

AUTUMN 2000

HINDES AND WILLIAMSON:

Early Welsh Nursery Gardeners

by Thomas Lloyd

Commercial nursery gardens appeared relatively late in Wales. John Harvey, in his deeply-researched *Early Nurserymen* (Phillimore, 1974), says of the period 1791-1800 (the last decade he covers) "...at this point may be mentioned one of the very few nurserymen in Wales, Thomas Vickers, who was gardener, nurseryman and seedsman at Holywell, Flintshire, in 1795...". Harvey notes that Vickers was later to be known for cultivating the Cambrian plum, but has nothing else to say about Wales at all.

This is probably not surprising for two reasons. Firstly, the gradually increasing wealth and sophistication of the Welsh gentry was only by the end of the eighteenth century providing a strong enough infrastructure for quality tradesmen to become established locally and secondly, until the appearance of local newspapers (first seen in 1804 with *The Cambrian* in Swansea), the most effective form of advertising – and of our present-day evidence – was lacking.

One nursery business that sprang up shortly after 1800 and flourished until 1850 has left a body of evidence to merit particular attention. This was the Felindre nursery, in the village of that name a few miles east of Newcastle Emlyn in Carmarthenshire. It bursts upon the scene, fully formed, in 1808, with an advertisement in *The Cambrian* of 11 November announcing that the proprietor, Philip Hindes, had five thousand transplanted forest trees for sale, together with seedling Scotch firs, flowering shrubs and evergreens.

The extent of this business is fully made clear in the first of two remarkable printed catalogues (see illustration), only one copy of which has so far been found (NLW Maesnewydd 155). The catalogue shows the wide range of trees under cultivation – British native trees, as well as ornamental evergreen oaks, variegated hollies, cypresses, cedars and apple trees and more exotic flowering specimens such as arbutus, and tulip trees; also ranges of flowering shrubs, including rhododendrons, azaleas, kalmias, different kinds of cistus and heathers. The prices are particularly valuable to have, being regarded as cheap (see below), while the (unspecified) types of rhododendron, then quite newly introduced, underline the quality of the business. The catalogue, annotated by Hindes to serve as an invoice, indicates that the nurseryman was able to deliver to the purchaser – Mr. James Morgan of Maesnewydd in the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r-glyn, mid Cardiganshire – the extremely large order of over eight thousand five hundred trees, together with a number of shrubs. A letter from Hindes on the back of the catalogue gives instruction on planting and also refers to the difficulty of transporting such a great number of plants on the roads of the day:

"...I have placed them as secure as I could but as the loads are so large, I found it difficult to send them as safe as I could wish..."

In May 1813 the nursery was visited by the Reverend Walter Davies who subsequently wrote an important account of it in his *General View of the Agriculture and Domestic Economy of South Wales*

(London, 1815: Vol II, pp.36-38). From him we know that Hindes was the largest nurseryman of several in the district, rearing hundreds of thousands of seedling trees on eighteen acres. In the year of his visit, Hindes sold 576,365 forest saplings, 1506 apple, plum and cherry trees, and 725 flowering shrubs. Davies also notes that the scale of the operation meant that Hindes could offer very low prices and undersell his rivals (for example, James Evans who was working an 8 acre nursery just over the fence) and that "gentlemen who formerly reared their own plants from seed, or procured seedling plants from Scotland etc, now find it more convenient and advantageous to purchase transplanted trees by the thousand." Hindes gave Davies an inventory of his stock for the coming season, totalling the astonishing figure of 2,640,700 saplings and seedlings, ranging from 500,000 oaks and pines down to 200 plane trees of up to 9 foot

Sometime around 1820, Hindes took a Mr. Williamson into the partnership. Thus in the advertisement that appears in *The Carmarthen Journal* of 17 October 1823 we read that Hindes and Williamson have for sale "an extensive and healthy assortment of fruit and forest trees, evergreen and flowering shrubs, thorns etc." Evidence of their business in this period can be found in account books for Picton Castle near Haverfordwest (in the library at Picton), in which four large payments for trees appear (but it should be noted, well interspersed with payments to nurserymen from Bristol and London). In 1841 an entry in the Picton accounts is in name of Mr. Williamson only, suggesting that Philip Hindes had by then either retired or died. In 1848 the business is being run by William Hindes. In that year the latter sent a copy of his then current catalogue with hand-written prices to William Gwynne of Court, Llanychaer, near Fishguard (NLW Trenchydd 8th series 792), which reveals that the range of ornamental trees, shrubs and climbers in stock had increased considerably since 1809, reflecting the much stronger floral and garden tastes of the time. There were now fifteen specified varieties of rhododendron, some highly priced, such as Smith's Scarlet, costing five shillings each. To cater for this, the area of land under cultivation had expanded fourfold to 74 acres, as noted below. This catalogue, which runs to two full pages of closely typed lists in three columns, is also the only known survivor to date, but surely others will turn up.

