

# The Bucks Gardener

Issue 27/28

The Newsletter of the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust

Summer 2008

## Cliveden in flower

2pm, Saturday 16 August

Andrew Mudge, Cliveden's new head gardener, will lead us on a tour of the extensive work of bringing flowers back to Cliveden, especially concentrating on the replanting of the Long Garden, and the revival of Isabelle Van Groeningen's replanting of Geoffrey Jellicoe's, so called, secret garden, a look into the future of Graham Stuart Thomas's exemplary herbaceous flowerbeds in the forecourt, and of course, plans for the great parterre. Sarah Rutherford (who wrote the Conservation Plan) and the National Trust's Richard Wheeler will also be on hand.

## The Hartwell House Seminar 2008

### Gibbs and Gardening, Hartwell & Stowe

Saturday 30 August

James Gibbs, as the inheritor of the mantle of Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor, was one of the seminal architects of the eighteenth century. What is less well known is his involvement in not only the buildings of the great gardens of the time, but the compelling evidence for his guiding hand taking the lead in the garden design as well. This year's Hartwell Seminar will be looking at the work of James Gibbs in both architecture and gardening, at Newbridge in Ireland, the Eastern gardens at Stowe and of course the gardens and garden buildings at Hartwell that were so eloquently depicted in the paintings of Balthazar Nebot. A cameo performance by Patrick Eyres will pose James Gibbs's possible involvement at Wentworth Castle as well.

As usual we will start the day with coffee, then a serious morning session concludes with a glass of Pimm's and a buffet lunch. In the afternoon there is a chance to see the gardens, concentrating of course on Gibbs's contribution. The afternoon concludes with tea. As usual we intend to publish the proceedings.

**David Adshead;** Head Curator, the National Trust

*James Gibbs, Architect: the place of his work in eighteenth century England*

**Richard Wheeler;** NT Gardens and Parks Curator

*Gibbs and the landscape garden in Stowe's Grecian Valley and Hawkwell Field*

**Eric Throssell;** Architect & Restorer of Hartwell, presented by Sarah Rutherford

*Gibbs and the Formal Garden; Hartwell as depicted in the Nebot paintings*

**Alec Cobbe;** whose family instructed Gibbs to build Newbridge, his home

*Newbridge, Gibbs, and garden ornament*

**Patrick Eyres;** Editor & Publisher of *The New Arcadian Journal*

*Wentworth Castle — Gibbs and Garden buildings: examining the evidence*

Eric Throssell and Richard Wheeler will lead guided walks around the gardens at Hartwell.

## Trentham revisited

Thursday 11 September

Michael Walker, formerly Gardens Manager at Waddesdon is now in charge of Trentham, near Stoke-on-Trent, a major restoration and replanting, and a sister garden to Cliveden. A chance therefore to compare two very different but perhaps equally valid approaches to conserving historic landscapes, with perhaps more in common than most. Tom Stuart-Smith's replanting of the grand Italianate parterre has become well known, the newly planted Eastern Pleasure Garden to a design by Piet Oudolf will raise the profile still further; his extensive 'prairie' plantings should be looking very good by the time we visit.

We have now abandoned the minibus plans due to cost, but do encourage car sharing.

## Cheddington Combined School

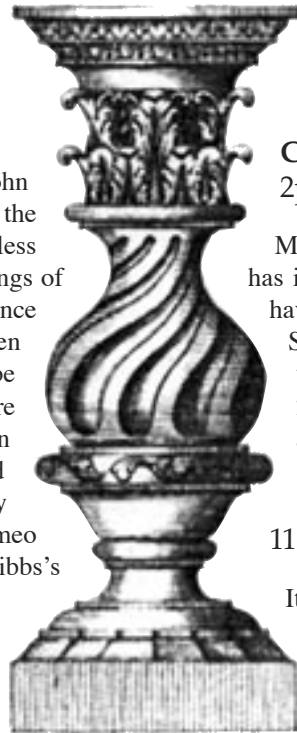
2pm, Friday 19 September

Mrs Stapledon of Cheddington Combined School has invited us to see their brilliant sensory garden (we have contributed £200 and it really is good!). Mrs Stapledon has suggested a day when the children will be able to show us around. Meet at the school at 2pm. It would be nice for as many of our members as possible to see what they are supporting.

## Dropmore rebirth?

11am, Wednesday 24 September

Its not often that a garden comes back from the dead but like Trentham, Dropmore may possibly prove to be another exemplar. With the recent appointment of new head gardener Chris Notley things are looking up. The home of a very specific



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type of bedding-out complemented by what was considered for over 150 years one of the leading Pineta in Europe, with many first plantings and champion trees, the hope is that all the garden buildings and many of the ornamental plantings can be brought back too.

A chance to see the lie of the land as the process of garden restoration gets underway. Already the major yew hedges have been radically pruned back, but we are really in with a good opportunity to witness the reawakening of this Sleeping Beauty.

**Hall Barn, Beaconsfield**  
2pm, Sunday 26 October

We return to the C18 garden where we launched the Trust some 11 years ago. The gardens featured in the recent BBC drama *Miss Austen Regrets* on the final years in the life of Jane Austen. Hall Barn represents a very specific type of early C18 pleasure ground, within a surprisingly large scale park landscape considering its bisection by the M40, scarcely noticeable from the gardens. The visit includes tea.

*For all our events please send a cheque with the enclosed booking sheet and an SAE to our Events Secretary:*

*Rosemary Jury, 11 Fledglings Walk, Winslow, Buckingham, Bucks MK18 3QU*

## Advanced warning

### Spring Talks 2009

We are once again running our optimistically titled Spring Talks at the Power House, Waddesdon Manor. Although our speakers remain to be confirmed you might like to put the dates in your diary, Waddesdon do! As usual all talks will be followed by tea in the Manor restaurant.

Dates are:

**2.30pm, Saturday 24 January,**  
**2.30pm, Saturday 21 February &**  
**2.30pm, Saturday 14 March 2009**

### Wotton Landscape Conference

Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October 2009

We are also running a two-day conference at Wotton House with David and April Gladstone, on the subject of the history of the gardens and pleasure grounds there, which will be based in the house and out in the grounds.

Our keynote speaker is Johnny Phibbs, who wrote the Landscape Management Plan that David and Michael have been working with for many years. We hope to include several other speakers both familiar, and others less so, in an extensive programme, probably consisting of 2 walks and eight talks.

## FROM THE CHAIR

Where to start? Well, of course, the first thing has to be to apologise for the non-appearance of this spring's newsletter, promised for earlier in the year. We have tried to keep you in touch by letter and email, but I realise this has probably been inadequate. Perhaps trying to put out two sets of conference proceedings, on top of everything else, was too ambitious, but there we are.

Many thanks to those members who paid by standing order, those who pay by cheque should have received a delayed reminder with this mailing, so thanks in advance for sending your cheques to Rosemary as usual.

So here we are back again with a combined spring and summer edition so hopefully this will take you through till the next one. We have had two successful visits, the second combined with our AGM at Wotton House, and though the picnic had to be abandoned when a huge cloudburst landed right on top of us generally the day was sunny; which is more than can be said for the earlier months of the year. Perhaps we got away with not having any events in the first half of the year, and as you can see we have over-compensated accordingly.

Alarmingly a theme seems to have developed to this year's visits, in so far as several of the events really delve into the nitty-gritty of garden conservation. It is a great joy to see the splendid restoration, even rebuilding, of Dropmore House, just across the road from Cliveden. If the standard of work in the gardens and pleasure grounds is maintained at that lavished on the house it should once again resume its rightful place among the top echelon of Bucks gardens. Here's hoping.

I have included probably too much information about the gardens, pleasure grounds and the Pinetum at Dropmore, but I cannot stress highly enough the remarkable survival, albeit in so degraded a form, of the very late Georgian gardens there. Due to the long lives of the owners and perhaps most significantly

that of 'old Frost', the head gardener from the 1830s through till his death in 1887, and the respect his successors seem to have felt for his style of gardening, the gardens are almost all of one elongated period. Most remarkable.

I had a hugely enjoyable sneak preview visit to Trentham where the planting is really proceeding. Both the parterre and eastern prairie are maturing well; almost too well according to one gardener who seems to think he has had the same bedding scheme for the last three years!

And of course some of you will already be aware of the transformation underway at Cliveden where the money from the development of the hospital site seems already to be paying dividends in the hands of new head gardener Andrew Mudge. Just how many tulips did members manage to take away?

It is almost in danger of knocking the top spot away from Stowe. Or should that spot really be occupied by the more restrained delights of Wotton, where David and Michael continue to open up the lakeside landscape gaining a resounding round of applause from us this time for the opening up of the vista along the lakeside from the Octagon to the urn, previously hidden by several hundred (thousand?) trees and shrubs. The look of the 'emerald sward' sweeping down to the lakeside when viewed from the Rotunda opposite is truly rewarding, showing how fine is the balance between shades of green, light and dark.

I hope though that in all this talk of landscape, the ever-continuing part of flowers and scent, as well as, in my opinion, the role of sound, the buzzing of the lime trees, and the splash of water (that was a very big pike that leapt out at us at Wotton last week), is not forgotten. Even, dare I mention, the whack of bat and ball, all have their role to play in our appreciation of gardens; though marred in my case by the continuing presence of builders on three sides of the house, front, side and back. Hmm. Just as well I have invested in a new hand powered mower!



## THE 'ROSE GARDEN' AT CLIVEDEN

In the early 1960s Lord Astor asked Geoffrey Jellicoe to rework the existing rose garden at his country estate, Cliveden. He took on the project was to write up the garden three times, initially in his *Studies in Landscape Design 2* (1966), with a further addition in his *Guelph Lectures* of 1983 (p48–49), and both appear in his 'conversation' with Michael Spens (p.88–89, published as *The Complete Landscape Designs and Gardens of Geoffrey Jellicoe* (1994).

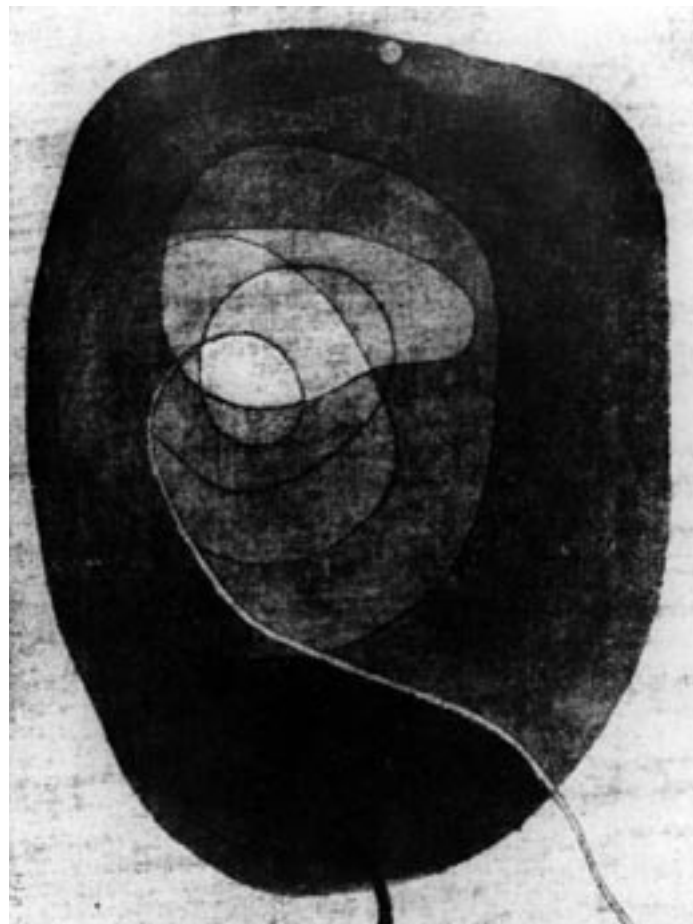
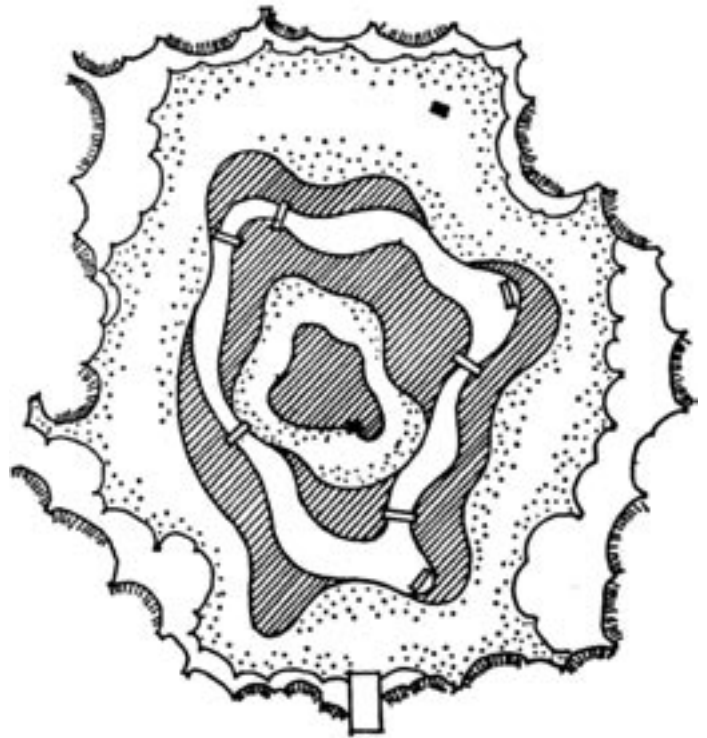
He first describes the garden in a brief piece in which he states that the commission was executed in 1962. He says, "The site is an open glade and is wholly surrounded by trees and foliage. The circle of the original garden is the conventional design of the beginning of the century and is clearly a relic of renaissance design. It is static and finite. The new design endeavours to create a different sense of space and by reason of its organic form generates a sense of movement and therefore a sense of time. It is a reflection, however of the design by Paul Klee."

"Probably no artist is more rewarding to landscape than Klee, for his inventiveness is infinite and his explorations seem to have covered almost every field that could come within the province of the landscape architect."

