



CAMBRIDGESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

NEWSLETTER No. 22 2007

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Following a very successful Annual General Meeting at The Gilmour Building at the University of Cambridge Botanic Garden in November 06, I announced that I would like to stand down as Chairman. I have been chairman for some 10 years now and think it is time for new blood in the Trust. At the following CGT committee it became apparent that there seemed to be no one willing to take over my role so it was decided that the work that I do for the Trust will be done by other members of the committee. Mr Christopher Vane Percy has agreed to help at the AGM, the events will be agreed in advance and we have already given contact names so that I do not have to answer every phone call regarding each event. The newsletter articles are now all sent by email so that they can be checked and then forwarded to the printer, which saves me typing 19 pages of A4 text. So for this year I am on a 'sabbatical' in order that I can concentrate on other problems.

Fergus Garrett gave an informative illustrated lecture about Great Dixter at the AGM and kindly gave everyone a typed list of each plant association he showed on a slide, which was much appreciated. Mrs Judith Christie, who has organised the Huntingdon Garden Recording Group from the local NADFAS group, has kindly agreed to join

the committee and attended a meeting with me and the representative for East Anglia to arrange that our research folders can be delivered to York so they can be included in the National Data Base Project on Parks and Gardens. Helping set up a NADFAS Garden Recording Group is a first in the history of the Gardens Trusts. I would like to thank Jane Brown and Charles Malyon who have given workshops and guided tours to this enthusiastic group.

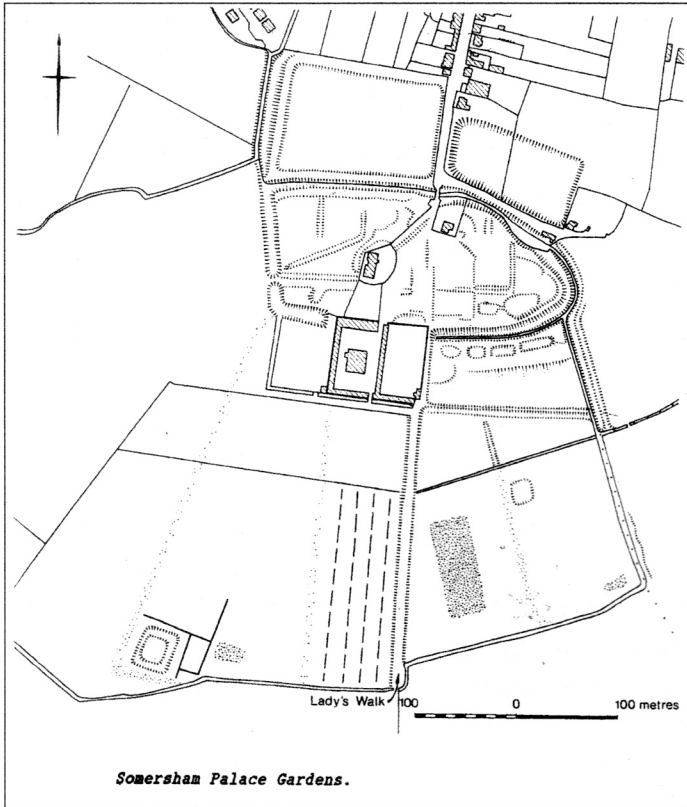
I would also like to thank the Suffolk Gardens Trust for allowing us to reproduce an article from their recent newsletter about recording walled gardens in the county. This article was written by Adam Paul (a violin restorer) whose garden we visited two years ago which included a walled garden with crinkle-crankle walls. I do hope that you will find the articles in this newsletter of interest, I thank all those who have contributed to date which enables the Trust to produce newsletters of such quality.

I urge you to try and attend as many of our planned visits to gardens this year. Advance weather forecasts promise a long warm summer and there are many gardens to be enjoyed on our events list.

*John Drake,
Chairman*

SOMERSHAM PALACE GARDENS

The site of Somersham Palace lies to the south of the village at the end of the road that runs from High Street past the parish church. Although nothing still stands of the medieval palace itself, the site is surrounded by the archaeological traces of a remarkable garden and a park. The remains are important for two reasons. First, despite being much damaged, and indeed partly ploughed over, what survives is a splendid example, certainly the best in Cambridgeshire, of a medieval designed landscape. Second, it was one of the earliest of such designed landscapes to be recognised and this led on to the discovery of many more, all over Britain.



The concept of a medieval designed landscape was unknown before the 1970s. It was assumed that such landscapes, with parks, ponds, lakes, drives and associated gardens did not come into existence until the 17th century at the earliest and that most were created by such well-known designers as Brown and Repton. Although there are occasional references to some form of designed landscapes in medieval documents these were not appreciated or understood.

