend as far forward as it does today and the stage surface appears to have been finished with gravel and tilted to show off Cory's collection of bonsai to best effect.

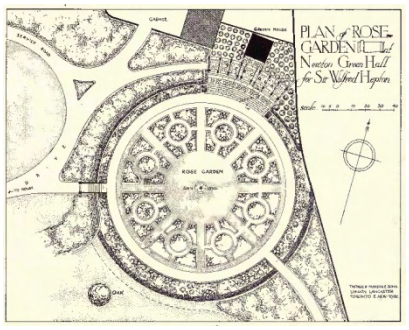
15 Pemble, J., 1987. *The Mediterranean Passion. Victorians and Edwardians in the South*, p60

In addition to the ideas that he brought back from Italy, inevitably Mawson also brought his own design experience to the gardens. The long herbaceous borders, the Rose Garden, the Lavender Court and Mawson's design for the site of the Heart Garden all have the 'feel' of garden spaces of a type that he had developed previously, found useful and could insert into various garden plans for different sites.

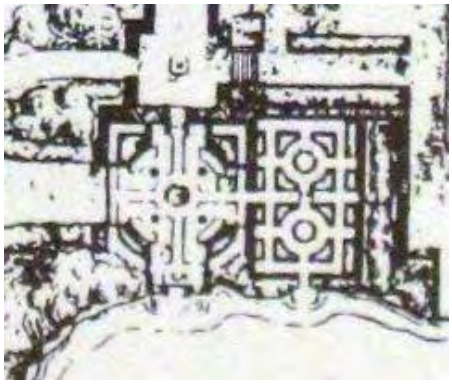


Rose Garden, Dyffryn

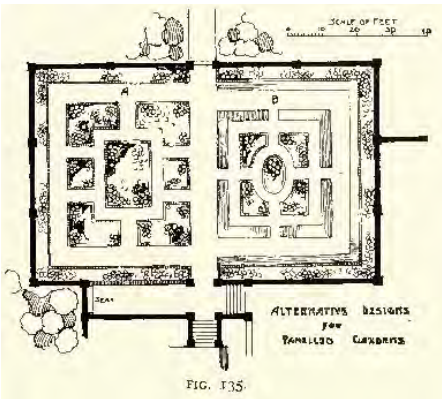
Mawson's master plan for Dyffryn, prepared in 1906 represents something of a 'snap-shot' illustrating the stage that the designs for Dyffryn had reached by that date. There had almost certainly been earlier versions of the plan and the 1906 plan shows Mawson's underlying structure but, by now, had been adapted to accommodate design elements created by Cory. Writing about the Lavender Court, Mawson describes its "*somewhat unusual treatment of raised beds planted with dwarf lavender and baby roses, whilst ….. water lily troughs have been arranged as part of the design*". One is left with the impression that this idiosyncratic choice of detailing was Cory's, not Mawson's.



Rose Garden, Newton Court (1910)



Details from Mawson's master plan for Dyffryn showing Lavender Court (left) and his design for the site of the Heart Garden (right)



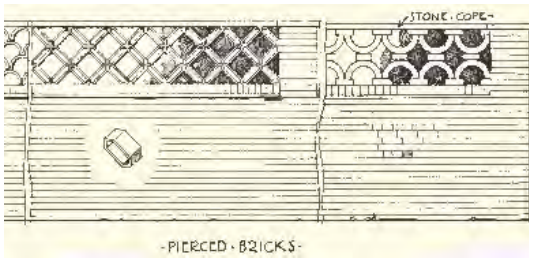
Example designs for panelled gardens, shown in 'The Art and Craft of Garden Making'

Mawson confirms that two of the garden rooms shown on the 1906 master plan – the Bathing Pool garden and the Paved Court (described as a panel garden) were planned by Reginald Cory. Nonetheless, the detailing in these two gardens may have been inspired by Mawson's own advice contained in '*The Art and Craft of Garden Making*'. Cory also appears to have been guided by an earlier book published in 1866, '*Garden Architecture and Landscape Gardening'* by John Arthur Hughes. Cory's copy of this book is now in the RHS Lindley Library and is marked with annotations which are thought to be in Cory's hand.[16] Some of the garden features designed by Cory are reminiscent of features to be found in the gardens created and owned by his friends and neighbours in Glamorgan.

The brick arched cloister adjoining the Lavender Court is described by Mawson in 1926, but was not shown on the master plan of 1906. Again, this suggests that this feature was designed and built at some date after 1906 by Cory, possibly drawing inspiration from some of the medieval structures and towers of Tuscany or Umbria?

Cory continued to develop his gardens well after 1906, but now working within the framework that he and Mawson had developed together. Probably driven by a collector's desire to continue creating new display spaces for his growing collections of plants, Cory's later gardens tended to be of simpler design tucked into the spaces between the architectural garden rooms of the 1906 plan. They usually comprised flowing paths running between broad plant borders. The exception to this is the Dutch Garden which appears to have been Cory's last architectural garden. It is not shown on the 1906 master plan; nor is the Italian terrace, part of which forms the enclosing western boundary to the Dutch Garden.

Paved Court balustrade and alcove pool



Examples of terraced walls and balustrades from 'The Art and Craft of Garden Making'

Adams Well, Talygarn, the garden of the prominent horticulturalist George Clark

Cory's brick arched cloister between Lavender Court and the site of the lake

16 Reader, J., 2014 Communication with author

The colonnaded detail at the highest level of the Italian terrace is reminiscent of colonnades to be found in Italy. It is not known whether this particular detail was designed by Mawson – as part of the long herbaceous garden – or by Cory as part of the Italian Terrace and Dutch Garden.

Italian Terrace, Dyffryn

Examples of Italian colonnades

In summary, it seems that the basic master plan for Dyffryn was developed by Mawson but that the idiosyncratic asymmetry of the plan was probably driven by Reginald Cory's brief to incorporate a suite of small garden spaces of diverse character. Mawson's involvement in the detailed design of these spaces may only have been moderate; he probably designed the details for the long herbaceous borders, the Pompeian Garden and the Theatre Garden. After 1906, Mawson was less available as, increasingly, his work was taking him abroad. So the detailed design for the other garden spaces appears to have been developed by Cory, relying on a combination of text book guidance and his own observations. Cory's head gardener, Arthur Cobb, also brought considerable talent not only to the cultivation of plants but also to the planting arrangements and design within the gardens. An article published in *The Gardeners' Chronicle* in December 1914 remarks that "*much of the work has been carried out during the last seven years by Mr. Cory and his energetic gardener. The improvements made have consisted in extending and modifying of the grounds as they were laid out by Mr. Mawson.*" [17]

17 The Gardeners' Chronicle, 12 Dec 1914. *Florists' Dahlias and the Duffryn Trials'*, p380.

8. Natural Environment and Wildlife

8.1 General

Dyffryn Gardens lie within the gently sloped combined valleys of the Nant-Brân and River Waycock. In its turn, this valley system is part of an active lowland river system which dissects the limestone plateau of the Vale of Glamorgan and runs into the Thaw, south of Llancadle. The valley is a relatively unspoiled historic rural landscape, retaining a coherent pattern of large fields and woodlands. The combination of road, streams and drainage ditches, stone walls and dwellings is typical to this part of the Vale of Glamorgan. The general integrity and well-managed condition of this landscape is relatively rare within the Vale.[1]

Dyffryn House and its gardens sit right in the floor of the valley at the confluence of the Nant-Brân stream and the River Waycock. During periods of high rainfall, there is run-off from neighbouring land on higher ground and numerous ditches carry water in addition to the main streams. Inevitably there is a tendency for the site to be wet and, in periods of prolonged rainfall, the Dyffryn property is subject to flooding. Dyffryn village, downstream, also gets flooded.

The Dyffryn Gardens estate supports a mosaic of habitats including parkland, woodland (the arboretum), formal gardens, ancient woodland (The Rookery), ponds and streams, buildings and areas of species-rich neutral grassland (in the arboretum). The wildlife that exists on the Dyffryn estate should be conserved and managed not only on grounds of individual rarity at a national, regional or local level, but also in recognition of the role that those habitats play within the broader context of a network of similar habitats that exist in this part of Glamorgan.

The NERC Act 2006, Section 42 lists species of all taxonomic groups that are of principal importance and habitats that are of principal conservation importance in Wales. Of the UK's 65 priority habitats (defined in 2007 by the UK Biodiversity Partnership), 51 occur in Wales. Section 42 lists identify those habitats and species which are important, both nationally and locally, particularly in terms of rate of decline over the past 50 years. Some of these habitats and species have a significant presence in the Vale of Glamorgan. Plant and animal species that are of particular conservation concern or interest locally are

- species that are particularly vulnerable (e.g. brown hare);
- species where the area supports a significant percentage of the UK population (e.g. great crested newt);
- species where specific management is, or could reverse the decline.

Dyffryn Gardens is identified in the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). SINCs are non-statutory sites identified in order to protect areas of substantive nature conservation value at the local level. The identification of SINCs is an important mechanism in ensuring that the habitats and species identified as being of importance in the Vale of Glamorgan are protected. Section 42 –listed Priority Habitats to be found at Dyffryn Gardens are:

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1 Vale of Glamorgan CB Council, 2011. *Designation of Special Landscape Areas: Review Against Historic Landscapes Evaluations Update.* SLA5 Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes

Wood pasture and parkland
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
Hedgerows
Lowland meadows
Lowland calcareous grassland
Rivers and streams
Ponds
Inland

Known protected species present on the site include a considerable variety of bats including the lesser horseshoe, brown long-eared and whiskered/Brandt's bats. Lesser horseshoe bat is included in Annex 11 of the Habitats Directive and so is of international importance and requires special protection of its roosts and feeding areas. Within the past 5 years, a range of Red- and Amber-listed bird species have been recorded on the site.

The ponds and streams support great crested newts. No evidence has been found for the presence of water voles or otters.

Although there are no designated geological sites on the property, the Carboniferous limestone outcrop of The Rookery is a feature of interest, contrasting with the mudstone that dominates much of the Dyffryn site.

Dyffryn is sufficiently far from the urban areas of Cardiff and Barry to enjoy relatively dark night skies. Dyffryn is home to a small observatory belonging to the Cardiff Astronomical Society which is used regularly by the society's members individually and for group observing sessions.

Clean air is another significant attribute at Dyffryn. The good range of lichens which grow on a range of substrates is testament to how much the air quality in the region has improved over the past 50 years, as the effects of the Clean Air Acts have become embedded in the industrial system.

A summary plan presenting significant vegetation and biological features across the Dyffryn property is presented in Map IV of Appendix F.

8.2 Trees

8.2.1 Parkland trees

Lowland wood pasture and parkland as a habitat is the product of historic land management systems and represents a certain vegetation structure rather than a particular plant community. The parkland at Dyffryn probably dates from no earlier than the late 18th century, and so was probably never managed as wood pasture. The parkland trees were almost certainly planted for aesthetic effect and comprise a variety of species, including some veteran trees of native and introduced species. A scattering of veteran trees survives throughout the site in the outlying meadows and parkland, but also in the arboretum and a few survive in the gardens. They include veteran oak, sycamore, lime and a fine sweet chestnut, all of which appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1878 and many of which probably date from much earlier.

A group of veteran oaks with decaying boughs in North Meadow support two Nationally Scarce beetles associated with fungoid growth on their bark. They also support a good cover of lichens and bryophytes, epiphytes including the common polypody fern. One veteran oak growing towards the north end of North Park is hollowed out and supports *Ganoderma* bracket fungi.[2]

Within the inner areas of North Park and the North Lawn, the majority of trees are much younger and the variety of species is broader, including a number of exotics. Many date from the 1950s, when Dyffryn was managed by Glamorgan County Council. They include ornamental trees such as Paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*), London plane (*Platanus x hispanica*), *Gingko biloba* and Copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) and hybrid poplar. Tree belts, planted for shelter and screening, predominantly comprise larch (*Larix decidua*) and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). The shelter belt between along the Dyffryn Lane boundary of North Park also contains silver birch (*Betula pubescens*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and London plane.

Today different parts of the historic parkland of Dyffryn are managed in different ways. The majority of the outlying areas of parkland have now reverted to agricultural land, some cultivated and some remaining as pasture. The inner parkland areas, which comprise North park, the north lawn and the main gardens and arboretum, are now all subject to high or relatively high levels of maintenance. Despite this, the veteran and older trees remaining in all these parkland areas represent a valuable wildlife habitats, supporting a range of birds, bats, moths, beetles and other invertebrates, fungi, mosses and lichen are associated with this habitat. The wood-decay, epiphyte communities and mycorrhizal (root-based) communities are likely to be species-rich and will include saproxylic organisms associated with veteran trees.

Storm-damaged mature trees in the former parkland areas (now meadows) around the periphery of the Dyffryn estate have rotting cavities which are likely to have been well-colonised by wood boring insects. Tree holes and cavities are also a potentially valuable habitat for bats. Amber-listed breeding birds associated with the parkland trees include green woodpeckers and mistle thrush.

Factors affecting veteran trees which may be relevant at Dyffryn include:

1. inappropriate grazing levels, particularly under-grazing leading to loss of habitat structure;
2. fragmentation of remaining parkland and landscapes containing veteran trees (poor powers of dispersal are characteristic of dependent species);
3. pasture improvement through fertilisation/chemical treatment and/or mechanical means such as deep ploughing or reseeding;
4. over-estimation of work needed to make trees safe in areas of public access and over-zealous dead-wooding of trees; and
5. visitor pressures causing soil compaction, especially through car parking.

2 National Trust, Oct 2012 *Dyffryn House and Gardens Biological Survey*, 2012/13. Map IV

6.2.2 Garden trees and woodlands

The trees in the gardens and arboretum comprise a particularly rich variety of species, including many exotics planted during the 19th and particularly the early 20th centuries. In addition, there are a number of veteran trees which stood within the parkland before – sometimes well before - the gardens of the Cory period were created. These include a veteran lime (*Tilia cordata*) in the Australasian garden, a particularly fine Lucombe oak on the Archery Lawn and several veteran oaks in the arboretum. The latter support various fungi including beef steak fungus (*Fistulina hepatica*) and a Nationally Scarce beetle associated with brown heart rot.[3]

Other mature trees in the gardens - probably planted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries - include *Gingko biloba*, Black pine (Pinus nigra), Black Poplar (*Populus x canadensis* 'Robusta'), Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*), Wellingtonia *(Sequoiadendron giganteum),* Copper Beech, Japanese Thuja (*Thuja standishii*), Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa),* Silver Pendent Lime (*Tilia tomentosa* 'Petiolaris'), Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoial glyptostroboides*), Swamp Cypress (*Taxodiumdistichum*) and Chinese Wingnut (*Pterocarya stenoptera*). The range of trees in the arboretum is even broader.

The woodland on the Rookery knoll is included in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland. This inventory identifies sites that have had a continuous woodland cover for centuries. These woodlands are typically more ecologically diverse and of higher nature conservation value than those that have developed recently or those where woodland cover on the site has been intermittent. It is apparent that the woodland on the Rookery knoll has been re-planted during the 19th and 20th centuries with a few exotic tree species (now lost) and native trees including oak and yew. But it's inclusion in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland indicates that it has probably been wooded continuously for centuries. The yew canopy, which is now mature and therefore dense, has probably resulted in the loss of ground flora species, but some may survive. Consideration could be given to opening the canopy to see what species might re-grow given sufficient light.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders on any of the trees at Dyffryn, because the property is owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

8.2.3 Management of veteran and mature trees for the benefit of wildlife

Specific actions which could be taken at Dyffryn, seeking to enhance the development of future generations of veteran trees, include:

1. minimising dead-wooding from existing mature trees, recognising their future role as veterans;
2. a limited amount of dead wood that has fallen from old trees could be moved to positions close to young trees of the same species, with the object of transferring epiphytic or mycorrhizal organisms to a future generation of host trees;
3. planting and/or creating new pollards, in locations near existing ancient trees, using native species to match those of the veteran trees, and within the dispersal distance for characteristic associated species; and

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3 National Trust, Oct 2012 *Dyffryn House and Gardens Biological Survey*, 2012/13. Map IV

4. development of a tree planting programme for Dyffryn Gardens to ensure a long-term succession of future garden and parkland trees and continuity of habitat for associated species.

8.3 Hedgerows

The hedgerows defining outer areas of the former parkland - particularly those bordering North Meadow and East Meadow - are in variable condition; in places they are overgrown and straggly, in others the hedgerow is more-or-less lost. Some historic hedgerows have been lost completely but their position can still be traced because of surviving hedgerow trees. The existing hedgerows would benefit from a combination of re-planting where they are thin, and also cutting and coppicing or laying to renovate them. This would create a greater range of habitat heights, which will encourage nesting and feeding by a broader range of birds and small mammals. Work to the hedgerows should not be undertaken during the breeding season for nesting birds.

The possibility of re-planting lost hedgerows, or planting new ones, might be considered in terms of the roles that they play in slowing down the rate of overland flow of excess water in periods of prolonged rainfall and also in trapping sediment.

8.4 Grassland

8.4.1 General context

Wales is particularly important for conservation of the *Cynosurus cristatus - Centaurea nigra* grassland (MG5 in the National Vegetation Classification[4]). This is probably the natural community type for much of the grassland of the Lias Vale in its unmodified state, though agricultural improvement has driven most examples to the less diverse and more widespread MG6 grassland.[5] The lowland hay meadow habitat has declined significantly as a result of agricultural improvement. Other factors affecting the habitat are recreational pressure (erosion, trampling) and neglect or inappropriate management leading to the invasion of rank vegetation or scrub.

Today's Dyffryn estate contains three areas of meadow or remnant meadow:

i) the former parkland to the west of the north drive;
ii) East Meadow, to the east of Dyffryn Lane, immediately to the east of the house and arboretum; and
iii) a small area of hay meadow in the arboretum.

Limited information is available about the grass and herb species growing in these areas.

8.4.2 North Meadow

The former parkland to the west of the north drive (North Meadow) remains as meadow. The meadow has been sheep-grazed in the past [6] and for some years it was grazed, on an informal basis, by a neighbour's horses. That arrangement ceased a

4 Rodwell, J.S., 1992. *British Plant Communities, Volume 3. Grass and montane communities*

5 Vale of Glamorgan Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 2002. *Lowland Hay Meadow Habitat Action Plan*

6 Donovan, G. 27 March 2014. Verbal communication

number of years ago.[7] Since then it has been left un-grazed and the grass is now rank. This is probably detrimental to the species diversity owing to more aggressive grass and herb species being allowed to out-compete the slower-growing species. An ecological survey of North Park (the field between the north drive and today's visitor reception) was carried out in 2005.[8] The only area of richer sward identified in that survey was found on the verge along the west side of north drive, bordering North Meadow. (North Meadow itself was not included in the survey.) The verge grassland was described as semi-improved and the soils are more calcareous than those found elsewhere on the site. This is reflected by the presence of bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*), cowslip (*Primula veris*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), hoary plantain (*Plantago media*), glaucous sedge (*Carex flacca*) and the moss *Thuidium tamariscinum*. In 2005, broadleaved herbs were frequent and included bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*), bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), common cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), thyme-leaved speedwell (*Veronica serpyllifolia*), marsh thistle (*Cirsium palustre*), hairy lady's-mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*), germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys)*, common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederecea*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus reptans*). The area was considered to be approaching the MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus -Centaurea nigra* community of the NVC.

8.4.3 East Meadow

East Meadow became part of the Dyffryn parkland in the 19th century and then, during the second half of the 20th century, was used a nursery area by Glamorgan County Council. Depending on how extensive the nursery was, it is probable that the soil nutrient levels were raised as a result of soil improvement and fertiliser applications. More recently, the land has remained fallow although a few years ago, a portion of East Meadow was sown with a sunflower mixed crop to benefit the bird population. This was supported by the Countryside Council for Wales and was maintained for a couple of years but then lapsed. From 2010 - 2014, a number of bee hives were located in the East Meadow and managed by the Cardiff, Vale and Valleys Beekeepers' Association. The hives have now been re-located because they were not particularly productive in this location.[9]

An option for the use of East Meadow with particular potential for wildlife benefit would be a community orchard. In fact, the benefits would be multiple:

- wildlife benefits derived from the trees, grassland and soils;
- potential of the orchard for conservation of genetic diversity of local fruit tree varieties;
- local food production (fruit, juice, cider, honey, livestock products); and
- opportunity for involvement of the local community.

8.4.5 Arboretum grassland

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7 Donovan, G. 19 Feb 2014. E-mail to author

8 David Clements Ecology Ltd, 2005. *Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Ecological Assessment of Grassland Area.*

9 Donovan, G. 19 Feb 2014. E-mail to author

A pocket of open hay meadow survives at the south end of the arboretum, amongst the trees. This was surveyed in 1997 by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) as part of a much larger regional survey of rich lowland grassland throughout the former counties of Mid and South Glamorgan. The survey showed that the meadow is comprised of neutral grassland with some areas of a more calcareous (calcicolous) nature.

The majority of the grassland is neutral grassland of National Vegetation Community (NVC) MG1, dominated by *Arrhenantherum elatius*. The mown grass paths are of vegetation type *Centaurea nigra – Cynosurus cristatus* grassland, NVC type MG5.

In 1997, small stands of the calcicolous grassland - NVC type CG3 *Bromus erectus* grassland - were considered to be of the greatest conservation interest. Upright brome (*Bromus erectus*) is abundant in the sward, which includes many other species including *Carex flacca*, common bent grass (*Agrostis capiliaris*), sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), quaking grass (*Briza media*), lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*) bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) and salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*).[10] More recently, in 2012, devil's bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) and betony (*Stachys officinalis*) have been recorded.[11]

The ideal form of management for this type of grassland would be grazing by stock, preferably cattle, but this would be impractical in this situation. Instead, a mowing regime designed to benefit the sward has been maintained for some years. Before 1997, the gardeners took one hay cut in late summer each year. The CCW recommended that the sward should be cut twice a year, once in late June/early July and then again in late summer/early autumn.[12] In fact, the meadow is still cut once a year, usually at the beginning of September and the arisings are left for 2-3 days to allow the seed to drop before the hay is collected and disposed of.[13] A valuable alternative would be to collect the freshly cut hay, before the seeds have dropped and spread it on other grasslands to encourage the establishment of greater floristic diversity in other areas.[14] A variable cutting regime, of just one cut in one year, and two cuts in another, would favour the seeding and regeneration of a broader range of herb species.

8.4.6 North Park and North Lawn

An ecological survey of North Park (the field between the north drive and today's visitor reception) conducted by David Clements Ecology Ltd in 2005 showed that the grassland was nearly all a fairly species-poor example of MG6 *Lolium perenne - Cynosurus cristatus* neutral grassland of limited significance. The sward was recorded as being short, tight and dominated by yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*). A limited number of broadleaved herbs were recorded, the most abundant being cuckooflower (*Cardmanine pratense*), common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinalis* agg.) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*). The main central area of grassland is still mown weekly during the growing season and the

10 Countryside Council for Wales, 2007 *Lowland Grassland Survey. ST 07/4 Dyffryn Gardens*

11 National Trust, Oct 2012 *Dyffryn House and Gardens Biological Survey*, 2012/13. Map IV

12 Garner, G. A., Countryside Council for Wales. 20 July 1998. Letter to G. Donovan, Dyffryn restoration project manager

13 Luker, A., 10 Mar 2014. E-mail to author

14 Buckingham, H., & Bullock, D., June 2012 *Dyffryn Gardens Nature Conservation visit, 25 June 2012*

clippings are left. Bluebell was last recorded along the banks of the River Waycock in 2003.[15]

The neighbouring north lawn (to the immediate south of the River Waycock) had been identified previously as comprising moderately species-rich semi-improved neutral grassland but, in 2005, it was found to have declined and now had a similar ecological status to the grass of North Park. No rare or scarce species were recorded in the grass sward of North Park although grey sedge (*Carex divulsa*), a species that is infrequent in Glamorgan, was growing in the NE corner of North Park, west of East Lodge.[16]

8.4.7 Enhancement of grassland habitats

The floristic diversity of the grasslands in North Meadow and East Meadow would benefit from being summer grazed. Cattle graze less selectively than sheep, tearing up herbage rather than nibbling at it. This creates opportunities for vascular plants to invade the spaces and become established. Clearly, strengthening the field boundaries by repairing or installing new fencing would be an essential prior step. A stock person would be needed if either field were to be grazed by cattle. Sub-compartments would help to partition grazing by sheep and separate this from any parts of either field where people might be working (e.g. beekeepers).

