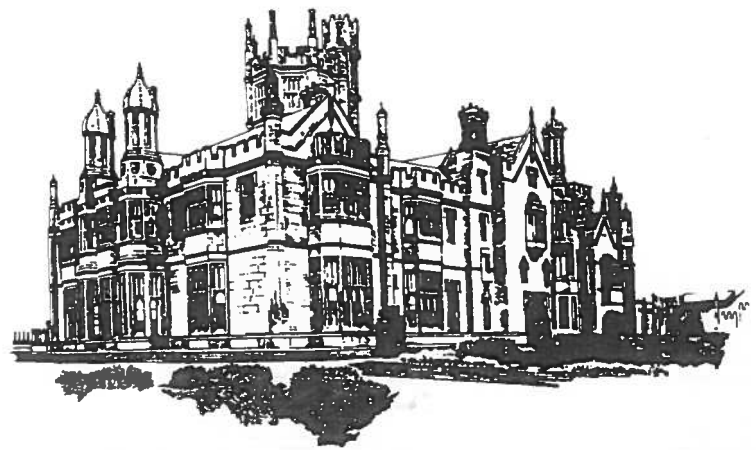




The Gardens at Margam

by John Adams



A few miles east of Port Talbot in a sheltered position lies Margam Country Park. For the last two centuries the main attraction for the early traveller and present day tourist has been the magnificent Georgian orangery and surrounding pleasure gardens. The gardens, however, have a much longer history and are probably unique in Wales, having been in continuous cultivation for over a thousand years.

Local tradition and the presence of numerous Christian monuments suggests the presence of an early Celtic monastic community where each monk or hermit would have cultivated his own plot, growing vegetables and possibly fruit. Documented evidence begins with the founding of the Cistercian Abbey at Margam in 1147. The Cistercians were an order whose aim was self-sufficiency and the monks would undoubtedly have brought their gardening philosophy with them when they came from Clairvaux.

Margam Abbey, the richest monastic house in Wales, was dissolved by the Crown Visitors of Henry VIII in August 1536. Much of the former monastic property was acquired by Sir Rice Mansel, a member of one of the foremost county families with extensive estates in Gower, including Penrice and Oxwich Castles. Margam now replaced Oxwich as the Mansels' chief residence. The house was based on the domestic ranges of the Abbey, added to in a variety of styles by successive generations, so that eventually medieval, Tudor and seventeenth-century classical elements contributed to a rambling house one hundred and seventy-five metres long, with formal pleasure gardens, orchards, ponds and an extensive deer park. A feature of the garden was the banqueting house attributed to Inigo Jones in which Sir Edward Mansel entertained Henry, first Duke of Beaufort during his progress through Wales in 1684. The banqueting house façade has now been relocated in the orangery gardens and is known as the 'Four Seasons'.

In 1750 following the death of Bussey, Lord Mansel, the estates of Margam and Penrice passed to the Reverend Thomas Talbot of Lacock Abbey. It was Talbot's son, Thomas Mansel

Talbot, who eventually demolished the historic seat of his Mansel ancestors, leaving only small portions of the Abbey buildings and Margam's unique 'Chapter House'.

Shortly after returning from a grand tour in 1772, T.M. Talbot focused his attention on Penrice, building a villa there in a classical style between 1773 and 1779. Margam fell out of favour, a partial clearance of the Mansel house allowing construction of Margam's magnificent orangery (1787-90), designed, as was Talbot's villa at Penrice, by Anthony Keck. Built on a scale that recalled the grandeur of classical Rome, it provided a repository for an extensive collection of citrus trees, formerly housed in several dilapidated greenhouses, and some of the antiquities acquired by Talbot in Italy. The origin of the collection of citrus trees remains somewhat of a mystery. Legend suggests they were intended as a gift to royalty, the ship carrying them being wrecked on the local coastline and the trees subsequently claimed by the Mansels who owned the right to the wreck.

Talbot employed the landscape architect William Emes and a certain Mr Wright to suggest improvements to the gardens, but whether any of their ideas were implemented is not known. In 1800 a new conservatory was constructed and the Abbey Church restored between 1805 and 1809.

