



Gateway to
the history
of Shropshire
and Telford

Garden history

- **Books**

A good overview of estate gardens is Stamper, Paul; *Parks and Historic Gardens of Shropshire*, 1996 (ref: C 71.2). Our local studies library also includes guides to the gardens of stately homes (for example Hawkestone and Attingham) as well as texts on domestic gardens such as Christine Buxton's *A Year in My Garden* (C 22.1).

You can search our books online at www.shropshirearchives.org.uk . A separate printed index to the Shropshire Magazine, 1950 onwards identifies gardens and there are many articles within Country Life.

- **Photographic and Print Collections**

We hold files of photographs arranged by place. Many photographs can be copied (subject to copyright). While most tend to be fairly recent, the boxes do contain some copies of earlier items. Please ask staff for the index to prints and watercolours. Most photographs and prints and watercolours are searchable on our online catalogue.

- **Sites and Monuments Record**

For more information about this visit <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/historic-environment-record/>. www.parksandgardens.ac.uk is another useful starting point.

- **Maps and plans**

John Rocque produced a map Shropshire of approx one inch to the mile in 1752. As his original trade was concerned with garden design he pays attention to parks and plantations. A copy of this map is in the Shropshire maps drawer in the reading room.

The first edition Ordnance Survey sheets have good detail of all sizeable gardens showing paths, greenhouses and trees marked on the spot where they grew. 1:500 scale maps exist for the larger Shropshire towns. These are openly available on microfiche.

More specific maps are indexed on cards in our search room. For example a survey of estates of Thomas Wolley 1765 with detailed garden plan in miniature of Woodall Farm, Pontesbury (552/27/28).

- **Our archive catalogue**

Search www.shropshirearchives.org.uk . Terms such as garden* will bring up references to gardens and gardeners. Horticultur*, park* and nurser* might also be useful.



Shropshire Estate Gardens

Shropshire Archives has a wealth of material on some (but by no means all) of the larger estate gardens.

The Powis collection (552) is of note and contains references to the gardens at Montford, Oakly Park near Ludlow, the Styche and Walcot. The records include accounts and lists of shrubs, trees and other stock, diagrams for garden structures such the metallic hot house at Walcot.

The extensive Attingham collection (112) includes numerous receipts for purchases in the house and garden. The Red Book of Humphrey Repton is in facsimile (6001/6755) and there is a photograph of his designs for the gates to the park (MI428/1).

The Downton Hall collection (6683) contains material relating to the management of the gardens including specifications and plans for a proposed greenhouse and peach house, 1925 as well as inventories of plants.

To find out whether an estate has deposited records here, check the small green folder entitled 'Guide to Private Lists' at the start of the red catalogues. Some estate records can be searched on our online catalogue (see above).

Sometimes there are miscellaneous items (MIs) relating to gardens. For example a list of 14 designs relating to proposals for landscaping, garden buildings, and improvements to Mawley Hall, Shropshire. (MI5615). Usually items such as this can will be picked up by searching our online catalogue or index on microfiche. Please ask staff for help.

Sales catalogues can also describe the garden. For example the Mellington Hall Sales catalogue, 1902 (539/2/5/2/5) includes a description of grounds, size and content of the garden as well as photographs of the lake, park and grounds. The photographs and prints (above) may also be useful.

- **Gardeners**

Our local studies collection contains many books on famous Shropshire gardeners, from William Shenstone (mid 17th century) and his famous garden "ferme ornee" at Leasowes, Halesowen to Percy Thrower (1913-1988).

Estate records may give details of the individual gardener and gardeners are likely to be included in estate rentals. Unfortunately many records of estate management have not survived. Of particular interest are the following:

Attingham (112) – including references to George Pearson, gardener c1870- 1900; Henry Walton's notebooks; 112/7 includes garden accounts and correspondence from the estate managers

Downton Hall (6683) including contracts for gardeners and other estate works

Powis (552) includes accounts of gardeners at Walcot Hall, 1796-1803 and wage books
Lilleshall (972) includes receipts and expenses for gardeners. There are also prizes for tenant gardeners within this large and well catalogued collection.

Gardening manuals may also be of interest, such as Richard Gardiner's : *Profitable Instructions for the Manuring, Sowing & Planting of Kitchin Gardens Very profitable for the*

common wealth & greatly for the helpe and comfort of poore people (1603) in Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society 2nd series, vol IV, 1892 pp 241-263.

