

**The origins, development and influence of William
Shenstone's landscape garden design at The
Leasowes, Halesowen**

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Synopsis

William Shenstone was a polymath. He wrote letters, essays, composed poetry, painted water-colours, played musical instruments and indulged in architectural design, but above all he created a landscape garden at The Leasowes Farm in the West Midlands that became a celebrated place to visit during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Shenstone worked during the early days of the English landscape garden movement, and while others created grounds with political and/or historical themes he fashioned a garden in a 'nauresque' style: allowing the trees, shrubs and flowering plants to grow as they would in a natural environment. Although he altered watercourses, and constructed waterfalls, cascades and pools they were made to look as if they were natural features. In landscape-gardening (a term he coined) he created a version, called a *ferme ornée* that was untypical of the many forms of landscape-garden (another term he coined) that were being created.

This thesis is the first detailed study of The Leasowes and as well as re-evaluating previous writings it adds new material to our knowledge of Shenstone's landscape garden and its influence in Britain and overseas. Though people have written about Shenstone's garden in the past, few have explored it from a multi-disciplinary perspective which combines archival and literary sources with evidence from an exploration of archival and literary material with landscape studies and archaeology. The study is

divided into two parts, the first looks at Shenstone's context, his cultural networks and the influences upon his work and the second looks at the making of his landscape, horticultural activities and impact.

This thesis evaluates why Shenstone created his garden and how it came into being. It examines the garden's features and how the landscape evolved. It also considers his planting regime and discovers that many of his plants came from abroad thus closing the myth that he only used native specimens. The presence in The Leasowes landscape of inscriptions from Virgil and Horace's Latin verse and his English poems add an extra dimension to how he thought his garden should be perceived. The landscape was also an exercise in creating a philosophical, spiritual and emotional awareness in the minds of those who came. Carefully placed seating enabled visitors to think about what they were seeing rather than just observing scenes and verse and poetry suggested ways in which these thoughts should be directed.

The case studies in this thesis of other landscape gardens review the influence that The Leasowes had on other gardeners in Britain, Europe and America and deliberates how their estates were/or may have been influenced by his work before and after his death. It looks at reports written by the many visitors to his landscape garden both from home and abroad, which indicated the extent to which his achievements were widely acknowledged.

The Leasowes was a special landscape-garden, and in eighteenth-century garden design it stood out as a distinctive and influential place.

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The illustrations in this thesis have been copied by the kind offices of the Huntington Library, California USA; Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA; Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA; British Library, London School of Economics and Political Science; National Portrait Gallery; National Gallery; Birmingham Archives and Heritage Service; Dudley Archives and Local History Service; Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service; Shropshire Record Office; University of Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library; Viscount Cobham, Hagley Park; West Wycombe Estate and Wikimedia Commons.

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This thesis has been printed in Baskerville font. There are three reasons why this is being used: firstly because of the friendship between John Baskerville

and Shenstone; secondly, Shenstone assisted Baskerville in his work by proofreading many of his publications; and thirdly because the eighteenth-century type face belongs to the period and seemed appropriate to the subject matter.

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Fig P.1: Portrait of William Shenstone and his dog Lucy, by Edward Alcock, 1760. The scene exterior to the arch is part of his landscape garden, due west of the house. The Ruined Priory is in the centre of the garden view. NPG263. ©National Portrait Gallery. London.¹

¹ Portrait of William Shenstone by Edward Alcock, 1760. ©National Portrait Gallery. London; Deborah Graham-Vernon, 'Alcock, Edward (fl. 1745–1778)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/65535>, accessed 28 Aug 2015].

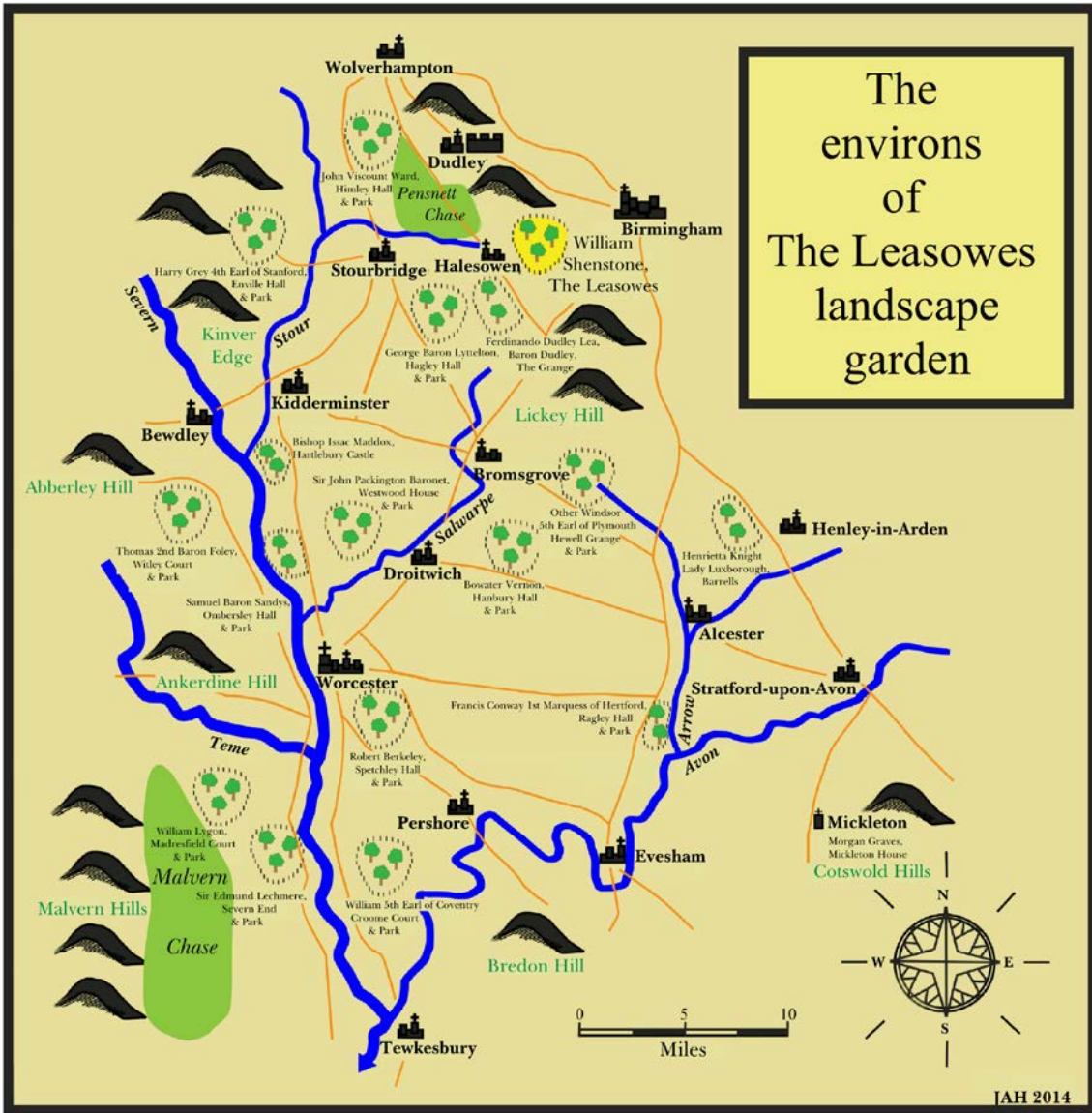


Fig. P1.2: A plan of the environs of The Leasowes in the mid-eighteenth century.²

² Most of the plans in this thesis were created by the writer from various sources which are identified in footnotes and the bibliography.

When Shenstone walk'd...

When Shenstone walk'd his own Arcadian field,
O'er Leasowes gentle slopes and flowery lawn;
What did the poet think, what did he feel,
What stole the gardeners mind that augural dawn
To build a fantasy beneath the hill?
Was it due to life amidst the rustic scene,
(His spirit loved the meadow and the rill),
Or was it nature's soul here to be seen?
Was it simple nature or art born
That made him paint the canvas of his farm
And fashion softer hues of guileless form
That nature saved so sweetly and could not harm?
Who taught him how to love the perfect land?
Who taught him how to plant with tender hand?

When Shenstone walk'd his own Arcadian field
What did the poet see, what did he hear
What did his garden paradise reveal?
Where cattle, sheep and bird song call so clear,
Where oaks and beeches swayed in sylvan bliss
And in the mind's eye elven spirits dwell
In rock cut grottoes (where they made their tryst),
While down the vale cascading waters fell
In crystal pools displayed in sun and rain.
But even in perfection death prevailed
And cold stone urns reminded him in pain
Of those he loved, life often was curtailed.
When Shenstone walked his own Arcadian field
A prospect of poetics was revealed.

John Hemingway 2014

A pair of Shakespearean sonnets composed by the writer.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Arthur Marwick wrote that when undertaking research in the sciences or arts, about society or an individual, one looks at their history first.³ The purpose of this thesis is to uncover the importance in history of one man: William Shenstone of The Leasowes because of his creation of a distinctive natural-looking landscape garden in the eighteenth century.⁴ Although Shenstone was widely celebrated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, what he achieved as a gardenist⁵ has not been the subject of a major study. This thesis provides a revision of existing interpretations, a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding his work, the uncovering of new information and a reassessment of his significance within the United Kingdom and internationally.

The writer's interest in Shenstone began in the 1970s, when as a school teacher he first discovered his poetry. Subsequently he changed his career, became an archaeologist and secured the post of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Archaeological and Historic Environment Officer. The

³ Marwick, Arthur, *The Nature of History* (London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1973), p. 9.

⁴ Thomas Percy to William Shenstone 19th December 1761, Brooks, Cleanth, (ed.) *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & William Shenstone* Vol. 7 (New Haven, Yale University, 1977), p. 131. Shenstone was not happy with the name of his farm and thought of changing it. However, Percy recommended that the term The Leasowes be retained as it was appropriate and the fame of the name had spread.

⁵ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. xii. Gardenist is a term used by Horace Walpole to refer to a garden designer.

Leasowes, which became a public park and golf course, was within the borough and formed part of the writer's responsibility. Little has survived in the twenty-first century of the above-ground features that once graced it: a contemporary confirmation of Shenstone's observation that things begin to decay as soon as they are created.⁶ A council-inspired project, however, led to the writer's search for surviving evidence of features in the park's landscape. Since 1993 he has studied The Leasowes, organised and monitored excavations, performed various archaeological and historical investigations, written articles and given presentations on the landscape garden.⁷ An interest in the work also directed him to pursue a study of Shenstone's gardening beyond his professional remit, which has culminated in the present thesis.

In reading the published material on garden history and Shenstone, and the evidence that had arisen throughout his research, it became clear to the writer that a new substantial study of The Leasowes was possible. This thesis aims to correct the errors in previous works, examine known and previously unused evidence and offer a more complete picture of Shenstone and The Leasowes. It looks at documentary, published, visual and physical material to explore the influences upon his creative activities as a landscape designer, how his estate took the form it did and the ways in which he influenced other

⁶ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts in Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone, Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 137.

⁷ The writer was Archaeological and Historic Environment Officer for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council from 1993-2011. For investigations, articles and presentations associated with The Leasowes see Bibliography.

created landscapes in Britain and abroad. This chapter creates a framework by outlining the context of the study, providing a literature review to locate The Leasowes within the work of garden historians, and exploring the methodology of the thesis and the nature of primary source material. It concludes with a description of the contents of the subsequent chapters.

1.2 Context

The Leasowes Park was established in 1934 as a community recreation area when it was purchased by Halesowen District Council. Subsequently Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council became owners of the site. After many years during which the historic garden was neglected, the Council created a strategy for long-term development to include a part-restoration of the Shenstone landscape. This was included in the policy document ‘Landscape Web’.⁸ The Council’s recognition that the site was important was shown by the designations it was awarded: a ‘Conservation Area’, a ‘Landscape Heritage Area’ and a ‘Site of Importance for Nature Conservation’. Central government also recognised its significance and in 1986 it was added to the government’s list of ‘Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Interest in England’. As a result, the Council made a successful bid to the National Heritage Memorial Fund for a Heritage Lottery Grant to restore some of the features in the landscape.⁹ The Debois Landscape Survey Group, a historic garden consultancy, was employed to lead the project and in 1991 an interim

⁸ Within *The Leasowes Restoration Combined Bid & Business Plan* Application No: 96-01401 (Dudley, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, 1996), Appendix D, p. 6.

⁹ *The Leasowes Restoration Combined Bid & Business Plan* p. 10.

report was published to suggest the work that should be pursued.¹⁰ The results of the archaeological, geological and topographical work referred to in this thesis came about as a consequence of the implementation of that report.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were great changes in many aspects of British society; in politics, agriculture, and industry. They were so extreme that historians have called them revolutionary and this label can also be applied to gardening.¹¹ Gardening, however, is difficult to describe. Anthropologists and biologists claim gardens are indicative of a human need to dominate nature or an expression of the natural landscapes of our primitive ancestors.¹² Artists and philosophers on the other hand assert that they should be labelled as: ‘pure and innocent, rewarding and important, morally and philosophically instructive, restorative and reposing’.¹³ This last description sees the garden as a sentimental object. These explanations, however, are only a small part of how gardens can be perceived. There are also many different types of gardens and the English landscape garden, the subject of this thesis, is just one example.

The English landscape garden was conceived as a replication of nature itself, rather than a fabrication by humanity which had been the purpose of earlier

¹⁰ Gallagher C. & Phibbs J., *The Leasowes - Summary of Proposals* (Dudley, Debois Landscape Survey Group, 1991).

¹¹ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016). The subtitle of this book is *Landscape Revolution in Eighteenth-century England*.

¹² Cooper, David, E., *A Philosophy of Gardens* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2006), p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 4 - 5.

gardens.¹⁴ In the historiography of English landscape gardens, traditionally historians have looked at sites like Stowe, Castle Howard, Rousham and Painshill and have assumed that the artistic development they revealed was the norm.¹⁵ Recent research influenced by the new garden history provides a more complex picture. Studies have been conducted on smaller gardens using varied sources such as diaries, letters, documents, illustrations and maps as well as archaeology and landscape studies. Garden history has also been reappraised as a dimension of cultural history. Diane Harris noted that an ‘examination of landscape as artefacts of material culture’ reveals ‘fresh insights’.¹⁶ These varied approaches have thrown new light on the genesis of gardens as a whole and the eighteenth-century landscape garden in particular.

David Whitehead noted that Shenstone’s creation of The Leasowes ‘was one of the seminal moments in garden history’ in establishing one of the first truly natural gardens,¹⁷ and when Arthur Lovejoy stated that: ‘The God of Romanticism was one in whose universe things grew wild and without trimming and in all the rich diversity of their natural shapes’, he was looking at the type of garden that The Leasowes represented.¹⁸ These suggestive

¹⁴ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010), p. 8.

¹⁵ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1998), pp. 4-5.

¹⁶ Harris, Diane, ‘The Postmodernisation of Landscape: a Critical Historiography,’ *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Histories*, Vol. 58, No. 3 (1999/2000), p. 439.

¹⁷ Whitehead, David, ‘Leasowes, West Midlands, England’ *Encyclopaedia of Garden History*, Vol. II (Chicago, Chicago University, 2001), p. 773.

¹⁸ Lovejoy, Arthur O., *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 16.


remarks are explored in this thesis, which looks at The Leasowes as a farm and its gradual expansion into a celebrated landscape. It presents an investigation of Shenstone's work, to discover how and why this contribution to what may be called the Picturesque or Naturesque movement came about and how its development contributed to the evolution of eighteenth-century gardening.¹⁹ Shenstone's importance, however, was not only in the creation of his garden but also in how it was labelled. Although there were estate gardens before his time there was no term to define them. Joseph Addison borrowed the word landscape, actually 'landskip', from the Dutch.²⁰ Samuel Johnson defined this word in his 1755 English Dictionary, but did not list the word 'landskip-garden'.²¹ Shenstone's first use of the compound nouns: 'landscape-gardener' and 'landscape-gardening' led to the widespread use of the terms.²²

This thesis pursues three main avenues of enquiry. Firstly, the reasons for and nature of the creation of The Leasowes landscape are explored.

¹⁹ See Chapter 12 for a definition of the Naturesque. This is a new term and is yet to enter the vocabulary of garden history.

²⁰ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Bantam Press, 2008), pp. 128-129.

²¹ Johnson, Samuel, *A Dictionary of the English Language* Vol. II (London, J. and P. Knapton; T. and T. Longman; C. Hitch and L. Hawes; A. Millar; and R. and J. Dodsley, 1755), p. xvii.

²² Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts in Gardening' op. cit., p. 111. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, he was also the first recorded person to use the term 'landscape-painter' in Paul Baines, 'Shenstone, William (1714–1763)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2015 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25321>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Also see Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts in Gardening' op. cit., pp. 125, 129, 139.; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd Edition (Oxford, 1989) under 'Shrubbery'. He was also reputed to have been the first to have used the word 'shrubbery', but the term was initially used by Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough in a letter to Shenstone dated July 1748. Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, M.DCC.LXXV (1775), p. 40.

Although the garden has been previously described little attention has been devoted to why it developed in the way it did. Secondly, as a result of the archaeological, geographical and topographical work at The Leasowes new evidence has become available to enhance understanding of how the site was created. Thirdly Shenstone's impact on other landscape gardens is evaluated. Shenstone had an undisputed influence, but it has never been precisely charted and one purpose of this thesis is an attempt to do this.

The Leasowes is explored by investigating the early evidence for the natural garden, and Shenstone's personal interest, taste and philosophy as they related to gardening. The development of The Leasowes itself, Shenstone's use of landscape and built architecture, his introduction of verse and poetry into the landscape and plants and planting, his influence on garden commentators and the use of his gardening techniques in contemporary and later gardens are also considered. It is a journey in which new evidence and interpretations of many aspects of Shenstone's work are revealed, but first, the nature and extent of literature about the subject need to be explored, to show how this thesis relates and adds to the existing historiography of the garden.

1.3 Literature Review

In his essay *On Gardens* published in 1625 Francis Bacon stated that making a garden 'is the purest of human pleasures.'²³ The landscape garden that Shenstone created at The Leasowes not only gave him pleasure, but also to others who saw it. A substantial amount has been written about his garden between the eighteenth and twenty-first centuries, but most of the earlier studies of The Leasowes were celebratory rather than critical. One observer was Oliver Goldsmith who wrote in 1773 that 'all men of taste wished for so enviable spot'.²⁴ John Byng, Viscount Torrington, who visited The Leasowes in July 1781, thought the 'pleasing objects are well introduced'²⁵ and the American, Thomas Jefferson, wrote after a visit in 1786, that the 'cascades are beautiful – the prospect fine and the woodland walks pleasing'.²⁶ John Wesley in the following year described The Leasowes as follows: 'I have seen nothing in all England to be compared with it. It is beautiful and elegant (sic)

²³ Bacon, Francis, *On Gardens* (London, J. Lane, 1902), p. 11.

