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MINGLE, MASS AND MUDDLE: THE USE OF PLANTS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GARDENS

This article demonstrates that by integrating the documentary and field evidence with a knowledge of eighteenth-century estate maintenance, it is possible to refine one's understanding of the way in which garden plants were used.

To begin with simple definitions, the eighteenth century had three ways of grouping plants. First, 'dotting' or planting single specimens;¹ second, 'mingling' or mixing plants of different species;² and third, 'massing' or planting a group of the same species or cultivar.³ These basic models could be further modified: most obviously 'mingled' planting could be ranked (lowest plants in the front and the highest at the back) in rows, with rhythmic planting of a variety of species. This is 'graduated' planting, discussed at length by Mark Laird.⁴ Of additional ways of mingling plants, the most often tried was ordering by colour, either to produce beautiful effects,⁵ or to create the illusion of distance and space through aerial perspective.⁶ Humphry Repton regarded the random mixing of colours as 'cheerful' and sometimes recommended it on that account,⁷ but Thomas Whately was more thoughtful, considering that:

In massing these tints, an attention must be constantly kept up to their *forms*, that they do not lie in large stripes one beyond another; but that either they be quite intermingled, or, which is generally more pleasing, that considerable pieces of different tints, each a beautiful figure, be, in different proportions, placed near together.⁸

Whately's 'quite intermingled' planting is what I have called 'muddled'; that is, plants being put together with very little sense of order, whether of height or colour. This was the tradition of wilderness planting,⁹ but since it was rarely defined as a method during the eighteenth century and was condemned out of hand at the end of it,¹⁰ it will be worthwhile to give some examples, and the most influential was the shrubbery that William Shenstone planted outside his house at the Leasowes. This was described by his protégé, James Woodhouse, who noticed the 'piony and catch-fly .../ Narcissus fair, and early daffodil' growing between the stems of Scots pine, silver fir, larch, sycamore and holly and other trees, along with unnamed shrubs, and laurustinus planted with *Robinia* and willows with sweet-briar.¹¹

The criticism of 'muddled' planting at the end of the century implicitly condemned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, and one can sometimes find it in his tree planting, particularly in association with stables: at Dynevwr, for example, between the house and the offices; and at Berrington, where there are pieces of grassland planted with single trees of mixed species. Both these areas are close to the stables, both are in quiet parts of the landscape, and none is visible from the windows of the house (which is why both have found a new role today as car parks).¹²

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GROVES

Open and closed groves are above all characterized by the fact that one can walk in them. Oaken Grove at Eastnor, Herefordshire, was a field scattered with trees and grazed as pasture. A closed grove, as we shall see, would be associated with an understorey, but it is differentiated from a wilderness or coppice because the understorey surrounds and protects a clearing.

The Serpentine Walk at Heythrop, Oxfordshire

Having established some definitions, the next step is to see how planting within each of the different components of the pleasure ground might have looked. One starting point, which provided a fertile model for groves, enamelled lawns, and the various forms of linear garden, is the serpentine walk at Heythrop (Plate I). This had been constructed by 1718, and was probably made between 1706 and 1712; its lasting influence has never been questioned.¹³ It is in a fragmentary condition today but at its most complete it is clear that the design was bounded by two broad low banks (approximately 1 foot high today). It had a width of at least 70 feet and this seems to have been maintained with some consistency throughout its length. The width of the central walk also varied, but is generally slightly wider than either of the two banks.

Such evidence as we have from the field and from Joseph Addison and Stephen Switzer suggests that these banks were planted with native and long-established plants and trees and that this planting varied along its length, changing from one type to another at intervals of about 100 feet. As far as one can tell, the understorey was ‘massed’ rather than ‘mixed’ – that is, the principal plantings (Portugal and cherry laurel, box and holly) were planted in monospecific groups, then forest trees were added as individuals on the edge of, or on the course of, the central walk. Like the shrubs, the trees may have been varied within the length of the walk, so although oaks survive in one section, further north there is some elm scrub, and further north again there are limes. Some yews (six in all) survive throughout the extant length of the walk, in the main on the edges of the walk itself. It is therefore possible that these were planted, like the yews in another of Heythrop’s walks, the ‘Wilderness Serpentine’, in rows at relatively regular distances along the walk. It is as likely however, that even if the planting began in this fashion, it had been made less regular by the time of Switzer’s visit, as is suggested by the two yews that are growing in the walk. The one unusual tree, which may be eighteenth century in date, is a London Plane on the west bank in what appears to be the best preserved section of the walk. This gives us a broad central turf walk, 30 feet wide, probably without any gravel, but with turf enamelled with ‘the natural Embroidery of the Meadows ... helpt and improved by some small Additions of Art’,¹⁴ and occasionally obstructed by trees, or small clumps and ‘tufts’ of shrubs in simple monospecific groups.

As regards the banks, since in the eighteenth century this walk also served as a boundary and perhaps a drove between the two fields, one would expect there to have been fences on both sides.¹⁵ Hence, the banks may therefore have been partly designed to conceal the fences from the central walk, and one would expect them by and large to be planted over with shrubs or coppice. So far as one can tell these shrubs were not planted in rows (though there is evidence for graduated planting elsewhere at Heythrop), but in groups which cut across the changes in levels to give a consciously informal effect. Thomas Hale’s proposals of 1757 that the walk through a grove should be serpentine with flowering shrubs to edge it, and that trees should be planted three times thinner than in a wood, might have been written of Heythrop: everything should imitate nature with ‘a well chosen irregularity’, to which end Hale valued ‘here and there along the Walk,

an old Tree' which 'thrusts its Trunk beyond the formal Line of the Verge; or stands even in the Middle, in a well chosen Place'.¹⁶ Equally he might have been describing Shenstone's work at the Leasowes: 'Sometimes the hoary trunk of an ancient oak will half project into the path ... another will affectedly stand in the very middle of it.'¹⁷ Indeed, after Heythrop, the 'wild forest-looking scene' below Faunus at the head of the South Valley at the Leasowes may have been the first place where planting of this kind, mimicking natural woodland and beloved of the picturesque movement, was carried out on an extensive scale.

