# COURSEWORK SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

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Stutton Hall and Crowe Hall: The Development of Two Designed Landscapes on the Stour Estuary, Suffolk. c.1500 to 2017

Name of tutor: Barbara Simms

Due date: 27/09/2017

I declare that the attached essay/dissertation is my own work and that all sources quoted, paraphrased or otherwise referred to are acknowledged in the text, as well as in the list of ‘Works Cited’.

Signature:

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Figure 1. The Stour Estuary from Stutton, by Gay Strutt, Stutton Hall.

THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
MA IN GARDEN AND LANDSCAPE HISTORY
MODULE 3, DISSERTATION

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INTRODUCTION:

Stutton Hall and Crowe Hall are two of a number of historic houses overlooking the Stour Estuary. The development of the gardens and designed landscapes in which they are set is examined from Tudor origins to the present day, with particular reference to the influence of the estuary, topography, location, geology and climate. Situated on the south-facing bank of the Shotley Peninsula in the parish of Stutton, the estates of both Halls adjoin the estuary and have panoramic views southwards across it, walled Tudor forecourts and twentieth- and twenty-first-century gardens.

Both Halls are mentioned in *Copinger’s Manors of Suffolk* as two of six Stutton Manors.¹ The other Manors are not the foci of attention here as Alton Hall Manor was submerged in 1976 by Alton Water Reservoir, the Manor of the Rectory of Stutton (possibly Quarhams) and Argents Hall have no estuary views, and Crepping Hall no longer has estuary frontage and almost no remains of any Tudor garden. Stutton and Crowe Halls are included in Pevsner’s Suffolk volume, *Burke’s and Savills Guide to Suffolk Houses*, Eric Sandon’s *Suffolk Houses*, in a Suffolk Institute Report and a book by Crisp.² A landscape character assessment of the Shotley Peninsula was made in 2013, and a survey of its parkland by Suffolk Coasts and Heaths is intended.³

Crowe Hall, an Historic England grade II* listed building dated 1605,⁴ is described in a *Country Life* article which notes avenues, views across ‘the tree-framed park to the River Stour shimmering like a lake,’ and mentions that:

> Stutton itself lies some seven miles south of Ipswich on the north bank of the Stour estuary, and it contains a number of fair-sized houses that take advantage of the southerly aspect

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⁴ English Heritage, Building ID: 277533, NGR TM1528034214. Also listed are the external boundary wall, grade II; barn, grade II; and garden wall and gateway, grade II.
across the estuary to the Essex landscape beyond, for example Stutton Hall, Crepping Hall and Crowe Hall.\(^5\)

Pevsner details the seventeenth- and nineteenth-century crenellated garden walls.\(^6\) Crowe Hall was redeveloped in the 1820s in a Regency Gothick style by the Reade family. Since the 1990s extensive work has been done on the house and grounds by the current owner, Stephen Clark, who commissioned a review of parkland at Crowe Hall executed in 2016 by The Landscape Partnership, who prepared the 1996 Masterplan.\(^7\)

Stutton Hall is also listed as Grade II* by Historic England.\(^8\) The Suffolk Heritage Explorer lists the great hall, avenue, garden and park.\(^9\) Paula Henderson and Tom Williamson consider the impressive gateway and forecourt built by Sir John Jermy in 1543, Williamson also mentioning the development of parkland and renovation of the garden in an Arts and Crafts style by J. O. Fison after his purchase in 1887.\(^10\)

Thomas Mills, rector of Stutton and Royal Chaplain in Ordinary, and his family kept journals which give useful historical insights into the area and their own eighteenth-century arboretum created by Tobias Rustat at Stutton Rectory, now Stutton House (figures 2 &3 ).\(^12\)

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\(^6\) Bettley, *Suffolk*, p.532

\(^7\) The Landscape Partnership, *Review of Parkland, Crowe Hall, Stutton*. (2016). CHA.

\(^8\) English Heritage, Building ID: 277546, (NGR: TM1403233702).


Figure 2. Stutton Rectory arboretum.
Both Halls were tenanted from the early eighteenth century, and by the 1730s Stutton is listed as having no ‘Gentlemen’s seats.’ \(^{13}\) Sandon maintained that the many isolated Halls and small Manors of Suffolk, like those of the Stour Estuary which lie ‘in remote sites in their own land’, stem from:

The large number of Anglo-Saxon freemen given in the Domesday Survey…The word Hall came from a common Teutonic source, meaning the residence of a territorial proprietor, a baronial or squire’s hall. \(^{14}\)

Many Medieval manor houses were built on the site of earlier Halls, and, like Crowe and Stutton Halls, later suffered varied fortunes as farm houses or country houses. \(^{15}\) ‘Making do with old places’ is typical of Suffolk, resulting in ‘a surprising layer of historical strata in a single house.’ \(^{16}\)

This preliminary survey confirms that no detailed examination of the development of the estates and gardens at Crowe Hall and Stutton Halls has been made, underlining the contribution

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\(^{13}\) John Kirby, *The Suffolk Traveller: or, A Journey through Suffolk.* (Ipswich, 1735) p. 59.


\(^{15}\) Ibid., p. 52.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 14.
that this study will make to knowledge of villas on the Shotley Peninsula. Using detailed analysis of maps, archival material, archaeological and environmental surveys, architectural plans, early and modern photographs and other visual material, oral histories, interviews and site visits, this dissertation has the following aims to:

• develop a chronology of the gardens at Crowe Hall and Stutton Hall;
• assess the constraints and advantages of the sites;
• investigate environmental, economic and other factors affecting the rise and decline in status of Crowe Hall and Stutton Hall, and their subsequent resurrection as gentlemen’s residences;
• evaluate the specific contribution of professional modern-day designers at Crowe Hall, including Tom Stuart Smith, Thomas Hoblyn, Cleve West and Xa Tollemache, and the creative input of the owners, architect and head gardener.

The dissertation is divided into six sections. Chapter one describes the location, geology and climate of the Shotley Peninsula; chapter two outlines the history of settlement in the area, looking at transport, agriculture, trade and the textile industry; chapter three observes the aspect and topography of the estates and influences on the choice of the sites; chapter four examines the history of the garden and parkland at Stutton Hall with reference to garden styles and local, national and foreign influences on them; and chapter five examines the history of the garden and parkland at Crowe Hall, and the contribution of professional garden designers. The final section evaluates the different influences on the development of the gardens, how they are interwoven and whether the aims of the study were achieved.
CHAPTER ONE.
Location.

Figure 4. Detail, Saxton’s 1575 map of Suffolk.

The Shotley Peninsula is a tongue of land between the Stour and Orwell estuaries at the south-eastern tip of Suffolk. It has a unique geology, internationally important wildlife and a long history of settlement. In the former Samford Hundred and now within Babergh District, it was historically isolated by land, but connected by water (figure 4).

The Stour straddles the border between Suffolk and Essex, and was an important trade and transport route for people and goods between inland centres of religion, agriculture and the cloth industry, London and Northern Europe, via Mistley, Harwich and the North Sea at its mouth (figure 5).
Figure 5 Hodkinson's 1783 map of Suffolk, detail, showing study sites on Shotley Peninsula.

Figure 6. 2015 map of Shotley Peninsula, showing Stutton.
Stutton parish is on a sub-peninsula bounded by Samford River to the west, Holbrook River to the east, Alton Water reservoir to the north and the Stour Estuary to the south (figure 3). Stutton is in the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths’ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with Higher Level Stewardship objectives including biodiversity, landscape and historic environment.  

Shotley Peninsula shoreline includes vegetated shingle, deciduous woodland, grazing, saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats which are registered as wildlife habitats of international importance, particularly for migratory birds, by the Ramsar Convention, as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and as a Special Protection Area (SPA).

The Stour Estuary is about 11km long. The shape of the estuary has changed over the centuries: the sea-level has risen; saltings have been reclaimed for millennia, and also eroded with eroded matter deposited; the Holbrook and Samford Rivers have been blocked off, and creeks silted up; and seawalls in Holbrook Bay were retreated after the 1953 floods. Erosion makes the Stutton estates vulnerable, and loss of mature trees along the cliffs is rife with tidal surges sometimes killing trees planted on low-lying land (figure 4). Erosion, frequent sea-wall breaches and tidal surges are recorded in the Mills journals, listing disastrous effects on specimen and ornamentally planted trees: In 1901 ‘nineteen scotch firs on the shore walk died from touching the ooze.’

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20 Stutton Manuscript, 1901 entry.
Geology

A combination of factors, including geology, water availability, soils, climate and aspect dictate what can be successfully grown in a garden or park.

Part of the ancient Thames system, deeply buried chalk beneath the Shotley Peninsula is covered in glacial deposits. A central plateau has mostly fertile, light soils derived from wind-blown loess, sand and gravel, with springs emerging where these meet the underlying London clay and Septaria.21 These springs form streams which intersect the gently undulating land below, defined as ‘rolling estate farmland’, with wetter alluvial soils in the valleys (figure 5).22 Nationally important geological exposures occur on Stutton and Wrabness cliffs, including volcanic ash layers.23 The agricultural land, and sub-soils of crag, clay, sand and gravel have been long exploited, indicated by historic field names.24 The high quality of Shotley Peninsular soil has long been recognised, Arthur Young characterised it as some of the best rich loam in the country.25 Local variation of soils

21 Alison Farmer, Shotley Peninsula.
22 ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 S. Laverton, Shotley Peninsula. The Making of a Unique Suffolk Landscape, (Stroud, 2001) p.15
25 Alison Farmer, Shotley Peninsula.
and subsoils within relatively small areas enabled both a profitable mixture of high grazing and arable farming, and a range of tree and garden plantings.\textsuperscript{26}

The presence of ‘kiln’ field names at both Stutton and Crowe Halls, of strata of ‘mild’, alluvial clay ideal for brick-making and of brick earth suggest that bricks were made on-site.\textsuperscript{27} Brick-earth, rich in fossils, sits in ‘a hollow in the London Clay’ below Stutton Hall, easily accessible where: ‘a river cliff exposes a section half a mile in length, varying from 10 to 20 ft. in height’.\textsuperscript{28} Brickyards were widespread along the north bank of the Stour Estuary, where Peter Minter suggests that the Romans made bricks, digging claypans in creeks to fill overwinter with perfect mud for bricks.\textsuperscript{29} Roman brickmaking skills were supposedly lost, and re-introduced into the broader area by Monks from the Low Countries during the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{30} Brickmaking developed in Suffolk from the 1300s, and although small hard bricks came in up the Stour from the Low Countries as ballast for boats taking wool and cloth out, these were used as paving.\textsuperscript{31} Flemish brickworkers came to East Anglia in parallel with clothworkers, introducing or re-introducing technology and styles.\textsuperscript{32}

Septaria, a crumbly, concretionary clay, and flint are the only local building stones. From the late eighteenth-century Septaria was collected by ‘stone boats’, burnt and ground to form ‘Roman Cement’, sometimes used for render to give the look of stone like that used by Reade at Crowe Hall.

There is an old gravel pit below Stutton Hall and a crag pit was recorded in Stutton.\textsuperscript{33} Crag, a complex sequence of shelly sands, gravels and clays laid down in late Pliocene and early Pleistocene, contains phosphate-rich nodules of coprolite, erroneously named as fossilised excrement.\textsuperscript{34} From the mid-nineteenth-century Packards in Ipswich, who later merged with Joseph

\begin{flushright}
26 1821 Crowe Hall Sales Catalogue, IRO, SC399/1. \\
27 Pers. Comm. Peter Minter, Bulmer Brick Company, Sudbury. 1/02/2017 \\
29 Peter Minter, 1/02/2017 \\
30 Ibid. \\
31 Ibid. \\
32 Ibid. \\
33 Stutton Manuscript. 1865 entry. \\
\end{flushright}
Fison & Sons, mixed these nodules with sulphuric acid to create superphosphate artificial fertiliser.\textsuperscript{35} This was a source of wealth for J. O. Fison to develop Stutton Hall.