²⁴ John A. Dussinger, 'Goldsmith, Oliver (1728?–1774)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10924>, accessed 22 Aug 2015].; Spalding, William (ed.) 'Essay xxi' *The Complete works of Oliver Goldsmith* (London, James Blackwood & Co, 1890), p. 398. Despite the praise he gave of The Leasowes in his paper *The History of a Poet's Garden* (Oxford, 1773). Goldsmith was not certain about the real natural landscape. Lord Macaulay in his *History of England* Volume III, footnote to page 43 quotes a letter that Goldsmith wrote to Thomas Contarine stating that with Scotland 'hills and rocks intercept every prospect'. A similar attitude was shown in the letters of Captain Burt, published in 1730, where he stated of the highlands of Scotland that 'Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape'.

²⁵ Joanna Innes, 'Byng, John, fifth Viscount Torrington (1743–1813)', rev. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37252>, accessed 21 Aug 2015]; Bruyn, Andrews C. (ed.) *The Torrington Diaries*, 4 vols. (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1934), pp. 46-7.

²⁶ P. S. Onuf, 'Jefferson, Thomas (1743–1826)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/63233>, accessed 22 Aug 2015]; Jefferson, Thomas, *Garden Book* (Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1981), p. 113.

all over.’²⁷ This approach continued into the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. J. C. Loudon in 1822 said Shenstone had ‘laid down unalterable principles for the imitation of nature in the arrangement of garden scenery’.²⁸ Hugh Miller in 1868 saw The Leasowes, despite the removal or destruction of many of its features, as still displaying a ‘singular ingenious composition inscribed on an English hillside’.²⁹ E. Monro Purkis in 1931 described the landscape and considered Shenstone to be a ‘gardening genius’.³⁰ These were laudatory comments, but none of these views provided a detailed analysis of the site as an explanation of how it evolved.

Garden history changed in the late-twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and studies became more wide-ranging and evaluative. In 1998 Tom Williamson affirmed that gardens are ‘worthy of serious historical enquiry: they demand investigation’ because they are cherished landscapes and remain a part of our cultural experience, and claimed: ‘Gardens need to be explained in terms of the lives and lifestyles of their owners.’³¹ Tim Richardson in 2008 following this line of thinking wrote that the mental worlds of these individuals need to

²⁷ Henry D. Rack, ‘Wesley, John (1703–1791)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2012 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29069>, accessed 22 Aug 2015]; Wesley, John, *An Extract of the Re. Mr. John Wesley’s Journal from August 9th, 1779 To August 26th 1782* (London, 1797) Vol. XIX, p. 77.

²⁸ Brent Elliott, ‘Loudon, John Claudius (1783–1843)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2010 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17031>, accessed 22 Aug 2015]; Loudon, John Claudius, *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, London, 1822), p. 99.

²⁹ M. A. Taylor, ‘Miller, Hugh (1802–1856)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18723>, accessed 22 Aug 2015]; Miller, Hugh, *First Impressions of England and its People* (Boston, Gould and Lincoln, 1865), p. 134.

³⁰ Purkis, E. Monro, *William Shenstone Poet and Landscape Gardener* (Wolverhampton, Whitehead Bros, 1931), p. 65.

³¹ Williamson, Tom (1998), *op. cit.*, pp. 1, 2.

be explored: their desires, their beliefs or lack of them, their understanding of how their society works and their approaches to art, culture and taste.³² Modern followers of the new garden history, have realised that to understand a garden one has to search for the elements that made it work.³³ This was pursued in the second half of the twentieth century by investigating gardens more methodically, but with Shenstone's gardening, even then, their approach to the topic was varied. Garden writers have frequently made mistakes when describing Shenstone's work. Some writers have also made inappropriate assumptions concerning The Leasowes, some have come to conclusions that are debatable and others have been completely wrong. Some works generalise, or contain unhistorical comments and errors: some due to a lack of concrete knowledge, others through speculation. In 1967 Christopher Hussey wrote that Shenstone had obtained his idea of a *ferme ornée* from Philip Southcote.³⁴ This was only partially true: when their gardens are analysed they are different in detail. Another writer, Timothy Mowl, claimed that Shenstone placed 'coy inscriptions and gimcrack wooden temples' in his garden.³⁵ Shenstone, in fact, only built one temple and that was in stone. Mowl's dismissive views were revealed by the comment: 'If he were alive now Shenstone would be described as shamelessly camp, a Boy George of the gardening world.'³⁶ His text contains inaccuracies such as describing Shenstone's farm as a Palladian dwelling, thinking the modern

³² Richardson, Tim, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

³³ Hunt, John Dixon (1989) op. cit., p. xi.

³⁴ Hussey, Christopher, 'English Gardens and Landscapes 1700-1750', *Country Life* (London, 1967), p. 48. A *ferme ornée* is an ornamented farm.

³⁵ Mowl, Timothy, *Historic Gardens of Worcestershire* (Stroud, Tempus, 2006), p. 57.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 60.

Leasowes House was the place where Shenstone lived, and misplacing the position of features such as the chalybeate spring.³⁷ Shenstone's literary inclination is the key to understanding him, and Mowl's chapter: 'William Shenstone – Bad Poet, Great Gardener', criticises his poetry. This judgement misconceives Shenstone's approach as both his garden creation and poetry interrelate.

Errors were often made by writers who only visited The Leasowes once and did not understand its nuances. Despite the value of much of Richardson's work, he used the term 'western combe' for the northern dingle and described the Gothic Seat stationed in the middle of the hanging wood as a temple in the 'umbrageous walk of hollies'.³⁸ James Woodhouse's poem concerning the walk, mentioned the tree species but not hollies, suggesting that the tree cover was different in Shenstone's time.³⁹ When he termed the Lyttelton Seat as being the closest to Hagley, there was another mistake. Hagley is in fact on the opposite side of the valley to The Leasowes. The importance of the seat was that the observer had a view of Hagley, not that it was close. Richardson's statement that James Thomson's Seat was near the Upper Pool (Beech Water), rather than where it was in Virgil's Grove, is

³⁷ Ibid, p. 61. A chalybeate spring was one in which minerals came up with the water. Physicians such as Doctor Wall (Shenstone's final medical doctor) wrote treatises on their health benefits.

³⁸ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 450. During the eighteenth century the spellings, Gothic and Gothick seemed interchangeable. For the purpose of this thesis the term Gothick will only be used in quotes.

³⁹ Woodhouse, James, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, J. Dodsley, 1766), pp. 81-2.

incorrect.⁴⁰ Richardson also stated that Shenstone's work was more naturalistic than Southcote's *ferme ornée* at Wooburn because he left the fields bare.⁴¹ However, the fields were not bare. Anyone who has seen a natural meadow with its embroidery of flowering plants scattered in great multitude across its turf can hardly call it devoid of life. In later life, Shenstone refused to have his land drained because he knew the effect it would have on the vegetation.⁴²

One problem with some of the work on The Leasowes, is that it has been highly speculative. Simon Pugh in 1990 considered that the journey round The Leasowes was a form of psycho-sexual possession: 'the equivalent of the pornographer's journey round the female figure'.⁴³ This tendentious comment probably said more about Pugh's mind than it did about Shenstone's. James Curl in 1993 also suggested that there are loose Masonic references in The Leasowes landscape.⁴⁴ He claimed that because Shenstone created classical and Gothic structures, and wrote poetry for his garden, this was evidence that he was a freemason. Curl is not making a particularly revealing statement, as by the eighteenth century, Masonic ideas and ideals had permeated throughout society. Their apparent presence in The Leasowes is not proof that Shenstone was a freemason and an examination of

⁴⁰ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 452.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 447.

⁴² William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 14th December 1756 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 460.

⁴³ Pugh, Simon 'Loitering with intent: from Arcadia to the arcades' in Pugh, Simon (ed.) *Reading the landscape: country-city-capital* (Manchester, Manchester University, 1990), p. 152.

⁴⁴ Curl, James, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry* (Woodstock, 1993), pp. 169-204.

his letters reveals that given his dislike of ‘clubs’ it would have been surprising if he had been a member.⁴⁵

Sandro Jung is a writer who has tried to marry Shenstone’s poetry and landscape design, but his interpretation is based on errors and misunderstandings. He stated that Shenstone ‘improved nature’,⁴⁶ a comment that Shenstone would never have supported given his ideas about nature, and that he used flower beds as ‘buffer zones meant to prevent visitors deviating off his paths,’ which he did not.⁴⁷ He also stated that he placed features to represent ‘exemplary models of humanity,’ such as Somerville, Thomson and Virgil, when Shenstone wrote that he placed them there as a personal gesture to celebrate the individuals’ lives.⁴⁸ Jung also asserted that Shenstone gave his house keeper, Mary Cutler, a volume of poems and drawings of The Leasowes because he wished to inform female visitors about the estate, when a much more prosaic reason was that he had not paid her wages, which he is recorded as not doing, and that is all he had to give her.⁴⁹ Jung also has confused dating as he maintained that Shenstone

⁴⁵ Williams, Marjorie, op. cit., this can be understood by reading his letters.

⁴⁶ Jung, Sandro, ‘William Shenstone’s Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,’ *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014) p. 2. Shenstone believed that nature could not be improved as it existed without assistance. What he did at The Leasowes was to place natural items within his landscape garden that looked as if they had always been there.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 23. Jung was obviously thinking about Southcote’s ferme ornée that did direct the visitor.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 23.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 5. Jung attempted to show the manuscript was a gardening manual, but a study of the work discloses it was put together as a book of poems and paintings between 1746 and 1759 when he gave it to his house keeper, Mary Cutler, in no particular order. David Beattie wrote that *In amore haec insunt omnia* translates as ‘All these things are inseparable from love’ and that the form *Terren* at the end is extremely odd in Latin. He thought that it was some

was influenced by Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, but this was not published till 1757 when Shenstone had finished most of his garden work.⁵⁰ He also referred to Worcestershire as the county he lived in when Shenstone always referred to himself as a Shropshire man as Halesowen was in Shropshire throughout his life.⁵¹

Substantive academic research into Shenstone has also revealed limitations of the knowledge of authors. Francis Burns, Robert McKee, Simone Schultz, Johanna Dahn and Patrizia Granziera all refer to Shenstone, but they do so in very different ways from the subject matter of this thesis.⁵² Burns was interested in Shenstone's poetical works, but provided little useful material for a study of his landscape garden. McKee also concentrated on the biographical evidence, though he did look at his gardening in Chapter Twelve: 'Shenstone and the English School of Landscapes', which covers some of the earlier ideas about The Leasowes.⁵³ Although Schultz studied The Leasowes as a *ferme ornée*, she tended to look at it as a manifestation of

garbled form of 'Ter. Eun.' because the quote comes from one of Terence's comedies entitled *Eunuchus*, i.e. Ter. Eun. It certainly shows Shenstone's love of gardening, poetry and painting, but whether it reveals affection for Cutler is unknown?

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 23.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 2.

⁵² Burns, Francis Daniel Alexander, 'William Shenstone: A critical biography and an edition of his poetical works' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1971); McKee, Robert, 'Commentary on Life and Works of William Shenstone' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1976); Schultz, Simone, 'Horticulture, agriculture and poetry of William Shenstone and his Ferme Ornée 'The Leasowes in the mirror of his literary' (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Free University of Berlin, 2004); Dahn, Johanna Karen Lykke, 'Women and taste; a case study of Katherine Plymley (1758-1829)' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberystwyth, 2001); Granziera, Patrizia, 'The Ideology of the English Landscape garden', Dissertation for a Ph.D., Department of the History of Art, University of Warwick, September 1996.

⁵³ McKee, Robert, op. cit., pp. 208 – 253.

his literary circle, rather than focusing on the practical accomplishments of Shenstone as a gardener. Dahn's thesis extensively discusses Shenstone's work, but it reiterates what has previously been stated and makes basic mistakes by even getting the date of his death wrong.⁵⁴ Another error was made by Patrizia Granziera in her dissertation where she discussed The Leasowes briefly and stated that Shenstone was lucky in 'incorporating genuine ruins on the site' into his landscape garden, not realising that although some of the stone for his ruined priory may have come from a real medieval abbey site, it was not from The Leasowes.⁵⁵

Christopher Gallagher, completed a survey of The Leasowes estate for Dudley Council during the 1990s, to restore part of the Shenstone landscape.⁵⁶ He identified many of the physical dimensions of the garden, but not where Shenstone's ideas came from or what they represented.⁵⁷ His findings were summarised in an article for *Garden History*.⁵⁸ Michael Symes and Sandy Haynes provided more detail than Gallagher. They followed Robert Dodsley's route around The Leasowes, commenting on the features as it went. It is the first text to discover that Dodsley's numbering in the map

⁵⁴ Dahn, Johanna Karen Lykke, op. cit., p. 86.

⁵⁵ Granziera, Patrizia, op. cit., p. 22.

⁵⁶ Gallagher, C. & Phibbs, J., 'The Leasowes - Summary of Proposals' (Debois Landscape Survey Group, 1991); Gallagher, C., 'Summary of Known References to Buildings at The Leasowes, including a list of Illustrations' (Debois Landscape Survey Group, 1997).

⁵⁷ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010, p. 154. The comment that 'garden restoration and conservation call for substantial theoretical and practical research,' would not have gone amiss if it had been done properly in the 1990s restoration at The Leasowes.

⁵⁸ Gallagher, C., 'The Leasowes - A History of the Landscape' *Garden History*, Vol. 24, Part Two, (1996).

of The Leasowes which accompanied 'A Description of The Leasowes', in Volume II of *The Works and Prose of William Shenstone*, was often wrong.⁵⁹ They were also the first to recognise that Dodsley did not include features that were absent on the circular walk, but were in fact also in the estate.⁶⁰ The features of the garden were described though they did make mistakes. One was by repeating Joseph Heely's comment that Shenstone chose only native plants in his planting, an error which deeper research would have corrected.

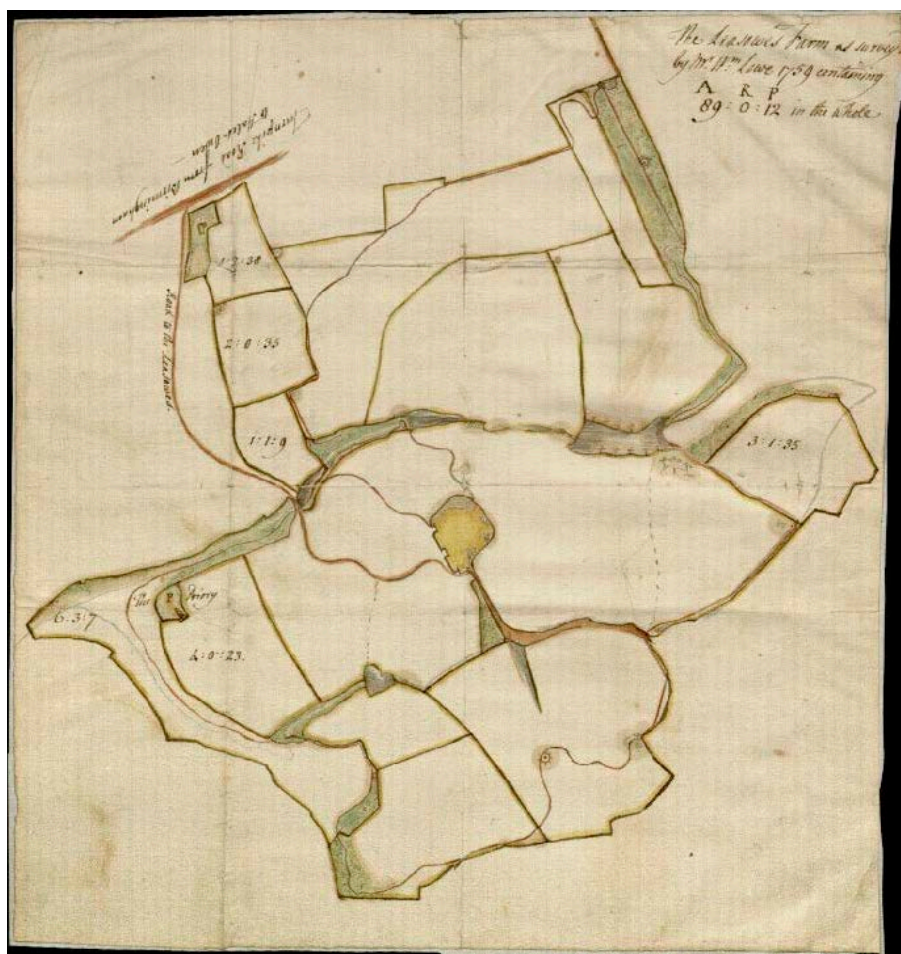


Fig. 1.1: Plan of The Leasowes, drawn up by William Lowe in 1759.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Symes, Michael and Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley, & The Leasowes: Three great eighteenth-century gardens* (Bristol, Redcliffe Press Ltd, 2010), p. 157.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁶¹ Box 1, Folder 50, Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA. This plan seems to have been drawn up when Shenstone was considering making the Priory a sub-estate.

Other writers provided insightful comments by considering influences outside gardening that determined how The Leasowes was created. They include John Dixon Hunt with Peter Willis, Tim Richardson, Edward Hyams, Douglas Chambers and Audrey Duggan. Shenstone's personality, his use of poetry and application of philosophy were most important. Hunt and Willis argued that 'the creation of gardens is determined by intellectual, social, economic, political and artistic forces'.⁶² Many of these aspects can be seen at The Leasowes. One of these was when Hunt stated that Shenstone added the touch of magic: the elemental world which stimulated Shenstone's friend Robert Dodsley, as well as others, in his visits to The Leasowes.⁶³ As Hunt says: 'It is the vocabulary of dream and vision that is invoked to praise the best in landscape gardens'.⁶⁴ He also observed that Shenstone was not always geared to the dryad and the naiad scene, the allegorical was turned into the 'Natural Landscape'.⁶⁵ Richardson devoted a whole chapter to Shenstone and examined his character.⁶⁶ He recognised that Shenstone was exceptionally sensitive and that like most people he had characteristics that were incompatible. For example, on the one hand he liked solitude (one of his early creations was a hermitage), but on the other he complained in his letters about lack of company.

⁶² Hunt, John Dixon & Willis, Peter, *The Genius of the Place* (London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1990), p. 2.