Groves of old trees

Planting of this kind might properly be called 'grove', but as the century progressed, grove planting rapidly came to be valued most if the trees were mature when the garden was designed. William Hanbury gave a careful account of the way in which a mix of mature standards and bushes could be created. First, prospects were to be opened up, 'for nothing affords more pleasure and satisfaction to the mind, than a noble and extensive prospect', and then:

the ground amongst the old standards should have all old stumps or stools grubbed up; it ought to be dug, and cleared of the roots of all strong and noxious weeds, and should be then planted with roses, honeysuckles, sweet-briars, &c. which will afford an agreeable fragrance: If it be the owner's taste, he may introduce laurels, bays, and such evergreen plants as will grow under the drip of large trees. Perennial flowers, annuals, &c may also be introduced to complete the whole. Thus an old plantation may at once be converted into a place of the sweetest retirement.¹⁸

A letter written from Welbeck by William Speechley, on his appointment as head-gardener, demonstrates that, even in the greatest gardens in the country, this ideal could be very difficult to achieve:

On my Arrival at Welbeck the Labourers employment were in planting Shrubs, Flowers &c in the Dutchess'es Flower Garden, but in such a manner that I can by no means approve of. The place I judge Your Grace remembers perfectly well; I suppose were formerly a Sand Pit, the bottom of it is pretty near a Square, and the sides which slopes into it were design'd to be planted with Flowering Shrubs &c: now on these Bank-sides were several sorts of Forest trees, which Mr Brounton has left standing, and were their was none, he has planted Beach &c everywhere among the Shrubs &c. the look of these large Trees, together wth their Tops shading, and dropping on the lesser ones, will injure 'em so much that they will always look poorly, if they can be got to grow at any rates. However as he says it were by Your desire, I can't think of removeing one of them without Your Graces Approbation. I shou'd be glad to know in what manner Your Grace wou'd chuse to have the Bottom of said place done, whether all Grass; or wou'd you choose to have little hills in different forms planted wth flowering shrubs? But perhaps the former wou'd be more Agreeable, as Her Grace wou'd chuse to have a Tent, or something of that sort fix't their.¹⁹

MAZY SHRUBBERY

There was a strong association between the grove (essentially timber trees in grass) and 'mazy' shrub planting, the two together forming the close grove.²⁰ This association was sufficiently widespread to be criticized by William Shenstone as well as by William Mason (it seems to have been the style of the early flower garden at Nuneham, which William Mason rapidly came to condemn). To judge the latter's attack the difficulty lay in planting groups of shrubs of the same low height across a lawn at some distance from

the path. As his commentator made clear the shrubs should be planted 'contiguous to the pathway, where alone they can have consequence, and where the eye may either dwell upon their peculiar beauties, or altogether look beyond them'.²¹ The problem lay not with using large numbers of shrubs of the same height to make up the planting, but with an awareness that if you extended this style too far from a path it would not be possible to enjoy the shrubs. In short one should not invariably look to graduation in the planting of a grove or mazy shrubbery, nor is there much need for earthworks, unless as a screen, as perhaps in Heythrop's Serpentine Walk.

THE WALK ROUND A FIELD

The Serpentine Walk at Heythrop was essentially a garden arm, designed to take people from the house to the river, a tributary of the Glyme. The walk round a field on the other hand was designed as a garden in itself and was to have all the elements that go to make up a garden: views out, diversions and surprises provided by structures and planting, and all year round interest. The Mars Belt at Wotton is a good example and the earthworks here suggest that the fields (Great Ground and Common Ground) were bounded by sunk hedges to allow selected views in. Then within the walk there was a generous turf strip, perhaps with some enamelling, and with some tufts of shrubs and exotics; then the shrubbery proper, still delineated today by the slight bank on which it was planted (varied frequently along the walk);²² and then a gravel path (unsightly but essential for winter use),²³ and, in places at least, native coppice (so that the whole thing would look like natural woodland from the outside).²⁴ Fiona Cowell has found some beautiful drawings of exactly that style in Richard Woods's work,²⁵ but the best known descriptions of walks of this kind are probably those for Wooburn Farm. These were mown, with 'a sound [gravel?] path through it', and between about 16 and 50 feet wide 'as it happens giving a pleasing swell to the walks', 'with ... a close screen on one side, the other open to the field or only little clumps, single trees etc., and the sunk fence guarding the whole'.²⁶

Riskins, or Percy Lodge, less well known, was laid out in exactly the same style. There, by 1747, Lord Hertford had:

converted a long narrow walk which runs at the bottom of it [the park] into the resemblance of a wild lane in the country, and made it wider or narrower just as he had in mind to take in a great tree or fill up a vacancy with flowering shrubs. On the one hand, there is for about forty or fifty yards an open grove, through which you see a corn-field, with a turfed walk of about six foot wide around it, and bordered all round under the wood with roses, honeysuckles, Spanish broom, lilacs, syringas etc; and underneath these bushes cowslips, primroses, violets, foxgloves, with every flower that grows wild in the fields which is capable of adding a variety to the many colors which are blended in that border; but there is nothing on the side next to the corn to separate it from it. On the other side of the canal he has had cleared away a good deal of wood, and continued a gravel walk by the pale, against which he has planted a mixture of laurel and other greens to hide the fence, and raised a bank against it which is covered with rosebushes, pinks, stocks of all sorts and all colours, Sweet Williams, blue and white campanulas, rose champions, chrysanthemums, lupins, and fifty things; this leads you by the side of a nursery and another corn-field, and on the side next them is fenced off some part of the way, with a hedge of sweet-briar, and the rest is a mixture of all manner of sweet shrubs.²⁷

One of the best surviving examples of Brownian planting in a linear walk is at Denham Place. One should, however, always look for variety within the walks, and there were other planting styles, the most conspicuous of which today are those marked by earthworks in the form of linear mounds, running along the line of the walk.

Graduated shrubbery

So far as one can tell, these banks are associated with planting in rows, and this in turn is associated by Mark Laird with graduated shrubbery, which lies at the heart of his book, and which will be addressed directly at the end of this article. This section only makes some additional observations based on the author's field work.

Planting in rows does not necessarily imply gradation of heights

Although the templates for shrub planting that Laird has found show shrubs generally getting taller as they go to the back, there are plenty of exceptions to this. In Robert James, 8th Baron Petre's, design for Worksop, Nottinghamshire, yews crop up in three of his six rows. One might read this to mean that the plant was to be managed differently in each row, but it seems simpler to assume that the plant was to be managed in the same way and their occurrence in more than one row shows Lord Petre varying his gradation.²⁸ One conclusion from this is that careful designers were playing with and adding variations to gradation; that this was indeed happening is apparent in one of the most authentic account of graduated planting (though it actually refers to the stage of a greenhouse):

The common Direction is, to place the tall ones at the back, and the lower all the way down in front; but this is a rude Manner of Instruction.

In such a Disposition, where there had been no other Care, the prim Regularity would displease a judicious Eye; and the Pains taken in raising many of the most curious Plants, would be lost by their being obscur'd among others [...]

Let the choicest Plants be first set by themselves [...] they must be set at some Distance from one another, that there may be [...] an Intermixture of other Kinds, serving as foils between them: and this farther Advantage will result from the same Disposition, that on whatever Part [...] the Eye is cast, there will be some Object to charm and satisfy the Attention.

These particular Plants should be dispos'd at separate Distances, backward, or toward the Front, according to their Height; and when they are thus plac'd, where those of a like Size will stand about them, they should be rais'd to some Elevation above the common Level, that they may be the more conspicuous.

This done, let the Gardener carry in his Eye a general Notion of the Height of the others, and thence begin to place them [...] not in a compleat Row, but with some of a little less Height interchangeably between; that they may Represent a Range of Trees, and not a Wall.

