

Mawson, Thomas Hayton 1861 - 1933



Thomas Hayton Mawson was born Scorton, Nether Wyersdale, near Lancaster in Lancashire, England, on 5 May 1861. He left school at the age of twelve and worked initially with an uncle in the building trade in Lancaster. When his father died, he moved with his mother to London in 1877 where he obtained employment with John Willis, a landscape gardener and nurseryman.

In 1885 Mawson returned north and joined his two brothers in a nursery business they had started in Windermere. It was during this period that he began designing gardens. Most of the gardens he designed were in the Windermere area. His first commission was Graythwaite Hall at Newby Bridge (1889). He later designed gardens at Langdale Chase in Troutbeck (1890), Heathwaite in Windermere (1899), Moor Crag in Windermere (for C.F.A. Voysey, 1899), Brockhole in Windermere (1900), The Yews in Storrs (1902), Blackwell in Windermere (for M.H. Baillie Scott, 1902), The Corbels in Windermere (1906), Rydal Hall in Ambleside (1909), Wood Hall in Cockermouth (1910), Gatehouse in Eksdale (1914). He also designed gardens elsewhere in Britain, Europe and North America. Mawson expounded his ideas on garden design in his classic work 'The Art and Craft of Garden Making' (London: B.T. Batsford, 1900) which ran to several editions. In 1898-99 he was briefly in partnership with the architect Dan Gibson. In the 1900s Mawson was also briefly in partnership with the architects Charles Edward Mallows (1864-1915) and George Henry Grocock (1863-1938) as Th. Mawson, C.E. Mallows & Grocock.

In addition to his work as a designer of gardens, Mawson also designed garden furniture garden furniture and features for the garden, which were mainly made

by Garden Crafts Ltd.. Several examples of these are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art'. Oak doors, folding gates, a fences, furniture, seats, screens, a trellus, a rose arch and a footbridge designed by Mawson and made by Garden Crafts Ltd. are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1906 (pp.240, 250, 251, 252, 253, 257, 272); an oak door, trelliage, a garden terrace, and a seat designed by Mawson and made by Garden Crafts Ltd. are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1907 (pp.182, 183, 184, 185 186). For 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1908 Mawson wrote a long article, 'The designing of gardens' (pp.iii-x, plus 22-pages of illustrations), which is illustrated with several examples of his work.

For 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1913 he wrote an article, 'The garden as a means of artistic expression' (pp,117-124), in which he examined the role of the garden both in art and as art in its own right. The article is also illustrated with several examples of his work. Photographs showing the garden house at the entrance to the pergola and panel garden at Woolley Hall, near Maidenhead, designed by Mawson are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1915 (pp.96, 97, 98); photographs of Walhampton Park, near Lymington, designed by Mawson are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1916 (pp.49, 50, 51); and photographs of French trained fruit trees at 'Foots Cray Place', Sidcup, the house and gardens at 'Wightwick Manor', Wolverhampton, the entrance to rose walk at 'Wood Hall', Cockermouth, the garden entrance at 'Brackondale', Hest Bank, the garden house at 'Bidston Priory, a bridge at Grasmere, and garden house and terrace at 'Above Beck', Grasmere, designed by Mawson are illustrated in 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' 1917 (pp.55, 56, 57, 58, 59).

From 1900 onwards Mawson became increasingly interested in landscape architecture and town planning. He acted as a consultant on town planning schemes for Athens in Greece; Calgary and Banff in Alberta, Canada; and Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada, and elsewhere. He also served as a consultant for public park schemes in Bolton and Blackpool in Lancashire, England; Hanley and Burslem in Staffordshire, England, and elsewhere. Mawson's views on town planning are summarised in his book 'Civic Art: Studies in Town Planning, Parks, Boulevards and Open Spaces' (London: B.T. Batsford, 1911).