⁶³ Some people during the eighteenth century, saw the fairy world as being populated by elemental creatures that represented the four elements; earth, fire, water and air.

⁶⁴ Hunt, John Dixon (1989), op. cit., p. 75.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 249. Dryads were wood nymphs, naiads were water nymphs.

⁶⁶ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., pp. 444-467.

Williamson located Shenstone within the process of the rise of consumerism across the country: 'the consumer revolution' and its effect on gardening when 'gardens were a natural arena for the expression of the new individualistic ethos'.⁶⁷ He also described The Leasowes as 'set free from all signs of industry, from all association with useful toil and activity'.⁶⁸ This was a misunderstanding as Shenstone practised farming activity, but it was not the modernising activity of the eighteenth-century 'improvers'.⁶⁹ What Shenstone created was a model that had more in common with his understanding of what a classical Roman villa estate looked like, and how it operated rather than a working farm of his period.⁷⁰

Another dimension of his landscape creation was the use of perspective, an important stylistic accomplishment of the gardeners involved in the Picturesque movement.⁷¹ Edward Hyams, mentioned Shenstone's application of perspective.⁷² Shenstone stated that 'A straight-lined avenue that is widened in front and planted with (y)ewee trees, then firs, then with trees more and more s(h)ady, till they end in an almond-willow, or silver osier will

⁶⁷ Williamson, Tom (1998), op. cit., p. 66.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 118.

⁶⁹ Shenstone, William, in Williams, Marjorie, op. cit. This can be understood by reading his letters.

⁷⁰ Taylor, Christopher, *Village and Farmstead* (London, Book Club Associates, 1983), pp. 83-108.

⁷¹ Hyams, Edward, *The English Garden* (Norwich, Book Club Associates, 1968), p. 55. Perspective was a painter's accomplishment.

⁷² Ibid, pp. 54-55.


produce a very remarkable deception.’⁷³ Like Shenstone, early English gardenists knew about perspective, but did not talk or write about it.⁷⁴ The Chinese were aware of this, but it was not until 1793 that an English writer, George Staunton, referred to it.⁷⁵ Staunton thought that Henry Hoare at Stourhead was the first promoter of using perspective, forgetting that Shenstone and he were contemporaries. Alexander Pope at Twickenham and Southcote at Wooburn also relied on perspective and either could equally have been considered the originator in England.⁷⁶

Richardson observed that Shenstone like Pope saw the power of a landscape garden in its associative literary meanings as much as in the composition of the vistas.⁷⁷ Douglas Chambers also explored this idea in 1993, by recognising the importance of poetry for eighteenth-century gardenists and in particular, the classical Roman poet Virgil, who wrote *The Georgics*.⁷⁸ The theme of withdrawal from the corruption of urban life to the simplicity of rural life repeated from Virgil was central to Lord Shaftesbury’s ‘The Moralists; a Philosophical Rhapsody’. Shaftesbury explained that urban life had a corrupting influence, and this philosophy permeated through social

⁷³ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’ op. cit., p. 124.

⁷⁴ Hunt, John Dixon (1989), op. cit., p. xii.

⁷⁵ Staunton, George, *Authentic account of an embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* (London, G. Nichol, 1796), p. 126.

⁷⁶ Howard Erskine-Hill, ‘Pope, Alexander (1688–1744)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22526>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; King, R. W., ‘The "Ferme Ornée"; Philip Southcote and Wooburn Farm’ *Garden History*, Vol. II, No. 3 (1974), p. 35; Hyams, Edward, op. cit., p. 49; Batey, Mavis, *Alexander Pope: The Poet and the Landscape* (London, Barn Elms, 1999), p. 70.

⁷⁷ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 446.

⁷⁸ Chambers, Douglas, *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden* (London, The Paul Mellon Centre for studies in British Art, 1993).

thought.⁷⁹ Chambers wrote that there was no doubt that for the eighteenth-century gardenists, including Stephen Switzer, who wrote the gardening treatise *Ichnographia Rustica* in 1718, *The Georgics* was the chief source for the making of rural or extensive gardens. Chambers also demonstrated that James Thomson's *The Seasons*, was a translation of the themes of *The Georgics* and that it was natural and appropriate that Shenstone placed Thomson's urn in Virgil's Grove.⁸⁰

Richardson recognised that Shenstone's originality lay in the way he integrated his poetry with his landscape work, so that the one interconnected with the other. He recognised that Shenstone created a living embodiment of Virgil's pastoral poetry in an 'extraordinarily pretentious but really rather wonderful enterprise'.⁸¹ Richardson also claimed that 'the essential tone of *The Leasowes* was elegiac'.⁸² Shenstone's elegies led the way in translating elegiac poetry into landscape gardening, just as this form of poetry was becoming fashionable.⁸³ Audrey Duggan in 2004 supported Richardson's contentions where she espoused the importance of poetry in his gardening: 'Shenstone the poet and Shenstone the gardener each pursued a

⁷⁹ Shaftesbury, Anthony, Earl of, *Characteristics of men, manners, opinions, times* Vol. II (Basil, J. J. Tourneisen and J. L. Legrand, 1790).

⁸⁰ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., pp. 8. 183.

⁸¹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., pp. 454, 445.

⁸² Ibid, p. 454.


⁸³ Fisher, J., 'Shenstone, Gray and the Moral Elegy,' in *Modern Philology*, Vol. 34 (1937), pp. 273-294. Fisher stated that Shenstone's elegies were at the forefront of that form of poetry.

complementary craft. Without an appreciation of this interconnection, an understanding of the Leasowes is incomplete.’⁸⁴

This Virgilian ideal was also espoused by Chambers when he speculated about the origins of the ferme ornée. He considered that the idea went back to John Evelyn’s Warley Place in Essex, but it was not till the 1730s that the term was first used by Southcote.⁸⁵ When Southcote moved to Wooburn Farm he enacted the classical ideal of a working farm. His neighbour, Joseph Spence, who was Professor of Poetry at Oxford, promoted Virgil’s depiction of ideal nature in *The Georgics* and Southcote followed the ideas of the rural landscape that Virgil described.⁸⁶ What was covert in the gardens of Southcote and Spence, where the Virgilian ideal existed, was overt in Shenstone’s The Leasowes, where no fewer than eleven monuments on the peripheral walk employed texts from the poet.⁸⁷

Philosophical aspects of Shenstone’s landscape are often mentioned in modern garden literature. Mowl rightly points out that people who visited The Leasowes came to experience not simply a garden, but their inner selves: a ‘true advance in self-knowledge’.⁸⁸ The philosophy behind his

⁸⁴ Duggan, Audrey, *The World of William Shenstone* (Studley, Brewin, 2004), p. 60.

⁸⁵ Douglas D. C. Chambers, ‘Evelyn, John (1620–1706)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8996>, accessed  22 Aug 2015]; Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 11.

⁸⁶ ‘Spence, Joseph (1699-1768)’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2010 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2611>, accessed 8 Sept 2014].

⁸⁷ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 11.

⁸⁸ Mowl, Timothy, op. cit., p. 58.

landscape garden helped to make it popular and as the writer of this thesis explained in 1993, the overlying theme of Shenstone's paradise was simplicity. Like Shaftesbury he had come to the conclusion that 'modern' life had led people into false values and this view was supported by the many poems that he posted on his seats.⁸⁹ More than this he saw that 'natural gardening was a sign of moral integrity just as a rustic life was'.⁹⁰

The general conclusions of this historiographical selection are that although there have been many critical and positive comments about Shenstone and The Leasowes, further study is needed to explain these and other aspects of his work. This thesis examines a range of documentary sources, including letters to and from Shenstone, and written accounts of the landscape garden. By comparing this information with surveys and excavations of the physical landscape it adds new evidence to the history of his garden.

1.4 Methodology and Sources

It is difficult to describe a three-dimensional creation like a garden in a one-dimensional perspective through the written word. As Martin Calder wrote:

Gardens perhaps more than any other art form must be experienced at first hand in order to be fully appreciated... Gardens are impossible to reproduce... Any second-hand


⁸⁹ Hemingway, John, 'William Shenstone: the Landscape as Art' in Association of Gardens Trusts, *The Ferme Ornée working with Nature: Conference Proceedings*, (Priorslee, Staffordshire Parks and Gardens & Trusts, 1998), p. 32.

⁹⁰ Humphreys, A. R., *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1937), p. 45.

representation of a garden can only be fragmentary and insufficient.⁹¹

This suggests that no writer can describe a garden fully, but a landscape and its creation can be explored analytically. To do this we need to divide the subject into a number of facets: theoretical (philosophical), spatial (both internal and external views), temporal and sensual. The philosophical element includes the ideas of eighteenth-century landscape gardening and this theoretical aspect of Shenstone's work at The Leasowes is explored by looking at the ideas that were circulating about gardening, including periodicals by Addison,⁹² books by Switzer and poetry such as the writings of Pope. Secondly, there are the spatial elements: this facet incorporates the way in which spaces are located in a garden, within its woodlands, glades, open areas and waters, including the views and scenes that were created in the garden internally and externally. This aspect is uncovered in contemporary written sources, and what was left in the landscape in 2017. Thirdly, scenes were not isolated ideas, but were part of a journey. They told an unfolding story as the visitor walked around the garden. That story was not only a passage through physical space, but also through time. This temporal element was experienced through prompts that landscape gardeners placed in their gardens, including features that belonged to the past *via* classical or Gothic architecture or literary references to classical and contemporary

⁹¹ Calder, Martin, 'Foreword' in Calder (ed.), *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Peter Lang, 2005), p. 7.

⁹² Pat Rogers, 'Addison, Joseph (1672–1719)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2015 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/156>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

poetry. In particular, the spirits of the water, plain and woodland were called upon to set the ambience of bygone days. To add to the impression, memorials to the dead, both urns and mausoleums, were placed in the landscape as a reminder of man's mortality.⁹³ The temporal dimension was conveyed through visual indications, including images and archaeological evidence. Fourthly, the sensual and emotional dimension was experienced as visitors wandered around the garden: the sound of the brooks and waterfalls, birds and livestock, the sight of the landforms, colours and shapes of the trees and plants, the touch of the animate and inanimate features of the landscape. The sensual side is also uncovered by looking at the poetry that was distributed within the landscape. The verses that Shenstone physically placed in his garden enhanced and allowed visitors to have an emotional experience. All of these elements could be found in The Leasowes landscape garden.

The approaches to understanding Shenstone's *The Leasowes* is cross-disciplinary and includes the analysis of eighteenth-century written, printed, drawn and painted material, and the physical exploration of the estate, using archaeological, geological and topographical evidence. Some of the most important texts are the published and unpublished letters of Shenstone, as well as those that were written to him. Apart from his elegant use of words his correspondence to friends also disclose his intentions of the work on his

⁹³ Calder, Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

estate.⁹⁴ Many of these letters, set out in date order, give evidence of the development of the garden and the collecting of plants (see Fig. 1.2). It is in Shenstone's and others' comments of about what the estate looked like that we can gain a good idea of what he did and how it appeared. Although these comments are interesting, the material does have its limitations as letters are prejudiced towards what the person wanted to say about the work. Also his letters were intended to be published;⁹⁵ therefore he was 'consciously writing for posterity' and his self-consciousness may have interfered 'with the immediacy of the reporting'.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Shenstone, William, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit.; Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775); Hull, Thomas (ed.), *Select Letters between; the late Duchess of Somerset, Lady Luxborough, Miss Dolman, Mr Whistler, Mr R. Dodsley, William Shenstone, Esq., and others* 2 vols. (London, J. Dodsley, 1778).

⁹⁵ W. S. to R. G. 23rd Oct 1754 in Williams (ed.), op. cit., p. 413. Shenstone's letters were very important to him as he considered them to be his 'chef-d'oeuvres' and he complained bitterly when they were destroyed.

⁹⁶ Marwick, Arthur, op. cit., p. 136.

Dear Sir,
 Since I had the Pleasure of your
 Company at the Leasowes, which is always a very
 delightful one, I have been thinking the last third
 to my Little Plantations for this year. I want,
 however, let the season ^{new} escape, without making
 one effort towards the cultivation of one of your
 Spindle-trees - Their Appearance in Autumn,
 is really not inferior to the Beauty of any
 Flowering-Plant I know - I would therefore
 beg the Favor of you to send me one or two
 by any Carrier that first happens to come
 from Worcester into this neighbourhood - you
 will object, no doubt, to y^e Season; but you
 must know I have a peculiar Talent at

making things live; which I speak not, for, not
 in y^e Capacity of a Poet, but of a Gardener.
 I try my best respects to every part of
 your Family; & shall be glad to hear how you
 have been employ'd. I hope my Place will receive
 yearly Improvements, so long as I crawl upon
 its surface, to procure me, now & then, an occa-
 sional Visit from you - If not there, at least y^e
 you will be inclin'd to do so, by y^e sincerest &
 Cordial affection with which you'll ever find
 me: your most obed^t & humble Serv^t
 Wm: Shenstone.



April 22, 1759.

Fig. 1.2: Manuscript letter from William Shenstone to Edward Knight dated 22nd April 1759.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Kidderminster Library Collection, 000101 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990). In this letter he is requesting that Knight send him some of his Spindle Trees.

The Leasowes became famous in Shenstone's lifetime and many visitors wrote accounts of their visits, some of which were published. The printed works included: Resta Patching in 1755, Bishop Pococke in 1756, Thomas Hull in 1757-9 and Joseph Spence in 1758,⁹⁸ but the main source was the author and publisher, Robert Dodsley who visited the farm for a number of weeks in the 1750s and who is said to have written 'A Description of The Leasowes' in Shenstone's posthumous *The Works*.⁹⁹ There are problems in using visitors' descriptions as they are the personal opinions of the writers, who wrote only about the features that interested them or they observed. As evidence these observations are partial and subjective, but generally when checked against one another they display a remarkable uniformity of impressions about the estate.

Pertinent documents are located in the United States of America, where various universities have accumulated material written by Shenstone and his friends. These include his copy-book of poems with some of his water-colours, at Wellesley College, Margaret Clapp Library, Massachusetts,

⁹⁸ Patching, Resta, *Topographical Letters Written in 1755 upon a journey thro Staffordshire etc.*, (London, 1757); Pococke W. (ed. Cartwright, J. 1888-9) *The Travels Through England*, Vol. 2, (London, Camden Society, 1750-7); Elizabeth Baigent, 'Pococke, Richard (1704-1765)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22432>, accessed  30 Sept 2014] Richard Pococke (1704-1765): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/22432; Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Beinecke Library, Osborn c.20, Osborn Collection, 1v, MSS of 30 pages Hull, Thomas (c.1760); 'Shenstone's Walks'. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA, HM 303 12, Spence, Joseph, *The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise*; Trevor R. Griffiths; 'Hull, Thomas (1728-1808)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14109>, accessed  30 Sept 2014]. Thomas Hull (1728-1808): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/14109.

⁹⁹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., pp. 287-320.

Thomas Hull's description of a walk around The Leasowes,¹⁰⁰ a copy of Shenstone's accounts, a plan of The Leasowes drawn by William Lowe in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut,¹⁰¹ and Joseph Spence's 'The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise' in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.¹⁰²

Several important descriptions were provided by the Reverend Richard Graves, who was a close friend. Graves wrote a treatise called *Recollections of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* on the defence of Shenstone after his death in 1763. This work was in reply to Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* in which he made disparaging comments about Shenstone.¹⁰³ Biographies have to be used with care as they are often considered to be 'a lazy and easy form' of history,¹⁰⁴ but as John Tosh stated, they display motive and intention: 'The actions of an individual can be fully understood only in the light of his or her emotional make-up, temperament and prejudices.'¹⁰⁵ Graves knew his friend's strengths and gardening was one of them and went as far as commenting that Shenstone 'reduced the

¹⁰⁰ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number. See Beinecke Library, Yale University, USA, Osborn c. 20, Hull, Thomas, 'Notes on the Leasowes Landscape Garden c.1760.

¹⁰¹ Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Beinecke Library, Box 1, Folder 50, A plan of The Leasowes drawn up by William Lowe in 1759.

¹⁰² San Marino, California, USA, Huntington Library, HM 303 12, Spence, Joseph, *The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise*.

¹⁰³ Johnson, Samuel, *Lives of the Poets* (London, E. Newberry, 1797), pp. 226-229; Pat Rogers 'Johnson, Samuel (1709-1784) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14918>, accessed 8 Sept 2014].


¹⁰⁴ Marwick, Arthur, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

¹⁰⁵ Tosh, John, *The Pursuit of History* (London, Pearson Educational Limited, 2010), p. 69.

principles of landscape gardening to a regular system'.¹⁰⁶ Shenstone also became a fictional character in Graves's novel *Columella; or, the distressed anchoret*.¹⁰⁷ Its subject was a thinly described Shenstone and his obsession with landscape gardening. The work also explored the weaknesses of his friend, such as his indolence, apparent lack of ambition and more importantly, in Graves opinion, his unmarried status and his relationship with his housekeeper, Mary Cutler. In another novel that Graves wrote, *The Spiritual Quixote*, Shenstone is shown as a good-natured man, preoccupied with his garden.¹⁰⁸ The texts provide an insight into his character as well as his landscape gardening and reveal how he looked at different aspects of his work. Novels are works of fiction and are based on what the writer wants to portray, generally without criticism. Nevertheless, Marwick's comment should be taken into account: 'The historian, and layman, who ignores the imaginative literature of the period he is studying is as foolish and incomplete in comprehension as the historian or layman who relies exclusively on such material.' should be taken into account.¹⁰⁹ They can be used as source material, but critically and carefully as source material.

Relevant official documentation includes the Chancery Proceedings that were recorded after Shenstone's death, at the National Archives, Kew and a copy

¹⁰⁶ McKee, Robert Andrew, op. cit., p. 210.

¹⁰⁷ Dugan, Audrey, *The World of William Shenstone* (Studley, Brewin Books, 2004), p. 35; Graves, Richard, *Columella; or, the distressed anchoret A Colloquial tale* 2 vols. (London, 1779); David Oakleaf, 'Graves, Richard (1715–1804)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11313>, accessed  30 Sept 2014].

¹⁰⁸ Graves, Richard, *The Spiritual Quixote* (Stroud, Nonsuch Classics, 2007).