In 1850, however, newspaper advertisements bring the story to a close. In *The Pembrokeshire Herald* of 31 May and in *The Welshman* of 7 June, the "...old established ground, now in the occupation of William Hindes, is to let...". Then in *The Welshman* of 14 June, announcement is made that the nursery stock is to be auctioned. No reason is yet known for this, and nothing further is heard until *The Welshman* of 11 June 1852, when the "...old established nursery, covering 74 acres, properly arranged by the late Messrs Hindes and Williamson..." is to be sold.

The site now is covered by the council housing estate in Felindre.

CATALOGUE

OF

FOREST TREES,

Flowering Shrubs, Evergreens, &c.

Mr J. Morgan
1809

SOLE BY

PH. HINDES,

Feb 22nd At Helindre, near Newcastle-Emlyn,

	25 Balm of Gilead fir	15/-		3.9
	1 Variegated Holly	3/6		6.0
	Red Virginian Cedars	1/-		6.0
	2 Rubras & Planca	2/6		5.0
	Silver Fir.....1 to 2 Feet.....	15s. # 100		
	Spruce do.....1 to 2 Feet.....	80s. — 1000		
<i>3000</i>	Scotch do.....5 Years Old.....	70s. — 1000		6.6.0
	Do.....4 Do.....	50s. — 1000		
	Do.....3 Do.....	35s. — 1000		
<i>25</i>	Weymouth Pine. 2 Feet.....	15s. — 100		3.9
	Larch.....5 Years, 6 Feet.....	10s. — 100		
<i>3000</i>	Do.....4 Do. 3 to 4 Feet.....	60s. — 1000		6.6.0
	Do.....3 Do. 2 to 3 Feet.....	42s. — 1000		
	Spanish Chesnuts 4 to 6 Feet.....	15s. — 100		
<i>6</i>	Horse Do. 2 to 4 Feet.....	9s. to 10s. 6d. — 100		6
	Hombams.....4 to 6 Feet.....	12s. — 100		
	Elms in Sorts.. 4 to 7 Feet.....	10s. 6d. to 21s. — 100		
	Beech.....3 to 4 Feet.....	50s. to 70s. — 1000		
	Birch.....2 to 4 Feet.....	60s. — 1000		
	Sycamore.....2 to 5 Feet.....	25s. to 30s. — 1000		
<i>6</i>	Poplars in Sorts 4 to 8 Feet.....	25s. to 30s. — 100		1.6
<i>500</i>	Ash.....2 to 5 Feet.....	30s. to 50s. — 1000		15.0
	Do. Mountain. 4 to 6 Feet.....	8s. to 10s. 6d. — 100		
<i>2000</i>	Oaks.....2 to 3 Feet.....	42s. to 50s. — 1000		3.6.0
	Seedling Scotch Fir very fine.....	10s. — 1000		
	Apple Trees One Year grafted.....	50s. — 100		

£17.19.6

Evergreen Oaks, Turkey Oaks, American Oaks, Cypresses in Sorts, Cedars in Sorts, Junipers, Arbor Vitae in Sorts, Cistus in Sorts, Variegated Hollies in Sorts, Sweet Bays, Phillyreas in Sorts, Alaternus in Sorts, Aristoteias, Arbutus's in Sorts, Laurels and Laurentines in Sorts, Daphnea Colina, Do. Cneorum, Rhododendrons in Sorts, Andromedas in Sorts, Azalias in Sorts, Kalmia's in Sorts, Mespilus's in Sorts, Carolina Alsipce, Tulip Trees, Gleditsia Triacanthus, Some Heaths, with a Number of other Articles.

Orders addressed to P. HINDES, will be punctually attended to.

A.B. 1 Hedgehog Holly — — — — — *2/6* — — — — — *2.6*
J. EVANS, PRINTER, PRIORY-STREET, CARMARTHEN.
£18.1.0

Reproduced by kind permission of the National Library of Wales.

Sir
As you be at home will you see that the evergreens are enclosed with care, the Hollies requires dry ground & the others likes the Black & Maggy Earth. I have placed them as secure as I can, but as the loads are so large I found it difficult to send them as safe as I could wish. your future orders will oblige
Sir your obed^t Serv^t
P. Hinds

A note from Philip Hinds on the back of the order of 1809, reproduced above.

HARDY ORNAMENTAL TREES, SHRUBS, EVERGREENS, & AMERICAN PLANTS.