At the Guelph lectures, given to students at the University of Guelph, Ontario, in 1980, he added "This little garden (*right, photograph & plan*) illustrates the change in man's attitude to environment that has taken place in this century — from the nineteenth century's academic outlook to the ecological approach of the twentieth century. Set in the woods of the great classical mansion of 1851 and as if in deliberate contrast to its grandeur, the Edwardian rose garden was redesigned from its geometric circle to correspond with the sensitive feelings of the present owner. The design was inspired by the probings of Paul Klee into



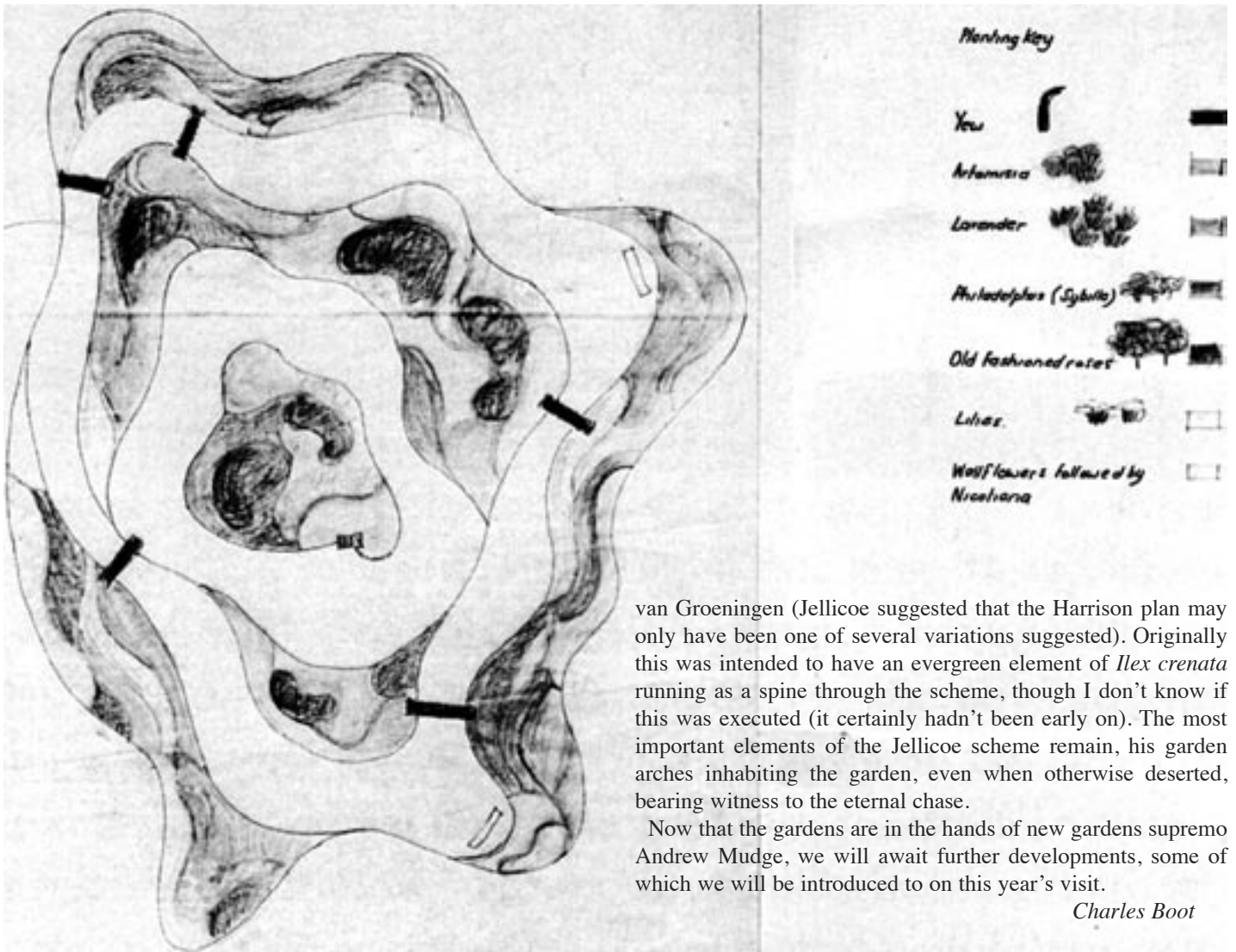
*The Rose Garden at Cliveden [here photographed in 1962] incorporates Jellicoe's specially designed architectural elements with planting and the idea of the secret enclosed garden (Spens)*



the vegetable world. Planted by its owner, it was never wholly completed, being maintained today by the National Trust."

The articles are illustrated with Klee's picture **The Fruit** of 1932 (*left*), then in Jellicoe's ownership, along with the before and after plans shown here. Almost as a throw away Jellicoe gives a caption to the before and after pictures, saying, "Apollo remains in the centre [of the garden]. A dryad has been rescued from the cellars to follow him forever". She continues the chase to this day.

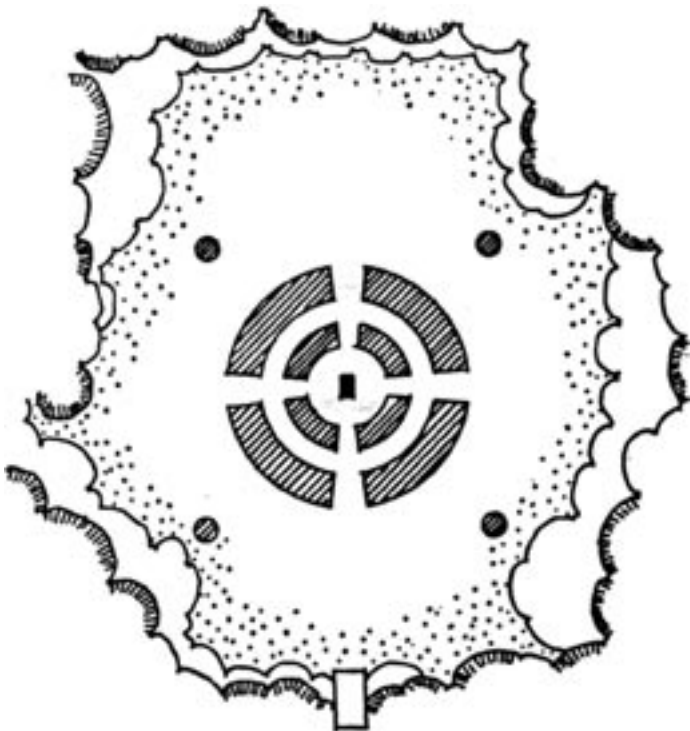
The planting plan (*overleaf*) by June Harrison, prepared for Jellicoe, was never executed. When Lord Astor received the plans, he disregarded Jellicoe's intentions for a highly scented garden, but returned to the former planting of roses, as shown in the photograph. It was only when the Trust attempted a restoration in the last few years (*BG 12*, Summer 2001), that a new planting scheme was planted out to a design by Isabelle



van Groeningen (Jellicoe suggested that the Harrison plan may only have been one of several variations suggested). Originally this was intended to have an evergreen element of *Ilex crenata* running as a spine through the scheme, though I don't know if this was executed (it certainly hadn't been early on). The most important elements of the Jellicoe scheme remain, his garden arches inhabiting the garden, even when otherwise deserted, bearing witness to the eternal chase.

Now that the gardens are in the hands of new gardens supremo Andrew Mudge, we will await further developments, some of which we will be introduced to on this year's visit.

Charles Boot



Jellicoe's sketch plan of the original Cliveden Rose Garden that his concept was to replace, clearly showing its already secret setting, suggesting 'enclosure and fecundity'

## THE GARDENS AT DROPMORE

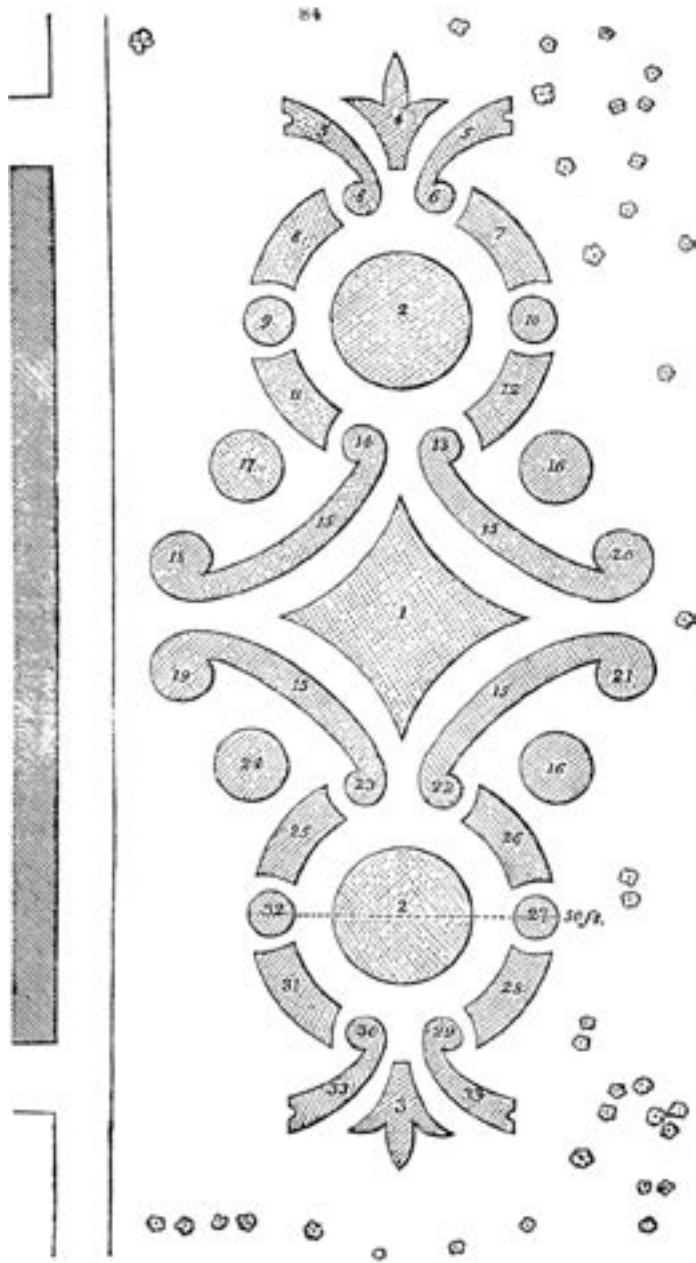
By way of reacquainting members with the landscape at Dropmore I thought it would be interesting to include some contemporary articles about these fascinating gardens and their idiosyncratic plantings. I perhaps also ought to send you back to look at the article following a previous Council visit in *BG 15*, Summer 2002.

From *The Gardener's Magazine*, January, 1828 [p257-69, VOL. III, No. II.]

### Original Correspondence

ART. 1. *Some Account of the Flower-gardens and the Pinetum at Dropmore, the Seat of Lord Grenville.* By Mr WILLIAM BAILLIE, Gardener at Dropmore. Interspersed with general Remarks on the Gardens and Grounds there, by the CONDUCTOR [J.C. Loudon]

**Dropmore** has been long celebrated for its pinetum, or collection of plants of the pine and fir tribe, and for the taste displayed in the flower-garden. Some account of the former, which contains upwards of fifty species of pines, will open to view an extensive field for the improvement of evergreen forest scenery; and the lists of flowers, and the mode of displaying them in the parterre and Dutch garden, will afford useful



instruction to every class of gardeners and amateurs; instruction the more valuable, because, in so simple a matter as planting flower-beds, very few think it worth while to proceed systematically. The grand lesson to be learned from the flower scenery at Dropmore is the advantage of placing beauty in masses.

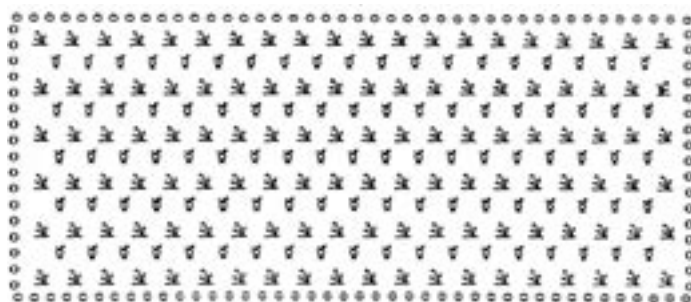
As a situation for a country residence, Dropmore exhibits no very striking natural feature. The house is pleasingly and picturesquely situated among woody scenery and fine turf; and the views from the lawn command a very rich and grand distance, including Windsor Castle and Windsor Forest. It is simple, spacious, and elegant, with a judiciously contrived conservatory in front, the glass of which is removed during summer, leaving the roof supported on piers of trelliswork, the structure assuming at that period of the year the character of a veranda. When we saw this veranda in July last, it was beautifully clothed with flowering creepers, magnolias, and geraniums; and, altogether, the disposition of plants about and against the garden front of the house equalled our expectations, while the symmetrical disposition of assemblages of flowers on the lawn surpassed them. The effect of considerable masses, entirely composed of Geranium, of Celsia, of Heliotropium, of Fuchsia, Of *Salvia coccinea*, and of various other free-growing green-house plants, is striking from its novelty and rarity, and well worthy of imitation. We have seen no place where this description of flower-gardening is carried to such an extent as it is at Dropmore.

The masses of flowers in front of the house form a regular figure (left), and the plants are so disposed that, when in flower, the corresponding forms of the figure contain corresponding coloured flowers. The following is a list of the plants which now occupy this figure, with the order in which they are disposed, and a corresponding enumeration of the bulbs and other plants which occupy the beds during winter and spring:

Beds	in Summer	in Winter and Spring
1	<i>Rosa indica</i> (blush), bordered with <i>R.semperflorens flore pleno</i> and <i>R. indica minor</i>	<i>Anemone coronaria</i>
2	<i>Pelargonium inquinans</i> (scarlet geranium)	<i>Malcomia maritima</i> (Virginian stock)
3	<i>Verbena Lambertii</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> common (hardy varieties)
4	<i>Senecio elegans flore pleno</i> (double Jacobæa)	
5	<i>Celsia urticifolia</i>	<i>Delphinium Ajacis</i> (rocket larkspur), sown in autumn
6	<i>Cineraria amelloides</i>	<i>Crocus mæsiacus</i>
7	<i>Fuchsia coccinea</i> , bordered with <i>Primula vulgaris var. flore pleno-carnea</i>	<i>Scilla nonscripta</i> (blue harebells)
8	<i>Heliotropium peruvianum</i>	<i>Muscari comosum var. monstrosum</i>
9	<i>Ruellia formosa</i>	<i>Tulipa suaveolens</i>
10	<i>Ageratum mexicana</i>	
11	<i>Dianthus chinensis</i> (Indian Pink) and <i>Reseda odorata</i> (mignonette)	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana var. flore pleno</i> (double sorts)
12	<i>Lobelia splendens</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (single sorts)
13	<i>Dianthus latifolius</i>	<i>Ixia crocata</i> and <i>Ixia fenestralis</i> , kept in frames in midwinter
14	<i>Lobelia unidentata</i>	
15	Choice herbaceous plants, not exceeding 1ft. 6in. in height	
16	<i>Gladiolus cardinalis</i>	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (double blue variety), plunged in pots

17	<i>Pelargonium lateripes</i> (pink-flowered variegated ivy-leaved geranium)	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (double red variety), plunged in pots
18	<i>Anagallis grandiflora</i>	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (single blue variety)
19	<i>Anagallis Monelli</i>	
20	<i>Pelargonium coruscans</i>	
21	<i>Pelargonium sp.?</i> (Prince of Orange geranium)	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (single white variety)
22	<i>Oenothera caespitosa</i>	<i>Crocus vernus</i> and <i>biflorus</i>
23	<i>Oenothera missouriensis</i>	
24	<i>Pelargonium zonale</i> (scarlet-flowered variegated-leaved var.)	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (double red variety)
25	<i>Malope trifida</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (double yellow variety)
26	<i>Lobelia fulgens</i>	
27	<i>Petunia odorata</i>	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (double white variety)
28	<i>Commelina caelestis</i>	<i>Muscari botryoides</i> (grape hyacinth)
29	<i>Cistus guttatus</i>	<i>Oxalis caprina</i> , kept in frames in midwinter
30	<i>Campanula pentagona</i>	<i>Scilla verna</i>
31	<i>Rosa damascena</i> (four seasons rose) and <i>Reseda odorata</i> (mignonette)	<i>Muscari racemosa</i> , the border of <i>Viola tricolor</i> in varieties
32	<i>Bouvardia triphylla</i>	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> (double white variety)
33	<i>Tropæolum majus flore pleno</i> (double nasturtium)	<i>Delphinium Ajacis</i> (double rose larkspur)

As a general principle for regulating the plants in this figure, Mr Baillie observes that the winter and spring flowers ought, as much as possible, to be of sorts which admit of being left in the ground all the year; and the summer crop should be planted in the intervals between the winter plants. Or the summer crop having been brought forward in pots under glass, or by nightly protection, may be planted out about the middle of June, after the winter plants in pots are removed. A number of hardy bulbs ought to be potted and plunged in the beds in the months of October and November, and when out of bloom, in May or June, removed to the reserve-garden, and plunged there, in order to perfect their foliage, and mature their bulbs for the succeeding season.



