



ULSTER  
ARCHÆOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

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# Survey Report

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Reference: **Survey Report No. 72**

Author: **Randal Scott**

Location:

**Redburn Garden  
Redburn Country Park,  
Holywood, Co. Down**

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In association with:

**Holywood Shared Town**



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Ulster Archaeological Society  
c/o School of Natural and Built Environment  
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Cover illustration: The UAS Team on 26 May 2018 with members of Holywood  
Shared Town and the local community.

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## 1. Summary

### 1.1 Location

A site survey was undertaken at an old Garden, originally part of Redburn House (since demolished) and now located in Redburn Country Park. The Country Park is on the hillside above the town of Holywood. A Care Home has been built on the site once occupied by the House. However, parts of the old stable block and outhouses remain, with the stable wall backing onto the garden. The garden is located on the south shore of Belfast Lough, about 1.25 miles south of the shore line at Holywood. The Irish Grid Reference is J401775. The survey, on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018, was the 3rd in a series of planned surveys undertaken by members of the Ulster Archaeological Society during 2018. Follow-up surveys were carried out by small teams on 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2018 and 12<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2019.



Figure 01: Location map (Ordnance Survey).

## 1.2 The Site

The Garden, as part of Redburn Country Park, is managed by the NI Environment Agency, with DAERA (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs). Various community groups also have an interest in the Park. Robin Masefield, representing Holywood Shared Town, has a particular interest in the old Garden and approached the Ulster Archaeological Society (UAS) to see if a survey of the Garden could be carried out. The Shared Town Group and other volunteers intend to clear the Garden, now badly overgrown, and restore it as far as possible. It is hoped that the UAS survey will assist with the restoration.