There is in these Things no Beauty but in their Freedom, and they will represent cut Yews, not handsome Shrubs, when disposed in the common dull and formal Manner.

When the upper Row is placed, the Remainder are to come in their several Ranks; not exactly, but nearly according to their Degrees of Height.

In the placing these there is room for a great deal of Fancy: The Variety of Tints and Shades of Green, is an Article of great Elegance; and a Painter would think himself happy in half the choice the dull Eye of the Gardener neglects.

First let him place on each Side of the several conspicuous Plants first disposed, some one of these that has a Colour not like its own, but fittest to set it off in Picture.

Then let the rest be placed with Freedom, and though most Leaves be called Green, yet there will be a vast Fund of Variation in the grey Green, the blue Green, the yellowish, and the silvery White mixed interchangeably among the full and fine Colour of the others.²⁹

To summarize, planting in rows is essentially a way of setting out plants like matrix planting today; it need not imply simple gradation by height.

The yew row problem

From what one understands of eighteenth-century setting out, the process was linear: ‘permanent marks’ should be put out ‘at every second, third, or fourth step, according to the length and flexure of the line’,³⁰ and these markers would be needed both to establish the line of the shrubbery and the planting interval. As often as not, the yews one finds today in Brownian landscapes are also planted in rows and at intervals of around 12 feet (the ‘fourth step’),³¹ but the single best piece of evidence to support the idea that yew was a marker plant is a row on the south side of the West Lakeside Pavilion at Stowe (the East Pavilion has since been extended and turned into a house). This side of the building is a blank and the yew row there must have been planted to screen the blank wall. So much is agreed. The two pavilions were moved to their present situations in 1764 and here they play the same part in the landscape as the Tuscans at Wotton: both sets stand beside the main axis like sentry boxes, but the Lakeside Pavilions are square to the axis, while the Tuscans are skewed.

The yew row that was planted to screen the West Lakeside Pavilion is also skew (by approximately 8 degrees). The simplest conclusion to draw is that the yew row was planted to mark the location and orientation of the building before it was moved.³² This assumes that the setting out began with markers (white painted stakes, or splines perhaps)³³ set in the ground by the foreman, who might have been Brown himself.³⁴ Indeed, William Smith captured a scene during the 1789–90 winter at Daylesford with the landscape gardener John Davenport ‘attending the ... great man [Warren Hastings] as he sat on his horse (with a livery servant behind him) hammering the stakes which marked out the ground for planting’.³⁵ The gardener could then create his earthwork, if need be, and plant his yews at intervals along the row of stakes,³⁶ then unroll the rest of his shrubs, using a pre-arranged palette of plants for each rank, disposed ‘agreeably to the intentions of the artist’.³⁷

This could create shrubberies still more complex than Mark Laird has supposed: the template capable of rhythmic repetition (which he has discussed), could, as appears from Croome, be cut across by paths and grass swards – so that one could see into the heart of the shrubbery and the profile of the shrubbery itself could be altered, or even thickened by laying two or three yew rows close together. There is something in this variation, with the splay of the rows, of three strokes of a paint-brush, of literally ‘painting with Living pencils’, as Peter Collinson described Lord Petre’s planting in his letter to Philip Southcote (9 December 1752).³⁸

The earthworks

The earthworks themselves, as at Wotton, seem to have had three purposes. They may have developed from the ‘carp’s back’ profile of the parterre bed, developed by the early eighteenth century to deepen the topsoil of the planting bed, but it is more likely that they were generally adopted, as with the bank raised against the pale at Riskins, to get an instant screen. The reason for this is that the earthworks are usually, perhaps invariably, associated with evergreens, which Mason chiefly valued for their screening role.³⁹ The implications of this for management will be touched on later.

Perhaps two further points might be made here about yew in Brownian pleasure grounds. First, it was also planted in bands: there is an excellent example running up from the Saxon Deities towards the Cobham Monument at Stowe. This does not run parallel to the vista, but at an acute angle to it, which gives the monument a theatrical depth: it darkens the foreground and lends greater distance and apparent size to the monument. That this only happens on one side of the composition may appear a fault but

is not. Claudean pictures, like those of Thomas Gainsborough, are formally unbalanced.⁴⁰ Yew rows can also exhibit this relationship to sight-lines: the row north of the house at Wotton is also at an angle to the view to Mars; the yew rows at Croome are at an angle to any line of sight to the Grotto, and the yew row by the Dry Arch there is skew to the line of sight over the bridge to the church. The shrubberies, from which these yews survive, might all be described as directional – some can necessarily be seen only one way down the vista (i.e. the yew band is concealed in the view from the monument at Stowe, as are the yew rows in the views from the Grotto at Croome, even though the views from the Grotto are of great significance to the composition). Shrubberies can then be double or single-sided, symmetrical or asymmetric, and they can also be directional. This level of detail, however, is more easily traced in ‘integrated’ pleasure grounds, the planting of which has been omitted from this paper.

GRASS

Pleasure ground turf could still have been managed in a number of different ways

Despite the evidence for grazing, it is surprisingly hard to determine the preferred state of keeping and length of the turf in the eighteenth-century pleasure ground. Short mown turf was maintained in the flower garden, for without it there could be no parterre of *gazon coupé*, in which beds were cut out of the turf – only cutting several times a week through the height of the growing season could have achieved the necessary crisp effect. So at Blenheim Jefferson noted that, ‘the turf is mowed once in ten days alone’.⁴¹ Bowling greens were also produced during the century. The plan for Hainton attributed to Brown had an oval ‘Garden which may answer for a Bowling Green’ off the south front of the house;⁴² and at Wrest and Trentham he was also required to produce them in his contracts.⁴³ These required labour: even at the modest Woodside, as recorded by Thomas Robins’s painting, it took five people to roll, mow and rake a bowling green.

However, as far as possible, pleasure ground grass was to be managed by cutting grass for the horses and hay-making,⁴⁴ and by grazing, and there is plenty of visual evidence for the longer, less manicured, sward that this management would produce.⁴⁵ This was also the advice of George London and Henry Wise, from early in the century:

In Persons of Qualities Gardens, where Interest is not so much minded as Pleasure, the Gardener should not stay till the Grass is ripe before he mows it, but keep it as short as possible, that the Walks may always be smooth. But good Husbands let the Grass grow till ‘tis perfectly ripe, and then mow it for Provender for their Horses.⁴⁶

This rough effect is what William Marshall was after around the Cobham Monument at Stowe (‘erected, if we recollect rightly, by Lady Cobham, to the merits of her husband, during his life-time’), where he reckoned Brown’s influence was dominant.⁴⁷ There he was pleased to see:

some tufts of trees, shrubs, and flowers, growing promiscuously; and in the same natural way, in which we had long wished to see them, in ornamented Nature. These clumps are placed on the edge of the terrace, or unseen fence, which divides the kept grounds from the adjoining fields, – stocked with grazing cattle. They have, of course, a doubly good effect: as being in themselves ornamental, and as assisting to mix and assimilate the kept with the unkept grounds. For the latter purpose, however, they were, at the time we saw them, in too high keeping: an error which a little neglect would soon rectify.⁴⁸