In some parts of the grounds the masses are thrown about the surface, without regard to regularity or combination of figures, and, occasionally, as it struck us at the moment, in a manner which was rather injurious to what a painter would call breadth of effect. Sometimes a large mass of one colour has an

eye in the centre of a different colour, and marginal borders of contrasted colours. In the open glades of lawn in the woody scenery, groups of flowers rise up among moss; others among roots, rocks, gravel, petrifications, bark, or other materials. Fine single specimens of green-house plants appear here and there, plunged in pots. On observing the surface round the large geraniums in general closely covered with smooth gravel stones, about the size of hens' eggs, we were informed that the stems of geraniums are very apt to rot after continued moist' weather, and that these stones are found to counteract this tendency; probably by maintaining a drier surface, and causing greater reflection of heat during moments of sunshine.

The Dutch Flower-garden consists of sixteen beds, each 14 ft. in length, and 6 ft. in width (above); and the following is a list of the plants which are grown in them, the arrangement varying every year, so that the same plants may not be two years in succession on the same bed:

Beds	in Summer ( ☼ )	in Winter and Spring ( ❄ )
1	<i>Oenothera missouriensis</i>	<i>Narcissus poeticus</i>
2	<i>Lobelia fulgens</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (select varieties)
3	<i>Anemone hortensis</i> (double)	<i>Anemone hortensis</i> , in autumn <i>Lobelia decumbens</i>
4	<i>Ruellia formosa</i>	<i>Gladiolus byzantinus</i>
5	<i>Commelina caelestis</i>	<i>Narscissus floribundus</i>
6	<i>Fuchsia coccinea</i>	<i>Erythronium dens canis</i>
7	<i>Verbena Lamberti</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (parrot and double yellow varieties)
8	<i>Pelargonium zonale</i> (pink nosegay variety)	<i>Narscissus jonquilla</i>

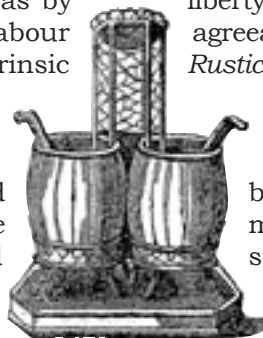
9	<i>Heliotropium peruvianum</i>	<i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i> , double varieties in all colours
10	<i>Gladiolus cardinalis</i>	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i> , plunged
11	<i>Tigridia Pavonia</i>	All the year
12	<i>Mathiola annua</i> (scarlet ten-week stock)	<i>Anemone coronaria</i> (double)
13	<i>Pelargonium Fothergillii</i> (scarlet nosegay geranium)	<i>Narcissus calathinus</i>
14	<i>Salvia coccinea</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (var. double red, or pæonia-flowered variety)
15	<i>Fuchsia gracilis</i>	<i>Scilla verna</i>
16	<i>Dianthus Caryophyllus</i> (double carnations)	All the year
17	<i>Pelargonium lateripes</i> (pink variegated ivy-leaved geranium)	<i>Gladiolus communis</i>
18	<i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	<i>Delphinium Ajacis</i> (double rocket larkspur)
19	<i>Pelargonium Daveyanum</i>	<i>Tulipa Gesneriana</i> (early clarimond variety)
20	<i>Celsia urticifolia</i>	<i>Enanthis hyemalis</i> (winter aconite)

A bed (*as above*) of the dimensions given by Mr Baillie will contain six rows of any one of the summer plants enumerated; five rows between them of any of the winter and spring bulbs mentioned; and a surrounding border of *Crocus*, *Trichonema*, *Bulbocodium*, *Scilla*, *Saxifraga granulata*, and similar plants, 3in. from the edge of the bed, and the same distance apart from each other. The summer plants (3) are readily inserted in the centre of the squares formed by the winter plants (4), without the least risk of injuring the latter; and, when finished, the summer plants will be 1ft. apart from the summer plants, the winter plants 1ft. apart from the winter plants, and all the plants of one season 6in. distant from the plants of the other season.

After disposing of flowers and plants in immense quantities; and in almost innumerable forms on a flat surface, an active mind like that of Lady Grenville, enthusiastically fond of gardening pursuits, cannot avoid pushing the taste farther. The direction given to this extreme of art here, is that of raising the plants in the air in grotesque vessels of a great variety of shapes (*below*); of surrounding them with



varied basket-work; or of training them on elevated forms of wire, and trellis-work. It is worthy of remark and of imitation, and indeed it forms a characteristic of the artificial ornaments of Dropmore, that they are not so much made up of costly materials, as by the application of skill and taste, and the labour of local workmen, to articles of little intrinsic value. Fantastic roots and boughs of trees, with rods of hazel or other clean growths, bark, moss, and such old boxes, barrels, tubs, or jars, as may be at hand, and would otherwise be burned or thrown away, are the materials which are metamorphosed into forms remarkable for their singularity (*right*), or engaging for their allusion to



shapes of established beauty. For example, a tripod for geraniums consists of an old cask, which had contained Roman cement; and an old Italian jar, such as is sent from the oil-shops with grapes, or Genoese pickles, forms the basis of an elegant vase, which may be supported on a pedestal consisting of an old tea-chest disguised by pieces of bark. In this way, by the tasteful application of a little labour, and, with materials worth almost nothing, are produced pleasing and varied objects and effects.

There is no greater evidence of attachment to a situation and a pursuit, than to be always doing and contriving something. Various plans of improvement are in progress at Dropmore, some of which relate to the more confined and artificial beauties near the house, and others to the pinetum, to a winding avenue of cedars, and to an extensive piece of ground laying out with water and rough banks, in imitation of wild scenery. As far as we observed and learned, the formation of this water and the wild scenery are in a style which would give satisfaction to Mr Price. Rough picturesque surfaces, exotic plants and shrubs, and the common productions of wild situations, as heath, broom, furze, ferns, and digitalis, are happily combined.

In the conservatory there is an abundant crop of *Passiflora edulis* (*Gard. Mag.*, vol.II. p.232, fig. 63.), and against a lofty wall are some plants of *Magnolia grandiflora*, which must be amongst the tallest and oldest in England. Near this wall are some of the finest specimens of the *Stuartia*, *Malachodendron*, and *Virginica* we have ever seen. They were magnificently in flower. There is a handsome range of aviaries, one of which contains a number of canary finches (*Fringilla canaria*), to some of which Mr Baillie intends giving their liberty, with a view to naturalising them in the woods, agreeably, as he mentioned, to the suggestions of *Rusticus in Urbe*. (*Gard. Mag.*, vol. II. p.480.)

The Pinetum at Dropmore occupies perhaps about four or five acres in the space more immediately allotted to that object; but its boundaries are of an irregular form, and much broken; and in all the surrounding scenery various specimens of this interesting tribe are introduced. The collection was first commenced with some plants, raised from

seeds received from New York about the year 1795 or 1796. Additions have ever since been continually making to it. The ground was naturally productive of heath and furze. Between two plantations composed chiefly of the common species of pines and firs, the collection is scattered over a surface of smooth turf, through which passes a winding gravel walk. Some of the trees, though young, have already taken very picturesque shapes.

There is a very good plant of *Araucaria imbricata*, and two of *Cunninghamia lanceolata*; one of the latter raised from a cutting, which, left to itself, has sent up from the collar several stems contending which shall take the lead; the other has a fine leading shoot. These plants are protected during winter by temporary coverings of mats and fern, which are opened to the south on fine days, and closed in severe weather. From observations carefully made during the last winter, it was found that these huts, or cases, had entirely excluded the frost, even when most severe.

Besides the species in the pinetum at Dropmore, Mr Baillie states that there are a few specimens which have been raised from seeds, or otherwise obtained, but whose characters are not yet judged sufficiently distinct to assign to them their proper place in the

catalogue. *Pinus Pinea* appears at present to be the produce of some seeds from Chile\*, and *Pinus Pinaster\*\**, or *maritima*, of some from the interior of New South Wales.

Of the species in the following list, Nos. 14, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 50 appear to suffer from the frost of our English winters, but have hitherto been preserved by the shelter of coverings formed nearly in the shape of bee-hives, and consisting of bent rods or poles of hazel or ash, over which are stretched two thicknesses of garden mats, including between them a wall and roof of dry fern, of about 6 or 8 inches in thickness. Some fern is also strewed over the roots in severe weather. This experiment is now about to be tried with Nos. 28, 29, 44 and 51; No. 48, *A. imbricata*, is believed to be quite hardy, but has not yet been exposed here to the frost without protection. Nos. 49 and 52 are supposed to require being housed in the winter, the others have been found, or are known to be hardy.

\* The *Pinus Pinea* was introduced to Chile by the Spaniards.

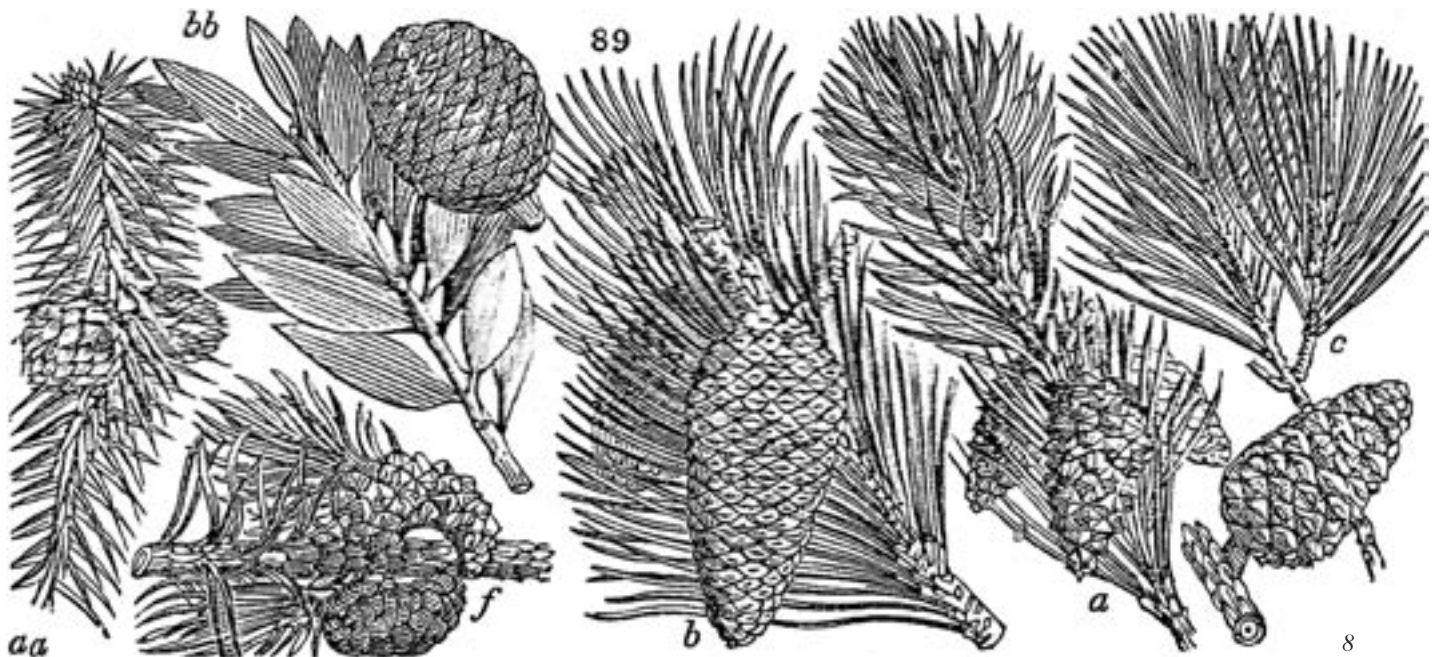
\*\* Some trees of the *Pinus Pinaster* have been introduced to the vicinity of Sydney, New South Wales, and from these trees there is little doubt that the seeds were gathered from which the above was raised.

**List of the Species of *Pinus*, *Abies*, *Cedrus*, *Larix*, *Araucaria*, *Cunninghamia*, and *Dammara*, composing the Pinetum at Dropmore [in 1828]**

1. *Foliis geminatis*: Leaves in pairs (88, right)

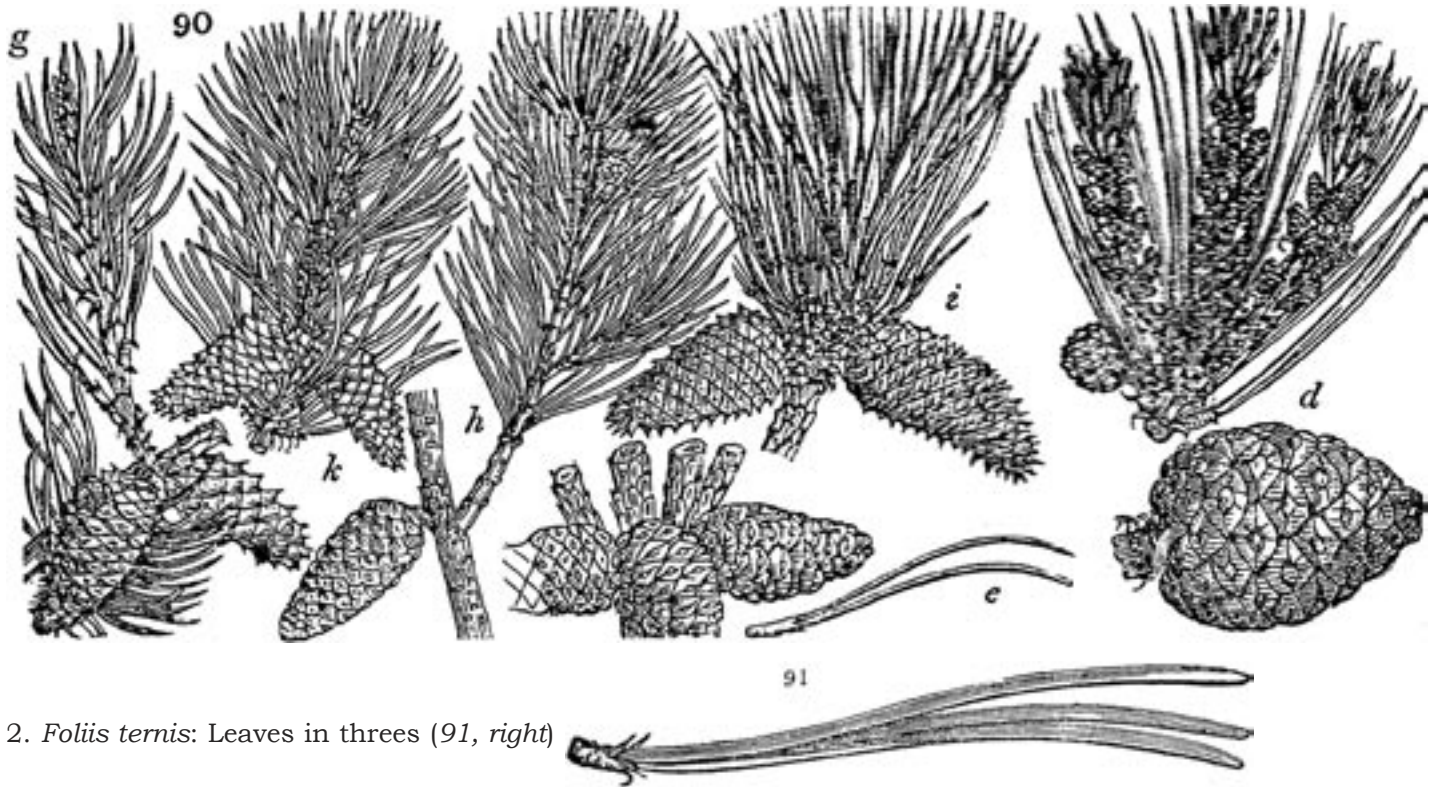


	Systematic name	English name	Native country	Year of introduction to England	Year of introduction to Dropmore	Height in native country in feet	Height of ticketed specimens at Dropmore	Figures
	<b><i>Pinus</i></b>	<b>Pine Tree</b>						
1	<i>sylvestris L.</i>	Wild or Scotch	Scotland			30 to 100	30	89a
2	<i>pumilia Jacq.</i>	Dwarf wild	Carnilooa[?]	1779		6	10	
	<i>pumilia var. rubriflora</i>	Dwarf wild red flowered					13	
3	<i>Laricio Poiret</i>	Laricio or Corsican	Corsica	1814	1825	80	3	
4	<i>uncinata Dec</i>	hooked	Pyrenees		1824	50	5	