**Climate.**

In Stutton proximity to the estuary, sea and Alton Water tempers the East Anglian climate, with damage from snow and hard frost rare enough to be mentioned by Mills.\textsuperscript{39} The Head Gardener at Crowe Hall enjoyed the potential to ‘grow anything’ with no fear of prolonged snow, although some irrigation was necessary.\textsuperscript{43} East Anglia is the driest part of the country, and rainfall is localised. Often drier on the peninsula than further inland, annual precipitation is sometimes lower than 18 inches with an average of 23 inches. This is not a recent phenomenon. Mills recorded a drought that caused a reduction in the tithe, one ‘so great that no water could be obtained either from the pump or the hydraulic ram,’ and with another ‘ponds were dried up all over the district and wells became so low that in many places water had to be carted long distances,’ killing a 60 foot high Araucaria.\textsuperscript{45}

To ensure adequate water for Suffolk, in 1976 Alton Water reservoir in Stutton was constructed by damming Holbrook River valley, flooding historic properties and radically changing the landscape.

Mills bemoaned wind damage when during ‘a tremendous storm of wind…many of the trees in the grounds were torn up by the roots’ also an ancient elm snapped off. The approach avenue to Stutton Hall similarly lost cedars to the 1987 hurricane. Tree-belts and brick-walls have long sheltered gardens at Stutton and Crowe Halls from the prevailing south-westerly winds which are ‘defended by a high hil, on the North part, and all the day comforted by the open face of the South quarter’.\textsuperscript{49}


\textsuperscript{39} Thomas Mills’ *Stutton Manuscript*. 1834, 1845 and 1860 entries.

\textsuperscript{43} Robert McCart, conversation 12/05/2017.

\textsuperscript{45} *Stutton Manuscript*, 1834, 1857 and 1921 entries.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT.

The Stour operated as a transport artery. From early pre-history East Anglia was densely wooded and land travel was slow until significant road improvement in the eighteenth-century. But ‘coming and going across the north sea throughout recorded history’ meant agriculturalists settled there from 4000 BC.\(^{50}\) Local place names and archaeology point to extensive early settlement throughout the peninsula.\(^{51}\) Stutton is on the windward shore but Samford and Holbrook creeks provided havens and probably access inland with a shallow boat.

Springs above the Stutton shore and good soil also encouraged habitation and cultivation. The string of imposing Halls along the north side of the estuary are elevated enough to be above flooding, with good views of the estuary for both pleasure and defence. Habitation of these sites probably predates remaining buildings. Most of Stutton has not been surveyed archaeologically and the land beside the river is considered ‘an area of high potential’ with important local finds.\(^{52}\) Many ‘rare palaeolithic implements and faunal remains including lion and mammoth bones, and mesolithic and neolithic material have been exposed in the low cliff below Stutton Hall’.\(^{53}\) The field and landholding patterns in Stutton probably have early origins, and many cropmarks of trackways, field systems and boundaries have been recorded.\(^{54}\) A ditched trackway and ‘field boundaries or enclosure of possible prehistoric date’ are visible in the grounds of Stutton Hall.\(^{55}\) Patchy knowledge suggests the Roman field system followed an Iron Age field pattern, and the Peninsula has vestiges of Iron age, Roman and later coaxial field systems. The Roman capital Camulodunum (Colchester) is ten miles south of the Stour, and an early ferry or other crossing from Stutton Ness to Essex has been suggested.\(^{56}\) Stutton foreshore finds of coins, Romano-British pottery and other Roman finds suggest a Roman site and Roman Red Hill salt production, with land reclamation starting at least from this time.\(^{57}\)

\(^{50}\) Sandon, *Suffolk Houses*, p. 33.
\(^{51}\) Laverton, *Shotley Peninsula*, p.15.
\(^{52}\) Suffolk Coastal National Mapping Project (SCNMP) Report, (STU 001).
\(^{53}\) Ibid.
\(^{54}\) Suffolk Heritage Explorer (SHE) website, (STU 003-085) accessed 12/1/2017
\(^{55}\) Ibid. (STU 009).
\(^{56}\) Bob Malster, *Roman Road Colchester-Westfield*, Unpublished, 2017
\(^{57}\) SHE, (STU 014,023,039). 12/1/2017
Oak-wooded shores still apparent today provided timber for dwellings and boat building. The remains of the largest Anglo-Saxon fishtrap in Europe, over 500m long, made of wooden posts and hurdles carbon dated 650-1050 AD are in the bay off Stutton.\textsuperscript{58} This implies the presence of a religious community sizeable enough to manage the fishing and woodland for construction timber.\textsuperscript{59}

The Domesday survey listed Stutton as relatively large, reflecting the mixed agriculture which by later Saxon times had made East Anglia the most wealthy and densely populated part of England.\textsuperscript{60}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{saxton_map}
\caption{Saxton's 1575 map of Suffolk showing the Stour. Detail.}
\end{figure}

By the fourteenth-century wealth came from textiles as well. Medieval Suffolk monasteries brewed beer using high quality local barley and bred sheep with high quality wool, most of which was exported to Flanders, Burgundy and Italy for processing.\textsuperscript{61} Edward III forbade the import of foreign cloth and in 1334 allowed Flemish weavers to immigrate to England. Many settled in villages on the freshwater Stour and its tributaries, their skills giving impetus to the development of a domestic system of woollen cloth production. The river was used during the processing of wool and also enabled export to northern Europe and the Baltic of the high-quality cloth produced,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[58] SCNMP, (TM170336, STU 054/067). 12/1/2017
\item[59] Pers. Comm. Jezz Meredith, Suffolk Archaeology. 12/05/2016.
\item[60] http://opendomesday.org/place/TM1634/stutton/ 11/08/2017
\end{footnotes}
cargoes being offloaded downstream onto seagoing vessels in Harwich, Manningtree or Mistley downstream, with some wool and other goods being imported.\textsuperscript{62}

Saxton’s 1575 map of Suffolk shows significant towns, where By the mid-sixteenth century trade remained prosperous in towns such as Long Melford and Dedham along the upper Stour (figure 8).\textsuperscript{63} Textile workers, low country again immigrants, were producing the popular ‘new draperies’ which replaced coarser Stour cloth, but trade gradually declined as textile production concentrated on Colchester and Norwich.\textsuperscript{64}

Within the Thames tidal area, Stour estuary ports traded with London, as well as Northern Europe, and began trading with the new worlds, alongside transporting people, ideas and possibly plants. The Jermys of Stutton Hall could visit their lands in Kent and Essex easily by water, or less comfortably along poor roads. By the eighteenth century Stutton Mill had moved to the mouth of Samford creek, and largish boats are depicted using its quay, which is conveniently close to Stutton Hall (figure 9). First mooted in 1634, the 1705 Stour Navigation Act made the Stour above Manningtree navigable for larger boats up to Sudbury from 1708, partially used until the 1930s by which time it had been overtaken by railway and transport.\textsuperscript{65}

By the sixteenth century Harwich had long been a strategic trading, naval and military port and for centuries naval dockyards and shipbuilding in Harwich and Mistley had used local timber.\textsuperscript{66} Naval connections persisted with the establishment of HMS Ganges Naval Training School in Shotley after 1899 and the removal in 1933 of The Royal Hospital School from Greenwich to the site of Holbrook House, gifted to the navy.

\textsuperscript{62} ibid.
\textsuperscript{63} 1575 Saxton map, IRO, MC/40.
\textsuperscript{64} VCH. pp154-161
\textsuperscript{65} https://www.waterways.org.uk/ipswich/river_stour_navigation, accessed 2/05/2017.
\textsuperscript{66} Timber-felling rights were being traded in Stutton as early as the fourteenth-century, T/Hel/49/85.
The connectivity of the estuary enabled the soil to be further enhanced with manure. Francois de la Rochefoucauld wrote of the peninsula in 1784 that ‘they arrange for the muck to come from London on the barges that take there the local produce and that might otherwise return empty, so the cost is low.’\textsuperscript{67} Thames sailing barges were used by Stutton farms until the 1930s to transport agricultural and other cargoes, and hards and wharves, whose vestigial remains are still visible below Stutton and Crowe Halls, were considered selling points (figures 10 & 11).\textsuperscript{68} J. O.

\textsuperscript{67} Rochefoucauld, \textit{A Frenchman’s Year in Suffolk}, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{68} 1822 Sales Catalogue, Crowe Hall, CHA; 1887 sales catalogue, Stutton Hall. IRO, HD 1678/131/4.
Fison had several spritsail barges registered in his name 1859-1904.69

Figure 10. Sailing Barge loading at Graham’s Wharf, Stutton.

Figure 11. Barge at Stutton Mill.

CHAPTER THREE: ASPECT AND TOPOGRAPHY, THE SETTING.

From the Middle Ages or before, landowners in Suffolk used their wealth to create ornamental and productive gardens around their homes, from which the Tudor gardens whose skeletons are visible at Crowe and Stutton Halls would have developed.

In sixteenth-century England, landscape setting was increasingly seen as integral to the design of houses. European Renaissance thinking, stimulated by renewed study of classical culture, spread into England throughout the sixteenth century. This influenced garden layout, which became integral to a house’s overall design. Alberti propagated classical ideals recommending that a gentleman should build his house:

where it could enjoy all the benefit and delight of breeze, sun and view…it should be in view, and have itself a view of some city, town, stretch of coast, or plain, or it should have within sight the peaks of some notable hills or mountains, delightful gardens, and attractive haunts for fishing and hunting.70

In 1542 when Dr Andrew Boorde reiterated these recommendations, the sites of Crowe and Stutton Halls already fulfilled these requirements, and Stutton Hall was being developed.71

The use of bodies of water in garden and landscape design is well documented. When Capability Brown lived on the Thames ‘...the lake-like qualities of the river…captivated [him]...curving graciously away into the distance...[and became]...printed upon his mind's eye as the ideal “river-stile” and serpentine water.’72 The eighteenth-century Orwell estates used the Orwell as their serpentine lake, although Humphry Repton, in his ‘Red Book’ for Broke Hall blocked the disgusting ‘ooze’ of low tide from view.73 Neighbouring Crowe and Stutton Halls were mostly tenanted during the eighteenth century and seemingly not ‘improved’ to include parkland, although the wide estuary probably long functioned as a borrowed landscape feature. The Stour Estuary landscape was certainly appreciated in 1745 when Horace Walpole praised the location of his friend Richard Rigby’s Mistley Hall, diagonally opposite Stutton Hall:

71 Ibid, p. 16.
Tis the charmingest place by nature… The house stands on a high hill on an arm of the sea… with a wharf where the ships come up… Cross the arm of the sea, you see… charming woody hills in Suffolk. All this parent Nature did for this place;… he may make one of the finest seats in England there.74

In 1784 Francois de la Rochefoucauld described the view from Mistley ‘… a great expanse of water – an estuary formed there by the sea… On the far bank you see a delightful water’s edge, well planted and stretching for over a dozen miles.’75

CHAPTER FOUR: STUTTON HALL

Renaissance influence meant that classical proportion, geometrical patterns, axially and symmetry were increasingly being incorporated into the design of sixteenth-century English houses, and by extension their gardens. The owners of Stutton and Crowe Halls would probably have been aware of contemporary theories and changes in architecture and garden-making, either directly from descriptions of classical models by Pliny or Alberti and illustrated treatises, or indirectly from reports of Italian, French and Dutch gardens or English gardens they had influenced. In the 1570s Sir Thomas Kytson of Hengrave brought a ‘Dutch-man’ from Norwich ‘to viewe ye orchardes, gardyns and walkes’, and later paid him for ‘clypping the knotts, altering the alleys, setting the grounde, finding herbes, and bordering the same’. 76

Gardens at both Crowe and Stutton Hall would probably have been developed as settings for the newly developed Tudor houses, combining new ideas with pre-existing Medieval gardens. Medieval gardens ranged from an orchard and fishpond, to productive complexes, with stewponds, dovecotes, deer parks, vineyards and one or more orchards frequently combined with ornamental elements and structures. 77 Low hedges often divided areas for culinary, tinctorial and medicinal herbs, and vegetables. Tudor households were similarly self-sufficient. The kitchen garden, areas of useful plants and plants for fragrance and decorating the house, vineyards and hopyards had increasingly recreational and ornamental roles.