Each	Doz.	100.	Each	Doz.	100.	Each	Doz.	100.
Acacia, or Locust	1/1		Daphne Cneorum	1/1		Pyrus Japonica, Red	1/1	
Alaternus, broad-leaved	1/1		Variegated	1/1		White	3/6	
Narrow, ditto	1/1		Elder, Parsley-leaved			Spectabilis	1/1	
Golden ditto	1/1		Elm, Weeping	2/6		Ribes, Golden Currant	1/1	6
Althaea Fruiter	1/1		Gale, Fern-leaved	1/1		Red ditto	1/1	6
Andromeda, in sorts	1/1		Guelder, Rose, Snow-ball	1/1	6	Rhodora Canadensis	1/1	10/
Amom. Dwarf	1/1	6	Hearths, in sorts	1/1		Rhododendron Ponticum	1/1	10/ 60/
Amorpha Frubiosa	1/1		Hollies, variegated, in sorts	1/6		Alta clerense	3/6	
Arbutus	1/1		Honey-suckle, in sorts	1/1	6	Azalioides	1/1	10/
Arborvitae, in sorts	1/1		Jasmine, in sorts	1/1		Atrovirens	2/6	
Atcuba Japonica	2/1		Juniper, Swedish	1/1		Catawbiense	3/6	
Ash, Weeping	2/1		Ivy, Irish	1/1	4	Dauricum	2/6	
Azalea, early White	1/1		Kalmia Latifolia	2/6		Gold blotch'd	3/6	
Late, ditto	1/1		Augustifolia	1/1		Gold striped	1/1	
Scarlet	2/6		Glauca	1/1		Ferrugineum	1/1	10/
Nosegay	1/6		Rubra	1/1		Hirsutum	1/1	10/
Pink	1/6		Nana	1/1		Magnoliæfolium	3/6	
Yellow	1/1		Laburnum, in sorts	1/1	4	Maximum	2/6	
Bay, Sweet	1/1		Laurel, Common	1/1		Roseum	2/6	
Beech, Purple	1/6		Portugal	1/1	6	Silver Striped	2/6	
Copper	1/6		Narrow-leaved	1/1		Smith's Scarlet	1/1	5/
Fern-leaved	1/6		Laurestinus, in sorts	1/1	6	Rose Acacia		
Barberries, in sorts	1/1	6	Ledum, Palestini	1/1		Roses, in sorts	1/1	6
Box Tree	1/1	6	Thymacfolia	1/1		Rosemary	1/1	6
Variegated	1/1	6	Lilac, Purple	1/1	6	Snowberry	1/1	6
Miroca	1/1		Siberian	1/1		Syringa	1/1	
Dwarf, for hedges	3/6		Persian	1/1		Service, in sorts	1/1	
Broom, White	1/1		Lime Tree	1/1		Sycamore, variegated	1/1	
Yellow Portugal	1/1		Yellow-barked	1/1		Gold blotch'd	1/1	
Briars, Sweet	1/1	6	Maple, Norway	1/1	6	Tamarish, French	1/1	6
Candleberry Myrtle	1/1		Mountain Ash	1/1		German	1/1	6
Cedar, Red Virginian	1/1		Mespilus, in sorts	1/1	6	Thorns, Scarlet	1/1	
Calycantha Allspice	1/1		Oak, Evergreen	1/1		American	1/1	
Cypress, Upright	1/1		Lucombs	1/6		Yellow fruited	1/1	
Cistus, in sorts	1/1		Scarlet	1/1		Double blossom	1/1	
Clematis, Double Purple	2/1		Turkey	1/1	6	Arbutus leaved	1/1	
Sweet Scented	1/1		Phillirea, in sorts	1/1		Variegated Dogwood	1/1	6
Clethra Alnifolia	1/1		Pyracantha, Evergreen thorn	1/1		Virginian Creeper	1/1	6
Corchoros Japonica	1/1	6	Plane	1/1		Willow, Weeping	1/1	6
Cornus or Dogwood	1/1	6	Privet, Evergreen	1/1		Yew	1/6	3/6
Daphne Mererion	1/1		Variegated	1/1				

A part of William Hinde's catalogue of 1848 shows a wide range of ornamental plants, some of which may survive in gardens to this day. Reproduced by kind permission of the National Library of Wales.

Advance Notice - Glasshouses Study Day 2001

Do not fail to mark your diaries for the forthcoming event. Further details of the day and of additional speakers will appear in the booking leaflet to accompany the next Bulletin.