A more exact illustration of what Whately called ‘the visible difference in the preservation’ would be hard to come by.⁴⁹

So far as Mason was concerned, the sheep sufficiently justified themselves if they saved the gardeners the trouble of ‘useless’ mowing,⁵⁰ but Repton was an advocate of live-stock as a means of animating scenery,⁵¹ and he preferred to use sheep, at least partly for their effect on the turf and undergrowth.⁵² This shows a striking sensitivity to the texture of turf, put into words in his Luscombe design in which he proposed to grade the garden planting into the parkland in a manner that would have delighted Gertrude Jekyll.⁵³ This very sensitivity should warn us how unpredictable grassland management was in the eighteenth century – it might depend on the numbers of horses, the whereabouts of the sheep, the eye of the gardener – but, under grazing, the planting that would be theatrical to Mark Laird would have been smörgasbord to the passing sheep, while, where the sward was grown longer and mown for fodder, the low plants at the front of the border would have been concealed by the grass during the early summer. Marshall’s description of ‘some tufts of trees, shrubs, and flowers, growing promiscuously’ is clearly of another, ungraduated, tradition.⁵⁴

Both long grassland and parkland were also associated with waste

We now have, therefore, a sheaf of arguments for the idea that grass was full of flowers and might have been left to grow long in pleasure grounds.⁵⁵ Tom Williamson has recognized how complex is its meaning in Brownian landscape⁵⁶ and it is clear that somehow this remained entangled with a ‘counterfeit neglect’,⁵⁷ its effect on the imagination the reverse in fact of ‘lush green richness’.⁵⁸ That roughness, mocked by William Marshall as the encouragement of nettles and brambles (‘by mere “dint of neglect” places, heretofore beautiful, have been rendered picturesk’⁵⁹) was fostered by the picturesques themselves.⁶⁰ The area and shape of a lawn are our best guides to its management. Repton went into detail about this, regarding a roughly oval area (266 by 200 feet) as ‘rather too large to be kept as mown grass or pleasure ground, & therefore must be fed occasionally by sheep’, whereas a linear strip (66 by 333 feet) ‘would be too small to feed, too much to mow’.⁶¹ While one might hope to manage the grass in a long linear walk in the same way as the turf in the field it surrounded, in practice a more circular lawn is much more likely to have been grazed because it would have been easier to fence and oversee.

PLANT CHOICE

Plants were particularly admired in the eighteenth century if they were native

Another difficulty in the way of creating lush green lawns in eighteenth-century England will have been the fact that clean grass seed was not available then: the mid-eighteenth-century improver could not have sown pure grass seed or clean mixes even if he had wanted to.⁶² The tradition in which Brown had grown up, and which he no doubt employed both for parkland and for the dressed lawn, was one of finding turf or seed of as high quality as possible (that is to say free of pernicious weeds and plants of low nutritional value) and then improving it by subsequent maintenance.⁶³ He added white clover to the mix when making good after earthworking, as at Longleat in the 1750s,⁶⁴ at Chatsworth in 1763,⁶⁵ at Sandbeck in 1774,⁶⁶ and, very likely, whenever called upon to resow grassland,⁶⁷ for the benefits of clover had been promoted before the Glorious Revolution by Captain Yarranton and his ilk.⁶⁸ The resulting lawns will by no means have been clean by modern standards.

Discussion about this was interwoven with a debate that pitted native plants and the English against exotic plants and the French. This debate was wide-ranging in its influence, embracing the parkland as well as the pleasure ground. Exotics (defined by John Evelyn as ‘plants such as are sent from beyond the seas’) had long been imported into England,⁶⁹

and there is a tendency today to assume that in general the eighteenth century planted them as readily as natives.⁷⁰ However Alexander Pope believed,⁷¹ and the sporting poet Francis Mundy of Markeaton Hall implied, that the genius of the place preferred natives, and their use had to be closer to a divinely created beauty.⁷² William Shenstone associated liberty, England, nature and simplicity with ‘flow’ry fields’.⁷³ William Gilpin criticized Lord Bute for importing exotics to Highcliffe after he moved his Botanic Garden there from Luton Hoo.⁷⁴ His love of natives, ‘the heath, and broom, with their purple and yellow tints; the fox-glove with it’s pale-red pendent bells; the wide-spreading dock; and many of the thistle-tribe’ is evident in his writing.⁷⁵

This interest was scientific. The great botanists Joseph Banks (1743–1820) and James E. Smith (1759–1828), author of *Flora Britannica* (c.1800), enjoyed a high position in society, the latter being regularly invited to botanize at Hafod with Mariamne Johnes. John Lightfoot (1735–88), who wrote the first catalogue of Scottish flora – *Flora Scotica* (London, 1777) – after his trip to Scotland with Thomas Pennant, was in similar demand at Bulstrode.⁷⁶ Launching what was to become the nineteenth-century’s filophilia, James Bolton wrote in 1785 that there was no ‘tribe of plants so singular and beautiful as the British proper Ferns must be allowed to be’. Such was ‘their own beautiful singularity’ that he recommended that they ‘might with great propriety be introduced into our botanic gardens’ and even into hot-houses, though they are plants usually associated with wasteland.⁷⁷

A similar regard for native plants may be found in the eighteenth-century wild flower gardens of Burton Constable (made 1763–69), where the plants were labelled ‘H’ if they came from Holderness,⁷⁸ and of Bulstrode.⁷⁹ An almost commercial interest in them is shown by William Curtis, who took about an acre of Restoration Spring Garden in 1771 for the culture of British plants.⁸⁰

William Marshall founded his criticism on his inherited sense of association: ‘If a taste for botany lead to a collection of native shrubs and flowers, a shrubery [*sic*] will be requisite; but, in this, every thing should be native. A gaudy exotic ought not to be admitted ... [in the garden of an ornamental cottage].’ He made the point repeatedly that native plants were spurned only because they were common, and tried to confine exotics to a ‘principal residence’,⁸¹ but, even at a big house like Rousham, Mr MacClary’s ‘variety’ was provided by mixing common shrubs, rather than by using exotics,⁸² and nurserymen who sold American plants found themselves having to defend their use.⁸³ (This distaste for exotics strongly refreshes Laird’s picture of eighteenth-century flower gardening as dominated by imports.⁸⁴) Old and familiar cottage plants, on the other hand, also licensed a degree of disorder, so Batty Langley, having advocated graded planting in the wilderness, advised adding ‘Sweet-Brier’ to the plantation and allowing ‘the several Kinds of Jessemynes and Honey-suckles to run up and about [the hedges] in a wild and rural Manner’.⁸⁵ These three in particular resist tidying and attempts to incorporate them into grand formal displays drew the kind of sarcastic comment that Catherine Stapleton made of Lady Queensberry:

We Found Them, sitting with more Company than we wish’d, before the House under a Perimitier yew hedge Shear’d like velvet & the Pile of a Light Green, form’d by the Fresh Shoots. The Whole entwin’d, with the most Beautiful Huney-suckles hanging in Festoons from the top. I cannot help having a small suspicion of their being guided a Little by Art, but so ably done, it is impossible to determine.⁸⁶

The management of the shrubbery

If a degree of disorder might attend the management of grassland and of natives, it might also be found in the shrubbery. First, where a shrubbery was intended as a screen, rather than a foreground, it would operate most effectively if it were about 6 feet high, and rather less if planted on a bank. Second, in many shrubberies where plants have survived from the eighteenth century, with the exception of Combe Bank, there is evidence that the shrubs were coppiced; where trees survive, however, (for example the beeches in Repton's flower garden at Sarsden) they have generally not been cut (exceptions are plants like holm oak, *Robinia* and Norway maple that were grown as shrubs).