The grassland habitats of the inner parkland areas of Dyffryn - currently mown - could be enhanced in selected areas, by creating new areas of semi-natural grassland of higher species-diversity. Existing swards could be removed and the ground re-seeded with low productivity swards containing a range of native broadleaved herbs which are indigenous to the locality. This would be more likely to succeed in areas of poorer soil nutrient status, avoiding areas that had been subject to recent or regular fertiliser applications. The nutrient status of parkland areas could be gradually lowered by harvesting all grass cuttings. A more radical approach to reducing the soil nutrient status rapidly might be to remove some topsoil and re-seed the thinner surviving layer of topsoil and/or subsoil with a low productivity sward mix. It might be possible to harvest species-rich grassland seed from the National Trust's property at Llanlay Meadows near Peterston super Ely.

8.5 Lichen

8.5.1 Lichen on garden statues

Many of the garden statues support a number of lichens: some communities are particularly luxuriant. A survey of the lichens was carried out in March 2004 to establish what species were present, their importance and the effect that they may be having on the stonework of the statues. Forty-nine lichens, seven mosses and one (named) alga were recorded. These included a good representation of species that apparently require slightly elevated nutrient level, including *Caloplaca aurantia, C. crenulatella, Lecania erysibe, Lecanora dispersa, Phaeophyscia orbicularis, Physcia caesia* and *Verrucaria fuscella*. These species are frequent in man-made environments such as

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15 South East Wales Biodiversity Record Centre, 28 Mar '14. *Biodiversity Information Search: Dyffryn Gardens (ST0976272489)*

16 David Clements Ecology Ltd, 2005. *Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Ecological Assessment of Grassland Area.*

churchyards, old buildings and free-standing walls but are often restricted to bird perches or other enriched semi-natural sites.

All the lichen species found are listed as of 'Least Concern' by Woods and Coppins (2003), but two are listed as relatively uncommon:

Bacidia egenula: Nationally Scarce, with one other record for Glamorgan. Recorded on the west urn, on the south side of the South Walk.

Verrucaria calciseda: Nationally Rare. Known from three vice-counties in Wales, including Glamorgan. However, this species may be under-recorded.

The presence of forty-nine lichens on just sixteen statues and urns indicates a quite rich lichen community. By comparison, the average number of lichens in a churchyard in lowland England is approximately forty. Some lichens actively dissolve limestone by the excretion of oxalic acid and the fungal filaments of the algal cells of the lichen then occupy the minute spaces in the partially dissolved upper surface of the rock. Species at Dyffryn that do this are *Verrucaria calciseda* and *V. hochstetteri.*

However, instances have been reported where certain lichens appear to protect the rock surface. Deterioration of the limestone surface caused by lichens may, in some instances, be less severe than non-biological processes acting on the same surface. At Dyffryn, it was considered that there was no evidence that the presence of lichens was accelerating the weathering of the surface of the statues. Some of the worst instances of weathering occurred on surfaces devoid of lichen cover, such as the undersides of the two fine urns along the south side of the South Walk. The case for retaining the lichens on the statues in the gardens of Dyffryn can be based as much on their aesthetic effect as on the conservation needs of the statues. Cleaning is unnecessary for reasons of conservation.[17]

8.5.2 Epiphytic lichen

A baseline survey of epiphytic lichen growing on parkland, arboretum and field trees, undertaken in January 2014, confirmed that 98 species of epiphytic lichen are present on the Dyffryn estate today.

The lichen flora contains no Red Listed, *threatened* or nationally rare species although six nationally scarce taxa were recorded: *Caloplaca phlogina, Catillaria nigroclavata, Dactylospora parasitica, Micarea doliiformis, Porina borreri* var. *borreri* and *Sphinctrina turbinata*. These are scattered about the grounds of the estate rather than concentrated in one or two 'hot spots'. *Bacidia incompta*, a *Critically Endangered* species of old elms in Wales is now extinct here.

The area's old woodland characteristics were evaluated for conservation purposes using lichen indices but although two Index species were found (*Pyrenula chlorospila* and *Lecanora jamesii*), it was concluded that the lichen community associated with the existing tree cover has no ecological continuity with the ancient woodlands and forests of Wales.

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17 Orange, A, March 2004. *A Lichen Survey of Statues at Dyffryn Gardens.* National Museum and Gallery, Cardiff.

Currently, the site is of low conservation importance for its epiphytic lichens. However, the lichen flora is in a healthy condition. Dyffryn is located in a region that is still recovering from the past effects of sulphur dioxide air pollution (including acid rain) in South Wales. Fifty-five additional taxa were reported here for the first time, including 'invasive' lichens and relatively sensitive lichen communities such as the *Parmelion* and *Usneion.* This suggests that this accumulation of bark-inhabiting species is set to continue.[18]

Areas of trees on the Dyffryn estate that were supporting lichen communities that were considered to be disappointing in January 2014 were:

- many of the oaks at the southern end of the North Park
- the veteran hollowed-out oak at the north end of the car park
- the majority of the Turkey oaks e.g. in East Meadow
- beech (at least those inspected) and hazel in the arboretum
- the trees to the front of the North Lodge (beside the main entrance)

8.5.3 Management actions to benefit epiphytic lichens

In his report of February 2014, Vince Giavarini (lichenologist) suggested a number of management actions which could benefit of the epiphytic lichen community:

- If grazing is restored to the rank pastures of the former parkland areas in North Meadow and East Meadow, this should be backed-up by the removal of existing ivy from the base of the field trees such as oak, sycamore, horse chestnut and beech. The grazing stock would then continue to keep this in check. Ivy invading the root plates of poplars growing at the top end of the North Lawn should also be kept in check. There is no place for even the smallest amount of ivy on stand-alone 'specimen' trees.
- The main body mass (trunk) of large fallen trees should be allowed to remain in situ and decay naturally so promoting colonisation by lignum-inhabiting (lignicolous) lichens and *Cladonia* species.
- A few wooden seats and lengths of fencing sourced from local woodlands and left untreated could be introduced around the property in well-lit situations. Natural weathering would encourage different lignicolous lichens to colonise over time. This might be linked to initiatives or creative courses in the use of natural resources or wooden sculptures.
- Trees such as sycamore and horse chestnut appear to be faring well on the drier higher ground towards the north end of North Meadow. The introduction of sallow to the wetter areas, possibly one or two additional sycamore and species such as bird cherry, rowan or *Sorbus* spp. would all offer potential host sites for other, different lichens on account of their different bark properties.
- An inventory of the lichen on the site could be amended and up-dated possibly with the help of Glamorganshire/South Wales lichen recorders.

[18] Giavarini, V., Feb 2014. *Dyffryn House and Garden, South Glamorgan. Epiphytic Lichen Survey*.

8.6 Birds

Protected and red listed bird species (globally threatened) recorded at Dyffryn over the past 10 years[19] include:

Linnet (Carduelis cannabina), last recorded 2010

Spotted flycatcher (Muscicapa striata), heard singing 2012

House sparrow (Passer domesticus), last recorded 2012

Marsh tit (Poecile palustris), last recorded 2013

Starling (Sturnus vulgaris), last recorded 2004

Song thrush (Turdus philomelos), last recorded 2011

Amber listed bird species (unfavourable conservation status) recorded at Dyffryn over the past 10 years [20] include:

Kingfisher (Alcedo atthis), last recorded 2005

Common swift (*Apus apus*), last recorded 2012

House martin (*Delichon urbicum*)– significant number of nests on the Cory Centre building in 2011 and 2012

Barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – nested in Pompeian temple in 2004

Barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) - one nest on the Cory Centre in 2012

Grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*), last recorded 2004 (near Nant Brân stream)

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), last recorded 2005

Green woodpecker (*Picus viridis*), last recorded 2012

Mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) 2007

Other birds recorded in Dyffryn Gardens include coal tit (*Periparus ater*), long-tailed tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*), goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*), great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) and a variety of more common garden birds.

8.7 Bats

8.7.1 Bats known to inhabit the Dyffryn estate

Previous surveys of Dyffryn House, gardens and outbuildings have shown that a range of bats is present on the estate, including Lesser horseshoe, Noctule, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Natterer's bat and small Myotid bats, probably either whiskered, Brandt's and/or Alcathoe bats.

A survey of bats in the mansion and adjoining service buildings of Dyffryn was undertaken in 2006, prior to the commencement of roof and structural repairs to the building in 2007. This established that Dyffryn House was a significant roosting site for

19 South East Wales Biodiversity Record Centre, 28 Mar '14. *Biodiversity Information Search: Dyffryn Gardens (ST0976272489)*

20 South East Wales Biodiversity Record Centre, 28 Mar '14. *Biodiversity Information Search: Dyffryn Gardens (ST0976272489)*

bats during the summer months and that there was a slight possibility of winter hibernation in the fabric as well. However, ambient temperatures in the unoccupied building made it unlikely that it was used for nursery roosting.

Initially, following the repair works, bats did not appear to have re-occupied the attics of the mansion. However, a survey undertaken in 2010 showed that brown long-eared bats had, by now, re-occupied all parts of the house that had been occupied prior to the repair works, seemingly in similar numbers (estimated to be about 15-20).[21] The survey of 2013 indicates that this is still the case. The brown long-eared bats use gable louvre vents and a bat access dormer to enter and leave attic and appear to forage in the upper storey corridors and rooms of the house where there is abundant prey in the form of cluster-flies and other roosting or trapped flying insects.

Further work inside the mansion to up-grade mechanical and electrical systems, repair a ceiling and install a lift for disabled visitors were undertaken between November 2012 and March 2013. The timing was a mitigation requirement of a NRW derogation licence. Work in the attics was carried out as quickly as possible, under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist to minimise potential disturbance to bats. Monitoring surveys have been undertaken to assess the impacts of noise disturbance during the installation of the lift and its subsequent operation. The surveys will continue for a total of three years, ending in December 2015. The survey report prepared in December 2013 confirmed that bats are still occupying the mansion and using it in much the same way as they were before the restoration works took place. The attics are still used by roosting brown long-eared bats in good numbers. Common and soprano pipistrelle and myotid also use the attics including Natterer's bat, a species not previously recorded in the house. All of these species were present in May 2013, after the restoration works were completed. A flight survey failed to confirm whether or where bats emerge from the main house, although evidence of foraging activity around the house and its surrounding gardens suggests that they do.[22]

The 2010 survey also showed that a small number of lesser horseshoe bats were roosting in structures west of the main house, including inside the boiler house where they had been recorded previously. There was also evidence of lesser horseshoe bat roosting in the Long Acre buildings (gardeners' bothies) which stand to the west of the Traherne Suite. There is recent faecal evidence for use of the stable block clock tower by lesser horseshoe bats.[23] This species appears to use attic voids and other routes, including the main corridors of the house, for passage and also uses the house attics for roosting. The current fortunes of the lesser horseshoe bats are unknown.

A survey carried out in 2013 revealed that the eastern section of the attics of the old stable blocks (now part of the Traherne Suite) is used by a maternity colony of Long-eared bats. Faecal evidence indicates that this colony is centred at the north end of the east wing. The entry/emergence point is at an (unidentified) point on the east ridge/pitch of the north-south aligned roof.[24]

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21 David Clements Ecology Ltd, Nov 2010 *Dyffryn House, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Resurvey for Bats, 2010*

22 David Clements Ecology Ltd, Nov 2013 *Dyffryn House, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Monitoring surveys for bats, 2013*

23 Rob Colley Associates, August 2013. *Bat Survey: Traherne Suite*. Unpublished draft report

24 Rob Colley Associates, August 2013. *Bat Survey: Traherne Suite*. Unpublished draft report

In 2010, Lesser horseshoe bat was found to use 'the Folly' (the observation tower in the Lavender Court) for transitional roosting in the spring and autumn.[25]

The gardeners' sheds along the north side of the north kitchen garden walls (facing the service yard) support a long-established summer roost of Pipistrelle bats. Individual Pipistrelle bats also roost in the roof of the vaulted-ceiling building at south-end of bothies range.[26]

Although the surveys to date appear to have concentrated on identifying those bats that use the mansion and outbuildings for roosting, hibernation and as feeding sites, no wider survey of bats within the parkland appears to have been carried out. It is probable that the mature and veteran trees of the estate would also provide habitat for various species of bat.

8.7.2 Protection of bat roosts, feeding and hibernation sites

Any future works which may cause disturbance or alteration to any areas of the house which are known to support bats (i.e. the roof voids, the boilerhouse area and garden structures) are likely to require a derogation licence from the Welsh Assembly. Future works affecting other areas inside the house (e.g. the main rooms, corridors, stairways, Great Hall, kitchens, Traherne Suite, etc.) can probably be undertaken without a derogation licence, but should be subject to an appropriately detailed method statement and working protocols designed to minimise any potential adverse impacts to bats.

The basements have been found to support roosting bats in the past but, in 2010, this was not thought to be significant. There was no evidence of current roosting or hibernation and recent flood episodes made this unlikely. Therefore any future works affecting the basements should be carried out subject to an appropriate method statement but, depending on the nature of the works, they may also require a derogation licence.

It is possible that cattle might be brought in, to graze the outlying meadows at some future date. Livestock are routinely given anti-parasitic treatment, including drugs that affect the flies and beetles that feed and lay their eggs on cattle dung. As a result of being eaten by flies, these drugs enter the food chain of, and are harmful to bats. The *avermectin* family of drugs are the most harmful in this respect and the National Trust requires its tenant graziers not to give their cattle *avermectin*-based drugs but to use approved alternatives such as *moxydectins*.

8.8 Water bodies and water quality

Dyffryn Gardens has a number of water habitats. There are a number of ponds in the gardens but until recently these have been filled using borehole water, which is free of chemicals. Current difficulties with the borehole water supply mean that this is being reviewed. The central canal is topped up using mains water.

Two main streams run through the parkland and garden, the Nant-Brân stream and the River Waycock. These converge before flowing into a culvert which carries the water –

25 David Clements Ecology Ltd, Nov 2010 *Dyffryn House, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Resurvey for Bats, 2010*

26 Rob Colley Associates, August 2013. *Bat Survey: St Michael's*. Unpublished draft report

underground - through much of the length of the south gardens. There are indications that the water quality of the River Waycock deteriorates as it runs through the Dyffryn Gardens site. The reason for this is unclear. During periods of prolonged heavy rainfall and flooding, it is possible that run-off from the surrounding catchment fields into the tributary streams that feed into the streams through the gardens contribute to the elevated nutrient status in the stream water.

8.9 Great crested newts

8.9.1 Regional context

The population of great crested newts at Dyffryn are probably part of a wider meta-population that is regionally and possibly Nationally significant. Although the presence of the newts necessitates the adoption of various procedures in gardening operations at Dyffryn, the presence of the newts is a special attribute of the property and to be celebrated.

8.9.2 Distribution of great crested newts in the Dyffryn gardens

The 2013 survey results[27] indicate that great crested newts occupy the majority of the water bodies where they had been previously recorded; that is, the Reflecting Pool (or Swimming Pool), Lavender Court ponds and upper pool of the rockery. The presence of great crested newt efts in these water bodies indicate that the population is thriving, possibly increasing. The highest number of efts was found in the Lavender Court ponds and the upper rockery pool, suggesting that these are the current breeding ponds at Dyffryn.

Consistent with previous surveys, the 2013 survey found no evidence of great crested newts in:

- the central canal
- Pompeian Garden pond
- Paved Court alcove pool
- kitchen garden dipping ponds

In 2013, there was also no evidence of great crested newts in the rill (in the old lake bed) and the rockery cascades, although they had been recorded in low numbers in both, in previous surveys. Their absence this time probably reflects the periodic lack of water in the rill and flowing water in the cascades, neither of which provides optimal conditions for great crested newts.

The pond in the fernery (the 'Black Pond') is a very suitable habitat for great crested newts. It was cleared of silt in 2011 and it is thought that the great crested newts may yet 'rediscover' it as a suitable breeding habitat.[28]

Refugia surveys in various terrestrial parts of the Dyffryn gardens and arboretum (the walled gardens, West Garden, the Rookery and east garden, and the arboretum meadow) did not reveal any great crested newts, despite attracting other small reptiles

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27 David Clements Ecology Ltd., Dec 2013. *Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Great Crested Newt Surveys*, 2013

28 David Clements Ecology Ltd., Dec 2013. *Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Great Crested Newt Surveys*, 2013

and mammals. This suggests that either the newts do not occur in these terrestrial habitats or that, if they do, it is only at very low frequencies.

8.9.3 Management of the Great Crested Newts

On the basis of their survey findings of 2013, David Clements Ecology Ltd (DCE) recommended that it would be reasonable to reclassify these areas at the 'low' level of risk for this species in the Great Crested Newt Handbook for the Programme of Works licence issued by Natural Resources Wales, pending any future evidence to the contrary.[29]

In early 2014, the DCE report and recommendation were forwarded to Natural Resources Wales. NRW were happy to support the reclassification of the majority of areas (including walled gardens, arboretum, west and sunken garden) but had concerns over reducing the defined level of risk for the area around the rockery ponds and east garden. In the light of this, DCE have recommended that 'The Rookery' yew circle and the east garden remain as 'moderate' and 'high' risk zones (as in the 2011 handbook) but that other areas including the arboretum, walled gardens and sunken/west garden can be re-classified as 'low' risk zones, for the likelihood of encountering great crested newts.[30] The GCN Handbook is currently being up-dated to reflect this.

8.9.4 Further actions

1. NRW have suggested that if there are still tasks currently included in the GCN Handbook, which are restricted by the zoning, it may be beneficial to develop specific programmes for separate areas, following a more detailed look at the proposed tasks, and risks to GCN in these areas.

2. A full GCN breeding survey of all ponds in the gardens, which will support the POW licence requirement for continued monitoring.[31]

8.10 Climate Change

The weight of evidence indicates that global warming is occurring, causing changes to the climate that are already being experienced and are likely to become widespread and more severe in the future. For Dyffryn Gardens this has implications for the conservation of the historic and natural environment such as increased risk of flooding, damage to and loss of trees during high winds, changes in microclimate and changes in biodiversity of the site.

More specific implications of climate change that could affect the plants and animals of Dyffryn Gardens include:

- Delayed or impaired bud burst, flowering and/or cropping of certain trees or shrubs where milder winters result in inadequate chilling during the dormancy period.

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29 David Clements Ecology Ltd., Dec 2013. *Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Glamorgan. Great Crested Newt Surveys*, 2013. Summary p1

30 Pooley, C., David Clements Ecology Ltd, 25 Feb 2014 E-mail addressed to Alex Luker & Geraldine Donovan, NT

31 Pooley, C., David Clements Ecology Ltd, 25 Feb 2014 E-mail addressed to Alex Luker & Geraldine Donovan, NT

Beech trees, for example, have a large chilling requirement; insufficient chilling can lead to a delay in bud burst.

- Prolonged waterlogging of soils causing anaerobic soil conditions and depriving roots of oxygen. Milder winter temperatures may result in certain plants continuing to grow during winter and so be more susceptible to the adverse effects of waterlogging than they would in dormancy.
- Water deficits in plants due to increased evaporation rates during spring, summer and autumn could impact on the health of certain species. Again, beech trees may be particularly susceptible to harm through changes to their growing conditions.
- Warmer winter temperatures can lead to greater activity in certain animal populations – for example, bees – resulting in poorer winter survival, but also greater activity throughout the winter by certain garden pests.
- Wetter warmer winters result in greater availability of surviving host material for pests and diseases, greater survival of overwintering spores or growing fungi. Diseases that need water to spread, such as *phytophthora*, will be favoured. Many diseases are spread by insect vectors and the effect of climate change on the biology of vectors may also affect the spread of certain diseases.

It is more difficult to anticipate the effects of climate change on plants and animals living and growing together in communities, than when they are grown as individuals or single species groupings. Survival of individual species will depend on how much more or less they are able to respond to climate change than their competitors, rather than their innate response. Despite this, an attempt must be made to anticipate the effects of climate change on the more susceptible wildlife species and plants in the gardens at Dyffryn, in order to develop a strategy for future management and presentation of the property. In addition, a contribution could be made to monitoring the effects of climate change more broadly by collaborating with other gardens to grow a range of genetically uniform plants and monitor the effects of climate change upon them.

Climate change will also have an impact the mansion and outbuildings of Dyffryn. It may affect the durability of building materials owing to changes in surface temperature, hydrology, humidity and soil moisture. In some instances, the effects of climate change may be beneficial (less frost) while, in others, it will be detrimental (more and harder rain). Increased driving rain will affect the façades of structures and lead to more water penetration around openings and via cracks and weak points. This could affect the internal structures, particularly of some of the garden buildings. The only practical way to address this is to regularly inspect the structures and ensure that repairs and maintenance are carried out well and promptly.

The roof gutters of the mansion (which run partially through the roof structure beneath each dormer window), but particularly the rainwater hoppers and downpipes are of insufficient size to cope with high volumes of run-off during prolonged downpours. As a consequence, roof water overflows and can penetrate the building structure at the second floor level.

8.11 Further surveys

The following surveys would be relevant to Dyffryn:

- Veteran tree survey
- Bryophytes on trees
- Parkland and garden bat survey (possibly by trained volunteers?)
- Wood decay invertebrates associated with veteran trees
- Fungi, including wood decay species
- Botanical survey of the hay meadow in the Arboretum

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9. Significance

9.1 Historic significance

In many ways, the history of the Dyffryn estate represents, in microcosm, the story of land ownership and the gentry of south Wales. Originating as the Saxon estate of Worleton, its history appears to have been typical of a medieval estate owned for several centuries by the Church and then by minor gentry of mixed Welsh and English descent. By the date of the founding of the first house at Dyffryn, the family who built it - the Buttons of Worleton - were on the brink of decline and a shift in the basis of the region's economic prosperity was only a few decades away.

The first house at Dyffryn, built in the mid-17th century, represented the aspiration of a gentry family of moderate wealth and local status to build a sizeable new house, less than a mile from their old manor. Almost as soon as the new house was built, the estate ran into troubled times. Having paid a heavy price for backing 'the wrong side' during the English Civil War, the Button family's fortunes never recovered. In this, as in other ways, they were typical of the much of the land-owning gentry of Glamorganshire: of gentle lineage but only moderate wealth. The ultimate sale of the Dyffryn estate in the mid-18th century to a member of the growing class of newly-rich south Wales industrialists, was symptomatic of the changing economic balance of the region. From this time on, the story of Dyffryn – that is, who lived there and who maintained it - is the story of industrial wealth as the Glamorganshire economy shifted from an essentially rural one to a predominantly industrial one. In 1749 the new owner, Thomas Pryce, had already made his money as coal owner, iron-master, shot founder and gun maker: a very different kind of man from the old Welsh gentry. Information is scant about what changes or improvements may have been made by Thomas Pryce, but it was almost certainly on the strength of his large fortune that 'Dyffryn Place' was enlarged or re-built and the surrounding parkland improved in the early decades of the 19th century by William Booth Grey, the man who married Pryce's daughter.

The pattern of Dyffryn's owners as being able men who have made their money through a combination of their own hard work and talents, and the emerging opportunities brought about by industry and trade, was now set to continue. When the estate changed hands again in 1837, after the death of Thomas Pryce's daughter Frances, it passed to the grandson of Thomas Pryce's friend, William Bruce; another astute man who had made money from the iron industry (notably, the Dowlais Iron Works). The beneficiary of Pryce's will, John Bruce Pryce, subsequently became massively wealthy when the value of the coal reserves beneath one of his other Glamorganshire estates, Duffryn Aberdare, started to be realized.

John Cory, shipping magnate and coal-exporter, was the last of the line of Dyffryn owners to emerge from the mould of hardworking, self-made industrialists and traders. John and his brother Richard had continued to build the business solidly founded by their father. Although undoubtedly a good businessman, Cory was also fortunate to be active at a time when the increasingly universal demand for South Wales steam coal offered considerable opportunities for making a fortune. The growth of both the metal industries and coal extraction industries of South Wales had been driven by developments in the outside world, particularly technology, creating a huge demand

for these resources. Modern Glamorgan would look very different if the great transport revolution of the second half of the 19th century had been fuelled by oil.[1]

Although Cory's good fortune could be ascribed to being in the right place at the right time, he was also an example of a surprising number of men in 19th century south Wales who were willing to bear risk. Was the existence of these men simply a response to raw materials and vigorous demand, or was there something in the culture of the period that was particularly favourable to the evocation and exercise of enterprise?

How these men related to the society around them remains a subject that has been poorly researched and so is rather simplistically understood. Views about them remain polarized. One view represented 19th century capitalists as men of exceptional vision, energy and enterprise: these individuals might typically be described as '*one who had spent a life full of work and good deeds, and was well beloved as only a good and kind master could be'*.[2] A very different school saw such men as the beneficiaries of what Marx termed 'primitive capitalist accumulation', exploiting the property-less proletariat who worked in their industries and were paid far too little their labour. Both views undoubtedly over-simplify the real situation and are not very informative.