WELSH HISTORIC GARDENS TRUST
In association with The Museum of Welsh Life

GLASSHOUSES

at
The Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagans
Saturday 28th April, 2001
Principal Speakers

May Woods:
Glasshouses from Orangeries to the Millenium Dome

Elizabeth Whittle:
South Wales Glasshouses

Contact Ros Laidlaw, Ty Leri, Talybont, Ceredigion SY24 5ER

Note: Members who missed the W.H.G.T. study day **Knots and Parterres** at St Fagan's last summer have a second opportunity to hear these talks when the event is repeated as a part of the Clwyd Branch programme on Saturday 7 April 2001 at Bodysgallen Hall, Llandudno. Contact Elizabeth Bartlett 01352 758023

The Knotty Problems of Spelling - Extracts from a Correspondence

To The Editor of The Bulletin

Dear Dr Palmer

I think that you will agree that it is important these days that every effort be made to spell Welsh place-names correctly and I know how difficult that is, even for native Welsh speakers. I have noticed some misspellings in *The Bulletin* without making any comments, but Penllergare is such a glaring one. The name has always been written Penllergaer, although Penlle'r-gaer would be more correct – the place at the top of the fort. The latter is given in the late Dr Elwyn Davies's *A Gazetteer of Welsh Place-names*, which is the accepted authority on place-name spelling. If you follow him you will be safe, and above any criticism on the matter of spelling Welsh place-names, as there so often is!

Yours &c. Dillwyn Miles F.R.Hist.S., F.S.A.

Dear Caroline Palmer

I do not think that the spelling of Welsh place-names is as complicated as you make out. Of course there are different spellings over the centuries, as in the case of English names. Haverfordwest is spelt Averford in 1228, Havreford (1289), Hareford (1283), Herefordwest (1471), Harffort (1597), Harfett (1755), and so on, but it is now Haverfordwest. Likewise Llanychlydog, in this county, appears as Lannewloydak in 1291, Lann'loy dauk (1315) &c., &c. Where changes have been made recently it is because the meanings of the names have been realised, or discovered. Llanaeron, 'the church of the fruit', apart from sounding silly, was a corruption of Llanerchaeron, 'the glade where the fruit grows'.

I do not follow your statement that 'estates have retained the traditional spelling for the estate name and yet adopted the "correct" Welsh spelling as their village name. Trawsgoed was always Trawsgoed: the family claims descent from Morus Fychan (Fychan 'small', was corrupted into Vaughan) and Trawsgoed was anglicised into Crosswood, Nercwys was Nerchgoys (1398), Nerthkwys (1492), Nerquis (1533), &c. There is no difference in spelling between a house and a village and therefore Penllergaer is Penllergaer, pen + lle + caer, 'the head or end of the place of the fort', wherever it is.

Dillwyn Miles

Dear Dillwyn Miles

Thank you for your recent letter. I agree that every effort should be made to spell and indeed punctuate correctly, and that at times I fall short of spotting every error in what is a rapidly produced, multi-author newsletter.

However I believe that the Welsh language issue which you raise is more complicated than it at first appears. Often Welsh estates were known, through documentary sources, and to their owners, by anglicised spelling. These spellings became for generations, the accepted and published name. I am not at all convinced that I would be correct to alter these names of estates, from that adopted in the manuscripts submitted to me.

Your comments on the spelling of Penllergare should perhaps be addressed to the author of the recent book of that name, and to the Friends of Penllergare. However it is the tip of an iceberg. Not everyone is happy that the National Trust received the gift of Llanaeron from its owner, and promptly rechristened it Llanerchaeron. Other estates have retained the traditional spelling for the estate name and yet the 'correct' Welsh spelling has been adopted as their village name. Thus we had (until recently) Crosswood at Trawsgoed, we have Nerquis at Nercwys; is not is Penllergare in a similar category? Researchers depend upon following the then accepted name, which is sometimes entirely English (e.g. Castle Hill) rather than the correct Welsh in searching documentary sources.

Caroline Palmer

Dear Madam

I have been sent a copy of the letter from Dillwyn Miles regarding the spelling of Penllergare and the name of the family. May I please be permitted to comment as the author of *Penllergare – A Victorian Paradise*, as a researcher on John Dillwyn Llewelyn for some thirty years, and also married to a member of the family.

The name Penllergare was used consistently by the family in the 19th century, and appears spelled as such in the Will of Colonel John Llewelyn of Ynisgerwn and Penllergare, who willed the estates to John Dillwyn Llewelyn. An earlier Will, 1783 of Gryffydd Price, passing the estates to his cousin, also John Llewelyn and father of the Colonel, also uses Penllergare. I have also read a document in the National Library of Wales, c1710 where it is Penllergare. Moreover the Estate Office seal is Penllergare even today. It was certainly never spelled "Penlle'r-gaer", at any stage by the family though Thereza did use Penllergaer, but in the 20th century. And of course the current Village was originally Cors-einon/Gorseinon.