Despite these observations, the graduated shrubbery in its purest form may have been the new style of planting introduced after the mid-century. Graduation needed a new kind of gardening and it will be helpful to emphasize that its novelty was such that, unlike coppice, parterre, and other traditional forms, no one could find a way to make it work. So in the nineteenth century John Claudius Loudon still struggled to find a kind of management that would extend the shrubbery's life, and his recommendation of coppicing should be read as a nineteenth-century acknowledgement that the graduated shrubbery as a distinct eighteenth-century form had failed: 'This process of keeping the beds and groups in shape, by pruning and cutting down, might be carried on for an indefinite period, as may easily be believed by observing the great duration of hedges which are continually cut, and of coppice-wood.'⁸⁷

Even in the eighteenth century, there was something faintly ridiculous about the ambition of the graduated shrubbery. It was somehow immodest and against Nature – the word 'shrubbery' is itself a mock word. It has the authentic rust of eighteenth-century whimsy, like 'pinery' and 'thornery', it is an eighteenth-century joke, a childish diminutive adopted as a collective noun. It is within the context of a joke that we should consider Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire, and the association between shrubbery and hair-does. She favoured in her pomp immense constructions 3 feet high and the wit of the analogy was deemed more effective the more monstrous the headgear.⁸⁸ That is to say, the height seems to have been the thing, and she would not have had the impact she did unless it was also true of shrubberies that the steeper the theatrical rake, the higher it could be grown while remaining ordered and graded by height, the more successful the design, and the gardener, would be perceived to be.⁸⁹ The alternative was to be derided by William Cobbett:

Shrubberies should be so planted, if they be of any considerable depth, as for the tallest trees to be at the back, and the lowest in front; if one could have one's will, one would go, by slow degrees, from a dwarf kalmia to a Catalpa or a Horse-chestnut. Such a slope, however, would require the depth of a mile; and therefore, that is out of the question.⁹⁰

On the other hand a shrubbery only 20 feet deep would be 30 feet high at the back if it had a gradient of about 60 degrees (the gradient of a 3 foot hair-do on a 2 foot base). In such a shrubbery forest trees would have a place: they would eventually suppress the understorey (that is, the shrubs themselves), but their gardener would probably be ready to sacrifice the long-term interests of the garden to impress his employers by drawing his shrubberies up at an astonishing gradient from violets to forest trees.⁹¹ This desire can explain Walpole's odd remark of Petworth, echoed by Loudon, that 'the size of the trees are out of all proportion to the shrubs and accompaniments ... shrubs ... are past their beauty in less than twenty years'.⁹² Most forest trees will reach at least 30 feet within twenty years, but while short-lived plants may need to be replaced more frequently than that, the hardy shrubs that are the back-bone of the shrubbery – laurel, hazel, yew and so

forth – will grow indefinitely so long as they are stooled. The other factor in the design of these graduated shrubberies, which is illustrated in some of Lord Petre's own designs (Plate II) is that they were essays in form, not plantsmanship. His shrubberies were not made up of individual specimen exotics, and one might make the argument that there was no intention behind the distribution of the plants beyond a gesture at ranking them by height.⁹³ It looks as though the different plants were intended to operate in concert as a complex yet homogeneous scarf around the landscape, but the fact is that the shrubs have a wide range of responses to stooling – some, like holly, will shoot up vigorous and erect, others, like cherry laurel, still more vigorous, will bush out sideways, others again, like yew, juniper and *Phillyrea* are simply more slow. One might conclude on that account that the twin desires for height and a more or less architectural form undid these novel designs.

They were certainly novel, so when William Mason described his flower garden at Nuneham (Nerina's garden in his poem) as a place where 'each flow'r that bears transplanting change/ Or blooms indigenous, adorn'd the scene';⁹⁴ he also made it clear that it was not an English garden. The first Earl Harcourt's Nuneham had been presided over by the plain English Babs Wyatt, but Mason's literary gardeners were the thoroughly exotic figures, Nerina, Abdolominus and Alcander, the last of whom apologized for its presence in an English landscape:⁹⁵ hence George Mason's ironic comment that 'the author of the *English Garden* has virtually acknowledged an excellent notion of rural design to have anciently prevailed in the East – by his picture of the retreat of Abdolominus'.⁹⁶ Graduated planting, so essential to understanding Nuneham, was particularly appropriate for the exotics of the flower garden shrubbery (an unnatural practice for unnatural plants in an unnatural place). Furthermore Nuneham's flower garden was associated with the grove,⁹⁷ which (as we saw in the first of these papers) had an uncertain English provenance, and while its enclosure made it easier to control the turf, it also kept the exotics separate, out of sight of the English parkland scenery. In short, the crowning achievement in eighteenth-century English flower gardening, according to Laird, was not actually English. Its great influence testifies to its novelty, its position outside the English tradition, its irrelevance to the great bulk of eighteenth-century design.

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¹ For example, William Mason, *The English Garden. A Poem* [begun 1767] (York: J. Todd, 1783), Bk III, ll. 199–204; and Richard Jago, *Edgehill, or the Rural Prospect delineated and moralised* (London, 1767), p. 29.

² For mingling, see Humphry Repton, *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening ...* (London, 1816); repr. in John Claudius Loudon (ed.), *Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture of the late Humphry Repton, Esq.* (London: Longman & Co. and Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1840), p. 508.

³ For massing, see, for example, Mason, *English Garden*; Repton, *Fragments*, p. 556; and John Claudius Loudon: *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (London, 1822), p. 914; *ibid.* (London, 1834), pp. 1007–8; and *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion* (London, 1838), pp. 258–9.