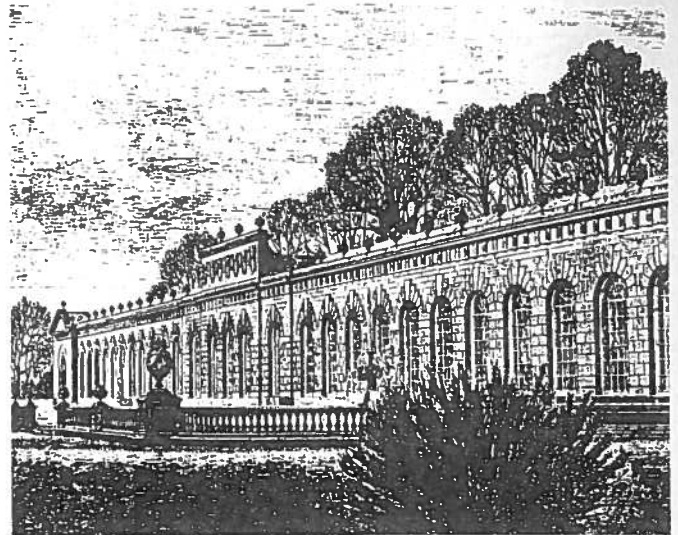
The present gardens were developed by Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot (1803-90); the work was continued by his daughter Emily Charlotte (1840-1918). During the 1820s Talbot formulated plans for a grandiose new mansion at Margam, designed by the architect Thomas Hopper. Construction of the mansion and pleasure grounds removed all vestiges of the gardens created by the Mansels. William Kent as head gardener was responsible for implementing Talbot's instructions and on a number of occasions found himself sent to London 'for his improvement in gardening'. In 1842, he ordered 5,300 shrubs and trees for the new garden, creating numerous shrubberies, separated by gravel paths, on either side of a broadwalk. Kent created a sober Victorian garden dominated by evergreens with

dark green foliage. Talbot demolished Margam village to make way for an extensive kitchen garden, and a fishpond was constructed in what had been a marshy valley, ultimately to provide water for the fountains added to the terrace of the orangery in 1851-3.

During the tenure of Richard Milner, a bamboo garden was created to the south of the fishpond, and in the 1920s, using local sandstone, a Japanese garden was developed to the north of the broadwalk. A further addition to the park was 'New Pond', which improved the vista from the mansion and provided a boating pool for the family.

In the late 1940s the park and gardens were purchased by Sir David Evans Bevan. He chose as his residence Twyn yr Hydd, the former land-agent's house and commissioned the landscape architect Ralph Hancock to redesign the garden. By the early 1960s Margam Castle was fast becoming ruinous, and, with the cost of maintaining the gardens to Victorian standards prohibitive, shrubberies became overgrown.

The acquisition of Margam Park by West Glamorgan County Council in 1974 began a new chapter in Margam's history. T.M. Talbot's orangery was restored with the rehabilitation of the overgrown gardens a priority. In the former kitchen garden a major attraction is 'Margam Maze', one of the largest in

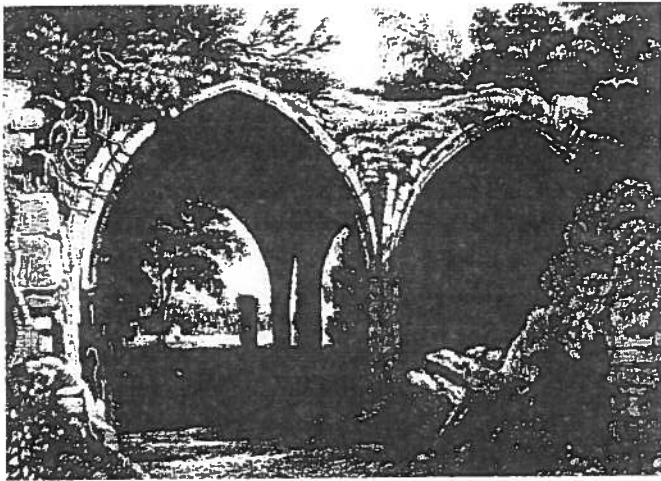


The Orangery in 1881.

Europe, formed of green and gold Leyland Cypress; an amphitheatre bordered with sculptured urns provides a venue for outdoor concerts and a pinetum contains a collection of dwarf conifers. A pergola 450 yards long is a permanent feature of the orangery gardens; new shrubberies and rosebeds have been created with extensive plantings of daffodils providing spring colour. The Abbey ruins have been restored, the orangery fountains refurbished as a contribution to the European Year of the Environment and, after much work, the Japanese garden has once more emerged from beneath a tangle of brambles, nettles and rhododendrons.

A sculpture garden allowing easy access for the disabled and funded by B.P. Chemicals has recently been created to the south of the Fishpond. Gently sloping paths between borders of shrubs, roses, herbaceous perennials and strategically sited sculptures in a variety of media, give access from the Orangery gardens. The cascade, other water features, associated bog gardens and raised beds provide further sources of interest.

The main source for this article was *A Celebration of Margam Park and Gardens* by John Adams and Arthur Rees.



Remains of the Cloisters. Drawn by Gastineau.

Plant Fair

Thursday 18 May 1995

at Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, Glynllifon,
near Caernarvon

10.00 am to 4.00 pm. Admission £1

*Leading nurserymen offering trees, shrubs, plants.
Gardening books, tools, ornaments and gates.*

In aid of Gwynedd Branch, Welsh Historic Gardens Trust

The Nelson Garden

During the winter, Lloyds Bank have initiated a survey and repairs to the Summerhouse in the Nelson Garden at Monmouth. The roof has been stabilised and the boarding at the back, which was suffering from damp, repaired. The front railings have been repainted in black, although I was a little alarmed to see that the centre had been picked out in white. However a query to the bank produced the assurance that their expert restorer had proof that this was part of the original design, although I have not so far identified his source.