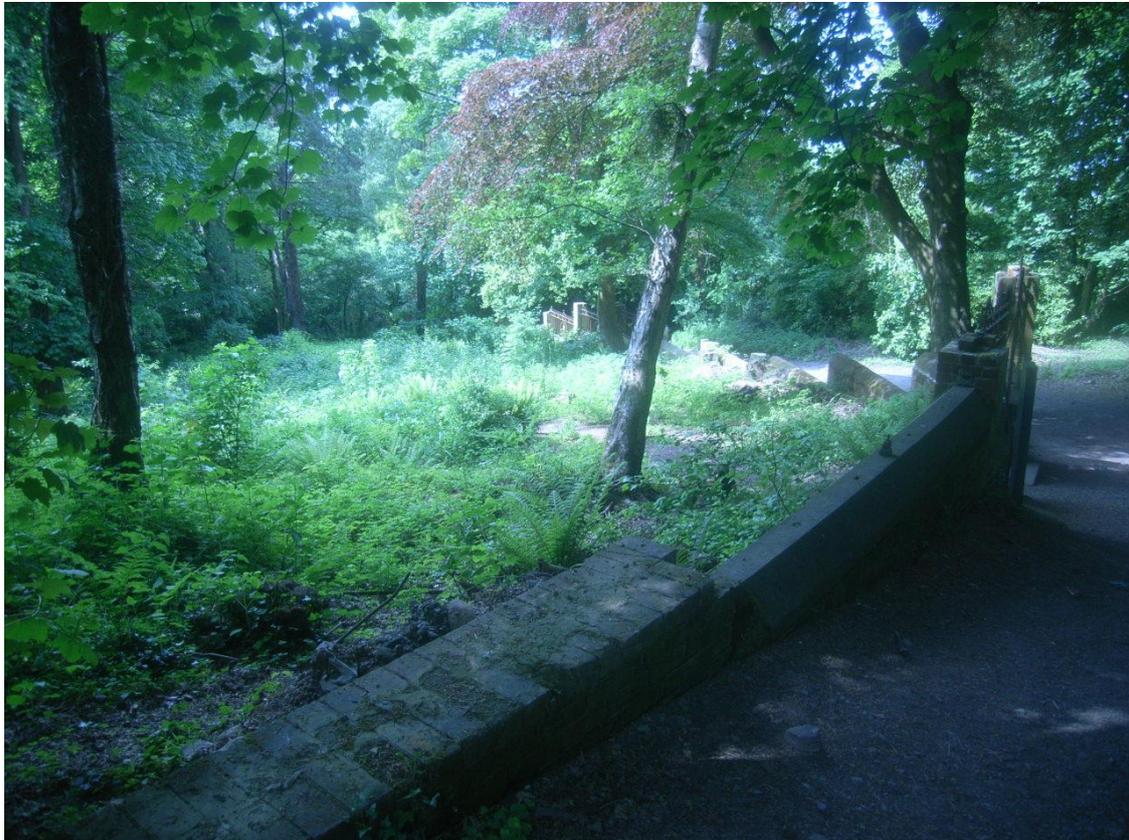


Figure 02. View into Garden, looking west.

## 1.3 Aims

The aims of this survey were to produce accurate plan drawings and a photographic record of the Garden and thus enhance its archaeological record. This information was compiled into a report and copies submitted to Holywood Shared Town and to the archives of the Ulster Archaeological Society.



Figure 03. Survey team in the Garden.

The remains of what is thought to have been an arbour can be seen to the middle-right of the photograph, probably not in its original location.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background

Members of the Ulster Archaeological Society undertook a survey of Redburn Garden on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The survey was initiated in response to a request from Robin Masfield on behalf of Holywood Shared Town, and carried out by Members using survey equipment purchased from a bequest to the Society from the late Dr. Ann Hamlin. Small teams carried out two subsequent surveys, on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 12<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The purpose was to map out features which were previously hidden and had been exposed by a combination of clearance by volunteers (assisted by The Conservation Volunteers) and winter die-back of vegetation. These features included parts of paths, path edging, cobbled areas etc.

### 2.2 Previous archaeological surveys

As far as it is known, there has been no previous archaeological survey at this site.

## 2.3 Documentary Evidence



Figure 04. Griffith Primary Valuation of Ireland – 1862

The Griffith Valuation map of 1862 (see Fig. 04 above) shows a property called “Bess Mount” on the site subsequently occupied by Redburn House.

VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.							
PARISH OF HOLYWOOD.							
No. and Letters of Reference to Map.	Names.		Description of Tenement.	Area.	Rateable Annual Valuation.		Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property.
	Tenants and Occupiers.	Immediate Lessors.			Land.	Buildings.	
	KNOCKNAGONEY— continued.			A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
28	Alexander Gourley.	John Heron.	House, office, and land.	14 3 20	12 0 0	—	12 0 0
	(Bessmount)						
29	α } George Gourley,	James Anderson,	House, office, and land.	27 0 10	35 0 0	28 0 0	63 0 0
30		John Thompson,	Land.	3 0 0	3 10 0	—	3 10 0
	β } John Gourley,	James Anderson,	Gate-lodge.	—	—	3 0 0	3 0 0
	γ } Henry Farrington,	Same,	House.	—	—	1 5 0	1 5 0
	δ } Robert & Co. Down	Same,	House & small garden.	—	—	2 0 0	2 0 0

Figure 05. Griffith Primary Valuation list – 1862

The valuation shows the main buildings rated at £28 annually, and the land at £35. A gate lodge and two other small properties are also included in entry 29. The 1<sup>st</sup> Revision of the Primary Valuation (VAL/12/B/17/2A, 1863 – 1866) shows no change on this property.

Handwritten valuation document on lined paper. The text includes "Redburn", "Robert Dunville", and "John Harrison". Numerical values include 14 3 20, 12 0 0, 225 0 0, 47, 295 0 0, 47 0 0, 60 0 0, 3 0 0, and 3 10 0. A small diagram of a building is visible on the right side.