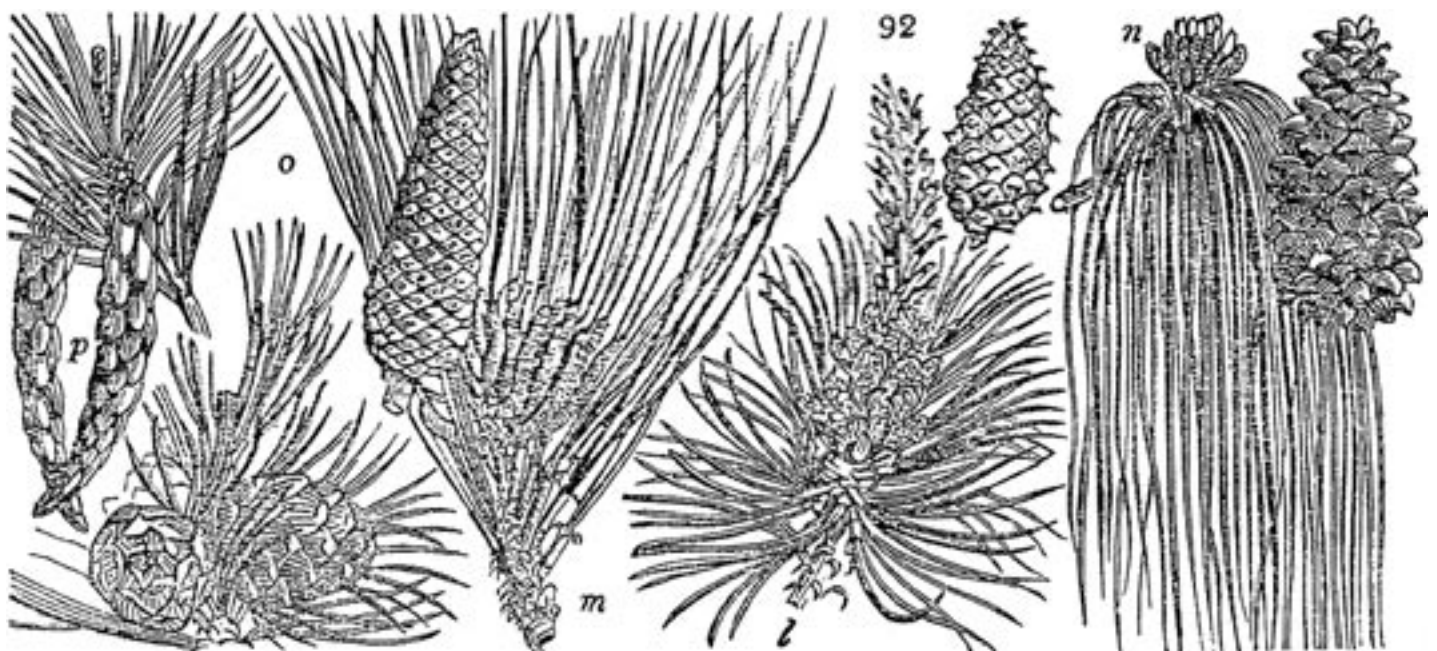


5	<i>Pinaster L.</i>	Pinaster or Cluster	S. Europe	1596	1824	60	32	89 b
6	<i>maritima Mill.</i>	Maritime	S. Europe	1759	1821	40	12	89 c
7	<i>Pallasiana Lamb</i>	Pallas's	Russia		1821	50 to 60	12	
8	<i>Pinea L.</i>	Pinea or Stone	S. Europe	1548		40	18	90 d
9	<i>resinosa H. Kew</i>	resinous	N. America	1736	1821	50	9	90 e
10	<i>pungens Lamb</i>	prickly-leaved	N. America	1804		60	20	
11	<i>Banksiana Lamb.</i>	Sir Joseph Banks's	Hudson Bay	1785		12	24	89 f
12	<i>inops Hort. Kewl</i>	poor	N. America	1737		40	22	90 g
13	<i>halepensis Mill.</i>	Aleppo	Levant	1683		20 to30	9	90 h
14	<i>Massoniana Lamb.</i>	Masson's		1824			4	



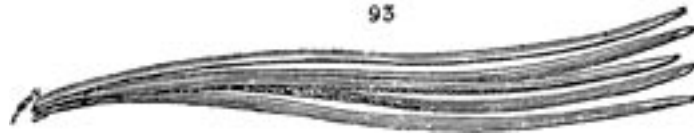
2. *Folius ternis*: Leaves in threes (91, right)

15	<i>tæda L.</i>	torch	N. America	1713		30	29	90 i
16	<i>variabilis Lamb.</i>	variable	N. America	1739	1821	60	8	90 k
17	<i>serotina Mich.</i>	late	N. America	1713	1821	60	7	
18	<i>rigida Mill.</i>	stiff-leaved	N. America	1759		80	26	92 l
19	<i>palustris Mill.</i>	swamp	N. America	1730	1824	50	7	92 m



	Systematic name	English name	Native country	Year of introduction to England	Year of introduction to Dropmore	Height in native country in feet	Height of ticketed specimens at Dropmore	Reference to figures
20	<i>Longifolia</i> Lamb.	long-leaved	E. Indies	1801	1822	90	8	92 n
21	<i>sinensis</i> Lamb.	Chinese			1825		2 to 6	
22	<i>canariensis</i> C.Smith	Canary	Canaries	1815	1822	40	8	
23	<i>lutea</i> Walt.	yellow			1821		10	

3 *Foliis quinis*: Leaves in fives (93)



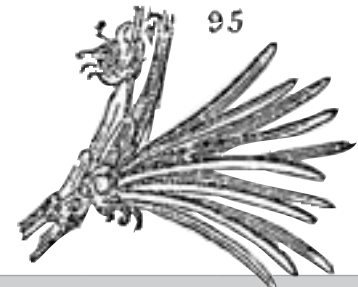
24	<i>Cembra</i> L	Cembra	Siberia	1746		50 to 60	24	92 o
25	<i>Cembra sibirica</i>	Siberian Cembra	Siberia		1825		1	
26	<i>pygmæ</i>	pygmy			1827		6 ins	
27	<i>Strobus</i> L.	Strobus or Weymouth	N. America	1705		100 to 150	35	92 p
28	<i>excelsa</i> Wallich	lofty or Bhotan	Nepal	1823	1827	100	1	
29	<i>occidentalis</i> Swartz	western			1826	70 to 80	6 ins	

4. *Foliis fasciculatis perennantibus*: Leaves in bundles, and persisting (94)



	<b><i>Cedrus</i></b>	<b>Cedar Tree</b>						
30	<i>Lebani</i> L.	Lebanon	Levant	1683	1802	70 to 80	25	96 q

5. *Foliis fasciculatis deciduis*: Leaves in bundles, and deciduous (95)



	<b><i>Larix</i> L</b>	<b>Larch Tree</b>						
31	<i>europæa</i> Dec.	European	Germany	1629		80 to 100	40	96 r
32	<i>microcarpa</i> Lamb.	small coned	N. America	1760	1821	80	18	96 s
33	<i>pendula</i> Lamb.	weeping	N. America	1739	1821	70	5	96 t



34	<i>sibirica</i>	Siberian	Siberia	1786	1824	80	1	
35	<i>daurica</i> Fisch.	Daurian	Dauria		1827		6 ins	

\* *Schubertia disticha* Mirb. *Cupressus disticha* L., Two-rowed *Schubertia*, or Deciduous Cypress; North America; 30ft high.

\*\* *Podocarpus nucifer* Pers., Nut-bearing *Podocarpus*; Japan; 20ft high.

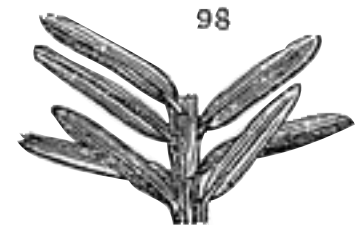
\*\*\* *Podocarpus macrophyllus*, Long-leaved *Podocarpus*; China; 10ft high.

These three species are introduced to show the links which connect the fir tribe with other hardy conifers.



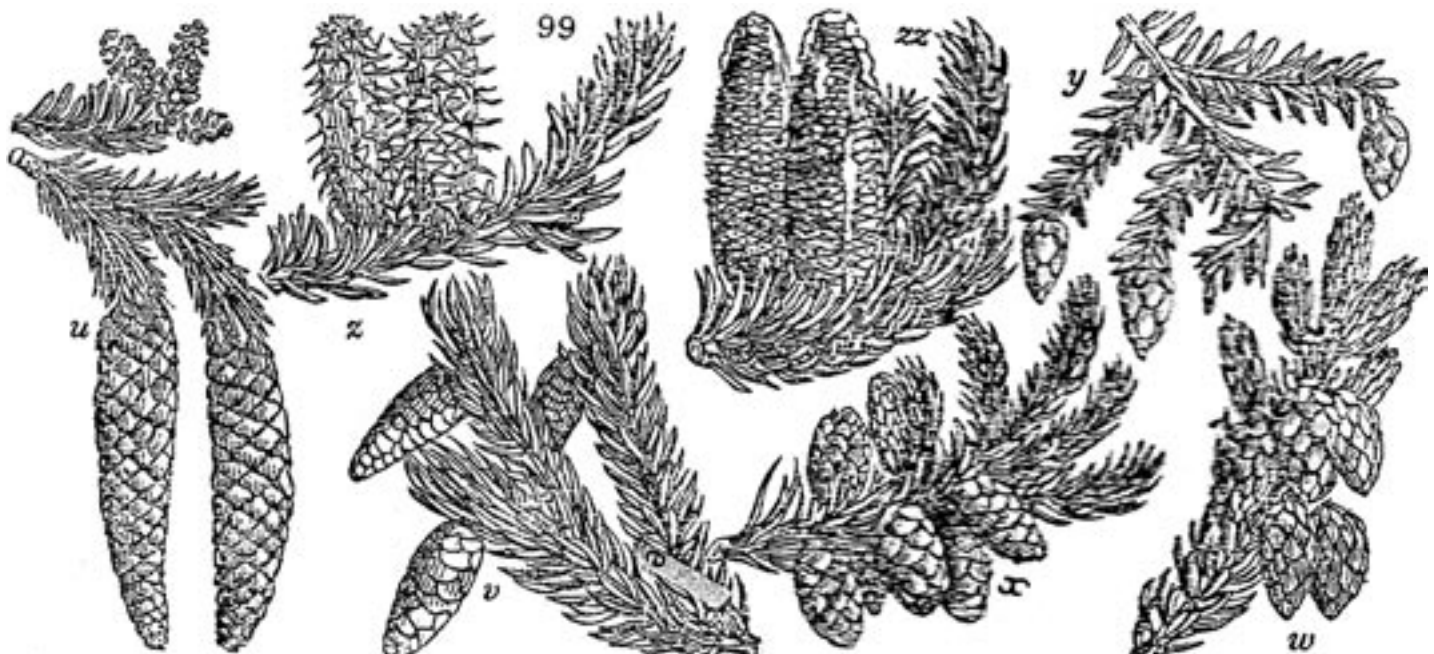
6. *Folius angulatis, solitariis, subulatis, sparsis*: Leaves angular, solitary, awl-shaped, loose (97)

	<b>Abies</b>	<b>Fir Tree</b>						
36	<i>excelsa</i> Dec.	lofty or Norway Spruce	N. Europe	1548		100	35	99 u
37	<i>alba</i> Hort. Kew	white Spruce	N. America	1700		80	35	99 v
38	<i>nigra</i> Hort. Kew	black Spruce	N. America	1700		45	18	99 w
39	<i>rubra</i> Lamb.	red Spruce	N. America	1755		30	5	99 x
40	<i>Clanbrassiliana</i> Hort. Kew	Lord Clanbrassil's				2 to 3	1 to 6	
41	<i>carpatica</i>	Carpathian						



7. *Folius solitariis, planis, subdistichis*: Leaves solitary, flat, nearly two-rowed (98)

42	<i>canadensis</i> Hort. Kew	Canadian	N. America	1736		40 to 50	15	99 y
43	<i>pectinata</i> Dcc.	comb-leaved or Silver	Germany	1603		80	40	99 z
44	<i>spectabilis</i> Lamb.	showy			1827	80 to 90	2	
45	<i>balsamea</i> Mich.	Balm of Gilead	N. America	1696		50	14	99 zz
46	<i>Fraseri</i> Pursh	Fraser's	Peensylvania	1811		30	2	
47	<i>sibirica</i>	Siberian	Siberia		1826		1	



The following species are all that are wanting to render the collection complete:

*Abies dumosa* Lamb.; Nepal.

*Abies hirtella* Kunth; Mexico.

*Abies orientalis* L.; Levant.

*Abies religiosa* Kunth; Mexico.

*Abies taxifolia* Lamb.; N.W. Coast of America.

*Abies thunbergii* Lamb.; Japan.

*Cedrus Deodora* Roxb.; Nepal and Thibet.

*Dammara australis* Lamb.; New Zealand.