Nor in retrospect does Somersham seem to be a likely candidate for what turned out to be a completely new type of garden and landscape. Its documented history, although of interest, gave no clue as to what was waiting to be discovered on the ground. The manor of Somersham was given to Ely Abbey by Earl Brithnoth in 991 and remained part of the abbey's extensive estates until the early 12th century. In 1109 Somersham was one of the abbey manors that was transferred to the newly established bishopric of Ely and it remained part of the bishop's estate until 1600. From the 12th century onwards Somersham was a bishop's palace. Not only was it relatively close to Ely, but it was also conveniently situated at the end of the first stage of most journeys made by the bishop from Ely to London. It was thus used for brief overnight stays and more protracted visits by both bishops and eminent travellers as well as for important meetings. Certainly Edward III stayed there

in 1334. Somersham Palace was thus a very well appointed building. It was also set within elaborate gardens that in turn lay within a wider designed landscape, all intended to provide for leisure activities and pleasant surroundings. Although what survives of these gardens are now merely archaeological features, some of them visible only on aerial photographs, it is possible to reconstruct what the site must have looked like in medieval times.

The main approach to the palace was, as now, from the village street to the north. Today this road appears to be part of the village, and indeed originally was. When the bishops of Ely acquired Somersham it was in fact the main street of the village with the parish church halfway along on the eastern side. When the palace was built and the designed landscape laid out a new and more pleasing approach was created. All the peasant houses along the village street were removed and the whole village was relocated over its own fields further north, where it now lies. The result was to create a wide, probably tree-lined, drive leading to the palace with the church, lavishly rebuilt by one of the bishops in the mid-thirteenth century, standing alone amongst great open paddocks. Near the end of the drive the approach road became a causeway between two rectangular lakes. The eastern lake has now been built over but the large banks that once bounded the western lake survive and indicate that they were once also walkways from which the lake, and doubtless fishing or boating parties, could be viewed. And the lake had another purpose. As visitors approached the palace along the drive its towers and walls would have been reflected in the still waters.

Immediately beyond the lakes was a large moated enclosure with a squared-off western end and a rounded eastern one. The broad moat was water-filled for most of its circuit and approaching visitors crossed it on a small bridge, the medieval abutments of which can still be seen. The palace itself lay inside this moat, roughly where the present Park House stands, although it was much larger with rooms arranged around two courtyards. Beyond it to the east lay gardens, slight traces of which can be detected as low banks and ditches, as well as the shallow depressions of former small ponds. These indicate that the gardens were almost certainly divided into rectangular compartments, bounded by walls and fences, in typical medieval form. Further gardens probably extended beyond the moat to the south where the present farm buildings stand. All of these gardens were tended by gardeners, payments of whose wages are recorded, for example in 1169-72.

The curved eastern end of the moated enclosure and its south-eastern boundary is quite different from the broad deep ditch elsewhere. Here there is (or was until recent changes) only a small meandering stream in the bottom of an asymmetrical artificial 'valley'. This originally must have been a wooded glade with a central rill that could be viewed from the garden within the moat to the north. Beyond this glade a large rectangular compartment bounded by banks with walkways along them probably contained another garden. However, the most remarkable feature in this compartment is a line of four small rectangular ornamental ponds, also with flat terrace walks between them. What makes these ponds unique is that they increase in size from west to east. That is, they are corrected for perspective and thus, from the west, seem to be all the same size. This appears to be the only known example of such an optical illusion in a medieval garden context.

To the south, beyond these formal gardens, the land is now

all arable. But cropmarks, visible only from the air, reveal that a contrived landscape once extended in this direction. It was divided into two unequal areas by a raised causeway, now called Lady's Walk, that led south from the palace. To the east of the Walk the remains of three ponds, one very large and rectangular and two other small ones, as well as a long path, are visible, all contained within an area bounded by ditches. To the west of the Walk a larger, ditched area encloses traces of two more long paths, some faint planting ridges aligned north to south that were probably a former orchard and a tiny moated 'island' with an associated pond and other features. This island is so small that it can only have been the site of a gazebo or summerhouse, perhaps similar to those that survive at another bishop's palace at Lyddington in Rutland or in the abbot's garden at Bury St Edmund's.

The palace and its gardens, lakes and ponds lay on relatively flat ground. But the Lady's Walk runs on across the rising

ground to the south. From here there was a bird's-eye view of the entire site. It can be no coincidence that the Walk was the major approach to the palace from the south and thus provided a splendid view of the gardens for visitors. The track also gave access from the palace to a huge deer park that extended to the east and west. This deer park is now entirely arable but it was probably once wooded with copses and avenues. The park and gardens seem to have survived until the 16th century although by then the palace had been largely abandoned.

Here at Somersham it is possible to reconstruct a medieval landscape that was designed deliberately to enhance the setting of the bishop's palace and to provide a place for recreation, leisure and contemplation. It, and the many similar sites that have been discovered more recently, give a new insight into the aspirations of medieval lords and prelates, as well as into a hitherto unknown aspect of the history of parks and gardens.