Figure 06. Primary Valuation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Revision: VAL/12/B/17/2B (1867 – 1878)

Changes seem to have been recorded in 1871, with “Redburn” replacing “Bess Mount” and Robert Dunville becoming the new owner of properties 28, 29 and 30. Subsequent re-valuation increases in 1875 and 1877 reflect the various stages in the building of Redburn House. By 1877 the house appears to be valued at £223 (unclear) and the overall valuation has risen to £295. (Above by communication from Michael Catney, 2018).

These valuations are consistent with the building of the house in around 1866 (Masefield 2017) and are also consistent with the continuing development of the property in that the valuations would have been carried out after completion of the building works. In addition to the house a laundry, dairy and staff accommodation were built. A courtyard and stable block were added in 1879 (Masefield 2017).



Figure 07. Early photograph of Garden and Stable Block.

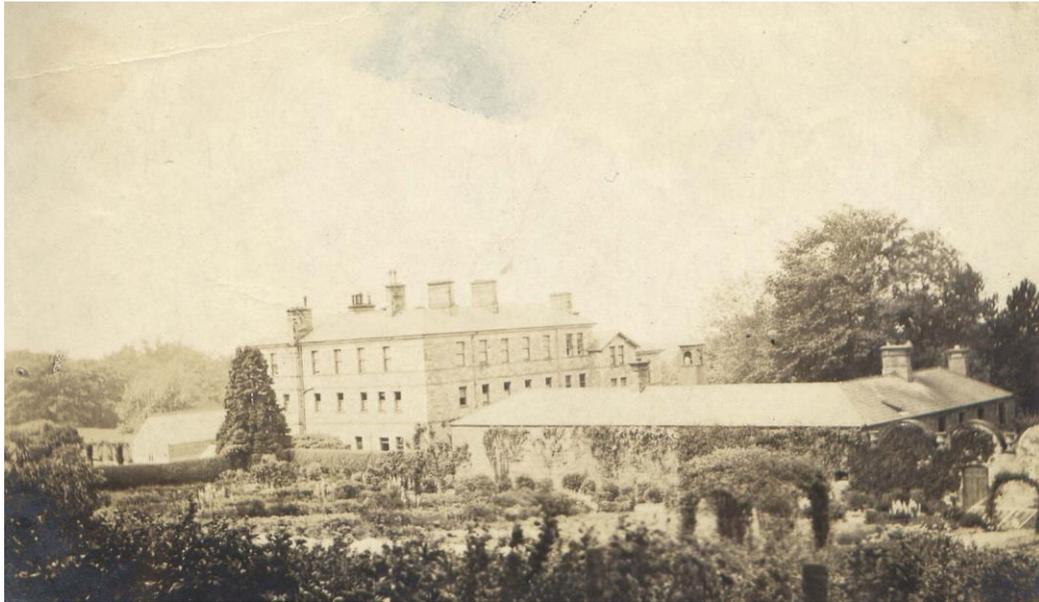


Figure 08. Overview of Garden, House and Stable Block.

Figures 07 and 08 are two early photographs showing the Garden and its position in relation to the House and Stable Block. No exact date could be found but using information given below in 2.4 they would not be earlier than about 1908/1910 – the boundary wall can be clearly seen in Figure 07. The photographs, and much more, can be found at the website [www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html](http://www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html).

#### 2.4 Cartographic Evidence



Figure 09. Redburn Ordnance Survey Map 1904.

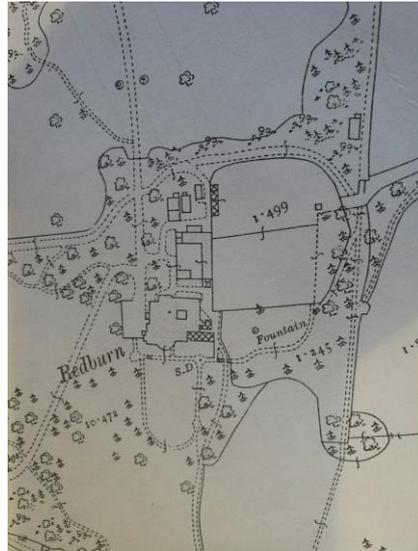


Figure 10. Redburn Ordnance Survey Map 1921.

