

Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust
Walled Kitchen Garden Register

Name of House:	East Norton Hall			
Address:	Uppingham Road East Norton Leicestershire LE7 9XD			
Ownership:	<u>Private</u>	Public	Institutional	Other
Grid reference: SP 783005		Map Nos: Explorer 233 Leicester & Hinckley O/S Map First Edition 1886 O/S Map Second Edition 1904		
Official Designations	Designation: English Heritage Listed Building	Reference: East Norton Hall 190785	Grade: II	
Date original WKG created:	Post 1871			
Other key dates in development: 1674 original house constructed. c.1871 house rebuilt partially on the old foundations. The walled garden was probably built at around this time. 1886 the first documentary evidence of the walled garden on the <u>O/S Map</u>. 1927/8 the Messenger greenhouse was constructed in the north west corner of the walled garden. Late 1980s a fenced riding surface was installed in the walled garden and was surrounded by a post & railed grassed paddock. Currently no other records known.				
Size and brief description:	0.668 acre The 1886 <u>O/S Map</u> shows East Norton 'Manor House' located adjacent to buildings forming two yards to the north east. These yard buildings form the west wall of the walled garden and there is one large entrance from the northern courtyard into the garden. An orchard is shown to the north of the walled garden. The shape of the kitchen garden was and remains almost a rectangle; the two northern corners are cut off and opposite walls are not quite parallel. The land slopes to the north west.			

	Today a hedge forms the southern boundary of the garden (we found no evidence that there had been a wall here). Currently there are additional entries into the garden not indicated on the 1886 <u>O/S Map</u> .
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Current Use: Mainly grass with cultivated beds – see below.	
Features: further information and current condition:	
Walls, doors, gates	Today the garden perimeter is composed of the walls of yard buildings and stables to the west; red brick Sussex Bond walls to north and east and a holly hedge to the south. The wall height varies from c. 15 feet in the north west corner down to approximately 7 feet 10 inches in the south west corner. There are four entries to the garden: one from the stable yard; one now bricked up from the north yard; wooden gates in the north and east walls; and steps at the end of the holly hedge – which possibly once extended across the south end.
Glasshouses	We found no evidence of original greenhouses. A Messenger greenhouse built between 1927 and 1928 survives sited next to the north wall and built on the instructions of Miss Heycock, sister of the owner at the time. Miss Heycock wrote to Messenger between November 1927 and May 1928 negotiating the price and ordering the greenhouse and its construction. See appendix. In brief Miss Heycock specified: ‘lean to’ and $\frac{3}{4}$ span - to be built by a wall’. She eventually accepted the size at: ‘20ft by 10ft at a cost of £65-0-0’. Concern for the high price led to the owner not requiring any ‘wood staging for the flowers’. The colour scheme chosen by the owner for the commissioned greenhouse was as follows: ‘I should like all the woodwork inside and out to be white or pale cream. The ironwork <u>inside</u> to be a <u>light</u> blue and the outside ironwork can be the colour it is at present’. The greenhouse has been faithfully restored and painted white by the present owners and the original ventilation system installed by Messenger is still in use.
Frames	Today there are two raised beds located between the disused gateway and the greenhouse. These were built on the foundations of six cold frames - still visible.
Heating pipes/boilers etc.	Letters to Messenger from Miss Heycock included a request for the prices of the fittings including ‘hot water pipes etc.’ and ‘clear directions about the brickwork – if any – required for the boiler or connection with the present chimney’. Miss Heycock

	accepted the estimate of 'heating apparatus fixed and complete for a further sum of £15-0-0'. We have not been able to identify any heating heating pipes, boilers etc.	
Backsheds, workrooms, stores	We have not ascertained the original functions of all the yard buildings, but the stable yard is still in use with all the facilities of a late Victorian establishment – somewhat modernised.	
Gardener's house, cottages, bothies	The gardener's cottage in the north yard was extended in the late 1980s and subsequently all the livestock housing and other buildings in the yard were incorporated in a new residence. Three original windows overlook the kitchen garden.	
Wells, ponds, tanks, towers	The 1886 <u>O/S Map</u> shows a well to the north west (of which evidence survives today) and a pump just outside the north wall (still extant) and the current owner mentioned other disused water tanks within the grounds of the hall.	
Planting	Earlier planting is not shown in the 1886 <u>O/S Map</u> and does not survive however there is a peripheral path, an old box hedge remaining on three sides of the grassed area, and currently beds for vegetables and soft fruit on the north and east sides.	
Any other information:	We found little documentary evidence but hope other information may be forthcoming in future.	
Date site visited:	October 2013 and 27th May 2015.	
References:	Detailed discussion and help from the owner, October 2013 and May 2015 Letters from Miss Heycock, sister of the owner of East Norton Hall, to Messrs Messenger, Greenhouse makers Nov 1927 – May 1928 O/S Map First Edition 1886 O/S Map Second Edition 1904	
Researched by:	Elizabeth Bacon, Gill Knight; Rowan Roenisch	
Record Compiled by:	Elizabeth Bacon, Gill Knight; Rowan Roenisch	Date: 26th August 2015



1927/8 Messenger greenhouse in N/W corner



Interior of Messenger greenhouse showing parts of the original ventilation system



View of west side of walled garden showing raised beds on the foundations of original cold frames and greenhouse. The bricked up wall into the old farmyard can be seen on the left.