⁴ Mark Laird, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden. English Pleasure Grounds 1720–1800* (Philadelphia: University of

Pennsylvania Press, 1999). For the adoption of gradation as a way of choosing species, see Thomas Whately, *Observations On Modern Gardening, Illustrated by Descriptions* (London: T. Payne, 1770), pp. 28–9; John Claudius Loudon, *Observations on the Formation and Management of Useful and Ornamental Plantations* (Edinburgh, 1804), p. 64; Dr John Trusler, *Elements of Modern Gardening; or, the art of Laying Out of Pleasure Grounds, Ornamenting Farms, and embellishing the Views round about our Houses* (London: R. Baldwin, 1784), p. 29; William Marshall, *On Planting and Rural Ornament*, 2 vols [1785] (London: G. & W. Nichol, 1803), I, p. 352 (25 January 1786).

⁵ '[William] Kent had little more than the idea of mixing lighter and darker greens in a pleasing manner'; Revd Joseph Spence, *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men Collected from Conversation*, ed. James K. Osborn, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), I, p. 250, Item 603. And

Arthur Young favoured the mingling of the woods at Houghton, 'planted with great judgement ... to appear one beyond another, in different shades'; Arthur Young, *Six weeks tour through the Southern counties of England and Wales* [1768] (London: W. Strahan, 1769), pp. 33–4.

⁶ For example, Mason, *English Garden*, Bk I, ll. 184–98; Revd William Gilpin, 'Remarks on Trees; and their several combinations; (relative chiefly to Picturesque beauty;) illustrated by y^e Scenes of New-forest in Hampshire: in three books' Book II of trees in combination (c.1781), Bodleian MS Eng. Misc. e.499, Bk II of 'Trees in Combination' (c.1781); Bodleian MS Eng. Misc. e.499, f. 317.

⁷ For example, Humphry Repton, Red Book for Rose Hill (June 1806).

⁸ Whately, *Observations On Modern Gardening*, p. 32.

⁹ 'The Quarters within are planted with various kinds of Trees promiscuously without Order'; Philip Miller, *Gardener's Dictionary*, 2 vols (London, 1731), s.v. 'Wilderness'.

¹⁰ For example, Uvedale Price, *Essay on the Picturesque*, 2 vols (Hereford and London, 1796–98), I, pp. 319–20; Humphry Repton, Red Book for Woburn (January 1805), cited in *Fragments*, p. 556; see also *ibid.*, pp. 190–1, 334.

¹¹ James Woodhouse, *Poems on Sundry Occasions* (London, 1764), pp. 95–8.

¹² The tree-planting at least was noticed by Girardin: 'Round the stable, partly hidden amongst trees, your horses may range at liberty in a large enclosure'; R. L. Girardin Vic^e d'Ermenonville, *An Essay on Landscape* (Paris and Geneva, 1777); trans. by Daniel Malthus as *An Essay on Landscape* (London, 1783), p. 76.

¹³ This walk was admired by Stephen Switzer and, probably, by Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 414 (25 June 1712).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ The walk runs along the line of the deer park boundary shown on a plan which appears to be late seventeenth century; Arundel Castle, MS TP133. Sanderson Miller's walk at Radway was described in similar terms by William Shenstone after visiting his place in 1750 in a letter to Lady Luxborough; Marjorie Williams (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1939), p. 252.

¹⁶ Thomas Hale's account is in John Hill (ed.), *Eden or, A compleat body of Gardening* (London: T. Osborne, 1757), p. 611. George Mason also advised retaining some thickets within the grove; George Mason, *An Essay on Design in Gardening* (London: Benjamin White, 1768), p. 41.

¹⁷ Joseph Heely, *Letter on the Beauties of Hagley, Envil, and the Leasowes* [1777] (New York: Garland, 1982), p. 13.

¹⁸ William Hanbury, *A Complete Body of Planting and Gardening* (London, 1769), p. 69.

¹⁹ Nottingham University, PwF8428, Speeachley to the Duke of Portland (17 March

1767). Thanks to Keren Holland for bringing this to my attention.

²⁰ This association is mentioned in John Phibbs, 'The persistence of older traditions in eighteenth-century gardening', *Garden History*, 37/2 (2009), p. 176.

²¹ Mason, *English Garden*, Bk III, ll 232–7; see also William Burgh's commentary, *ibid.*, p. 171.

²² For example, Charles Marshall, *An Introduction to the Knowledge and Practice of Gardening* (London: F. & C. Rivington, 1796), p. 125. Brown's 1752 design for a serpentine walk along the paddock on the east boundary of the pleasure ground at Petworth was embellished with studs of shrubs, and had varied views over the 'paddock' and the more distant countryside. This walk is discussed in Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, p. 136.

²³ Walks, drives, ridings and approaches could be surfaced in sand, grass or gravel. The grass might require a substrate to provide a firm footing in wet weather. The most troubling of these surfaces was gravel, celebrated in William Mason's twelfth sonnet, which hymned the convenience, though acknowledging the limit such walks put on freedom; William Mason, Sonnet XII 'To A Gravel Walk', in *The Works of William Mason, M.A.*, 4 vols (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1811), I, p. 133.

²⁴ Nonetheless, 'the outer walk of pleasure grounds and plantations, should every now and then break into open views of the country, and to parts of the internal space, made pleasing, if not striking, by some ornaments of art and nature'; Marshall, *Introduction to the Knowledge and Practice of Gardening*, p. 125.

²⁵ Richard Woods's plan for Brizes (1788) has a walk to a pond, with a seat looking out into the park over a shrubbery/flowerbed. This is separated from the field by a ha-ha and was presumably created where the field was to be grazed not mown; Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, p. 312.

²⁶ In August 1763, John Parnell found at Wooburn Farm 'some barley and oat fields (which were in high beauty when I was there, all filled with reapers, binders &c) and some pasture-ground on a fine mowed walk'; John Parnell, '1763 Tour' (The Folger Shakespeare Library MS Ma. 11), f. 159), cited by James Sambrook, 'Wooburn Farm in the 1760s', *Garden History*, 7/2 (1979), pp. 85–6. In 1769 he returned to this walk; John Parnell, *Journal of a Tour thro' England and Wales* (1769); London School of Economics (LSE), Coll. Misc. 38, I, f. 171. In 1763 the sunk fences had been shallower and protected by a *chevaux de frise*.

²⁷ Work continued in the following year, when 'A piece of waste-ground on the lower side of the Abbey-Walk has been turned into a corn-field; and a turf walk about 8 feet wide round it, close to a flourishing hawthorn hedge. On one side there is a thatched seat,

open on three sides'; Helen Sard Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford her life and letters* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), pp. 162, 384–5; Lady Hertford to Lady Luxborough (4 May 1747, 15 May 1748). The borders of flowers beside the walks, like those between lawns and plantations with 'clumps for flowering-shrubs, and the more specious plants' are discussed in John Rutter and Daniel Carter, *Modern Eden or the Gardener's Universal Guide* (London: J. Cooke, 1767), pp. 206–7, 209.

²⁸ Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, pp. 30, 34, 55, 56, 249.

²⁹ Thomas Hale, 'The Management of the Flower-Garden and Greenhouse for the latter End of November', in Hill, *Eden*, p. 166.