These two maps show how the Garden was extended (to the north) between 1904 and 1921. The House and Stable Block are clearly visible in both. However, buildings, extending from the north east corner of the Stable Block in an easterly direction and seen in the 1904 Map, have been demolished to accommodate the garden extension. The extension includes a glassed area, seen hatched and north of the Stable Block (cf. hatched conservatory at the south corner of the House). The extension is enclosed by a boundary wall to the north and east. It is clearly seen in the old photograph (Fig. 07) and the northern section is still present today (Fig.02). Bricks used in the wall construction were manufactured by McGladery and Sons and post-date 1905 when press machinery was introduced into the brick-making process (communication George Rutherford 2018). The wall is a low one with a metal fence on top and between pillars. Terence Reeves-Smith (Historic Environment Division) suggested a date of around 1908-1910 for the wall (and Garden extension by implication) when visiting Redburn in April 2018 (communication from Robin Masfield). This date is consistent with the above information.

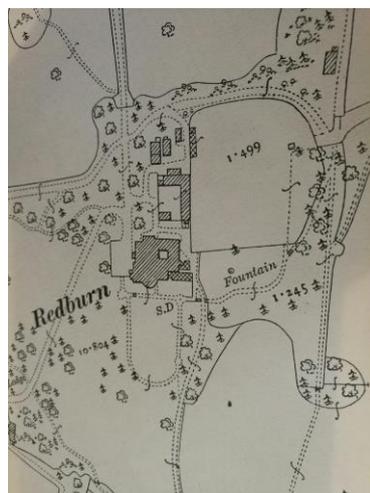


Figure 11. Redburn Ordnance Survey Map 1932.



Figure 12. Redburn Ordnance Survey Map 1938

The 1921 Map depicts a boundary (probably hedge) between the old Garden on its north side and the extension. This appears to have gone by 1932 (Fig. 11). By 1938 the eastern part of the garden, which is on an upward slope, is separated off (shown as 0.320 acres) and appears to be planted with trees/shrubs (Fig. 12).



Figure 13. Redburn Ordnance Survey Map 1957.

By 1957 the Garden boundary is open on the eastern side and the whole area planted out in trees/shrubs (Fig. 13).

## 2.5 Archiving

Copies of this report have been deposited with the National Trust and the Ulster Archaeological Society. A copy was also provided to Holywood Shared Town. All site records have been archived by the National Trust at Rowallane, Saintfield, County Down.

## 2.6 Credits and Acknowledgements

The following members of the Ulster Archaeological Society took part in this survey on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Colin Boyd, Hilary Boyd, Michael Catney, Robin Collins, David Craig, Ian Gillespie, Lee Gordon, Roisin McCaughan, Anne MacDermott, Janna McDonald, Paula Sandford, Randal Scott, Chris Stevenson, George Rutherford, Harry Welsh and June Welsh. Randal Scott led the team. Two follow-up surveys were carried out on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The teams were Colin Boyd, Janna McDonald, Lee Gordon, Paula Sandford, Randal Scott (10<sup>th</sup> Dec) and Colin Boyd, Hilary Boyd, Janna McDonald, Lee Gordon, Paula Sandford, Randal Scott (12<sup>th</sup> Jan). A particular thanks is due to Lee Gordon who produced the site plan drawings. We are also grateful to Robin Masefield who initiated the survey with the Society and who provided useful background material on the day and afterwards. In addition, we were assisted by the valuable recollections of current and former residents, including members of Holywood Men's Shed.

## 3. UAS Survey 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018

### 3.1 Methodology

It was decided that the survey would take the form of the production of plan drawings, accompanied by a photographic survey. This report was compiled using the information obtained from these sources, in addition to background documentary material.

### 3.2 Production of plan drawings

Plan drawings and elevations were completed, using data obtained from the field survey. Measurements were obtained by using the society's *Leica Sprinter 100* electronic measuring device. Sketch plans at 1:500 scale were started on site by recording these measurements on drafting film and backing up the data on a field notebook for subsequent reference. Field plans were later transferred to a computer-based format for printing.