The economic characteristics and attitudes of pre-1914 capitalists were almost inevitably conditioned by the general business ethos of the age. They accepted the inherent superiority of an economic system based on competitive private enterprise.[3] However, from the mid-19th century onwards, most Glamorgan businessmen subscribed to the liberal competitive model whereby they recognised that a growing personal fortune brought with it social responsibilities. They funded the provision of crucial parts of the regional infrastructure; the Merthyr ironmasters promoted and financed the Glamorganshire Canal and the Taff Vale Railway; the Rhondda coalowners, including Cory, financed the Barry dock and railways. Of course, these investments benefited their own businesses just as much as they contributed to the region's broader economic development. More positively, many of the south Wales capitalists made contributions towards the social institutions of the community. They provided facilities for working people of a kind that would otherwise have been beyond their reach: schools, hospitals, libraries, working men's institutes and homes for those who had been disabled through their work. Having done their social duty (often rather visibly), they felt free to create their beautiful homes, often in settings which provided a contrast with, and haven from the world of their working lives. Here they maintained lifestyles that were genteel rather than ostentatious; they moved in the better social circles of the region, preferred to cultivate flowers than breed horses, and avoided scandal to an extraordinary, almost unnatural, degree. It would appear that Nonconformity demanded high levels of conformity.[4] Dyffryn, tucked away in its own quiet valley and only accessible via country lanes, provided just such a haven. John and Anna Cory appear to have lived there in characteristically peaceful conformity.

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1 Habakkuk, J., 1981. '*Industrial Glamorgan: a review article'*. Morgannwg, Vol.25, p.131

2 Phillips, Elizabeth, 1925. *Pioneers of the Welsh Coalfield*

3 Williams, L.J.,1988. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, Ch.VI, *Capitalists and Coalowners*, p119

4 Williams, L.J.,1988. Glamorgan County History, Vol 6, Ch.VI, *Capitalists and Coalowners*, p123

9.2 People of note associated with Dyffryn (up to c.1900)

Several of the people that had family connections with Dyffryn and were notable for their achievements beyond the confines of Wales were younger sons. This might not be entirely coincidental, since the eldest sons of the families who owned Worleton or Dyffryn would have stood to inherit the property and gain their incomes, at least in part, from the estate. Younger sons had to look elsewhere and often further afield for a career and an income. Some achieved this through advantageous marriages and others through their own endeavour. Their choices of career tended to reflect the career routes open to the sons of gentlemen: the army, the church and the law.

Thomas Button, the fourth son of the family who owned the Worleton estate in the late 16th century began his career as a soldier and then quickly became a sailor. An advantageous marriage brought him the patronage of his wife's uncle, Admiral Sir Robert Mansell and he became the owner of the Cottrell St Nicholas estate. In the early 17th century, commanding his own ship, he cleared the Irish Sea of pirates in the waters around Bristol and, in due course, was sent to explore Hudson's Bay and seek the North-West passage. On his return, having been successful in part, he was appointed 'Admiral of the King's ships on the Coast of Ireland' by King James I.[5]

John Bruce Pryce, who had become wealthy twice-over through inheritance - the second of which was Dyffryn in 1837 - had two younger brothers. Both achieved distinguished careers. **William Bruce Knight** (d.1845) became Archdeacon of Glamorgan and also Dean of Llandaff. **Sir James Lewis Knight Bruce** (d.1866), became the Lord Justice of the Court of Appeal in Chancery.

John Bruce Pryce's two eldest sons, studied the law and practiced in London. We know little of the career of John Bruce Pryce's eldest son, John Wyndham Bruce, but his second son **Henry Austin Bruce-Pryce** was evidently a man of considerable ability. After his early scholastic and legal apprenticeship, he returned home to another of the Bruce Pryce family homes – Duffryn Aberdare – where he managed the estate and gradually became involved in regional public life, initially as a Police Magistrate and then as a Liberal MP. He rose to become Home Secretary in Gladstone's Cabinet in 1868 and, in 1873, was raised to the peerage, taking the title of Lord Aberdare.[6]

9.3 The creators of the gardens: Mawson and Cory

The key period when Dyffryn itself was 'put on the map' and became known beyond Glamorganshire – was a period of some 25 years after the gardens had been created. The design of the gardens is often ascribed to the fruitful collaboration between Reginald Cory and Thomas Mawson. Mawson, with his strong design sense for structure and formality, created a formal master plan that brought unity to an eclectic range of themes and ideas, harmoniously melding the existing gardens in with new, more extensive gardens beyond. However, it is apparent that Cory was an imaginative and enthusiastic client, visualising the planned gardens as providing the setting for his exciting new collections of plants. It is apparent that Cory contributed to the design

5 Miller Christy, 1897. *Admiral Sir Thomas Button, Kt., of Cardiff.* Cardiff Naturalists' Society Report and Transactions, Vol XXIX, pp12-13

6 Yorkshire Herald, 16 Feb 1895. Obituary for Lord Aberdare.

work, by designing several parts of the gardens completely and bringing his own idiosyncratic interpretations to other parts of Mawson's original master plan.

Thomas Mawson, with sound business sense, understood the importance of publishing and promoting his work. His became the greater reputation. By contrast, Cory was both modest and private. Although very well known in the upper echelons of the horticultural world and among a wide range of friends, he avoided roles that afforded status or even recognition. So, for many years, Mawson's name has been the better known. Public perception of his role in the creation of the gardens at Dyffryn has tended to eclipse that of Cory's, even though Mawson himself acknowledged how much of the credit for the gardens should go to Cory.

Quite apart from his achievement in creating the gardens at Dyffryn, it is his contribution to the world of horticulture which is probably where Cory's greatest contribution and significance lies. In some ways, his reticence has made it difficult to know exactly how numerous and extensive his contributions were, but they are summarised (as far as we know) as follows:

- The Royal Horticultural Society:
  - member of the Council from 1922 - 1924 and 1929 – 1930;
  - served at various times as member of the Floral Committee B, the Library Committee, the Wisley Advisory Committee (where his knowledge of landscape gardening was often called upon)[7] and the Botanical Magazine Committee;
  - gave The Cory Cup to the RHS (which became the Reginald Cory Memorial Cup after his death), initially for dahlias but, since 1923, awarded annually to the raiser of the best hardy plant of garden origin that is the result of an intentional cross, and of which one parent is a species;
  - bequeathed all his books on 'botany, horticulture and kindred subjects' to the RHS Lindley Library. This was the largest single collection books ever given to the RHS (as opposed to being bought).

- Linnaean Society:
  - Member of the Council from 1926 – '28;
  - served on the Audit and Library Committees; and
  - donated the fine presidential chair of the Society (anonymously at the time).

- Contribution to the dahlia-growing world:
  - Organisation and running of the Dyffryn trials for dahlias in 1913 and, again, in 1914, resulting in a renaissance in recognition of the value and variety of garden dahlias;
  - President of the National Dahlia Society in 1926 (the only high profile office that Cory ever accepted);
  - Awarded the RHS Gold Flora Medal for his work with dahlias.

- Curtis's Botanical Magazine – the highly esteemed, longest running botanical magazine, first published in 1787 – nearly foundered in 1920, when the publishers announced their intention to terminate the fourth series. Several of this country's

7 The Linnean Society of London. Proceedings 1933-1934, p153. *Reginald Cory (1871-1934)*, obituary

leading and richest horticulturalists, including Reginald Cory, Lionel de Rothschild and Henry Elwes, purchased the copyright in 1921 and presented it to the RHS. Under the new arrangements, the magazine resumed publication in 1922, with the loss of a volume dated 1921. Cory personally funded the publication of the missing 1921 volume.

- Financial support to the Cambridge University Botanic Garden:
  - In 1920, on hearing that the Botanic Gardens were in financial difficulties, Cory provided an annual sum for five years to make up shortfalls in the Garden's running costs;
  - he paid for the publication of a Guide to the Gardens;
  - he paid for specific items such as new boilers, grinding machines and other pieces of machinery and settled accounts with nurserymen and booksellers;
  - he paid for the Garden Superintendent, F. G. Preston, to attend the fortnightly shows of the Royal Horticultural Society;
  - between 1924 and '26, he funded the building of a new house for the Director within the Botanic Garden, which became known as Cory Lodge; and
  - on his death, Cory bequeathed a substantial share of his estate to the Cambridge University Botanic Garden and the resulting fund continues to support the garden today.

- Sponsoring of several plant hunting expeditions by some of the most notable plant hunters of the early 20th century; in particular:

  - one or more of Reginald Farrer's expeditions to Japan, Sri Lanka and Europe (before 1920);[8]
  - George Forrest's expeditions to China in 1917- 20 and 1921-23; and
  - H.F. Comber's expeditions to the Andes in 1925-26 and 1926-27.

- Personally undertaking a number of plant hunting trips himself to:
  - South Africa in 1927, in a party which included Lawrence Johnston, Collingwood Ingram and George Taylor. Cory made a special point of collecting succulents and other plants for the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh;
  - the West Indies in 1931; and
  - the Atlas Mountains in 1932.

- Cambridge Preservation Society:
  - In his will, Cory bequeathed all his property (presumably old houses) and land in Cambridge to the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings.

- The British Museum:
  - In his will, Cory bequeathed all his Chinese porcelain, Chinese objects of art and other items including pictures, statues, furniture and tapestries to the British Museum.

8 Torode, S J, 2001. *The Gardens at Duffryn, St Nicholas, Glamorgan: The creation of Thomas H. Mawson and Reginald Cory.* Gerddi, Vol 3. 2001, p71

Owing to the destruction of Reginald Cory's personal papers after his death, we know very little about the people who visited Dyffryn, although they must have been numerous. In fact, some of Reginald's acquaintances in the world of horticulture came about through personal and local friendships. At his brother, Clifford Cory's wedding in 1893, Reginald was best man. One of the bridesmaids was Frances Wolseley, the future gardener and pioneer of gardening education for women. In 1902 she established the Glynde College for Lady Gardeners at her family home at Glynde in Sussex. In 1908, she published **'***Gardening for Women*'. Cory's gardens at Dyffryn were evidently known and loved by many people in the district as well as by Cory's family. Locally, the Cory family (both generations) were almost certainly on visiting terms with the Clarks (also both generations) of Talygarn just a few miles from Dyffryn. George Clark was a prominent horticulturalist and elected Vice-President of the Royal Horticultural Society in 1877.[9] In 1913, George Clark's son Godfrey hosted the visiting RHS contingent who came on to judge the dahlia trials at Dyffryn.

As Reginald Cory's horticultural activities, support and benefaction continued, his circle of friends and acquaintances in the horticultural world must have widened correspondingly. Those mentioned here represent just a handful of those that we know about. Albert C. Seward was Professor of Botany at Cambridge University between1890 and 1936. It is possible that Cory was acquainted with him even from his student days but, whenever they first met, the two men were on friendly terms by 1920, when Seward was a guest at Dyffryn. It may have been Seward who introduced Cory to Gilbert-Carter who became the first academic Director of the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens in 1921. These two developed a particularly warm and jovial friendship and corresponded regularly, almost daily, for many years.

Among Cory's fellow horticulturalists wealthy enough to sponsor planting hunting expeditions were Major Lawrence Johnston of Hidcote Manor, J.C.Williams of Caerhays, H. J. Elwes of Colesbourne Park in Gloucestershire, and Colonel Stephenson Clarke of Borde Hill in Sussex. Other important sponsors included the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh and the Royal Horticultural Society.

Among Cory's other friends and correspondents were E. A. Bowles of Myddleton House (Enfield, Middlesex), J. E. Williams (of the Manor of Talyvan, Llandaff), Lionel de Rothschild, F C Stern (peony specialist), Collingwood ('Cherry') Ingram and plant hunters such as George Forrest, E. H. Wilson and Frank Kingdon Ward. Cory was friends with Ellen Willmott of Warley Place in Essex - a passionate plantswoman and generous sharer – gave him specimens of *Hydrangea sargentiana* and *Helwingia japonica* in 1916.[10]

Two other people of key importance to the gardens of Dyffryn, in the years between c.1908 and 1934, were the head gardeners: both appear to have been men of particular ability. Arthur Cobb was head gardener at Dyffryn through the period between c.1908 and 1919 when Reginald's fine new gardens were being created. Cobb was clearly an energetic and talented gardener, undaunted by the scale of Cory's ideas, including his enthusiasm to host the 'Cardiff Trials' of garden dahlias at Dyffryn in 1913, and then repeating the exercise in 1914. As a result of this experience and no doubt infected by Reginald Cory's particular fondness for dahlias, it is not

9 Parks & Gardens, UK website. *Talygarn, Mid Glamorgan, Wales*. July 2007 http://www.parksandgardens.org

10 Saneki, K., 1993. *Reginald Cory - botanist and benefactor*. The Garden, February 1993, p82

surprising that, by 1919, Arthur Cobb had gained a reputation as a dahlia specialist and was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society. He appears to have been ambitious for new opportunities and so moved on from Dyffryn around 1919, initially becoming the head gardener at Bournemouth Town Council, taking charge of the borough's gardens. His career gradually took him into academic roles. He started to write on the subject of horticulture, initially publishing regular articles in local newspapers and then contributing to and writing books. By the 1930s, he had moved again to become Senior Lecturer in Horticulture at Reading University and then, finally, became Head of the Horticultural Department at Seal-Hayne Agricultural College at Newton Abbot in Devon.[11]

Arthur Cobb's successor at Dyffryn was John T. Smith, who appears to have either trained or worked at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. We know less about J T Smith but contemporary accounts describe him as 'an excellent man'. He was clearly an able successor to Cobb and remained committed to the gardens at Dyffryn until the property was sold in 1938.

9.4 Significance for horticulture

Reginald Cory – ever an enthusiastic collector - began collecting and planting at Dyffryn, probably by the early 1900s, and before Thomas Mawson was appointed to plan the gardens. As a consequence, Mawson had to incorporate certain areas, such as the nascent arboretum, into his new designs. Cory's lively curiosity and catholic tastes led to his assembling plant collections that were notable for their diversity of subject, as well as the rarity of many of the individual acquisitions. His collections included trees (notably *Acers*), bonsai, alpine plants, water lilies, *Wisteria*, garden dahlias, orchids, cacti and other succulents.

Cory had an abiding interest in newer garden plants of the time (introductions or new hybrids).[12] He was enthusiastic to propagate, plant and grow newly-arrived plants brought back to Britain from recent plant-hunting expeditions by eminent plantsmen such as E. H. Wilson, Reginald Farrer and George Forrest. Initially, recent introductions were supplied to Dyffryn from the Veitch nurseries. The house of Veitch employed twenty-two recognised plant hunters, including Ernest Wilson and was responsible for introducing 1281 plants into cultivation by the outbreak of the First World War. However, Cory's personal financial support of various plant-hunting expeditions meant that, as a subscriber, he received a share of the seeds collected on those expeditions. As a result, Dyffryn became the nursery for a number of newly introduced plants. It is a tragedy that none of Reginald's own horticultural records for Dyffryn survive as we now know little about which of these newly introduced plants were successfully grown from seed. Only in the arboretum are we better informed, partly owing to the longevity of the trees compared with other plants in the gardens and partly due to survival of a record of the trees from 1938. Early in its development, the arboretum was home to such trees as *Acer griseum, Abies sachalinensis, Cunninghamia lancealata, Acer palmatum* and *Magnolia sieboldii*. Cory's original plantings, although diverse, include many fine specimens from eastern China, Japan and California.

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11 Minutes of the Small Holdings and Allotments Committee, 19 Feb 1940. Mockbeggar Allotments, Reading. Berkshire Record Office ref. R/AC1/3/74

12 Torode, S J, 2001. *The Gardens at Duffryn, St Nicholas, Glamorgan: The creation of Thomas H. Mawson and Reginald Cory.* Gerddi, Vol 3. 2001, p71

The arboretum continued to be planted after the time of Reginald Cory – in fact, a sizeable proportion of today's arboretum dates from the 1960s - and the collection is particularly strong in the genera of *Malus, Crataegus* and *Acer*. It also includes some very rare species (e.g. *Cunninghamia lanceolata* and various species of Spruce) and some of the oldest and/or largest specimens of certain species and cultivars in the British Isles including. 17 champion trees growing at Dyffryn were recorded in the Tree Register of the British Isles (TROBI) in 2009, including *Acer griseum, Carpinus betulaus 'Fastigiata'*, a number of *Crataegus, Malus, Pyrus species*, and several others.[13]

1938 was a critical moment in the history of the Dyffryn gardens, when their future was in the balance and their existing and potential significance for the whole of Wales was recognised. The two year period following the death of Florence Cory in 1936 was a time of considerable uncertainty for Dyffryn. The gardens teetered on a knife-edge between being saved or possibly lost. The neighbouring landowner, Major (later Sir) Cennydd Traherne, had bought the estate in 1937 but had no use for the house and gardens. He had offered them to Glamorgan County Council on a 999 lease for a peppercorn rent, with the proviso that the House would be used for educational purposes or for furthering the interests of horticulture and botany, and that the gardens would be maintained for the education and enjoyment of the public. The offer was the subject of considerable debate within the County Council and beyond. The opening words of a paper written by R.C.McLean, Professor of Botany at Cardiff University stated

> *"It is not often that any nation receives a gift so splendid as that contained in the offer to the people of Wales …. of the house and garden at Duffryn, which was the home of the late Mr. Reginald Cory. The gardens were the peculiar pride of the late owner, a man eminent among horticulturalists, who lavished his wealth and his knowledge in creating a garden of unique interest and beauty.*
>
> *There can be no two opinions about the value of the gift …. Wales has no national garden. England has Kew, Scotland has the Edinburgh gardens, where the keeper, Sir William Wright-Smith is the King's Botanist, and Ireland has Glasnevin. The idea of establishing a national garden in Wales is therefore one that commends itself …. The opportunity of utilising the exceptionally fine gardens at Duffryn for this purpose is certainly not one that should be allowed to slip.*
>
> *Not only are the collections in the gardens extraordinarily rich, including many unique varieties bred on the spot and many specimen trees, the finest of their sorts, but the house itself offers the possibility of establishing a School of Horticulture for Wales."*[14]

McLean went on to develop his theme that the gardens of Dyffryn were well-suited to become the National Botanic Garden for Wales and that the mansion could accommodate a related horticultural college. Although the suggestion of making Dyffryn into a national botanic garden was never taken up, the gardens were accepted by Glamorgan County Council on a lease arrangement and were an object of immense pride during period from the 1950s to '70s. Only in the 1980s, when public spending cuts led to the decline of public parks, did the gardens of Dyffryn also deteriorate. However, their significance was not forgotten and in the 1990s, when the creation of the Lottery

13 Nicholas Pearson Associates, 1998. *Dyffryn Gardens. Arboretum Management Plan.*

14 McLean, R.L., 1938. *Duffryn. The Welsh Kew?* Pub. Western Mail and Echo Limited

Fund inspired ideas for many new public projects, the possibility of creating a National Botanic Garden of Wales became a matter for earnest discussion once again. Dyffryn was one of the sites considered, but was rejected in favour of a new site at Llanarthne, to the west of Swansea.

9.5 Significance: the present day perception

Dyffryn passed into the care of Glamorgan County Council in 1938 and so, although there are still people who remember the gardens from as far back as the 1940s, their recollections are of the gardens as a public facility. Among today's visitors and volunteers, there are many who remember visiting the gardens in their youth or staying in the house while attending residential courses run for both students and adults.

For many years, the gardens of Dyffryn were a source of considerable civic pride, as attested by the County Council garden parties that were held each summer, which were attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan, Council dignitaries and a broad spectrum of guests. Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh were particularly eminent guests who attended a garden party in August 1960, hosted by Henry Brooke, Minister for Welsh Affairs.

The new role for Dyffryn House as a training and educational facility typified the destiny of many large and fine historic houses when, between the First and Second World Wars and in the years thereafter, they were sold or given to the nation (often to the National Trust) because the families who owned them could no longer afford to maintain and run them. Numerous such houses were adapted for institutional uses, frequently as schools and colleges.

Today Dyffryn is known and loved by visitors, property staff, volunteers, Friends of Dyffryn, local residents and several stakeholder groups including the Cardiff Astronomical Society, the Cardiff Vale and Valleys Beekeepers' Association and the Dyffryn Croquet Club. Perceptions of the house and gardens and their significance vary, quite often reflecting how long individuals have known the place and how they have experienced it.

The majority of people who have come to know Dyffryn in recent months or years take it at face value and enjoy it as they find it today. A distillation of their comments and conversations tells of a journey of discovery, surprise and delight, never knowing what to expect around the next corner and almost always enchanted by the next revelation. Typical comments include "*one of my special places*", "*the gardens were magnificent and full of surprise and interest*", "*the multiple garden rooms are as intriguing as ever*", "*so peaceful*", "*very impressed by the scope and imagination of the garden design*", "*I still feel I am probably somewhere I shouldn't be !* " The last comment suggests a sense of peeking into a private world – a secret garden - giving a special piquancy to the experience. Numerous visitors, volunteers, staff and other stakeholders speak of the peace, tranquillity and beauty of Dyffryn and the sense of retreat from the busy-ness of their everyday lives that being there gives them.

Dyffryn has been a public garden for 65 years – in fact, for a longer time than the Cory family lived there. Comments from people who have known Dyffryn for many years or, indeed, decades serve as a reminder that Dyffryn has been public property - in legal

terms as well as in perception - for many years. The sense of public ownership and civic pride is a strong one and emphasizes the calibre of the gardens as a publicly-owned resource. The comments reveal a rich seam of varying perceptions of the place through recollection, memories of personal experiences and nostalgia. For some, the gardens have declined in quality - and therefore significance - compared with how they were in the 1950s – '70s when they were perceived as a 'flag ship' garden by the County Council and maintained to a high standard. Anecdotal comments about those times have described the rockery as "*out of this world*", the Pompeian Garden as "*fabulous with planting trailing off the tops of the structures*", the glasshouse on the north lawn (now gone) as "s*uperb*" and of how you could walk straight up to the house along the North Drive. For others, re-visiting the gardens brings pleasurable recollection of times past, when they played there as children, got wet in the fountains, came to memorable open air theatre or opera performances, attended residential courses, or even met their wives or husbands there for the first time. For them, Dyffryn's represents a mellow backdrop to happy episodes or periods in their own lives.

Curiosity about the past and the family who created the Dyffryn that we see today is more readily aroused in the house, where the unfurnished rooms prompt visitors to try to imagine how they might have been when furnished and lived in. Even standing empty, the rooms trigger exclamations of surprise and pleasure at the space, the height, the light, the views. Many visitors are charmed by the details of ceilings and fireplaces which gives clues to the tastes of the Cory family. The sense of history and of lives lived is probably strongest in these personal spaces of the house and also in the outbuildings, especially the gardeners' bothies and kitchen gardens.

9.6 Environmental significance

Dyffryn, lying within a secluded valley in the Vale of Glamorgan, occupies a relatively unspoiled historic rural landscape, which retains a coherent pattern of large fields and woodlands. Owing to the continuity of the site, particularly the parkland which has existed for over 200 years, Dyffryn has become a small sanctuary encompassing a range of wildlife habitats that are significant at least at a local or regional level, sometimes even at national level.

Possibly of greatest significance is the population of great crested newts that live in the streams and a number of the ponds. The Dyffryn community of great crested newts is probably part of a wider meta-population that is regionally and, possibly, nationally significant. This part of South Wales supports a significant percentage of the UK population of great crested newts.

The veteran and older trees throughout the site represent valuable wildlife habitats, supporting a range of birds, bats, moths, beetles and other invertebrates, fungi, mosses and lichen associated with this habitat. The wood-decay, epiphyte communities and mycorrhizal (root-based) communities are likely to be species-rich and will include saproxylic organisms associated with veteran trees. A group of veteran oaks with decaying boughs in North Meadow support two Nationally Scarce beetles associated with fungoid growth on their bark. [15]

15 National Trust, Oct 2012 *Dyffryn House and Gardens Biological Survey*, 2012/13. Map IV

The whole property provides a habitat for a range of bats including Lesser horseshoe, Noctule, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Natterer's bat and small Myotid bats, probably either whiskered, Brandt's and/or Alcathoe bats. Many of these roost or hibernate in the buildings, but the veteran and older trees almost certainly also provide a suitable habitat for bat colonies.