The next opening of the garden will be on Sunday, 14th May.

Sheila Thorneycroft

A French Tourist in Wales

by Phyllis Guskin

Although Wales became a popular destination for English tourists in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was less well known in Europe. Thus, an unpublished illustrated account of a walking trip through North Wales undertaken by a young Frenchman, Adolphe Thiébault, in September 1827, offers an interesting European perspective.

Adolphe Thiébault was well qualified for his trip. The bilingual son of a French father and a Scottish mother, he was drawn to the romance of the Celtic lands. He was an accomplished draughtsman and mapmaker and had read widely in the earlier accounts of such Welsh authorities as Pennant. In his two-week trip, Thiébault drew approximately five to ten views a day, and later made up an account for his wife Harriet from his sketches and notes. The two volumes of over a hundred wash drawings with an accompanying narrative in French are part of the extensive manuscript collection of Thiébault family papers recently acquired by the Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.

Thiébault's Welsh trip took him from Shrewsbury to Llangollen, then to Bangor via Capel Curig, then along the coast to Conway, and back into the hills via Capel Curig again and Llanberis to Caernarvon, then down to Harlech, and to Dolgellau where he abandoned walking in favour of speedier transportation, making his way back via Aberystwyth, Kington, and Worcester to Oxford. He travelled anything from ten to twenty-five miles a day, often exhausted by climbing 'Cyclopean' walls and getting drenched to the skin. His initial romantic vision of unspoiled nature, innocent peasantry and Celtic bards was tempered somewhat by the realities of travel. Although he noted that many hotels kept a bard to entertain their guests, he was deeply disappointed when

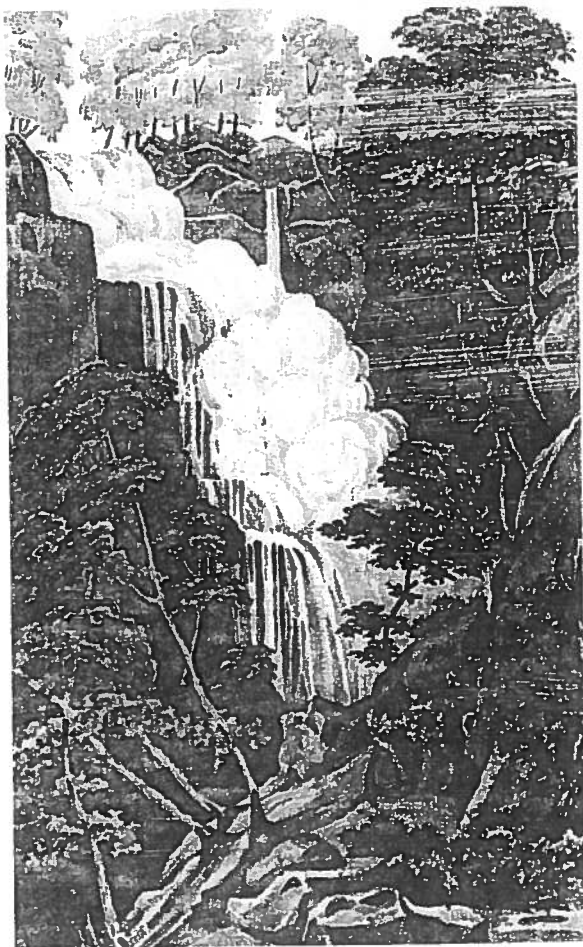
in one hotel the bard played an air from a modern opera instead of the traditional airs he was so interested in. Although in general he was impressed by the courtesy of the Welsh, on one occasion he met a couple of unsavoury characters on a deserted road, and regretted having packed his pistol away in the luggage sent on ahead. So, taking out his knife as if to sharpen his pencil, he nervously continued on his way, concluding eventually that they would not have been interested in him anyway as his tattered clothes and military moustaches made him look like a penniless artist.

However, his journey was rendered bearable by the frequency of good inns, for he comments, 'This is the only wild, picturesque country where one can find a good hotel every ten miles.' After a particularly exhausting day, with a twenty-one mile walk over sodden mountain passes, he reached the hotel at Capel Curig, where he found lashings of hot water, Windsor soap, lots of towels, a blazing fire and a good dinner. 'Perfection,' he exclaims.

Thiébault's passion seems to have been waterfalls, a lucky preference, since his two-week trip was marked by incessant rain. However, to his chagrin, the weather prevented him from climbing the mountains of Snowdonia. He glimpsed Snowdon in its splendour only once, when, accompanied by a well-travelled stranger, he surveyed the panorama from near Carnioge Mawr. Thiébault later became convinced that this chance encounter was with Wordsworth but, regretfully, research has concluded that he was mistaken.

Although Thiébault's main interest was in the grandeur of nature, he depicted such works of man as the Pont y Cysyllte viaduct, 'digne des romains', and Telford's new bridge to Anglesey. He sketched Sir Watkyn Williams-Wynn's summer house from the distance, and reports the anecdote of two Welshmen. One asks another, 'If God should die, what would become of us?' To which the other calmly replies, 'Well now, wouldn't we still have Sir Watkyn Williams-Wynn?'