During World War One, Mawson became concerned about the plight of disabled servicemen. In his book 'An Imperial Obligation: Industrial Villages for Partially Disabled Soldiers' (London: Grant Richards, 1917) he advanced a scheme for purpose-built villages to house disabled ex-servicemen. The villages would be

equipped with workshops and the necessary facilities to enable them to support themselves and maintain their independence after the war.

Mawson was a Fellow of the Linnean Society (FLS), President of the Town Planning Institute, President of the Institute of Landscape Architects, Member of the Fine Arts Commission, Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, Member of the Art Workers Guild, a Member of the Royal Arboricultural Society of Scotland, and an Honorary Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA). He was awarded the Order of the Saviour of Greece, 1st Class.

Mawson exhibited on several occasions at the Royal Academy in London. He died in Applegarth, Hest Bank, Lancaster on 14 November 1933. His son was the architect and town planner Edward Prentice Mawson (1885-1954).

Worked in

UK

Works

See: [Historic England](#); [British Listed Buildings](#); [Parks & Gardens](#) [*links below*]

Bibliography

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. The Arts and Crafts movement in the North West of England: a handbook. Wetherby, England: Oblong Creative Ltd., 2006

Beard, Geoffrey and Wardman, Joan. Thomas H. Mawson: the life and work of a northern landscape architect. Lancaster: University of Lancaster Visual Arts Centre, 1976

Freeman, John Crosby. 'Thomas Mawson: imperial missionary of British town planning'. RACAR: revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review vol. 2, no. 2, 1975 pp. 37-47

Kissack, Elizabeth. The life of Thomas Hayton Mawson: landscape architect 1861-1933. Kendal, England: Stramongate Press, 2006 ISBN 0955365300

Leeuwin, Edward W. 'The Arts of Peace': Thomas H. Mawson's Gardens at the Peace Palace, the Hague'. Garden History vol. 28, no. 2, Winter 2000 pp.262-276

Mawson, David. 'T. H. Mawson (1861-1933) - landscape architect and town planner'. Journal of the Royal Society of Arts vol. 132, no. 5331, February 1984 pp.184-199

Mawson, Thomas H. The life and work of an English landscape architect. London: Richards Press, 1927 [Mawson's autobiography]

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 145, 17 November 1933 pp.773-774

T. K. 'Industrial villages for disabled soldiers'. Landscape Architecture Magazine vol. 9, no. 1, October 1918 pp. 32-34

Waymark, Janet. Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes. London: Frances Lincoln, 2009

Links

- Great British Gardens <https://www.greatbritishgardens.co.uk/garden-designers/35-thomas-mawson-1861-1933.html>
- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980 http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201147
- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hayton_Mawson
- National Art Library Catalogue <https://nla-vam.on.worldcat.org/search?databaseList=&queryString=Mawson%2C%20Thomas%20Hayton>
- The Arts and Crafts Home [scroll down to name] http://www.achome.co.uk/antiques/international_decorative_arts.htm
- Reckless Gardener - Thomas Mawson - Edwardian landscape genius <https://recklessgardener.co.uk/thomas-mawson-edwardian-landscape-genius/>
- Visit Cumbria <https://www.visitcumbria.com/thomas-mawson/>
- Find a Grave <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/57529731/thomas-hayton-mawson>
- Engle <https://engle.info/thomas-hayton-mawson/>
- Harriet Jordan, revised. Thomas Hayton Mawson. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online [Subscription service] <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37748>
- Historic England - over 30 records of architectural work by T. H. Mawson <https://historicengland.org.uk/sitesearch?searchType=site&search=Thomas%20Hayton%20Mawson>
- Aided Places%3AGrant-Aided%2520Place%3Aftype%7Cfacet_cb_Educational_Images%3AEducational%2520Image
- British Listed Buildings - listed buildings by Thomas Mawson <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/site-search/?q=Thomas%20Mawson%22>
- Parks & Gardens <https://www.parksandgardens.org/people/thomas-hayton-mawson>