The Renaissance saw greater emphasis on plants’ aesthetic and botanical interest, with publication of herbals and garden advice books alongside scientific and world exploration and the importation of new, exotic plants, possibly through Suffolk ports. 78 The Jermys of Stutton Hall introduced an accurate and ornamental sundial, a scientific curiosity. Their plantings may have equalled this, but, unlike hard landscaping, plants and wooden structures such as the trellising, rails and arbours popular in Tudor gardens have not survived.

76 Williamson, *Suffolk’s Gardens and Parks*, p. 11.
78 Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*. 
The gardens and grounds at Stutton Hall appear to have two major phases of development. The first around the time of the construction of the house, walled forecourt and gateway by the Jermy family, and the second with the creation of new gardens and parkland by James Oliver Fison, whose great-grandson Henry Strutt is current owner (figure 12).

Ownership

Stutton Hall was built on the probable site of the earlier manor owned by Robert Grenon in 1066; Nicholas de Bassyng from 1165; the De Paveley family from 1230; the de Visdelieu family from
1311 and passed down by marriage through other powerful and wealthy families, including the Cursons, to Margaret Tey in 1476.\(^7\) Her daughter married Sir John Jermy of Metfield and Brightwell KB. The Jermy, or Jermyn, family held land and property in Norfolk, Essex and Suffolk, and the Teys were a wealthy old Essex family, some holding government office.\(^8\)

As was usual in East Anglia, Stutton Manor had been passed down as one of a bundle of properties, but with manorial status it might have contained features typical of gardens created by wealthy Suffolk landowners since the early Middle Ages. The Jermy family held Stutton Manor from the 1520s until 1699. The first three generations of Jermys married wealthy women, reflecting their own status, and, despite religious and political upheaval nationally, lived lives long and prosperous enough to invest in gardens at Stutton Manor, unlike subsequent generations. Sir John Jermy (I) took over Stutton Manor (also called Hall) around 1527.\(^6\) By 1533 Sir John was a Knight of the Bath, and it was before his death in 1560 that the new timber frame house with lathe and plaster walls, brick chimneys, forecourt and gateway was built. The main chamber was on the piano nobile, south-facing, with wide views of the river and land beyond. Sir John (I) either built Stutton Hall as a secondary residence, as he was ‘of Brightwell’, concurrent with Renaissance fashion for country homes or ‘villeggiatura’, or for his second son, John (II).\(^8\)

John Jermy (II)’s wife Margaret was heiress of Kent landowner Edward Isaac.\(^8\) The arms of Sir John (I), those of his wife (Tey) and of Isaac remain over fireplaces in the house.\(^8\) John Jermy (II) was succeeded by his son Sir Isaac Jermy in 1592.\(^8\) In 1626 Isaac gave a generous settlement to his erudite son John Jermy (III) on his marriage to the heir of wealthy London merchant William Rowe, son of The Lord Mayor of London.

In 1658, before his own death in 1662, John (III) settled Stutton Manor, money and local and Kent land on his son William and his new wife Mary Bedingfield.\(^8\) William then married Ann Boys in 1667. He subsequently left land in Kent to his daughters, and his Suffolk and Essex

\(^7\) W. A. Copinger, *The Manors of Suffolk: notes on their history and devolution.* (Manchester, 1910); Durrant, *Proceedings.*

\(^8\) http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/tey-robert-1426. Accessed 12/05/2017

\(^6\) Copinger, *The Manors of Suffolk,* p. 98. In 1526 a fine was levied of it against Sir Thomas Tey, and then again in 1527 but involving John Jermy.


\(^8\) Letter from Stewart Valder to Lady Fison, 1962. Strutt PC.

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^8\) T/Hel/120/2. Marriage settlement, Helmingham archives.
property to his son John (IV) (b. 1668), all in trust as they were young, and his widow died in 1684 in Stutton.87

John Jermy’s fortunes waned and the landscape was not further developed. Against a backdrop of the division of family wealth, mid seventeenth-century economic depression locally with religious dissent that saw increased emigration to the New World, the aftermath of national religious and political upheavals, the fire of London, and plague and war. In 1690 when John Jermy (IV) was only 22, his property including Stutton Hall was tenanted and later mortgaged, followed by common recovery of the manor, ten gardens, seven messuages, and other lands and properties.88 Amidst widespread debt in England, in 1694 he felled and sold timber from the Stutton estate, and started paying off his debts.89 In 1699 all his property, land, goods and chattels and advowson of Stutton Church were sold to Thomas May, resident at the Hall, for £5,400.90 May bought the Queach farm and a gatelodge or cottage, calling the estate ‘The Homesitting’, with 350 acres.91

No changes to the landscape during his thirty years of ownership are recorded, and he too encountered financial problems from 1710-1722, and in 1730 he mortgaged the estate, and died. The Countess of Dysart who had lent him money then became the owner.92 She and husband Lionel Tollemache owned Ham House and Helmingham Hall, but despite their significant gardens Stutton Manor simply returned agricultural rents, tenanted by a series of farmers until 1841. This however spared the gateway and forecourt from being swept away to satisfy the eighteenth-century fashion for landscaped parkland right up to the house. By 1805 Wilbrahim, Earl of Dysart had mortgaged Stutton Manor and sold it in 1856 to Joseph Catt, a philanthropist.93 In 1887 James Oliver Fison bought the estate, initially a base for holidays and hunting.

87 T/Hel/120/5-6 – William agreement with Bedingfields on marriage to Ann Boys; TNA. Prob.11/331/207. Will of William Jermy; TNA prob/11/381.
88 Mortgages. T/Hel/120/7-15/Stutton
89 TNA ADM 106/470/54 Folio 54. Thomas Podd, assistant master builder of Portsmouth, Harwich gives dimensions of Squire Jerman’s timber at Stutton Hall, which has sailed by Hoy for Chatham.
90 T/Hel/120/26.
91 T/Hel/120
92 Tenancy, mortgage and sales documents, T/Hel/120
93 T/Hel/120/62 1856 sale catalogue of Stutton Manor, Stutton Hall Farm and Queach Farm (420a); Common recovery T/Hel/123/19, 1805.
Passionate about gardening, he and his wife Lucy planted, renovated and reconfigured the grounds and Hall, still a prestigious and much-loved family home to fourth and fifth generations (figure 13). Fison was a partner in the successful milling and fertiliser family firm Joseph Fison & Sons. After J. O. Fison’s death in 1920 the Hall was let until the 1940s and Lucy had Little Hall built for herself on the estate, designing it and the Jekyll-style garden she created there around the view of the estuary.

Their son Clavering (Francis Guy, knighted 1957, on his retirement, for services to agriculture) took over the firm, Stutton Hall and the estate. He oversaw both profitably, and planted

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94 Diana Collins, [J.O. Fison’s granddaughter], *Stutton Hall and Stutton, Memories and Reflections*, unpublished, SVA.
95 Michael S. Moss, Fison Family. This later became Fisons, a conglomerate multinational which dominated first fertiliser and then agrochemical and pharmaceutical industries.
commercial orchards (figure 14). 96 His daughter, artist Gay, inherited Stutton Hall estate, her husband Peter Strutt, a High Sheriff, was director of Tolly Cobbold brewers (figure 1). It has been their son Henry’s main residence since 1992, with an interlude in the far east for work in finance. Extended family members now own Crepping and Little Halls but associated farmland remains within the estate, now c.1200 acres, including a commercial shoot.

Figure 14.1963 aerial photo of Stutton Hall.

The Approach

The earliest estate plans of Stutton Hall are Isaac Johnson’s 1802 survey and an undated map, both made during William Baker’s occupancy when it was called Stutton Hall Farm (figures 15 - 19). These record field names and boundaries, vestigial garden outlines and landscape features.97

96 Ibid.
97 Isaac Johnson’s 1802 survey of Stutton Hall Farm. HD 11 475/480, IRO. Undated map, SHPC.
Figure 15. Key: Isaac Johnson 1802 survey of Stutton Hall Farm.
Figure 16. Isaac Johnson’s 1802 Survey of Stutton Hall Farm, 1.
Figure 17. Isaac Johnson’s 1802 Survey of Stutton Hall Farm.
Figure 18. 1802 Survey, Stutton Hall Farm. Detail.
Figure 19. Detail, estate map, Stutton Hall, c.1804.

The axis of ‘The Walk’ aligns almost perfectly with the gatehouse, central axis of the forecourt, and the probable position of the original entrance to the house (figure 20). This axis possibly dates from the construction of the house and forecourt in 1543. Boorde's recommendation that: ‘The gatehowse be opposyte or agaynst the halldore standynge a base, and the gatehowse in the miydle of the fronte entrynge into the place had already become common by 1542. 

Avenues of trees were being created in sixteenth-century Suffolk as part of an axial approach designed to impress, and seventeenth-century maps show dwellings of even minor gentry approached by avenues. Stutton Hall reportedly had a mature oak approach avenue at the late eighteenth century. In 1863 Mills wrote that: ‘The widow Pinkney who is upwards of eighty years of age told me, that when a girl, she used to pick up acorns from under the avenue of oaks, which led from the road leading to Brantham up to Stutton Hall.’ The Walk’ has no trees on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 or in 1887 sales particulars (figures 20 & 21 ).

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100 Martin, Pastime of Pleasure, pp.16-19.  
101 SMS. 1863 entry.  
102 1844 Tithe Award Map P461/245, IRO.
Access to the main road from the Hall was indirect via an internal road (figure 16). The central axis possibly endures from the Jermys' time. Pre 1897 maps show 'The Walk' as a faint track, its axis only slightly misaligned with paths bisecting the forecourt and a corresponding enclosure south of the house, possibly contemporary with the forecourt (figures 15-19). A hedged
and paling-fenced enclosure not extant after Fison’s redevelopment are visible in nineteenth-century illustrations (figures 21 & 23).

Figure 22. Stutton Hall, showing south enclosure. Pre-1887.