He sketched most of the expected sites: the cottage of the ladies

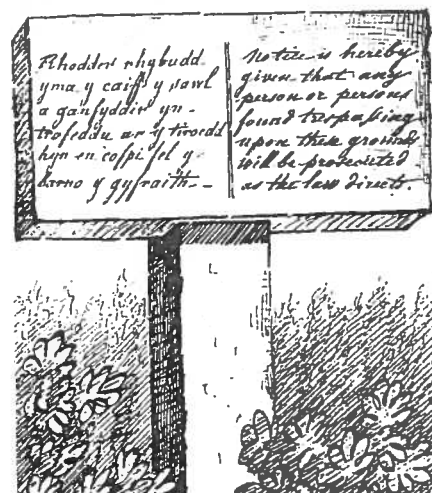


*'Cataracte de Pystyll-y-Cain or the spout of the river Cain'
sketched by Thiébault on the 25 September 1827*

of Llangollen, a view of the 'Belvedere called the Summer House on the crags above the Falls of the Llygwy', and Mr Ashton Smith's cottage opposite Dolbadarn castle. However, he omitted Hafod and merely lunched at the Devil's Bridge. He also noticed little details like a massive No Trespassing sign inscribed in both English and Welsh. In contrast to his tour of Scotland, where he had many family connections, Thiébauld visited few private houses, but he was invited to Goggerddan which he considered 'a pretty house, only rather small'. Most of his drawings are of rocky valleys and waterfalls, with the peak of enthusiasm reached when he was transfixed with admiration at Pistyll y Cain, near Dolgellau, 'Cette magnifique chute d'eau, au milieu des bois, dans une solitude profonde, vaut, à elle seule, le voyage... C'est la plus belle du pays de Galles.'

Thiébauld's volumes provide a charming glimpse of the dedicated tourist at work, clambering over hills, exhausted and drenched, in search of that special quality of wild beauty so characteristic of North Wales.

Illustrations courtesy of the Manuscripts Department, The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, USA.



THE ORCHARD AT PLAS TAN-Y-BWLCH Bettina Harden

As many of you may be aware, the Gwynedd Branch has been closely associated with the setting up of the Plas Tan-y-Bwlch Gardens Trust, officially launched in April last year. At the end of last year we donated the trees for an orchard in the gardens. This has now been planted and I thought it might interest members to have details of the trees selected.

The remarkable gardens at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch, set high above the River Dwyryd and the Vale of Maentwrog, were begun in 1798 by William Oakely on his marriage to the Welsh heiress Margaret Griffith. It is set on a series of huge terraces suspended on the steeply sloping sides of the valley and over the years was developed and enhanced with the wealth derived from the Oakely slate quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog. With the decline of the slate industry the estate too declined and the gardens began to revert to wilderness. This was arrested when the estate was acquired by the Snowdonia National Park as its Study Centre. The setting up of the Gardens Trust is the next step in restoring the gardens to their former glory.

In planning the orchard account was taken of the age of the gardens and the fact that their heyday was during the nineteenth century. The choice of apples and pears has been dictated by the aspect and rainfall of the site as well as taking account of species known to have been planted in local gardens. Wales is not generally known as being a good apple growing region and has few of the local species such occur widely in the West of England, for example. However, in the course of my researches I came across the following fascinating quote:

'The finest apples I have ever seen were grown on the slated roof of a shed in...Bodnant, near Conway. These were all standards planted against the wall of the shed, and the trees were trained over the roof.'

While not planted in the same style, we hope that the trees chosen for Plas Tan-y-Bwlch will do as well.

APPLES

Lord Derby A smooth green mid-season apple, raised by Mr Witham, a Stockport nurseryman in 1862. Turning yellow when

ripe, this cooking apple stays intact when cooked. It is known as a tree which never fails to crop.

Blenheim Orange This apple, together with Orleans Reinette, was considered by Edward Bunyard to be the best dessert apple of all. The Blenheim Orange was raised in 1740 by a tailor, George Kempster, in his garden at Manor Road, Old Woodstock, near Blenheim. It was a local marvel, with people coming in coachloads to see the tree and take scions of it. Known as Kempster's Pippin until 1811, it is an excellent choice for Apple Charlotte. It keeps well from November to February.

Orleans Reinette Jane Grigson wrote 'no wonder France sends us only her Golden Delicious. She has the sense to keep the Orleans...for herself.' An abundant tree, though not until it has established itself in size and age, the fruit has a rich flavour and is a delicious eating apple as well as cooked. Picked in October, the fruit should keep until January.

Rev W. Wilks Raised by Veitch's Nursery, King's Road, London, in 1904, this apple was named after the Vicar of Shirley, Surrey, who was Secretary of the RHS 1888-1919. A cross between the Ribston Pippin and Peasgood Nonsuch, the tree produces huge fruit which bake superbly. Pick in October and eat by November.