Richard Morris

Richard Morris to Dillwyn Miles

My concern with Penllergare is that history must not be altered. Only American film directors can do this and win the war for us! Maps are not always accurate either. Where I work, the Greater London map marks a building as belonging to my university whereas it belongs to another. *Burke's Peerage* certainly gets it wrong: the incorrect date for Lady Elisabeth Talbot's death (mother of Henry Fox Talbot): her name is spelled with a Z instead of an S; they miss out one of Sir J T D Llewelyn's sons. Put not your trust in the written word.

Even the name Dillwyn, settled on two L's by the 18th century, was variously spelled Dilwyn, Deulwyn etc in old documents. I would use these spellings if referring to that particular person. So I really do believe that, whatever the correct modern translation may be for the fort on the hill, and JDL was very aware of the origins of the name, it was never used by the family and one cannot, in retrospect, alter the name of their house and property

I used to live in a 17th century house, where Sir Isaac Walton fished, called Black Potts, after the colour of the old eel pots. I would have been very upset if anyone said it should be spelled, in retrospect, Black POTS – that being the modern spelling!!!! I have a letter from a very distinguished Librarian of the NLW in the early 1930's to Rice Dillwyn and Sir Charles DVLI, referring to the Diaries of Lewis Weston Dillwyn, that were being transcribed. He stated that you must never alter the names, even if they are spelled differently today. I do hope you see my argument!

Richard Morris

Madam

In concert with my fellow-director, Richard Morris – I cannot accept for a moment Mr Miles's contention that the name of John Dillwyn Llewelyn's estate has always been written *Penllergaer*: not so! *Pace* Dr Elwyn Davies, here is some more evidence in favour of Penllergare, starting with Bowen's map of 1729.

Moving on the name appears on the 1813 – 14 Old Series of Ordnance Survey 1-inch maps. The same nomenclature is used in the tithe surveys of 1838. The Ordnance Survey 25-inch scale map of 1876 and the 6-inch of 1884 introduce a minor variation with *Penller-gare*, but it was not until the second edition of the 25-inch – in 1916 – the *Penllergaer* appeared, by which time there was also an adjacent village of that name.

So, although *Penllergaer* is the accepted usage today, it is self-evidently not historically correct. We therefore take the view that, in seeking to further the restoration of J D Llewelyn's landscape in the picturesque style, it is entirely proper that we should use the name that he, himself, used for his estate. In that regard it is also worth confirming that the Llewelyn family trusts and companies continue to this day to use the spelling of *Penllergare* in their titles.

Yours faithfully

M C Norman

Company Secretary. Friends of Penllergare

Dear Dr Palmer

That I should have stimulated a 'vigorous debate' on the spelling of Welsh place-names, as you state in your editorial comments, I find difficult to understand. There is a standard way of writing English place-names and there is a standard way of writing Welsh place-names, which I tried to point out to you by drawing your attention, for ease of reference, to Dr Elwyn Davies's *Gazeteer of Welsh Place-names* which was prepared by the Language and Literature Committee of the Board of Celtic Studies and published by the University of Wales Press.

One wonders therefore what you mean by saying that the 'topic opens a substantial can of worms' and what you have in mind by inviting your readers to contribute to the debate. How many of our members are sufficiently erudite to joust with such eminent scholars as Sir Ifor Williams, Dr Melville Richards and a host of other professors of Welsh who have studied the language. And who is to decide 'when and whether to correct the spelling' in line with the *Gazeteer*.

Dillwyn Miles

An Archivist's Perspective

Dear Madam

On the subject of Penllergare – to give the point of view which I held as an archivist – The spelling used by a family for the name of its seat is the form that should always be respected, retained and used. I would therefore use the form Penllergare for the house and its estate. On the other hand, for the neighbouring village a different form might now be deemed to be correct, probably Penlle'r-gaer.

Patricia Moore

Afterword

The Editor has now realized that this topic was most authoritatively explored, as it pertains to the WHGT's objectives to produce a gazeteer of historic Welsh gardens, in an article which appeared in *The Bulletin of Spring 1994* under the title *What's in a Name* by Donald Moore. At the end of a thoughtful treatment, which directs the reader to the *A Gazeteer of Welsh Place Names* by Elwyn Davies, *Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units* by Melville Richards, *A List of Welsh Place Names* by Gwyn Ellis (NLW Pictures and Maps manuscript 1968), and an article of his own in *The Indexer* 15, 1, pp3-8, Donald Moore concludes as follows: To sum up, a garden should be listed under its best historic form, as used by the family or institution chiefly concerned. Alternative versions should follow, and cross-references should be given elsewhere in the list, where widely different names are recorded. The location should be the modern form of the place-name, followed by a four or six figure map reference.