Figure 23. Stutton Hall, south aspect. c.1865.
A former ‘grove containing some very fine oak and other trees, extending from the house to the river’ may have continued this central axis, and field boundaries marked on the 1802 survey continue it to the cliff. A Tudor approach avenue from the river would have enhanced the view of the house, although boat access would probably have been easier from the mouths of Samford or Holbrook Rivers. Gay Strutt, J.O. Fison’s granddaughter, remembers a path which followed the central axis from the house to steps in the cliff. These led to a staff recreational wharf in Clavering’s time, with the family’s more private recreational wharf slightly further west. The creek-head wharf in figure 20 was the ‘Hardway for Barges, from which Agricultural Produce can be shipped and Manure landed’.

The nineteenth-century agricultural recession meant that small Tudor or Stuart manor houses reduced to working farms were being sold at reasonable prices. These were frequently purchased and restored by people who had made their money in commerce, industry or the professions, and remaining walled gardens restored sometimes surrounded by new small parks. Similarly James Oliver Fison bought the estate in 1887 and created what by 1904 was called Stutton Park. The 1856 sales catalogue had listed a Manor and agricultural estate. That of 1887 promoted its Elizabethan origins and associations with ‘the Knightly Family of Jermy’, Tollemache and the Earl of Dysart. It extolled the virtues of the riverside location for views, proximity to Harwich, Yachting, Fishing, Wild-fowling’ and ‘Hardway for Barges’, and its mixed soils for game, ‘…not to be surpassed in the Kingdom’.

Earlier in the century Loudon had remarked that ‘An energetic young man, driving himself on a racing phaeton, could make weekend visits within a hundred-mile radius of London.’ By 1887 the new railway gave easy access to London in ‘an hour-and-a-half’ via Manningtree four miles

103 Frederick Crisp, *Some Account of the Parish of Stutton*. 1881. SHPC.
104 GS, 30/1/2017
105 ibid.
106 1887 Stutton Hall, Sales Particulars. HD 1678/131/4, IRO.
108 Ibid.
110 1856 Sales Particulars……ref
111 1887 Sales Particulars.
112 John Claudius Loudon *A treatise on farms, improving and managing country Residences* vol 2 (London, 1804) p705.
away, or ‘the County Town and Port of Ipswich’ meaning that Stutton was no longer isolated by land.\(^{113}\)

By the late nineteenth-century different styles of garden design co-existed. Broke Hall, Orwell Park and Woolverstone Hall on the River Orwell had landscaped parks, Berner’s nearby Woolverstone estate recently extensively redesigned by the Nesfields in a Picturesque style, where Lutyens designed a new religious house, with a ‘Jekyll style’ garden.\(^{114}\) By 1887 Brantham Court nextdoor had been built in a ‘Tudor’ style, approached by an avenue of trees.\(^{115}\) Rather than an avenue, Fison chose to create an impressive approach to the newly renovated Hall in the landscape tradition, with a ‘natural’ wavy belt of Scots and Corsican pine, horse and sweet chestnut, sycamore, oak and beech (figure 24).\(^{116}\) This continued over the road and edged adjacent agricultural fields, screening them and other properties from view. A new Arts and Crafts style gatelodge was adorned with yew topiary, and a ‘west lodge’ built.

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\(^{113}\) 1887 Sales Particulars.
\(^{114}\) Susan Gould, *Orwell Estates*.
\(^{115}\) OS 1884 map;
Partway along the Walk the tree belts gave way to wide views of newly created parkland extending to the river, then fastigiate yews and ornamental shrubs in front of the forecourt and the gateway (figure 25).
Fison created a new main entrance at the south of the house accessible to both horse-drawn and motorised vehicles. Visitors travelled on a smart gravel drive between the pinnacled forecourt walls and an irregular canale planted with pond lilies and marginals, newly formed by joining two pre-existent ponds to be greeted by the full view of the river with newly laid-out gardens in the foreground (figures 26 & 27).\footnote{117 GS, 30/1/2017.}
Figure 27. View of pond with topiary extending into parkland. pre-1914.

Judging by pre-1914 photos two lower ponds were also integral to the overall design, and 'green-fingered' Lucy Fison extensively planted flowering bulbs around them. They have recently been restored.

The parkland retained some old hedgerow oaks but was also planted with oak, horse and sweet chestnut, *Wellingtonia*, cedar of Lebanon, *Deodar* cedar and later *Cedrus Atlantica* var. *glauc.* The last gasp of the landscape park tradition’, a designer is unknown, but E.F. Bishop, known locally for Arts and Crafts church restoration and design, redesigned the house in 1892.

The parkland was ploughed up for food production in the 1940s but gradually reinstated as grazed parkland as now. Gay and Peter Strutt replaced many damaged cedars with beech, since regretted as they dislike the dryness. In the 1970s they also replaced a diseased elm avenue, on Fison’s new west walk, with limes (figure 28). A wavy line of box hedges borders this lateral axis, terminating in a wide stone staircase flanked by pedestals topped by concrete balls, leading to to ‘Upper Breach’.

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120 ibid; GS, 30/1/2017.
122 ibid, 30/1/2017.
123 Ibid.
Orchard sites are long-lived, and were sometimes used by the Tudors as private areas unlike the more public forecourt. In 1802 there were two orchards, one below the house visible from the upper chamber, and Upper, or Old, Orchard roughly where the modern orchard is today, west of the house, planted by Fison with apples, pears and plums (figure 17). In 1856 both orchards were listed as pasture. Fison created a large, partially walled kitchen garden complete with heated greenhouses, cold frames, nutwalks, figs, fruit cages, espaliered fruit trees including peaches, and many vegetables, allowing the household to be almost self-sufficient during the 1940-45 war. This is now much reduced in size.

Fison enlarged the timber-framed house in two stages, encasing it in red brick and building new chimneys matching the originals.

The Forecourt

The three remaining Tudor chimneys at Stutton Hall have elaborate cut brick spiral patterns. For a fifty-year period, around Henry VIII’s reign, moulded and cut bricks were first made by Flemish

\[\text{Martin, } \textit{Pastime of Pleasure}, \text{ p.12.} \]
\[\text{Isaac Johnson survey.} \]
\[\text{1856 Sales Particulars. Ref.....} \]
\[\text{GS, 30/1/2017; Diana Collins, } \textit{Memories.} \]
\[\text{Three have been dated variably as: 1520 - Nathaniel Lloyd, } \textit{A History Of English Brickwork.} \text{ (London, 1925), p 81; c.1543 - owner Henry Strutt; 1553 - Bettley, } \textit{Suffolk}, \text{ p. 533; probably of Henry VII or VIII’s reign, Sandon, } \textit{Suffolk}, \text{ p 210.} \]
immigrants and later also by English specialist brickmakers to create complex patterned chimneys.\textsuperscript{129}

The use of bricks in Suffolk became widespread throughout the sixteenth century, with walls increasingly used to enclose gardens.\textsuperscript{130} The Tudor house was not symmetrical, and the forecourt was possibly built to give an overall feeling of symmetry. At Stutton Hall:

On the North side is a Garden walled in, and opposite to the centre of the house a small gateway, for foot passengers only, built of red brick, somewhat in the style of the gateway at Erwarton Hall...and has similar turrets at the angles, at the corners and on other parts of the wall are pinnacles formed of brickwork of various patterns...\textsuperscript{131}

As the Renaissance concept of order and harmony in gardens and man’s relationship with the natural world became entwined with the idea of divine and political order, continuing the metaphor of gardens as the garden of Eden, creating gardens became compatible with even reformed religion. John Jermy (II) was a pupil of a Protestant minister, John Dawes, at Ipswich School, which developed from Wolsey’s Ipswich College.\textsuperscript{132} In 1570 Jermy (II) presented Dawes with the living of Stutton, ‘a hotbed of Puritanism’, where he lived till his death in 1602, possibly reflecting Jermy’s religious sympathies. Dawes may have brought reports of gardens from his time studying at Cambridge, or when in Calais and Germany during the reign of Queen Mary ‘to keepe his conscience free from Idolatrie.’\textsuperscript{133}

Base courts at the approach to houses had been cluttered with unpleasant service buildings, dairies, laundries, slaughter and brewhouses, all requisites of a self-sufficient estate. By the middle of the sixteenth century Boorde’s recommendations that symmetrically designed forecourts should replace these were being followed for sanitary as well as symbolic and aesthetic reasons.\textsuperscript{134} Service buildings were moved, with domestic stables generally close enough for horses to be led off, and the forecourt entered on foot, as at Stutton. Three walled forecourts from before 1660 survive on the Shotley Peninsula, at Crowe, Erwarton and Stutton Halls, the last two

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., p128
\textsuperscript{130} Tom Williamson, \textit{Suffolk’s Gardens and Parks}. PAGE
\textsuperscript{131} Thomas Mills Stutton Manuscript. 1824.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{134} Henderson, \textit{Tudor House and Garden}, p13.
entered by impressive pedestrian gateways. Stutton Hall forecourt, dated 1543, is north of the house, built from regular, thin red bricks (9 3/4 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/4 & 2 1/2 inches) in Old English Bond, widely used from fifteenth century to second quarter of seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{135} The crenellated walls were a fashionable nod to Medieval military battlements. Spaced at roughly twelve metre intervals are pinnacles each with a different brickwork pattern.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image1.png}
\caption{Forecourt from upper chamber. 2017}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{135} HS, 6/2/2017, or by Peter Minter as 1570 pp4-6; Lloyd, \textit{A History Of English Brickwork} dates it 1530 p 312.
When Bulmer brickworks supplied bricks for restoration of seven pinnacles in 2007, patterns that occur elsewhere in Tudor embroidery, cloth and also Arran knitting were noted. These patterns could have been echoed in knot gardens and geometric patterned planting typical of the period inside the forecourt or to the south of the house, visible from the *piano nobile* of the new house (figure 29). The northern seven metres of the forecourt and the north wall are raised by about one and a half metres, and the side walls step down after seven metres (figure 30). With a quatripartite pattern of paths shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, the existence of an earlier internal viewing platform as often created in Tudor and Stuart gardens is suggested (figure 20).

An 1815 engraving depicts the forecourt overgrown with trees, approached by rough land grazed by ponies with a fine view across the river (figure 32). The title reflects its declined status and the renewed interest in historical remains. Several contemporary prints were made of the riverside site (figures 31, 33 & 34).
Figure 31. Gateway at Stutton hall. 1815

Figure 32. The Remains of Stutton Hall. 1815.
The intimacy of ‘Old English Manor’ walled gardens became fashionable and they were being restored and copied by designers like Lutyens. The raised terrace was a smoothed incline by 1911, where the Fisons created symmetrical box-edged parterres with bedding plants (figures 35 &
36). These echoed the nineteenth-century passion for bedding schemes within loose interpretations of seventeenth-century parterres. More complex versions were those of Donald Beaton at Shrublands, and William Andrews Nesfield at The Chantry in Ipswich and Woolverstone Hall nearby.

Figure 35. Box parterres inside the forecourt. pre 1914

Figure 36. Parterres viewed from upstairs. Between 1918 and 1940.