Trade directories list 19th and early 20th century gardeners and census returns (1841-1911) give personal details.

- **Market gardens and nurseries**

Trade directories of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries provide references to market gardens and nurseries. The term nursery often indicates a tree nursery rather than a provider of general horticultural plants.

There is sometimes information in sales catalogues and auctioneers books, for example sales books: nursery sale, East Hamlet - Mrs E. J. Brocklehurst, 1911 (4924/1/37/11/1-2) and posters: trees and shrubs, Friars Nursery, Ludlow, 1886 (4924/2/13/10)

Solicitors' collections sometimes include business accounts, such as G M Salt in account with W Pritchard, nursery and seedsman, for plants to Midsummer 1876 (D3651/E/2/1/9) and sale particulars of nursery stock at the Column Nursery, Shrewsbury, 1850 (D3651/B/66/6/7)

- **Municipal parks**

Most material relating to municipal parks is likely to be in the District Authority Collections. For example there are plans of the Castle Hill pleasure gardens in Bridgnorth, 1897 (DA2/709/2/30). There are sometimes references in the minute books. Material with the prefix DA needs to be ordered before visiting as these records are not held onsite.

The photographic collection would also be worth a look. The first series Ordnance Survey map can also be helpful as, on this map, the location of each tree is precise.

- **Horticultural Societies**

Some horticultural societies have deposited their records at Shropshire Archives. These include:

Shropshire Horticultural & Botanical Society: posters and notices, 1850s and 1860s (in 665)

Sutherland Arms Horticulture Society: minute book 1930-54 (5876)

Shrewsbury Horticultural Society: records of land ownership, 1907-1944 (D3651/B/164, D3651/B/165/43)

Shropshire Horticultural Society: records 1876-1969, including some photos and tickets (3122), scrap books, 1937-1960 (449)

Miscellaneous Horticultural Society information, Florists Societies, Flower and Gooseberry shows included in research into Charles Darwin undertaken by Mrs D Haxton 1999-2004 (7242)

Wrekin Horticultural Society, programme 1936 (3041)

Whitchurch and District Agricultural and Horticultural Society: minute book 1926-1938 (6001/6757)

Pamphlets relating to local shows run by horticultural societies, such as the Shrewsbury Flower Show, are likely to be found in our local studies collection. The photographic collection includes some lovely photographs of these events. These are filed under the location of the show – for example Shrewsbury: Quarry (PH/S/13/Q/) for the Shrewsbury Flower Show.

- **Allotments**

Allotments may have been provided alongside alms houses, such as in Trinity Hospital, Clun, Bridgnorth (BB/E/3/1/1, almshouse charity leases); Newport (message to use of the poor, P60/Q/1/8-9). Many early uses of the term allude to common land allocated to parishioners at the time of enclosure.

Local authorities were first empowered to provide allotments by the Allotment Act in 1887, but it was not until the Act of 1908, which gave powers to parish, urban district and borough councils, that many authorities decided to exercise their powers. District Authority collections (ref: DA) of the twentieth century include material on allotments. These need to be ordered before visiting as they are not held onsite. Material may be found within the Shropshire County Council minutes, 1889-1974 and also minutes of the committee on allotments and small holdings (SCC1/B/16). There is sometimes material within the parish and town council (ref: PC) collections.

Please note that all of the above are likely to be subject to **data protection** legislation and items with a DA prefix are held offsite and must be **requested in advance**.

The large scale Ordnance Survey maps may help establish when allotments were created.

Some allotment associations have deposited their records for example:

Monkmoor Gardeners and Allotment Association, 1929-1990 (7021)

Meole Brace Garden and Allotment Club, 1946-1999 (6769)

Wigley's Field Allotment Association (Ludlow), 1988-2002 (7294)

Castlefields Allotment Association, 1932-1969 (7445)

- **Deeds**

Deeds often mention whether a garden was attached to the property. For example a lease from Sir Robert Corbet of Adderley to John Murhall of Moreton Say of a property in Adderley specifies the garden, orchard, backside and hempbutt together with several parcels of ground, 1728 (327/5/3/1/74).

The tithe map and apportionment, c 1840 also includes information about the type of land as does the land valuation map of 1910. Both of these are available in the first instance on microfiche/film.

Shropshire Archives

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