Caroline Palmer

Breaking down the barriers



To date the Gateway Project has enabled access to Welsh historic parks and gardens for almost 2,500 people from the very young to people in their nineties, from all parts of Wales, from inner-city ethnic communities to rural-Welsh speaking ones. For many it was their first visit to a garden and their first opportunity to be included in the appreciation of such beauty. Most have already asked for such an experience to be repeated in 2001.

However the tasks set out for the Gateway Project have not been as straightforward as you may assume. Gardens may advertise the provision of disabled access, but in reality few gardens professionally open to the public in Wales have disabled access to be proud of. Disabled people would like to enjoy access to garden heritage with the *same* level of service as anyone else visiting a garden from refreshments in the tearoom to joining in a garden tour.

Only when accompanying such groups with special needs do the difficulties become apparent. We have yet to find a garden that produces maps or guides for disabled people showing pathways, gradient, seating and possible hazards such as quality of path surfaces or parts of the garden where visually-impaired people may need assistance. To offer a few examples, during the past year the Gateway team has struggled to push wheelchairs along dangerously uneven paths, searched in vain for benches on which the elderly or infirm can take a rest. On slippery stone steps we have been in desperate need of handrails such as those at Snowhill Manor in

Gloucestershire which in no way detract from the garden's beauty. We'd also very much like to see 'Table Service on Request' signs for disabled visitors in self-service tea rooms throughout Wales. In the year 2000 there are gardens with no disabled toilets at all or in which the toilet deemed suitable for the disabled has no wheelchair turning circle.

Yet Government statistics show that there are more than 8 million disabled people in the UK with a spending power of more than £40 billion a year. If the economic implications of offering improved access don't cause a stir then legal requirements might. As part of the Disability Discrimination Act, from 2004 service providers will also have to make "reasonable adjustments" to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.

Physical barriers such as wheelchairs ramps or decent paths aren't the only barriers to garden heritage appreciation becoming a socially inclusive activity. Even fewer gardens freely offer intellectual access through garden interpretation, be it a guided tour or garden leaflet, to those who have had little opportunity to appreciate horticulture, or history, let alone the two subjects combined. When we've requested garden tours we've had some discouraging responses: "No-one's asked us that for years", "We don't do garden tours" or "That'll cost you £50, or £11 a head" There are, however, a handful of gardens offering free or low-cost garden tours. The free guided tours given to Gateway Project groups at Margam Park, St Fagan's Castle, Aberglasney and Dyffryn have been truly inspirational.

Very few gardens offer intellectual access for schoolchildren. There's such a lack of garden information for children that the Gateway Project team has been busy devising garden information sheets with quizzes, wordsearches and other activities such as collage cards. For as we have discovered, children do actually *enjoy* visiting gardens just as they enjoy visiting museums and country houses but with the added bonus of being able to run around in traffic free green space! Museums and country houses are doing all they can to attract a younger audience. And if we are to protect and preserve our garden heritage should we not be doing all we can to reach out to the young also?

Sharron Kerr

William Powell Williams Honoured

The Queen's Birthday Honours List brought the announcement that William Wilkins had been appointed CBE. An artist by profession, Williams was the founder of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust. His vision not only brought the Trust into being, but has also been behind the establishment of the National Botanic Garden of Wales at Middleton and the re-creation of the gardens at Aberglasney.

Members of the Trust will wish to record their whole-hearted congratulations. Many of them, individually, derived great inspiration from William's enthusiasm and vision. Who knows what his next imaginative venture will be?