The Fisons’ parterres survived the 1914-18 war, and figure 36 also shows an urn and a
gravel path along the central axis aligned with the still-rendered gateway. The forecourt parterres were ploughed up during the 1939-45 war to grow potatoes for the swollen household, later replaced by lawn as bedding plant parterres were labour-intensive and by then unfashionable.\textsuperscript{137} Demonstrating the Fisons’ amalgam of ‘styles’ there are also herbaceous borders backed by climbing roses and shrubs representing the looser planting style made popular by Gertrude Jekyll at the turn of the twentieth-century, more in keeping with the ‘Arts and Crafts’ style of much of the south garden (figure 35). Similar borders exist today within the walls including \emph{Melianthus major} and \emph{Romneya coulteri} ‘White Cloud’. Clavering’s friend Wilfred Howse had worked with the Oxford Botanic Gardens and holidayed frequently at Stutton Hall before moving to Stutton in the 1950s. He reportedly introduced many then ‘special’ plants to local gardens, such as \emph{Genista aetnensis}, and various \emph{Eucryphia} and \emph{Cornus}.\textsuperscript{138}

\textbf{The gateway}

Wit, device and extended symbolism were widely used in the Renaissance when Jermy built the forecourt. Gateways and gatehouses were Tudor status symbols and more ornamental than defensive, but turrets and crenellations echoed the military function of their medieval forebears, whilst increasingly incorporating some form of classicism. Gatehouses or gateways in East Anglia were typically free-standing in the outer wall of the entrance court. Allowing transition from one place to another, they were used symbolically: at Caius College Cambridge the gateway used classical metaphor for the students’ progress.\textsuperscript{139} The gateway at Stutton Hall is a red-brick, vaulted, roughly square, pedestrian tunnel gateway with pairs of pinnacled turrets of cut and moulded brick, but with two different facades. The northern façade has a crow-stepped gable and perpendicular arch typical of early Tudor gatehouses, but flanked by columns with ionic capitals (figure 37).

\textsuperscript{137} Gay Strutt, 30/1/2017.
\textsuperscript{138} Pers. comm. So Scott-Barratt. June 2017
\textsuperscript{139} Henderson, \textit{Tudor House and Garden}, pp. 65-6.
Figure 37. The gateway, north facade. 2017.
Figure 38. South elevation of gateway. 2017

The inner, southern face has a more ‘classical’ semi-circular arch, with two more ionic columns and outer pillars adorned with double, fluted ‘Tuscan’ pilasters topped by an entablature (figure 38). The four outer pilasters narrow at the top, playing with perspective, in classical style:

There can be no doubt that the choice of styles was symbolic: the external façade welcomed visitors using the traditional vocabulary of the medieval gatehouse, while the
internal classical façade was deemed more appropriate for the pleasures of the court or gardens.\textsuperscript{140}

The ‘classical’ features of both elevations were coated in plaster to imitate stone, since removed (figure 39). Lloyd commented that:

\begin{quote}
The Flemish practice of coating brick walls and moulded brickwork with plaster to represent stone was [also] in vogue in [England]. It would be difficult to find a more interesting instance of an attempt to embody new fashion with old methods.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Figure 39. The still rendered gateway. 1920s.}

The transition from the darker, exposed and colder north side to the lighter south-facing shelter inside the forecourt echoes the conceit of hot and cold used in sonnets fashionable in sixteenth century England written by or in the style of the Italian Humanist, Petrarch (1304-1374). The

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141} Lloyd, \textit{A History Of English Brickwork}. 
transition from dark to light, would be repeated when going from the screens passage of the house and out of the south door, surprising the visitor with a spectacular view of the river. A plaque found in the grounds which is probably not original bears the date 1357 (figure 40).

![Figure 40. Plaque found in the grounds.](image)

The Sundial

Sundials had been used for millennia, with an upsurge in the sixteenth century. The sundial set into the gateway is another demonstration of Jermy showing his Renaissance credentials and scientific sophistication. It was ornamental, but recent measurements show that it is also a calendar and remarkably accurate, far better than a Tudor clock. Recent restoration suggests it was built in as part of the original 1543 structure, which would make the sundial one of ‘Britain’s earliest known ‘scientific’ sundials, accurately delineated using mathematical knowledge which had only arrived in
Britain during the previous century (figure 41).\textsuperscript{142} The restoration was made based on Tudor sundials including those made by Nicholas Kratzer (1487-c 1550) who lectured at Oxford for Cardinal Wolsey, an Ipswich man.\textsuperscript{143}

\textbf{Figure 41. Sundial after restoration. 2017.}

\textsuperscript{142} Harriet James. ‘Report on the Recording and Cleaning of the Sundial, South elevation, Stutton Hall’. (2010).
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
Plasterwork and Iconography

In the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century after Isaac Jermy inherited Stutton Hall ‘a remarkable number of lime plaster ceilings and friezes’ were added in the house, with motifs laid out symmetrically.144 The design of the great chamber ceiling gives an impression of stars or flowers, based on a pattern popular in the London region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.145 Similar Interlocking hearts friezes occur at both Stutton and Crowe Halls, along with less similar friezes of hops or grapes, fleur-de-lis and Tudor rose motifs (figure 42). Claire Gapper suggests a Suffolk plasterwork repertoire, possibly by a London plasterer willing to travel, reflecting London connections.146

Figure 42. Detail of botanical plasterwork frieze, Stutton Hall. 2017.

These patterns and botanical motifs were iconographical links between house and garden, perhaps repeated in ‘carpets of needlework’ cited in John Jermy (III)’s will, and patterns clipped into knots, symbolising eternity, from evergreen plants such as box.147 Other carvings originally at Stutton Hall possibly extend this connection. A female figure holds a cornucopia representing plentiful garden produce. A naked woman placing horns on a man’s head suggests the story in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* of Diana punishing Actaeon, well-known in the Renaissance (figure 43). Referencing woods and hunting in Stutton, Diana, goddess of hunting, woods and chastity often represented a tribute to the Virgin Queen Elizabeth I.

145 Ibid.
146 ibid.
147 Hops were valuable new crops, listed in the Will of Johanes Jermy, TNA PROB 11/312/205, 1663.
The South Garden.

No Medieval or Tudor dovecotes, deer parks or fishponds are recorded at Stutton Hall but six ponds are marked on the 1802 survey which may have early origins (figures 44). Useful freshwater stores, stewponds were primarily used to breed and hold Friday fish. ‘Stew Grove’ implies this use but it does not feature in later maps (figures 44).148

148 Isaac Johnson’s 1802 survey.
Figure 44. Detail of 1802 survey.
The ponds depicted by concentric squares may have had ornamental roles and some are still visible from the upper chambers (figure 45). One is within ‘Green Piece’, a possible garden symmetrically balanced by ‘Mulberry Piece’ on the long, thin north-south enclosure or walk corresponding roughly to existing lawn open to views.\footnote{\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.}

‘Mulberry Piece’ implies earlier mulberry growing linked to silk manufacture. An elaborate Jermy monument in Stutton Church uses a silkworm metaphor: ‘like the silkworme seekeing
verity.\textsuperscript{150} Isaac Jermy’s settlement on his son included lands with rent in the wool towns of Kelvedon and Coggeshall, possibly demonstrating a link with textiles.\textsuperscript{151} Black mulberries, \textit{Morus nigra}, were distributed in 1609 by James I to encourage an English silk industry, misguidedly since silkworms prefer the white mulberry, \textit{Morus alba}. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 many French Huguenots emigrated to England, bringing silk weaving and other skills. By the end of the eighteenth century the silk industry had spread to the Stour Valley, centred on Sudbury.

James Fison laid out new gardens below the new entrance with some features in keeping with the house Arts and Crafts style modifications. The south garden included lines of topiaried and fastigiate yews, urns on neat lawns wandered by peacocks, a rose garden and arbour (Figures 46, 49 & 50). Of these only topiarised yews remain, now bulbous after neglect during 1940-46 labour shortages. Modern statuary and sculpture now adorns this garden, some from Henry’s time living in Japan.

Figure 46. The south garden, pre 1914.

\textsuperscript{150} From a poem by John Jermy III, on a monument to his wife Mary (d.1664), in Stutton church. 
\textsuperscript{151} T/ Hel/120/1. 1626 Marriage settlement, Helmingham Hall archives.
Yew hedges divided the Fison’s new lower garden into compartments (figure 47 & 51). Lucy Fison created a rose garden, with an arbour in which she would take tea admiring the view (figures 48-50). In the 1960s this was removed as unfashionable and replaced by lawn open to views which the east-west hedge had blocked from downstairs (figure 49). A rudimentary ha-ha was recently upgraded where lines suggest terracing below the orchard (figure 43). The intermittent east yew hedge now fully encloses the ‘Glade’, which Lucy planted with scented and flowering shrubs, spring bulbs and beeches which are now mature and block the lateral view.

Figure 47. Detail 1900s OS map.

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152 Gay Strutt, 30/1/2017
153 Henry Strutt, 21/03/2017
Figure 48. Lucy Fison's rose garden. pre-1914

Figure 49 Rose garden and river view. Pre-1914.
Figure 50. Lucy Fison's rose garden, with Yew hedge bounding ‘The Glade’ c.1920.

Figure 51. Summer 1964. Before removal of the central east-west hedge.
Like most Edwardians the Fisons were passionate about sport, and added two lawn tennis courts and coverts for shooting, now used commercially.\textsuperscript{154} Recorded in 1802, The Grove’s name could conceivably be a remnant of a Renaissance designed grove.\textsuperscript{155} Mills refers to very large girths of oaks growing there.\textsuperscript{156} Both shore and Grove were used for picnics with butler and footman, parties and weddings with recreational wharves used for swimming and boating (figures 52).\textsuperscript{157} A small boat house stood on the cliff and some moorings remain, but only stumps remain of the wharves.

\textbf{Figure 52.} Favourite Bathing Place.
Figure 53. 19th century walls and new gate lodge beyond. 2017.
Crowe Hall has three likely phases of designed landscaping, contemporary with modification of the house and wall construction in the Renaissance, early nineteenth century, and from 1997 to the present day (figure 54).

Ownership

Early ownership is unclear but from the late thirteenth-century ‘The Manor of Crowe Hall’ passed through the hands of the significant families of de Playz, de Coggeshall and Latymer, and then the Smyth family from around 1643 to 1731, overlapping with the Bowes and their descendants from 1691 to 1821, the Reade family from 1821 to 1974, inherited by Dr. Inch, until Stephen and Billy Clark’s purchase in 1993.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{158} See, also, Dr David S. Smyth, Letter to S. Clark, 2003, Crowe Hall archives; Copinger, \textit{The Manors of Suffolk}, p. 102.
The name’s origin is uncertain, but a suggested connection with the fourteenth-century Crowe family of Hintlesham and Debenham is supported by a 1414 grant of land from Richard Crowe of Stutton to Peter Man and his wife Agnes.\textsuperscript{159} It is on or near the site of an earlier sub-manor to Stutton Hall, 24m high overlooking the widest part of the estuary c.700m away, with abundant springs nearby (figure 55).

\textsuperscript{159} T/Hel/89/7 Grant 13 Jan 1 Henry V (1414); Proceedings, 1909. p. 393.
Figure 56. Possible phases of development.
The existing house dates in part from the fourteenth, early fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with a significant extension in c.1605-10, possibly contemporary with plasterwork botanical motifs of hops or grapes, and the extended walled forecourt (figure 56). The Latymers, associated with Freston Manor, reputedly carried this out during roughly forty years of ownership. The Smyths owned extensive land and property, including some in Stutton from the sixteenth century, by which time Alexander (I) Smyth (1545?-1605) was ‘of Stutton’. Alexander (III) (d.1645) was the first ‘of Crowe Hall’. Alexander (II)’s daughter Elizabeth’s c.1645 marriage to William, Viscount Fairfax, and Sir Thomas’ knighthood indicated the family’s social status. Sir Thomas’ (1629-91) second wife, Bridget Bowes was descended from a Lord Mayor of London. The Bowes family arms engraved ‘1605’ over the front door may possibly not accurately represent Bowes ownership.