¹⁰⁹ Marwick, Arthur, op. cit., p. 141.

of his will in Birmingham Library.¹¹⁰ Sections of the Foley Scrapbook from Worcester Archive pertaining to The Leasowes Estate during the early eighteenth century are relevant.¹¹¹ Other documents are located in the Dudley Local History Archive. This material is mainly post-Shenstone occupation material and includes indentures for the estate, census information and parish records for Halesowen, but they are useful for detailing how and when the features in Shenstone's landscape garden disappeared¹¹² (see Appendix 7). Various documentary sources were inspected in Dudley Borough Council's Historic Environment Section and numerous estate documents from the Legal Department helped to chart the history of The Leasowes.¹¹³ Legal documents tend to be factual, but they were designed for the purpose designated, not as historical sources, and 'in each case there is a controlling purpose which may limit, distort or falsify what is said'.¹¹⁴

Shenstone composed poems about and painted water-colours of his landscape garden. The poems were placed on various features in his grounds and were there to 'lead' his visitors into the thought processes that he wanted

¹¹⁰ National Archives, Kew, London, Chancery Proceedings, 1765 Cutler vs Hodgetts, C12 1892/22, Cutler vs Graves and C12 1958/11 Cutler vs Harris, C12 1958/12; Birmingham Library, Will of William Shenstone, Part 1763, Accession No. 176965, shelved at Archives DV31. Birmingham Library.

¹¹¹ Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service, unpublished Foley Scrapbook, b899:3, BA 3762/6, Parcel 6.

¹¹² Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. Documents held by Legal and Property Department and Dudley Local History Archive, Coseley.

¹¹³ Dudley Local History Archive, Conveyance, J. S. Gibbons to Halesowen District Council 25th April 1934.

¹¹⁴ Tosh, John, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

to stimulate on his walks. They also provided an insight into his philosophical thinking. Shenstone's paintings reveal the existence of features within the estate. The value of this material can be seen when he complained about a later artist moving a tree on a drawing of Virgil's Grove, suggesting that Shenstone painted what was there, not what he thought it should look like. A particularly important piece of artistic evidence is the empty copy book that had belonged to Shenstone. It was given to David Parkes, a local artist, after Shenstone's death and Parkes drew images of the features that were still in The Leasowes landscape during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. In many cases this provides the only pictorial evidence that we have of the contemporary landscape garden.¹¹⁵ As Tosh advises, 'historians should be as quick to draw conclusions from paintings, sculpture and material objects as from deeds and diaries'.¹¹⁶ There are limitations on using paintings as evidence, however, as an artist's view of a scene is not a facsimile and for various reasons it may have decided to place or remove items out of the prospect. As noted above, they are subjective but need to be considered alongside other written and visual sources.

Landscape studies is a multidisciplinary subject: it is only comparatively recently that archaeological,¹¹⁷ geological and topographical investigations

¹¹⁵ Shropshire Record Office, Shrewsbury, Ref. 6001/154, David Parkes Sketch Book.

¹¹⁶ Tosh, John, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

¹¹⁷ Malek, Armina-Aicha, *Parc et Jardins*, Vol 1: Sourcebook for Garden Archaeology (Peter Lang, 2013), pp.24, 60. Amelia Amherst was the first garden historian who recognised in 1895 that there was an "archaeological side to garden history" when she observed earthworks within both existing and abandoned gardens. The first articles on the subject were published by Wilhelmina F. Jashemski beginning in 1967-1968 in *American*

have been included as relevant research areas for garden history. In addition to this, Williamson commented on the use of archaeology in 1995,¹¹⁸ and in a 1998 article, Edward Harwood wrote that this practical knowledge is important because ‘we need to know much more about what was happening on the ground’ in garden history.¹¹⁹ Physical investigation at The Leasowes began in 1990 when Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council organised work to find evidence of original features in order to reinstate them. This involved a number of approaches. Firstly, geological investigation to identify the rocks that lay beneath the ground, including the sources of stone which Shenstone used for structures and the soils that lay above these. Secondly, a topographical investigation to discover the morphology and particularly the drainage of the landscape to identify what Shenstone could and could not do at particular points.¹²⁰ Thirdly, archaeological work was essential to answer questions such as: where were his garden features situated, what were they made of and how large were they? These questions needed to be answered to influence restoration practice.¹²¹

archaeological journals (*Archaeology*, *Classical Journal*, *American Journal of Archaeology*) on the gardens of Pompeii. In 1976 in Japan a special issue – ‘Excavations of Ancient Gardens’ – of the journal *Buddhist Art* n°109, was followed in 1979 by Jashemski’s first volume of *The Gardens of Pompeii, Herculaneum and the Villas destroyed by Vesuvius* published in New York. *The Archaeology of Gardens*, a pamphlet written by Christopher Taylor and published in Aylesbury, England, in 1984, came next and lastly the volume *Earth Patterns*, edited by William Kelso and Rachel Most and published in 1990 in Virginia, USA.

¹¹⁸ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 5.

¹¹⁹ Harwood, Edward, ‘Whither Garden History?’ in Harwood, Edward, Hunt, John Dixon, Leslie, Michael, Williamson, Tom, *Studies in the history of gardens & designed landscapes* (London, Taylor & Francis, 1998), p. 94.

¹²⁰ Morphology – dealing with forms.

¹²¹ Jacques, D., ‘The progress of archaeology’ *Journal of Garden History*, Volume 17, Issue 1, 1997, p. 7. ‘Careful planning and integration of historical analysis, non-destructive techniques, and archaeobotanical and soil testing can usually provide a good general understanding of the garden without recourse to excavation. However, if the project is



Fig. 1.3: Archaeological excavation of the Priory in May 1998 by Christopher Currie.

Geological research has revealed a number of facets that have not and could not be found in documents.¹²² The sandstone of the area, for instance, is very poor in quality and this explained why many of Shenstone's structures decayed quickly after they were built. Topographic work highlighted the careful placing of the waterworks and features on the hillside setting. Shenstone was able to use and site things effectively in appropriate positions.

The archaeological work included an evaluation of the Priory site by Lucie

premised on a future reconstruction, there will be no surer route to accuracy than excavation.' Although this comment was made later than the work that was done at The Leasowes, its conclusions were adhered to and only areas that were going to undergo some kind of reconstruction or were covered in wall rubble and top soil were excavated.

¹²² Palmer, T. J., *Geological Report on Stone Samples Recovered from Various Sites at the Leasowes*, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences (Aberystwyth, University of Wales, 1997).

Dingwall,¹²³ archaeological excavation and recording of a number of features within the park by the late Christopher Currie (see Fig. 1.3),¹²⁴ and an investigation of the Leasowes Lane Bridge by Brian Dix.¹²⁵ The writer also produced a photographic survey of the watercourses, where most of the Shenstonesque features were sited, and discharged a watching brief on the construction of a gardener's building at the rear of Leasowes House in 2005.¹²⁶ Subsequent field research has also been pursued by the writer.¹²⁷ The evidence that has been forthcoming has revealed details of how features such as the High Dam and the Priory were constructed, as well as the location of other structures and their composition.¹²⁸ Evidence has also revealed that Shenstone's home was completely removed when the present house was built.¹²⁹ The various reports that culminated from these exercises provide important source material for this thesis. Although the archaeological work is factual it is also selective and the conclusions that are drawn from it are particular to the archaeologist who made them. Archaeology rarely answers all the questions that the archaeologist asks and particularly in this case when only parts of the landscape garden have been excavated.

¹²³ Dingwall, Lucie, *An Archaeological Evaluation at Leasowes Park, Halesowen, West Midlands*, (Birmingham Field Archaeology Unit, 1996).

¹²⁴ Currie, Christopher, *Archaeological recording at The Leasowes, Halesowen, Dudley, West Midlands* (Eastleigh, CKC Archaeology, 1998).

¹²⁵ Dix, Brian, *An Archaeological Investigation of The Lower Dam at The Leasowes* (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Brian Dix, 2004).

¹²⁶ Hemingway, John, A Photographic Survey of the watercourses of Leasowes Park (unpublished, 1994); Hemingway, John, A Watching Brief during the construction of a building at the rear of Leasowes House (unpublished, 2005).

¹²⁷ Hemingway, John, visits by the writer to The Leasowes (reports in his possession).

¹²⁸ Currie, Christopher (1998), *op. cit.* pp. 30-31.

¹²⁹ Hemingway, John, in writer's possession.

William Shenstone was a landscape gardener of authority and many garden historians have acknowledged his importance in the field, but the writer believes that the origins, development and influence of The Leasowes have been insufficiently covered in the past and need to be studied in more detail. This thesis explores questions that up until now have not been asked or answered satisfactorily and include: where did Shenstone get his ideas from, how did he put them into practice and what did other people think of them?

This chapter investigates the different ways in which garden historians have observed The Leasowes. It has looked at the methodology that is applied in future chapters and explained how evidence is analysed by dividing the subject up into various categories: theoretical (philosophical), spatial (both internal and external), temporal and sensual. It is only by analysing Shenstone's landscape more thoroughly and studying it at its base level that evidence of what was done will be forthcoming. Modern garden studies are multidisciplinary and many diverse sources have been explored. All these approaches need to be combined, as Williamson states: 'The art is to test one against the other, combining and recombining the various threads until a coherent story emerges.'¹³⁰ It is only by examining this material and interpreting or reinterpreting it that we can discover the nature of the

¹³⁰ Williamson, Tom (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 5; Grillner, Katja, 'Experience as imagined: writing the eighteenth-century landscape garden' in Calder, Martin (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 37-64.

origins and impact of The Leasowes, which resulted in an innovative eighteenth-century landscape garden.

The content of the following chapters uncovers this material in the following way. Chapters' two to four look at the theoretical ideas that were applied to create The Leasowes landscape garden. Chapter two contains a consideration of approaches to nature and the philosophy of gardening. It examines the influences of eighteenth-century gardening literature upon Shenstone and looks at the garden theory that was current and the ideas that evolved from his reading. As his garden was a philosophical creation, the reasons why he created his own 'Arcadia' are discussed.¹³¹ It also looks at the notion of taste and its manifestations in Shenstone's work: poetry, painting, literature and music as they related to Picturesque gardening. Shenstone saw a garden as a physical expression of many artistic forms, and in the case of music it included both man-made forms and natural sounds to provide a multi-sensory experience. Chapter three uncovers how Shenstone's personality affected his motives in creating a landscape garden. These together with his social aspirations but limited finances led to his Naturesque strategies. During his early life he travelled and due to his interest in gardening saw many of the gardens in the new Picturesque style that may have influenced him. His aristocratic associates probably provided direct influences based on the work on their estates. Notable intellectual figures and the publisher

¹³¹ Grant, Michael, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), p. 308. Arcadia, after the region of Greece that later writers and painters described as a pastoral Utopia.

Robert Dodsley supported him in print, while his university colleagues, together with relations and friends supported him verbally. His attempt to copy features from others' estates led to financial problems, but the fact that money was unavailable led to his devising a landscape garden in a naturalistic manner. Chapter four sees how Shenstone applied, less than a decade later, features of Philip Southcote's *ferme ornée* style to his own landscape garden. The chapter also examines the component parts of the style, based on practical and philosophical ideas and used the principles of proportion, balance and symmetry in its creation. His application of perspective, time and imagination was intended to create an idyllic landscape. Grandeur, beauty, variety, novelty and imagination were the cornerstones of Shenstone's practical application of the *Naturesque* garden at The Leasowes. Detail was added by introducing classical and English verse, physical structures and antique features. Although his *ferme ornée* evolved over time and reflected his changing ideas, it still adhered to the concept of being a natural garden.

Chapters' five to nine look at the practical applications of his work. Chapter five examines his role as a gardener. It studies how he used the topography and geology to create a garden based on what already existed on his farm and how he made the structures appear to be innate to the landscape. A circuit route was particularly important as it allowed his visitors to stroll around an ever-changing scene, giving them the opportunity to view the

farmscape as well as the surrounding valley. Shenstone believed the farmstead was a part of his garden and chapter six shows how he made structural changes to the farmhouse in which he lived.¹³² He was not a trained architect, but developed his home by visiting other properties, gaining advice from friends and acquaintances, reading and practical experience. As a designer he changed a plain farmhouse into a villa-style building to transform it into a polite structure. He aspired to be a gentleman and to make his home a suitable place to entertain his middle- and upper-class guests, the changes, however, were only partly successful.

Chapter seven concerns his ability in building structures within The Leasowes estate. They display his capability as a landscape architect by the way that he designed features and placed them in an appropriate position. The design of the urns he erected in remembrance of his dead friends and relations showed that he was aware of the rules defining proportion. The classical features conveyed an image of Shenstone as a Roman patrician like the poet Virgil in his ancient villa, but at the same time the Gothic features, such as the priory, showed that he was an English gentleman, with a tradition stretching into the medieval past. In chapter eight the types, origins and the use of plants at The Leasowes are identified. In the eighteenth century plant-hunters brought many new species into England. Heely, an early commentator, thought that Shenstone was not part of this movement to plant foreign species, but, in fact, many trees, shrubs and herbaceous varieties in

¹³² Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', op. cit., p. 114.

his garden were of foreign origin.¹³³ Chapter nine looks at Shenstone's literary landscape. Shenstone thought of himself as a poet who gardened, rather than the other way around, but poetry and gardening were indivisible pursuits at The Leasowes. The inscriptions in Latin demonstrated his knowledge of the language and the philosophy behind the verses. Latin inscriptions on memorial urns reminded his visitors of both life and death, and were designed to secure an emotional response. After 1749 he began to compose poems in English to be sited on a number of features in The Leasowes. Various human feelings were expressed in the poetry of the garden: joy, sadness, ambition, indolence, but contentment was the most important. They conveyed many of his ideas about the landscape, particularly those about the peace found in rural life. Many gardeners have subsequently copied this approach.¹³⁴

The next two chapters, ten and eleven, explore the influence of Shenstone's gardening ideas during his life and after. Chapter ten considers the people and estates influenced by his landscape gardening during his lifetime. It is not always clear when or how gardeners are influenced by visiting a garden. They absorb its lay-out and copy or repeat some of the effects they see there, but rarely acknowledge from where they secured the idea. Fortunately, we have evidence of individuals who were inspired by Shenstone. Chapter

¹³³ Symes, Michael and Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 153.

¹³⁴ Ballard, Phillada, Loggie, Val & Mason, Shena, op. cit., p. 6; Gilonis, Harry, 'Emblematic and Expressive: the gardenist modes of William Shenstone and Ian Hamilton Finlay' in *Arcadian Greens Rural*, No. 53/4 (2002), pp. 92-98.

eleven looks at the garden designs that were influenced after Shenstone's lifetime both in Britain and abroad. These can be divided into three groups: direct evidence, indirect evidence (visitors) and those gardens having a Shenstonesque appearance. The export of his style of gardening overseas shows how extensive his influence was. Chapter twelve summarises the conclusions revealed in the thesis, outlines the wider significance of its findings and points to where future research might take place. Although the precise style of Shenstone's gardening did not carry on much further than the nineteenth century its importance can be seen in that many twentieth-century and twenty-first-century gardenists have followed his train of thinking and natural types of gardens still exist both in this country and abroad.

Chapter Two

Nature, taste and the senses: the cultural context of Shenstone's gardening

2.1 Introduction

Roy Porter claimed that 'the Georgians read Nature as a masterwork of divine artistry', and 'The key Enlightenment concept was Nature'.¹³⁵ It was this appreciation that gave rise to the idea of natural gardening of the Picturesque or Naturesque style. Shenstone, however, was not only a disciple of nature he was also an apostle of taste and his ideas of the notions of taste were shaped by philosophy, and the arts of poetry, painting and music. This chapter explores the philosophy of gardens and taste, and seeks to discover to what extent Shenstone's approach to gardening was shaped by his engagement with the cultural and intellectual milieu of the eighteenth-century.

2.2 Eighteenth-century philosophy and the garden

Tim Richardson in *The Arcadian Friends* claimed that landscape gardening was the only art form that the English ever created.¹³⁶ The Picturesque garden movement began in England and eventually spread into Europe and beyond and it encouraged new thinking about landscapes. In *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* Thomas Burnet (1681) stated that 'There is nothing doth awaken our thoughts or excite our minds to inquire into the causes of such

¹³⁵ Porter, Roy, *Enlightenment* (London, Penguin, 2000), p. 295.

¹³⁶ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld, 2007), p. 13.

things, then the actual view of them'.¹³⁷ John Locke considered that these sense impressions allowed us to appreciate objects.¹³⁸ This idea was taken up by eighteenth-century gardeners.¹³⁹ Shenstone mentions reading the works of Enlightenment figures including: Alexander Gerard (1728-1795), Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) and Henry Home, 'Lord Kames' (1692-1782).¹⁴⁰ However, apart from the ideas formulated by the Earl of Shaftesbury (1671 – 1713), theoretical writing about landscape gardening was uncommon in Shenstone's day.¹⁴¹ One exception was the work of the Frenchman A. J. Dézallier d'Argenville. His book, *La Théorie et la Pratique de Jardinage* was published in Paris in 1709 and translated by John James with the title *The Theory and Practice of Gardening* in 1712. Although D'Argenville was more concerned with formal gardens he also suggested that there was a need to conform 'to that which best suits the situation of the place'.¹⁴² Joseph Spence seems to have followed these directions and was an early instigator of making rules for designing a garden in England.¹⁴³ Spence stayed with Shenstone at The Leasowes for a week in 1758, and it is likely that they talked about garden designs.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁷ Burnet, Thomas, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (Glasgow, R. Urie, 1753), p. 131.

¹³⁸ Locke, John, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, T. Longman, 1796), p. 167.

¹³⁹ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁴⁰ Shenstone, William 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), op. cit., p. 111.

¹⁴¹ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1998), pp. 48-49.

¹⁴² James, John, *The Theory and Practice of Gardening* (London, Maurice Atkins, 1712), p. 13.

¹⁴³ Spence was Professor of Poetry at Oxford and a supporter of the new gardening style.

¹⁴⁴ Spence, Joseph (ed.) Singer, Samuel Weller, *Anecdotes, observations, and characters, of books and men. Collected from the conversation of Mr. Pope and other eminent persons of his time. By the Rev. Joseph Spence. With notes, and a life of the author* (London, John Russell Smith, 1858), Spence's ideas were probably not applied by Shenstone as by that time he had completed most of the features at The Leasowes.

Philosophers have rarely taken the study of gardens and gardening as important. Perhaps this is because a garden is a practical creation and it is difficult to connect it with a philosophical approach.¹⁴⁵ David E. Cooper, however, argued that gardens are the ‘dependence of human creative activity upon the co-operation of the natural world’,¹⁴⁶ or to put it another way, it is the beginning of a person’s understanding of the relationship they have with the earth.¹⁴⁷ Gardening is a relationship between the mind and the real world, but nearly everyone who creates a garden feels that the background to their work has come from somewhere else. The French philosopher, Gabriel Marcel, called this ‘creative receptivity’.¹⁴⁸ At The Leasowes, Shenstone let nature lead and he tweaked it, but where his ideas came from is more complex. In a letter to Edward Knight, Shenstone stated that ‘I have a particular Talent for making things live: which I speak not, God-wot, in ye capacity of a Poet, but of a Gardiner’.¹⁴⁹ It is obvious he was not aware of where the ‘talent’ came from.