East wall with wooden gate showing old box hedge



Pump outside wooden gate in
north wall over old soft water tank



View across the garden towards the west side
Shows the main stable block with hayloft and other stables on the left. The gardener's
cottage is to the right beside the greenhouse

APPENDIX

Transcripts of letters from Miss Heycock, sister of the owner of East Norton Hall to Messrs Messenger, Greenhouse makers Nov 1927 – May 1928

Sept 19th '27

Miss Heycock will be obliged if Messrs Messenger will send her sketches and prices of greenhouses, 'lean to' and $\frac{3}{4}$ span - to be built by a wall – and about 15 – 20 ft in length, also will he please give prices of the same with fittings, hot water pipes etc. complete – and prices for the greenhouse only.

Does he send his own workmen to erect the building? And at what cost?

Sept 27th '27

Miss Heycock thanks Messrs Messenger for their estimate. The price seems very high for such a small greenhouse – nearly £100 pounds without the brickwork and floor pavement and 10ft wide is very narrow – could they do the work in a less expensive style and keep the width to 12 ft.

Oct 20th '27

Miss Heycock thanks Messrs Messenger for their estimate for a greenhouse 20ft by 12ft – but was disappointed that the difference in price was only £2.0.0 between that, and the first class workmanship 20ft by 10. Ninety four pounds exclusive of brickwork seems very expensive for such a small lean to greenhouse.

She would much like to have one of their make.

Will they kindly tell her the price of a 2nd class one 20ft by 10ft, and also if they could supply one by Christmas if not earlier. The brickwork could be done here without difficulty.

Oct 31st '27

Miss Heycock finds that Messrs Messenger make so little difference in price between their first and second class greenhouse (only £1) that she has decided to accept their estimate for a lean to greenhouse 20ft by 10ft at £65-0-0.

She considers this very expensive and must depend on the work being thoroughly well carried out in all details for the price they name £65-0-0.

The heating apparatus fixed and complete for a further sum of £15-0-0. Wood staging for the flowers will not be required.

The building of the walls will begin immediately – and Miss Heycock requests that Messrs Messenger will please arrange to have their part of the work done as early in December as possible – and certainly before Christmas as promised in their letter 24th October.

P.S. Will Messrs Messenger say when they can begin erection? It is especially hoped that the work can be finished by December 15th when Mr and Mrs Haycock expect to leave home.

Nov 3rd '27

Miss Heycock returns the plan. It is most unfortunate that Messrs Messenger did not state in their letter that the plan was incomplete as the builder made his estimate from it and is here this morning to begin the work. Will they please send a fully correct one as quickly as possible as the builder cannot waste his time.

Will Messrs Messenger give clear directions about the brickwork – if any – required for the boiler or connection with the present chimney.

Unless the plan can be here on Monday morning by first post will Messrs Messenger send a wire but Miss Heycock much hopes they will arrange to send it.

Nov 12th '27

Miss Heycock will be much obliged if Messrs Messenger will kindly let her know which day their men (will) be here to put up the greenhouse. She is very anxious for it to be finished quickly.

Jan 14th '28

Messrs Messenger
Loughborough

Sirs

Now the weather is better I shall be much obliged if you will send men to finish the greenhouse – I am very anxious it should be completed as soon as possible, and hope your men can come on Tuesday this week.

You will remember it was impossible to glaze it owing to the frost before Christmas and for some time afterwards. I understand the painting is to be done by the glazier. I should like all the woodwork inside and out to be white or pale cream. The ironwork inside to be a light blue and the outside ironwork can be the colour it is at present. The door does not fit well and will not shut. A short length of pipe to connect the down ????? from the gutter along the front with the inside tank is wanted. The man who put up the greenhouse will know the length I think – The boiler and pipes have got rusty. Nothing has come by train yet as your postcard of January 11th led us to expect.

Yours faithfully
(Miss) E.M. Heycock

Feb 16th

Invoice for £82-0-0 was sent by Messrs Messenger

15th May '28

Miss Heycock encloses a cheque for £82-0-0 in payment of Messrs Messenger's account. She could have paid it sooner, but the greenhouse was painted in such bad weather that it was doubtful whether another coat of paint be required. However it appears to be ????? fairly well so far.

As Mr. Heycock pointed out to your workmen the measurements of the site were not quite correct and the work would have been more satisfactory had the floor been higher.