Lowland calcicolous hay meadow has declined significantly in the Vale of Glamorgan, particularly as a result of agricultural improvement. Small pockets of calcicolous grassland survive at Dyffryn, are of local importance and merit particular care to ensure their conservation and encourage their gradual spread.

Dyffryn has a rich community of lichens, particularly those that grow on stone. Many of the garden statues support a number of lichens; some communities are particularly luxuriant. The presence of forty-nine lichens on just sixteen statues and urns indicates a rich lichen community and is a significant indicator of clean air.

These wildlife communities owe their particular richness and diversity to their protection from disturbance within the garden and parkland for decades or even centuries, allowing slow incremental colonisation by valuable groups of associated species.

10. Issues and Opportunities: condition and future uses of Dyffryn House

10.1 Condition of the fabric Dyffryn House

10.1.1 *Roof and roof drainage*

In 2007-'08, the roof of Dyffryn House was repaired using new Welsh slate, leadwork and asphalt flat roofing. There are no known concerns about the condition of the roof, but it is no longer possible to gain safe access to the roof spaces to make an internal inspection. There are no properly boarded walkways or crawl boards and it is not possible to walk across the joists because loft insulation has been laid over them concealing them. There is also no access within the structure of the side vaulting of the Great Hall ceiling. The roof voids are a roost for brown long-eared bats in significant numbers. Common and soprano pipistrelle and myotid bats, including Natterer's bat, also use the attics. Birds get into and use the roof spaces, leaving guano which ought to be cleaned, subject to avoiding disturbance of the bats.

The roof drains into deep gutters which run behind the parapet, at the base of the mansard roof. The gutters run inside the house structure just below each second floor dormer window. Low steps in front of each dormer window have wooden access covers which lift to reveal the lead-lined gutter passing beneath. In heavy rainfall, it has been reported that the gutters do not have adequate capacity to cope with sudden downpour water volumes. However, the gutters themselves are spacious, so it is probably the capacity of the downpipes that is the limiting factor. In exceptionally heavy downpours, the gutters fill faster than they can empty and then overflow, causing top-down flooding in the building. It has been suggested that better and more regular maintenance to ensure that the gutters and particularly downpipes are kept clear of leaves and debris may resolve the problem. If not, then some form of design intervention may be necessary.

The Breakfast Room at the SW corner of the ground floor and the room immediately above it both suffer from serious damp, thought to have been caused by a blocked and overflowing drainage hopper above. Water ingress in this corner of the building resulted in ceilings falling down.

10.1.2 *External walls*

While the roof repairs were carried out to the mansion in 2007-'08, repairs were also carried out to some of the parapet and upper level masonry. However, there remain a number of places where the Bath stone cladding is still decaying, particularly where it is subject to regular wetting or continual damp. These include parts of the mansion parapets particularly along the north side of the house, the surrounds to some of the main windows, and beside leaking downpipes. The north façade of the mansion is blackened where regular damp has resulted in algal growth. The surfaces of the lias plinth stones at the base of the building are also spalling, in places, due to damp. The ground level against the north side of the house has been raised at some date and this may be contributing to the problem. A survey of the external stonework is needed to identify all the areas of stonework deterioration and assist in prioritising remedial actions and repairs.

The roots and trunk base of a large old *Magnolia* are growing tight up against the south wall of the house, beside the bay window to the east of the balcony. The roots have broken a nearby drain and have caused paving slabs to lift. The base of the trunk also traps damp against the house wall. The magnolia is thought to date from before 1910 and is receiving phased pruning. Cuttings have been sent to the National Trust's plant conservation centre for propagation so that a replacement plant from the same stock can be replanted in the same position if the existing plant dies, following appropriate repairs to the building and drain.

10.1.3 *Building structure*

Dry rot is present in parts of the house; in particular the service stair, where the half-landing is unsafe. It is also present in the former Estate Office (adjoining).[1] The quinquennial survey of 2011 also reported that two of the first floor south-facing bedrooms (the master bedroom and bedroom to the immediate east) had dry rot.[2] The dry rot in the master bedroom has now been treated.[3]

The quinquennial survey of 2011 also reported significant structural damage to the south-facing first floor rooms, to the west of the master bedroom, which required further inspection by a structural engineer.

10.1.4 *Floors*

In 1998 a major programme of works was begun on the house, to make it into a prestige hotel. The project quickly foundered following intervention by the Vale of Glamorgan Council's planning department, but only after initial opening up and strip-out of the internal fittings and finishes had begun. Many of the floors were taken up throughout the mansion, resulting in two forms of damage. Oak laminate flooring, particularly in the corridors and main rooms at the first floor level, was taken up and a significant proportion was damaged, lost or discarded. This was particularly regrettable because the oak laminate flooring was of an interesting form of construction using 10mm thick, random width oak laminate (including burr oak) fixed to 20mm softwood boards. The floors have been restored in many of the rooms and spaces now on public display (Great Hall, billiards room, drawing rooms, morning room, master bedroom and parts of the ground floor corridors) and partially restored on the first floor landing. Elsewhere whatever oak laminate flooring can be salvaged should be re-laid and then matched with new oak laminate flooring, to make up the shortfall.[4]

The purpose of lifting the floors at first and second floor levels was to install fibreglass batts supported on chickenwire as a means of soundproofing and to improve fire separation between the floors. Ironically, the pugging (a mixture of clay, mortar, sawdust, sand, etc.), which had been installed originally between the wooden floors and the ceilings beneath to reduce the transmission of sound, was removed as part of this exercise. The fibreglass insulation and chickenwire support should be removed and the voids thoroughly cleaned.

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1 Goss, Nathan (NT building surveyor), 13 May 2014. Verbal communication

2 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/3

3 Donovan, G., 17 Aug 2014. Email to author.

4 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/4

Before installing any further fireproofing and re-laying the lifted floorboards, an archaeological analysis of the floor structure should be undertaken. Variations noted in the sizes of the floor joists indicate that timbers have been re-used and records should be made of these for future analysis.

A new fire-separation membrane should be installed. The floors should be restored and repaired by re-laying the existing floorboards and supplying new matching floorboards (say, 70%) to make up the shortfall. Skirtings surviving in situ will need to be removed in their entirety to allow floorboards to be re-fixed.

10.1.5 *Walls*

During the 1998 works, chases were cut in walls for electrical services and service riser routes generally using circular saws. This work was planned almost indiscriminately, with the result that there are numerous significant breaches through floor and ceiling structures. Where the original plaster was applied to riven softwood laths and sawn softwood grounds, the laths have been cut or damaged. In order to make good, the plaster needs to be removed and the wall chases widened, to allow new riven softwood laths to be fixed to the vertical timber grounds and re-plastered.

The timber panelling in the Great Hall probably originally had a shellac finish. Unfortunately the panelling has been partially treated in recent years using Junckers oil (a proprietary water-based maintenance oil). This has been cleaned off as far as possible and the panelling is now waxed to give a suitable protective finish to the wood.

10.1.6 *Ceilings*

Ceilings in parts of the house have been damaged as a result of water ingress and damp rot. They have also been damaged where light fittings have been installed and removed and particularly where service risers have been installed. Plaster cornices have also suffered damage. The ceilings and cornices have been repaired in the main show rooms already open to the public (listed above). In the other family rooms on the ground and first floors, replacement plaster to the cornices could be fibrous or run in situ depending on the extent of replacement needed in individual cases.

10.1.7 *Doors*

During the 1998 hotel alterations, many of the doors in the mansion were taken off their hinges and not re-hung. Some of the original doors have now been re-hung. However, a number of doors were not original and, in many cases, the original door furniture appears to have been lost (possibly earlier than 1998, when the doors were in-filled with flushboard material to improve their fire resistance). Non-original doors have not been put back and need to be replaced with new doors designed to match the originals. Missing of mis-matched door furniture also needs to be replaced, with the aim of re-establishing the style of handle used in the 1890s, which appears to have been a drop brass handle.[5]

5 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/5

10.1.8 *Windows*

As part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council-funded external envelope repairs undertaken in 2007-'08, repairs were made to many of the sash windows in the mansion. However, sash windows are designed so that both frames open to allow air circulation at the top and bottom of the window. It appears that only the bottom sashes have been restored to working order but some of these are difficult to lift and need overhauling.[6]

10.1.9 *Fireplaces*

A number of fireplaces on the first floor have been removed and stored in one of the former bedrooms. These need to be examined and/or researched (if possible) to establish which rooms they belonged in and re-installed. Broken tiles from the fire surround in the first floor bedroom to the immediate west of the main staircase should be repaired and re-installed.

10.1.10 *Partitioning and fittings*

In various parts of the mansion and the former service range, fittings survive which appear to date from the 1950s – '80s. These include partitioning of a number of rooms to adapt them for various purposes including the conference centre reception, smaller bedrooms, washrooms and bathrooms. Washroom and bathroom fittings, items of signage and many electrical fittings are still in place. As a first step, these should be dismantled to allow the relevant rooms to be inspected properly and then repaired.

10.1.11 *Paintwork*

The joinery, plaster and wallpaper surfaces have all been painted as a result of many years of institutional use. Where the modern paint finishes have been damaged (such as in the dressing room west of the master bedroom) earlier paint schemes have been revealed. A paint analysis undertaken in 2007 by Crick Smith[7] on elements of the Blue Drawing Room identified six pre-1894 decorative schemes on parts of the columns. These dated back to the late 18th /early 19th century. There were two earlier schemes on parts of the cornice. Before any further redecoration is undertaken, paint scrapes and analyses should be carried out to aid understanding of earlier decorative schemes and allow informed decisions to be made about redecoration.

10.1.12 *Wallpaper and wall coverings*

Very few historically significant wallpapers now survive in the mansion. Wallpaper still exists on the upper wall facing north, in the ground floor west corridor, above the false ceiling. This paper pre-dates 1893. The dark green wallpaper in the billiards room is thought to date from the late 1940s / early 50s. A fragment of wallpaper has been found in the room at the very west end of the first floor corridor which may be a remnant of a floral pattern wallpaper of a type popular in the late 19th century.[8]

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6 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/5

7 Crick Smith Conservation, 2007. *Dyffryn House, Glamorgan, Wales: Architectural Paint Research Archive Report/Selected Interiors.*

8 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/6

Elsewhere, the majority of the older wallpapers, many embossed, have been painted over and so cannot be salvaged.

The silk wall covering in the Blue Drawing Room is thought to be a rayon fabric on paper backing, which may have been applied in the 1950s or '60s. When the fabric wall coverings in the Red Drawing Room were investigated in 2012, they were found to be of a similarly relatively modern material, which had been superimposed onto the original late 19th century fabric. The more modern top layer has now been removed, revealing the original wall covering. Where the original silk panels in the south-west corner of the room were damaged or missing, new replacement panels were woven to match the surviving original material.

In 2011, the ceiling paintwork in the Red and Blue Drawing Rooms (bordering the ceiling pictures by T. W. Hay) was peeling in places due to water ingress. The ceiling plaster was also found to be unstable and detaching from the ceiling laths. In 2012 and 2013, repair work was undertaken to stabilise the plaster and clean and repair the ceiling paintwork.[9] Unfortunately the paintwork has begun to be de-laminate again and needs further investigation and analysis in order to take corrective action. The continuing problem of damp cellars, leaks and roof drainage overflow, probably mean the house has a high relative humidity level. Active water ingress and/or a high relative humidity may be contributing to the problem of paintwork delamination.

10.1.13 Environmental conditions

The mansion is currently heated by oil-fired central heating. The heating system is kept running in the showrooms of the house (but not elsewhere), on thermostat control, to maintain a minimum level of warmth but also to control the relative humidity control. The system is old and unsophisticated; the boiler is about 40 years old. Plans are imminent (autumn 2014) to decommission the oil-fired boiler and temporarily run the heating system of the house from an existing LPG boiler in the gardeners' yard which has spare capacity. In the longer term (summer 2016), there are plans to install a biomass boiler adjacent to the Cory Centre and run the heating systems for the mansion and other buildings from that. The new system will allow the mansion to be zoned and will enable more sensitive response not only to fluctuations in the internal temperature but also to relative humidity. In advance of that, the house's temperature and relative humidity are being monitored and recorded.

10.1.14 Actions

The continuing lack of use of much of Dyffryn House is the single greatest issue affecting its proper conservation. Much of the house is kept closed to unauthorised access because doors are off their hinges and floor boards are lifted, making access to the corridors and rooms hazardous. While parts of the house are left closed up, there are risks of unobserved faults developing due to untended maintenance needs (e.g. blocked rainwater gutters, leaks, etc.) and outbreaks of decay. The deferral of investment in new services such as fire detection systems could also put the building at risk.

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9 Hirst Conservation, 2013. *Treatment Report. Decorative Plaster Ceilings and Chimney Pieces to the Orchid and Rose Rooms, Dyffryn House, Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales*

As described in the sections above, a substantial amount of repair is needed to the interior fittings and finishes of building, to remedy the wear, tear and alterations that resulted from more than 50 years of institutional use, but also to repair the damage done in 1998, during the early stages of conversion to a hotel.

Necessary repair and conservation actions are summarised as follows:

- Establish/maintain programme of routine inspection and maintenance to ensure that gutters are cleared, drains are unblocked, and any new faults in the roof or windows that allow water ingress are identified early and repaired.
- Commission a study on adaptations to roof drainage design to cope with exceptional downpours without causing internal flooding to the house.
- Instigate a survey of the external stonework to identify all the areas of deterioration, in order to arrange a contract for remedial actions and repairs.
- Instigate a survey of internal progressive defects, in particular dry rot, in order to organise a programme of remedial treatment.
- Commission an archaeological survey of the mansion, before areas that have been uncovered (walls and floors) are repaired and covered up again.
- In the light of decisions about the future use for different parts of the mansion, define a programme to repair and, as appropriate, restore different sections of the mansion. Works should include removal of fittings and fixtures of the 1950s onwards (bathrooms, light fittings, etc.), repairs to ceilings, walls and floors, replacement of doors, and door and window furniture, and replacement of fire surrounds where these can still be found on site.
- A new, effective fire-proof membrane should be installed beneath the first and second floors that have not yet been repaired.
- Overhaul bottom sashes of windows that have been repaired but are still difficult to open. Re-consider whether the top sashes of the windows should be repaired and returned to working order as originally intended.
- Undertake appropriate investigations and analysis (paint scrape and wall covering sample analyses) to inform decisions of re-decoration of rooms and spaces that have not yet been restored.

10.2 Parts of the mansion: possible future uses

10.2.1 Zones of the mansion

The manner in which the different parts of the mansion were used historically provides the starting point from which to develop a strategy for future use and interpretation of the house. The house can be sub-divided quite simply into:

- The ground floor family and reception rooms
- The first floor family bedrooms
- The first floor guest bedrooms
- Smaller secondary rooms at the west end of the first floor
- Domestic rooms on the second floor used for staff bedrooms, box room, work room, etc.

10.2.2 Ground floor family and reception rooms: continued repair and presentation

Several of the ground floor reception rooms – the Great Hall, Billiards Room, Blue and Red Drawing Rooms and the Morning Room – were repaired and restored during 2012 – 2013. These are now open to the public. In 2014, the Dining Room and the Boudoir were also opened to visitors. Other family rooms on the ground floor – the Red and White Libraries, and the Breakfast Room – need to be repaired and redecorated. When this has been completed, these rooms would also merit being opened to the public, to enhance an appreciation of the house and its owners. Information on how these rooms were furnished can be found in the sale particulars of 1937, although refurnishing in a similar manner may bring its own difficulties. Several of the rooms have less in the way of vulnerable fittings and so might be used for administration, events or commercial activities. A decision on how these rooms may best be presented and used would need to be the subject of curatorial judgement.

10.2.3 Estate Room

The Estate Room (or secretary's office) was built as part of the single storey extension on the north side of the mansion at some date between 1894 and 1910. Rodney Melville & Partners suggest that the room may have included a cloakroom lobby inside the north entrance door.

The room appears to have become enclosed when the additional service ranges of the Moorish Courtyard were added to the house between 1910 and 1915. This would have had the effect of closing in the north window and doorway. These were only exposed to the outside world again after the more extensive structures of the Moorish Court were demolished at some date before 1940.

The room has been substantially subdivided - probably during the 1950s - presumably to create a check-in desk and locker spaces for visitors and students arriving for residential courses. The purpose of some of the sub-dividing structures is unclear; particularly that of an exceptionally large ceiling joist.

To a degree, presentation of this room may depend on decisions about the future uses of Dyffryn House as a whole. However, the room should be restored by removing the partitioning and false ceiling, to allow the room to be seen as originally intended, as the estate office. Removal of the partitioning would enable the large window and doorway to be appreciated from the inside. A lobby might also be reinstated although this would have to be to a new or conjectural design as no information exists to tell us what the early 20th century lobby may have looked like.

The outside door to the Estate Room could be re-used as a secondary entrance, providing access to office, activity or 'private' areas in the former domestic/service parts of the house on the second floor and to the western half of the first floor.

10.2.4 *Service staircase*

The service staircase is an important survival dating from the Georgian house and was probably built by William Booth Grey. It is significant in terms of what it tells us of the household hierarchy and how the family areas of the house were separated from the areas used by the servants for access and their own accommodation. Following Lansdowne's remodelling of the house, the corridor at first floor level was undivided,

so privacy needed to be maintained between the corridor and the service staircase. However, at the first floor, the staircase enclosure is glazed to allow the passage of borrowed light to the corridor. It seems likely that it would have been glazed originally with etched glass to maintain privacy and screen the comings and goings of the house staff.[10] Rodney Melville & Partners suggest that the existing Georgian wired glass should be replaced with etched fire rated glass. On the second floor, there is no evidence of a glazed door and screen between the staircase and the corridor of the servant's wing. The servants' wing is separated from the batchelors' wing by a door on the corridor.

The service stair probably lost its lowest window (and therefore daylight) when the single storey extension, which included the secretary's office, was added to the north side of the mansion at some date before 1910. The small half-moon window may have been added between the service stairwell and the central corridor at this date, to allow some borrowed light to enter the stairwell.

10.2.5 *First and second floor bedrooms, bathrooms and corridors*

The family bedrooms and dressing rooms on the first floor and the box room, workroom and servants' bedrooms on the second floor have been subject to considerable wear and tear, and alteration over the past 70 years. This culminated in the damaging preliminary work carried out by the contractors preparing to convert the building to a hotel in the late 1990s. Adaptations made between the 1950s and the 1980s were mainly to subdivide some rooms into smaller spaces to create washrooms, bathrooms and toilet cubicles, particularly at the NE and SW corners of the building. The partitioning and some of the bathroom fittings and mid-late 20th century tiling survive.

As described above, ceilings are in poor condition, walls and skirtings have been cut into, and doors have been removed. Throughout these rooms and spaces, a comprehensive programme will need to be undertaken to:

- remove institutional fittings;
- repair the damaged interior finishes (ceilings, walls, doors, floors);
- replace original fittings dating from the time of the Corys where these are still on site (fire surrounds, door and window furniture, tiles, etc.); and
- replace missing fixtures (window and door furniture, tiles, etc.) to match surviving originals, or of appropriate design.

The first floor landing and gallery and the master bedroom were repaired and redecorated in 2012 and are now open to the visiting public. Two further bedrooms to the east of the master bedroom have been opened but are not yet fully repaired and restored.

10 Rodney Melville & Partners, 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, p2/42

The potential uses for the other rooms on the first floor and for the entire second floor are quite wide-ranging. They might include adaptation for use as:

- National Trust property offices;
- managed work spaces;
- the larger rooms might be used for meetings, or seminar or training rooms;
- self-contained flats (on the second floor) for use either by resident staff or possibly as holiday lets;
- accommodation for residential students (although this would require the installation of plumbing for bathroom facilities).

Rodney Melville and Partners have suggested that, if demonstrated to be necessary, the plan form of these spaces could be altered by the partial removal of partition walls and the blocking of doorways, to upgrade for structural engineering and fire precaution works and install services and lavatories, as long as there is no adverse impact on the principal rooms immediately below.[11]

11 Rodney Melville + Partners, 2010. *Dyffryn, Glamorgan, Wales. Conservation Management Plan*, p24

11. Issues and Opportunities: Condition and future uses for the Traherne Suite

11.1 History

The Traherne Suite was built as part of a project to convert Dyffryn into a conference centre, which was undertaken when the property was managed by the Mid and South Glamorgan Councils. The restaurant and accommodation suite were designed by H. M. R. Burges & Partners and then built between 1983 and 1985.[1]

The Traherne Restaurant was built within the courtyard at the west end of the main house, facing the south garden. The kitchens were installed in the service building along the east side of the small service courtyard to the immediate north of the former service range of the mansion.

The former stables and the cottage to the immediate north of the stable yard were converted to become part of the new Traherne accommodation suite. In addition, an extension was built across the entire north end of the stable yard complex, blocking off old entrance to the stable yard. The suite can be accessed from the restaurant via a mezzanine bridge, or via an external door on the north side of the 1980s extension.

Possibly as a result of the recession of the early 1990s, the use of Dyffryn as conference centre had proved to be less successful than had originally been hoped. In 1996, local government reorganisation resulted in the creation of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Residuary Body for Wales closed the property as a conference centre. In 1997/8, the Council embarked upon an ill-fated project to convert the house into a luxury hotel which quickly failed. Since then the Traherne Suite has remained un-used.

11.2 Traherne Accommodation Suite: condition and possible future use

11.2.1 *Accommodation suite: roof and roof drainage*

The roof of the accommodation suite extension is designed with a central valley (possibly at the junction between the roof of the new extension and the stable yard cottage). A down drain from the gutter in this valley is located within the building structure. This drain is currently blocked or damaged, which has resulted in flooding inside the building. Some first floor ceilings have collapsed. As an emergency measure, the downpipe has been located and a diversion pipe run now carries the roof-water through a corridor and out through an external door, so that it discharges outside. The blocked drain needs resolution as a matter of urgency.

Birds are entering the loft spaces and nesting. On occasion, they get into the rooms and corridors of the building. The stable block clock tower is also being used by lesser horseshoe bats.[2] There are voids between the internal walls of the stable block rooms and corridors (created as part of the conversion) and there is a risk that the

1 Vale of Glamorgan Council, 2008. *Dyffryn House Conservation Statement*, p5.

2 Rob Colley Associates, August 2013. *Bat Survey: Traherne Suite*. Unpublished draft report

bats could move into other parts of the building via these voids. Inspection covers in the internal walls have been left off in a number of places, which would also allow the bats to travel into the rooms and corridors of the Traherne Suite. The inspection covers should be replaced immediately.

11.2.2 Accommodation suite: exteriors and external spaces

The exteriors of the accommodation suite and the service ranges to the north of the conference restaurant do not appear to have been redecorated for many years, possibly not since the early 1990s. Paintwork is peeling. Some window and door frames are rotten. Flashings have come loose.

The service yard to the north of the original service range and the stable yard are both neglected and weedy. The service yard is treated as dumping space for stripped elements from the buildings and spare bits of timber, etc.

Beneath the paving of the stable yard there is thought to be a large water tank. This requires investigation to a) check its condition and b) explore whether it can be used to provide water supply to toilets and/or the gardens.

11.2.3 Accommodation suite: internal condition

The accommodation suite is suffering from neglect. Its lack of use for 18 years has resulted in it becoming an unofficial store for numerous items of furniture, redundant office equipment, files, etc. The result now is a mess. Many of the rooms still contain beds, desks and chairs for conference delegates. The décor and fittings are of 1980s style.

Although the en-suite bathrooms, if thoroughly cleaned, would be functional visitors might regard them as dated. An asbestos survey of the south range of the stable block undertaken in 2013 revealed the presence of asbestos in the damper pads of the baths in the existing en-suite bathrooms.[3] A similar situation is likely to apply to the other bathrooms in the Traherne Suite.

The building is unheated and the windows are kept shut which results in the building suffering from lack of ventilation. It tends to feel cold and damp and smells mouldy. It is generally dirty.

11.2.4 Conference restaurant and former kitchen: condition

As in the accommodation suite, the roof drainage design of the Conference Restaurant is problematic. Downpipes have been installed within the building. These require frequent maintenance to ensure that they do not get blocked, causing leaks and floods at high level. Apart from this, the quinquennial survey report of 2011 indicates that, externally, the Conference Restaurant (referred to as the Exhibition Hall) was in fair condition at that date. Internally the floors and walls are showing wear and tear and need cleaning and re-treating / decorating respectively. The air

[3] Envirochem Analytical Laboratories Ltd., Oct 2013. *Major Refurbishment Asbestos Survey of Dyffryn Gardens.*

conditioning system needs review, overhaul and possibly up-dating.[4] The servery comprises a bar and there is a heating cabinet and freezer. If brought back into use, this would require refurbishment.