Cooper asked a basic question: ‘What is a Garden?’, and considered varied examples from a minimalist Zen creation to a Gertrude Jekyll horticultural

¹⁴⁵ Cooper, David E., *A Philosophy of Gardening* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 64.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 135.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 145.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 147.

¹⁴⁹ William Shenstone to Edward Knight, 22nd April 1759, Kidderminster Reference Library, 000101 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990).

fancy,¹⁵⁰ but ‘gardens are not ‘virtual’ or ‘ideal’ places, or somehow connected with physical ‘chunks’ of land: they are simply places, albeit ones that invite a range of description, experience, and comportment’.¹⁵¹ Cooper pointed out that gardening has at least two strands: creation and outcome. Creation is practical, but to walk around a garden admiring what it does to an individual is not.¹⁵² The concept of what gardens do philosophically goes back to the ancient Greek philosopher, Epicurus, who saw a garden as ‘a place peculiarly suited to the conduct of philosophical thought and discussion’.¹⁵³ Addison, two thousand years later, added that it allows the ‘exercise of imagination – a pre-condition of wisdom, creativity and insight’.¹⁵⁴ Cooper suggested ‘that the appreciation of gardens is ‘distinctive’: the objects of appreciation, natural or artefactual, owe their identity to their place in the garden as a whole’.¹⁵⁵ It is this whole garden approach that Shenstone strove to create. According to Cooper:

Gardening is a form of self-expression, say; but since, presumably, it is the gardens themselves, rather than the actions involved in their creation, which are the vehicles of expression, then the value of the practice is a function of that of its products.¹⁵⁶

A garden allows the gardener to create a world of their own, but within the confines of nature. James Thomson’s reply to William Lyttelton in the

¹⁵⁰ Cooper, David E., op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 19.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 65.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ Hunt, John Dixon, and Willis, Peter, *The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (London, MIT Press, 1990), p. 147.

¹⁵⁵ Cooper, David E., op. cit., p. 67.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 69.

company of Shenstone was apposite in that he ‘had done something for nature too’.¹⁵⁷ This idea was elaborated by Robert McKee. He saw the creation of a garden as an ‘Aristotelian concept which saw visible nature not as realised perfection but as a statement of potential achievement tending towards, rather than actually achieving full self-expression’.¹⁵⁸ He meant that a garden was never completed in the technical sense, as the art of creating it was the important accomplishment. Richardson claimed that ‘we are physically and emotionally vulnerable, and therefore more sensitive to our surroundings’.¹⁵⁹ Indoors everything normally stays the same, but outdoors we have limited control, while working or walking. There are always chance elements which induce change, such as the weather, insects, tripping or a careless use of a spade/fork, secateurs or recalcitrant chainsaw. In a way a garden is naturally sublime in Edmund Burke’s sense, as the element of uncertainty is always there or at least felt to be there, though Hunt paradoxically points out that an enclosed space like a garden suggests safety.¹⁶⁰

Horace Walpole wrote that gardens were ‘polished nature’ and asserted that although they might appear to be natural they are the results of human

¹⁵⁷ McKillop A. D., ‘Thomson’s visit to Shenstone’, *Philological Quarterly* XXIII (1944), p. 284.

¹⁵⁸ McKee, Robert, ‘Commentary on Life and Works of William Shenstone’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1976), p. 209.

¹⁵⁹ Richardson, Tim, ‘Psychotopia’ in Kingsbury N. & Richardson T. (eds.), *Vista: The Culture and Politics of Gardening* (London, 2005), p. 13.

¹⁶⁰ Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (London, R. & J. Dodsley, 1764); Hunt, John Dixon, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 29

artifice.¹⁶¹ There is a difference between the countryside being changed slowly and a garden being created in a short while. In nature the element of choice does not exist; in a garden it becomes an overriding factor. Just because nature is imitated does not make it natural. It is not natural, for example, to attempt to grow plants from warmer or colder climes in England.¹⁶² Purpose is another philosophical objective in the garden that it does not have in nature.¹⁶³ A cascade and a stream in a garden have meaning. They represent something its creator wants the individual to feel. Associated with this is the 'Genius of the Place' as the Earl of Shaftesbury, wrote in 1709.¹⁶⁴ The context of one thing with another in a garden has meaning that goes hand-in-glove with the rest of the garden and Shenstone's The Leasowes, is a good example of how this works.

Prosaic aspects of gardening were also noted by Cooper, including a sense of community. Gardeners, generally speaking, are generous with their time, advice and gifts such as vegetables, fruit, flowers, cuttings and seeds. In Shenstone's letters he gave advice and plants away, just as Henrietta Knight, Edward Knight and Richard Graves gave him plants and seeds.¹⁶⁵ A garden also allows for reverie and contemplation. Rousseau advocated allowing ideas

¹⁶¹ Walpole, Horace, 'The History of Modern Taste in Gardening' in Hunt, John Dixon & Willis, Peter, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁶² Cooper, David E., op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 39.

¹⁶⁴ Shaftesbury, Cooper, Anthony Ashley, Earl of, *Characteristicks of men, manners, opinions, times* Vol. 2 (London, n. p., 1714), p. 393.

¹⁶⁵ Joan Lane, 'Knight, Henrietta, Lady Luxborough (1699–1756)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15720>, accessed 30 Sept 2014].

to ‘follow their bent without resistance or constraint’.¹⁶⁶ This is maybe because the garden is familiar, unlike a wood or fields where new things are to be discovered. It allows the participant to bring back memories and think more deeply about identifiable subjects; it is therefore most suitable for the writer and the poet. People wrote poems while seated in The Leasowes landscape and it is likely that many of Shenstone’s poems and prose writings began life while he walked along his favourite paths.¹⁶⁷

For Cooper, a garden is a mixture of both art and nature: a fusion, belonging to neither one, but using the concepts of both, though he pointed out, that we do not generally see a garden as an aesthetic creation in the same way that we look at a painting.¹⁶⁸ The ‘associations with, and borrowings from, paintings do not establish that the model for appreciation of a garden is appreciation of a painting’.¹⁶⁹ He did not deny that there was an ‘important interplay between garden design and the arts of painting and poetry’,¹⁷⁰ but, that is very different from stating like Alexander Pope, that all gardening is landscape painting.¹⁷¹ Shenstone claimed that ‘every good painter of landskip appears to me to be the most proper designer’.¹⁷² He was very careful not to cross the divide in saying that one was the other. In practice, Shenstone knew that the creation of a garden was an art, but he was wary of it being seen as

¹⁶⁶ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *The Reveries of a Solitary Walker* (Indianapolis, Hackett, 1992), p. 143.

¹⁶⁷ Shenstone, William ‘Verses to Mr Shenstone’ Vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 333-336, 341.

¹⁶⁸ Cooper, David E., op. cit., p. 41.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 25.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

¹⁷¹ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 176.

¹⁷² Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’ Vol. II, op. cit., p. 124.

such. He noted: 'Art, indeed, is often requisite to collect and epitomise the beauties of nature; but should never be suffered to set her mark upon them.'¹⁷³ When he wrote to Henrietta Knight that his landscape was looking like a flower garden, a contrived feature, he knew the difference and did not wish it to look created.¹⁷⁴ As Whitehead wrote of The Leasowes: 'with a poet's feeling', the scenery was enhanced 'by means of art', but more importantly 'it provided opportunities for a display of artistry without clashing with the pastoral scenery outside'.¹⁷⁵

Cooper suggested that gardens were not purely creations of art, because all the senses can be used to create a garden, which they could not in a painting. A painting is a two-dimensional image and it is there forever, or until it is destroyed. A garden is not static as it changes through time: from morning to evening, week to week, month to month and via the seasons and by man's alterations to it.¹⁷⁶ Gardens change with the perception of the observer and the same place can look very different on a balmy sunny day compared to an evening thunderstorm, unlike a painting or a poem which always places the person in the same position in relation to the subject or the text.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps the answer is, as the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel wrote:

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 126.

¹⁷⁴ William Shenstone to Lady Luxborough 14th May 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 193.

¹⁷⁵ Whitehead, David, 'Leasowes, West Midlands, England' in *Encyclopaedia of Garden History* Vol. II (Chicago, Chicago University, 2001), p. 773.

¹⁷⁶ Cooper, David E., op. cit., p. 29.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, pp. 28-29.

‘gardening is an imperfect art because it is affected by nature’.¹⁷⁸ Shenstone’s work revealed nature in his garden.

2.3 Shenstone and taste

In 1735 James Miller’s play *The Man of Taste* was performed at London’s Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.¹⁷⁹ The play, a study in manners, reflected the growing awareness of ‘taste’ at the time. By the middle of the century, the acquisition of ‘taste’ had become an important cultural attribute, but taste is a very variable concept. A simple definition of taste is ‘the ability to discern what is of good quality or of a high aesthetic standard’;¹⁸⁰ however, in the eighteenth century the attribute meant more than this. Burke thought taste was ‘that faculty, or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgement of the works of imagination and the elegant arts’.¹⁸¹ *The Critical Review* of 1758 viewed taste as ‘a delicate, acute perception, in the powers of fancy, as well as the faculty of understanding’.¹⁸² In the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of 1766 it was considered to be ‘a kind of extempore judgment; it is a settled habit of distinguishing, without staying to attend to rules, or ratiocination, and arises from long use and experience’.¹⁸³ The *Universal Magazine* of 1772, defined it as ‘the power of receiving pleasure from the

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, quoted by Cooper, David E., p. 43.

¹⁷⁹ Miller, James, *The Man of Taste, a comedy* (London, John Watts, 1735).

¹⁸⁰ ‘Taste’ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, online 2014, Modern definition: c. *fig.* A slight experience, received or given; a slight show or sample of any condition or quality.

¹⁸¹ Burke, Edmund, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁸² *Critical Review*, VI (1758), p. 389.

¹⁸³ *Gentleman’s Magazine*, xxviii (1766), p. 405.

beauties of nature and art'.¹⁸⁴ With taste being so important it was soon acknowledged that not everyone had it. William Hogarth burlesqued people with 'connoisseurial ambitions', suggesting that many were unable to possess real taste.¹⁸⁵ Annie Richardson, in her study of Hogarth's, *Analysis of Beauty*, stated that he implied, in the final section, that the 'end' of taste is 'self-advancement through impression management', meaning that taste gives an individual status and self-confidence.¹⁸⁶ This may be applicable to Shenstone who was highly status-conscious and lacked confidence, though he added significantly to the literature of taste.¹⁸⁷

By the twentieth and twenty-first centuries other aspects of taste were considered. David Brown and Tom Williamson claimed that taste was 'something that embraced a knowledge of etiquette, a familiarity with classical languages and myth, an appreciation of art, literature and music'.¹⁸⁸ Williamson also recognised that 'Taste was what defined polite society'¹⁸⁹ and claimed that during the eighteenth century, 'polite' people (that is people of the middling to upper classes of the country), thought that taste was an essential cultural attribute. So much so that they followed the example of

¹⁸⁴ *Universal Magazine*, LI (1772), pp. 179-180.

¹⁸⁵ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 274.

¹⁸⁶ Richardson, Annie, 'From the Moral Mound to the Material Maze: Hogarth's, *Analysis of Beauty*,' in Berg, Maxine & Eger, Elizabeth, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century – Debates, Desire and Delectable Goods* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 126.

¹⁸⁷ Shenstone, William, 'Essays on Men and Manner's: On Taste', Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 267-284.

¹⁸⁸ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p, 23.

¹⁸⁹ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

those who thought of themselves experts in the field.¹⁹⁰ Another aspect was, as Richardson observed, that although the eighteenth-century perception was that ‘beauty existed in the world as an absolute quality’ it only could be ‘objectively rated by a connoisseur’ who possessed taste, reiterating what Hogarth had written.¹⁹¹ Richardson also observed that during the eighteenth century, the ‘constant cycle of proliferation of new fashions in all the arts coalesced in the notion of Taste as a guiding principle’.¹⁹² However, he felt that taste represented more than just the ‘appraisal of beautiful things’; it was also an excuse for spending money on luxuries and in theory it ‘helped speed the economy and increased the general wealth of the nation’.¹⁹³ As an object of study therefore, taste was an important element of consumerism,¹⁹⁴ and taste and beauty were aspects of the ‘consumption’ of nature.¹⁹⁵ It is highly likely that Shenstone would have been appalled at the idea that he was consuming nature, though it could be argued that he was using it for his own ends. Williamson also saw the consumer revolution as the ‘development of a society geared, as never before, to the production and consumption of a whole range of fashionable’ items. Fashion was also something that Shenstone was suspicious of when he stated that ‘Fashion is a great restraint upon your persons of taste and fancy; who would otherwise, in the most

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 68.

¹⁹¹ Richardson, Tim (2007), *op. cit.*, p. 392.

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁹³ Williamson, Tom, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

¹⁹⁴ Goodman, Dena, ‘Furnishing Discourses: Readings of a Writing Desk in Eighteenth-Century France’, in Berg, Maxine & Eger, Elizabeth, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

¹⁹⁵ Mitchell, Elaine, ‘A fine crop of peaches, and several hundred geraniums’ Thomas Clarke’s Metallic Hothouse Manufactory, 1818-1848’ (Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, University of Birmingham. 2011), pp. 15-19.

trifling instances, be able to distinguish themselves from the vulgar.’¹⁹⁶ In other words, fashion could and would lead them away from proper discernment. In attempting to break down the concept of taste R. W. Babcock listed different dimensions including: taste and morality, natural and acquired taste, taste and elegance, taste and sentiment, taste and novelty, taste and the soul and taste and delicacy - features which are identified in this study.¹⁹⁷ Shenstone knew that taste was more complicated than could be defined in a single definition and in his ‘Essay on Taste’ he observed that ‘persons eminent in one branch of taste, have the principles of the rest’.¹⁹⁸

Shenstone probably acquired a sense of what constituted taste at Pembroke College, Oxford. His importance was shown in an article in the *Dublin Magazine* of 1764, entitled ‘Shenstone and Taste’, which revealed that he was recognised as a conveyer of the attribute.¹⁹⁹ An example of his good taste was shown in the Reverend William Gilpin’s²⁰⁰ description of The Leasowes.


Gilpin was a garden writer who paid a visit in 1772. He was an exponent of the late-Picturesque movement and wrote guide books giving his readers conceptual guidance in the appreciation of such landscapes.²⁰¹ Gilpin

¹⁹⁶ Shenstone, William, ‘Essays on Men and Manners: Taste’, Vol. II (1768), op. cit., p. 196.

¹⁹⁷ Babcock, R.W., ‘The Idea of Taste in the Eighteenth Century’ in *Modern Language Association*, Vol. 5, no. 3 (1935), p. 925. Shenstone covers many of these aspects in an ‘Essay on Taste’ in his ‘Essays on Men and Manners’, Vol. II, pp. 267-284.

¹⁹⁸ Shenstone, William, ‘Taste’, op. cit., p. 267.

¹⁹⁹ *Dublin Magazine*, December 1764, pp. 221-227.

²⁰⁰ Malcolm Andrews, ‘Gilpin, William (1724–1804)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10762>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

²⁰¹ Hunt, John, Dixon, *The Picturesque Garden in Europe* (London, Thames and Hudson, 2004), p. 65.

brought theoretical standards to the garden visitor, which they were supposed to use in judgment of what the garden designer was doing. His critique of Shenstone's landscape garden was in volume one of his *Observations on several parts of England*.²⁰² He commented: that 'Mr. Shenstone has, on the whole, shown great taste and elegance, and has diversified his views very much; and been particularly happy in (that most agreeable mode of design,) affixing some particular character to each scene.'²⁰³ Another contemporary who also recognised his sense of taste was Jabez Maud Fisher. Fisher was a Quaker who came from Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, and visited The Leasowes on 19th August 1776.²⁰⁴ His travel diary included a description of the walk around the farm. His main observations are in the arrangement of the farm and he stated: 'A place like this I can view with pleasure. Here is nothing costly: yet for Taste in these improvements nothing can exceed it.' The Hanging Wood comes in for some hyperbolic observations the 'prospect too copious for the eye, the scene too great, the variety too profuse'.²⁰⁵ This comment on Shenstone's sense of taste occurs repeatedly in the remarks made by people who visited The Leasowes. Shenstone's approach to landscape gardening was his particular contribution to eighteenth-century taste.

²⁰² Gilpin, William, *Observations on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*, Vol. 1. 3rd edition (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), pp. 58-64).

²⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 61.

²⁰⁴ Fisher, Jabez Maud, 'The Travel Journals of Jabez Maud Fisher, 1775-1779' in Morgan, Kenneth (ed.), *An American Quaker in the British Isles* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 1. Fisher found himself trapped once the American War of Independence had started, could not get home, and died in England.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 259.



Fig. 2.1: Athena handing the Elements of Taste to William Shenstone.²⁰⁶

An interpretation of Shenstone's sense of taste can be seen in Figure 2:1 from Robert Dodsley's edition of *The Works*.²⁰⁷ It shows Athena, the Greek goddess of philosophy, wisdom, civilisation (law and justice), warfare and strategy, inspiration and the arts (including poetry), and crafts and skills, giving him a scroll: 'Hints towards the Elements of Taste'. Her identity is proven by the

²⁰⁶ Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Vol. I (London, J. Dodsley, 1768).

²⁰⁷ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' Vol. II (1768), op. cit., p. 3.

device on her shield: the Gorgon's head.²⁰⁸ The engraving shows Shenstone beneath a tree (a symbol of nature), dividing the illustration into two parts. On the right, is a sylvan scene entered by a gate with hills in the background (possibly a scene from *The Leasowes*). While on the left a classical Palladian mansion is being erected (note the scaffolding to the left of the finished part which is perhaps a reference to his skill as an architect). The engraving, probably chosen by Dodsley, was an attempt to represent Shenstone's architectural, gardening and poetic abilities, and his status as a master of taste.

Marjorie Williams recognised that 'One of the signs of the change in taste which marked the middle of the eighteenth century was a revival in the interest in gardening',²⁰⁹ but a pertinent question is why did Shenstone devote himself to that subject? One reason was perhaps because gardens are an example of the individual creating his own domain, and having the taste to make it appeal to a wider audience. As the fame of *The Leasowes* grew, Shenstone's gardening was clearly not conducted only for his sole benefit. Like most gardeners he wanted as many visitors to see what he had achieved and he regularly complained when they did not arrive. 'They' were the national and local gentry and the new commercial classes whom he regularly recorded in his letters. These were people with 'shared cultural values often

²⁰⁸ Bulfinch, Thomas, *Bulfinch's Mythology - The Age of Fable* (London, Spring Books, 1967), p. 85. Athena changed the beautiful, but vain, Medusa into the monster Gorgon, whom Perseus beheaded.