Ribston Pippin Thought to have been grown from a pip from Rouen in 1707, this fine apple was discovered at Ribston Hall, near Knaresborough, Yorkshire. Crisp, juicy and aromatic, a contemporary description says 'it is a little streaked with red towards the sun, and yellow on the other side. It is one of the best apples for eating and baking, and continues in use from the end of October till April. It bears very well as a dwarf, and no garden should be without it.' Modern suppliers state that it only lasts till February.

Charles Ross was the Head Gardener at Welford Park near Newbury from 1860 to 1908. He bred apples on a large scale and this is one of the 30 varieties he raised, a cross between Peasgood Nonsuch and Cox's Orange Pippin. A very handsome fruit, yellowish brown flushed with broken red stripes, it is sweet and flavoursome to eat. Picked in September, it keeps until November.

St Edmund's Pippin 'The best flavoured of all October apples',

this was raised by Mr R. Harvey in Bury St Edmunds, first recorded in 1875. A green fruit, overlain with orange brown russet, it bruises easily.

Dr Harvey A rich, yellow colour, with tender white, mealy flesh, this apple was first mentioned in 1629 and named for Dr Gabriel Harvey, Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. It was one of the most common apples available in Norwich market in the 1820s. Once the tree is a good size and age it is a good bearer of fruit. 'A splendid baking sort which does not 'fall' in cooking.' Picked in November, it will keep till March.

Red Ellison This is a scarlet fruit with an aniseed flavour, making an unusual eating apple. Ready in October, it won't keep beyond November.

Katy An early apple, ready in September, it does not keep long. The tree is a heavy cropper, producing big red fruit.

Irish Peach Greenish-yellow, striped and flushed with bronzy-red, this small apple does not look unlike a peach. With a spicy rich flavour, it is ready in August and Edward Bunyard recommended 'it is best to let fall by themselves upon a straw mulching.'

PEARS

One of the oldest garden fruits—Pliny mentions 20 varieties, and Virgil at least 5 or 6—all the pears selected were once grown at Wern, near Porthmadog. From garden records in the library at Nanhoron it is clear that a wide of variety of pears were grown successfully on espaliers in Wales in the 1770s.

Beurre Hardy A rich brown, shading to gold with melting, very juicy flesh. 'A grand grower with long, handsome foliage', † it crops in October.

Louise Bonne of Jersey Pale green fruit with a deep chocolate-crimson, sometimes scarlet flush. The white flesh is firm and juicy when ripe. A free-bearing tree. A nineteenth-century description ‡ calls it 'the Good Lewis Pear—the flesh of this pear is extremely tender, and full of very sweet juice. It is in eating about the middle of December.'

Pitmaston Duchess Pale green to yellow fruit with firm and juicy flesh. 'In good seasons it has a first-rate flavour but in cold years it is apt to be acid and poor.' † It is a good pear for bottling

and stewing. Popular in the last century, it possibly went out of fashion because of its tendency to develop 'pitstones'—hard little pieces in the flesh.

Williams' Bon Chretien Yellow, often with a carmine flush, this highly perfumed pear has melting and juicy flesh. It ripens about the middle of September. First mentioned in 1770, it is also known as the Bartlett Pear and was raised at Aldermaston, Berkshire.

Winter Nellis A pale yellowish-green fruit with patches of nut-brown, the flesh of this pear becomes slightly gritty towards the core.

CHERRIES

Both the cherries in the orchard were grown at Wern.

Bigarreau Gaucher Cropping in July/August, this is a large roundish cherry, almost black with a very dark-red flesh. A vigorous grower, this is a firm and juicy fruit of good quality.

Morello (outside to NE) An excellent tree on a north wall, the Morello is the best of the Sour Cherries. Deep red to black in colour, the deep crimson flesh has a rich slightly bitter-sweet flavour. A nineteenth century description † states it 'a very fine fruit when kept 'til the month of October and makes a very great addition to the dessert at that time of the year. This is the best cherry we have for preserving, and for making Cherry Brandy.'

All the trees for the orchard were supplied by Trewilmod Plants, Holyhead, Anglesey, Gwynedd. Tel: 01407 762837

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‡ *A Treatise on the Management and Culture of Fruit Trees*, William Forsyth, Gardener to His Majesty at Kensington and St James, London, 1803.