The former kitchen (along the east side of the north service yard) has been cleared of preparation, cooking and washing-up units. The ceiling-mounted air extraction equipment is still in place. If the kitchen were re-fitted, the air extraction system would need overhaul or possibly replacement.

11.2.5 Actions

Dis-use of the Traherne Suite and the Conference Restaurant is the main problem affecting their upkeep and maintenance. In the short-term, the following basic maintenance actions and repairs should be undertaken:

- Clear out stored rubbish and old furniture from the Traherne Suite and the service yards and recycle or discard as appropriate.
- Open windows regularly in the Traherne Suite (possibly using bird-exclusion meshes over the openings) sufficient to ventilate the building properly.
- Investigate and repair the blocked/damaged roof-water drain in the stable yard cottage section of Traherne accommodation suite.
- Replace inspection covers in the walls of the Traherne accommodation suite immediately to prevent bats from moving into the buildings and starting to roost in the wall and ceiling voids.
- The roof should be inspected to establish where birds are getting in and sealed to prevent their continuing access.
- Damaged and rotten window frames and doors - at least of the former stable buildings and stable yard cottage – should be repaired and redecorated. Similar repairs should be made to the modern Traherne Suite, subject to a decision about its future.
- Investigate the tank beneath the stable yard to establish its condition and scope for re-use.
- Remove weeds and remove redundant structures from the service and stable yard, and carry out simple repairs to the hard landscape.

11.3 Future uses

11.3.1 Conference Restaurant

When viewed from the south gardens, the Conference restaurant is a sizeable architectural element, inserted immediately between the mansion (to the immediate east) and the old stable block (to the immediate west). The design introduces quite different building forms and modern materials, particularly tinted glass and steel, which are out-of-keeping with the neighbouring buildings. However, the Conference restaurant and its related facilities are potentially useful. Plans are in place to redecorate the dining room and re-fit the servery, so that this facility can be brought back into use, and will start to serve light refreshments to visitors later in 2014. (It is to

4 Rodney Melville + Partners, Jan 2011. *Dyffryn Estate. Quinquennial Inspection Report*, pp2/8 – 2/9

be re-named 'The Conservatory'.) The space is large and versatile; tables and chairs can be moved in order to use the space for special events.

Longer-term plans for a more extensive catering offer, or possibly putting this space to a different use will need to be informed by a business appraisal of the property as a whole. There is probably scope to modify the external appearance of the restaurant – particularly of the roof level elements - to make its appearance more harmonious, but also more recessive relative to its more important neighbours.

11.3.2 *Traherne Suite residential accommodation*

Plans have been drawn up for the south range of the old stables, with the aim of bringing the building back into use. The interior arrangement will be altered to create a permanent residential flat for one member of staff, and two bedrooms with bathrooms for the use of visiting National Trust staff and trainees.

The retention of the rest of the residential accommodation in the rest of the Traherne Suite will need to be assessed with rigorous appraisals undertaken to balance the cost of repair, upgrading and maintenance against a realistic assessment of a potential use and economic returns. Possible uses might include accommodation for:

- residential students attending regular courses run at Dyffryn;
- bed and breakfast accommodation for students and visitors coming to courses and events in Cardiff.

If demand cannot be demonstrated the retention of the 1983-86 structures could be reviewed. In itself, the 1980s Traherne Suite extension is of no significance and it has had an adverse impact on this whole part of the Dyffryn property. When viewed from the north, it is intrusive; its design is clumsy and relates poorly to the adjacent older service ranges and the mansion beyond. It has been built across the historic entrance into the stable yard and made it impossible for an uninformed observer to even guess that this was a significant access route into the historic service areas of the mansion. In conservation terms, its demolition would be entirely beneficial.

12. Issues: flooding and surface water management

12.1 Flooding history

Dyffryn house and gardens sit within the upper reaches of the valley of the River Waycock. The river has a broad, gentle, rolling catchment with numerous tributary streams and valleys joining it as it travels its course south and then south-west towards the Severn estuary. The two water courses to affect Dyffryn are the River Waycock from the north-west and the Nant-Brân stream which enters the site from the east, immediately north of East Lodge. A ditch the flanks Dyffryn Lane also enters the parkland beside the North Drive. Dyffryn House sits to the immediate south-east of the confluence of the River Waycock and the Nant-Brân. The upstream catchment comprises a broad area which extends as far north as the A48 and the village of St Nicholas, west as far as the A4226 and east as far as the village of St Lythans and St Lythans Down. This means that, during periods of prolonged rainfall when the ground is saturated, all the small upstream watercourses run high and there is significant overland flow, which converges on Dyffryn.

Dates when Dyffryn House and/or gardens are known to have been flooded are 1991, 1994, 1997, 2003, July 2007, September 2008 and October 2013.[1] However, historic documents tell us that the house basement flooded in the past. It is possible that the realignment of the River Waycock in the early 19th century was intended, at least in part, to alleviate flooding of the house. The river was made to by-pass the house, on its east side, in a culvert built beneath the lozenge-shaped curtilage. However, although the culvert is sizeable, it may never have had sufficient capacity to carry the volume of river volume when in spate. It also appears to be not particularly watertight. Drains from the cellar may discharge into the culvert and so be liable to backflow during periods when the culvert is running at full bore. The cellar nearest to the culvert, underneath the billiard room, has flooded regularly. Dwarf walls separate this part of the cellars from the rest and are intended to contain modest floods.

The floods of 2007, 2008 and 2013 were caused by a combination of the River Waycock and the Nant-Brân overflowing the culvert. Surface water run-off converged on the house from the west across the North Lawn and from the road to the east via the East Gate. The following parts of the property have been particularly vulnerable to the effects of flooding:

- Dyffryn House – the basements have been prone to flooding historically. In the worst recent episode in 2008, the ground floor was flooded, particularly the billiards room and Great Hall.
- East Lodge – surface water from Dyffryn Lane used to flow into the property at the East Gate and then downhill towards East Lodge and the new visitor centre and towards the Nant-Brân beyond.
- The Long Canal – during severe flooding, when the Great Lawn has been submerged and the water has overflowed into the sunken gardens to the south, carp from the canal have escaped into the River Waycock downstream.

1 Waterco Consultants, Feb 2014. *Dyffryn Gardens. Water Management Plan. Scoping Report*, p4

- Lavender Court – during severe flooding, the ponds have been awash, disturbing the breeding habitat for great crested newts.

12.2 Previous flood alleviation measures

The history of changes made to the River Waycock, the Nant-Brân and to the culvert that carries the combined watercourses suggests that flooding has been a recurrent problem at Dyffryn.

In recent years, further attempts have been made to offset the effects of overland flow and the watercourses bursting their banks. In 2006-'07, flood alleviation works were undertaken in the North Meadow and North Park. These comprised opening up the drain which carried water from the ditch in Dyffryn Lane along the line between the North Drive and the parallel visitor car park, making it into a broad open ditch, to act as a swale with greater water-holding capacity. Two attenuation ponds were also created in the North Meadow near the River Waycock with the intention of collecting and storing overland flow and/or river floodwater, and then allowing it to drain more slowly back into the River Waycock reducing flooding peaks. These measures are likely to have had some success in reducing the incidence of local flooding but proved to be of insufficient capacity to cope with a major flash flood which occurred at Dyffryn only a year or so later, in 2008. The condition of the overflow pipes from the ponds needs investigation: the ponds may not be working properly now.[2]

The visitor toilets in East Lodge and the new visitor centre have also proved prone to flooding when water flows into the site via the East Gate from Dyffryn Lane. In spring 2014, a ramp was added across the East Gateway to prevent water from the lane entering the site. Another gentle ramp was added to the drive, further in to the site, to divert surface water from running down the connecting path towards the visitor centre and East Lodge.

12.3 Actions

12.3.1 Flood protection of specific parts of the property

A scoping report for all aspects of water management across the Dyffryn property, prepared by Waterco in February 2014[3], recommended a number of flood protection options, aimed at protecting the most vulnerable parts of the site (mansion cellars and ground floor, visitor centre and visitor toilets, the Lavender Court ponds and the Long Canal). These are summarised briefly below, in hierarchical order:

1. ***Protection*** to prevent flooding reaching the property by a combination of managing water in the catchment as a whole, to slow the passage of heavy overland flow and/or by river management to improve flow past the property. The latter could worsen floods downstream.

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2 Waterco Consultants, Feb 2014. *Dyffryn Gardens. Water Management Plan, Scoping Report*, p8

3 Waterco Consultants, Feb 2014. *Dyffryn Gardens. Water Management Plan, Scoping Report*

2. ***Flood routing*** to direct flood water away from the property without causing or worsening flooding to other properties. This could be achieved by gentle re-grading to create shallow sump areas and grassed embankments to provide attenuation storage.
3. ***Passive protection*** to prevent flood water entering the property. An example is the periscope protection, applied to the cellar vents in 2010, which prevents surface water entering the vents from above ground. Non-return valves could be installed in the cellar drains and other drains connecting to the culvert or river. Walls and floors could be made watertight and any gaps around services could be sealed.
4. ***Active protection*** to prevent flood damage when flooding is known to be imminent. This can be by use of measures such as demountable aperture flood guards or temporary sandbags to protect thresholds. Temporary netting could be erected around the ornamental ponds to contain the fish or they could be caught and moved. These measures are dependent on flood warnings and therefore may not be in place when they are needed.
5. **Resilient protection** to enable quick recovery from flooding. Flood resilient protection has already been used in the toilet building. Examples of measures include:
    - raising all electrical sockets;
    - storage of materials or equipment susceptible to damage in a flood in waterproof containers or raised to an appropriate level above ground;
    - installation of non-hygroscopic renders below 300mm; and
    - installation of resilient floor finishes which are easy to clean and would not need to be replaced after flooding.

Other specific measures that have been suggested are:

- The site levels fall generally from the north and east property boundaries towards the house. The carriage circle outside the north front has been raised relative to the threshold levels of the house and drains immediately around the house. Consideration could be given to reducing the levels across the carriage drive and adjacent areas of grass, to encourage ponding away from the house doorways.
- Replace existing Aco-drains outside the doors to the visitor centre and visitor toilets which have insufficient capacity to cope with surface water, with drains of larger capacity.

12.3.2 Catchment and flood risk management

Within the catchment upstream of Dyffryn, measures that would help to reduce the rate of runoff into watercourses would include:

- planting trees or other vegetation to impede runoff;
- introducing meanders and permeable dams/ponding within or alongside watercourses;

- addressing compaction via soil protection reviews required for single farm payments;
- creating swales and attenuation ponds;
- clearing ditches and watercourses to increase capacity, including beside highways; and
- maintaining drains to clear obstructions including silt and roots.

Waterco have suggested that a hydraulic model would help to demonstrate the impact of these measures and give guidance on where they would most effective.[4]

4 Waterco Consultants, Feb 2014. *Dyffryn Gardens. Water Management Plan, Scoping Report*, p12

13. Issues and Opportunities: the parkland

13.1 The parkland: extent of surviving areas

The surviving areas of parkland at Dyffryn represent the remnants of a designed landscape setting to a gentleman's house of the 18th and 19th centuries. The parkland has been the creation of more than one owner but it seems likely that William Booth Grey laid the foundations for the parkland that survives today. Two areas of former parkland have reverted to agriculture and are now excluded from the estate. One of these, to the east Dyffryn Lane (opposite North Park), appears to have been parkland relatively briefly during the mid-19th century and was part of Nant-brân Farm by 1885. The other - a wedge of parkland to the immediate north of the service yard, appears to have retained its parkland character until 1937 but was to have been separated from the property when it was leased by Glamorgan County Council. The remaining parkland is fragmented into two distinct areas:

- former parkland to the north of Dyffryn House, comprising the North Meadow, North Park and North Lawn; and
- the East Park to the north-east of the arboretum, beyond Dyffryn Lane.

Both areas contain former drives, although in East Park the drive surface is lost and the route is only partly discernible where an earthwork survives and by being fringed by trees. In each of these areas, the quality of the parkland character has been eroded through a combination of management choices and neglect.

13.2 Current character and appearance of the parkland areas

The parkland to the north of Dyffryn house is divided into three areas of quite distinct character:

North Meadow, to the west of the North Drive, has a number of mature hedgerow and veteran parkland trees. It is the most hilly and uneven of the three areas, has been used for grazing in the past but is now rank grassland. It contains two attenuation ponds. Despite its unkempt appearance, it is probably the area that retains more historic parkland character than any of the others.

North Park, to the east of the North Drive and north of the River Waycock, suffered a gradual diminution of its parkland trees from the 1870s onwards (and from possibly earlier). Even during the period of the Cory family's ownership, little or no new tree planting was carried out in the North Park and it was almost completely cleared of trees during the Second World War. Since then the area has been maintained as amenity grassland and is used for occasional overflow car parking on busy weekends and during special events. Comments made by interviewees during meetings and workshops held during April 2014 about their experience of this area ranged from enjoying the sense of tranquillity to finding the area disappointing and lacking in a sense of arrival. (See Appendix G.)

Although a few parkland trees have been replanted within the 10-15 years, the area has lost much of its parkland character. It is enclosed by a shelter belt along the east boundary fronting onto Dyffryn Lane. It is also quite screened in views from the mansion by trees planted beside the River Waycock, together with a certain amount of understorey. Although the reason for establishing this planting is clear, it is at variance with the history of this area. The North Park and the North Lawn would have been perceived as united parkland during the 19th and early 20th centuries, albeit with a few more parkland trees nearer to the course of the river. Some of the trees beside the river are inappropriate – particularly the Scots pines –and now contribute little to effective screening. This planting could be significantly reduced to re-establish visual connection between the two areas. Although the open grassland of North Park is used for overflow parking, this occurs on fewer than a dozen days of the year. This may increase as visitor numbers rise and more crowd-drawing events are held at the property.

North Lawn has lost the majority of its parkland trees. During the 60-year period of public authority management from the late 1930s to the mid-1990s the North Lawn, in particular, lost its grazed parkland character and instead acquired a new persona as an extension of the gardens. An interpretation of Mawson's axial design was laid out in the early1950s and supplemented by neat, regimented plantings of pyramidal conifers and 'mushrooms' of box (imitating a feature that Mawson had created in other gardens but never at Dyffryn). Successive park managers and head gardeners appear to have found the North Lawn irresistible as a 'blank canvas' where they could site a tea room and new adornments such as a substantial conservatory. Although most of the post-war developments were cleared away again during the HLF-funded restoration project of the late 1990s and early 2000s, remnants of the more ornamental planting of the mid-20th century still survive: particularly a sizeable grouping of copper beech trees towards the east end of the River Waycock and other varieties including hybrid poplars, gingko and a number of *Acer griseum*. The impression remains of an urban park rather than rural grazed parkland.

To the west of the North Lawn, beyond the North Drive and the property boundary, there is a piece of the historic parkland which is owned by the neighbouring Traherne estate and is not managed by the National Trust (***Zone L.4*** in the Gazetteer). Now farmland pasture, the field still contains a handful of mature parkland oaks and an earthwork which marks the line of the former parkland boundary hedge.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the old parkland trees in ***East Meadow*** beyond Dyffryn Lane, fared slightly better than in the other parkland areas and clumps of new parkland trees were added between 1898 and 1915. However, these later trees were short-lived and much of the field to the south of the East Drive had been cleared of trees by 1940, possibly to allow the field to be cultivated during the Second World War. The area has been used since as a nursery and been sporadically cultivated. Today it is colonised by ruderal weeds and is un-used.

13.3 Current and potential uses of the parkland areas

13.3.1 Visitor arrival and car parking

Visitors to Dyffryn Gardens arrive via the North Drive. North meadow and North Park, together, are the first arrival space that visitors encounter. Until 2006, visitors parked beside the north drive. The bitmac parking area still survives. Today they are guided on beyond this point via a new drive that sweeps round, following a course parallel to the River Waycock, to an informally-designed parking area outside the visitor reception and tea room.

Daily visitor numbers vary from less than 100 up to maybe 600-700 on sunny weekends. Visitor figures show peaks of between 1000 and 2000 on sunny bank holidays. However, in the year from April 2013 – March 2014, visitor numbers only exceeded 800 on nine days of the year, nearly all of which were over bank holiday weekends. It is likely that most visitors only stay for part of the day, so it is estimated that peak car parking - when maybe 200 cars are parked on the grass of North Park - probably occurs on less than a dozen days per year. This occurrence is likely to rise as visitor numbers grow but extensive parking across North Park is likely to remain an occasional - rather than a regular - event.

A number of questions therefore arise:

a. whether the North Park needs to be so frequently and comprehensively mown;

b. whether there is more scope for planting parkland trees. The parkland trees that existed in the 19th century may have been the result of designed planting, or may simply have been former field trees. The analysis of the historic maps shows that the numbers parkland trees diminished steadily from 1878 onwards and may have been declining previously. It would be perfectly reasonable to re-plant the North Park more generously to re-establish a long-term parkland landscape. When the parkland is used for overflow parking more trees would be an advantage. They would reduce the visual impact of the parked cars. Also, visitors tend to prefer to park in the shade of trees on warm sunny days.

13.3.2 Visitor reception

East Lodge and the visitor centre both front onto the North Park and, as the hub for visitor facilities on the site, they have an impact on that part of the parkland. The car park immediately outside the reception, the children's play area and the reception forecourt itself are inevitably areas of activity and can become congested on the busiest days of the year.

The tea room has insufficient capacity on busy days in summer. As visitor numbers increase and busy days become more regular, congestion at the tea room may become a more frequent occurrence. However, plans are now in place to create additional visitor catering facilities within the property by refurbishing the 1980s conference restaurant and its servery, in order to offers light refreshments. Even in the short-term, this should make a considerable difference to the congestion in the tea room. In due course it is foreseeable that the range of the catering at Dyffryn House will be increased.

13.3.3 Surface water management

Flooding is a serious problem at Dyffryn. Detailed studies, including hydraulic modelling, will be undertaken during the second half of 2014 and will inform a new strategy for surface water management. It is possible that proposals for flood management could include additional earthworks and extended attenuation ponds within the parkland. In conservation terms, this presents a conflict between conserving the historic character and form of the parkland and accommodating new features within the parkland that would help to manage water flow across the site, averting potential harm to other vulnerable parts of the property. However, the existing attenuation ponds in North Meadow are unobtrusive. With sensitive design, it may be possible to extend these ponds and/or create additional ponds without incursion into the more central areas of North Park or North Meadow. It may even be possible to negotiate the use of the former parkland to the west of the North Lawn (zone L.4 in the gazetteer) which is currently owned by the Traherne estate.

The improved management of existing hedgerows and restoration of lost hedgerows in the parkland would help to control overland flow, slowing the rate with which floodwater converges on Dyffryn. The benefit of this would be considerably enhanced if adjacent landowners within the surface water catchment area can be persuaded to do the same on their land.

13.3.4 Utility installations

Existing utility installations within the parkland are minimal. An overhead power line passes across North Meadow and continues southward across the next field to the south (gazetteer zone L.4) towards the service yard. The National Trust seeks increasingly to find sustainable sources of energy for its properties. To this end, energy supplies to the Dyffryn property have been reviewed and a biomass boiler is proposed, which will be located beside the Cory Education Centre. Other possibilities that have also been mooted include installation of a photovoltaic array (PVA) in the parkland and/or a wind turbine. PVA panels would need to face south and be in a position that would not be shaded during the main part of the day. The installation of a PVA system would be reversible and, if located in the parkland, the land could be managed by sheep-grazing which would be likely to benefit the grassland sward.

Clearly, these kinds of installations would have a visual impact and be perceived as incongruous features within the historic parkland. If any of these proposals are found to have merit, they would need to be located carefully to avoid impinging on the visitors' experience of Dyffryn.

13.4 Future presentation of the parkland

Up until the 1940s, map evidence indicates that the North Park and the North Lawn were seen as single entity. The River Waycock ran through the parkland as a feature, but not as heavily planted visual divide. In fact, the stream running parallel to the North drive had significantly more trees planted beside it than the River Waycock. The bosky fringe along the river that exists today appears to have been planted in the 1950s or later, probably with the aim of screening views of parked cars from the gardens and mansion. Glimpses of the mansion would have been gained between the parkland trees as one travelled along the north drive; the house would not have

been obscured by the river corridor. Given the relative infrequency with which overflow parking extends across the North Park grassland, the relevance of retaining this woodland belt in its present form should be reviewed. Inappropriate trees such as the Scots pine, which have almost certainly outlived their original purpose of contributing to the screen effect, should be thinned out and gradually removed. Other trees, particularly towards the east end where car parking occurs more regularly, could be conserved.

Today, as part of a visitor attraction, the parkland has to accommodate other uses and activities as described above. However, the character of peacefully grazed parkland could easily be re-established in the North Park and across the North Lawn by a combination of supplementary tree planting to establish a good future stock of parkland trees and management with a lighter touch. In order to maintain historic legibility, a particular species – oak – could be planted in the positions of parkland trees shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1878. Additional new trees that have no historic precedent - planted to give additional shade for grazing animals and parked cars - could be distinguished by planting different species, maybe ash, lime or sycamore.

Less frequent mowing and appropriate management could help to reverse the decline in species diversity of the grassland sward which has occurred through 70 years of local authority style management. Grazing animals might be re-introduced in the North Meadow and the North Park. This could be done if a cattle grid was installed at the north gate. A different strategy would be needed for fencing and managing the parkland to separate grazing animals from the regular parking area. Grazing would also benefit the grassland flora and fauna.

New landscape features such as attenuation ponds, which could be of considerable importance in managing surface water drainage and flooding, may need to be accommodated within the parkland. Necessary interventions of this kind would need to be sited and designed with sensitivity and also guided by consideration of what the Cory family might have done, had they still been living at Dyffryn.

It would be desirable to re-unite the piece of former parkland to the west of the North Lawn with the rest of the parkland. This might be achieved by negotiating to lease the land from the Traherne estate. It would allow a parkland setting to be restored for the adjacent section of the North Drive and would also give an opportunity to replant a missing parkland boundary hedge and parkland trees.

The East Meadow was a significant part of the parkland for over a hundred years. It is now almost bereft of parkland trees except in the north-east. It is entirely un-used and unknown to visitors. The line of the former carriage drive through East Meadow is still discernible and should be made clearer, through a combination of tree planting and mowing the route. The site of the tumulus – now ploughed out – could also be interpreted by mowing. The Ordnance Survey map of 1920 shows that the parkland had more parkland trees in 1915 than at any other time (as far we can tell from map evidence) suggesting that the Cory family chose to travel to Cardiff via St Lythans - which is spectacularly attractive route - and so used the east drive regularly and appreciated the east park. The 1919 OS map could be used as the basis for restoring the parkland trees.

Owing to its relative seclusion, East Meadow offers opportunities to accommodate new or different uses in a way that might be difficult in the north parkland. A community orchard might be located either at the extreme north-east or south-west corner of the site. The site might even be a suitable location for other functional or service installations needed for the property, with careful positioning.

14. Issues and Opportunities: the gardens

14.1 Approach to the garden restoration adopted to date

Restoration of the gardens of Dyffryn has been underway, in stages, since 1997. The project was undertaken by the Vale of Glamorgan Council with the aid of grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The restoration approach that has been followed was mapped out in Nicholas Pearson Associates' 'Historic Landscape Survey and Landscape Proposals' dated 1996. This report defined a number of restoration objectives for the property[1]; those specifically for the gardens were:

i. To restore those areas of the Mawson-Cory gardens that were constructed and planted, to the best available evidence, based on Mawson's plan, historic photographs and the Ordnance Survey third edition.

iii. Where evidence is inconclusive, to use contemporary sources, e.g. plant lists and Mawson's own design guidelines as set out in, for example, *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, to restore the gardens.

iv. To recognise that the gardens are constantly evolving and that later developments, such as recent planting in the Arboretum, the acquisition of oriental sculptures, the brick and concrete garden shelters, and the Heather Garden must be judged by their contribution to the overall appearance of the garden and not by an arbitrary cut-off date. This judgement will inevitably necessitate validation by subjective aesthetic criteria.

vi. To improve visitor access, including disabled access, to the site by improved pathways, interpretation, facilities and marketing.

vii. To recognise that the gardens have a high maintenance requirement and to target available resources at those parts of the garden that are historically most significant and currently most popular; as a corollary, to formulate proposals which will reduce the maintenance burden in other parts of the garden.

ix. To recognise the long tradition of horticultural excellence at Dyffryn and, in particular, the existing and potential value of the gardens to horticultural training, adult education and the national curriculum.