The seventeenth-century extension included the main chamber overlooking the river. This has an unusual moulded plaster ceiling relief of two large angels holding up wreathes in one hand, and rings in the other which in turn appear to hold up the central panel (figure 57). Four leonine heads blow horns that become interconnected cornucopias of foliage and fruit, with four angel heads in the corners, and the whole is bordered by swathes of foliage and fruit. Sandon dates this as ‘of Charles II time (1663-1685)’. The angels are naïve but the overall design is symmetrical. Such elaborate work would probably have been complemented by plentiful gardens with equally classical overtones, created contemporaneously or slightly later during the surge in garden-making after 1660. The remains of an internal viewing terrace in the forecourt could date from this time.

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160 Rodney Black, conversation, 15/12/2016; Bettley, Suffolk, p.532; The 1614 will of Dorotheae Smith of Stutton, left to Thomas Smith ‘my hoppe poales in my hopp groune de with the hopp howses’. Facsimile, CHA.
162 History of the Smyth Family of Cavendish, Suffolk. 2007, pp 2-5. CHA.
164 Eric Sandon – Notes for Suffolk Houses – Crowe Hall. IRO.GG 402/3/159
Alexander (II)’s son, William had a long ownership, possibly shared with his mother, until his own death without issue in 1687. He had time to work on the ‘gardens orchyards dovehouse Fishponds’ with income from the ‘Mannor...Capitall Messuage and Farme of Crowes Hall in Stutton... Land meadows Pastures feedings marshes Woods and underwoods’ along with ‘two messuages one dovehouse one barne three stables two gardens two orchyards sixty acres of land tenn acres of meadow seventy acres of pasture and ten acres of Marsh’ in Stutton. By 1695 William’s nephew Thomas had deeded his share of these to an unmarried brother, Charles, a Rector in Essex.

After William’s death subsequent owners had less incentive for capital expenditure on park or garden-making, as many were not resident, had shorter periods of ownership, often with complex, shared and indirect inheritances. Mortgages assigned in 1708 and 1763 implied the need for cash from the estate and associated farm and there were long tenancies on both. An eighteenth-century fireplace and tower imply some expenditure on the house, and therefore possibly also on the grounds. In 1770 Philip Bowes-Broke of Broke Hall, Nacton, (1749-1801),

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166 Release of 1695 inheritance. (CHA).
167 Ibid.
168 Elizabeth Smyth married her cousin Thomas Bowes, whose sister inherited but was certified as a ‘lunatick’, and half-shares were left, David Smyth letter, CHA.
169 Charles Smyth and his mother, mortgage documents, CHA; Assignment of mortgage to attend the inheritance of Crowse Hall, 1731 for Bowes, TNA,D/DU 161/362; Tenancy agreements, CHA; Philip Broke married Anne Bowes and died leaving debt. Gould, Orwell Estates, p.22.
170 Rodney Black’s dating.15/12/2016.
had inherited a moiety after his aunt’s death, although it is unlikely he inhabited Crowe Hall.\footnote{Will of Isabella Bowes pr.1779, CHA.} In 1791, while part-owner of Crowe Hall, he had commissioned designs for Broke Hall, Nacton, from his schoolfriend Humphry Repton, and a Gothic makeover from Wyatt.\footnote{Williamson, \textit{Suffolk’s Gardens}. P.103} There, Repton considered the ‘dignity due to the long establishment of the Bowes family.’\footnote{ibid.} It is unlikely, but possible that Repton once also made dignifying suggestions for Crowe Hall, used later when parkland was laid out with clumps of trees reminiscent of Repton’s designs (figure 58).\footnote{OS map 1\textsuperscript{st} edition,1884, 1 : 5000.}

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\textbf{Figure 58. 1884 1st edition OS map showing parkland.}
The 1821 sales catalogue emphasised Crowe Hall's commercial agricultural assets, coastal location and suitability for game shooting, and it was purchased by George Reade (figure 57).

Figure 59. 1821 Sales Catalogue.

175 Sales catalogue, IRO SC399/1 1821
Shares in the estate had been complex and divided. Mills wrote that 'the family of Bowes sold it to a Mr. Gant who sold it to Mr Robert Daniels for £4,000’... ‘the reverend Messrs Bracken, Edgar and Freeman lived in the house at different times as curates’ but tenancy and ownership may have been confused. Mills recorded:

We called upon Mr & Mrs George Read who have become the Purchasers of Crow Hall and who intend to make it a Place of Residence, the House at present is overrun with Rats and totally unfit for the reception of a Gentlemans Family.

Upon it becoming the property of George Read Esq. who realised his fortune in India material alterations have taken place. The house itself enlarged and which from being a large rambling manor farmhouse has become an eligible residence.

George Reade was born in Madras in 1776 and was wealthy. He employed local architect Richard Beale from 1824-1826 to extend and modify the house, but died in 1825 leaving his son John Page Reade to continue. John's marriage to Helen, daughter of Sir John Coloquoun, Bt., of Coloquoun and Luss possibly reinforced the choice of a fashionable Scottish castle style, 'picturesquely irregular Perp Gothic, stuccoed and castellated and pinnacled' (figures 60 & 61).

His second wife was Lady Mary Stuart Knox (d.1903), eldest daughter of the 2nd Earl of Ranfurly.

The estuary was significant in the design. The new upstairs drawing-room windows opened onto the south porch and commanded wide views (figure 62).

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176 Indenture document, facsimile. SVA
177 Stutton MS pp.33-35 1827
178 Kalendarium, Vol. II, 1819-26: p. 102, 1 July 1822.
180 George Reade's: 1805 declaration of birth in absence of birth certificate; London House,1826 sales catalogue including valuable contents; will,1825. Facsimiles, SVA.
181 Reade family tree, SVA; Bettley, Suffolk, p.532.
182 Family tree, SVA.
Figure 60. Crowe Hall, north elevation. 1992.

Figure 61. Sketch of the newly modified Crowe Hall, south elevation. Probably 19th century.
By 1831 John Page Reade (d.1880) was High Sheriff, had property elsewhere, and after Helen’s death in 1852 the Hall and farm were frequently let, separately, from 1851.\textsuperscript{183} James, (Colonel) Coloquon Revell Reade, JP. succeeded, and was frequently stationed abroad, despite having shooting rights over Crepping Hall estate.\textsuperscript{184} His widow Sophia (d.1931) took over in 1915 and from 1918 resided at Crowe Hall, followed by her daughter Margaret aka. Peggy, a close friend of Sir Norman Brook, 1\textsuperscript{st} Baron Normanbrook.\textsuperscript{185} Unmarried, she left Crowe Hall in 1974 to her friend’s son Dr ‘Binks’ Inch.\textsuperscript{186} His family sold the house to Stephen and Felicity (Billy) Clark in 1993. A former interior designer, Billy Clark lived at Castle Howard where her father was agent, in Africa and London. Suffolk-born commercial property developer, and life-long sailor, Stephen Clark bought Crowe Hall primarily because of its powerful relationship with the landscape and estuary, and has committed much energy and capital to long term enhancements (figure 63).

\textsuperscript{183} Facsimile certificates and leases SVA, to ‘respectable’ tenants including the Pigotts (d. 1873) and General McMahon).
\textsuperscript{184} Military certificates, SVA; Crepping Hall Sales Catalogue, CHA.
\textsuperscript{185} Reade family history, SVA.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid.
The Grounds

Vestiges of early garden layouts are evident on Isaac Johnson’s 1825 survey made before George Reade’s death, and Tithe Award maps (figures 64-66). ¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ Isaac Johnson, 1825 ‘Crow Hall and Glebes’ IRO, HD 11 475/488; 1825 Tithe map copy, CHA; Stutton Tithe award map 1844. IRO, P.461/245; Apportionment 1844. IRO, FDA 245.
Figure 64.1825 Survey, *Crow Hall.*
The Approach

The 1824-6 building work underlined the renewed status of the house with a new crenellated red-brick outer wall flanking a gateway, extending along the village road and boundary with Ancient House (figure 53). The gateway’s stonework pillars and moulded capitals and the wall’s crenellations closely match the original inner forecourt.

‘The hall is approached by an avenue…at a convenient distance from the highway to be sufficiently secluded…’ The northern avenue aligns with the main axis of the seventeenth-century house and forecourt and is possibly contemporary with them. Mills’ 1827 history of Crowe Hall also implies that the avenue predates Reade: ‘There was an avenue of oaks and Limes, leading to the house with some large chestnuts, measuring 4 loads of timber, which were taken

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188 Proceedings,1909. p.393
down, and the whole sold for £500.00. It had subsequently been replanted as by 1844 it was
depicted as tree-lined, and is now an avenue of mature oaks (figure 66). Since 1997 Stephen Clark
has added other trees and underplanted with spring bulbs.

![Figure 66. 1844 Tithe map showing Crowe Hall avenue.](image)

By 1880 ‘there [was] a lodge near the entrance gate where the gardener lives’. Kitchen
gardens and greenhouses behind it were in use until completion of the new walled kitchen gardens
and greenhouses in c.2003. From 1974-93, Doctor Inch ‘respected continuity in the gardens’ and
despite frequent being resident in France, his gardeners still used the kitchen garden for

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189 Stutton MS, pp.33-35 1827 entry. SVA
190 1884 OS 1st edition map; Proceedings,1909. p.393; Crowe Hall. Stutton Parish Magazine, 1900. SVA.
vegetables and the hothouse for flowers.\textsuperscript{191} The lodge was rebuilt in 2005, designed by Rodney Black to match the house.

During the seventeenth century building work, the main building had been joined to a separate c.1550 building, and connected to a southwest section of a walled enclosure.\textsuperscript{192} A jumble of service buildings were later built into this wall, in which there were remnants of a probably Renaissance, blocked gateway with a gauged brick arch, pilasters with moulded capitals and bases with a moulded band over it, reputedly also with the traces of a lion’s head (figure 67).\textsuperscript{193}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Renaissance gateway remnants. c. 1995.}
\end{figure}

The buildings, wall and gateway were sacrificed to the 2001-3 house extension. The alignment of the gateway with the axis of an existing south avenue of mature trees depicted on an 1844 map, and the landing point at the heads of two small creeks imply that this river approach also dates from the Renaissance or before (figure 66).\textsuperscript{194} The southern avenue does not align with the northern, terminating at a dogleg that crudely aligns with the south porch. The avenues possibly approached separate buildings or were constrained by landing points, or pre-existing neighbouring properties to the north such as seventeenth-century Ancient House.\textsuperscript{195} The river approach was

\textsuperscript{191} Pers. Comm. So Scott-Barratt, 6/07/2017
\textsuperscript{192} Bettley, \textit{Suffolk}, p.532.
\textsuperscript{193} Historic England listing 1194756; Stephen Clark interview May 2017.
\textsuperscript{194} Rodney Black, 15/12/2016; 1845 Admiralty Chart, Stour Estuary. Author’s PC.
\textsuperscript{195} Historic England website, accessed 10/06/2017
certainly in use during Peggy Reade’s ownership, for access for sailing and swimming where a mooring now exists.\footnote{196}

**Forecourt History.**

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{17th century forecourt gateway, 2017.}
\end{figure}

\footnote{196 GS, 30/1/2017}
The Reades’ modified house was assymetrical but the new porches and internal axis aligned with the north approach and forecourt gateway, bisecting the Renaissance north wall. The gateway allows for vehicles and has octagonal columns, domes with moulded finials, carved stone brickets and no overhead structure (figure 68).197 The red-brick walled forecourt has crenellations of stone or brick on different aspects. The 1605 plaque dates the whole as seventeenth-century, but Rodney Black dated it late sixteenth-century based on brickwork and other local forecourts.198 Restored and repaired in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the walls and columns were closely copied for the new walled gardens in the twenty-first (figure 69).