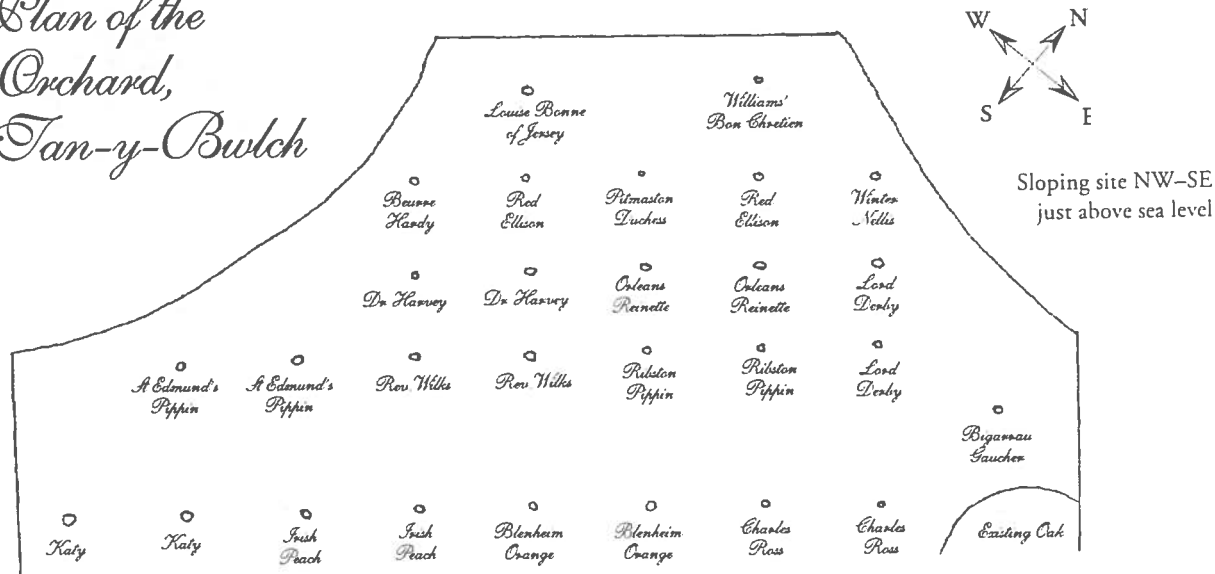
† *The Fruit Garden*, Edward Bunyard & Owen Thomas, Country Life, 1904.

The Anatomy of Dessert, Edward Bunyard, Chatto & Windus, 1933.

The R.H.S. Dictionary of Gardening Ed. Fred J. Chittenden, Oxford at The Clarendon Press, 1956.

Jane Grigson's Fruit Book, Michael Joseph, 1982.

Plan of the Orchard, Plas Tan-y-Bwlch



A Victorian Conservatory in Llandrindod Wells

by Anne Carter

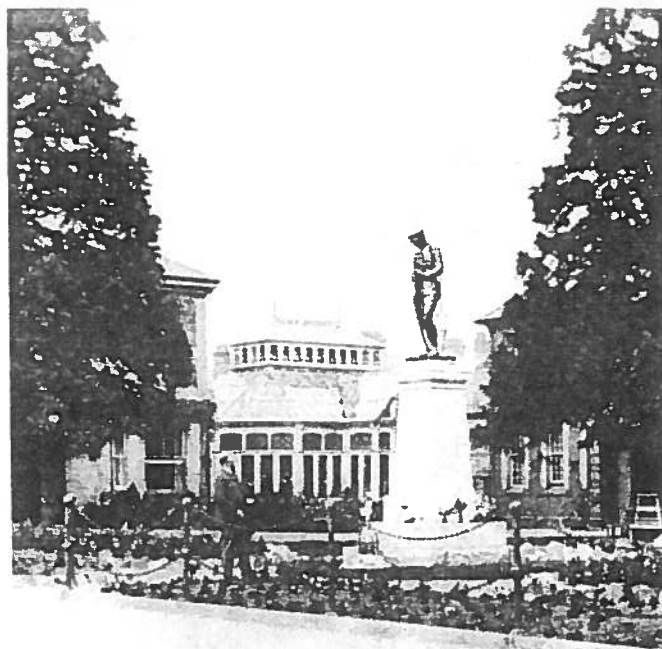
When William Bowen-Davies came to Llandrindod Wells in 1872, the place was hardly more than a hamlet. The nearest GP was at Crossgates, four miles away, and contemporary maps of the area show a high proportion of the surrounding land depressingly labelled 'bog'. But as young Dr Bowen-Davies rode for miles among the hills, visiting patients rich and poor, he cherished the belief that Llandrindod could become one of the foremost health resorts in the country.

He worked tirelessly to promote the spa, sending saline water from the old Pump Well to Frankfurt, to compete with German waters, where it won a medal. He became Llandrindod's first Medical Officer of Health and, later, Chairman of the newly created Urban District Council. In 1910, two years after his death, his substantial stone house, Brynarlais, became the Town Hall. What was once its garden now contains the Museum, built in 1911, a public lavatory, the remains of a short-lived bandstand and the War Memorial, but a number of fine trees survive and the path which people take from the town centre to the Public Library beyond has recently acquired a not inelegant new footbridge over the stream.

Building his house must have been one of the doctor's first concerns when he arrived in this remote area. It is a solid, foursquare stone building, very suitable for a man whose household was to include a wife and six children. But Bowen-Davies was also a botanist of distinction. His obituary says that he knew the habitat of every flower and rare fern among the local hills. And so, quite naturally, he built himself a large conservatory, attached to the house. It was designed—most probably by himself, possibly in collaboration with his architect—in the style of a Chinese rockery garden, using stone brought from Derbyshire. The windows were decorated with stained glass and it was a home for birds as well as tropical plants. A photograph of the doctor shows him apparently working at his desk in the conservatory, which suggests that the birds are likely to have been caged.