²⁰⁹ Williams, Marjorie, *William Shenstone - A Chapter in Eighteenth Century Taste* (Birmingham, Cornish Brothers Limited, 1935), p. 36.

referred to as politeness' and more importantly 'knowledge of taste'.²¹⁰ Shenstone's comments about the 'vulgar', normally meaning the lower or uneducated classes who did not understand his gardening style - though even they were welcome at The Leasowes - suggest that it was the intellectual elite, people with taste, that he wished to impress.²¹¹ As Shenstone was university educated and an exponent of the fine arts, it was amongst persons of a similar background that he hoped his landscape garden would achieve recognition. That he succeeded can be seen in Stephen Bending's comment that Shenstone's garden began 'to take on a public character'.²¹²

In a letter to Henrietta Knight, Shenstone wrote: 'Taste in Gardens &c: has little more to do than to collect ye Beauties of Nature into a compass proper for its observation.'²¹³ This comment suggests that we must search for a more appropriate term for Shenstone's type of garden: not Picturesque, which is a general term for a wide variety of different landscapes, but Naturesque, which is more specific. Naturesque was an expression first used by Min Wood in his 2011 thesis. He meant that creating vistas that looked natural was essential to Shenstone and it was his main objective in his creation, therefore it is a more appropriate label for the landscape of The Leasowes.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 17.

²¹¹ Shenstone probably considered anyone who did not show a delight in his garden as vulgar – a verdict that would have included Lords Anson and Sandys. Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 275, 410.

²¹² Bending, Stephen, "Uneasy Sensation: Shenstone and Retirement, 'Arcadian Greens Rural'", *New Arcadian Journal*, Nos. 53/54 (2002), p. 26.

²¹³ W. S. to L. L., 23rd April, 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), p. 190.

²¹⁴ Wood, Min, 'The Search for Elysium' (Unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of Bristol, 2011). As it is a new term it will need time before it is used in popular parlance.

2.4 Literary influences on the Picturesque garden

Literature and gardens have often been tied together. Written text describing gardens came to Europe from the Middle East where the legends of the Garden of Eden began in the Abrahamic religions, Judaic-Christian-Islamic faiths.²¹⁵ Gardens featured in King James' *The Holy Bible*. For example, Genesis, chapter two, verse eight states: 'And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden.'²¹⁶ A garden was called paradise in the Persian language and in Christendom the word came to describe the ultimate place to live, the Garden of Eden.²¹⁷ The term paradise was used by John Milton's in his poem *Paradise Lost*. It told the story of the fall of Lucifer before the creation of man and describes the Garden of Eden. Through *The Holy Bible* and *Paradise Lost* the idea of the natural garden entered public consciousness in the early modern period.²¹⁸

Gardens, however, have not always been the same. W. G. Hoskins wrote that in the medieval period as people needed food, flowers were less important, 'large houses were surrounded by a formless and uncouth landscape' and villages and cottages by fields and paddocks, so that there was little room for gardens.²¹⁹ In fact this was only partially true as aristocratic castles and

²¹⁵ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010), pp. 8, 13.

²¹⁶ *The Holy Bible* (London, Oxford University Press, no date), p. 6.

²¹⁷ Hunt, John Dixon (2000), op. cit., pp. 19-20.

²¹⁸ Milton, John, *Paradise Lost* (London, S. Simmons, 1774), pp. 54-59.

²¹⁹ Hoskins, W. G. *The Making of the English Landscape* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1975), p. 169; Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), op. cit., pp. 23-35; Lambert, David, 'William Shenstone and the Fairy Landscape', *Report and Journal of The Georgian Group*, pp. 67-73.

houses show that gardens were attached to their abodes, though normally they were formal in construction.²²⁰ In the post-medieval period more people began to appreciate gardening for its own sake, and gardens were planned: their formal appearance being proof of man's power over the natural world.²²¹ For most of this period their appearance signified symbolic values to those who created them, but in England that formality began to be relaxed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²²² This was partially due to John Gerard's *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes* published in 1597.²²³ This practical book revealed how to transform botany and medical information into the garden and demonstrated that 'in England there was no dichotomy between botanical science and the practice of gardening'.²²⁴ Once it was revealed that a garden was more than just an attractive image other ideas came to the fore. In 1629 another herbal was written by John Parkinson where the frontispiece of the book showed a scene from Genesis, with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, illustrating a natural landscape (Fig. 2.2). From this emerged the idea that notions of nature could shape garden design.²²⁵

²²⁰ Taylor, Christopher, 'The place of analytical fieldwork in garden history' *Journal of Garden History*, Volume 17, Issue 1, 1997, pp. 21-23.

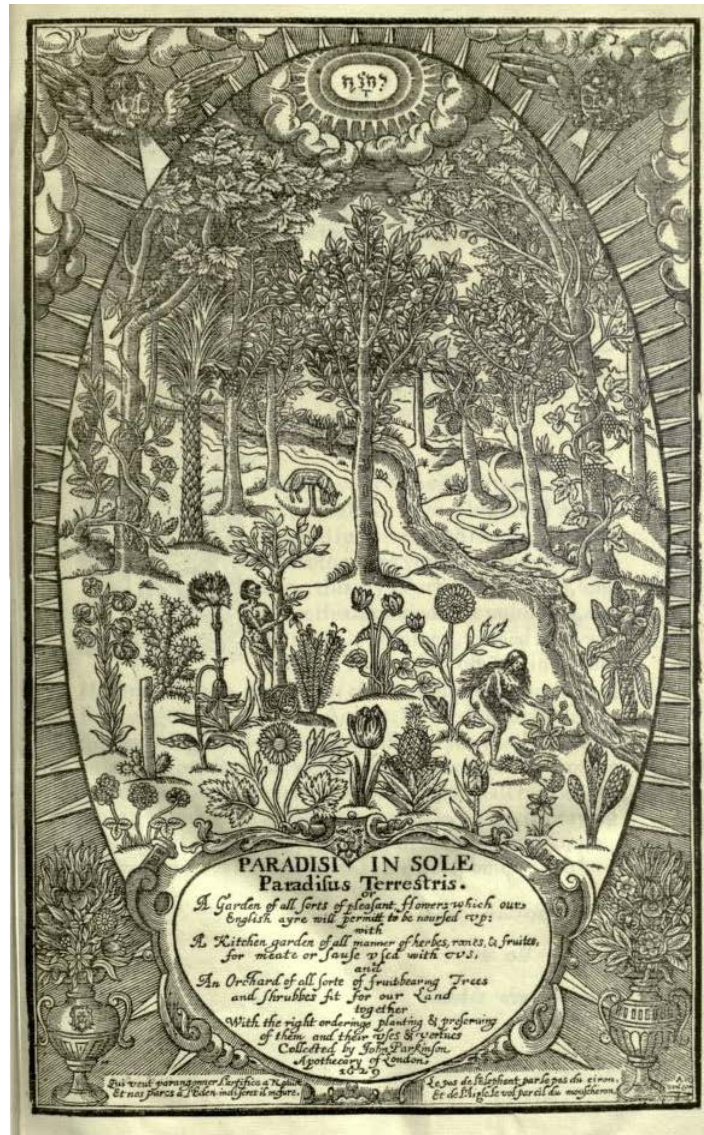
²²¹ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Sutton 1998), p. 1.

²²² Zagari, Franco, *Questo e paesaggio – 48 definizioni* (Rome, Gruppo Mancosu, 2005) in Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio, (trans. David Stanton) *ibid.*, p. 8. Zagari sums this up in that a garden 'has always been a space with a notable symbolic value: it is a theme of fundamental importance that every culture seeks to express'.

²²³ Gerard, John, *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes* (London, Adam Islip, Joice Norton, Richard Whittaker, 1633).

²²⁴ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), p. 62. Shenstone studied the economic and medical properties of plants (see Chapter Eight).

²²⁵ Hunt, John Dixon, and Willis, Peter (1990), *op. cit.*, p. 79.



2.2: Title page of John Parkinson's *Paradisi in sole, Paradisus Terrestris*.²²⁶

John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* was not just a list of plants, but a manual, which was devoted to the knowledge and techniques necessary for creating a garden. Thirty years later, when Milton published *Paradise Lost* he gave an added impetus to the idea of a natural garden. His

²²⁶ Parkinson, John, *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* (London, Humfrey Lownes and Robert Young, 1629). The idea of nature had been shown before both in Christian and secular art, but generally as an appendage to the subject matter. The subject matter in this case was nature not the people.

description of Eden in the poem was widely appreciated in the eighteenth century.²²⁷ Shenstone had a copy of *Paradise Lost* and made annotations on its pages and quoted from it.²²⁸ George Mason noted in 1768, when he was writing in praise of Shenstone, that Milton's depiction in a later poem called *Paradise Regained* could be compared with a woody scene at The Leasowes.²²⁹

Early English gardens therefore, including Castle Bromwich Hall, with its formal lay-out, showed that 'nature had been tamed' and 'that wilderness was no longer a threat'²³⁰ and with nature tamed, 'wilderness itself could become aesthetically prized'.²³¹ By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, gardeners began to value nature and imitated it in their gardens: 'cultivated scenes' were 'in retreat'.²³² As Williamson explained, due to the agrarian changes that were permeating the countryside, the 'real landscape began to look increasingly artificial'.²³³ Reverting to a natural landscape both showed both signs of a higher taste, and represented an ancient Arcadian environment that was found in the writings of Virgil and Horace. Both these ideas were taken up by Shenstone as he wanted to be considered a gentleman and was enthusiastic about the poetry of classical writers. Many people in

²²⁷ Walpole, Horace, *On Modern Gardening* (London, 1770, Pallas Athene, 2004), pp. 27-30.

²²⁸ William Shenstone to Richard Jago 28th August 1741 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 31.

²²⁹ Mason, George, *An Essay on Design in Gardening* (London, 1768), pp. 28-32. Mason bases a great number of his ideas on Shenstone's words; Chambers, Douglas, *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden* (New Haven & London, Yale University, 1993), p. 8.

²³⁰ Currie, Chris, *Garden Archaeology: A Handbook* (York, CBA, 2005), pp. 99-104.; Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscape* (Stroud, Sutton, 1998), p. 3.

²³¹ Porter, Roy, op. cit., p. 312.

²³² Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 3.

²³³ Ibid, p. 8.

English society, brought up on the teachings of *The Holy Bible*, thought the idea of creating another Garden of Eden was attractive and the Picturesque garden was the result.

Although originally the term Picturesque was just used for landscape painting, by the mid-eighteenth century it began to be applied to landscape gardening in England. Other terms have been used to describe it: 'English', 'modern', 'natural', 'informal' and sometimes even 'rococo', though this latter term is more suggestive of architecture.²³⁴ The Picturesque movement in gardening appears to have started with the essayist Joseph Addison and the poet Alexander Pope.²³⁵ Addison enthused about the Dutch and Flemish landscape paintings that appeared in England after King Charles II's return from Holland in 1680, and introduced the word 'landskip', a Dutch word, to describe them.²³⁶ In *The Spectator*, Addison claimed that the old geometric style of gardening had had its day.²³⁷ Arthur Raleigh Humphreys later commented that: 'natural gardening was a sign of moral integrity just as rustic life itself was or thought to be', and that 'Restoration gardens were degenerate'.²³⁸ According to Humphreys, in a paraphrase of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's famous dictum: 'Nature was born free but was everywhere to be

²³⁴ Hunt, John Dixon (2004), op. cit., pp. 9-10.

²³⁵ Addison, Joseph, *The Spectator* 414, June 1712. One of the first articles in which Addison invoked the new idea; Pope, Alexander, *Discourse on Pastoral Poetry* the fifth part (London, Tonson's Poetical Miscellanies, 1704).

²³⁶ Pischel, Gina, *The Golden History of Art* (New York, Golden Press, 1968), pp. 528-531.

²³⁷ Addison, Joseph, op. cit., no page number.

²³⁸ Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, CUP, 1937), pp. 45- 46.

found in chains.’²³⁹ Addison advocated a different way forward and wrote that gardeners should follow the ideas used in landscape paintings.²⁴⁰ Richard Graves in his *Recollections* commented that while at Pembroke College, Shenstone, Anthony Whistler and Graves himself spent many mornings reading ‘Spectators and Tatlers’.²⁴¹ Addison wrote many essays in *The Spectator* and one in particular may have introduced Shenstone to the new form of gardening. The issue of June 25th 1712 noted how important aspects of nature were when added to a garden landscape.²⁴²

Alexander Pope was another instigator of this new style of gardening. The German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer had written: ‘Be guided by nature. Do not depart from it, thinking you can do better yourself. You will be misguided, for truly art is hidden in nature.’²⁴³ It is not known if Pope’s ideas about gardens grew out of Dürer’s ideas about art, but his views on nature and how it should be treated in poetry were presented in his verse. One of his first poems, ‘Discourse on Pastoral Poetry’, was based on the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of Virgil where each section contained its own moral or philosophical idea that underpinned the narrative. Pope saw landscape

²³⁹ Ibid, p. 48. The phrase was ‘Man is born free but everywhere is in chains’; Hobsbawm, E. J., *The Age of Revolution* (London, Abacus, 1977), pp. 30- 31.

²⁴⁰ Addison, Joseph, op. cit., no page number.

²⁴¹ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq* (London, 1788), p. 20.

²⁴² Addison, Joseph, *The Spectator* 414, June 25th 1712. No page numbers.

²⁴³ Dürer, Albrecht, *Vier bucher von menschlicher proportion* (Nuremberg, 1528) in Pavord, Anna, *The Naming of Names* (London, Bloomsbury, 2005), p. 17.

gardening as a physical expression of his pastoral ideas.²⁴⁴ According to Richardson, Pope seemed to have been the first to have joined the two art forms - poetry and painting - with gardening, as he studied painting and used painting metaphors in his writing.²⁴⁵ Spence interviewed Pope at Twickenham in 1727 and recorded his favourite maxim that all gardening is landscape painting, 'Just like a landscape hung up'.²⁴⁶

Pope also created his own 'natural' garden at his home in Twickenham. According to Richardson, his garden was the 'epicentre of the landscape gardening craze.'²⁴⁷ Pope wrote about inexpensive simplicity in gardening style and in his poem 'Epistle to Burlington', advocated the removal of garden walls and the extensive use of groves, something that Shenstone later followed.²⁴⁸ He emphasised that a gardener should frame his sight-lines and produce a scene with gradations of view from the foreground, to the middle ground and to the background. In his garden at Twickenham, he used a perspectival means of extending a small site by giving it depth. This was an ability of the best painters. Pope actually used the word 'picturesque' when he was translating the works of Homer in the second decade of the eighteenth century, but the picturesque meant more to Pope than just a view. He had the same idea as Giovan Pietro Bellori who wrote in 1672 that 'the

²⁴⁴ Pope, Alexander, 'Discourse on Pastoral Poetry' in *The Complete Works of Alexander Pope* (Boston, Houghton & Mifflin Company, 1905), pp. 19-27.

²⁴⁵ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 176.

²⁴⁶ Spence, Joseph, Singer, Samuel Weller (ed.), op. cit., p. 158.

²⁴⁷ Richardson, Tim, (2007), op. cit., p. 292.

²⁴⁸ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 51.

essence of painting consists in imitating human actions'.²⁴⁹ A landscape needed a human presence for viewers to locate themselves within it. Pope's garden became a popular resort for visiting poets and writers. According to Joan Edwards, Pope told Shenstone to contact Robert Dodsley, Pope's publisher, to publish his poem 'The Judgement of Hercules' in 1741.²⁵⁰ If Pope advised him about his poetry, he may have also invited him to view his garden at Twickenham while Shenstone was on his several sojourns to London. Considering Pope was one of Shenstone's favourite poets - he had his works in his library and a bust of him in his house at The Leasowes - this may have been his earliest introduction to the practice of this new style of gardening.²⁵¹

Following the guidance of Pope, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the study of nature became an essential subject for the poet and the philosopher. Joseph Warton published the poem 'The Enthusiast: or Lover of Nature' in 1744 in which the simple life of the classical world and nature was extolled.²⁵² Warton is mentioned in Shenstone's letters so it is likely that he had read his

²⁴⁹ Hunt, John Dixon (2004), op. cit. p. 16. The volume was in Italian and called *Vite de' pittori*. It was about the paintings of Raphael.

²⁵⁰ Edwards, Joan, 'The Contribution of an Eighteenth-Century Bookseller to Garden History', *Garden History*, Vol. 8. No. 1 (spring, 1980), p. 27; Tierney, James E. (ed.) *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733-1764* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 7.

²⁵¹ Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 23 The bust was given to him by Mr Outing, a friend of Lady Luxborough and himself.

²⁵² Wooll, John (ed.), 'The Enthusiast: or Lover of Nature' *Biographical Memoirs of the late Joseph Warton D.D.* (London, T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1810), pp. 111-124.

poetry.²⁵³ Shenstone also read the works of the philosopher Alexander Gerard who used the analogy of literary creation with natural growth.²⁵⁴ In Gerard's *An Essay on Genius* he announced: 'A perfect judgement is seldom bestowed by nature, even on her most favoured sons: but a very considerable degree of it belongs to real genius.'²⁵⁵ A derivation of genius in the eighteenth century was 'mental power or faculty'²⁵⁶ and Shenstone took his understanding of nature as a guide to his work at The Leasowes.

Picturesque was a style of gardening that was not only intended to look attractive, but also to stimulate the viewer's imagination.²⁵⁷ As we have seen, imagination was an essential mental ingredient of the early eighteenth-century gardenists. David Lambert pointed out that for Shenstone and other writers, imagination was not what the eye saw, but what the mind discovered. This was expressed by Shenstone as: 'Objects should be less calculated to strike the immediate eye, than the judgment or well-formed imagination.'²⁵⁸ To achieve this the landscape had to be created by a single person who held this philosophy and not by professional landscape gardeners, who could not intellectualise it. This aspect was lost when only the visual dimensions of

²⁵³ W. S. to Richard Graves, 21st March 1755, May 30th 1758, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 482. Shenstone mentions Professor Thomas Warton, Joseph's brother, as going to The Leasowes for a visit.

²⁵⁴ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', Vol. II, op. cit., p. 111.

²⁵⁵ Gerard, Alexander, *An Essay on Genius* (London, W. Strahan, T. Cadell, 1774), p. 74.

