

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

LISTED BUILDING	'Cwrt Herbert', Kilfield Road, Bishopston, Swansea
Grade:-	II
Date of Notification:-	29.09.99
National Grid Reference:-	SS 5867088195
O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-	SS 58 NE
CADW Reference No.:-	22380
C & C of S Reference No.:-	LB:361

Notes:-

Location:-

Approached by a drive off Kilfield Road, the house is set in grounds and faces S towards the sea. Herberts Lodge adjoins to the W.

Belongs to a group of 2 Group:-

Cwrt Herbert and Herberts Lodge.

History:-

The house dates back to the C16 when it was hunting lodge owned by Sir George Herbert, Steward of Gower. By the late C17 it was a substantial farm, first recorded in documents in 1638. From the Herberts, the house and its estate passed to the Earls of Warwick, and then in the C18, to a family of local farmers. In 1829, the property was sold to John James (1772-1850), curate of Bishopston and Rector of Penmaen. He bought the estate as a dowry for his daughters, one of who married Charles Morgan in 1833. The couple rented the house to local farmers, but in 1855 decided to rebuild it, perhaps with the intention of living there. The work was undertaken by a local builder, Walter Richard Thomas, and is shown in a drawing of 1862 as a symmetrical villa of 2 storeys and an attic with a hipped swept roof. The entrance was to the E (S of the current entrance) and it had a 2-window garden front. A central door was added here later. Charles Morgan never lived in the house and it passed to his brother, and then to his youngest son, Frank Arthur Morgan (1844-1908).

Frank Morgan worked in China as deputy head of Imperial Chinese Customs. He remodelled the house in 1885 with the addition of new wings to the S and E. The architect was Henry Hall of London, previously known to the family, but whilst Frank Morgan was keen on the Colonial style, Henry Hall was influenced by Norman Shaw. The house contained elements of both styles: The asymmetry and polygonal bays with timber-framing to the upper storeys (now partially lost) reflect Shaw's influence, but the latter was painted red and orange in Chinese style. Much of the interior arrangement and detail is influenced by Chinese customs. The builder was David Morgan of Swansea, the limestone is thought to have come from nearby Norton quarry and the slates from Portmadog. The house was originally approached from the E, but a new drive was laid out to the N. In 1928, a large W wing was added in place of brew-house and kitchens, but in 1958 was divided into 2 dwellings.

Exterior:-

Asymmetrical 2-storey house of snecked rock-faced limestone under slate roofs with polychrome brick stacks. Entrance front to N and garden front to S. Built around the original mid C19 house, roughly square in plan. The remodelling of 1885 involved the addition of a higher gabled E wing, making an L-shaped plan, and an entrance bay on the N side in the angle between the original house and added wing. The windows are sashes with margin glazing, under slightly cambered heads with stone sills. Flat-roofed 3-window entrance bay with timber-framing to upper storey. The doorway is in the chamfered NE angle and has double panelled doors under an overlight. Further R, in the E wall of the original house is a single sash window to each storey. The N wall of the original house is 3-window, with a late C20 half-lit door offset to the R. Single steep-pitched roof dormer with 2-light casement. The N wall of the E wing has a mock corbelled 1st floor stack.

The E gable end of the E wing has a polygonal conservatory (replaced after the Blitz of 1941), above which the wall is rendered above a moulded corbel table, and with a single window. The gable is timber-framed on another corbel table, and the eaves project on moulded brackets.

The S garden front is of 1885, and is dominated by a large polygonal bay to L, incorporating French doors, and with windows to each face. Rendered to upper storey in place of timber-framing. To the R are 2 further pairs of French doors leading to a veranda supported in wooden columns with glazing above and under a slate roof, which continues round the E gable end to the conservatory. To R of polygonal bay, the upper storey has a plain sash and a large oriel window. A bay of the earlier house survives to L of polygonal bay, beyond which a long 3-window W wing was added in 1928. It is rendered under a hipped slate roof with late C20 fenestration. Polygonal W end with sash windows. To the N, this wing joins the SW angle of the original house in which there is a flat roofed 1-and 2-storey entrance bay containing wide double panelled doors, flanked by small windows. The W side of the original house is not refaced in snecked stone, but detail is C20, including a 2-storey staircase projecting to L. Two original attic dormers with 2-light casement windows are retained.

Interior:-

Access through the house is staggered, following Chinese custom, while many of the interior fittings are of Chinese design or materials. A prominent feature is the coloured glazing to the doors and windows, depicting waterside scenes with swallows or swifts, predominantly in yellow. Panelled doors and fake window shutters have carved bands, each bearing different flowers or leaves. The entrance porch has a floor of pink and grey Chinese stone, with double half-lit doors leading to the R into the hall. To the rear is a cloakroom retaining its original fittings and coloured glass. Encaustic tiles to hall floor are by Carter Edwards of Ruabon. Dog-leg staircase to rear of hall, with Chinese fret balusters, leads to a 3-sided gallery with matching balusters projecting on brackets with pendant finials. Two reception rooms to the front of house. Drawing room to E with recessed archway to S and boarded ceiling. Two pairs of French doors to veranda, bearing the waterside design with birds. The veranda has Carter Edwards floor tiles. Pale marble fireplace in N wall with shouldered head and triple shafts to jambs, the inner order in dark grey marble. In the 2nd reception room which belonged to the mid C19 house, the added polygonal bay has window seats. Projecting fireplace in W wall has angled panels to sides and below mantelpiece, bearing foliage motifs, including Welsh daffodil. Moulded coving and dado rail. The W wall is now the dividing wall with Herbert's Lodge. Modernised kitchen to rear, formerly the pantry and wine cellar. On the 1st floor to the N is a former dry food store, reached by servants' stairs to the W. Half-lit double doors with coloured glazing

prevented servants entering the main house. On the E side of the gallery is a small room formed by screens for the Chinese man-servant of Frank Morgan. The screens are of half-lit round-headed panels, which contain Chinese paper hangings depicting scenes of old age and good fortune. Main bedroom to SE with interconnecting dressing room. Further bedroom to S. Cast iron fireplaces, those of the 1850s in Rococo style.

Listed:-

Listed as a well preserved late C19 house in a unique style which retains evidence of its development from the C16. The Chinese elements are of special interest.

Reference:-

Orrin, Geoffrey, 1982, A History of Bishopston, p. 114-6.
Information from landowner.