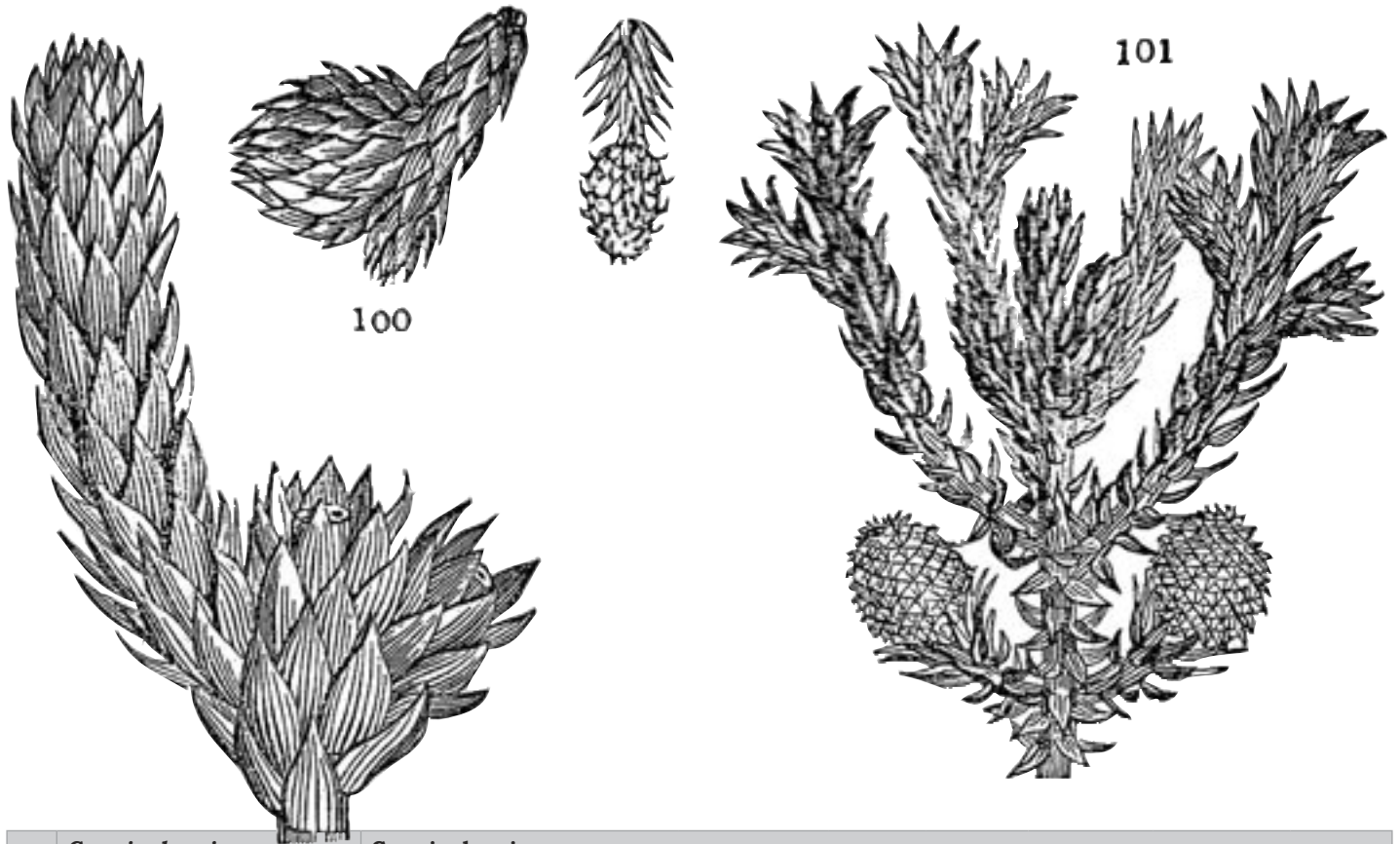
*Larix Koempferi* Lamb.; Japan .

*Pinus Lambertiana* Dougl.; California; grows 215 feet high.

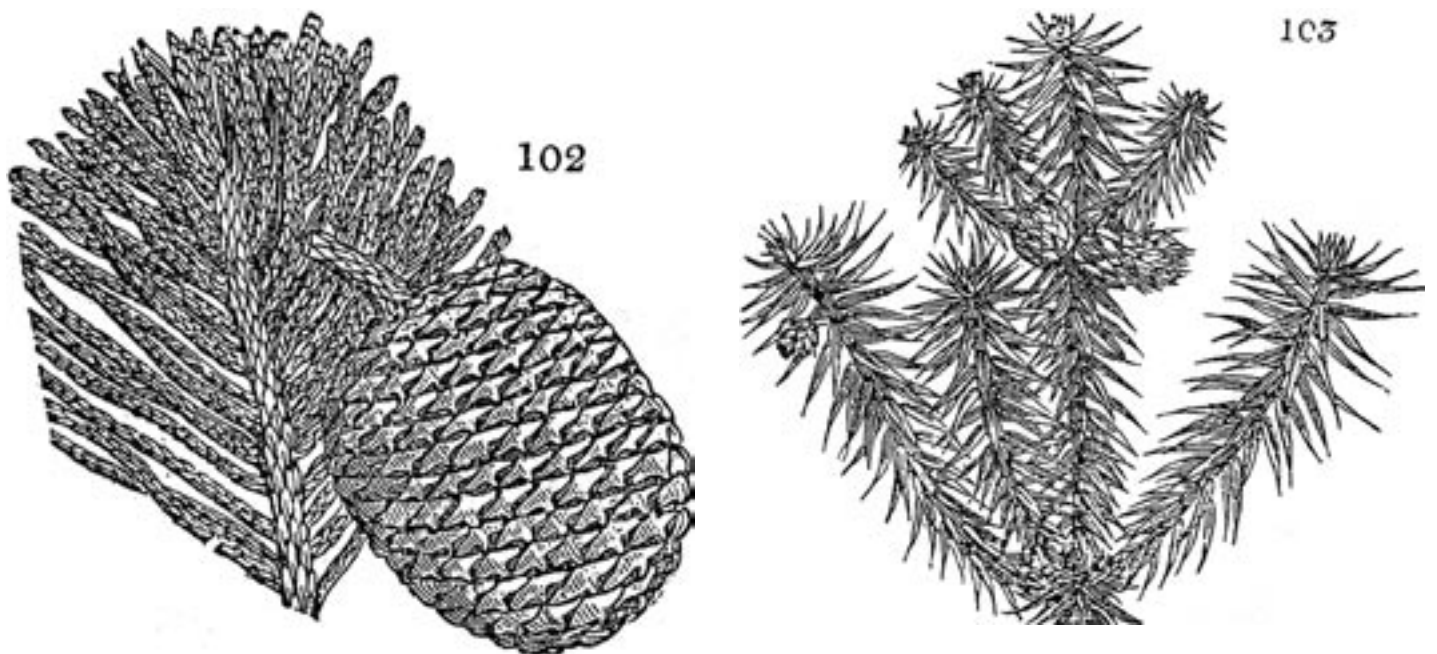
There are several other undescribed pines and firs, known partly from dried specimens, and partly from the reports of travellers.

8 *Coniferæ miscellanæ*

<b>Araucaria</b>		<b>Araucaria</b>						
48	<i>Imbricata</i> Pav.	Imbricated Chile Pine	Chile	1796	1824	150	4	100
49	<i>brasiliana</i> Lamb.	Brazil Pine			1825	100 to 150	2	101
50	<i>excelsa</i> Lamb.	lofty or Norfolk Island Pine	Norfolk Island	1793	1827	180	8	102



<b>Cunninghamia</b>		<b>Cunninghamia</b>						
51	<i>sinensis</i> Brown	Chinese			1823	15 to 20	10	aa & 103
<b>Dammara</b>		<b>Dammara</b>						
50	<i>orientalis</i> Lamb.	eastern or Amboyana Pitch Tree			1825	100	1	bb



Adjoining the pinetum, and winding through a pinewood, is a drive bordered with cedars, and leading to the above mentioned avenue of that noble tree.

In one part of the grounds an artificial elevation of earth and gravel has been raised, for the purpose of commanding an extensive and well wooded view. This is faced and ornamented with roots, and with stems of old beeches of a very picturesque form, already much clothed with flowering and other creepers. The work is still in progress, but even the present effect is striking.

Many other things at Dropmore would require to be noticed, but our glance was too rapid to admit of more detailed recollections. For the lists of flowers and pines, and the observations on their culture and management, we are entirely indebted to Mr. Baillie; who has been head-gardener at Dropmore for five years, and to whom it is but doing justice to state that everything under his care was in the highest order and keeping.

[It has been suggested (2008) that the new head gardener at Dropmore will be rebuilding and indeed increasing the conifer collection from its current 50+ species, Ed.]

From *The Gardener's Magazine*, 1833  
[p559-61, VOL. IX]

#### ART. XI.

*A Notice of the Species of Pines added to the Pinetum at Dropmore, and of some showy Species of flowering Plants which decorate the Garden there. By Mr. PHILIP FROST, Head Gardener at Dropmore.*

Sir,

I Send you, according to the wish expressed by you when here, a list of the new species of pines which have been added to our pinetum subsequently to the publication of an account of it in your Vol. III. p263-68 [see above].

*Pinus Lambertiana; taxifolia; L'laveana; monticola; grandis; hispanica; amabilis.*

*Pinus nigricans; Pichta Fischer; ponderosa; Sabiniana; Sabiniana var.; Gerardiana; nobilis.*

*Cedrus Deodara.* Also an unknown species sent here for *Deodara. Araucaria [Altingia] Cunninghamsi. Dammara australis.*

I shall also give you a brief notice of some of the new and beautiful plants which we bed out, group, or otherwise apply for the decoration of the out-door garden during summer.

*Verbena venosa* is one of the greatest treasures of the garden when planted out in a bed; and we have a bed of plants of it arranged by the side of a bed of *Verbena chamædrifolia*, and the abundant blossoms of the two, those of each so beautiful and so unlike those of its neighbour, supply superb masses of colour, mutually relieved and enhanced in splendour by the striking contrast of the colours of the two. *Verbena venosa* may be readily multiplied by cuttings inserted under a hand glass, or in a frame with a little heat. It has a peculiar property of throwing

up suckers at a distance from the root, which soon make a good thick bed. Any light soil suits it.

*Verbena Sabini(?)* is quite a new plant here. I am preparing for a bed next season. It is a procumbent and delicate little plant, well adapted for beds, or to hang over the sides of flower baskets.

*Nierembergia phœnicea* is also a fine plant for grouping into beds, but should not be planted thick, or it becomes too much crowded.

*Nicotiana Phœnicea* is a beautiful plant to stand singly in borders. It grows three feet high, and produces a mass of large white flowers, which close for, a few hours in the middle of the day. Its seeds should be sown in the autumn; and, if the plants arising from them be kept in a cold frame or greenhouse, they will flower earlier and finer than if not sown until the spring.

*Calandrinia grandiflora* is also an eligible plant for borders. It attains two feet in height, and is very showy.

*Salpiglossis*, the species of, do well here, treated after the same manner.

*Argemone grandiflora* is also a great acquisition to the borders.

A great many plants are naturalised throughout the woods here; and it will be my study to scatter all the seeds I can procure, in every wild part, which, if they grow, will eventually supply great pleasure and amusement to the traveller.

This might be done in various parts of the kingdom, and would add greatly to the beauty of every place.

Clumps of plants of the Tuberose. I have this year planted clumps of bulbs of the tuberose (*Polianthes tuberosa L.*), which are now remarkably fine, and are delightfully fragrant. In planting them, I prepared a hole four feet deep, and filled it up three feet with well decomposed manure, and one foot of turfy loam, with a small portion of sand. They are admired by every observer, as being the finest they have ever seen.

If my observations prove of any service to you, I shall feel much pleasure in having forwarded them.

I am, Sir, yours. &c.

*Philip Frost*

Dropmore, September 2, 1833.

*Although many articles continued to appear about Dropmore throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, I thought we ought to jump forward seventy-three years and reintroduce the gardens in 1906, perhaps their last great flowering, and certainly representative of these essentially unchanging gardens. The Conifer collection continued to grow, but due to the longevity of both owners and head gardeners the ornamental gardens at Dropmore remained as a delightful and well-maintained exemplar of a garden of an earlier period for far longer than might otherwise have been case. Despite their recent neglect for over three decades they are still essentially the same gardens, albeit in need of a lot of tender loving care, Ed.*



*Dropmore House from the Flower Garden, 1906*

From a *Supplement to the Journal of Horticulture*,  
8 March 1906

### **Dropmore Maidenhead, Bucks**

The residence, of D. B. Fortescue, Esq

POSSIBLY the names of few, other estates are more familiar to gardeners than the estate of Dropmore, in Buckinghamshire. When I pointed to the title of this article in conversation with a friend recently, he queried whether I had named the county correctly, as Maidenhead, he believed, was a town in Berkshire. Perfectly true, as a look at the A.B.C. railway timetable will show; yet here before me lies a Dropmore letter with the address plainly embossed and coloured violet blue, thus: "Dropmore, Maidenhead, Bucks"; and so I am content to make this my authority.

It must be remembered that Dropmore lies northward from Maidenhead and the River Thames, at a distance of some miles. Maidenhead is the post town; the telegrams go from Burnham; and the nearest station is Taplow. Yet to those who enjoy walking, the journey by foot from the riverside town is exhilaratingly pleasant. The road is long and winding, passing onward in an ascending plane to the higher wooded reaches of South Buckinghamshire, and here and there one passes the stately gates that admit to one or other of the numberless residences of "county people"; or, it may be a hamlet,

a wayside inn "under a spreading Chestnut tree" (this virtually), or simply amid rural fields and hedgerows. Eventually, however, the elevation of spacious Dropmore is reached, and with nothing to hurry one, the magnificence and luxuriance of the environment may leisurely be enjoyed. We may not see the King's Castle of Windsor immediately from the Dropmore carriage drive, but after a short excursion to the south front, there it stands away across in the distant panorama of sylvan valley — a crowded, beautiful scene of river and grove, and village and meadow. An historic scene too, with Windsor and the Thames so boldly prominent. On clear days it is said that Hindhead and Horsham, some forty miles southward in Sussex, are visible; while in the intermediate distance are Staines, Egham, and Ascot, with its famous racecourse.

### **THE GALAXY OF GROWTH**

We stand upon the drive or carriage way. Probably a Scotsman of strongly local predilection will tell us that "guid rugged Heather" can only be seen at its best upon his own northern braes; but here in this fine Buckingham scene is Heather in which one can wade shoulder deep; and it grows everywhere; indeed, it has to be trimmed and trenched within bounds in places here and there. But, what a warmth and aspect of luxuriance this rich brown bed of Heather gives.



*The House, West Front, Dropmore*

When we further looke around and behold those giant, stately Firs and Pines upon, which the fame of Dropmore so largely depends, the visitor is more than ever delighted with his surroundings. In the spring Dropmore is charming; radiant in the summer, and gorgeous in autumn. Think of the pea-green of the Larch trees and the Beeches; the Bracken, covering acres, and the mounds of Azaleas. That is a glimpse of spring. Roses and Fuchsias abound in summer; while a thousand brown and gold and crimson tints emblazon the face of nature in the autumn months. Even winter has its distinctive character of sombre but stately arboreal features.

#### **THE VERNAL SEASON**

To exemplify these phases of seasonal character, the spring's picture of awakening growth arises naturally in the forefront. It is then that the huge banks of Azaleas, Rhododendrons, Kalmias, and other flowering shrubs are in full resplendency, evincing the late Philip Frost's wonderful industry, and the successive care of others. A writer has observed: "How easy it would have been to have massed them so that they would have enclosed the house and lawn on every side; have then produced a gigantic mass of colouring that would have at first astonished, then dazed, and soon have satiated. Happily no such modern notions of landscape gardening prevailed when Dropmore was beautified." This is perfectly true. The visitor wanders, as it were, through miles of trees and shrubs, sometimes on gravel paths, or again on soft turf or moss. Even the song birds here seem to realise that amid so much that is delectable, they must sing all the sweeter, and certainly they sing none the less softly. Daffodils and other spring flowers have been naturalised by thousands during late years, and their pretty dancing gaiety on the lawns and under the trees is a very welcome sight.