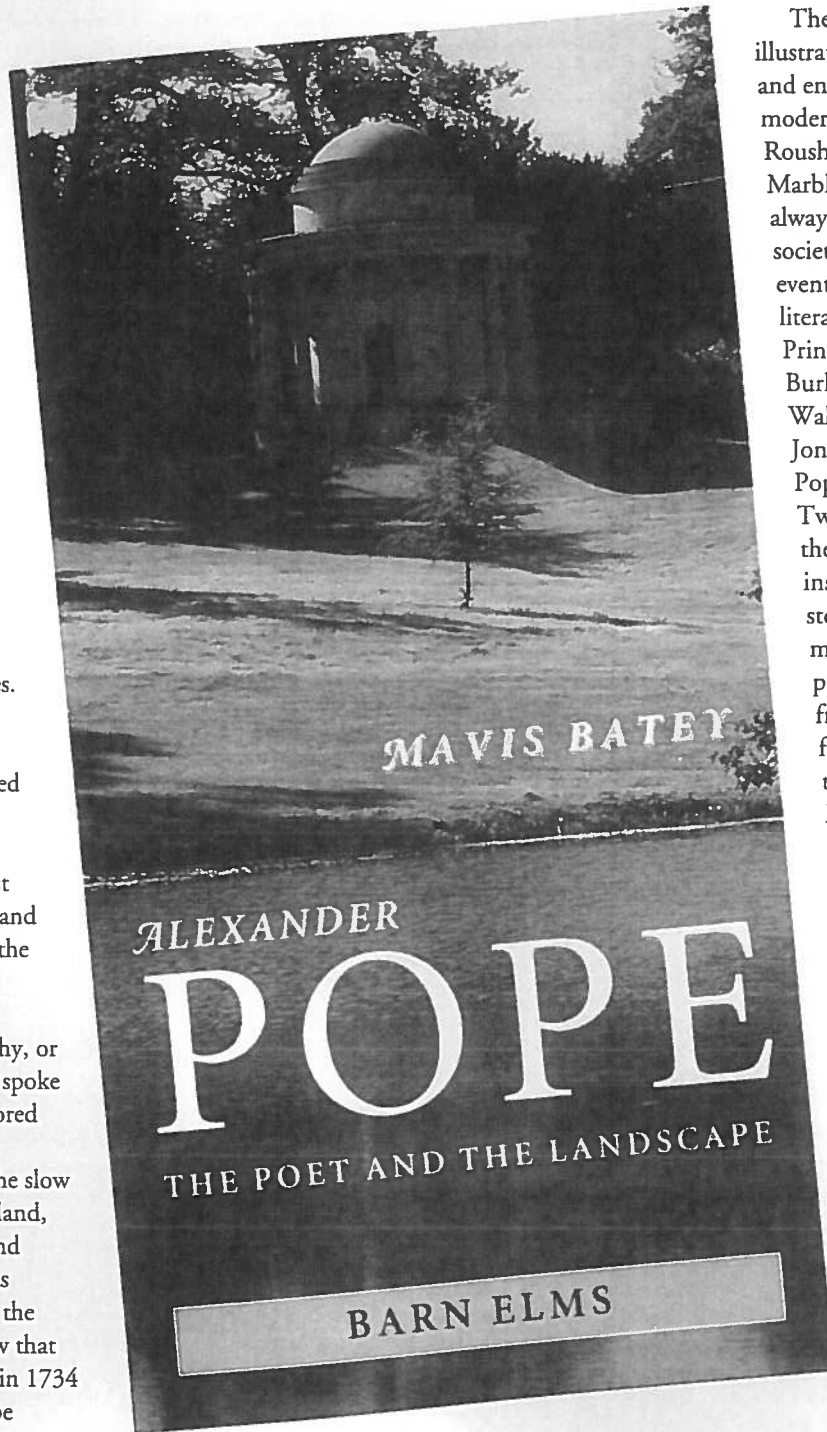
Patricia Moore

Alexander Pope: Poetry and the Landscape

by Mavis Batey. Published by Barn Elms, Price £25 (140 pp, 100 illustrations, 24 in colour, hardback)

I was entirely ignorant of garden history when as a student in 1971, I visited Rousham one Sunday afternoon. It was not tidy then, and a surviving member of the Cottrell-Dormers still lived in the house and collected the pitifully small sum then charged for a garden visit. Makeshift folds of polythene double-glazing inside the leaded windows were testament to an aching chill, a chill which penetrated the bones as we explored the little church and the many memorials to the sons of the mansion who died in military engagements over the centuries. Feather-footed bantams clustered around the gothic lodge, long-horned cattle grazed in the park, the autumn trees dripped. Yet as we passed through the walled garden past the huge round pigeonhouse, and descended into the landscape the spirits soared. William Kent's landscape came without any explanation, of date, philosophy, or contemporary thought, but it spoke volubly nonetheless. We explored Venus Vale, read the verse on Ringwood's tomb, followed the slow sloping rill through the woodland, sat in the Praeneste Arcade, and looked out to the preposterous eyecatcher on the hill beyond the Cherwell. I did not then know that Alexander Pope had declared in 1734 that "all gardening is landscape painting" but I did recognise a stunning three dimensional composition when I found myself inside it.

Another of Pope's famous dictums is "a little learning is a dangerous thing". In 1971, I was marvellously untainted, and although I have since learnt much about gardens and history, it has served to convince me of the appalling extent of my ignorance. Mavis Batey's new book is a marvellous antidote to such feelings. This is not just a book about some famous gardens, or a great poet and thinker. It welds the whole together, presenting an accessible picture of Alexander Pope, poet and gardener, the influential people who were his milieu, the landscape gardens which were then taking shape under the hands of Bridgeman and Kent, and the preoccupations of the times. Gardens are an expression of culture, and Alexander Pope was an important player in the culture of his time.