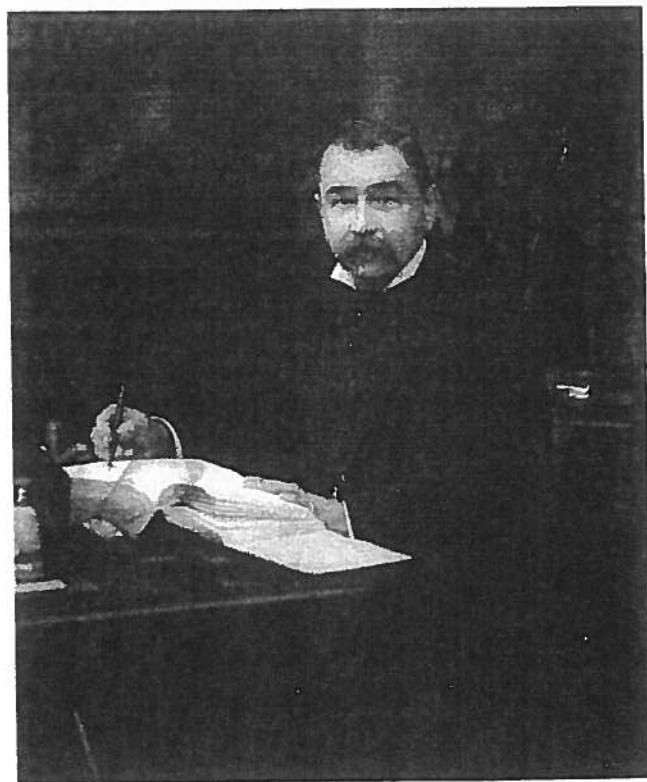
The only part of the design which is not natural stone is a small pillar of rough concrete by the door into the house. This was the Bowen-Davies' family tree and on it the doctor recorded the names and birthdays of his children. Tucked so deeply into a hollow behind it as to be scarcely visible, is a roosting concrete owl, made for the youngest child. When the door was in place, it must have been easier to find. But the other inhabitant, a frog which is rumoured to exist somewhere among the miniature cliffs and caverns, has so far escaped detection.

Heating was by 6 inch pipes laid under grilles in the tiled floor and the boiler probably housed in a building behind the rear wall, in what was then the kitchen yard. From the doors opening onto the garden, before the building of the Metropole Hotel and the streets on that side of the town, the doctor must



The Conservatory as it was.

have had a fine south-westerly view over the countryside towards Builth. Today, although the rockwork itself is partially sheltered by a glass roof and generously planted in the summer, which makes it a pleasant place to sit, the outlook is more circumscribed. But the good doctor would probably be pleased to think that it was still giving pleasure, while if his ghost were to pass the blocked door into the house it might amuse him to find himself, not in his drawing room but in the tourist office.



Dr Bowen-Davies at his desk in the conservatory.

Photographs courtesy of Llandrindod Wells Museum.

Leeswood Proposal Rejected

The outcome of the public inquiry into the planning application for the development of a Welsh cob breeding and schooling centre within the Leeswood Conservation Area has set a very important precedent for all Garden Trusts. It is the first time in Wales that the CADW/ICOMOS Register has been taken into account in a planning application of this kind, where the proposed development would affect the setting and gardens rather than the actual buildings of an historic site. The Secretary of State's rejection of the application on the grounds that it would detract from the Stephen Switzer landscape is therefore of the utmost importance to the future of gardens and designed landscapes everywhere.

It is a matter of importance, also, that the Clwyd Branch of WHGT, the Garden History Society and the Georgian Group were joined in their opposition to the proposed development by Delyn Borough Council and by Clwyd County Council. The statement by a member of Delyn Planning Department that: 'The case highlights the increasing importance attached to historic parks and gardens when determining planning applications' and that 'the importance of affording such landscapes statutory protection...is stressed by this decision,' should be engraved above the doors of every planning office in the country.

On the down side, just to prove that nobody is perfect, this same Delyn Borough Council has approved an application for an amenity site off the access road to Leeswood.

WHGT and the Garden History Society have asked for a proposed golf course at Bodelwyddan Castle to be called in, but have heard nothing as yet.

rhododendrons, accompanied by two men to plant them.

That our tour will be conducted by Lord Anglesey is a rare treat in itself. We are planning lunch after the tour and members will be able to visit the house in the afternoon. Details of the cost of lunch etc will be finalised after the National Trust reopens in March.

Thursday 18th May 10.00 am-4.00 pm. The Plant Fair, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Glynllifon, nr. Caernarvon. For details see advertisement on page 2.

Friday 16th June 11.00 am. Tour of the Gardens at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch, Maentwrog.

The visit will provide an opportunity to see the restoration work being carried out, especially the newly planted Sunny Border. We shall also have the chance to meet Lord Ellis-Thomas, President of the Plas Tan-y-Bwlch Gardens Trust, who will join us for lunch.