²⁵⁶ Johnson, Samuel, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London, J and P. Knapton, T. & T. Longman; C. Hitch and L. Hawes; A. Miller and R. and J. Dodsley, 1755), Vol. 1. No page numbers, under the word GENIUS.

²⁵⁷ Hunt, John Dixon, (2004), op. cit., p. 13.

²⁵⁸ Lambert, David, 'William Shenstone and the Fairy landscape', *Report & Journal of The Georgian Group* (Lavenham, 1986), pp. 68-69.

gardens were considered. Paraphrasing Addison, Lambert wrote that this was a world of visionary beauty, which could not be seen by the uninitiated.

An adjunct to the idea of nature was that gardens could be equated with the human body. Shenstone, like most intellectuals of the eighteenth century, had read William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*.²⁵⁹ Hogarth sought to displace moral judgements with the aesthetics of sensation and pleasure based on nature.²⁶⁰ He saw the serpentine line as an essential element of beauty because it resembled the shapes and curves of the human body.²⁶¹ This was an attractive idea to Shenstone, as he had already created serpentine paths in his garden. In a letter to Richard Graves, Shenstone wrote after reading Hogarth's book: it 'adjusted my notions with regard to beauty in general'.²⁶²

One of the more popular garden books in the early eighteenth century was Stephen Switzer's *Noblemen, Gentlemen and Gardening Recreation* published in 1715, but then reissued in an enlarged and illustrated form in 1718 as *Iconographia Rustica* and enlarged again in 1747.²⁶³ It became required

²⁵⁹ W. S. to R. G., 19th April 1754 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 396.

²⁶⁰ Richardson, Annie, op. cit., p. 126; Thomas Percy to William Shenstone 24th November 1757 in Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & William Shenstone* Vol. 7, (New Haven, Yale University, 1977), p. 3. Hogarth was following the ideas of the Greek philosopher Aristippus who also thought pleasure a worthwhile objective. Percy sent Shenstone a copy of the philosopher's thoughts.

²⁶¹ Mckee, Robert, op. cit., p. 212.

²⁶² W. S. to R. G. 19th April 1754 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 396. Shenstone's copy of William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* is in the Harvard Library, USA and the annotation is on page 82.

²⁶³ Switzer, Stephen, *Ichnographia Rustica, or, the Nobleman, Gentleman, and Gardeners Recreation* Vol. I (London, Brown, D. Barker, K. King, C., London, 1718).

reading for any gentleman gardener.²⁶⁴ This book summarised the evolution of landscape gardening and emphasised the importance of topographical features. Switzer wrote that the gardener ‘should make the best of all Hills, Dales, Corn Fields, high Hills, Banks and Tuffs of Trees’.²⁶⁵ In addition he prescribed ‘Hedge-rows, Coppices, and Lawns mix’d one another in Nature’.²⁶⁶ Variety was essential to him as ‘when the mind is every instant call’d off to something new’.²⁶⁷ Moreover Switzer mentioned the Latin poets, in particular Virgil: ‘From Virgil (that great Master of Gardening and most other Arts) we may collect all that is Beautiful.’²⁶⁸ Virgil was a favourite poet of Shenstone and he included portions of his verse within The Leasowes landscape, particularly in Virgil’s Grove. Although no direct evidence has been found of Shenstone reading Switzer, when he started to garden, he appeared to use many of the ideas that were suggested by the writer,²⁶⁹ in particular in his *Practical Husbandman and Planter*, of 1733.²⁷⁰

Batty Langley was another garden writer who Shenstone followed. He told Henrietta Knight in April 1749 that he was sending her a book of gardening

²⁶⁴ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., pp. 162, 210. In the earlier editions, Switzer did not mention the *ferme ornée*, but referred to it in the 1747 impression, by which time the Southcote and Shenstone landscape gardens were well known.

²⁶⁵ Switzer, Stephen (1718), op. cit., p. 6.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 87

²⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 4.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 8.

²⁶⁹ National Archives, Kew, C12/1892/22 S2485: Chancery Proceedings of The Leasowes Estate, 1765; Inventory. Shenstone was an avid reader and had a library of over 774 books. The number of books in his library was recorded in the Chancery documents after Shenstone’s death. The writer has collected evidence for 230 titles; others may turn up in time (see Appendix Two – Shenstone’s Library). The works by Switzer may have been amongst the missing books.

²⁷⁰ Switzer, Stephen, *Practical Husbandman and Planter* (London, 1733).

that he had borrowed from a neighbour about five years before.²⁷¹ This book, *New Principles of Gardening*, published in 1728, was by Langley.²⁷² It provided guidance on many aspects of horticulture from how to lay out the grounds to the planting of ornamental and edible plants. It also gave instructions for the correct placement of features such as canals, orchards, open lawns, walks and mythological statues with a month-by-month gazetteer of sweet smelling flowers.²⁷³ A great many of the ideas provided by Langley were followed by Shenstone. Although he wrote that Langley made blunders, like assuming Minerva and Pallas were too different deities, Shenstone wrote that he could be forgiven because ‘he was a poor illiterate fellow’.²⁷⁴

Another likely influence was Philip Miller, the superintendent of the Chelsea Physic Garden who wrote *The Gardeners Dictionary* (1735) which was also in Shenstone’s library.²⁷⁵ Like Langley’s book it was full of advice, including the comment that ‘Groves make the Chief of a Garden, being great Ornament to all the rest of its parts’, but he also stressed like Switzer, that variety was essential and ‘the same works ought never to be repeated on both sides’ of a

²⁷¹ W. S. to L. L., 23rd April 1749, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 190.

²⁷² Langley, Batty, *New Principles of Gardening* (London, J. Batley, J. Pemberton, T. Bowles, J. Clarke & J. Bowles, 1728).

²⁷³ Ibid, pp. 195-207.

²⁷⁴ W. S. to L. L. undated in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 188; Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, in *William Shenstone: an Eighteenth-century Portrait* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1937), p. 56, Humphreys with typical academic wit noted that the Minerva and Pallas ‘must have been pleased to encounter one another’.

²⁷⁵ W. S. to L. L. 14th May 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 193; Miller, Phillip, *The Gardeners Dictionary* (London, C. Rivington, 1735).

location;²⁷⁶ this was reiterated by Shenstone in ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’.²⁷⁷

2.5 Shenstone and poetry

Shenstone integrated his poetry with his gardening, but the connection between poets and gardeners began before his day.²⁷⁸ His use of poetry in his garden may have derived from the seventeenth-century writings of John Evelyn. Whether Stephen Switzer had read Evelyn when writing his *Ichnographia Rustica* is also not clear, but like Shenstone he certainly promulgated concepts that emanated from Evelyn. At the beginning of Evelyn’s *Kalendarium Hortense*, a month-by-month guide to gardening activities, he dedicated the book to the poet Abraham Cowley and quoted in full a poem he had written about gardening.²⁷⁹ If Shenstone had read this he would have understood the connection between poetry and gardens. John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis thought that the poet John Milton was the instigator of the Picturesque style of gardening, as he first mentioned serpentine lines, natural treatment of water, rural mounds and wooded theatres and rejected ‘nice Art In beds and curious knots’ in favour of ‘nature boon/Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine’, in his epic poem

²⁷⁶ Miller, Philip, op. cit., no page numbers, under the alphabet heading of GA.

²⁷⁷ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 118.

²⁷⁸ Shenstone, as a poet, wrote verse on a number of different subjects; gardening was just one of these.

²⁷⁹ Evelyn, John, *Kalendarium Hortense; or the Gardeners Almanac* (London, G. Huddleston, 1699), pp. xiv - xxiii.

Paradise Lost.²⁸⁰ Shenstone's annotated copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost* demonstrated his appreciation of the poet.²⁸¹

Shenstone populated the landscape by placing many poetic inscriptions in The Leasowes landscape garden, which made it, as Williamson noted, an 'aesthetic artefact'.²⁸² Many gardens of the eighteenth century were created with a political agenda. Stowe was the prime example, but very few, if any, were formed with a poetical agenda except for Shenstone's garden. According to Richardson, Shenstone created at The Leasowes a 'literary landscape of classical allusions': his landscape was a living embodiment of pastoral poetry in the spirit of Virgil.²⁸³ It was Pope who saw that the power of a landscape garden lay as much in its associative literary meanings as in the composition of its vistas. Shenstone's garden was to be read, as he placed poems at intervals along the paths, but his originality lay in the way he integrated his poetry with his landscape work, so one fed off the other. It was Shenstone's creation of a landscape that was in tune with his appreciation of Latin classical verse and English pastoral poetry that was so significant.

Douglas Chambers in 1993 saw what Shenstone achieved:

What made The Leasowes more than an itinerary of inscriptions, however, was Shenstone's concern with recreating antique landscape: *locus* as *locus*, the genius of the place as the sacred grove of antiquity, translated into

²⁸⁰ Hunt, John Dixon & Willis, Peter, op. cit., p. 81. *Paradise Lost* is the story of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

²⁸¹ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 177. Shenstone's volume is now in the British Library; B.L. ADD. MS. 28964, fol. 6v [12v].

²⁸² Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 119.

²⁸³ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 445.

England as surely as the genius of ancient poetry and politics
had been.²⁸⁴

Chambers meant that Shenstone was creating with his verse a classical landscape in his own country. Although his poetry spoke of spirits, most of his readers knew that they did not exist and this enhanced a melancholic perception of landscape: a world of lost significance. The tone of *The Leasowes* was also elegiac, a replication of some of his poetry. Poetry was crucial for the evolution of *The Leasowes* as David Whitehead commented: 'Poetry and Gardening:' seem 'indivisible activities for Shenstone'.²⁸⁵

2.6 Shenstone and painting

According to Richardson: 'The establishment of such rules of appreciation across the arts' meant that there was a 'right' and 'correct' way of interpreting it.²⁸⁶ Although Hunt suggested that 'the analogy between painting and landscape design was more easily enunciated than practiced', Shenstone was the exception to the rule.²⁸⁷ Like Pope he saw a garden as peculiar to the painter's art.²⁸⁸ Although Shenstone and other artists painted and made drawings of *The Leasowes* landscape garden, the source of their interest was in the Italian paintings that were celebrated at the time. The seventeenth-century work of Nicholas Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Gaspard

²⁸⁴ Chambers, Douglas, *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden: Botany, Trees and the Georgics* (New Haven & London, 1993), p. 179.

²⁸⁵ Whitehead, David, op. cit., p. 774. For further thoughts on poetry in *The Leasowes* landscape garden see Chapters Nine.

²⁸⁶ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 140.

²⁸⁷ Hunt, John Dixon (2000), op. cit., p. 50.

²⁸⁸ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' Vol. II (1768), op. cit., p. 124.

Dughet and Salvator Rosa provided idealised scenes of imagined landscapes.²⁸⁹ After 1720 the mass production of copies of their drawings and paintings appeared in London and later in the rest of the country: they became very popular amongst the elite or those who aspired to elite status. These landscapes had a great effect, particularly on people interested in poetry and helped to prompt the Picturesque movement in gardening.²⁹⁰ By the 1740s the nature paintings of these artists had become so fashionable that gardens were inspired by specific painters or paintings.²⁹¹ The relevance of these influences can be seen in Richard Graves' statement that he found The Leasowes 'fit for the pencil of a Salvatore Rosa and Poussin',²⁹² and Mrs Delany linked Shenstone with Claude.²⁹³

English painters also captured the rural mood, though not the themes of the continental artists with their classical Roman and wilderness scenes. To eighteenth-century English painters, the rural scene was modern, cultivated and well managed. Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) was a contemporary of Shenstone. Although acknowledged as a portrait painter, some of his paintings included the English landscape. One of the most relevant to the study of taste in the English landscape is the painting of Mr and Mrs

²⁸⁹ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape: Poetry, Painting, and Gardening during the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1989), pp. 15, 39.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

²⁹¹ Richardson, Tim (2007), *op. cit.*, p. 129.

²⁹² Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1788), p. 54.

²⁹³ Llanover, Lady (ed.), *The autobiography and correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany: with interesting reminiscences of King George the Third and Queen Charlotte* Second series (London, R. Bentley, 1862), p. 443.

Andrews (Fig. 2.3). The Andrews are shown as a couple, she is seated on a cast-iron bench beneath a tree and he is leaning against it with his flintlock muzzle-loading sporting firearm; their dog looks up at them obediently. This scene appears to show the Andrews admiring their fields. That the landscape is important is shown by the fact that it takes up half the scene in the painting; a wheat field lies to the right while sheep graze in the pasture behind and a wood is shown behind the couple. Dark clouds appear in the distance, but the sun is shining on the Andrews. It defines the English landscape, which people of taste admired.



Fig. 2.3: *Mr and Mrs Andrews* painted by Thomas Gainsborough in 1748. ©The National Gallery, London.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ National Gallery, NG6301.

One aspect of this approach in painting was the Italian art of *pittoresco*. The word implies a method of laying on strokes of paint, not necessarily legible in close-up. The word came to mean ‘negligent and picturesque’.²⁹⁵ The compositional strategies meant that people and places could be arranged irregularly as in the Andrews painting. By the early eighteenth century, *pittoresco* had specifically landscape associations and implied a lack of symmetry, which was typical of the English landscape and in particular the garden. It also stimulated the viewer’s imagination.²⁹⁶

Associationism, ‘the process by which the mind’s activities are released by the succession of images that pass before it’, also occurred in the new form of gardening and can be linked with painting.²⁹⁷ The idea was first formulated by Alexander Gerard (1728 -1795) in his *Essay on Taste* (1759),²⁹⁸ but had been advocated by Francis Hutcheson (1694 -1746) in his *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1738).²⁹⁹ Associationism in gardening meant that the natural forms in the landscape were able to find ‘contexts in which the mind in its many manifestations could expiate freely’.³⁰⁰ That is, when a person was walking around a garden their mind would be able to wander stimulated by the environment. An example occurred when

²⁹⁵ Hunt, John Dixon (2004), op cit., pp. 12-13.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 25.

²⁹⁷ Hunt, John Dixon (1989), op. cit., p. 25.

²⁹⁸ Gerard, Alexander, *Essay on Taste* (London, A. Millar, A. Kinkaid, J. Bell, 1759).

²⁹⁹ Hutcheson, Francis, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London, J. & J. Knapton, 1729); Baridon, Michel, ‘Understanding nature and the aesthetics of the landscape garden’ in Calder, Martin (ed.), *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (Peter Lang, Oxford, 2005), p. 82.

³⁰⁰ Hunt, John Dixon, (1989), op. cit., p. 63.

Shenstone applied the inscription from Poussin's *Et in Arcadia Ego* on the urn in memory of Maria Dolman, a favourite cousin (see Fig. 2.4).³⁰¹



Fig. 2.4: *Et in Arcadia Ego* by Nicholas Poussin painted in 1637-8.³⁰²

The painting shows shepherds around a stone looking at the inscription. Its words can be translated as ‘even in Arcadia there am I’. This could mean either a reference to the presence of death in a place of beauty or to the point that in this place the memory, if not the person, survives. The purpose of the inscription may have been that Miss Dolman in death and repose was considered safe in the garden. However, the stone had another message: life

³⁰¹ W. S. to R. G., 3rd October 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 524-5.

³⁰² *Palais du Louvre*, Paris; Whiteley, Mary, ‘Versailles and the age of the Cardinals 1600-1700’ in Copplestone, Trewin (ed.) *Art Treasures in France* (Feltham, Paul Hamlyn, 1969), p. 110. Poussin did two paintings on this theme with the shepherds in the earlier one agitated by death. In this one they are philosophically resigned to the transience of life.

is transitory and death is inevitable. In the painting, the stone is an ancient one in the present that belonged to a dead civilisation and it could also be read as an indication that after death the dead go to Arcadia (heaven). So the inscription on the urn may have had two meanings: an association of existence both here and in another world.

Many of the paintings of the age had classical themes and were important to the classically educated elite as manifestations of taste.³⁰³ Rosa was particularly interested in solitude as it gave a person time to think and to many English people, including Shenstone, seclusion was associated with the hermits of medieval England. Virgil's theme in *The Georgics*, of withdrawal from the corruption of urban life to the simplicity of rural life, was central to Shaftesbury's *Moralist*,³⁰⁴ and several followed this path literally. One was the politically ostracised 'hermit', Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751), who had to flee to France after supporting the 1715 Stuart uprising.³⁰⁵ Others included the religious 'hermit,' Philip Southcote (1698-1758), who as a Roman Catholic had no political rights,³⁰⁶ the marital 'hermit' Henrietta Knight (1699-1756), whose husband banished her after she had an affair with John Dalton,³⁰⁷ and Shenstone the self-imposed 'hermit'. To Shenstone, painting displayed not only his sense of taste, but his appreciation of art and nature and where it stood in his landscape garden design.

³⁰³ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., pp. 394-401.

³⁰⁴ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 8.

³⁰⁵ Richardson, Tim (2007), op. cit., p. 217.

³⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 424.

³⁰⁷ Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott* (London, Harper Press, 2006), p. 109.

2.7 Shenstone, music and the sounds of nature

Sound in its many forms was an important element of the sensual language of taste at The Leasowes. In his garden Shenstone intermixed various elements but the sounds of nature were especially significant. Sandro Jung wrote:

Music or song pervades the intermedially conceived realm of The Leasowes in the sense that he not only created a visually experimental landscape but also constructed various soundscapes that relied on different sounds of water in motion and the birds inhabiting the woodland.³⁰⁸

Jung was correct that sound was an essential part of Shenstone's garden but it is not certain if 'constructed' is the best word to use as most of these sounds were natural. They would vary between the inanimate objects such as rustling leaves as wind or a breeze hurried through the trees and shrubs to water trickling or flowing through his brooks, and dripping or roaring over his cascades. The cascades he contrived and the noise of the rushing water were partially of his making, but animate sounds such as the song of birds, the bleating of sheep and other animal calls were natural and could not be arranged.³⁰⁹ The sounds of nature, however, were an essential element in his landscape garden.

³⁰⁸ Jung, Sandro, 'William Shenstone's Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,' in *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014), p. 3.

³⁰⁹ Laid, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 191-2. The concert of bird song was particularly singled out in a garden by Shenstone and others. Mrs Delany described the melodies of thrushes and other birds in 1746.