Christopher Taylor

PURSUING THE PAST

About a year ago, friend and fellow Garden Trust member Maureen Hawes and I ventured into the field of research for the Trust and I have been asked to write an article on how we have gone about our work. Our brief was to explore the estate of Holmewood in the village of Holme, near Peterborough. We had visited the house and park on two occasions with the Trust; part of the estate is owned by the British Sugar Corporation who use it as a conference and research centre, the remainder is owned by the Crown Estate and used as farm land.

Our first step was to arrange to revisit the property, take some photographs and meet up with a member of British Sugar's staff who was responsible for their archives. She provided us with an historical overview of the property, parkland and past owners, plus telephone numbers of contacts, land agents and Crown Estate.

Our second step was to visit local establishments, namely Cambridge Central Library, the Cambridgeshire Record Office and the University Library. Whilst there was nothing of relevance to our research, Holmewood being outside the immediate area, these collections hold useful standard reference books, such as *Victorian County History*; and the Cambridgeshire Collection, housed in the Central Library, has a vast amount on local history. The University Library holds *Burke's Peerage*, the *Dictionary of National Biography* and Year Books for each college. It is a requirement when using Record Offices for the first time to obtain a Reader's Ticket. This involves filling out a simple form giving your personal details, area of research, producing some form of identification, such as a driving licence, and paying a small fee. A Reader's Ticket is issued immediately, which permits you to use all UK Record Offices. To obtain a Reader's Ticket to the University Library you need to make an appointment and attend a brief informal interview to which you are required to take a letter of introduction, in our case from the CGT Chairman, explaining your field of research; you also need some form of identification, such as your driver's licence. A passport-type photograph is taken during the interview and is bedded in your Reader's Ticket, which is issued immediately and lasts for one year. You are not allowed to take large bags into the reading rooms: this also applies to some Record Offices, and in the case of the University Library lockers are provided at a

small refundable cost, so take some coins with you.

The University Library uses both computers and manual references to locate books; if you are not familiar with computers, staff are on hand to help. To obtain documents and books at both the University Library and Record Offices you fill in a request form and staff locate the items. It is better to visit the University Library out of term time when items are located quicker; however they do have a café! The University Library has a comprehensive map collection which you can view and have copies made for a small cost. Maureen had access to the Anglia Ruskin University library which proved very useful and it is worth considering approaching any library that may help.

Cambridge Record Office did not have any relevant records so our next visit was to the Huntingdon Record Office. Using their card index we discovered legal documents, newspaper cuttings, maps and photographs. In order to view documents you are required to fill out a simple form quoting details from the card index; the staff find the items within 15 minutes or so. It is worth discussing with Record Office staff your area of interest as they can often refer you to relevant books and find related documents. If you require copies of documents, another simple form has to be filled in and the staff will then do the photocopying for you, a small charge per sheet being made.

Having exhausted all local records, other than Peterborough Record Office to which a future visit is planned, our next move was to contact Crown Estate who in turn referred us to the National Archives Office but first gave us reference numbers of relevant documents which proved invaluable; Huntingdon Record Office also gave us useful references. These can be obtained from the National Archives website www.nationalarchives.co.uk and its home page enables you to register on-line so that on arrival you need only show some form of identification and have your photograph taken; your Reader's Ticket is then issued immediately, free of charge, and lasts for three years. The home page also gives details on how to reach the office in Kew, provides maps, lists facilities available, and explains how to get the best out of your visit. We found the staff extremely helpful, the building a pleasure to look at and work in, the café good. The in-house computer system on which you trace and request documents is explained to you and is fairly easy to understand; staff are always willing to help. You

are allowed to request up to three documents to be ready on the day of your visit; this also automatically reserves you desk space and a locker to which any other documents you request during your visit are delivered within 20-30 minutes.

The Internet is worth browsing though time consuming and a bit hit-and-miss but by putting keywords into Google something may emerge and hopefully will not result in a lot of Spam.

Sometimes the less than obvious documents prove very useful. During our research we found a copy of a letter written by the grandson of someone employed by the last private owner of Holmewood. The letter was to the present owners offering archival material. Fortunately, he, the grandson, was still living at the same address, we made contact and have since met up. He has given us much help and some useful contacts which we might otherwise never have found and which we intend to follow up.

Research can be frustrating but we have never been bored and it is such a thrill when we find something we have been searching for or when something unexpected comes to light. We have learnt a lot, had a lot of fun and become quite attached to Holmewood and its owners.

Finally some useful tips when visiting places for research purposes:

- Phone ahead to check if the relevant material is held and is available.
- Take your Reader's Tickets.
- Take a pencil, as pens are not allowed for note taking.
- Keep careful records of references to validate your research and for future researchers.
- Ask for help; staff are friendly and willing.

Diana Silk
February 2007

THE WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN RECORDING GROUP SUFFOLK GARDENS TRUST

The Walled Kitchen Garden Recording Group have been very active in the last year. We are not only fair weather recorders – on a number of occasions we were out in the cold and wet, not as much talking, just wet feet and chattering teeth and a resolution to get a hip flask for next winter!