The resultant Redburn Garden Site Plan is shown below (Fig. 14). As mentioned previously, the Garden is now considerably overgrown. Features which were clearly visible are depicted as solid lines in the plan, for example steps, paths where edging and/or paving could be seen. The dotted lines represent paths where only occasional bits of edging were identified and are "joined up" in the plan to suggest a possible line of path.

Photographs of these features were taken and recorded (See 3.3 below).

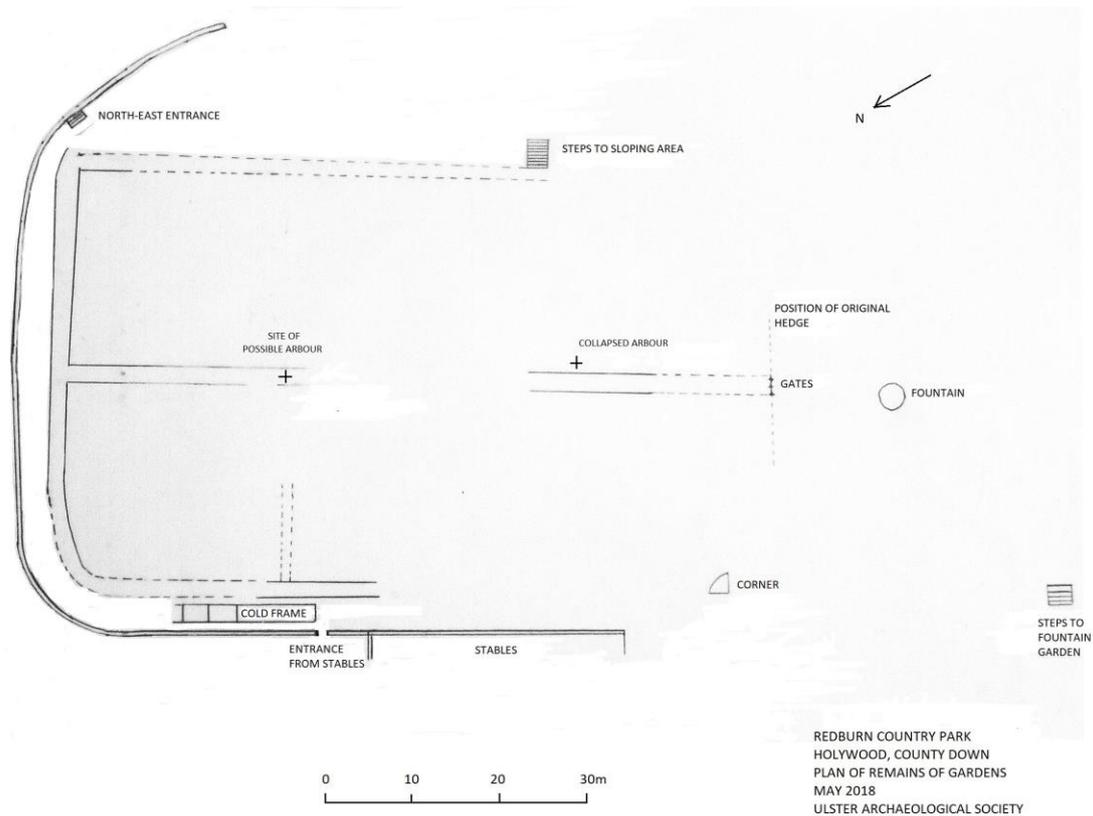


Figure 14. Redburn Garden Site Plan

### 3.3 Photographic archive

A photographic record of the site was taken by using a *Ricoh G600* 8-megapixel digital camera and a photographic record sheet was employed, corresponding to photographs taken during the site survey on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and on subsequent visits. The archive has been compiled in jpeg format and saved to compact disc.

The site was badly overgrown but none-the-less features were identified and uncovered during the survey. These were photographed and are recorded below.