³⁰ Marshall, *On Planting and Rural Ornament*, I, pp. 350–1. Switzer had recommended using stakes 10–15 feet apart to get levels and so forth; Stephen Switzer, *Ichnographia rustica, Or the Nobleman, Gentleman, and Gardener's Recreation*, 3 vols (London: D. Browne, 1718), III, p. 61.

³¹ It is worth noting that where the curves are more pronounced, by the Temple of Friendship at Stowe, the intervals between the yews are smaller.

³² If one is to use yew rows today as the skeleton on which to rebuild a shrubbery, then it is necessary first to decide in which row they were planted. Therefore, Richard Bradley recommended a 'Dwarf Yew hedge, which hides the Litter of the falling Leaves, and keeps it neat and within Bounds'; *The Weekly Miscellany for the Improvement of Husbandry, Trade, Arts and Sciences* (26 September 1727), cited by Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, p. 56. However, he also used yews in the tallest shrub rank before the trees. Philip Miller and Lord Petre followed the same practice, but I believe that Brown used them in the back row of the shrubs. Note too that throughout the Brownian era yews were stooled to retain their natural form rather than pruned into topiary. The process not only would have controlled the height, but also it would have given room to other plants growing nearby and prevented the formation of a solid wall of greenery.

³³ Thomas Page assumed that 10 foot splines would be used for measuring distance; Thomas Page, *The Art of Shooting Flying* (Norwich: J. Crouse, 1764), p. 11.

³⁴ Maw and Abercrombie assumed that a line would be used for setting out edging; T. Mawe and J. Abercrombie, *Every Man his Own Gardener*, 10th edn (London, 1784), p. 482. It is known that Richard Woods used splines at Goldsborough; Fiona Cowell, 'Richard Woods (?1716–93): a preliminary account, Part III: Influences, style and working methods', *Garden History*, 15 (1987), 115–35 (p. 123).

³⁵ Oxford University Museum, William Smith papers, Box 41, Folder 3.

³⁶ All but one of the yews around the lake in the pleasure ground at Croome stand on earthworks, some on part of the grander land

forms (the smoothing down of ground to the water's edge, particularly by the Dry Arch). Any setting out must first have been devoted to building this earthwork.

³⁷ Marshall, *On Planting and Rural Ornament*, I, p. 352 (29 January 1786).

³⁸ Linnaean Society, Collinson's commonplace Book, MS 323a, pp. 29–30.

³⁹ Mason, *English Garden*, II, 137–40.

At Riskins admittedly the evergreens were not planted on the bank, but adjacent to it. Additionally, one might occasionally find them, as in Repton's flower garden at Sarsden, used to increase the effect of graduated planting (or even to allow the same species to be managed in the same way in different rows and still to have a graduated effect).

⁴⁰ For example, Gainsborough's *Road through a Wood and Rest by the Way* (1747), *Wooded Landscape with Figures, Cottage and Pool* (1759–62), *The Watering Place* (1777) with rows of trees on the left-hand side to point the view, and, in particular, his *Rocky Wooded Landscape with Dell and Weir* (1783), where the row is convergent on the vanishing point.

⁴¹ E. M. Betts, *Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book 1766–1826* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1944), p. 112.

⁴² The Hainton plan (1763) is kept at the house, and has been studied by Steffie Shields.

⁴³ Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, pl. 19.

⁴⁴ Evidence has often been misused to suggest that the grass in pleasure grounds was frequently mown: that there were sixty-seven men mowing at Croome, or that in 1754 the Duke of Cumberland had twenty men mowing at Cranborne Lodge; James Joel Cartwright (ed.), *The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke*, 2 vols (London: Camden Society, 1888), II, pp. 63–4. It has also been noted that more than eighty gardeners were paid for mowing at Stowe; Public Record Office (PRO), 30/8/58, f. 110 (letter from Stowe, 6 July 1773), but Kate Felus has shown me copies of Medland's pictures of hay-making around the Oxford Gates and Rotundo in 1797, and these men were making hay not bowling-greens, hence the number of men involved.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Richard Wilson's set of pictures of Wilton, kept at the house, which show brambles in the Temple Copse shrubberies. S. H. Grimm also showed long grass in the foreground of the pleasure ground at Blenheim; British Library, Add. MS 15545, f. 134.

⁴⁶ George London and Henry Wise, *The Retir'd Gardener*, 2 vols [1706] (London: J. Tonson, 1717), under 'Of Hay Seed'. With thanks to Fiona Cowell for bringing this to my attention.

⁴⁷ Brown may have designed the monument and certainly supervised its construction.

⁴⁸ Marshall, *On Planting and Rural Ornament*, I, pp. 302–3.

⁴⁹ Whately, *Observations On Modern*

Gardening, p. 208.

⁵⁰ Mason, *English Garden*, Bk II, ll. 181–7.

⁵¹ See, for example, his Red Book for Point Pleasant (March 1796): 'I have not lost sight of economy in the mode of keeping up the neatness of the ground, without unnecessarily extending the mowed lawn too far from the house: at the same time the view will be more cheerful and animated by the appearance of cattle than if the whole were dressed and swept by hand.'

⁵² 'Our natural gardeners [sheep] will keep the turf more beautiful than the scythe, and will make those delightful openings which the sheers would in vain attempt to imitate'; Humphry Repton, Red Book for Claybury (20 August 1791).

⁵³ Humphry Repton, Red Book for Luscombe (June 1799).

⁵⁴ William Marshall, *Review of The Landscape ... also of An Essay on the Picturesque* (London: G. Nichol, 1795), p. 102.

⁵⁵ I am confident that to the eighteenth-century English heaven would not have been heaven without good stretches of flower-bespangled turf, and yet their response to grassland was by no means straightforward.

⁵⁶ Tom Williamson, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens & Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 118–23.

⁵⁷ Ironically, this phrase is Richard Payne Knight's in *The Landscape*, 2nd edn (London: W. Bulmer, 1795), Bk 1, l. 6. Ironically too, grass running up to the front door was placed most decidedly amongst the symbols of antique neglect by William 'Vathek' Beckford, himself a blazing romantic; Boyd Alexander (ed.), *Life at Fonthill, 1807–1822 ... from the Correspondence of William Beckford* (London: Rupert Hart Davis, 1957), Beckford to Francini (16 June 1811).

⁵⁸ Jan Woudstra and James Hitchmough, 'The enamelled mead: history and practice of exotic perennials grown in grassy swards', *Landscape Research*, 25/1 (2000), p. 37.

⁵⁹ Marshall, *Review of The Landscape*, p. 105.

⁶⁰ For example, John Claudius Loudon, *A Treatise on Farming, Improving and Managing Country Residences* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, & Orme, 1806), II, p. 651.

⁶¹ Humphry Repton, Red Book for Dullingham (February 1802).

⁶² In the eighteenth century 'ray grass' included not just rye, but others grasses such as meadow fescue, meadow foxtail, crested dog's-tail, cocksfoot, tall oatgrass and even herbs like yarrow, burnet, and ribwort plantain; Graham Harvey, *The Forgiveness of Nature. The Story of Grass* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2001), p. 218.