On our visits we often discovered aspects and details that would send some into raptures. The sheer size of **Rendlesham Hall** gardens – three distinct areas of over 4 acres with 700 yards of massive brick walling – was both impressive and daunting. In the course of our survey I found an apple, and of course had to try it in the interests of research! It had a particular shape called 'cat nosed', this one was aptly named Adam's Permain. Eagle eyed Polly spotted a label on a wall where some sort of fruit once grew, and after much research in my fruit books it was identified. It was not difficult to imagine the gardens at their peak, with various fruit houses for peaches and figs and nectarines, not forgetting vineries – all brought back to life by a contemporary account published in 1881 and sales catalogues from the 1920s.

In our visits, research and note taking is difficult to come to an immediate reason for this or that feature; but the saying 'reflection often supplies the answer', often followed by a visit to the record office or library, is valid. None so true as on our visit to **Chiltern Hall**, where we found two large recesses at the opposite end of the side wall in the walled garden, were they seats for a vista, or there to heat the wall, or to store or dry vegetables. We have come to no serious conclusion, other than it was probably an early walled pleasure ground, than the later purpose built productive garden. On a return visit it was raining, and almost by accident I prodded the grass with a stick and managed to accurately locate a path. I hope you have all made use of the recent dry weather as an ideal opportunity to find lost foundations in your own gardens.

The **Walled Gardens at Horringer**, which were sold off and separated from Horringer Manor in 1995, had two small kitchen gardens, and standing in one specific place we heard our own voices echoing back – the sound rebounding from the walls. The gardens were on a slope – one slightly higher than

the other – and it was not until we decided to look at the outside of the wall, that looking back, all the entrances were in line, and the walls at different heights. Was this to allow frost to drain out, or lower walls so the sun cast a shadow? Through the top door it was like entering 'Alice in Wonderland'; a pleasure ground, with paths linking it to the main gardens of Horringer Manor with perfectly planted oaks, limes and yews. Many are superb specimens, indicating that they had been planted and nurtured with skill and purpose. We also found a number of tools in an outbuilding, including puffers, bee keeping equipment, an oldseed drill marker, some pots, barn clocks and clips and armatures for floral decorations. Was it a pot washing or soil mixing shed? Not to mention the greenhouses, boiler house, the planting of a good example of a slip system of fruit growing and the damming of the lower stream to form a small, decorative canal feature.

Yet another Horringer walled garden (why are there so many in Horringer? Is it just a random chance that so many have survived?), this time **Horringer House**, proved to be a real gem – with its thin brick edging tiles, often in different shapes, called 'saw toothed', in fact there were two or three other original edgings there. There were a number of brackets just below the top of the wall; it is unusual to see these in such good condition. They were used to support overhanging shading, often to stop splash and disease, and when fully rolled down, for protection to keep the frost off peaches or apricots. In the superior gardens these brackets would have supported glass panels, and in front further glass frames, forming almost a vertical glass house with metal channels to lock in the glass panels, not only to protect, but 'bring on' the fruit by almost a month. We need to go back to Horringer, as our first visit was made in rain that made Blackheath seem like a minor shower, but the range of buildings, the tantalising remains of others and the intact sunken greenhouse, gave us a lot to ponder over.

Adam Paul
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Suffolk Gardens Trust Newsletter Autumn 2006.*

To carry out a similar survey in Cambridgeshire may be very rewarding and if anyone is interested do let the committee know. Ed.

THE CASE OF MR BARSON

FROM 'THE PETERBOROUGH ADVERTISER' 1909

The following was discovered by one of our members Anne Colbert, whom we thank for bringing it to our notice:

13th February 1909

SERIOUS CHARGE POPULAR HUNTINGDON MAN ARRESTED

A painful sensation was caused in Huntingdon on Monday by rumours of a grave character and the subsequent arrest on warrant issued on the applicant of Supt. Griffin and signed by the Mayor, of Mr. J. Barson, the well-known head gardener to Lord Sandwich at Hinchingsbrooke. There had been reports that Mr. Barson had left the neighbourhood and a warrant was obtained on Monday morning for his arrest and a second warrant empowered the police to search his house which is attached to the gardens at Hinchingsbrooke. The police, it is understood took possession of a large number of accounts and documents.

Mr. Barson returned home by the 6.16 pm train from London and was at once arrested on a charge of forgery and conveyed to the Police Station. Tuesday being the usual sitting of the Bench, it was anticipated by some of the public that the accused might be brought before the Borough Bench, but this was not so. The Mayor, attended at the Police Station, on an application of Mr. J. P. Maule, acting on behalf of Lord Sandwich, a formal remand for a week was granted. The specific charge on which the accused was arrested by P. S. Mayle was that between the months of January and December, 1908, James Barson did feloniously forge and utter certain acquittances of receipts of money, with intent to defraud, and that the said James Barson at the time did forge and utter the said acquittances, well knew the same to be forged. The accused seemed to feel his position very acutely. He asked for bail, but this was not granted, and later in the day accused and removed to Cambridge.