Meet 11.00 am for coffee and an introduction to the gardens by David Jeffries, the Gardens Administrator, followed by a tour of the gardens. After lunch, members are welcome to make longer excursions into the woods around the Plas. The charge of £8 includes coffee and two-course lunch.

WEST GLAMORGAN

A visit to the Gnoll gardens, Neath, in their autumn colours and a tour of the outstanding renovation works being carried out to the cascades and ponds was a highlight of October's programme.

The Branch looks forward to its AGM in July, which will be followed by a tour of the restored landscape features.

On November 11 the year's final event was a stimulating talk by Richard Morris on the gardens at Penllergare. An exhibition in the foyer showed the history of the gardens and featured the scale model of the orchid house.

Forthcoming events 1995:

Saturday 13 May: Clyne Gardens, Swansea. Annual pilgrimage around the rhododendrons and azaleas in this delightful valley, with informed commentary by Ivor Stokes. Meet 'Woodman' car park 2.00 pm.

June Penllergare. To be arranged.

Thursday 6 July: AGM, followed by tour of completed landscape renovations at the Gnoll gardens. New Visitor Centre, 6.00 pm.

CARMARTHEN INQUIRY

Dinefwr Park The Trust has made a formal objection to a planning application for a golf course on Dinefwr Home Farm which occupies a great part of the park. A Public Inquiry will be held on 28th March 1995.

CEREDIGION

Trawsgoed The recording group is writing up the data gathered during last summer and hopes to have its report ready soon. This will prove an important record at a turning point in the history of Trawsgoed. Present indications are that the Welsh Office Agriculture Department (WOAD) will have moved out by July 1995. No further information is available on the future of the house and estate.

Llanerchaeron The National Trust is to stage a grand opening of that property on 9th May 1995, and an Open Day on 15th July. Between those dates the Ceredigion Branch plans to hold a Day School jointly with the Ceredigion Antiquarian Society, as an up-date of the highly successful (and over-subscribed) event of last year. The Geler Jones collection of farm implements is to be housed at Llanerchaeron. An exhibition on John Nash, the architect of the house, is being prepared by the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

CLWYD GUEST LECTURE

'Mrs Delany - her life and her flowers' by Ruth Hayden, Leeswood Hall, Saturday 11th March 1995, 2.30 pm. To be followed by Clwyd Branch AGM Members £3.50 Non-members £5.00 including afternoon tea.

GWYNEDD EVENTS

Thursday 16 March, 5.30 pm. The Horticultural Books in the University of North Wales Collection. University College of North Wales Science Library, Deiniol Rd. Bangor. A chance to see some of the University's collection of nearly 200 books covering all aspects of horticulture, introduced by Paul Rolfe.

Sunday 30th April, 11.15 am. Tour of the Gardens at Plas Newydd, Llanfairpwll, Anglesey. The bones of the landscape at Plas Newydd are still those of Humphrey Repton's plans, made in 1798. The woodland he created, enhanced by the first Marquess after 1815, provide perfect sheltered conditions for azaleas, Japanese maples, magnolias and camellias planted in the 1920s and 30s and added to considerably in recent years. Lord Anglesey's passion for rhododendrons was sparked by a wonderful wedding present from the late Lord Aberconway—each spring, for three or four years, a lorry would arrive from Bodnant loaded with

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The Bulletin: Anne Carter, Bettws Mill, Hundred House,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5RP
(01982 570 279)

Branch Support and Membership Lists

The Trust Secretary can now produce up-to-date Membership Lists and addresses, county by county, for Branch officers who need them. He can also produce 'sticky labels' to match the lists.

Membership renewal reminders are only now being sent out, rather slowly, to members (not subscribing by Bankers Standing Order) whose subscriptions are in arrears, and the membership lists now being produced may therefore include a few members who are behindhand with their subs. We assume that many of these are still supporting the Trust. In March, we will review the lists and members whose subscriptions are then more than six months in arrears will not receive future publications.

Professional Training Course 2nd-6th October 1995
Wildlife Enhancement in Historic Gardens and Parklands
Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, Blaenau Ffestiniog,
Gwynedd LL41 3YU

The aim of this course is to allow participants to integrate appropriate horticultural and wildlife management techniques in order to enhance the conservation as well as the amenity and education value of their sites.

The course is open to the staff and managers of gardens and grounds of former large estates and mansions who recognise the wildlife value their sites offer and who wish to conserve and enhance that value.

“*G*od Almighty first
planted a garden. And indeed it is
the purest of human pleasures.”

— Francis Bacon: Essays

Books on garden design, studies of great gardens and gardeners, and the most important works of landscape history are offered at:

Peter J. Hadley, Bookseller
132 Corve Street, Ludlow, Shropshire

Where a selective range of literature and works on the visual and decorative arts may also be viewed.

Open 10am-5pm, Monday through Saturday; those travelling a distance are advised to telephone in advance and ascertain any temporary deviations from these hours. Catalogues are issued, and elusive titles sought upon your request.

telephone (0584) 874441 facsimile (0584) 873027