#### **THE STORY OF SUMMER**

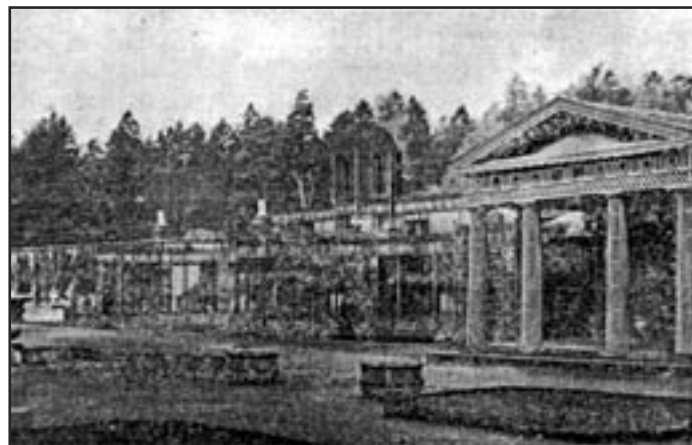
In the summer the Rhododendrons and Azaleas have to give way to the feast of Roses, which are liberally and extensively cultivated, even to exhibition standard in the case of those in the Upper garden below the terrace. Here are Roses as standars, as

bushes, and on pillars and arches. They are budded in the place, and thus their whole propagation and cultivation is carried through under the skilful care of Mr. Charles Page, as head gardener, whose efforts, however, are so whole-heartedly supported by the respected owners of Dropmore, J.B. Fortescue, Esq., and Mrs. Fortescue. Their cultivation of the Roses has been so successful that in open competition the Reading Cup for Teas has been captured, as well as the Windsor Challenge Cup for amateurs; and two firsts among other prizes at the National Rose Show in London.

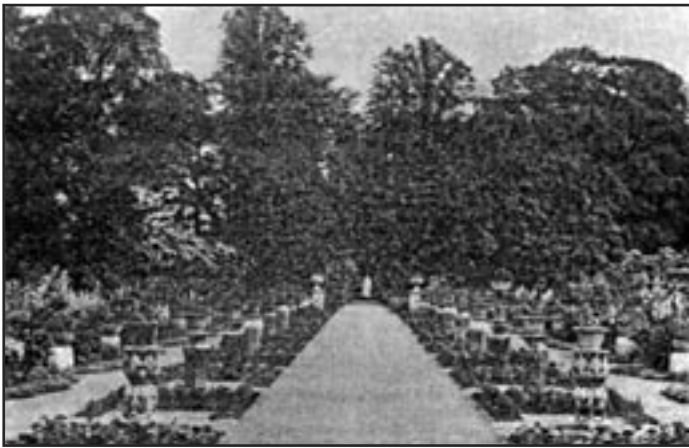
Summer bedding is practised on the usual lines, the geometrical beds in front of the aviary being filled with foliage and flowering subjects such as Heliotropes, Ivy-leaved Pelargoniums, *Nicotiana sylvestris*, Iresines, Eucalyptuses, Castor-oil plants, Cannas, and the like; while the abundance of ornamental tubs and garden vases that line the paths both here and in other parts of the garden, contain floriferous Fuchsias and the trailing Pelargoniums. Some of these "vases" — perhaps the best appellative one can use — are shown in a, few of our illustrations. They form a distinct feature of the interior gardens. We also recall the beauty of the Chinese pheasants in the elegant and roomy aviaries. It is likely that the aviaries that existed sixty or seventy years ago at Kew were similar to these. They certainly furnish an interesting centre of attraction in the garden and where a wise and wide selection of birds are kept an aviary is a most enjoyable, as well as instructive and amusing, provision. Even in large conservatories a goodly collection of rare and bright plumaged exotic birds can be caged and housed.

#### **SPECIAL FEATURES**

Dropmore House stands 276ft above sea-level, and 200ft above the Thames. This does not appear to he high, and yet the elevation is peculiarly commanding. It has been shown how noble the outlook is. The mansion is not in itself outwardly pretentious, and its character is excellently portrayed in the two photographs on pages 13 and 14; the walls being white. Lawns, that are kept close mown, surround at least three of its sides, and they extend to eight acres. Eight acres of lawns to mow! One almost dare question the utility of it.



*The Aviary and Arcade, Dropmore*



*View in the gardens looking south*

Then there are six miles of gravel paths, though I am not sure if this includes the lengthy drive as well. Some of the original heath and scrub comes close up to the south front — neighbouring, in fact, the velvety green lawn in that quarter. Golf is played over part of the ground, and delightful grassy rides have been formed in many directions through and among the Bracken fern and the Heather. The land that is strictly enclosed by a stout wooden ring fence, inclusive of woods and parks, is 760 acres, forming very nearly a circle.

A prominent Poplar tree, which can be seen from the southern windows, appears to contain numerous crows' nests; yet these are not crows' nests at all; they are healthy bunches of Mistletoe, the plant of Christmas story and romance. But even closer to the house stands a venerable and beautiful Cedar — *Cedrus Libani* — the oldest tree on the place, and planted by the maker of Dropmore, Lord Grenville of the early decades of last century. When he took possession it bore the popular name of "One Tree Estate" — a title sufficiently descriptive, in itself. But perhaps the present features of the garden had better engage our attention, and any historical allusions can follow.

#### **THE BAMBOO DINGLE.**

Many of my readers, I feel sure, would enjoy the "gravel pit scene." This is a name I give to it myself, because what is now a pretty dingle-dell and fast developing into one of those romantic bambooseries (alias bamboo-garden!), was until recently a gravel pit. It lies a short distance west of the house. It has been planted upon the banks with Azaleas, spring flowers are there in thousands. Japanese Irises are naturalised in the channel or floor of the pit. Last of all are the feathery, plummy wreaths of various bamboos in sheltered suitable places, and arching over a portion of the erstwhile chasm, now a dingle, there is an excellent rustic bridge. It is interesting to learn that all the Azalea bushes one sees about were grown from seedlings self-sown on the estate.

Another most notable gardening achievement, was the construction of a considerable mound, composed of huge tree roots, to form a vantage ground in an open, unrestricted part of the estate, from which to view the splendid perspective. From its levelled top,

guarded at the edge by a wooden rail, and having a seat for the comfort of visitors, Windsor Castle, which is eight miles south-east, and the other notable places and scenes are laid before the gaze. This mound has been admirably made, both in point of suitability and of harmony with its surroundings.

#### **GARDEN ADORNMENTS**

A summer-house made of Scots Pine; an alcove seat made with stones from the original London Bridge of interesting memory; a ruined arch (see photo), the numerous "pleached alleys" of tall Rhododendrons; the Cedar avenue; the lovely and extensive Lake; and the Rhododendrons and noble trees are the composing items of this varied and wonderful outer garden, or ornamental grounds, as one ought to describe them.

The lake is perfect in its beauty. It has a surface of four acres, but so disposed and intersected that one would imagine a far greater area was covered. The sides are abundantly hedged round with Rhododendrons and similar shrubs, while Water Lilies and wild fowl are upon its surface, and beds of purple Loosestrife peep out in bays, and tall Oak, Beech and Pine trees encircle the whole scene.

#### **THE CONIFERS**

Yet, while passing allusion has been made, to the noble Conifers, those

*"Towering Firs that in conic form arise,  
And with a pointed spear divide the skies"*

no detailed reference has been given. By the courtesy of Mr. Page, I am enabled to set forth this interesting list, with the respective height and girth of each one of them. Thus:

*Abies rubra*, supposed to be the only tree of this variety in Europe, height 95ft; girth at 5ft. 5ft. 6in.

	Height (in feet)	Girth (in feet & inches)
<i>Cedrus Libani</i>	93ft	12ft 8in
<i>Pinus rigida</i>	84ft	7ft 6in
<i>Pinus Laricio</i>	102ft	10ft 3in
<i>Abies cephalonica</i>	86ft	8ft 5in
<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	98ft	8ft 5in
<i>Pinus Lambertiana</i>	82ft	9ft 5in
<i>Tsuga Albertiana</i>	75ft	6ft
<i>Pinus cembra</i>	66ft	6ft 5in
<i>Cedrus Deodara</i>	96ft	8ft 5in
<i>Wellingtonia gigantea</i>	90ft	14ft 3in
<i>Pinus Benthamiana</i>	68ft	7ft 2in
<i>Cedrus atlantica glauca</i>	78ft	7ft 2in
<i>Picea grandis</i>	86ft	8ft
<i>Pinus monticolor</i>	74ft	5ft 2in
<i>Thuia gigantea</i>	85ft	5ft 10 in
<i>Pinus excelsa</i>	90ft	8ft 2in
<i>Libocedrus decurrens</i>	70ft	5ft 2in

Trees planted by members of the Royal Family in recent years (1903 to 1905):



*Picea nobilis*, by His Majesty, King Edward VII  
*Picea pungens glauca*, by Princess Henry of Battenberg  
*Picea concolor*, by Princess Victoria of Battenburg  
*Cedrus Libani*, by Prince Alexandra of Battenberg  
*Taxus baccata aurea*, by Princess Louise Augusta of Schleswig-Holstein

These are some of the principal conifers at Dropmore, and all of them are noble, healthy trees. *Abies (Pseudotsugo) Douglasi* is represented by a magnificent specimen raised from seeds sent home to Chiswick by David Douglas himself in 1827, and from Chiswick it was forwarded to Lord Grenville. It was planted in 1830, and twenty years ago measured 126ft in height, 15ft in girth, and had a spread of branches of 22yds. One might also name *Larix Kæmpferi*, *Pinus Jefferyi*, *P. insignis* planted in 1839; one of those that Frost brought home "in his waistcoat pocket!" as he himself has recorded. *Abies morinda*, *Pinus pinaster*, *Larix microcarpa*, and *Abies Brimoniana*. The Douglas-Fir is on a mound which was gradually made by successive top-dressings of marl. As much as 300 loads were said to have been placed over the roots; and indeed all the fine conifers here are regularly and generously treated now, as hitherto, in this fashion. This is the reason for their healthy continuity and large size.

**THE CEDAR AVENUE [SEE BG 4 Winter 1988, p6]**

Shakespeare speaks somewhere of the "tall, sepulchral avenues of trees", and his description more fittingly describes the quarter-mile Cedar avenue at Dropmore than any other that I know. So even and so straight and close are these immovable silent trees, that one readily compares the inter-vista to a huge cathedral aisle of solemn, dignified grandeur. This avenue of Deodars was probably planted about 1845-50. It is suggested that the trees, were planted in avenue form in order to get rid of them, so many Cedars having been dotted about the grounds as to be productive somewhat of monotony. The avenue is not conspicuous, as it lies back from the carriage road about a hundred yards, and leads to nowhere in particular. Nevertheless, it is most pleasing.



**THE TERRACE [above]**

is a well-balanced, beautiful part of the inner part of the garden. A real Roman bath, said to be 1,500 years old, with fountain and dolphins added is situated on

the upper side in the middle of the terrace. The trimly flower borders with a superexcellent display of tuberous Begonias, and lined at the back with dwarf young fruit trees, the vegetables being in the brakes within, lies below the eye from the terrace, and the glass houses are seen upon the left hand, looking south.

**THE GLASS HOUSES**

These are neither numerous nor spacious. There are three light, airy vineries, with seven Vines in each. One of these, containing strong, canes of Alicante and Lady Downe's, was planted four years ago, and are yielding heavy bunches, fifteen or sixteen to the rod, some of which have weighed 5lb. An early house is given over to Black Hamburgh and Madresfield Court, while the third contains Muscat Grapes. These houses are used also for plants, so far as possible. Chrysanthemums fill them during the autumn, and a bright show prevails. In a Peach-case style of house — the glass front rises nearly level with the top of the wall the roof sloping sharply up to the middle, and a hip-span meeting the back wall — are Peaches and Nectarines. Nectarines are more favoured than Peaches, although the well-known Royal George, Noblesse, Violette Hâtive, and Lord Napier Peaches were noted, as well as Spenser and other Nectarines.

Among Melons were Earl's Favourite and Hero of Lockinge. Tomatoes are cultivated in frames, and 800 Sovereign Strawberries are forced. Violets also occupy frames in winter, while in the plant house there were serviceable batches of Lorraine Begonias, *Jacobinia chrysocephana*, and "furnishing stuff" generally. Gardenias are treated as annuals, the cuttings being rooted in August to flower the next spring. The sub-lateral shoots are rubbed and nipped out when buds are seen.

One house is devoted to Odontoglossums, which comprised some excellent healthy young plants. The *Calanthe Veitchii*s were also remarkably good and plump, and ought now to be making a bright exhibition. Carnations too are another conspicuous success. About 2000 Malmaisons are grown, and of these many were in the cutting frames at the time of my visit, while others were in 3 1/2 in pots. The next shift is into 5in pots, or probably 6in, for the largest, and in these comparatively small sizes they are flowered. The American winter-flowering sorts are also being tried.

**THE KITCHEN AND FRUIT GARDEN**

The principal kitchen garden is about half a mile from the mansion, and is about three acres in extent. One and half acre is enclosed by a brick wall 12ft high, on the side of which wall there is a slip of ground some 14ft in width, so that both sides of this wall can be utilised for fruit culture. The south walls are used for Peaches and Nectarines; the western aspect for Apricots; eastern aspect for Pears; and all these fruits do well. The north wall is used for Morello Cherries, which do splendidly on this soil-strong loam, overlying brick earth.

Most of the ground inside the walls is used

for vegetable crops. Peas are largely grown, and, luxuriate. The portion outside the walls is principally used for bush fruits, intercropped with vegetables; while pyramid Apples and Pears are planted on each side of the garden walks, and most varieties of merit are grown. New varieties are also given a trial.

Referring to kinds of Apples, Cox's Orange Pippin, American Mother, Egremont Russet, Ribston Pippin, and Wealthy are favourites. Of culinary varieties, Lord Grosvenor, Grenadier, Royal Jubilee, Loddington Seedling, Lane's Prince Albert, Gloria Mundi, Tyler's Kernel, and Peasgood's Nunesuch, are largely grown and rarely fail to carry a crop.

There is also an orchard of standard Apple trees planted on grassland, but the trees are old and worn out. Young trees have been planted on a fresh site, and the old trees will be cut down when the young trees come into bearing.

Among the newer varieties of Apples are Chas. Ross, which promises to be very fine; Langley Pippin is a good early Apple of taking appearance and fine flavour; Royal Jubilee is an excellent culinary variety; as also is Lord Woolseley. Of Pears, Williams' Bon Chretien, Doyenne du Comice, Pitmaston Duchess, Le Lectier, Nouvelle Fulvie, Thompson, Beurre Hardy, Conference, Marguerite Marillat, Winter Nelis, and Olivier de Serres, are grown in quantity; while newer varieties are also given a place as cordon trees. The excellent condition of all of them may be inferred from the successes that Mr Page has met with in competition at Westminster and elsewhere. There are twenty men employed in the Dropmore gardens.

#### LOOKING BACK

When Lord Grenville became the possessor of this place it was popularly called the "One Tree Estate." Nevertheless, the neighbourhood, and indeed the district, is naturally fertile in trees, the Beech particularly. It is stated that the London nurserymen of two generations ago used to send their assistants here to gather the Beech seeds in the fall; and also those of Hornbeam, Holly, and Juniper. Stocks for Roses were also at one time largely sought out in the neighbourhood.