Mr. Barson, who is well-known as a most successful exhibitor in the horticultural world, has been in the employ of Lord Sandwich some years, and in connection with the outdoor estate occupied a position of considerable responsibility. He is a married man with two young children, and the greatest sympathy is felt for Mrs. Barson, who has been very seriously ill.

27th February 1909

THE FORGERY CASE OTHER CHARGES TO BE PREFERRED AGAINST BARSON SOME ASTOUNDING REVELATIONS LORD SANDWICH'S BITTER COMPLAINT

Great interest was taken in the hearing of the charge of forgery referred against James Barson, late head gardener to Lord Sandwich, by the Huntingdon Borough Bench on Tuesday. For the convenience of those engaged in the case, the hearing took place in the Crown Court, and there was a large attendance of the public, several well-known residents occupying seats on the Bench. The case was heard before the Mayor (R. Carter, Esq.) F. D. Veasey, and W. Gadsby, Esq.

Mr. J. P. Maule prosecuted, and had before him a voluminous

mass of accounts and other documents relative to the case. Mr. Harrison, of St. Ives appeared for the accused, who was accommodated with a seat in the dock.

Mr. Maule's opening statement

In opening the case at considerable length Mr. Maule said the charge was laid under the Forgery Act and alleged that the prisoner on divers dates between the years 1907 and 1908 forged and uttered certain acquittances and receipts with intent to defraud. Under the statute it was not incumbent upon him, that he should prove that a forgery was committed, and secondly that prisoner committed those forgeries with intent to defraud, and the jury would be entitled later on to say whether these two charges had been proved up to the hilt. Let him preface his remarks by saying at once that he appeared on behalf of Lord Sandwich who had felt it incumbent upon him to launch this charge against prisoner. His lordship did so for two reasons. It was with very great pain and regret Lord Sandwich had to bring this charge against one who had for many years enjoyed his entire confidence, but he did so first of all in justice to himself and secondly because he felt he owed a duty to the public. Prisoner came to Lord Sandwich eight or ten years ago with good credentials and occupied a position of trust with a good salary and certain prerequisites including the money won at Horticultural Shows. As time went on Lord Sandwich placed implicit confidence in him, believing that he was strictly honest.

From the very commencement of the time Barson occupied the position of head gardener, his lordship always instructed him to be very careful and accurate in his accounts. Lord Sandwich had a method of keeping his accounts, and when they came to look into that method he was sure the Bench would say that his lordship did everything right and proper in the keeping of those accounts. That did not only apply to the garden account, of which Barson had charge, but also to the various other departments of the house and estate. From the time when Lord Sandwich came to reside in that county he always held one view in regard to accounts, viz, that they should be rendered punctually and paid punctually. If there were three words in the English language which Lord Sandwich deprecated seeing in their sequence it was, "To account rendered." His lordship would never allow an account to run and it had been his practice throughout his life to have accounts rendered to him monthly and to pay them monthly. On the last day of January his lordship thought he could hold up his head and say "I owe no man in this world one farthing".

That belief, however, had been rudely shaken as he should show later on, and the defalcations that had been committed by this man had landed his lordship in a position which he scarcely thought possible. With regard to the method adopted by Barson in the keeping of the accounts, it was understood that no goods were to be ordered or supplied without a written order from his lordship. That was done to a very great extent, but during the last year or two Barson seemed to have adopted the method of sending the orders himself, and his lordship was not cognisant with this. At the beginning of each month it was Barson's duty to produce his statement, showing what had been expended on the gardens, what he had paid away in the way of pensions and exceptional expenses and for wages. The list also included bills incurred during the previous month. Barson was empowered to

go to the bank and draw his wages, and money for labour up to a given sum. When he produced his statement to his lordship, he would show what money he had received for wages and labour, and also the unpaid bills, or what were supposed to be unpaid bills, and he would be handed a cheque for the balance.

It then became his duty to discharge those bills, and to produce the receipts the following month. That method was an admirable one to adopt, on the assumption that his lordship was dealing with an honest man. If there had been any doubt in Lord Sandwich's mind that he was not dealing with an honest man, it was not perhaps the method that one would adopt. Did Lord Sandwich attribute the whole of the blame of these defalcations to Barson? His lordship had authorised him to say, and he said it with the deepest possible regret, that Lord Sandwich felt that he had not been fairly treated fairly by traders both in that town and in various parts of the country in connection with this extraordinary state of things, for if the various accounts were analysed, in not one single account in either of the two years – he was dealing with 1907-8 – was there an account commencing "To account rendered" and he (Mr. Maule) was sorry to say that some of the traders lent themselves, unwittingly it might have been, and gave Barson the opportunity of handling to his lordship invoices or accounts for goods with these words omitted.