Figure 69. 17th century forecourt walls with new gateway and gatehouse beyond, and the remains of an internal viewing platform.

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197 Bettley, Suffolk p.532.
198 Rodney Black, 15/12/2016.
Figure 70. Crowe Hall, 2016, from the south-east showing forecourt and new west gardens.
Reade’s house aligned with returns on the north walls. Nineteenth-century maps suggest that originally there were internal divisions and enclosed areas both sides of a symmetrical central forecourt (Figure 71). 199 Yew hedges now define this forecourt (figure 70). Until 1997 the walls fully enclosed a pleasure garden and service area to the west, and the north wall’s symmetry suggest that this was once mirrored to the east. The ‘lawns’ and ‘mansion yards’ form a roughly symmetrical group (figure 71). The west gardens were possibly the ‘extensive gardens, inclosed by brick walls well planted with fruit trees, and grape vines’ described in 1821. 200 Their mention implies productive gardens had been maintained during pre-1821 tenancies. The word ‘yards’ could be understood as ‘gardens’, ‘orchywards’ or orchards etymologically. By 1844 the west area was listed as ‘pleasure grounds and buildings’ including stables and trees north of the house. 201

199 Isaac Johnson’s survey.
200 Sales catalogue, IRO SC399/1 1821
201 1844 Stutton Tithe Award and Apportionment. IRO. P.461/245
An internal viewing terrace partially remains in the northwest overlooking an area once planted with Edwardian formal parterres and where seventeenth-century knots or parterres may have been.  

**East Garden**

Earlier enclosures to the east and southeast may have been removed to satisfy the eighteenth and early nineteenth century vogue for parkland right up to the house. An engraving illustrating Crowe Hall’s exposed forecourt was made during the brief period that ‘The present proprietor of this residence… assumed the name of Stutton House instead of Crow Hall’ (figure 72).

![Figure 72 Crowe Hall in Stutton House, undated.](image)

*Stutton House* depicts mature exotic conifers and other trees, larger than the ’… young growing timbers’ advertised in 1821 (figure 72). Genteel figures stroll and sheep and ponies graze right up to the house in picturesque parkland, complementing the hall’s new style.

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202 Edwardian postcard of Crowe Hall. PC.

203 *Stutton Manuscript*, pp.33-35 1847. Crowe Hall was briefly called Stutton House.

204 1821 Sales catalogue, Crowe Hall. CHA.
In 1825 a rectangular Lawn extended east bordered by the lateral axis of the ‘Drift’ (figure 71). This walk from the gardens, between wooded areas on a land bridge, above an ornamental, square pond, is still significant in 2017. By 1884 an informal east-west avenue of trees had been planted along it and the lawns surrounded by a ‘natural’ line of trees continuing the east return of the forecourt (figure 73). A circle of trees at its centre is possibly a bower or arbour. Not visible on earlier maps, there is screening by the forecourt walls, and a track along the terrace north of the lawns continuing past the copse, stream and pond, round the newly created parkland to the river.
As the farm approach was completely separate, this approach to the river could have been a carriage drive, walk or partial circuit for pleasure.

By the 1950s the east garden contained a recreation area with a swimming pool and brick terracing creating a sunken area for tennis. No level changes have been made in the east garden since 1993 but the north wall has been extended and the terracing restored. Head gardener Robert McCart designed and planted borders along the top terrace walls, with predominantly repeat flowering roses divided by buttresses of yew (figure 74). He joined Crowe Hall in 2001 with a brief to create an English country garden. Previous employment included work for Dame Miriam Rothschild, at Balmoral and seven years at Stutton Hall.

Figure 74. East garden with new rear wall extension and restored terracing. 2017.

CONTRIBUTION OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGNERS, ARCHITECT AND HEAD GARDENER.

The 75 hectare estate has developed since 1993 using designs and ideas from garden designers, landscape architects, the architect and head gardener with collaboration and key input from the family. Design was in conjunction with The Landscape Partnership (TLP) who had produced the 1997 masterplan. This included new parkland and ponds (figure 75). The

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205 1950s OS map.
206 RB, 15/12/2016.
207 The Landscape Partnership, 1997 Masterplan.
picturesque features such as follies and Rodney Black’s south lawn parterres, and some parkland layout, were dropped but most was implemented.

Figure 75. TLP Masterplan, initial proposals, 1997.

The New West Gardens

The house was restored from 1993-1995, and extended from 2001-2003 by architect Rodney Black, capitalising on estuary views, and ‘so skilfully…that it is not easy to disentangle the various components’.\textsuperscript{208} This is also applicable to 2000-2009 designs for the walled area west of the house, enclosed by walls which closely match the seventeenth-century forecourt. This is divided into garden rooms, a swimming pool, new conservatory, gatehouse and orangery (figure 76). ‘A clean sweep’ removed many nineteenth-century outbuildings.\textsuperscript{210}

\textsuperscript{208} J. Bettley, \textit{Suffolk}, p.532.
\textsuperscript{210} SC, 1/06/2017
Architectural unity exists between the rendered, pinnacled house, new gate lodge and orangery, the historic and new gateways in brick, stone and render and the historic and new red brick crenellated walls with coping in both brick and stone (figure 78). New pinnacles are made of reconstituted stone, new walls of reclaimed nineteenth-century Suffolk red brick, and York stone paving is reclaimed. The new garden spaces were generated by the buildings and architectural detail, using symmetry and classical proportions, echoed by architectural planting. Topiary, tightly clipped hedging and parterres throughout reference original Tudor and Stuart formal gardens.

Forecourt.

The west gardens and house extension overlay and replace the former pleasure gardens and nineteenth-century outbuildings, but original walls still enclose the north west and west of the forecourt, now bounded south by the house (figures 69, 70 & 76). The central area is made symmetrical by yew hedges. Planted bowls introduce colour. The western section contains a

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211 SC, 1/06/2017
212 ibid.
213 RB, 15/12/2016
parterre octagon, echoing the octagonal entrance pilasters, centred on the new service entrance, planted with nine topiarised hollies. An alley of yews divides the two sections, centred on a vista from the house and a spherical glass water sculpture set in a small octagonal parterre.

A new gateway leads west from the forecourt into a new cobbled service courtyard entered by a large, arched, vaulted gateway. The stables and garages are at a slight angle to the house, with paths in the cobbles carrying the eye to pinnacles on the orangery to offset this.\textsuperscript{215} These lines generated small courtyards either side of the orangery with informal planting designed by Xa Tollemache of Helmingham Hall creating intimate seating areas on the stone paving that continues from paths in the main orangery garden and cloister garden.

Orangery Garden.

The orangery itself was designed in 2:1 proportions as ‘a genuine orangery’ with cast iron radiators, ventilation and a dry-jointed self-draining floor (figure 78).\textsuperscript{216} Atop the south-facing slope a terrace allows the required extensive views. Relating axially to the orangery façade, the lower orangery garden is on a lower tier and conceals the swimming pool beyond.

\textsuperscript{215} Rodney Black, 15/12/2016
\textsuperscript{216} ibid.
The sunken lawn in front is reached down grass steps and was influenced by Stephen Clark’s visit to Sigiriya’s sunken garden in Sri Lanka. He ‘eased the paths [originally along axes aligned with the orangery and poolhouse steps] apart to give a bigger space’ for entertaining. The seven Holm Oak lollipops and three yew ‘bumps’ either side follow his rule of planting in multiples of 3, 7 or sometimes 5.

Xa Tollemache designed the ‘Gothic beds’ to either side in c. 2009. They comprise four rectangular, clipped box parterres picked out with pyramidal topiary with variations of box balls, lavender, aliums, Verbena bonariensis and Rosa ‘Munstead Wood,’ which replaced ‘Tuscan Superb’ (figure 79).
Figure 78. Gothic Bed, showing new walls with varied coping and the new gatehouse beyond. 2017.

Cloister Garden

Figure 79. Cloister garden with Gothic Bed in foreground. 2017.
The northeastern gothic bed also bounds this cloister-like area, with planting designed by Xa Tollemache (figure 79). Hydrangea petiolaris climbs the north-facing wall in which windows of Gothic arches, and windowed ‘doors’ allow estuary views (figure 80). Lavender, scented roses, wisteria and jasmine climb the south-facing wall opposite and between these walls and rows of three yew cones run stone paths, from a paved area with planters outside the family room to the gardens beyond.

Figure 80. Cloister garden. 2017

The Walled Garden.

In 2009 the Clarks commissioned a design from Tom Stuart Smith for the walled garden, inspired by his award-winning RHS Chelsea gardens. The resulting naturalistic yet structured garden is a horticultural highlight, seemingly discrete but with underlying thematic complexity referencing the estate.

In 2008 the Clarks had commissioned designs from Andy Sturgeon *Walled Garden at Crowe Hall* which were not implemented. Andy Sturgeon’s brief had been to:-

- Create a space with tangibly different character from existing completed gardens, yet which can sit comfortably within the context of the overall garden and house.

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219 ibid.
Retain formality using hard landscaping rather than topiary, which tends to dominate elsewhere.

Use planting to create intimacy and atmosphere and soften the overall feel of the garden.

Incorporate areas for sitting/relaxing making it a destination.

Explore the introduction of water in a bold way, combining with seating areas, to define separate spaces within the garden.

Capitalise on the level changes to create different routes around and through the garden.

Consider the introduction of sculpture as focal points.

Introduce exuberant planting to contrast with the structure and formality of the garden and to bring a real heart and soul to the place. 221

Tom Stuart Smith’s design fits this brief, employing modern design and planting within the parameters of historically referenced walls and pinnacles which enclose it, assymmetrically, on three sides. A yew hedge encloses the fourth. The 2009 proposals show strong axes and the garden exploiting the topography by division into three distinct but interrelated terraces. 222 Planting took place in April 2011. The gardeners split, propagate and regenerate plantings, respecting original designs except where plants have floundered, but it requires more maintenance than other garden areas.

The garden was intended to be about nature, not people, with a multi-layered, thematic progression ‘exploring the relationship between prospect and refuge’ from woodland inspired planting in the upper, north section, through open meadow planting to the silver-leafed grove of the south terrace ‘that represents a meeting of the two’. 223

Water was an intended theme. Fountains in the north garden representing the garden’s life-giving woodland springs and streams and for the south garden a stone well-head, central to medieval cloisters and possibly referencing the existing cloister garden, were not introduced. 224

The upper terrace provides an internal viewing terrace. Mature trees visible over the walls lend an established feel. Cloud-clipped hornbeam reference Crowe Hall woodland, and the walls

221 Ibid.
222 Tom Stuart Smith, Jem Hanbury, Crowe Hall Garden Proposal. 2009.
223 Ibid.
224 Ibid.
are clad with climbers including scented *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, *Wisteria sinensis* and *Hydrangea petiolaris* (figures 81-3). Loose underplanting softens the grid of stone paths.

Figure 81. Upper terrace plant list. 2011.
Figure 82. Upper Terrace Planting guide 2011.
Figure 83. Middle and upper terraces. 2017.
The middle and largest terrace reflects Tom Stuart Smith’s theory of ‘supernormal gardening’, employing naturalistic planting that evokes “a sense of the confusingly semi-familiar” promoting an emotional, almost primal, reaction to the feel of nature. Seemingly random paths go through plants mulched in gravel obliging the visitor to engage and decide a route and the style references the parkland’s flower-meadows. Repeat planting of key plants such as *Rosa mutabilis*, *Rosa Glauca*, *Amsonia salicifolia*, and *Iris sibirica* Papillon give cohesion, without overall colour theming (figures 83-6). Shrubs and *Romneya coulteri* soften the walls in summer. Clipped evergreen balls echo topiary elsewhere and provide formal counterpoint and winter structure, as does the pool’s sharp lines. The central 7.9 metre square reflection pool could signify the estuary beyond the walls and puts water ‘at the heart of the garden’ in a ‘reflective space’ (figure 84).

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226 Tom Stuart Smith, Proposal - 2009
Figure 85. Middle terrace, planting guide. 2011.
The sunken south terrace is connected by steps and often viewed from above. Conceived as a ‘quietly convivial space’, a balance between ‘the architectural and the natural’, ‘the enclosed and the open.’ The *Olea europaea* grove underplanted with predominantly silver-leafed plants

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contrast well with darker foliage in adjacent gardens (figures 87-9).

Figure 87. South terrace. 2017.

Figure 88. South terrace planting plan. 2011.
The Lower Orangery Garden.

This connects surrounding gardens to the swimming pool down two staircases continuing the double axis ‘generated by quatrefoil niches on the orangery.’ Two allees of seven pleached hornbeam underplanted with hornbeam along these axes divide the garden into three areas ending in terraces on the pool house roofs, where weight issues contribute to complexity. No proposal has been executed and it is ‘an unresolved area’.

Rodney Black suggested formal Elizabethan style parterres. A 2009 outline proposal by Tom Stuart Smith suggested simple topiary, a lead tank and silverleafed plants providing continuity from the walled garden.
Cleve West’s 2012 criticism of the existing layout was that the hornbeam led you to the pool without appreciating the space you traverse.\textsuperscript{231} His solution included a boules court, walled gravel garden, pollarded London Plane trees, and a water feature doubling as seating (figures 90 & 91). Harnessing the panorama, a telescope on ‘a raised stone viewing platform’ was proposed, flanked by stone seating.\textsuperscript{232} Reclaimed cobble paths would ‘bring interest and focus without impeding the view or movement through it.’\textsuperscript{233}

\textsuperscript{231} Cleve West, Crowe Hall: Outline Plan, 2012
\textsuperscript{232} ibid.
\textsuperscript{233} ibid
Figure 90. Cleve West, sketch proposal for lower orangery garden. 2012.
Figure 91. Proposal for Lower orangery garden. Cleve West, 2012.
The Pool Area

Designed by Rodney Black, this area is defined by walls and the orangery axes. The poolhouse and changing-rooms either side architecturally echo the orangery and are ‘answered’ by a belvedere overlooking the parkland (figure 92). Box-edged and topiary-filled borders contrast with white stone. An east entrance is marked in the lawns by a box-ball allee.

Figure 92. Pool with belvedere. 2017.

The Productive Gardens.

The sunken greenhouse is approached from the walled garden by an allee, which divides to lead to the tractor yard, and kitchen and cutting gardens.

Rodney Black designed it along historical lines. Built of reclaimed local brick, with a superstructure by Alitex, it has under-grille heating, automatic sunscreens and opening vents. It is skirted by box parterres with seasonal plantings and a wisteria-clad metal pergola designed by Xavier Cooper.
Robert McCart contributed to the 2001 layout inside the walled kitchen garden with box edges, espalier fruit trees and vegetables. The walled orchard also houses poultry, and a neighbouring wall cants round a mature Horse Chestnut.

The South Lawns.

Rodney Black designed box-edged borders with topiary cones and balls south of the ‘cloister’ walls and further parterres beyond the bay window.

New levels below the house overlay earlier grass terracing including a croquet lawn and an Edwardian rose parterre (figures 93 &4).\textsuperscript{234}

Figure 93. The south lawns, c. late 19th century

\textsuperscript{234} 1844 Tithe apportionment.
Figure 94. Pre-1993. The south lawns, showing rose garden parterre.

Since c.2001 grassed steps have led from tiered grass terraces to a ‘marquee’ lawn extending to park fencing. Small platforms in the south east corner were designed by Rodney Black, intended for lavender parterres and a box crow pattern (figure 95). His intention was to create picturesque ‘three distances,’ with an interesting foreground to the view from the house with the ponds as the middle ground and the estuary beyond.\textsuperscript{235} Removed in 2017, they were simplified, roughly in line with Tom Stuart Smith’s 2009 proposal (figure 96).

\textsuperscript{235} RB, 15/12/2016.
Figure 95. Existing levels, south lawns, 2009.

Figure 96. Tom Stuart Smith's south lawn proposal. 2009.

Parkland

The Landscape Tradition was partially embraced at Crowe Hall before the twentieth century, and extensively revived by the Clarks (figure 97).
Figure 97. Parkland in 2016.
Hodkinson's 1763 map (figure) depicts trees at the approach, east and south-east of Crowe Hall.236

Figure 98. Detail of Hodkinson's 1783 map, showing trees at Crowe Hall.

The OS Unions series map (1803-1838) and the 1884 OS 1st edition map also shows parkland south of the house.237 Johnson’s 1825 survey depicted this area as fields. High-grade arable farmland immediately adjacent to the estuary was not depicted as parkland on historic maps. TLP masterplan proposals extended parkland to the river, adding groups of large maturing specimen trees ‘arranged to allow vistas from the Hall and gardens across the park and to the Stour’ and were largely implemented from 1998-2000, with a riverbank walk (figure 99).238 ‘Dry Oak Woodland’ was also planted, as ‘Eastern Parkland’ to give a continuum intersected by woodland and ponds in the valley (figure 100).239 The southern parkland was sown with wildflower mixes intersected by mown paths, and a viewing mound created further east using topsoil removed during conversion.240

Parkland was also created either side of the northern approach, with timber rail fencing protecting trees, as all parkland is grazed by rare breed sheep and hay cut (figure 100).241 An

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236 1783, Joseph Hodkinson, map of The County of Suffolk. IRO, MC 4.20;  
238 TLP, Review of Parkland,  
239 ibid; Stephen Clark,1/06/2017  
240 Stephen Clark,1/06/2017  
241 TLP, 1997 Masterplan.
avenue of limes borders the west, service, entrance, paddocks and manege and further woodland screening at the approach was planted, to complete the intended ‘feel’ of a parkland estate.²⁴²

Figure 99. 1997 TLP parkland proposals.

²⁴² Ibid.
Figure 100. 2007 Estate Map showing parkland areas.
Ponds and Woodland

‘Two large ponds, stocked with Carp and other fish’ were listed in 1821, possibly originating as medieval stew ponds.\textsuperscript{243} Abundant springs feed a stream and ‘a series of tiered ornamental ponds,’ proposed by the 1997 TLP masterplan, was created by enlarging the existing pond, re-excavating the silted pond and adding another larger pond with a weir and stepping stones between.\textsuperscript{244} These ponds are highly significant in the landscaping, and combined with estuary views dictated the design of windows in the 2003 extension.\textsuperscript{245} In 2017 Stephen Clark, with designs and assistance from Timothy Carless, created a staircase of pools of increasing size from the stream, introducing the sound of water and culminating in the central ponds, whose layout he changed (figure 101).\textsuperscript{246} With an increasingly confident drive he also symbolised the ponds’ connection with the estuary by creating a delta at the mouth of the stream, digging channels in the grass intended to mirror the shape of saltmarsh when seen from above.\textsuperscript{247}

\textsuperscript{243} 1821 Sales catalogue.
\textsuperscript{244} Until 1993 a nineteenth-century hydraulic ram supplied spring water for the house; TLP, 1997 Masterplan.
\textsuperscript{245} Rodney Black, 15/12/2016.
\textsuperscript{246} Stephen Clark, 1/06/2017.
\textsuperscript{247} Stephen Clark, 19/08/2017
Figure 101. Timothy plan for pond staircase, 2017.
TLP’s proposed wild garden was created around the north pond (figure 102). The ponds supply irrigation water, and are bordered by fertile alluvial soil which facilitates tree establishment. Stephen Clark bought a range of semi-mature specimen trees with the intention of creating a woodland walk approached from the ‘drift,’ around the ponds and into the parkland. In 2010 Tom Hoblyn helped lay out and plant these, and proposed division into ‘geographical areas’ of American, English and Japanese trees now within the arboretum. He designed a plan, mostly implemented, with additional varieties of younger trees, such as Acer palmatum, ‘Bloodgood.’

Further discussions included a pondside Japanese Tea House and boardwalk.

Final decisions on the implementation of landscape designs are of necessity the owners’ according to their taste, and financial and maintenance considerations. Rarely does a designer have a free hand.

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248 TLP, 1997 Masterplan
249 Stephen Clark, 5/05/2017.
250 Ibid.
251 Pers. Comm, Tom Hoblyn. 24/08/2017; Tom Hoblyn 2010 designs for Crowe Hall.
252 Ibid.
EVALUATION

This study established a chronology of the gardens and designed landscapes at Crowe and Stutton Halls. These incorporate and overlay their sixteenth- and seventeenth-century predecessors, whose character has been surmised from remaining evidence. This primarily comprised walled forecourts, vestigial viewing platforms, axiality, remaining avenues and early nineteenth-century surveys and maps. These implied that surrounding landscapes were designed integrally with the Renaissance Halls themselves. Complex plasterwork botanical motifs, the gateway and sundial at Stutton Hall suggest the Halls’ gardens were equally sophisticated. Income to fund their creation came partially from advantageous marriages, land and property, but sources from textiles and trade are unproven.

Despite low rainfall, favourable local conditions for agriculture, the coastal location and connectivity with northern Europe were significant in creating wealth locally. The parallel influx of textile, brick-making and garden technology with migrants from the Low Countries directly or indirectly influenced the development of the gardens and garden structures.

The estuary, and the aspect and topography of the riverside sites influenced the orientation and design of the Renaissance Halls, gardens and landscapes for aesthetic and practical reasons. The significance of the river for transport of people gradually diminished, and the estates became isolated by road. Broad economic, agricultural and social reasons for the subsequent decline of the estates in the eighteenth century were complex and interwoven, and detailed analysis proved beyond the scope of this study.

Fragmented inheritance and subsequent reduction in wealth were significant factors in reducing Stutton Hall to the status of farmhouse and the tenanting, albeit ‘genteel,’ of Crowe Hall, during which phases capital expenditure on landscaping was unlikely. This left Renaissance constructions standing until nineteenth-century interest in historic properties, and increasingly in health and coastal leisure, saw renovation and investment in landscapes of both estates.

Major phases of garden development correspond to the halls becoming the main residence of a committed new owner with sufficient income independent of the estates, often associated with agricultural rents, property, trade or finance, to pursue their vision. Historical referencing in landscape styles and garden structures, from Renaissance use of crenellations to the continued adoption of eighteenth-century style landscaped parkland, has continued to reinforce the historic
origin of the Halls and by association that of the owners’ families. From the 1500s to 2017, gardens, garden structures or parkland created around the newly acquired or modified halls have enhanced and reflected the status of the owner, using contemporary designs or historical models. Contemporary garden designers have contributed significant enhancements to the design of Crowe Hall parkland, ponds, woodland and arboretum and to areas within Rodney Black’s distinctive formal architectural structures. This is ongoing, and the owners’ preferences and practical considerations ultimately decide what is implemented. Over time the river landscape has become more significant for aesthetic rather than practical considerations in the overall design and choice of site.
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