14.2 Garden restoration: state of play

The garden restoration projects that have been undertaken since 1997 have broadly followed the objectives listed above. In the main, the restoration has concentrated on the individual gardens for which the most comprehensive and historic information has been available. Thus the physical fabric of the garden 'rooms' designed by Mawson and/or Cory has been repaired quite extensively and the planting restored. A few of the more modern gardens, such as the Heather Garden and Physic Garden

1 Nicholas Pearson Associates, Sept 1996. *Historic Landscape Survey and Landscape Proposals*, p27

have also been restored and/or replanted. Maintenance resources have then continued to be focused on these gardens, as the highlight to visitors' enjoyment. This pragmatic approach has stabilised a significant proportion of the most important surviving gardens from the early decades of the 20th century.

However, some parts of the garden – notably the West Garden and Arboretum –still have strong, recognisable design layouts but have become neglected. The arboretum was extended during the 1950s – '70s with additions that have added value and interest to the collection. However in some areas, the significance of the original tree and shrub planting has been obscured and diluted by later plantings of lesser value. Because of the need to focus gardening resources on the newly restored 'showpiece' garden rooms, these peripheral woodland gardens have received minimal maintenance for many years.

There are parts of the gardens where what exists today is a run-down remnant of a design which once existed but is no longer legible. Collectively, these neglected areas add up to a significant proportion of the whole garden and detract from the quality of visit for many people. Some of these garden spaces are tucked between the Mawson/Cory garden rooms, are of uncertain age or design intent, and have less historic documentary information to inform how they should be presented and/or restored. There are also parts of the garden – notably the south lake – which were attempted and failed. In Mawson's vision for the gardens, the lake and associated water pavilion would have been an important climax, bringing the gardens to triumphal conclusion at their southern end. After the failure of the lake, limited evidence from aerial photographs and the 1947 Ordnance Survey map suggests that Reginald Cory attempted some re-design of this area but that his new ideas were only partially implemented. The impression gained is that he was struggling to know what to do with this whole area after the long-cherished lake scheme had collapsed.

The abandoned lake bed appears to have presented something of a design conundrum for head gardeners ever since. Designs of the 1960s and '70s comprised a Japanese Garden in the west half of the lake bed with a meandering rill, tiny bridges and diminutive planting; and a rather puny arrangement of island beds adorned with summer bedding in the eastern half. Neither layout was of a strength or scale to do justice to their context.

These uncompleted or forgotten parts of the garden probably present the greatest challenge in terms of how they should be presented in the future. They cannot be regarded as pure 'restoration' because what is one to restore? Mawson's design for the south end of the gardens, although attempted, ended in failure. There are no known drawings of the proposed water pavilion. The scheme that Cory started to develop instead was also never completed.

14.3 Horticultural presentation of the gardens

Reflecting the strategy that was put forward by Nicholas Pearson Associates in their *'Historic Landscape Survey and Landscape Proposals'* (1996), the maintenance regime for the gardens has aimed:

> *'To recognise that the gardens have a high maintenance requirement and to target available resources at those parts of the gardens that are both historically*

most significant and currently most popular; as a corollary to formulate proposals which will reduce the maintenance burden in other parts of the garden.'

The Dyffryn Gardens Maintenance Plan of 2005, which was prepared for submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund and intended to be used as a basis for monitoring and assessing the maintenance performance across the property, continued to espouse a prioritised maintenance regime. Prioritisation was broken down into 5 categories:

- Categories A – C, covering public areas. A was the highest level.
- Categories D – E, covering non-public areas.

Priority A were, in essence, the visitor arrival zones and key elements of the Mawson / Cory gardens which had been successfully implemented in the first place and by 2005 had been the subject of restoration. Thus they include the main entrance, the areas immediately adjoining the approach to the visitor centre, the areas around the tearoom and the formal gardens south and east of the main house; that is, the Rockery, the Archery Lawn, the Fernery, the Heather garden, the Panel Garden, the Croquet and the Great Lawns, all the individual garden rooms and the areas around all the champion trees. The walled gardens and glasshouses were identified for inclusion in this category following restoration. These areas were to be given first call on plants, horticultural resources and skills.

Priority B applied to the entrance drive, North Lawn, margins of the East Drive, surrounds to the Heather Garden and Fernery, main paths through the Arboretum, West Garden, proposed lake area and southern river corridor. These areas were to be given first call on resources after Priority A areas have been maintained to a good standard.

Priority C applied to North Park and the west verges of the North Drive, the delegates' car park, the Rookery (Yew Grove), the arboretum beyond the main paths, the shrubbery west of the kitchen gardens.

Priorities D and E applied to areas which were not open to the public. In 2005, the development of the Cory Centre and adjacent marquee were not yet anticipated and so these areas (which were still part of the horticultural compound) were included in Priority Area D. The North and East Meadows were Priority E areas, attracting the least maintenance input of all.

Since the 2005 Maintenance Plan was written, other parts of the Dyffryn site have also been restored and developed, notably the walled gardens and bothies, the Cory Educational Centre and adjacent car park and marquee, and the new visitor centre. Of these areas, the kitchen gardens and surrounds to the visitor centre now also attract Priority A maintenance. Although never defined, the Cory Educational Centre and surrounds are probably Priority B areas.

Gardening resources have continued to be deployed generally in line with the priorities defined in 2005, but with a greater differential in standards between Priority A areas and the Priority B – E areas than was probably intended originally. With a few exceptions, the difference is marked. Ignoring the parkland areas (as defined in

Chapter 13 above), the Priority A areas occupy a little over a quarter of the spatial area of the gardens that are open to the public. Although for many people the highlight of the visit is undoubtedly the core Mawson / Cory ornamental gardens and the kitchen gardens, here they find presentation standards which are attractive in summer but variable at other times of the year. However, their perambulation usually takes in the whole of the wider gardens too, where visitors should find gardens which are less formal but still of quality that invites them to linger and imbibe the charm of their surroundings. Instead, they find garden areas that look neglected, clearly have only a minimal level of maintenance and in many places are overgrown and weedy, sometimes impenetrably so.

The whole of the gardens (excluding the parkland) measures approximately 20 ha (50 acres). Within this, the Priority A areas measure a little under 6 ha (14 acres) and, of those, the garden rooms which require intense horticultural input measure approximately 2 ha (5 acres). The equivalent of 10 full-time gardeners is employed at Dyffryn which - on the basis of acreage calculations - appears to be comparable to that at other National Trust properties of similar complexity and scale. This is supplemented by 40-50 garden volunteers who collectively, in 2013, gave approximately 5500 hours of gardening time. While trying not to over-estimate volunteer achievement, this roughly equates to 2½ additional gardeners. Although it would be desirable to employ more gardeners this has to be balanced against the financial achievements of the whole property. At current visitor levels (68,500 in 2013; aiming for similar in 2014) employing additional gardeners is probably not yet affordable.

Instead, the way in which gardeners are deployed may require review to explore opportunities to use their time to best effect. Time spent by the gardeners on simple but time-consuming tasks such as grass cutting over extensive areas could be saved by contracting out grass cutting. Some parts of the formal gardens - for example the rockery - are particularly labour intensive and their current standard of presentation bears witness to the stretched gardening resources. While this Conservation Management Plan seeks to set out a vision and aims for how the gardens could look in years to come, in the short-term it may be more realistic to clear the overgrown vegetation and weeds from some parts of the gardens, such as the rockery, and initially simplify their presentation, then gradually raise the standards of maintenance and restore them properly as resources allow, bringing these areas back up to a presentational standard suitable to a garden of Dyffryn's standing.

14.4 Tree and woodland framework

Significance of the tree collections

The gardens of Dyffryn have a strong tree and woodland framework, much of which began to be planted by Reginald Cory from the early 1900s. The planted structure and rationale of the West Garden and the Arboretum have, in places, become dilute by later plantings of trees and shrubs which are not of relevance to the collections or the history of Dyffryn. A survey of both these woodland gardens is currently in progress to identify surviving trees planted by (or before the time of) Reginald Cory and assess the condition, age structure and aesthetic value of the collections

generally. The care and condition of the collections should be improved by individual tree care, removal of weed trees and replanting following an agreed collections policy. The standards of maintenance and presentation of these gardens should be raised by opening up the understorey and clearing out weeds (trees and others) to enable important and attractive trees to be seen and appreciated. New trees should be planted to ensure a succession, and with the aim of enhancing the value and interest of the collections.

Shelter

The combined structure of the trees and shrubs of the West Garden, the Arboretum, and other shelter and privacy planting around the north side of the kitchen gardens and at the extreme south end of the gardens all serve to give the gardens a strong visual framework. They also, importantly, contribute to the gardens' sheltered microclimate, which enables the cultivation of the more tender plants of which Reginald Cory was particularly fond.

Larch in the shelter belts bordering North Park is almost certainly at risk from *Phytophthera ramorum* infection, which is spreading through the UK. This should be anticipated by successional planting and, where space is a constraint, phased felling and replacement with shelter belt trees of a different variety. *Rhododendron ponticum* in the West Garden and Arboretum, which acts as a host plant for *P. ramorum,* should be cleared to reduce risk.

An important but mature shelter belt extends down the full length of the west side of the main gardens on a strip of land which is not owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The belt is only one tree deep and a significant proportion of the belt comprises single age hybrid poplars. The shelter belt is of great importance in protecting Dyffryn Gardens from severe weather from the south-west. It would be of considerable advantage to the gardens if the National Trust could negotiate to lease this strip of land in order to be able to assume management control of the shelter belt and then undertake supplementary planting to enhance the shelter characteristics and ensure its successional continuity.

14.5 Historic plants: care and continuity

Conservation of historic plants

Many plants dating from the time of Reginald Cory still survive at Dyffryn. Records are kept of which surviving plants are either known - or are thought - to have been planted in the time of Reginald Cory. These records are currently being verified and supplemented (summer 2014) by surveys of the trees and shrubs of the West Garden and Arboretum and of the shrubs in the various garden rooms. A propagation programme is already underway at Dyffryn. In the light of these surveys, prioritisation of the programme will be reviewed to ensure that the rarest, most significant and most vulnerable plants dating from the early 20th century, but also later periods, are propagated soonest and in sufficient numbers to ensure that they can continue to be grown at Dyffryn for the foreseeable future.

Future selection of plants

Where original plants from the time of Reginald Cory, or plants of significance from later periods no longer survive, plants and varieties should be selected to reflect:
a) plant varieties that are known to have been grown by Reginald Cory, as evidenced by published descriptions of the time and information contained in his surviving personal correspondence;
b) plant types (if not varieties) that can be identified from historic photographs and the paintings of Edith Adie.

Where information on historic planting schemes is scant, the following approaches could be adopted:
a) In parts of the garden where Reginald Cory is known to have assembled collections, choose plant species known to have been either introduced or plant varieties that were bred in the early decades of the 20th century and are still available and, importantly, are of garden merit. This approach may be suitable for collections such as water lilies and alpines.
b) In parts of the garden where the character of the planting is known but older varieties give an unreliable display, choose modern varieties with similar characteristics of appearance but better performance in terms of disease resistance, flowering time and general display qualities. This approach may be suitable for collections such as roses.
c) In parts of the garden where detailed information about Cory's planting theme and/or choice of plants is limited, define a theme on the basis of whatever historic information is available and explore the opportunity to plant new and exciting varieties as well as the old, tried and tested, and loved varieties. This approach may be suitable for the Australasian Garden.

Importantly, future plant selection should be mindful of the likelihood of global warming and should favour the use of plants that will continue to thrive as the climate warms and will be robust in the event of more frequent periods of drought.

Management of mature planting

There are a few instances where trees surviving from the time of Reginald Cory (or earlier), or from the period of gardening by Glamorgan County Council have grown to sizes that was probably never intended or envisaged. The Irish yews in the Panel Garden and bordering the South Lawn have now grown to a size that was probably never intended, obscuring views from the house. A number of individuals are in poor condition which cannot be easily reversed merely by good horticultural care.

In the Panel Garden particularly, the Irish yews have grown to a size that is out of proportion with the size of the garden. They constrain the scope to present panels of formal bedding as they would have looked a hundred years ago and, as a result, the existing borders are not historically correct.

In the Rookery on the top of the hillock to the east of the mansion, the common yews - which probably started life as under-planting beneath a high canopy of old parkland trees and ornamental conifers - have now grown on to become the dominant canopy themselves.

In both these areas, the character of the original gardens is considerably diminished. The Irish yews in the Panel Garden and the beside the croquet lawn need to be replaced with new young plants in order to re-establish the character of these areas as seen in photographs of 1910 and 1920. On the Rookery hill top, the yews could have their crowns lifted and/or be selectively thinned. This would allow light to reach the ground, enabling a more diverse ground flora to re-establish. Newly opened spaces would create the opportunity to re-plant ornamental trees of a character that existed in the Victorian woodland garden that occupied this hilltop a hundred years ago and more. The restoration of this garden will be a slow, staged process.

The numerous yew hedges that separate many of the garden rooms are in variable condition. Some have been reduced and some are still rather thick. When viewed from above, their heights are variable. A width restoration programme is needed and will be addressed as part of an overarching garden strategy.

14.6 Garden structures

Of the small garden buildings known to have existed during the time of Reginald Cory, only one now survives: the brick turret and series of brick arches built across the south side of the Lavender Court. This structure, although not considered dangerous, is in poor condition and needs repair in the near future.

Five other small garden shelters or pavilions dating from the 1950s or '60s, and each with a pantile roof, still stand in various parts of the garden. These are:

- a pair of shelters flanking the north end of the causeway that runs south across the former lake bed;
- a shelter at the west end of the herbaceous borders;
- a shelter at the south end of the former dahlia garden; and
- a shelter to the south of the former Japanese rill garden which occupied the west part of the former lake bed.

With the exception of the shelter at the west end of the herbaceous borders, the garden context for each of these shelters has either been lost or is at least partially derelict. Although arguably part of the gardens' history, if the gardens they were associated with are unlikely to be restored, their significance is debateable. They should be measured and recorded, but their retention should be re-considered in the light of future proposals for the areas within which they stand.

14.7 The gardens: visitor access

Footfall pressure

Despite the gentle nature of most people's stroll through the gardens, the number of visitors takes its toll in terms of wear to the grass. This pressure will increase with visitor numbers at least doubling in coming years. Parts of the garden which are particularly vulnerable to footfall wear and tear are:

- narrow grass paths and thresholds, such as through the herbaceous borders and at entry points to the Theatre Garden;

- grass areas and paths which tend to be wet, of which there are several: paths through the arboretum, the West Garden particularly towards the south end and the Great Lawn particularly in the south-east.

In pinch-point locations where the grass becomes worn through concentrated footfall, the condition of the grass needs particular husbandry through a combination of physical grass reinforcement, 'bounce-back' measures and out-of-season repair. Changing from a grassed surface to a paved one where, historically the surface was always previously grassed, should only be considered as a last-ditch solution. Where grass areas are inaccessible and also slippery due to soggy conditions, the existing land drainage may need to be repaired and additional measures designed and installed in terms of improved walking surfaces and/or improved drainage.

Visitor safety

At any property open to visitors safe walking surfaces and access ways are of critical importance. In the gardens at Dyffryn there are several areas which present hazards due to uneven paving, slippery surfaces and irregular flights of steps. Areas of particular concern are:

- the hedged corridors to the immediate south of the Theatre and Physic Gardens, and circumnavigating the Lavender Court and Heart Gardens, where the stone paving becomes extremely slippery in wet weather;
- the Theatre Garden, due to irregular flights of steps and uneven paving which is spalling and breaking up in places;
- the long canal stone margin, which becomes slippery in wet weather;
- the Italian Terrace steps, which are uneven;
- flights of steps connecting the Cloisters, Bathing (or Reflecting) Pool, Paved Court and Pompeian Garden;
- flights of steps leading down onto the Great Lawn
- the path past the bothies which becomes icy in winter where roof drainage downpipes discharge straight onto the path.

Various solutions to these differing problems might include:

- a change of surfacing material, possibly to gravel or a similarly 'grippy' material where the paving is regularly slippery;
- repair of stone and/or partial replacement of stone steps and pavings where these breaking up or spalling;
- provision of sensitively-designed handrails in situations where a visitor might be exposed to the risk of a serious fall, simply by inadvertently slipping or tripping, or where access for disabled visitors would be difficult without a handrail.

Disabled access

Disabled access around the gardens of Dyffryn Gardens is variable. By and large, a paved circulatory route avoiding difficult changes of level can be followed within the flatter central valley floor, in an area that extends from the North Lawn to the periphery of the former lake in the south. Wheelchair access is also possible via paved paths through the West Garden, and some garden rooms including the Rose Garden, Physic Garden and the Australasian Garden. Access, particularly for

wheelchairs, is difficult or impossible where there are marked changes of level between the garden rooms. There is no paved path along the grassed terrace down the west side of the Great Lawn and, in wet weather this route is difficult even for able walkers. A paved path here would provide another route option, mirroring the path along the east side of the Great Lawn and would anticipate the need for more paved access as visitor numbers grow.

Small signs are in place around the garden to help guide wheelchair users along suitable routes. A welcome leaflet, available specifically for visitors with limited mobility, might help them to choose a satisfactory and interesting circuit route without having to back-track too many times.

In the longer term, for those visitors for whom access to parts of the gardens is impossible, alternative methods of artificially creating a tour might be considered. Options include a film or video tour, or the use of a good range of illustrations or even a guided tour by web-cam given by a member of staff or a volunteer.

14.8 Gardening performance relative to Environmental Standards

The management system for the whole of the Dyffryn property is Green Dragon Environmental Standard accredited to Level 5.

The environmental performance of the gardens will be assessed against the National Trust's Environmental Standards [2] as part of the emerging Garden Strategy for Dyffryn. The National Trust's Bronze Level Standard requires:

- Efficient energy use. The glasshouses were newly erected in 2011 and so have modern energy-efficient glazing and design. The Cory Centre and heating buildings in gardeners' compound were built / restored in 2006 and, similarly, have modern standards of insulation and energy performance. All these buildings are heated by a modern fuel-efficient LPG boiler. (This may be de-commissioned when a biomass boiler is installed in 2016.) Powered equipment is chosen for energy efficiency, serviced regularly and used no more than necessary.
- Efficient water use. Compost is applied to bedding areas regularly to improve water retention as well as nutrient status. Mulch is also used. Minimal irrigation is used in order to encourage increased plant robustness. However, mains water is still used to fill some ponds.
- Optimal use of rainfall. Rainwater is harvested from the roofs of the glasshouses and various buildings and structures in the horticultural compound. However, rainwater from these tanks is not used at the moment due to poor pressure and *Legionella* concerns. This will be addressed as part of forthcoming water management studies (2014).
- Composting of garden waste. Dyffryn Gardens has a cold composting compound.
- Re-use or recycling of materials.
- A full Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme.

2 National Trust, 2012. National Trust Environmental Standards for Parks and Gardens

15. Dyffryn House, gardens and parkland: vision for the future

15.1 Vision for the future of the house

Dyffryn - during the 19th century - was a gentleman's residence but neither house nor garden were distinguished. Only when the Cory family bought the Dyffryn house and estate did the property undergo aggrandisement and become a place of some distinction.

The mansion was evidently a loved family home which the Corys, elder and younger, continued to extend and adapt for some twenty years or so after remodelling the house in the 1890s, to suit their preferences for living in the house and to accommodate their interests. It is on account of the exceptional interior decorations that the house is listed Grade II* by Cadw. Internally, particularly on the ground floor, there is a marked difference in decorative styles, reflecting prevailing fashions but also, to some extent, reflecting the tastes of the elder and younger generations. The family appears to have favoured the south-facing rooms as their regular living rooms, using the north-facing rooms – the dining room, billiards room and Great Hall - for formal entertaining. This was emphasized when Reginald and Florence installed large 'picture' windows in the Blue Drawing Room and Morning Room and Florence's ground floor boudoir at some date before 1923. When this change was made, the gardens would have been at the height of their beauty and young maturity. These enlarged windows strengthened the relationship between these charming rooms and the gardens. Visitors should continue to be able to enjoy drifting through these rooms enjoying the lavish decorative finishes and designs and the contrast between the light and bright character of the south-facing rooms with the more ponderous fittings of some of the northern rooms.

When Dyffryn house and gardens were bought by Major (later Sir) Cennydd Traherne and offered on lease to Glamorgan County Council for a peppercorn rent, the offer was made with the proviso that the House would be used for educational purposes, or for furthering the interests of horticulture and botany. Having purchased the freehold for Dyffryn, the Vale of Glamorgan Council is no longer bound by this covenant and, nearly eighty years on, using the house solely for educational purposes may no longer be a sustainable option. However, if possible, the spirit of Sir Cennydd's generous offer – made in tribute to Reginald Cory's life and achievements at Dyffryn - should be respected in whatever future purpose is found for the house.

15.2 Vision for the parkland

From the moment that visitors enter Dyffryn Gardens via the north gate, they should be aware of arriving in the same tranquil parkland scene of grassland, mature trees and grazing animals as would have greeted the Booth Greys, the Bruce Pryces and the Corys in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The parkland represents that private rural space that sets a gentleman's house apart from the busy everyday world beyond the gates.

Up until the 1940s, map and photographic evidence indicates that the North Park and the North Lawn were seen as single entity. Glimpses of the mansion would have

been gained between the parkland trees as one travelled along the north drive; the house would not have been obscured by the river corridor. The River Waycock ran through the parkland as a feature, but the bosky fringe along the river that exists today appears to have been planted in the 1950s or later, probably with the aim of screening parked cars. Given the relative infrequency with which overflow parking extends across the North Park grassland, the relevance of retaining this woodland belt in its present form should be reviewed.

Many of the structures erected by the County Council on the North Lawn - moribund by the 1990s - and much of the overgrown planting was bravely, and rightly, cleared away during the HLF-funded restoration project of the late 1990s. Some of the young/mature trees – individually good specimens – were kept as a testament to the gardening of the 1950s but are distinctively ornamental in character. Some of these trees also obscure important views of the mansion, particularly from both drives. The rather confusing mixture of amenity planting combined with parkland trees creates quite a different character from the simple parkland that existed as the foreground to the mansion in the time of Reginald Cory.

The character of peacefully grazed parkland should be re-established in the North Park and across the North Lawn through a combination of removing conspicuously ornamental trees, new planting to establish a good future stock of parkland trees and management of the grasslands with a lighter touch. Of the available historic map evidence, the Ordnance Survey map of 1878 shows the north parkland at its most timbered and so should be the basis for replanting parkland trees throughout North Meadow, North Park and North Lawn.

The outer parklands of the North and East Meadows should be similarly restored through conservation of surviving parkland trees, replacement of lost parkland tree and hedgerows and management of the grassland swards, preferably by grazing. Map evidence indicates that parkland trees in the East Meadow were at their most numerous by 1915. The Ordnance Survey map of 1919 should be used as the basis for replanting trees in this area.

15.3 Vision for the future presentation of the gardens and arboretum

The gardens created through the collaboration of Thomas Mawson and Reginald Cory are quite exceptional in their scale and complexity, noteworthy as the grandest and most outstanding Edwardian gardens in Wales and comparable to some similarly extravagant gardens of the period elsewhere in Britain. While the mansion is Grade II* listed by Cadw, it is on account of the exceptional early 20th century gardens that Dyffryn is recognised as being of importance at a national level and is Grade I registered.

The arboretum established by Reginald Cory, but extended after 1950, together with the West Garden give the gardens of Dyffryn a whole extra dimension. The tree collection includes specimens collected by Cory of both very rare species and some of the largest specimens of certain species and cultivars in the United Kingdom. Although the collections are neglected, the presence of these exceptional individual trees makes the collection of importance at a national level.

Gardens are never static and the gardens of Dyffryn, once created, had a life beyond the 1930s. Passing into the care of Glamorgan County Council, they were a source of considerable pride for the region and were maintained to a very high standard throughout the 1950s, '60s and early '70s. During this period, the arboretum was extended and additional gardens were created in many of the areas that had been less developed or more lightly gardened by Reginald Cory. Although, as part of the restoration programme, many of these later developments have now been removed, some – such as the rockery – were of considerable contemporary acclaim, still survive and, in due course, will merit a full restoration.

The National Trust's vision for Dyffryn is that, while the exceptional phase of garden building which resulted from the collaboration between Thomas Mawson and Reginald Cory eclipses all others on account of its singularity, other attractive parts of the gardens which were created solely by the Cory family or by various head gardeners of Glamorgan County Council should also be conserved. Fortunately, the majority of the more distinctive individual garden spaces are the product of single periods, making decisions about where to place the emphasis of their interpretation and presentation relatively straightforward. However, there are a few parts of the gardens which are now multi-layered in terms of the dates of what survives, often where there was substantial intervention by Glamorgan County Council in the 1950s – '70s.