The consequence had been that Barson had been ordering goods from time to time of these traders, and when they had oppressed Barson for money, he would tell them to send him particular items to make up a given sum, and he would put them forward for payment. Traders had done that, for what reason it was not for him to say; it was for the Bench to judge. They had lent themselves to carry out what Barson required, and what suited his purpose, instead of presenting their accounts in the full as they should have done in the ordinary course of business. Naturally his lordship, and he thought the Bench would say so too, had a grievance and he felt their account would have been paid long before this, and Lord Sandwich would have been made acquainted with a long standing account. The firm threatened in October last to write to Lord Sandwich if an account had not been paid. Barson appealed to them not to do so, as it would mean his instant dismissal. Mr. Maule dealt with the main facts of other cases he proposed to call evidence upon, and said the last of the forgeries he should refer to was a deliberate and wicked one, and related to Messrs. Ruston and Sons, of Huntingdon.

Messrs Ruston and Sons had a running account against Lord Sandwich which was rendered from time to time. Barson went to Messrs Ruston and asked them to take out certain items of the account to make up the sum of £16 11s. The account was sent to Barson, who afterwards met Mr. Ruston in the street and gave him two £5 notes, The receipt for £10 was sent, and Barson should have presented it to Lord Sandwich, having paid it. He did not do that, but did what he thought would be in his own interests, because he was in want of money to keep other creditors quiet. He had got Messrs. Ruston's bill for £16 11s, and he tore off the receipt for £10 which had been placed on another bill put it on the document for £16 10s and altered the £10 to £16 10s and thus got £16 10s from Lord Sandwich. If these forgeries were ingeniously intended, they were obviously intended, they were obviously clumsily perpetrated, and showed on the face that they were carelessly done. Next week it might be his duty to open another charge against Baron under the Larceny Act. Lord Sandwich wished him to say that he had no compunction about commencing proceedings against Barson, but he absolutely absolved Mrs. Barson, his wife, from anything in the charge, or of falsifications and forgeries. His lordship had the deepest sympathy for Mrs. Barson. He hoped

his lordship would in due course forget, if he could, what had transpired, and that his confidence with the traders generally might be restored.

Examples of alleged dishonesty

George Wood Ingram, seed merchant, Boston, was the first witness, and spoke to the transaction referred to by Mr. Maule in his opening. He gave a receipt for £5, but in the document produced, the receipt had been altered to £5 9s, and the same remark applied to the letter which accompanied the original receipt.

William Powell, in the employ of the liquidator of Richard Smith & Co., nurserymen and seed merchants, Worcester, said the firm supplied vegetable seed to Lord Sandwich in 1906, on the order of Barson. The amount produced was sent in by witness in September 1908. It was for £1 6s 3d and was paid to the receiver on Feb 3rd 1909, the letter (produced) being the acknowledgement. The receipt attached to the account sent in September (produced) was not given by anyone belonging to the firm, and he had not seen it before.

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In January 1907, Barson presented to Lord Sandwich four bills. Written across each one was the word "paid", and therefore his lordship had a right to assume, that they had been paid. But it was not so. For what reason it was impossible to conceive except that he paid one tradesman to the detriment of another. Mr. Maule drew attention to a bill of Messrs. W & J Brown, received May 1907, which was an altogether fictitious one. It would be interesting to know, if they ever did know, how and in what manner Barson got possession of this bill-head belonging to Messrs. Brown, because evidence would be called that the body of the bill was not their handwriting but was a complete forgery. The only conjecture he (Mr. Maule) could assign, was that some time or other Barson went to Peterborough, where Messrs. Brown carried on business, and whilst in the shop, got possession of some of the firm's bill-heads. Another curious fact about this account was that it represented to be not for goods Messrs. Brown ordinarily sold. For instance, one item was for two barrels of weed killer, which they did not sell. The items in this bill came to £13 1s 6d, which Barson presented to Lord Sandwich for payment, and got cash, which he must have put in his own pocket.

Another instance of distinct forgery was in respect of an account owing to Mr George Wood Ingram of Boston. He supplied goods to the value of £5 7s 0d in July and November 1906, and in September he received from Barson cash for £5 allowing 7s for discount. Amongst the papers found at Barson's house was Mr. Wood Ingram's printed receipt form for £5 9s 0d, and also a letter acknowledging the payment of value £5 9s 0d.

On looking very carefully by the aid of a strong magnifying glass, it could be seen that the receipt had been altered from £5 to £5 9s 0d, and the amount in the letter similarly. It was a paltry sum, but it had been done, and Mr. Ingram was present to tell them it was a forgery. Another case he was going into was that of Henry Dixon, coal merchant, of Huntingdon, who had been privileged to supply the gardens with coke. Dixon was an uneducated man whose writing was not of the clearest, and Barson had undoubtedly taken advantage of this more or less uneducated tradesman to the fullest extent to the detriment of Dixon, and the greater detriment of Lord Sandwich. Dixon had been straightforward to this extent, that he rendered his account to Lord Sandwich each quarter, and he put on bills "On account rendered" for what was owing from the previous quarter; but Barson took great care never to let that account go before Lord Sandwich. Dixon would tell them that on one or two occasions Barson had asked him to let him have a bill head, and he would fill up his own account. That was the complaint the prosecution had to make against Dixon, otherwise his transactions with Barson had been perfectly honourable. Mr. Maule showed that the bill-heads Barson had obtained had been used for perpetrating a fraud by means of forgery.