⁶³ 'By Hay is understood a Composition of several sorts of Plants growing in the Meadows, the Seed of which is gather'd after the Grass or Hay is mow'd and put in the Reek': London

and Wise, *Retir'd Gardener*, under 'Of Hay Seed'.

⁶⁴ 'to sow with Dutch Clover & Grass seeds or turff all such parts as shall be broke up'; Thynne Papers Box XXX, Vol. LXXVII, ff. 280–9.

⁶⁵ John Barnatt and Tom Williamson, *Chatsworth: A Landscape History* (Macclesfield: Windgather, 2005), p. 109.

⁶⁶ Edith Milner, *Records of the Lumleys of Lumley Castle*, ed. Edith Benham (London: Bell & Sons, 1904), p. 366.

⁶⁷ Brown's accounts mention 1120 lb of white clover seed bought from Sambrooke Freeman for Milton Abbey, probably in 1776, suggesting that he had already used it at Fawley Court before 1771; Dorothy Stroud, *Capability Brown* (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), pp. 118–19.

⁶⁸ As regards great estates, Wakefield Lodge was buying clover by the ton in 1730, and by the end of the century at the latest it was regularly being worked into the rotation; Michael E. Turner, John V. Beckett and Bethanie Afton, *Farm Production in England 1700–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 77. Kate Felus has shown me the record of Brown's purchase of 45 lb of clover for Stowe in 1750; Huntington Museum, California; National Trust IDs 7678, 8291.

⁶⁹ Mary Rose Blacker, *Flora Domestica* (London: National Trust Enterprises, 2000), p. 45.

⁷⁰ For example, the Duchess of Leinster's letter to her husband from Holland House, '21/June/1757 Mr Fox begs you will plant & sow a great variety & mix foreign trees with the natives; he says they require no more care than common trees, & some of them are fine forest trees'; Brian Fitzgerald, *Correspondence of Emily Duchess of Leinster (1731–1814)* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1949), p. 54.

⁷¹ Alexander Pope, *Windsor Forest* (1713), ll. 29–32.

⁷² Francis Noel C. Mundy, *Needwood Forest* (Lichfield: privately printed, 1776), pp. 6–7.

⁷³ William Shenstone, *The Works*, 2 vols (London: Dodsley, 1769), I, Elegy XXI, p. 77. This theme of the flowery lawn, meadow or grove as local and hence (in England) English permeates all of Shenstone's work.

⁷⁴ Gilpin, 'Remarks on Trees'.

⁷⁵ William Gilpin, *Remarks on Forest Scenery* (London: R. Blamire, 1791), I, p. 219.

⁷⁶ Ruth Hayden, *Mrs. Delany and Her Flower Collages* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), p. 112.

⁷⁷ James Bolton, *Filices Britannicae* (Leeds: John Binns, 1785), pp. iii, xiii.

⁷⁸ Elizabeth Hall, 'The plant collections of an eighteenth-century virtuoso', *Garden History*, 14/1 (1986), pp. 13–14.

⁷⁹ Emily J. Climenson (ed.), *Passages from the Diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys of Hardwick House, Oxon. AD 1756 to 1808* (London: Longmans Green, 1899), p. 120.

⁸⁰ John Nichols, *History and Antiquities of the Parish of Lambeth* (London: J. Nichols, 1788), p. 84.

⁸¹ Marshall, *On Planting and Rural Ornament*, I, p. 279. In this book, Marshall had kind words for many natives. The dog rose, for example, was 'possessed of many beauties, and if not so common would deserve a place in the choicest collections'; II, p. 356. He made similar comments about broom (*Genista anglica*), II, p. 140; ivy (*Hedera helix*), II, p. 151; white willow (*Salix alba*), II, p. 354; woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*), II, p. 367; and the wayfarer tree (*Viburnum opulus*), II, p. 409.

⁸² Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, p. 43.

⁸³ So, Rutter and Carter acknowledged 'the smiling beauty of a common ditch-bank, in the full spring, covered with its variety of weeds' and promoted 'the plants of North America' because they 'keep up that bloom of spring, which please in the hedge-rows for a fortnight'; Rutter and Carter, *Modern Eden*, p. 207. They still proposed that such flowers should be kept in a discrete part of the garden, hidden from the rest.

⁸⁴ John Phibbs, 'The Englishness of Capability Brown', *Garden History*, 31/2 (2003), pp. 122–3.

⁸⁵ Batty Langley, *New Principles Of Gardening: Or, The Laying out and Planting Parterres, Groves, Wildernesses, Labyrinths, Avenues, Parks, &c.* ..., 7 parts (London: A. Bettesworth, J. Batley *et al.*, 1728), p. 183.

⁸⁶ PRO, 30/8/58, ff. 158 (near Sheen, 4 August 1774) ff. 158–9; also Hill, *Eden*, p. 612 (Of the Disposition of flowers).

⁸⁷ Loudon, *Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion*, pp. 258–9.

⁸⁸ Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana: Duchess of Devonshire* (London: HarperCollins, 1998), p. 37.

⁸⁹ Actually, gradation, which is the essence of shrubbery, was hardly regarded as innovative at the time – field evidence suggests that it

had been adopted on some estates (e.g. Hale, Heythrop and Combe Lodge) by the beginning of the eighteenth century, and William Marshall dismissed gradation as old hat: 'What gardener's man does not know that, in forming either [the shrubbery, clump or belt] the tallest trees are planted behind or towards the centre; trees of lower growth in front of them, descending still lower and lower with shrubs of different heights, down to the edging of dwarf box'; Marshall, *Review of The Landscape*, pp. 185–6.

⁹⁰ William Cobbett, *The English Gardener* [1829] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 224, cited by Laird, *Flowering of the Landscape Garden*, p. 376.

⁹¹ A generation earlier the same horticultural pride had been shown in exhibiting 'High hedges ... sometimes carried up from fifteen or twenty, to thirty or forty feet high; sometimes trained perfectly close from the bottom to top'; Thomas Mawe and John Abercrombie, *The Universal Gardener and Botanist* (London: G. & J. Robinson, 1797), *s.v.* 'PLEASURE-GARDEN, or Pleasure-ground'.

⁹² Isabel Chase, *Horace Walpole: Gardenist, An Edition of Walpole's The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening* [printed 1771, published 1780] (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943), p. 36.

⁹³ The argument might be made by comparing Lord Petre's design with that produced by a simple algorithm, by which the percentages of each species in each rank was specified with a rule that each plant of a single species should be at least two spaces apart.

⁹⁴ Mason, *English Garden*, Bk IV, ll. 212–13.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 493–5.

⁹⁶ George Mason, *An Essay on Design in Gardening* [1768] (London: Benjamin & John White, 1795), p. 36.

⁹⁷ In the letter already quoted, William Mason made it clear that the Newby flower garden could never rival Nuneham's because the owner would not fell the grove in which it was planted.