A brave approach is needed for those parts of the Mawson/Cory-designed gardens which never fulfilled their original promise: notably the area that encompasses the south part of the Great Lawn, the Vine Walk and the failed southern lake. It appears to have been Cory's intention to implement Mawson's design for this area, although almost certainly adding his own interpretation. The lake was dug and filling attempted, bases were built of the right dimensions to support a water pavilion and, later, an excavation was prepared for a lily pond at the south end of the Great Lawn. This whole area should have become the southern climax to the gardens. The water pavilion would have provided a focus to views from both sides; the long views down the garden, but also views from the south across the new lake. The lake itself would not have been visible from the lower storeys of the house. It would have only been discovered, as a dramatic revelation, on reaching the southern cross-walk and nearby gardens such as the Lavender Court. The failure to realise this vision leaves the gardens incomplete. Had there been another generation of the Cory family to inherit Dyffryn, bringing new energy and similar creative talent to continuing the garden development, it seems possible that this grand southern finale would have eventually been achieved. A fresh eye and a new design are called for. It was Mawson's vision that gave the gardens of Dyffryn their strength and coherence, so a new design for this area should respect the principles that Mawson would have adopted. The design need not set out to create 'a modern Mawson' but should create a whole new garden zone that respects the symmetry and scale of the original design of 1906. The exact style and character should be the subject of curatorial discussion, but a design competition might be the best vehicle for bringing in a fresh, imaginative eye to this exciting but challenging project.

The condition of the arboretum is poor, having received relatively limited maintenance for many years. There has been a marked encroachment by inappropriate planting and weed trees, which have blurred the significance of the

botanic collection and also cramped the space available for the important specimens to grow well and be seen easily. The arboretum should be restored through good arboricultural practice, removal of inappropriate planting and development of a new collections policy. This will enable the arboretum to be restored as a vibrant and evolving collection of trees, building on themes already established and presented in a manner which is both attractive and accessible - physically and intellectually - enabling visitors to enjoy and understand the true worth of the collections.

An essential thread running through all aspects of plant collection, cultivation and planting design in the gardens of Dyffryn must be to keep alive the spirit of Reginald Cory's enthusiasm for, and collection of a wide range of plant types from many parts of the world, including the Americas, China and South Africa. The different garden rooms should provide display spaces for exemplary collections of the types of plants that Cory is known to have loved and collected, including examples of plants brought back from the various plant-hunting trips that he either sponsored or took part in himself. Building on this foundation, newer cultivars and recent introductions of the kind that Cory would have undoubtedly found exciting and wanted to grow should also be represented within the collections. Fundamental to achieving this aspiration, the propagation and nursery facilities of Dyffryn will need to be developed and brought up to a suitable standard.

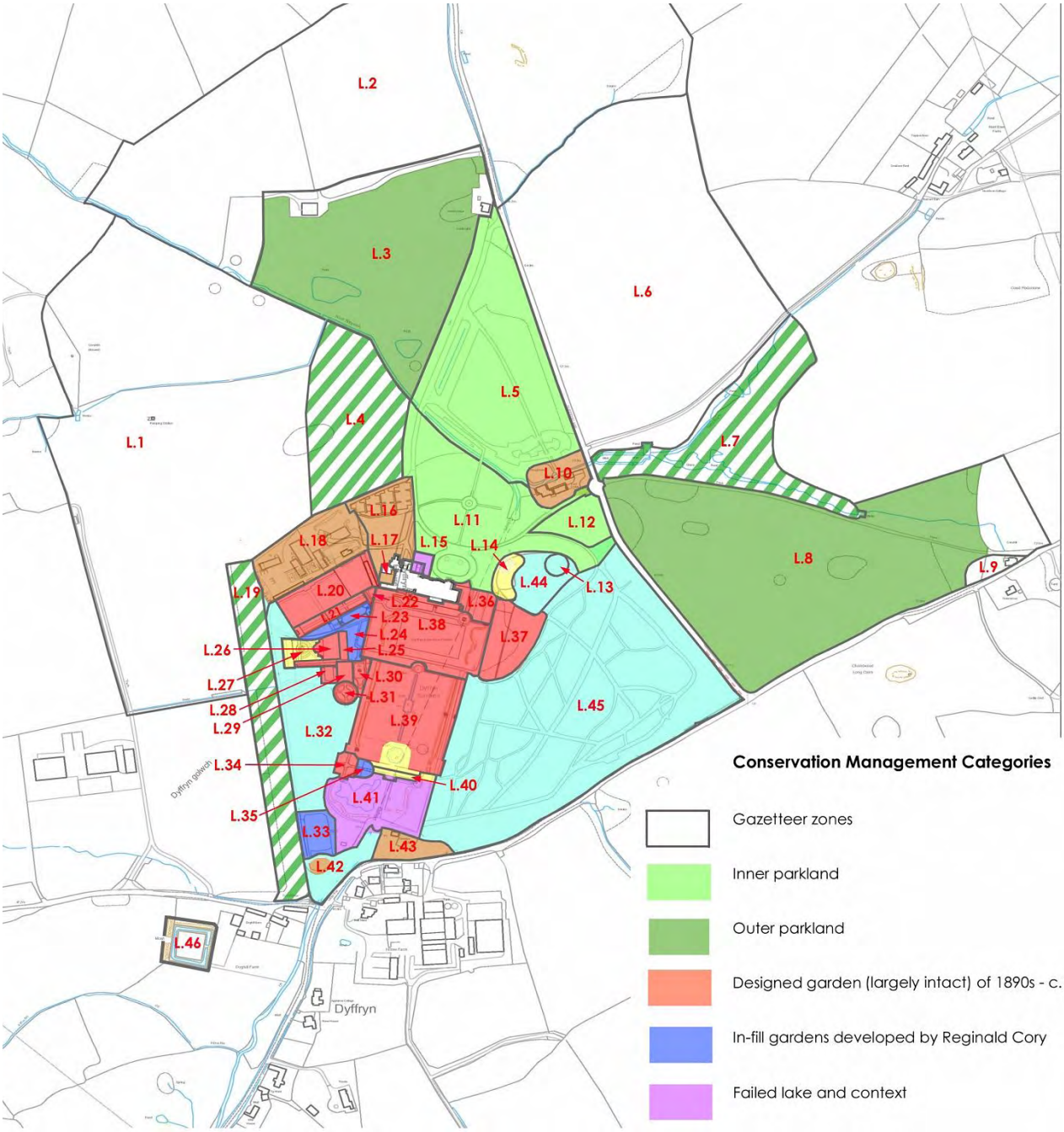
16. Gardens and Parkland: conservation strategy

16.1 Future strategy for the parkland and gardens

As described in chapters 10 and 14, the restoration the gardens and parkland of Dyffryn, and their subsequent management and maintenance, have made uneven progress across the property. Different areas show considerable variation:

- Those areas where Mawson's master plan, combined with good historic documentary evidence, provided a sound basis for quite extensive repair and restoration work in the late 1990s.
- Other parts of the gardens, created purely by Cory and where Mawson's master plan gave little detail, have had little restoration and, due to limited gardening resources, have been given a lower level of maintenance.
- The south end of the garden – that is, the failed lake and Cory's incomplete subsequent plans for the area – receive minimal maintenance and are awaiting a brave new decision about its future character.
- The peripheral areas of the property – particularly North Meadow and East Meadow – are now largely un-used and un-managed.

These represent different starting points from which to move forward and refresh or continue with the restoration of the historic landscapes of Dyffryn. The following categories are suggested as the basis of a strategy for conserving and managing the parkland and gardens in the future. These should be read in conjunction with the key plan presented on the following page.



Conservation Management Zones: Key plan

N.T.S.

(1) Inner parkland (North Park and North Lawn and Heather Garden)

(Gazetteer zones: L.5, L.11 and L.12)

Already managed as parkland since before 1811, when Dyffryn was remodelled by the Booth Greys the inner parkland became defined as a distinct area contained between the north and east carriage drives. However map evidence suggests that this part of the parkland was of similar character to the outer areas of parkland until after the Second World War, when Glamorgan County Council began to manage the property. On the North Lawn, an interpretation of Mawson's unfinished master plan was created. The County Council then gradually added other garden features and visitor facilities. The area to the north of the River Waycock was now used for car parking. However, the restoration work since 1998 has significantly reversed the trend, removing much of the clutter and overgrown planting of the 1950s from the North Lawn. The North Park remains the arrival zone for visitors, but with the regular car park now located at the south-east end, outside the new visitor centre.

The restoration work carried out between 1998 and 2006 made a first, substantial step towards restoring the informality to these areas. However, neither the North Park nor the North Lawn yet has the appearance of rural parkland; they both have the slightly-municipal look of amenity open space. Many of the trees planted in the 1950s, '60s and '70s, are now in young maturity. The heather garden, created in the 1970s to the immediate south of the east drive, introduced another gardenesque feature, at variance with the earlier parkland character. This still survives although it has had to be replanted several times and it has no inherent value as a collection.

The consequence of partial restoration is that what is left today is 'neither fish nor fowl'. The simple central parkland that extended away from the north front of the mansion, with glimpses between scattered parkland right across to the boundary of Dyffryn Lane has been foreshortened by the intermediate, slightly ornamental belt of trees bordering the River Waycock which have now grown to represent a strong visual divide, cutting the inner parkland area into two. There remains more to be done to remove the inappropriate tree varieties (Scots pine, copper beech, poplars and Gingko) and thin out the trees beside the River Waycock. The heather garden, which, although briefly attractive for two months in the spring, is a relatively drab feature through the rest of the year and should also be cleared away. These actions will clear the way for the re-establishment of that almost ubiquitous feature of 19th century country houses - the private parkland approach to a gentleman's residence.

It is recognised that the North Park will continue to be used for overflow parking. On peak visit days of the year cars may need to park right across the north parkland and so be visible from the house, but for the majority of days, overflow parking can be zoned and managed, to keep it to the outer edges of the view. New parkland trees should be planted, using the 1878 Ordnance Survey map as a basis. Additional trees planted across the north park to give shade to (overflow) parked cars, could be distinguished by use of different species to the other parkland trees.

(2) Outer parkland (North Meadow and East Meadow)
(Gazetteer zones: L.3 and L.8)

North Meadow was parkland before 1811. By 1826-'27, Greenwood's Map of Glamorgan shows East Meadow had also become parkland, with the east carriage drive running through it. Today, of all Dyffryn's parkland areas, the North Meadow best retains it parkland character - albeit unkempt – and still has a significant number of surviving parkland and trees and a few old hedgerow trees are mature/veteran. By contrast, the majority of parkland trees in the East Meadow were lost by 1940, although some veteran parkland trees survive in the north-east corner of the meadow. The line of the former carriage drive is still partially visible as an earthwork.

The parkland character of both fields could be re-established through planting new parkland trees reflecting:

- the 1878 Ordnance Survey map in North Meadow
- the 1915 Ordnance Survey map in East Meadow

Historically, at least a proportion of the needs of a country house like Dyffryn have always been met from its own estate. These needs have included food, fuel and sources of other income. The modern property of Dyffryn continues to have management needs which may be met, at least in part, from within its own estate. The outer parklands may provide a suitable location for certain installations or requirements relating to water and flood management and possibly such things as alternative energy generation. However, within the view range of the north and east carriage drives these meadows should be conserved as, or restored to parkland without any visible intrusion from alternative land uses or activities. Beyond the view horizons, with sensitive location and design it may be possible to accommodate new land uses and modern needs unobtrusively in the outer parkland areas.

(3) Designed gardens (largely intact) of 1890s – c.1930
(Gazetteer zones: L.20, L.21, L.22, L.25, L.26, L.28, L.29, L.30, L.31, L.34, L.36, L.37, L.38, L.39)

Many of the individual gardens at Dyffryn now appear as almost perfect 'period pieces'. For all those gardens which either existed already in 1906 or were created subsequently by the Mawson - Cory collaboration, care has been taken to restore them to an appearance very similar to that of 1910 and/or 1920, based on map, descriptive, illustrative and photographic evidence.

For these designed gardens photographs, paintings and written descriptions record the gardens in their youthful prime and so enable not only conservation of the physical fabric but also create the opportunity to re-capture of the character and atmosphere ('spirit of place') of each garden. The idealised exuberant and floriferous extravagance represented in the paintings by Edith Adie is particularly valuable in giving us an insight into Reginald Cory's vision of how he wanted his gardens to be perceived and remembered. Cory's particular delight appears to have been in the challenge of growing gorgeous dramatic plants, often highly floriferous and often new; that is, new introductions and new varieties. It seems wholly appropriate to continue to cultivate the gardens of Dyffryn in the same spirit of wonder, collection and adventure, embracing

the best and richest of the old, but also exploring the excitement and possibilities of the new, while trying to capture the essence of those visions painted by Adie.

(4) In-fill garden areas of loose design on Mawson's master plan, developed later by Reginald Cory *(Gazetteer zones: L.23, L.24, L.33 and L.35)*

A number of garden areas that exist today were not designed or were only loosely designed as in-fill areas between the garden 'rooms' of Mawson's master plan of 1906. Some of these areas, such as the Dutch Garden and the Australasian Garden, were developed subsequently by Reginald Cory as gardens inserted in the spaces between the garden rooms on Mawson's plan. Cory's Dahlia Garden was created at the extreme south end of the West Garden. The Heart Garden was created after the First World War, to a different design to that shown on the 1906 master plan. In each case, these gardens were re-worked and/or re-planted during the second half of the 20th century. In the 1990s, the Dahlia Garden – which had long since ceased to contain dahlias – was filled in and returned to a simpler form more in line with Mawson's plan.

Of all these gardens, Reginald Cory's dahlia garden is probably the most significant. Created as the show space for his dahlia collection – a plant for which he had a particular enthusiasm - the garden should be restored. A photograph taken by Neame Roff in 1920 gives a good impression of how the garden looked and could be used as the basis for a reasonably accurate reconstruction.

Photographs of the Dutch Garden and part of the Australasian Garden published in journals either at the time or some years later, give some indication of how these gardens looked. The Dutch Garden now looks very different from how it looked in 1914 but the basic shape and sunken form of the garden appears to be largely intact; it is the paving and planting detail which has changed and a small garden pavilion no longer exists. The Australasian Garden still appears to retain the basic arrangement of paths and some trees that were visible in photographs of the 1930s – '50s. However, the planting detail shown in photographs of c.1938 and possibly the 1950s shows some Australasian plants such as Cordylines, fan palms and bamboos but the lower storey planting appears relatively sparse. A small pond, visible in one photograph and on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1919 and 1940, has been filled in and is no longer visible. From the map and photographic evidence, it would be possible to restore lost features in these gardens and re-create planting schemes which respect the themes which Reginald Cory appears to have intended for these areas.

Where documentary evidence is more slender about how some of Cory's other gardens looked (the Heart Garden and the south part of the Australasian Garden), the garden framework established by Cory should be retained but a new planting theme should be developed, suited to the growing conditions of each garden area and preferably displaying a facet of Reginald Cory's known plant collecting interests.

No photograph has ever been found to show Cory's rockery, thought to have existed on the west side of the Rookery hill. His original rockery may have been created within a small hillside quarry but appears to have been engulfed within the much larger rockery constructed by Glamorgan County Council in the early 1950s. It is now impossible to tell whether any of Cory's original rockery remains. It is therefore considered in category (6) below. Other gardens from the time of the Cory family have also been lost. A Water

Garden, a Bog Garden and a Paeony Garden are all mentioned in the sales particulars of 1937. No additional information has been found to give clues to where these gardens may have been located.

(5) Failed lake & context *(Gazetteer zones: part of L.39, L40 and L.41)*

After the southern lake had failed, Cory appears to have started re-working the design for this area. He built a causeway running south across the sunken lake bed, which continued the axial design extending south from the house. He may have had in mind to build some terminal feature at the far, south end of the causeway; there are no surviving drawings or plans to tell us. The 1937 sales particulars mention a little Water Garden, Paeony Garden and Bog Garden and it is possible that these were located in this area. However, by the 1960s new designs had been introduced to the lake bed to either side of the causeway. To the west of the causeway, a sinuous rill with tiny bridges represents the remnant of a Japanese rill garden. To the east there was a formal arrangement of carpet-bedding. Very little survives from either of these gardens now.

These areas now present a disappointing anti-climax to the tour of the south end of the gardens: a very different experience from that envisaged by Mawson when he designed the master plan of 1906. It is crucial that the area of the former lake is given a brave new treatment to achieve an exciting revelation, only discovered as one approaches the more southerly gardens. A new design should be developed encompassing not only the lake bed but also the south lily pond of the Great Lawn and the site of the intended water pavilion, to ensure that a holistic, elegant solution is developed that lives up to Mawson's original vision.

(6) Gardens modified and/or extended between 1950 and 1999
(Gazetteer zones: L.14, L.27, south end of L.39 and L.40)

After the Second World War, Glamorgan County Council embraced the management of the gardens of Dyffryn with enthusiasm. Having repaired and restored the existing gardens after the neglect of the war years, the Council went on to 'finish' elements of the Mawson master plan that Cory had chosen not to build, but to an interpretation of their own. Successive head gardeners went further, creating new features and gardens of differing themes in other areas of the grounds which had previously only been gardened lightly. During the HLF-funded restoration project of the 1990s, many of these additional features and gardens, which had become moribund or overgrown, were cleared away again, restoring these areas to something more akin to how they would have looked in the time of the Corys. However, some garden areas and features dating from this time remain, as follows:

i. The Rockery. Although we cannot be sure of how large, or exactly where Reginald Cory's alpine rockery had been, by the 1950s, it had probably been engulfed (possibly replaced) by a massive, spectacular rockery occupying a large proportion of the west side of the Rookery Hill and also spilling out onto the lawn to the west. The creation of this entailed the import of substantial quantities of additional rocks, a new artificial waterfall was built using pumped water, and the small flights of steps that still exist today were built to climb the rockery slopes. From photographs of the period, it is difficult to identify specific rockery plants, but the garden was dotted with a variety of dwarf conifers and other small plants of complementary form and (no doubt)

colour. Although the rockery was restored in the 1990s, it is a part of the garden which demands a high level of maintenance for much of the year and now much of it is overgrown and weedy once again.

iv. The Physic Garden. Very little is known about the character of the area now occupied by the Physic Garden, in the time of Reginald Cory. It is shown on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1919 and 1940 as defined by a hedge, wall and path on different sides, with an oval feature at the centre and two or three trees. In the 1970s the garden was re-designed as a Physic Garden within a framework of sinuous paths. It was restored to the same theme in the 1990s.

v. ***The Vine Walk and southern Lily pond*** were never completed by Reginald Cory. The Vine Walk path was formalised by Glamorgan County Council in the early 1950s by adding the vine arches. The lily pond was also built to a similar but not identical shape to that shown on Mawson's master plan. These features – which should have been part of Mawson's grand finale at the south end of the gardens remain weakly incomplete to this day.

The surviving garden areas created in the second half of the 20th century have significance because they represent a period in the history of Dyffryn when the gardens were a public resource and focus of civic pride, enjoyed by thousands of people over a period of several decades. However, these later garden features merit retention where they

a) do not obscure the legibility of the gardens and designs for the grounds of Dyffryn, as laid out or intended by Reginald Cory;

b) have distinction and value in their own right; and

c) can be returned and maintained to a comparable quality of presentation as in their hey-day.

(7) Woodland gardens

(Gazetteer zones: L.13, L.32, L.42, L.44 and L.45)

The woodland gardens – that is, the West Garden, the Arboretum, the Rookery and the woodland fringes around the south end of the garden - constitute a strong setting, giving shelter and privacy to the inner, ornamental gardens of Dyffryn. The West Garden and Arboretum have strong, recognisable design layouts but have become neglected. In some areas, the significance of the original tree and shrub planting, and of some of the later tree collections has been obscured and diluted by later plantings of lesser value.

The Rookery (or Yew Grove) represents a remnant of a Victorian woodland garden which early 20th century photographs show comprised a mixture of mature native trees and tall ornamental conifers. It is also registered on the Ancient Woodland Inventory. The majority of the older, taller trees have now died allowing the understory yews to become the climax canopy in a manner that was probably never originally intended. On the northern fringes of the Rookery yew grove, a fernery was established during the 1990s. Although there was no specific historic evidence for a fernery in this location, Victorian paths were restored in this area and the choice of a fern garden is appropriate.

Designed landscapes – particularly those in which trees are important – often reach maturity, fulfilling the vision of their creator after his/her death. To conserve landscapes in which trees and woodlands are prominent requires a similar degree of foresight, so that removals are judicious and successional planting anticipates the loss of important trees and puts in place a future generation of trees of comparable value and stature to follow on. Work is currently underway to survey the trees and shrubs of the West Garden and the Arboretum, to identify surviving trees planted by (or before the time of) Reginald Cory and assess the condition, age structure, and the curatorial and aesthetic values of the collections. An up-to-date management plan and collections policy specifically for the woodland gardens is needed to guide the future care of the collections, through a combination of improved arboriculture, removal of inappropriate trees and shrubs and re-planting to enhance the value and interest of the collections and ensure succession.

Management should also seek to enhance the wildlife value of these areas, in particular a pocket of open hay meadow surviving at the south end of the arboretum.

In 'The Rookery' yew grove consideration should be given to opening out the canopy to allow the recovery of any surviving woodland ground flora and create opportunities to re-plant ornamental conifers.

(8) Functional areas

(Gazetteer zones: parts of L.5, L.10, L.16, L.17, L.18 and L.43)

In order to manage the property and accommodate the anticipated increase in visitor numbers to Dyffryn in coming years, certain facilities such as car parks, refreshment areas, toilets and gardeners' yards are operational necessities. Some of these – such as the gardeners' compound – are still located appropriately in the area to the north of the kitchen gardens that has been used for this purpose since the mid-19th century. The visitor reception and tea room built in 2006-'07 have also been located in an area that, historically, contained service buildings (kennels and earlier animal sheds). The car park immediately outside although encroaching onto the fringes of the North Park, is of modest size and relatively informal design. Owing to the convex topography of North Park, it is relatively discreet. The older car park, built by Glamorgan County Council beside the North Drive has been kept and serves as the first area of overflow parking before moving onto the parkland grass. It is also the coach park.

As visitor numbers grow, it is foreseeable that more parking provision will be needed. North Park is the most logical area for additional parking, although the old North-east Park beyond Dyffryn Lane (Gazetteer zone L.6), which is not owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, has been used occasionally for overflow parking. Cars parked on that side of the lane would be out of sight from positions within the Dyffryn property. More regular use of part of the North-east Park for overflow parking would require negotiation of some form of lease arrangement and would need planning consent. If visitor parking remains predominantly in North Park, a careful balance should be sought between paved surfaces and parking on grass (that is, regular parking versus overflow), to minimise the impact on the parkland character.

Facilities installed in the 1970s – the delegates' car park and the toilet block at the south end of the gardens – both have a character somewhat typical of public authority design of the period, showing little sensitivity to their historic context. Although both facilities are useful, they need to be well-screened to minimise their intrusion within their

surroundings. The future of the delegates' car park needs to be reviewed in the context of current and emerging business plans for Dyffryn House and the Traherne Suite.

(9) Significant land beyond the ownership boundary
(Gazetteer zones: parts of L.4, L.7 and L.19)

A number of areas which are currently outside the ownership and management boundary of Dyffryn have a particular significance and potential importance to the gardens. These are:

i. West Meadow - former parkland to the west of the North Lawn (Gazetteer zone L.4) which was been part of the parkland of Dyffryn by 1811 and was probably severed from the rest of the parkland in or after 1938. To obtain management of this relatively small area of land would enable the parkland setting to the adjacent section of the North Drive to be restored. Management of this area might also bring some flood management benefits.

ii. The Nant-Brân Weirs and Plantation (Gazetteer zone L.7) lay, for a short time in the 19th century within the parkland of Dyffryn. Little is known about the stream and weirs which are probably now derelict. However, weirs and ponds had been established on the stream in the 19th century, with what appear to have been sluices and overflow channels. Their purpose may have been to help control water flow and flooding affecting Dyffryn House and its surroundings. Regaining some management control of this area might create opportunities to manage flow on the Nant-Brân stream and also, possibly, to harness some micro hydro-power potential.

iii. West shelter belt (Gazetteer zone L.19) was planted as a shelter belt at some date between 1915 and 1940. The belt undoubtedly gives important additional shelter to Dyffryn Gardens, but it comprises a single row of trees and the south section of the belt is of single-age poplars. Obtaining management control of this strip of land would be immensely valuable, in order to plant a broader zone of trees to improve the shelter characteristics of the belt and ensure continuity when the existing trees start to die.