In the case of William Bull and Sons, an account which purported to be receipted for £9 5s 0d was a forgery. If this firm had done what they threatened to do in their correspondence, their account would have been paid long before this, and Lord Sandwich would have been made acquainted with a long standing account. The firm threatened in October last to write to Lord Sandwich if an account was not paid. Barson appealed to them not to do so, as it would mean his instant dismissal. Mr. Maule dealt with the main facts of other cases he proposed to call evidence upon, and said the last of the forgeries he should refer to was a deliberate and wicked one, and related to Messrs.

Ruston and Son of Huntingdon. Messrs. Ruston and Son had a running account against Lord Sandwich which was rendered from time to time. Barson went to Messrs. Ruston and asked them to take out certain items of the account to make up a sum of £16 11s 0d. The account was sent to Barson, who afterwards met Mr. Ruston in the street and gave him two £5 notes. The receipt for £10 was sent and Barson should have presented it.

LIABILITY FOR SERVANTS THE EARL OF SANDWICH'S EXPERIENCE "TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE DAILY MAIL'"

Sir, – I notice in your issue of Saturday a paragraph headed "Dishonest Servants", which gives an abbreviated account of a communication I addressed to the local Press.

The facts agree that my late gardener pleaded guilty and was convicted of a series of frauds and forgeries extending over a considerable period. I have had to pay a large sum for goods ordered without authority and contrary to my instructions from all over the country. The cost of the prosecution was nearly £80. Months after his committal I received a bill for goods ordered by the gardener from a tradesman in this county and supplied to the gardener for his own use, and am legally advised that I am responsible for the payment because many years ago the gardener ordered goods from the tradesman in my name.

The responsibility of employers for the dealings of servants with tradesmen thus appears to me incalculable, as if at any time an employer has authorised a servant to buy goods from him he becomes responsible for the payment for any goods which that servant may hereafter order for his own use or for any purpose.

Sandwich. Hinchingsbrooke, Huntingdon
3rd September 1909

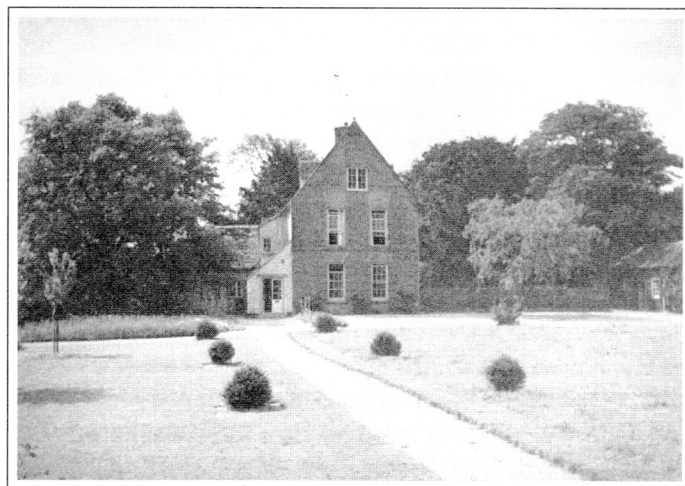
THE MANOR, HEMINGFORD GREY

According to the Title Deeds, Lucy Boston took possession of the property on 25 May 1939. The first few years, in between house restoration and giving twice weekly concerts to the RAE, were spent in planting trees and shrubs – mostly round the boundary of the property. These were bought from Wood & Ingram of Brampton, invoices from whom have been laboriously copied out by members of the Cambridgeshire Garden Trust who have my grateful thanks. Sixty five years on it is depressing to find how many of even the trees are no longer here.

After the War Lucy's "leisure was suddenly enormous and my energy at that time equally so" (Memories p.257) and she applied it to the garden, starting with the acre between the house and the river. There was never a plan of the garden to be, it grew little by little. Her first efforts suffered from the 1947 floods which came right to the front door.

The best known feature of the garden is the topiary planted in memory of her visits to Levens Hall near Kendal. Originally the eight on either side of the path to the river were to be simple cones but the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II gave her the idea of crowns and orbs – and the Ampula for the one that showed "a propensity to be a bird". Later, chess pieces were created nearer the house.

Roses and irises were a passion of Lucy's and Graham Stuart Thomas, then of Sunningdale Nurseries advised on both and often procured rose rarities for her. For the rest of the planting



she concentrated mostly on scented plants and through her life continued to make more space to house her treasures.

She had one gardener "Broomie" and when he grew too old George Watson, always known as Watson, took over. In the summer she employed local youngsters to weed paths and irises. Many a visitor to the garden has told me how well they remember earning money tearing the heads off the weeds in the iris borders.