The student of horticultural history will not find Dropmore mentioned in the earlier books of last century; and Loudon does not allude to it in his Encyclopædia of Gardening, published in 1830. It was a place then in the making. Lord Grenville, who was born in 1759, became its possessor, and at his death in 1834, it was maintained by his widow, Lady Grenville, from whom it passed to the Hon. G.M. Fortescue at her death, together with the Cornish estate of Boconnoc. On the decease of Lady Louisa Fortescue in 1898, Dropmore passed to the present

owner J.B. Fortescue, Esquire.

The first Lord Grenville, following his father's footsteps, began his Parliamentary career as the representative for Buckinghamshire. He became Speaker, which office he held for six months, and then succeeded to the Secretaryship of the Home Office; and after that of Foreign Affairs. Lord Grenville took an active part in promoting the Union with Ireland. Following the death of William Pitt in 1806, he became first Lord of the Treasury in the new Cabinet, though only for a short period. He was always a steady and consistent advocate of Catholic Emancipation, and was distinguished for his literary attainments, as well as for his political knowledge.

#### THE DAYS OF PHILIP FROST

Great credit is certainly due to Philip Frost for his share in the making of Dropmore; and his is a renown that will live for generations to come. He was a robust, hearty man of marked individuality and of strong convictions. Born at Moreton Hampstead, Devon in 1804, he lived to be eighty-three years of age, dying on 10 May, 1887. It was said of him that "anytime for half a century past he has been called 'Old' Frost." He was like his own trees, a hardy evergreen. His life was uneventful, yet never monotonous. He began as an under-forester on Lord Grenville's estate, Boconnoc, in Cornwall, in 1817. In 1822 he left home for Dropmore, but went to Ashted Park, Epsom, in 1826, returning to Dropmore, however, the same year. In 1827 he was made foreman of the frame ground, an important part of the garden in those days.

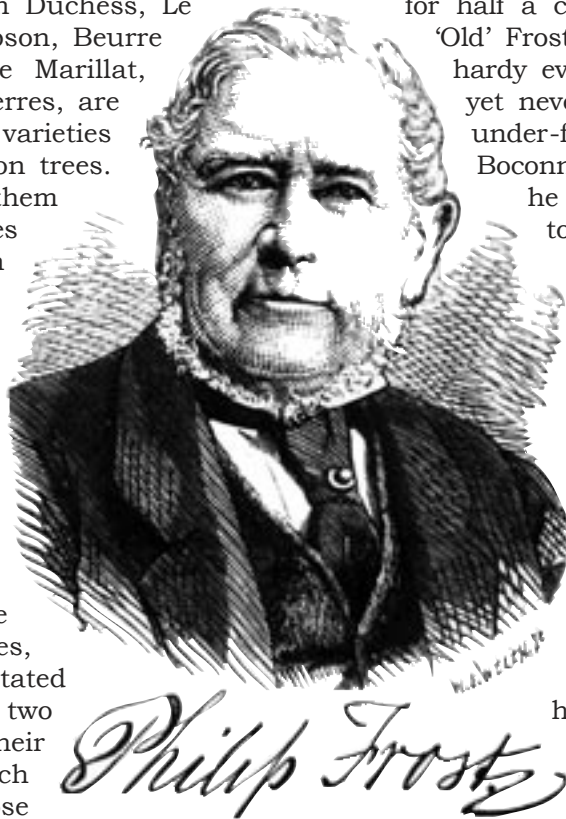
For improvement and experience in kitchen gardening he now shifted to Caen Wood, and then to the Botanic Garden, Chelsea, in 1829, under Mr. Anderson. Here he was noticed by Sweet and Haworth, for his skill impressed itself. But in 1832 Lord Grenville invited him to return to Dropmore as head gardener, which he did in January 1833. He began his successful planting and transforming labours next year,

with what success the foregoing descriptive notes try to show.

In 1872 his friends and admirers presented him with a handsome silver cup, valued at £25, on which were engraved portraits of two of his noble nurslings, *Araucaria imbricata* and *Abies Douglasi*, together with an annuity purchased with the sum of about £200.

#### THE PRESENT HEAD GARDENER

Since Frost died there have only been two gardeners, and one of the two is still in office. Mr Charles Herrin, who started in business on his own account a few years ago, succeeded Mr Frost in 1887, leaving



in 1900. He was followed by Mr Charles Page, the present experienced head gardener. Mr Page entered upon his gardening career so long ago as 1873, thirty-three years since, at Flixton Hall, Bungay, Suffolk, under Mr Harry Fisher, whose training he remembers with appreciation. Five years there, and then on to Messrs Veitch's nursery at Chelsea, and shortly afterwards to Cobham Hall. Next year he assumed a foreman's situation under Mr Chas. Herrin at the famous old Chalfont Park, Bucks, going from there to Audley End, Saffron Walden, in 1879.

His first charge as head gardener was at Fern Lodge, Bracknell, Berks; but five years later he removed to The Highams, Windlesham, Surrey; while after five and a half years he took charge of Mr Fortescue's gardens at Boconnoc, Lostwithiel, Cornwall. It was from here that he came to Dropmore in November 1900.

Mr Page is conscious of the fact that in Mr and Mrs Fortescue he has ideal, generous employers from whom he has at all times received every encouragement in undertaking improvements in the garden. Dropmore is Dropmore. It is all interesting example of what powers and talents men have to alter, and improve the aspect of Nature.

*J.H.D.*

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## REPORT ON BUCKS GARDENS TRUST'S GARDENS FOR SCHOOLS PROJECT

The garden at the PACE Centre, the school in Aylesbury for children with motor impairments which BGT member Mary Sarre has designed and worked on, is progressing well; in April four volunteers from GE Health Care in Amersham spend a day assisting with the planting and things are looking good.

Also in April Bucks Gardens Trust hosted a meeting of representatives and teachers from the South East County Trusts to discuss how schools might be encouraged to create, maintain and use gardens. This was held in the Queen's Temple at Stowe by kind permission of The National Trust and useful ideas were exchanged. Six counties were represented and Dr Ruth Taylor (head of education for the RHS at Wisley) spoke, explaining the new RHS Campaign for School Gardening. A very useful day!

The hard landscaping for the garden at Bearbrook Combined School in Aylesbury (*right*), designed by members of the Aylesbury College RHS group led by BGT member Anna Robertson, is now complete and planting will take place after the summer half-term.

Laurette Read and Jeanne Bliss have continued to support schools in the south of the county; to them and to all who have supported our Gardens for Schools Project, our thanks.

*Rosemary Jury*

## REGIONAL EDUCATION MEETING OF SOUTH-EAST COUNTY TRUSTS

The second South East Education meeting was hosted by Buckinghamshire on Thursday 3 April at Stowe. Rosemary Jury, schools' co-ordinator for the BGT, welcomed the representatives and teachers from six County Trusts to the magnificent Queen's Temple in the grounds of Stowe.

They started with a general discussion on how they might

help and encourage schools in making a garden and on the different levels that their counties were working at present. It was an interesting insight as to how best to proceed with the very different resources available.

Surrey talked about their award scheme and annual School Grounds Forum, Hertfordshire about their workshops in schools and Buckinghamshire on their successes with many schools over the past two years. It was agreed that most trusts worked in primary schools but were very encouraged when helping children with special needs. Secondary schools still seem a far off dream. The teachers agreed that all work in these schools would have to be curriculum based if teachers were going to take it seriously but there might be a new venture into horticulture as a subject.

The speaker was Dr Ruth Taylor who is head of education for the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley. She came to tell us about their new 'Campaign for School Gardening' and explain how it works. The RHS are trying to get schools to join this campaign and register on the website with a password that will enable them to log on and reach certain benchmarks as their gardening progresses. This will have to involve someone at the school keeping up with the various 'lessons' and it may not be that easy when staff are not always the ones who are running the garden or they move on to another school. It is for primary schools only at present and there is to be an RHS regional advisor, starting with the East, who will find schools who are examples of best practice and who can share their knowledge with other schools in their region.



*Hard landscaping for the sensory garden designed by the RHS group from Aylesbury College (headed by Anna Robertson BGT member) for Bearbrook Combined School in Aylesbury*

It was suggested to Dr Taylor that we could work together as we are in schools already and have some knowledge about their gardens. She was keen to promote the CSG days that the RHS run in various places throughout England and it was suggested that the Trusts could advise on colleges or gardens in their counties that might have these days.

Northants said they would be delighted to sponsor a teacher to attend a CSG day if they knew of when they were happening and maybe other Trusts could work with the RHS over funding a teacher.

After a very informative morning, Rosemary Jury had arranged a tour of the Stowe landscape with a National Trust guide. This was a fitting end to a good day. The South East meeting for 2009 will be hosted by Oxfordshire.

*Juliet Wilmot*

## THE PACE CENTRE GARDEN, AYLESBURY Spring 2008

In May 2007 I was approached by BGT to assist in the creation of a new garden at the PACE Centre in Aylesbury for children with motor disorders such as cerebral palsy, aged from 6 months to 12 years.

I had the most wonderful support and enthusiasm from the head and her staff in developing their ideas for a new garden for the children to enjoy, visually and actively. Space was confined to three small courtyards around the building but all had good access via double doors and ramps. As the children are in wheelchairs, or buggies we had to think carefully about movement around the spaces, and how they would access the planted areas.

This garden is intended as an active learning resource for the Centre where the children can experience handling and growing plants and learn where some of their food items come from. The emphasis is on edible plants such as fruit and herbs, together with plants that offer colour to the garden all year round, and have sensory qualities such as different textures, shapes, and scent. All these plants will contribute to a far richer school environment and provide the staff with a most valuable teaching resource.

We worked out in detail the location and dimensions of raised beds and outdoor worktops, storage spaces etc. all of which were ably built by the Centre's handyman/caretaker.

There is one courtyard devoted to gardening activities with fruit trees, raspberries, alpine strawberries and herbs. The photo (*below*) shows some the children (on a very cold day in March!) helping to plant strawberries.



*Mary Sarre and students at work at the PACE Centre*

The other small area used by the nursery class has lower beds, partially planted up. Here the children have sown easy-to-grow seeds such as nasturtiums, tomatoes, beans etc.

We also planned outdoor worktops and a water feature to be built in memory of a boy who sadly died recently.

Funding: The Centre received a generous grant from the Buckinghamshire Community Foundation as well as support from local charities and companies, including their on-going sponsor GE who fielded a team of four to help with the planting.

*Mary Sarre*

## CROSSING BOUNDARIES: THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

Report on a conference organised by The Association of Gardens Trusts, held on 25 April  
by Geoff Huntingford

The Bucks Gardens Trust sponsored me to attend this conference, which was held at Burlington House, Piccadilly.

*The European Landscape Convention* is significant because it is the first international treaty to deal solely with the protection, management and enhancement of European landscapes. It has been promoted by the Council of Europe, and so is concerned with the 47 countries comprising 'greater Europe' rather than just those within the EC. The Convention was opened for signature in Florence in October 2000, has been signed and ratified by 28 of these countries, including the UK relatively recently: a further seven have signed but not ratified, and the remainder (most notably Germany and Russia) have neither signed nor ratified.

Paul Walshe, giving his own presentation as well as that of the indisposed Prof Adrian Phillips, described how the Convention is trying to create a consistent approach while recognising the diversity of rural and urban landscapes across Europe. Our landscapes do not exist outside our perception of them, and this perception brings in a range of emotions and memories. Landscapes embody artistic associations, and a wealth of cultural, social, ecological, environmental and economic values. The definition of a landscape in the English version of the Convention is:

*"An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"*

The aim is to understand landscapes, be realistic about change, set objectives and create policies. The public must be involved all the time, and those making the policies should not presume what people think about their surroundings or require from them. The Convention covers all our landscapes, whether 'natural', rural or urban, whether outstanding, everyday or degraded. It requires Governments to recognise them in law as an essential component in people's lives, to establish and implement landscape policies for protection, management and planning, to establish procedures for public participation in raising awareness and defining and implementing landscape policies, and to integrate landscape values in all their forms into regional and local planning.

Unfortunately, in Paul Walshe's view, we have become a mobile society divorced from our surroundings: he described our standard perception of the landscape (urban or rural) as no more than the space between where we have left and where we are heading at any given moment. He lamented the lack of civic planning in Britain, stating that in his view we have lost the art of place-making, with street design almost entirely separated from architecture. The Government's 'top-down' and fragmented approach to the identification and management of our heritage has been a major contributory factor.

Paul Walshe mentioned some of the current initiatives with a landscape element. Local Heritage Initiatives are supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and are intended to rectify fragmented environments. *Tomorrows Heathland Heritage* provides a framework for habitat action plans for heathland. 37 Landscape Partnership Schemes have been set up to provide an integrated approach to the management of landscape heritage to improve the quality of areas with distinct character.

Val Kirby of "**Natural England**"\* described how her section of the Government is gearing up to recognise the implications

of the Convention on policies and practice. As all landscapes matter in some way to their users and inhabitants, Natural England are looking at how they will evolve in the future, at historic landscapes (considered for example in the *Higher Level Farm Stewardship Scheme*), and at landscapes with current protection (National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc). Their Implementation Framework will try to improve performance within existing legislation and influence the direction and content of future legislation. She believes that the Convention requires more bottom-up activity, but within a structure organised from the top. Any group can get together to produce an Action Plan for their area. There are also around 800 Landscape Character Networks in place, each one a forum to raise awareness of landscape issues. She suggested that the AGT and Gardens Trusts could formulate their own action plans within the Convention's framework, linking with new Regional Landscape Partnerships which are being set up and which should be in place in all English regions by the end of the year. She suggested that these bodies would be the vehicles to raise awareness of the Convention within local authorities when making planning decisions affecting the landscape.

After lunch, Lady Lucinda Lambton (a Buckinghamshire resident) gave the 'keynote address', using the occasion to promote cemeteries as important and influential historic landscapes. She took us back to Vanbrugh who was influenced by the Indian temple cemeteries during his spell in the country in the 1680's, and gave us many witty insights into the fascinating and quirky history of cemetery design and some of their permanent residents. Apparently John Claudius Loudon wrote to the Duke of Wellington asking to see his beeches, but a combination of Loudon's poor handwriting and the Duke's poor eyesight led to the delivery of a pair of the Duke's breeches to a surprised Bishop of London. Did you know that Beatrix Potter obtained some of the names for her characters from memorials in Brompton Cemetery? And we were left deliciously in the air as to whether the first man to bring a gorilla to England, buried in Liverpool, ever met the first man to import bananas to the country, as he is buried relatively close by.

Dr David Thackray, Head of Archaeology at the National Trust, gave us a talk on the development of guiding principles for the management of the Trust's historic parkland. He pointed out that 46% of parks recorded by the Ordnance Survey in 1918 had disappeared by 1995 (perhaps not such a surprising figure bearing in mind the attrition of historic houses after the war as documented by John Harris and the subject of a fascinating BGT talk a few years ago). The task is to establish significance for the widest range of people who share an interest. This entails assessing cultural, natural and social significance as well as the setting and context for the asset, and looking at access, visitor facilities, public safety, the management of agriculture, the environment and trees, leading to the setting out of restoration plans which should avoid conjecture. This all needs recording so that future generations can see what has been done, the choices that have been made and the reasons for those choices.