In each of these areas, consideration should be given to seeking some form of management control, probably through lease agreements. In addition to re-uniting severed parts of the historic landscape, control of these areas would bring definite or possible conservation management benefits.

17. Conservation Management Policies

The following sections summarise the conservation issues of Dyffryn house and gardens that were identified in chapters 10-14. Policies are then defined to a) address those issues and b) support the vision and the strategic objectives set out Chapters 15 and 16 above.

17.1 Conservation of the significance and character of the property

The continuity of presentation and use of major elements of Dyffryn – in particular, the ornamental gardens, kitchen gardens, parkland and selected rooms in the house – as testament to the domestic world of 19th century South Wales gentry - is a highly significant aspect of the property, which the National Trust should seek to perpetuate. Of even greater significance to the property is the legacy of Reginald Cory, through his creation of the extensive gardens and arboreta, working to a master plan prepared by Thomas Mawson. Cory was one of the 20th century's outstanding plant collectors. His purpose in cultivating the gardens of Dyffryn was not only to create idyllic, floriferous cameos but also to indulge his collector's zest and provide a showplace for his eclectic range of plants that he was fascinated by – particularly new cultivars and recent introductions – is a fundamental part of the gardens' significance. Even the way in which the Cory family - particularly Reginald and his sister Florence - arranged and lived in the house emphasized how important the gardens were in their lives.

Past periods of neglect, decline and even wilful damage have meant that both the house and the gardens of Dyffryn have suffered. Many parts of the house, bereft of their original furnishings, and with fittings damaged or removed have been badly degraded. However several of the reception and family rooms retain important decorations and fittings. A number of these have been repaired and restored already. Others, such as the White and Red Libraries and Florence's boudoir, should be similarly restored and brought back into use in ways appropriate to their original purposes, thereby conserving their character but also their spirit of place.

Over the past 15 years, the built fabric of the Mawson-Cory designed garden rooms, and of the kitchen gardens and glasshouses, has been repaired and the planting refreshed and restored. However, even in these gardens, there remains scope to enhance the quality of the presentation to recapture the exuberantly floriferous spirit of the gardens illustrated by Edith Adie in 1923. Much still remains to be done, where other significant garden areas created by Reginald Cory have been lost or degraded. However, restoring the significance of Dyffryn gardens goes beyond physical restoration. Reginald Cory's delight in collecting and cultivating new and unusual plants and his numerous services and benefactions to the world of horticulture are the true essence of Dyffryn's significance. This must be re-asserted through a combination of celebrating and displaying the kinds of plants that Cory is known to have collected and loved, and making the gardens into an exemplar for standards of cultivation and horticultural care, not only for the very special surviving plant collections, but also as a show garden for exciting new plant collections of the future. Dyffryn should, once

again, become known as a place of horticultural excellence and one of the best gardens in Wales.

Policy 1 *Seek to conserve and present Dyffryn holistically as a country house with gardens and parkland, emphasizing the historic relationships between the three.*

Policy 2 *Conserve the significance of Dyffryn House not merely through repair of the damaged fabric of the building and restoration of the degraded interiors, but also through seeking options for use of and presentation of the house and associated outbuildings in a manner that is interesting, relevant and appropriate to their original purposes and history. If alterations are considered, these must not harm the character or integrity of the buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.*

Policy 3 *Ensure that the role of the key reception and family rooms of Dyffryn House as a gallery from which to appreciate the gardens is conserved and presented in a manner which enables this strong house-garden relationship to be enjoyed by visitors to the full. All of these rooms should have public access.*

Policy 4 *Conserve the historic gardens - that is the kitchen gardens, formal gardens around house and the garden areas designed and created by Thomas Mawson and/or Reginald Cory - by conserving the strong structure of the gardens, which is the primary reason for their Grade I listing. Conservation should also seek to capture the character and atmosphere of the gardens as portrayed in historic photographs and the paintings of Edith Adie, but also perpetuate the Reginald Cory's legacy of variety and drama in the horticultural display.*

Policy 5 *Restore the transcendent significance of Dyffryn Gardens as the epicentre of Reginald Cory's passion for horticulture, the home where he assembled and cultivated horticulturally diverse plant collections, nurtured new specimens brought back from plant hunting expeditions and from where he made generous contributions of time and sponsorship in the service of horticultural exploration and excellence.*

17.2 Conservation of the historic fabric

Owing to a combination of factors, Dyffryn house, its associated outbuildings and the historic fabric of the gardens and parkland are in variable condition. A combination of dis-use, and damage caused during the preliminary stages of converting the mansion to a hotel, left the house with problems including leaks, dry rot and some structural problems. Whilst some of these have been rectified over recent years, some problems remain; particularly those related to water ingress and the deterioration of the external

stonework on the mansion. A number of garden buildings also remain in poor repair. However, through a series of restoration projects since the late 1990s, part-funded by the HLF, repair of the damaged or deteriorating fabric of the garden structures has begun. In 2011, a Quinquennial survey of all buildings and structures set out a programme of repair works that still remains to be implemented, although all urgent structural problems have been evaluated and repaired, or made inaccessible to visitors where necessary. Since the 2011 Quinquennial survey, new faults have also been identified. There is a risk of unobserved deterioration in some inaccessible or rarely accessed parts of the building, particularly the roof spaces. The lofts need crawl-boards / walkways to enable inspection at regular intervals.

The service buildings associated with Dyffryn House are at risk for a number of reasons:

- deterioration where there is a backlog of regular general maintenance and timely repairs;
- unobserved deterioration in inaccessible or rarely entered parts of the buildings particularly through water ingress, decay or insect damage;
- temporary repairs or protective measures which are deteriorating or could fail, and so no longer give the necessary protection;
- un-recorded repairs which could either create problems when further repairs are needed, or have been carried out using unsuitable methods or materials, or are inconsistent with the approach to repairs carried out elsewhere on the building or estate; and
- neglect of redundant buildings.

Striking a balance between conserving the historic fabric of the property and making changes needed to protect other parts of the fabric, cope with the impacts of climate change (particularly increased frequency, intensity and uncertainty of flood events), accommodate new uses and growing visitor numbers, and comply with current Health & Safety legislation will be a key feature of the management of Dyffryn. The priority is to identify areas where significant fabric is potentially affected and where delay could result in exacerbated or irreversible damage, and to take timely action to protect it.

There is a need for the regular cyclical inspection, monitoring and maintenance of all buildings and structures, in all parts of the property. A programme of planned repairs should be agreed and implemented to prevent any further deterioration and a preventive conservation strategy maintained to prevent damage from insects, light, water, humidity and dirt. No repairs should be undertaken without appropriate advice or recording.

Where repairs or new works are to be carried out, the historic fabric should be retained in-situ wherever possible. Where this may not be possible, a thorough understanding of the areas concerned should be developed, as well as an evaluation of the impact of proposed changes on the future of the historic fabric. This understanding should be informed by archaeological, curatorial and building surveyor advice. Changes should always make the lowest level of intervention possible and always be recorded in full.

It will be important to ensure that the Conservation Management Plan and its Gazetteers are an integral part of the decision-making process for anything which could affect the significance of Dyffryn, such as repair and maintenance actions,

conversions of historic buildings, construction of new buildings or landscape features and the continuing restoration and management of the gardens and parkland.

In order to avert the risks to the historic buildings of the Dyffryn estate, the following policies should be applied.

Policy 6 *The historic fabric of Dyffryn House and its associated outbuildings, the gardens, parkland and known archaeological remains should be cared for through an active programme of regular inspection and recording, appropriate management, maintenance and timely protection or repair in the event of deterioration. The programme of quinquennial surveys, already established, must be maintained.*

Policy 7 *Wherever possible, the historic fabric of the house, its outbuildings and buried archaeological remains should be retained in situ.*

Policy 8 *Conservation repairs to historic buildings and structures will be based on an understanding of significance and informed by the most appropriate professional advice. Additional professional historic building survey work will take place if required before and during the work based on the advice of National Trust conservation and/or curatorial staff, who should be notified of proposed building alterations at the planning stage of such works.*

Policy 9 *Repair records for the property should be compiled systematically as a resource for research, as an aid to recognising trends and to ensure consistency of future repair actions.*

Policy 10 *Take opportunities to continue investigating and researching the property to supplement the growing body of information about the house, outbuildings, gardens and parkland. Maintain a central repository for the archive of historic and management information relating to the property, providing a resource which is readily available to property, regional staff and researchers.*

Policy 11 *No decision which could have a permanent effect on a heritage asset should be taken unless there is sufficient information to adequately assess the significance of the asset and the effect of the proposal on that significance.*

Policy 12 *Conservation of structures dating from the mid-20th century onwards must be based on an assessment of their significance. If to be removed, they should be surveyed and recorded prior to dismantling.*

Policy 13 *A Disaster and Emergency Plan should be prepared for Dyffryn as a blueprint for action in the event of emergencies.*

17.3 Conservation of the gardens

The structure of the gardens, and a significant proportion of their detailed form remain almost exactly as they were in the 1920s. However, parts of the gardens have deteriorated, been replaced by later gardens, or have been covered over or cleared away.

Many formerly significant areas of Reginald Cory's gardens, including the arboretum, remain neglected or have been degraded by changes made after 1940. These need to be restored, drawing on whatever documentary information still survives to accurately recreate gardens and replace lost plants.

Although a number of plant collections exist and are maintained at Dyffryn including the arboretum tree collection and the cactus collection, a number of important plant collections are known to have declined or disappeared altogether.

Where the historic garden structure and some of historic plant collections still survive, and reliable documentary information may be available, these areas should be restored by careful horticultural / arboricultural remediation to return them to an exemplary standard of care and supplemented with new planting to a defined collections policy. In areas where the surviving garden structure from the time of Reginald Cory has been eroded and/or information is more limited, the gardens should still be restored in a manner that celebrates Reginald Cory's horticultural interests and benevolent activities, in order to restore the spirit of place.

In areas where the surviving garden structure from the time of Reginald Cory has been eroded and/or information is more limited, the gardens should still be restored in the spirit of Cory's interests and achievements.

Policy *14*	*Conserve and enhance the distinctive character and structure of the designed historic gardens (Strategy Zone 3) which remain largely intact.*
Policy 15	*Drawing on available documentary evidence to inform the process, degraded or lost garden areas that were created by Reginald Cory (Strategy Zone 4) should be restored or re-created in the spirit of Cory's original gardens, and gardened in a manner that celebrates Cory's particular horticultural interests.*
Policy 16	*Where the southern gardens centred round the lake (Strategy Zone 5), which were designed by Thomas Mawson and developed by Cory, foundered and were never completed, explore holistic new options for realising Mawson's vision.*
Policy 17	*Commission a Garden Strategy, rooted in the policies of this Conservation Management Plan, defining the detailed approach to future plant collections, themes and presentation, enhanced horticultural maintenance and management practices and a prioritised plan for implementation and phased renewal of the planted structure of the gardens.*

Policy 18 *Manage and maintain the gardens to the highest standards of horticultural excellence through propagation, cultivation and long-term care, placing an emphasis on creative horticultural display in order to communicate the fascination of plant hunting, collecting and cultivation and the importance of plant diversity.*

Policy 19 *Ensure the long-term conservation and development of the collections, by fully documenting the remaining collections and their significance, developing a collections policy, and identifying lost collections of Reginald Cory to be re-established as well as new collections for the future.*

Policy 20 *Actively promote the long term improvement of the plant collections through planned growth, appropriate conservation and management, on-site propagation and generally excellent horticultural practices.*

Policy 21 *Seek new opportunities, through the management of the gardens and interpretation, to celebrate and continue to advance the wide horticultural interests of Reginald Cory.*

Policy 22 *Conserve but also enhance the presentation and character of the West Garden, Arboretum and Rookery (Strategy Zone 7) through exemplary arboricultural care of the collections and development of a management strategy and collections policy to guide removal of inappropriate plants and new planting.*

Policy 23 *The arboretum should be conserved as a botanic collection of individual trees with room to grow. Inappropriate woodland planting or weed trees should be removed. A collections policy for the continued conservation and presentation of the arboretum should be prepared and endorsed.*

Policy 24 *The Rockery is a significant feature of the gardens dating from the 1950s but it places a disproportionate demand on gardening resources. It's current extent should continue to be managed by gradually clearing weeds and overgrown plants and enhancing the standards of maintenance. As resources permit, the rockery should be restored incrementally to re-establish the presentational quality and character of the 1950s rockery, and possibly its extent.*

17.4 Conservation of the parkland, approaches and setting to Dyffryn House

The parkland was created in the late 18th or early 19th centuries to provide a setting and zone of privacy between the old Dyffryn House and the outside world beyond the parkland boundaries. Although the shape and extent of the parkland has changed at different periods, the remaining parkland still leased by the National Trust from the Vale of Glamorgan Council provides an effective context for the mansion and also for the North and East approach drives. However, the historic parkland character has become eroded for different reasons in different areas. The outer areas are neglected; the inner areas have the legacy of a municipal 'parks and garden' style of management.

The setting and important views of Dyffryn house has been compromised by the introduction of planting during the second half of the 20th century that is inappropriate to the history of the property. Although much of this later intervention has been removed, remnants survive that still detract from the historic parkland character and introduce discordant, 'gardenesque' features.

The North Park represents the current arrival zone for visitors to Dyffryn and has been the location for visitor parking since the 1950s. The new car park outside the visitor reception is relatively discreet but, as regular visitor numbers grow, parking will need to encroach onto grassland areas, but avoiding the root zones of mature trees. If views across the parkland from the mansion are opened up again, car parking will require management to keep the central zone of North Park free of cars on all but the busiest days of the year.

The Dyffryn estate has certain management needs which might be partially met by making changes in the landscape. Flood management has clearly been a problem for the estate, probably for centuries and, with climate change, the problem will almost certainly increase. Finding sustainable sources of energy for the property is also a high priority. It is foreseeable that unobtrusive locations in the outer parklands may provide sites which could be used to meet these kinds of needs.

Policy 25 *The setting and historic designed landscape surrounding Dyffryn House should be conserved and, where appropriate, restored.*

Policy 26 *Historically significant views to Dyffryn House from the North and East approach drives, and from the house across the northern parkland (North Lawn and North Park combined) should be restored.*

Policy 27 *Existing veteran and mature parkland trees should be conserved and managed for their wildlife value.*

Policy 28 *A long-term succession of the planted framework to the historic parkland should be ensured through a parkland tree planting strategy and restoration of lost hedges.*

Policy 29 *Changes or new development within the registered park and garden should respect the historic character of the landscape and structures, where possible, contribute to the local distinctiveness. Changes which are necessary but out-of-keeping with the parkland character should be located out-of-view from the access drives and the mansion.*

Policy 30 *Visitor parking within the parkland should be managed to minimise intrusion within the important historic views from the access drives and the mansion.*

Policy 31 *Explore options for alternative overflow visitor car parking, sized to accommodate the visitor numbers set at a level that the property can welcome without detracting from the quality of the visit.*

Policy 32 *Explore or be receptive to opportunities to gain management control of other areas of former parkland now lying outside the Vale of Glamorgan ownership boundary.*

17.5 Management of change

The future management of Dyffryn will seek to breathe new life back into parts of the property that have become redundant and neglected. However, it is essential not only to conserve and respect the Cory family's legacy of beautiful artefacts and gardens, but to take Dyffryn forward in a manner which the Cory family would have endorsed, also embracing and seeking to promote the particular horticultural interests of Reginald Cory.

Owing to its lack of furnishings, and the degree to which the mansion was adapted in the 1950s – '70s, and then quite substantially stripped out in the late 1990s, a sizeable proportion of the upper floors have lost much of the detail that would have been likely to interest visitors. Although the 1937 sales particulars provide considerable insight into the Cory family's furniture and possessions in many of the rooms, any attempt to re-furnish even some of the upstairs rooms would lack authenticity. Buildings benefit from being used regularly, heated and aired. A new use is needed for parts of the mansion. It is possible that some adaptation of parts of the building will be needed. Sensitive adaptation to new uses need not undermine the significance of the property provided that the hierarchy of the house arrangement – that is, family area and staff/service areas – and the associated scale and character of the rooms is respected.

The main reception and family rooms on the ground floor, and the gallery and master bedroom on the first floor of the mansion have particular significance, not only for their surviving fittings and décor but also because of the important relationship between the south-facing rooms and the gardens. Many of these rooms were designed to be light and airy, and to allow particularly attractive views out across the gardens. It is important that all of these rooms should become accessible to visitors.

In the gardens there are areas that were never completed by Reginald Cory – notably the lake and its surroundings - and his plans for those areas remain uncertain. However, the master plan prepared by Thomas Mawson provided a vision for the gardens which, by and large, Cory appears to have shared. Any future attempt to complete the southern gardens should take, as its starting point, that vision conceived by Mawson.

Measures needed to manage the increasing frequency and severity of flood events may necessitate new interventions to the house and in the parkland and gardens. New ways of harnessing sources of sustainable energy may also introduce hitherto unfamiliar features and equipment to the property.

Policy 33 *New projects should be assessed against information set out in the Conservation Management Plan, with particular reference to these policies and the Gazetteers.*

Policy 34 *Changes within the gardens should respect the vision encapsulated in Thomas Mawson's master plan of 1906, and also what can be understood of Reginald Cory's own design intents.*

Policy 35 *Where a new element is introduced to Dyffryn (for example, a planting scheme, attenuation pond or garden structure) its design should be appropriate to and complement the historic character of its surroundings, contribute to local distinctiveness and, where possible, should not result in the loss of historic fabric.*

Policy 36 *Any alteration works should be preceded by recording of any elements of significance (building fabric, collections, designed landscape, archaeology or biodiversity) and the lodging of a record in the appropriate archive (such as the National Trust's SMR).*

Policy 37 *In advance of any construction works, advice should be sought from the relevant building, curatorial, archaeological and nature conservation advisers on best practice. Where it is necessary to excavate in the locality of the house, its contemporary or older outbuildings, the walled kitchen gardens and known sites of lost buildings and features, the presence of buried archaeology must be established in advance through appropriate survey and an archaeological watching brief undertaken if appropriate.*

Policy 38 *Monitor the effects of climate change on the Dyffryn estate, utilising existing research and commissioning new research as required, to give an improved understanding of what is likely to be the impact of climate change on the property in the future. Investigate and identify appropriate strategies identified for anticipating, mitigating and managing any potentially adverse effects.*

17.6 Conservation of wildlife, habitats and the natural environment of the Dyffryn estate

Dyffryn Gardens is identified in the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The estate supports a mosaic of habitats including parkland, woodlands, hedgerows, formal gardens, ponds and streams, areas of species-rich neutral grassland and historic buildings. The property supports populations of a considerable range of bats, and the ponds and streams support great crested newts. The parkland and gardens contain many old and veteran trees which provide a valuable wildlife habitats, supporting a range of birds, bats, moths, beetles and other invertebrates, fungi, mosses and lichen are associated with this habitat. The wood-decay, epiphyte communities and mycorrhizal (root-based) communities are likely to be species-rich.

The habitats that exist on the estate should be conserved and managed not only to protect rare species but also enhanced recognising their role within the broader context of a network of similar habitats that exist in the relatively unspoiled historic rural landscape area of this part of south Glamorgan.

Parts of the Dyffryn estate, particularly the grasslands, have suffered from declining species diversity due to past management regimes. There is scope to enhance the floristic diversity of the outer parkland meadows by re-introduction of summer grazing, and of the inner parkland by changes in mowing regime and reduction in soil nutrient status.

Dyffryn is sufficiently far from the urban areas of Cardiff and Barry to enjoy relatively dark night skies. It also benefits from clean air, which is evidenced by a good range of lichens growing on a range of substrates within the gardens and parkland.

Policy 39	*The nature conservation and landscape value of the Dyffryn parkland, woodlands, gardens and historic structures should be maintained and enhanced.*
Policy 40	*Opportunities should be taken to restore lost features of the historic landscape such as hedgerows and parkland trees. Less species-rich habitats, particularly the parkland grasslands, should be enhanced and restored.*
Policy 41	*Conserve mature and veteran trees, any surviving stumps and similar wood decay habitats in the parkland, arboretum, gardens and Rookery knoll (ancient woodland). Stumps of old trees should not be removed without a prior assessment of their wildlife value by an ecologist.*
Policy 42	*Manage the woodland sites of the property, including the arboretum, to encourage a diverse range of woodland and woodland edge flora and fauna.*
Policy 43	*Maintain and improve the biodiversity of ground cover and neutral grasslands, leading to greater diversity not just of plants but also of other wildlife including birds and invertebrates.*
Policy 44	*The River Waycock, Nant Brân stream and other water bodies within the parkland and garden periphery should be managed to enhance the range of aquatic and bankside habitats and encourage the use of these areas by kingfishers, dippers and a greater diversity of aquatic and waterside flora and fauna generally.*
Policy 45	*Protect the populations of great crested newt which inhabit various ponds in the gardens, ensuring that garden management follows procedures agreed with Natural Resources Wales.*
Policy 46	*Where conflicts arise between wildlife conservation and other management needs, wildlife should be surveyed and steps taken to minimise the effects of other actions. Legislation requires that the roosting and hibernation sites of bats, nesting sites of many birds and other legally protected species must be protected.*

17.7 Visitor Transport, Access and Appreciation

The dominant mode of visitor transport to Dyffryn is the private car. As visitor numbers to Dyffryn increase, there may be more congestion on the local lanes where they are narrow, particularly Dyffryn Lane, as visitors' cars and occasional coaches approach and leave the property.

The nearest public bus service, linking Porthcawl and Cardiff, passes through St Nicholas on the A48, 2.5 km (1½ miles) north of Dyffryn. Visitors can only use public transport to reach Dyffryn if they are also able and willing walkers. However, the property has a network of lanes and public footpaths all round it, including a designated Recreational Route. These provide an opportunity for encouraging more visits by walkers and cyclists.

Two power-assisted wheelchairs are available for the use of visitors for whom walking is difficult. An electric buggy service also shuttles between the visitor reception and the mansion and, if not too busy, will also take visitors for a tour around some parts of the gardens and arboretum.

Inside the mansion, access to the ground floor showrooms is relatively easy and a lift has been installed to enable access to the first floor.

Growing visitor numbers will place new pressures on certain parts of the garden, particularly due to increased footfall. A significant proportion of the gardens have relative easy gradients and well-paved paths, allowed disabled visitors to find circulatory routes. However, there are several flights of steps connecting garden rooms and up the west slope of the Rockery, which are inaccessible to visitors with limited mobility. There are alternative routes to many of these gardens, avoiding steps, but provision of some safety aids such as handrails may be appropriate in certain locations. A firm circulatory route is needed in the arboretum where Ground conditions in the arboretum are quite frequently soft and/or waterlogged.

Interpretation should be provided in a well-informed and sensitive way, to enhance visitor appreciation and understanding of the house, outbuildings, gardens and collections, particularly in the arboretum and West Garden. Interpretation should not detract from the quality and character of the gardens.

Policy 47 *Seek opportunities to encourage more visitors to come to Dyffryn by alternative means to the private car, particularly by walking and cycling and working in partnership seek ways to extend the public transport network to the property.*

Policy 48 *Safe and easy access should be made available for visitors to all the historic parts of the gardens and parkland for as wide a range of visitors as possible.*

Policy 49 *Access should be available for visitors to at least a representative proportion of the family rooms of the mansion, to enjoy the decorations and fittings dating from the time of the Cory family and enjoy the ambience of the rooms in themselves, and relative to the gardens.*

Policy 50 *Research and develop a visitor engagement plan for Dyffryn, in order to set the framework for future presentation and enjoyment of the whole property, including parts not visited at the moment, by as wide a range of visitors as possible. Enhance the visitor experience within the Gardens through the provision of improved and appropriate orientation, information and high quality visitor facilities and services.*

17.8 Sustainability and energy efficiency

It is important to act now to minimise the environmental footprint of the Dyffryn estate in order to protect natural resources, reduce carbon emissions and to improve the quality of the local and global environment. From an economic viewpoint, energy costs are currently increasing and future costs are uncertain. It is therefore prudent to monitor energy use and to increase the energy efficiency of the site.

Policy 51 *Ensure that all uses, activities and developments within the Dyffryn estate are undertaken in a sustainable manner and contribute towards the conservation or enhancement of the property, through*

- conservation of water;
- conservation of energy;
- minimisation of waste, and re-use and recycling where possible;
- control of pollution (principally sewage and other effluents);
- transport efficiency; and
- use of sustainable techniques in building restoration, construction and management.