She stopped gardening so vigorously when she was ninety and died at the grand age of 97. Watson died the following

year. They had been ageing in the garden together while the “thugs” took root: bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), what I call creeping sow thistle, couch grass which had sent its shoots through old iris roots like javelins and ground elder (this last to a lesser degree, thank goodness).

It was an awe-inspiring inheritance. Lucy had borrowed against the property in order to fund the maintenance so we had to pay off a large debt speedily. This meant no money for a gardener until the place could earn enough to pay for help. An experienced gardener friend of ours advised putting the property on the market in the hopes of selling it to someone with enough money to restore the house and garden properly.

I remember vividly a back-breaking day battling with weeds when an admirer of Lucy’s came round the garden and rather despairingly said she supposed she could still see the bones of Lucy’s garden – my answer was a rather tart “I think one day you will see my bones in the garden”. Today my backbreaking job is in a different form, trying to earn more and more money for both house upkeep and to pay more people to do what I would really love to do, which is the garden.

About a year after Lucy died a reasonable Book Royalty cheque arrived so we decided to spend it on much needed help in the garden.



In Lucy’s lifetime the muntjac deer moved in – rather to her pleasure as they added credence to the story of the Green Deer coming alive in *The Children of Green Knowe*. She enjoyed seeing them in the garden, whereas I have grown to hate them with a deep hatred as they damage the bark of roses and new trees and regard the rest of the garden as a desirable salad bowl. They breed in the garden in the wilderness – supposedly left for wildlife – in this case the wrong wildlife!

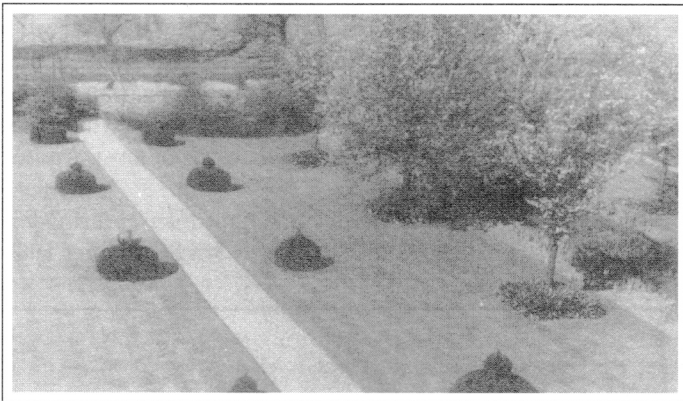
The floods continue to happen, bad ones in 1992, 1998 and 2002. Even this year the northern end of the garden has been full of water, to the pleasure of my grandchildren who suitably booted and coated for a winters day decided to “swim” in it in January. I suspect the irises have not enjoyed having cold, wet feet. They do not usually do well after a soggy winter.

Lucy writes in *Memories* about how much she enjoys the old trees here – the yews which she was confident would survive no matter what, but the copper beech she felt was more vulnerable and it would be devastating if anything was ever to happen to it. Alas, honey fungus got to it eighteen months ago and it has had to be felled. The trunk lies on the lawn, a splendid sculpture and has a new life as somewhere for children to climb. Tree felling has become one of my major expenses. The honey fungus is endemic in the garden and many of the roses that Lucy planted have died because of it, as have many shrubs as well as the trees. I find that all I can do is pretend it doesn’t exist and go on planting in the hopes that.

Seventeen years on I am still here and the garden is in reasonable shape. No garden remains static. I gardened alongside my mother from an early age so have inevitably added favourite plants of mine, and every now and then when the garden is looking pristine and under control in the winter I am tempted to add another bed – forgetting how quickly it can get out of control when everything is growing apace in the summer. Given two years of neglect this garden could become a suitable location for *Sleeping Beauty* to be filmed. Lucy always said that one should never win against nature and I am comforted by this when it looks as if nature is taking over.

Visitors seem to enjoy the atmosphere in the garden which is open to the public daily throughout the year from 11am to 5pm (dusk in winter). The house is also open but only by pre-arranged appointment.

Diana Boston
March 2007



The start of the restoration was slow. The huge border in the hidden garden was the first to have radical work done to it. Everything was removed except peonies and shrubs. Any bindweed that dared to show its head for the rest of that season was dug up. The following spring the border was repopulated. I do slightly miss the sight of the convolvulus twined round and flowering with lavender, what a pity such an attractive plant is so very vigorous!

The chess set had the same treatment of removing everything around the yew bushes and then replanting with dark leafed *Ajuga reptans* “*Atropurpurea*” for the black, and *Stachys Lanata* “*Silver Carpet*” for the white squares. It was difficult getting the perennial weeds from amongst the roots of the yew bushes so it had to be done again a couple of years ago.

Little by little the borders were released from the worst of the thugs. The bindweed rears its head in too many places but at least the roses are not under a mantle of its intertwining stems by the end of the summer, a perfect micro-climate for blackspot under this shroud. Lucy used to call the splendid white trumpets of flowers her autumn colour.

Cambridgeshire Gardens Trust
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