The book is lavishly produced, illustrated with choice paintings and engravings, and exquisite modern photographs of Stowe, Rousham, Chiswick House and Marble Hill at Twickenham. The always readable text introduces a society in which the landmark events are in poetry, theatre and literature, the people include Princess Caroline, the Earl of Burlington, The Prince of Wales, Walpole, Voltaire, Jonathan Swift, John Gay. Pope's own five acre garden at Twickenham, sloping down to the Thames, with its grotto inspired by the functional stone pillars in the Bath stone mines, and embellished with purloined marble fragments from the Grand Tour, was for many years an inspiration to himself and to his circle. Mavis Batey traces how Pope's influence, through didactic poetry, and through his friendships, was expressed in gardens far vaster than his own. Indeed Pope's opinions and sure turn of phrase have earned immortality. There can hardly be a heritage project on the drawing-board today which is not well-laced with allusions to 'the Genius of the Place'. I suspect that if he were alive today he would write some dry little couplets on the subject.

Thou who would get a Heritage Lottery Grant
Must show due deference to the sacred cant.
The 'Genius of the Place' must be assessed
And packaged to delight the paying guest.
And if your case needs gravitas and weight, I
Would recommend the grander '*genius loci*'

This is truly a book for the Christmas wish list, scholarly, yet readable, with wonderful pictures, yet through its breadth as seductive to the spouses and partners who never stoop to touch a spade, as to the passionate gardeners planning their shell grottoes, or exhuming ancient relics from a sea of brambles somewhere in less well-tended Wales.

Caroline Palmer

Gerddi-WWW.

Welcome to this new, and hopefully regular, section in the Bulletin where I hope to include information on our favourite WWW sites – on historic parks, gardens, designed landscapes and on related subject. If you have suggestions for sites to include in further issues, or would like advice on using the WWW, please contact me: Tel: 01446 775794.
E-mail: val.t.caple@newscientist.net

Historic Parks and Gardens of Wales

<http://www.gardenofwales.org.uk/historic/index.htm>
The YGHC-WHGT site. Map, access and information on 65 gardens listed in the Guide. Links to their WWW page when available.

Association of Garden Trusts

<http://www.britinternet.com/~gardenstrusts/>
The national organisation which represents 32 County Gardens Trusts.
Very useful links to related organisations in the UK.

The Garden History Society

<http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org/index.shtml>
The aims of the Society and details on how to join.

The National Trust (England, Wales and N. Ireland)

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/>
Entries on 63 NT properties that have gardens including opening times, access etc.

The National Trust for Scotland

<http://www.nts.org.uk/>
Entries on 21 NTS properties that have gardens including opening times, access etc.

UK Database of Historic parks and Gardens

<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/landscapes/ukpg/database/index.htm>
Eventually to become a comprehensive list of gardens, but the details vary.

The Wales Tourist Board

<http://www.visitwales.com>
At present this site gives links only to six Welsh gardens, but not to our own website.

Val Caple

E-mail the officers of WHGT

The Editor

caroline@aber64.freemove.co.uk

The Administrator

Historicgardenswales@hotmail.com

The Chairman

david.harden@farmline.com

CONTACTS

Brecon & Rad: Miss Anne Carter (01982 570279)

Carmarthen: Contact Administrator.

Ceredigion: Mr Donald Moore (01970 828777)
Ms Ros Laidlaw (01970 832268)

Clwyd: Mrs Sara Furse (01352 770360)

Gwent: Mrs Gwenllian Jones (01633 894338)

Gwynedd: Mrs Joan K. Jones (01766 522766)

Montgomery: Mr Neville Thomas (01686 690200)

Pembrokeshire: Mr Gerry Hudson (08134 814317)

South & Mid Glam Dr. P. C. Elmes (01222 512102)

West Glam: Mrs Elizabeth Belcham (01639 721868)

Administrator: Ms Ros Laidlaw, Ty Leri, Talybont, Ceredigion, SY24 5ER (01970 832268)

Treasurer: Col. Richard Gilbertson, Coed-y-Ffynnon, Lampeter Velfrey, Narberth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8UJ (01834 831396)

Bulletin Editor: Dr. Caroline Palmer, The Old Laundry, Rhydyfelin, Aberystwyth, SY23 4QF (01970 615403)

Membership Sec: Mr Peter Williams, Llangunnor House, Crickadarn, Powys, LD2 3PJ (01982 560288)

CEREDIGION BRANCH - WHGT

Strata Florida

A historic garden and landscape

Public lecture

Professor David Austin F.S.A.
Head of Archaeology, University of Wales, Lampeter

At The University School of Art
Buarth Mawr
Aberystwyth

Saturday 27 January 2001, 3.00pm

A collection will be taken at the meeting in aid of Branch funds.

The AGM of the Branch will be held before the lecture at 2.15pm.



Registered Charity No. 1023293



CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES