

**Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust
Walled Kitchen Garden Register**

Name of House:	Rothley Temple (now known as Rothley Court Hotel)			
Address:	Westfield Lane Rothley, Leicestershire LE7 7LG			
Ownership:	Private	Public	Institutional	Other: Commercial
Grid reference: SK 576123		Map No: Explorer 246		
Official Designations	Designation: Historic England	Reference: 1278606 1230470	Grade: I – Hotel and Chapel II – Lodge, Turret, Gate Piers and Gates	
Date original WKG created:	Between 1782 and 1785 (according to Thomas Babington's Account Book)			
<p>Other key dates in development:</p> <p>1086 – William of Normandy recorded in the Domesday survey as Lord of the Manor and Soke of Rothley.</p> <p>1231 – Henry III made a gift of his rights to the Knights Templar who set up a regional Preceptory at Rothley.</p> <p>1312 – The Order of the Knights Templar was suppressed and the Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem were granted the Manor and Soke, which they retained until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1540.</p> <p>1529 – A lease was granted to Humphrey Babington, who was also a Hospitaller Knight.</p> <p>1565 – The Manor continued to be leased by the Babington's until 1565, when it was purchased by them and the buildings were developed into a family home.</p> <p>1565-1845 – The Babington family lived at Rothley for many generations.</p> <p>1776 – Thomas Babington (the last Babington owner) inherited the Estate on the death of his father.</p> <p>1782 – William Emesⁱ produced a plan for the Estate, which included the walled kitchen garden</p> <p>1819 – A survey plan of the estate was produced, showing that some of Emes' proposals had been implemented.</p>				

<p>1837 – Thomas Babington died.</p> <p>1842 – Babington’s executors agreed the sale of the estate to Sir James Parker, Vice-Chancellor of England and Babington’s son in law.</p> <p>1852 – On the death of Sir James, the estate passed to his son, Harry Rainy Parker. The manor house was occupied by tenants.</p> <p>1893 – The house and grounds were put up for sale: The description in the sale catalogue described: “Pleasure grounds, Stone-walled Kitchen Garden, Orchard and Lawns, inexpensive to maintain, two men being sufficient” (Sale particulars: <i>Messrs Hampson & Sons – Rothley Temple Estate – 1892</i>)</p> <p>1894 – The house and grounds were sold to Frederick Merttens, a German émigré and successful Manchester businessman. He developed both the house and the grounds, creating a new garden front, a new wing, gate lodge, turret, piers and gates. However, in 1902, Merttens was advised to move abroad for his health and work on the house ceased.</p> <p>1935 – Merttens died.</p> <p>1939-1945 Rothley Temple was used by the Home Guard.</p> <p>1957 -1959. Clive Wormleighton, owner of Mallory Park Racing Circuit and a member of the modern order of Knights Templar, purchased Rothley temple in 1957 and opened it as an hotel in 1959. The name was changed to Rothley Court.</p> <p>It has remained as a hotel since that date.</p>	
Size and brief description:	0.818 acres according to 1883 OS map. A slightly skewed and elongated rectangle (a trapezoidal shape) with the long sides (and the north wall) running parallel with the main road. The orientation is south-south-east and it is situated to the north west of the house.

Current Use: Derelict	
Features: further information and current condition:	
Walls, doors, gates	<p>The walls are constructed from a mixture of brick and stone (the stone is local Mountsorrel granite). The brickwork is partly rendered on the exterior of the east facing wall. The render is crumbling. There are considerable variations in the height of the walls, with the highest being the north wall. There is a decorative turret in this wall and the stone coping is laid to resemble a castellated pattern.</p> <p>There are no obvious entrance gates and only one point of access towards the east end of the south wall. Babington’s account book makes reference to ”making a door place in the old back wall”</p>
Glasshouses	The 1883 map shows one greenhouse on the north wall – towards the NE corner and adjacent to a permanent structure such as a potting shed.

	<p>The revised 1902 map shows a large greenhouse on the east (west facing) wall and this is believed to be the existing span greenhouse. It must therefore have been installed at the time that Frederick Merttens was carrying out improvements to the property.</p> <p>It measures 21 metres x 6.15 metres and is divided into four sections. The top section has lost nearly all its glass and the entire structure is in a derelict state. It was not possible to access the interior though the winding gear for the window lights and the pipework are visible from the outside. It was not possible to see a manufacturer's name plaque.</p> <p>The 1902 map also shows a smaller greenhouse on the north wall but there is no trace of this.</p> <p>This same configuration is on the 1927 map.</p>
Frames	The 1883 map shows possible cold frames on the west-facing wall. The 1902 map shows possible cold frames in the corner of the north wall. No evidence of any frames remains.
Pits	No evidence
Hotwalls/furnaces	No evidence
Heating pipes/boilers etc.	The boiler house is at the north end of the glasshouse, on the east wall. There is a chimney but it was not possible to access it to inspect further.
Backsheds, workrooms, stores	There is a possible potting shed adjacent to the boiler house in the north-east corner, but, again, it was not possible to access this.
Gardener's house, cottages, bothies	The 1901 Census lists two gardeners, father and son, living in the Gardener's Cottage and another gardener in the Groom's cottage. However, it is not now possible to know which cottage was for the gardener.
Wells, ponds, tanks, towers	Thomas Babington's account book lists "making the well" but it has not been possible to locate this. There is a well elsewhere in the grounds, so it may refer to this.
Planting	<p>The William Emes plan shows the layout of the garden with a perimeter path and divided into two sections with a central path running north south. On the survey plan of 1819, the perimeter path remains and the beds are divided into four sections, with the paths crossing in the middle. Subsequent OS maps do not show the layout.</p> <p>The only surviving planting is a number of fruit trees, some of which were originally trained as espalier trees. Due to the state of the garden, it was not possible to look at these more closely.</p>
Other key features	None

Any other information:	None	
Date site visited	25 th August 2017 (Also earlier in 2011 for research in connection with the UK Database of Parks and Gardens)	
References:	<p>OS Maps 25" = 1 mile XXV.6 1st edition 1883, revised 1902 and 1927 (All accessed from the National Library of Scotland website: (www.nls.uk))</p> <p>Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Record Office (LLRO):</p> <p>Sale Particulars for Rothley Temple: Hampton & Sons: For sale by Auction on 25th October 1892 Ref: M620</p> <p>Plan of the Demense Lands, the seat of Thomas Babington, by William Emes – 1792 - Ref ID 38/2</p> <p>Plan of the Site of Rothley Temple and some land around Rothley belonging to Thomas Babington – 23rd April 1819 – Ref ID/38/5</p> <p>Thomas Babington Account Book – Ref 2D 31/385</p>	
Researched by:	Sarah Bailey, Sue Blaxland, Karen Gimson	
Record Compiled by:	Sarah Bailey, Sue Blaxland, Karen Gimson	Date: 12 th October 2017

Garden photographed in 2011



**Appendix:
 Transcript of Entries from Thomas Babington's Account Book relating
 to the "New Kitchen Garden"**

1782	Digging and carrying mould	£0 13s 7d
1783	Men grubbing up Trees and digging there	£2 11s 1d
	Setting down fence there (the whole expense) with cleaving the wood. Worth of wood Digging 25 espalier apple and pear trees	£2 6s 0d £3 0s 0d 15s 0d. £0 18s 0d.
1784	Jo Ward for carriage of manure Making door place in old back wall	£0 7s 6d. £0 12s 7d
1785	Carriage by Hudsons a tonne of stone for the walls	£5 0s 0d.
	Expense of sunk fence set.....the kitchen gardens and of carrying away the bad earth.....	
	Total expenditure	£26 14s 1½d

The notebook which contains these accounts appears to be cross-referenced to another account book (which has not survived). The page numbers in the main account book are listed.

The notebook has a marbled pattern on the cover and is about the size of an old-fashioned school exercise book. All the writing is in Thomas Babington's own hand. At the back of the book are extracts which he has copied, together with remarks, from Gibbons History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (published between 1776-1789)

ⁱ William Emes was a landscape designer and gardener active from the mid-18th to the early-19th century. He was noted particularly for his laying out of water and practiced largely in the English Midlands and in Wales. His work is similar in style to that of Capability Brown.