Figure 15. Remains of gate, looking south towards fountain.



Figure 16. Steps leading into upward sloping area, looking east.

There were at least eleven steps. They were 215 cm wide, formed by 26 red bricks on edge. Treads were about 30 cm deep and risers were 11 cm high. These steps lead into a distinctly upwardly sloping part of the garden and are depicted in the site plan (Fig. 14). This part of the Garden, on the east side, can be seen in the Ordnance Survey Map 1938 as a separate, wooded area (Fig. 12).

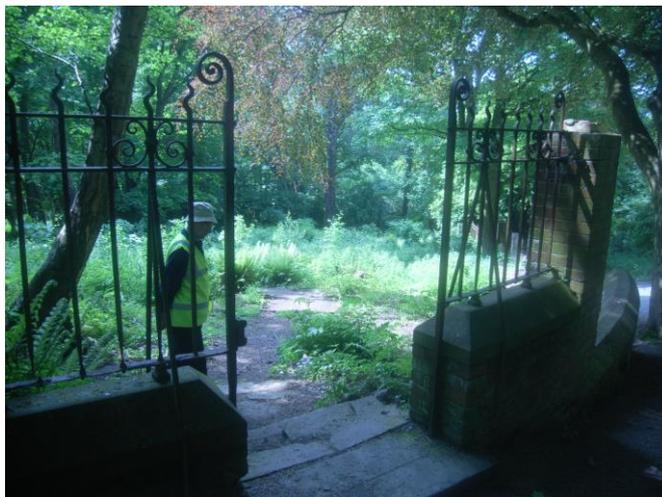


Figure 17. Top entrance at north-east corner of Garden, looking west into Garden.

Steps, leading down into the Garden, are also visible in this photograph.



Figure 18. Cold Frame, looking north.

This Cold Frame is just visible in the old photograph (Fig.7) confirming that it was a low structure, with glass frames resting on the walls. Part of it could have been heated; the “iron box” shown in Fig. 18 above may have been part of a heating system.



Figure 19. Garden Entrance from Stables, looking east.

The small arched doorway into the Garden is visible, with the Stable wall to the right of the photograph.



Figure 20. Corner, uncovered feature, looking east.

This is a brick-edged area, in the shape of a quadrant. It could be at a path corner, and is indicative of the features waiting to be uncovered.



Figure 21. Steps to Fountain Garden, looking east.

These steps would have entered into the Fountain Garden, from around the conservatory at the south-east side of Redburn House (see Fig. 10).



Figure 22. The Fountain, looking west.

The Care Home, built on the previous Redburn House site, can be seen in the background.



Figure 23. Collapsed Arbour, looking north-east.

This photograph shows the remains of a possible Arbour in its present location (see Site Plan Fig. 14 and Fig. 3). A closer examination revealed that most of the Arbour is still there, including the uprights.



Figure 24. Possible Arbour site.

This “white star” is located in the exposed pathway at the point described as “Possible Arbour site” in the Site Plan (Fig.14). The Arbour is clearly visible in the old photographs (see Figs 7 and 8) and appears to be occupying the location shown in the Site Plan.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Redburn House

Redburn House was built by Robert Grimshaw Dunville from around 1866. The property was further developed in subsequent years, cumulating in the addition of a walled courtyard and stable block in 1879 (see 2.3). The House had around 70 rooms and was considered to be the grandest in the area at that time.

Robert Dunville (1838 – 1910) was the third Chairman of the family business, merchants in tea and spirits. The Company started whiskey distilling in 1869. Robert took over as Chairman in 1874 and by 1910 the Royal Irish Distilleries was the world’s largest. Robert’s son John (1866 – 1929) and grandson Robert (1893 – 1931) were the fourth and fifth Chairman of the Company respectively. The Great Depression and Prohibition of alcohol in the USA during the 1930’s, together with no family member available to succeed Robert, spelt the end of the Company. The distillery closed in 1935. A family member, Violet, continued to live at Redburn until her death in 1940. More information about the House and Dunville family can be found at [www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html](http://www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html) and Masefield 2017.