We were then treated to an upbeat presentation from Jason Debney, the Strategy Co-ordinator for the Thames Landscape Strategy, who talked us through the excellent work being done on the Thames between Hampton court and Kew to improve access and the setting of this significant stretch of river. This is a long-term project, indeed "a 100 year blueprint to conserve, enhance and promote, for the future, one of the world's "greatest urban landscapes". It appears to have caught the local imagination with 16,000 volunteer hours being worked last year,

from environmental enhancement schemes and the opening up of historic viewpoints down to improved litter collection.

Finally, Val Hepworth, the AGT Vice President, stepped into another gap caused by indisposition to describe her experiences with historic landscapes in Yorkshire. While designed landscapes have always been subject to constant adaptation, with buildings and planting sometimes being surprisingly transitory, they were originally designed for a private and limited audience and need careful research and assessment for their future which may well include much greater visitor numbers. There are continuing threats from urbanisation, gravel extraction, road improvements and the conversion of the great houses to flats or other uses. Val referred to the creation of golf courses within historic parkland, but mentioned how much better this can be when the historic asset is researched and understood and the permission includes conditions to require the restoration of important features.

All in all, a very interesting day. What implications are there for the Bucks Gardens Trust in its activities? One problem has always been the lack of legal recognition of historic landscapes, and this has to improve if the UK's ratification of the Convention is to have any meaning. We should be able to point to the convention and its aims in our dealings with those responsible for making decisions affecting the Bucks landscape. Perhaps we need to be more aware of the definition of landscapes as set out in the Convention, ie virtually any area, built up or rural, and its perception by the viewer and user. And we could make stronger links with other bodies with a similar interest in the identification and enhancement of all aspects of the Buckinghamshire scene.

*Geoff Huntingford*  
*BGT Planning co-ordinator*

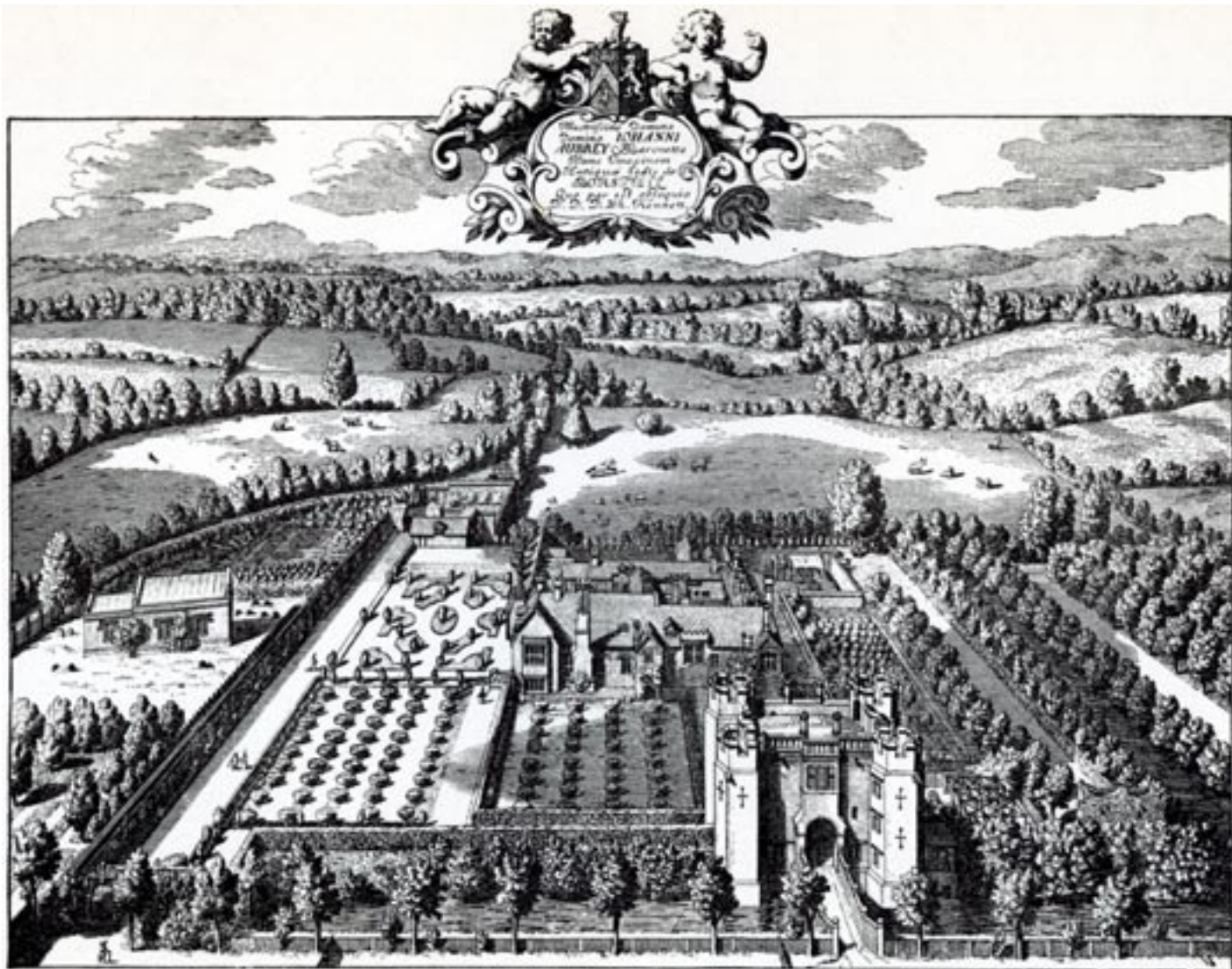
- \* Apologies for the quotation marks. This has always struck me as a remarkably silly name, saying more about New Labour than about our countryside which is of course not 'natural'. It was revealing at the Conference when Paul Walshe pointed out that Britain's National Parks would not be so designated elsewhere in the world because they are managed and simply not 'natural' enough.

## BOARSTALL TOWER — a report 11am, Saturday 19 July

Boarstall Tower is a National Trust property situated 7 miles south of Bicester in Buckinghamshire (NGR SP62421425). It comprises an early C14th gatehouse forming an impressive entry to the site of a medieval manor house. The property is enclosed on three sides by a large defensive moat. The fourth, east, side of the property is defined by a C17th brick wall separating the gardens from the adjacent Churchyard.

The site is well known for its involvement in the Civil War. Under the command of Sir William Campion it housed a garrison of Royalist troops resisting a prolonged Parliamentary siege, until finally called to surrender in 1646. Less well known is that the tower was one of several buildings on the site. It served as the gateway to a late-medieval manor house, which remained in existence until c.1778, when it was reputedly demolished under the instructions of Sir John Aubrey. Little is known about this building; indeed the only source of information is a bird's eye view dating from 1695 showing a sizeable manor house arranged and surrounded by formal gardens.

A recent geophysics survey in 2001 had suggested that the footprint of this group of buildings remains perfectly preserved beneath the southern-half of the lawn. In order to assess this



*M. Burghers' 1695 engraving of John Aubrey's house and gardens at Boarstall*

potential, and to answer various questions about the evolution and development of the site, a programme of archaeological works was undertaken, to which the BGT made a £100 contribution. The aim was to investigate the evidence from the geophysics survey and to determine if there was a correspondence with the detail suggested by the 1695 engraving. The project in part investigated surviving evidence for the formal garden suggested by this engraving. The six trenches actually seemed to concentrate on the house, its corners and outer walls, though some areas hinted tantalisingly at what might remain covered by soil. The plan was also to investigate the archaeological potential of previously un-surveyed areas, notably the moat, the overflow car park and the immediate surroundings of the tower, though on the final day and given the bad weather this had largely been abandoned.

The project did involve further geophysics surveying, topographical survey, metal detecting and excavation, with the main focus upon archaeological excavation. Run by the National Trust during National Archaeology Week and intended as a project involving the local community, members of archaeological societies and volunteers were heavily involved, indeed Gary Marshall was the only paid archaeologist on site, though others were spotted dotted about in the trenches, giving of their wisdom.

After an introduction from Gary outlining the history of the site, and looking at some of the finds, the local pottery being of considerable interest to members. Tiles, bricks and roof

tiles all in fragments pointed to the predominantly robbed out nature of the site, even down to the foundations, but enough evidence seems to have survived to point to the accuracy of the geophysical survey and indeed the 1695 engraving.

Perhaps the surprising thing was lack of evidence of the siege, only two musket balls were found by midday on Saturday. Perhaps given the nature of a prolonged siege they were all collected and fired back out?

Mr Dixon, the current tenant, gave us an entertaining account of the house's wartime history, and pointed out the ferocity of the siege. In Royalist newspapers the loss of life was put at as high as a third of the 1,200 besieging force. Parliamentary papers declined to list a number, though admitting to losses.

He very kindly showed us his home and told us some of his theories about it. The length of the drawbridge is still recorded in the now solid bridge, its doorframe still in use. What was previously an open archway now forms a living room, its beams dating to the same year that the licence to crenelate was given, 1312. Upstairs is an amazing open hall, with fantastic bow windows from the 1690s, flooding the room with light. Though seemingly the roof had been raised, the timbers again lending weight (literally) to their date. Up on the roof we had a fine view of the gardens and despite tree growth to the north a glimpse of the surrounding countryside which lent strength to the owner's theory that the tower was probably used as a grandstand for the hunting that no doubt took place in the vale beyond.

And the sun shone throughout.

## Other events of interest

### Ascott Park, near Stadhampton

2.30pm Saturday 27 September

A chance to see the site of some of Oxfordshire GT's recent researches, and hear more about the discoveries there. This interesting 17th century site belongs to Oxfordshire County Council. Bookings for free tickets, from John Shortland; we need to know who is coming. Contact him at: Glyme Cottage, Radford Bridge, Enstone Oxon or 07774889279 or [jdshortland@btopenworld.com](mailto:jdshortland@btopenworld.com)

### Words Set in Stone

until 20 September

The Turrill Sculpture Garden, South Parade, Summertown, Oxford (behind public library, with same opening hours) [www.turrillsculpturegarden.org.uk](http://www.turrillsculpturegarden.org.uk) includes a list of sculptors with contact details.

### GHS East Midlands regional event

October

The GHS will be holding the second of their Regional Events on a Saturday in early October, an opportunity for members in a particular region to meet the Chairman, other trustees and

officers of the society in a venue convenient to all away from London. This year they will be inviting members from the East Midlands region to meet us at the comfortable headquarters of our insurance company, the National Farmers Union Mutual, at Stratford-upon-Avon, where we shall have an opportunity to discuss the society and its activities with them and lay on some interesting talks with regional significance. Invitations to members in that region will be issued this summer although the event is open to all.

### Fruit in historic gardens

GHS study day, Saturday 15 November

This year the GHS's annual autumn study day will be held at Hampton Court Palace. Those who book in good time will benefit from a reduced rate for their ticket.

### Stop Press

The set of entrance gates reported stolen from Dropmore in BG 8, Spring 2000, were recently found safely in the Water Tower there and are now being restored for reinstatement.

\* \* \*

Can we say the same for the Cliveden maze also reported missing in the same issue? Perhaps we will hear more on our August visit.

### The Victorian Asylum

by Sarah Rutherford

Shire Library, 2008, £5.99

ISBN 978-0-7478-0069-1



### THE VICTORIAN ASYLUM

SARAH RUTHERFORD

SHIRE LIBRARY

In 1837 W.A.F. Browne, Superintendent of the Montrose Royal Lunatic Asylum, enthused about the similarities 'between the palace for the mad and the palace for the aristocrat'; so Dr Sarah Rutherford, our own Vice-Chairman, tells us in *The Victorian Asylum*, published by Shire Library, formerly Shire Books.

This is a sensitive and perceptive account

of the provision made for those who had the misfortune to suffer from distressed states of mind during the early nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth-century, whilst not forgetting earlier woeful treatments including that meted out to George III whose metabolic illness was regarded as madness

To the Victorians it seems that asylum meant just that — a place of refuge — providing support for the mentally ill and those with learning difficulties, and the author is at pains to point out that the terms 'lunatic' and 'insane', 'imbecile' and 'idiot' did not, at the time, have their present pejorative overtones. By 1847 5,247 'persons of unsound mind' were housed in 21 publicly funded asylums; formerly accommodation had been provided in workhouses. This number rose in 1917 to as many as 108,837.

Despite its relatively short length the book gives an in depth account of the ethos of the Victorian asylum, its building, design, staffing, the regimes and treatments provided for its patients, and how that ethos developed. It would appear that W.A.F. Browne was right; during the 1800s the Victorian asylums did indeed resemble great country estates. In 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, we are told that Prince Albert opened the second Middlesex Asylum at Colney Hatch in north London, the great corridor

of which was a quarter of a mile in length, the grounds having been laid out by the prestigious designer William Broderick Thomas. Much emphasis, it seems, was placed upon outdoor activity, some asylums having their own farmland and gardens on which the patients worked. Elaborate grounds with cricket pitches, croquet lawns and tennis courts were provided for recreation, and patients were well cared for, often enjoying better living conditions than in their own homes; although privacy was limited and visiting often restricted by reason of distance.

It is said that every picture tells a story and the story of the rise of Victorian Asylum is certainly told here by illustrations as well as text. Coloured photographs and drawings are reproduced with full explanatory captions; there is even a map showing the major asylums existing in England and Wales in 1914 with numbered locations mentioned in the text. The fall is also described in the final chapter; amongst others Colney Hatch has been converted into prestigious apartments, but William Broderick Thomas's pleasure ground survives to be enjoyed by its new residents.

But where are the asylums of today? Care in the Community and new drugs have taken the place of those Victorian places of refuge.

Rosemary Jury



FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

*Letitia Yetman sent this picture of an all too recognisable Buckinghamshire landscape feature, but I failed to recognise the building in the background. It is not of course Stowe's beloved Palladian Bridge, but the one built for Empress Catherine of the Russians at her country estate Tsarskoe Selo, near St Petersburg, a knock-off in pink and white marble. Letitia and her daughter were able to walk under it on last winter's ice!*

## EDWARDIANS IN COLOUR

at Waddesdon Manor, until October

The Manor has collaborated with the Rothschild Archive and the National Media Museum, Bradford on an exhibition celebrating the pioneering role of the Rothschilds in the emergence of the earliest known form of colour photography. The autochrome, as the process was known, which relied (astonishingly enough) on the application of potato starch to photographic plates, was invented in 1907. *The Colours of Another Age: The Rothschild Autochromes* explores the emergence of the technique and the

work of Lionel de Rothschild, one of the first practitioners. The exhibition is also based on a set of autochromes taken of the Manor itself around 1910, by an unknown photographer, which reveal the building and garden as it would have been known by its creator Baron Ferdinand and his sister Alice. The past, we suddenly realise, is no longer black and white.

To view part of this exhibition together with a selection Rothschild autochromes visit the Coach House, Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm. There is a book to accompany the exhibition: *Colours of Another Age: The Autochromes of Lionel de Rothschild 1908–1912* (£10)

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**We now have an e-newsletter, just send an email to [enewsletter@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:enewsletter@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk) labelled sign up**

**The deadline for the next *Bucks Gardener* (28) is September 1, and it should appear not too long after that**

Items are welcomed on all aspects of gardens and gardening in Bucks (and elsewhere), both ancient and modern

Please send all contributions to me, preferably electronically, at: [newsletter@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk) or at the address above