The Air Ministry commandeered Redburn House for the Woman’s Royal Air Force during World War II. After the War the House became derelict and the whole estate was eventually acquired in 1950 by Holywood Urban District Council. The House had been demolished by 1972 and was subsequently replaced, in turn, by the BP Club and Holywood Care Home. The then Ministry of Development took over the estate in 1969. The estate became a Country Park and is currently managed by Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

## 4.2 The Garden

The Garden is overgrown at present but we are fortunate in that early photographs of it exist (see Figs. 7 and 8). The House had a large conservatory attached to it on the south-east corner, visible in Fig. 8. The development and subsequent decline of the Garden can be traced using Ordnance Survey Maps of the period. These Maps and narrative are in section 2.4 and Figs. 9 to 13.

The conservatory opened into a garden area, containing a fountain (see Figs. 7 and 9). A gate, set in a low hedge, led into a rectangular area, probably a kitchen garden for growing flowers, fruit and vegetables. The “kitchen garden” is clearly depicted in the 1904 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 9) and the gate can be seen in the photograph (Fig. 7). The remains of the gate are still in situ (photograph Fig. 15). To the east of the “kitchen garden” there is an upward sloping area, perhaps less formal and with some shrubbery. During the survey steps which would have led up into this area were uncovered (see Fig. 16). The “kitchen garden” was later extended northwards, probably around 1910 (see 2.4 and Figs. 10 and 11). The heyday of this extended garden was probably from 1910 and well into the 1920’s. The photographs (Figs 7 and 8) are most likely from this period. Later, the eastern sloped area appears to have become more wooded (Fig. 12). Finally, when the House was abandoned just after World War II, nature took its course and the entire Garden area reverted to trees and shrubbery (Fig, 13).

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Redburn House Garden is an interesting one in that it dates from late Victorian / Edwardian times and that there are surviving old photographs of the Garden. The House and Garden fell into disuse just after WWII and, at present, only the overgrown Garden and part of the Stable Block remain. There is local interest in clearing the Garden and restoring, at least partially, some of the lost garden infrastructure. The UAS survey, carried out on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and on two follow-up occasions, aimed to produce a record of the Garden including a site plan, history and photographic record.

Volunteer groups have already started to clear the Garden site. Various structures including steps, brick edging to paths etc were recorded and photographed for the Survey Report. The path edging, for example, is indicative of the features still waiting to be discovered. The remains of what is thought to have been an Arbour is of particular interest; it appears that enough survives to enable restoration. The gates near to the Fountain are also worthy of restoration.

The grounds which were part of the former Redburn estate are now managed as a Country Park by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. An at least partially restored Garden, particularly with community involvement, would be an added asset for the Country Park.

**Bibliography**

Masefield, R. 'Redburn Country Park: A Community Guide', *Hollywood Shared Town, June 2017*.

Website on history of the Dunville family. [www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html](http://www.dumville.org/photo-pages/redburn-house.html) refers.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD FORM

Site: Redburn House Garden, Redburn Country Park, Holywood.

Dates: 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018, 12<sup>th</sup> Jan 2019.

Make and model of camera...Ricoh G600 (26<sup>th</sup> May 2018) and Nikon A100.

Frame no	From	Details
IMG 6505		The Survey Team and members of local community
RIMG 0060	E	View into Garden
RIMG 0016	SE	Survey Team in Garden
RIMG 0013	N	Remains of Gate
RIMG 0010	W	Steps to wooded area
RIMG 0061	E	Top entrance at NE corner of Garden
DSCN 0652	S	Cold Frame
RIMG 0055	W	Garden entrance from Stables
IMG 1608	W	Corner of Path
DSCN 0659	W	Steps to Fountain Garden
DSCN 6982	E	Fountain
DSCN 0657	SW	Collapsed Arbour
DSCN 0654	S	Possible Arbour Site