Natural sounds could be called the music of nature, but Shenstone also used reproductive music.³¹⁰ His musical tastes were probably stimulated at Oxford, where he saw Handel conducting his music,³¹¹ and in later life he attended the Worcester Music Festival, and performances in Birmingham.³¹² Closer to home he put on at least two concerts in his garden at The Leasowes in 1750 and 1751. These were organised by his friend the Reverend John Prynne Parkes Pixell, Rector of Edgbaston, Birmingham who was a musician and composer. Pixell was a leading member of the Birmingham Music Society and he arranged for the players who belonged to the society to play at The Leasowes.³¹³

Shenstone could also sing and play a keyboard instrument that he had in his home.³¹⁴ Fig. 2.5, shows an image from Dodsley's edition of Shenstone's *The Works*, where he is pictured playing a clavicytherium, a vertical stringed instrument, though he was recorded as having and playing a harpsichord, with its horizontal keyboard.³¹⁵

³¹⁰ Cooke, Deryck, *The Language of Music* (London, Oxford University Press, 1962) p. 1. Cooke wrote that reproductive music, the music made by instruments or the voice, could be divided into three different categories: direct imitation - such as a cuckoo; approximate imitation - such as a rippling brook; and symbolism - such as the effect on the ear similar to the appearance to the eye, p. 3.

³¹¹ W. S. to R. G. 25th November 1758 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 494. Handel's music, particularly 'The Messiah', was a great favourite of Shenstone; Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 63. Henrietta Knight knew Handel as he had taught her music and she often commented on things he had told her.

³¹² W. S. to R. G., 25th November 1758 in Williams Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 494; The Worcester Music Festival is called the Three Choirs Festival in 2017.

³¹³ Ibid, W. S. to Richard Jago, 11th June 1750 & W. S. to L. L. 21st October 1751, pp. 276, 322.

³¹⁴ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, 1788), pp. 175-176.

³¹⁵ W. S. to R. G., July 1743 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 175.



Fig. 2.5: William Shenstone playing a clavicytherium with the figure of Apollo awarding him a wreath.³¹⁶

This playing of an old-fashioned instrument suggests that the instigator of the engraving, probably Dodsley, thought of him as a traditionalist, a person who prefers objects belonging to the past rather than the present. The Greek god, Phoebus Apollo, is shown awarding him a wreath and by association, it

³¹⁶ Shenstone, William, Vol. II, op. cit., Frontispiece. This engraving has been taken from an original oil painting by the baroque painter Andrea Sacchi (1599-1661). It depicts an allegorical scene praising an Italian castrato singer Pasqualini. It is called 'Apollo crowning the singer Marc Antonio Pasqualini'. The castrato is given the laurel crown by Apollo, who according to Greek myth had a musical competition with the satyr Marsyas who won, so Apollo flayed him alive as he did not like to be beaten. The figure of Pasqualini /Marsyas has been missed out in the Shenstone illustration. To the Romans Marsyas was a proponent of free speech. T.P. Wiseman, "Satyrs in Rome?" *Journal of Roman Studies* 78 (1988), pp. 2-3 and p. 11, note 91, with additional sources on Marsyas p. 4, notes 26-28.

is suggested that Shenstone was an accomplished player.³¹⁷ According to Stephen Switzer, Phoebus Apollo also ‘took GARDENING into his protection’,³¹⁸ so it was fitting that he is shown with Shenstone. The wreath became a symbol of achievement and status in Classical Greece and Rome and suggests that Dodsley believed that his friend and client was a talented musician.³¹⁹ The background to the engraving showing Shenstone in a rural setting, again possibly The Leasowes landscape.

Another musical reference in *The Works*, is the engraving of a bust of Shenstone, Fig. 2.6, showing him with Pan’s pipes, a horn (to the left), a Greek lyre (to the right) and an arrangement of greenery around the base. This latter feature is possibly referring to his landscape-gardening skills. The pipes were a classical motif for shepherds and were probably associated with his chosen poetic pseudonym of Damien, a classical Greek shepherd.³²⁰ Shenstone also had a penchant for the figure of the rural god Pan who is often shown as playing pipes, by building a temple to the deity and having a bust of him in the portrait he had painted of himself.³²¹ The horn may have had something to do with him learning to play the instrument. He recorded in a letter to Richard Jago in June 1754 that he had borrowed a French

³¹⁷ Bulfinch, Thomas, op. cit., p. 10

³¹⁸ Switzer, Stephen (1718), op. cit., p. i.

³¹⁹ Batchen, Geoffrey, *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), p. 92. The use of a wreath comes from the story of Apollo and Daphne. To escape his amorous advances Daphne was turned into a laurel bush and Apollo wore a wreath of laurel on his head from that day forth.

³²⁰ Damien is the name Shenstone used when referring to himself in most of the poems in his *Work*, see Vol. 1.

³²¹ A portrait of William Shenstone, painted by Edward Alcock in 1760. See Frontispiece of this thesis.

horn, though he did not say what he was going to use it for.³²² The lyre was associated with Apollo.³²³ It was a poet's motif as classical Greek poets strummed a lyre when reciting their poetry.



Fig. 2.6: A bust of William Shenstone with Pan's pipes, horn and lyre.³²⁴

In his 'Essay on Taste' Shenstone referred to tunes with lyrics being more pleasurable when they were associated with the natural accent of the

³²² W. S. to R. J., 16th June 1754 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 402.

³²³ Seltman, Charles, *The Twelve Olympians*, (London, Pan Books, 1952), pp. 72-74. Hermes made the lyre from the bones and sinew of one of the god's cows and then gave it to Apollo in recompense for killing the animal.

³²⁴ Shenstone, William, Vol. I, op. cit., Frontispiece; Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & William Shenstone* Vol. 7 (New Haven, Yale University, 1977), p. 200. According to John Scott Hylton in notes made in his copy of *The Works* of Shenstone he stated that the bust was 'not a good likeness of him'.

words.³²⁵ His poetry showed he was aware of this onomatopoeic aspect of sound.³²⁶ The initial verse of his first elegy was: ‘Now here the fountains bubbling round my cell’, in which the music of nature is discovered.³²⁷ Other similar lines from his verses included: the wind in the trees ‘I heard the storm arise’. He also used animal sounds: bird calls in the ‘larks descant of love’ and ‘from my grove I hear the throstle sing’ and insects in ‘now chirping crickets raise their tinkling voice’. He also mentions his waters, the ‘gurgling founts are mine’ or ‘soothed by the murmurs of my pebbled flood’.³²⁸ These suggest that Shenstone was conscious of the association of sound within his landscape and being a musician, he recognised that aurally, the sound of nature was an important part of his garden.

Just as he played and listened to music in harmony, so he created his landscape in the same way. In Hunt’s *Great Perfections*, the last chapter is entitled ‘The Tune of the Garden’, where he discusses the difference between tunes in gardening: harmony and discord.³²⁹ Analogies can be made between music and other arts.³³⁰ Shenstone created harmony within the landscape. Just as a symphony is made up of notes that harmonise, so each of Shenstone’s different features combined within the landscape. Various composers after his death recognised the value of his rural poetry and used them as lyrics in songs. Interestingly most of the songs relate to his garden:

³²⁵ Shenstone, William, ‘Essay on Taste’ Vol. II, op. cit., p. 272.

³²⁶ Cooke, Deryck, op. cit., p. 3. Cooke calls the representation of physical objects in music ‘direct imitation’ and ‘approximate imitation’.

³²⁷ Shenstone, William, ‘Poems’ Vol. I, op. cit., p. 1.

³²⁸ Ibid, pp. 11, 10, 74, 49, 58.

³²⁹ Hunt, John Dixon, (2000), op. cit., pp. 237-239.

³³⁰ Cooke, Deryck, op. cit., pp. 1, 6.

Samuel Howard published his poem ‘The Rosebud’ as a song in his *The British Orpheus* in 1745,³³¹ and Richard Langdon published two of his poems in his *Ten Songs and a Cantata set to Music, Opus 1* in 1754 including ‘The Landskip’.³³² John Pixell published four of his poems as songs in 1759, which included ‘The Skylark’.³³³ Possibly the most famous composer for his work was Thomas Arne, Master of the King’s Music, who wrote music for poems including ‘The Scholar’s Relapse’, published in 1745 and performed in the Vauxhall Gardens, London³³⁴ and ‘The Pastoral Ballad’ in 1756.³³⁵

Something that was rarely mentioned by Shenstone or any other writer but existed in his landscape were the various aromas of the garden which provided an additional ingredient of the senses,³³⁶ including the sweet perfumes of flowers and fruit, the gentle fragrance of trees and shrubs, the deep odours of the earth and the fresh smell of water in the brooks. These

³³¹ W. S. to R. G. July 1743 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 70. According to Shenstone his poem had been set to music by Howard as early as 1743, but the earliest published copy in the Bodleian Library is in 1745.

³³² Langdon, Richard, *Ten Songs by and a Cantata set to Music, Opus 1* (London, c.1754). Bodleian Library: Harding Mus. E 420.

³³³ Pixell, Rev. John, *A Collection of Songs with their Recitatives and Symphonies for the German Flute, Violins, etc. with a thorough bass for the Harpsichord to which is added a chorus for Voices and Instruments* (Birmingham, John Baskerville, 1759), Bodleian Library: Johnson Mus. c. 9 (35).

³³⁴ Arne, Thomas Augustine, ‘Lyric Harmony consisting of Eighteen New Ballads Performed at the Vauxhall Gardens by Mrs: Arne and Mr: Lowe.’ *Opera Quarta* (London) 5/-. Bodleian Library: Mus.2 c.42. Arne in a reply to Shenstone (letter lost) had composed one verse of The Pastoral Ballad, but he stated that unless an agreement was made with Dodsley about money he would not compose any further pieces; W. S. to L. L. 29th March 1755 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 438. Arne did compose music for the other verses as it was published in the above.

³³⁵ Arne, Thomas *The Agreeable Musical Choice, A Pastoral Collection of Songs sung at the public gardens* (London, I. Walsh, 1756), only the second part beginning ‘My banks they are furnish’d with bees...’ was published.

³³⁶ James Woodhouse mentions the scents of the garden in his poem (see Appendix Four).

added to the impressions upon the senses in Shenstone's landscape garden.³³⁷

2.10 Conclusion

Appreciating nature was an important dimension of garden philosophy in the eighteenth century, through which the viewer could perceive a wider intellectual and spiritual universe. Shenstone explicitly recognised this in his 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', when he wrote that he was attempting to enhance the viewer's imagination in his garden. Shenstone was an apostle of taste, particularly in landscape design. Johanna Dahn claimed: 'the aestheticised landscape he created at the Leasowes, his small estate near Halesowen, was considered the apotheosis of taste.'³³⁸ As a student of the arts Shenstone recognised that the painters, composers and writers of his day had much to teach. His garden was a composite creation: 'a landscape of the senses, of sound, sight and feeling: a giant canvas on which he 'painted' his ideas'.³³⁹ It was a lesson that he learnt well as he used the arts to compose his landscape garden.

³³⁷ Laird, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), p. 20. Laird wrote that the sights and smells of the garden had an impact on the 'look' of the garden 'ensemble'.

³³⁸ Dahn, Johanna Karen Lykke, 'Women and taste; a case study of Katherine Plymley (1758-1829)' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberystwyth, 2011), p. 87.

³³⁹ Hemingway, John, 'William Shenstone: the Landscape as Art' in Association of Gardens Trusts, *The Ferme Ornée working with Nature: Conference Proceedings*, (Priorslee, Staffordshire Parks and Gardens & Trusts, 1998), p. 32.

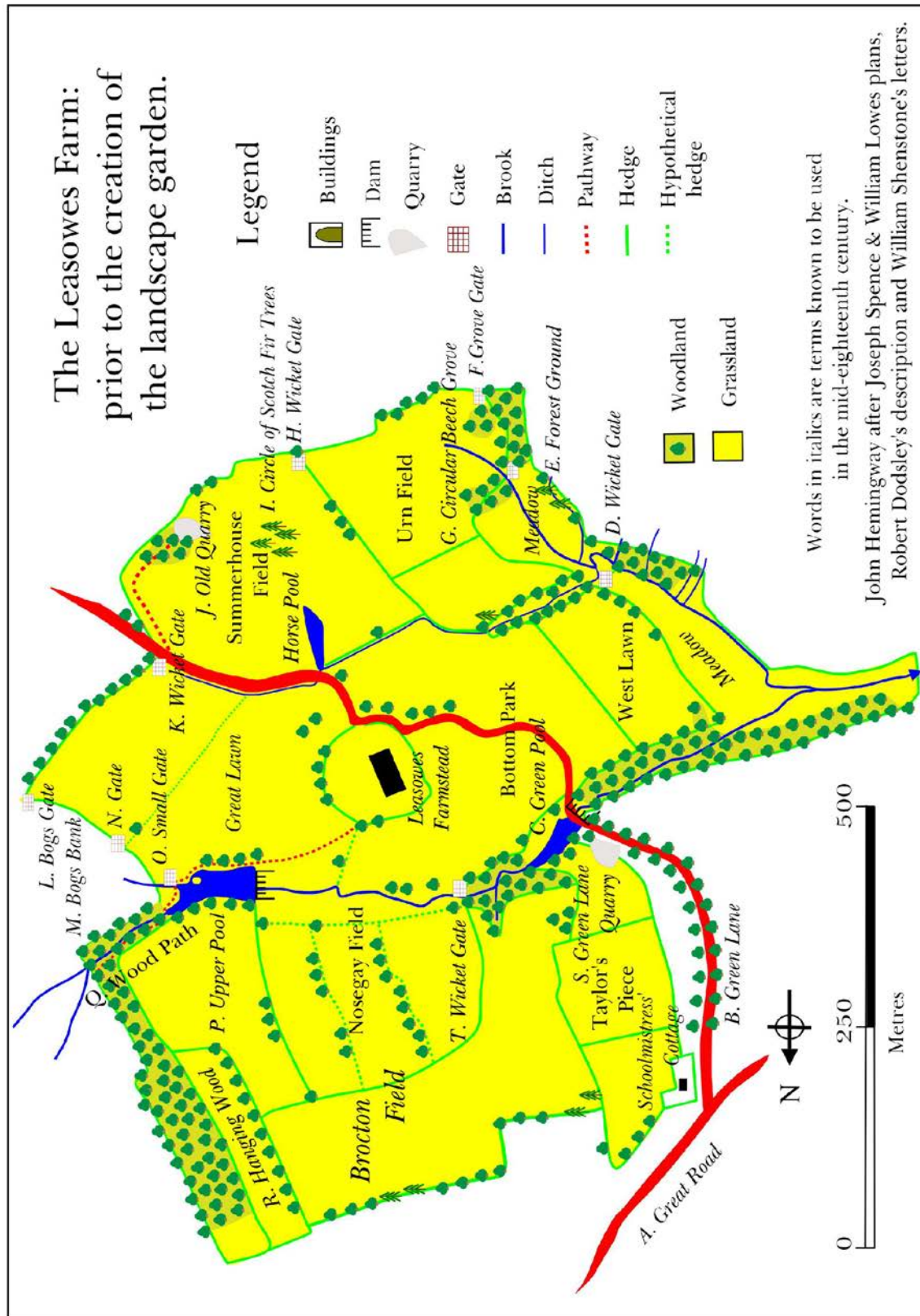
Chapter Three

Received ideas: individual influences upon Shenstone's garden

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the origins of The Leasowes Farm and the Shenstone family connection. It examines William Shenstone's early life and explores the attributes and connections that led him to develop an interest in garden design. It investigates how and why he was motivated to create a garden in the English landscape style, which combined facets of his appreciation for nature and poetry. Not all of the ideas that lay behind his project were his own: many of them came from visits to other gardens together with influences from his personal contacts. These provided suggestions for what to place and what not to use in his own garden. Some of the direct influences upon his work were provided by his aristocratic friends Thomas and George Lyttelton, Harry Grey and Sanderson Miller whose work on estates led to the mutual exchange of ideas. The writers Joseph Spence and Thomas Percy and the publisher Robert Dodsley supported him in print, while his fellow university students, Richard Graves and Richard Jago together with relations and friends supported him verbally. His attempt to copy features on other estates was expensive and led to financial problems, but the fact that money was not available led him to use nature rather than artifice in creating his landscape garden. This chapter evaluates the diverse influences and

examines the extent to which they were modified by the financial constraints



3.2 Shenstone and The Leasowes before the landscape changes

Shenstone's landscape gardening was affected and constrained by the early history of The Leasowes estate. According to Julian Hunt, the earliest known evidence of the estate occurs in a document when Thomas Blount and George Tuckey, who purchased the St. Mary's Abbey property of which The Leasowes was part at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, leased the 90-acre farm to Richard Underhill in 1558.³⁴⁰ Eventually the Lyttelton family acquired the estate, but the Underhills continued to occupy it for at least a hundred years as a Richard Underhill of The Leasowes was buried in St. John the Baptist Parish church in 1660.³⁴¹ Subsequently the estate was leased to a different family as a Thomas Taylor transferred it to William Shenstone the Elder and his son Thomas in 1714.³⁴² Thomas was William Shenstone, the landscape gardener's father and his mother was Ann Penn of Harborough Hall, Hagley.³⁴³ Ann belonged to the local squirarchy and when they decided to marry, Thomas may well have been considered as a far from appropriate consort. Ann's father, William Penn decided on her marriage that she needed some kind of security, so a wedding bond was made in the January in which Thomas's father, William Shenstone the Elder, passed the tenantry of The Leasowes Farm over to his son.³⁴⁴ The couple married at

³⁴⁰ Hunt, Julian, *A History of Halesowen* (Chichester, Phillimore, 2004), p. 107. Blount and Tuckey had purchased St. Mary's Abbey estate and then proceeded to sell and lease parts of it off.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 107. According to the document the settlement occurred on the 6th January 1714-5; the witnesses were Ann and Elijah Underhill. William the Elder married an Elizabeth Underhill, perhaps a relation to Ann and Elijah?

³⁴³ Nash, Treadway Russell, *Collections for the History of Worcester* Vol. 1 (London, John White, 1799), p. 528.

³⁴⁴ Burns, Francis, Daniel, Alexander, *William Shenstone: A critical biography and an edition of his poetical work*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 9.

Hagley Parish Church on the 5th of February 1714 and Ann moved into her husband's home at The Leasowes.³⁴⁵ Their first son William, who was given his grandfather's Christian name, was born nine months later on the 18th November 1714 and was baptised on the 6th December at St. John the Baptist Church, Halesowen. Another son, Joseph, followed two years later, but he was the last child.³⁴⁶

Not much is known about Shenstone's youth, but he presumably lived with his grandfather, parents and younger brother. A poem called the 'Ode to Memory', composed in 1748, displays an early love of music, and seems to suggest that he had a happy childhood.

Bring me the bells, the rattle bring,
And bring the hobby I bestrode,
When pleased, in a sportive ring,
Around the room I jovial rode;
Even let me bid my lyre adieu,
And bring the whistle that I blew.³⁴⁷

Another early poem 'The Schoolmistress' recollected his early Dame School education and contained a section on the flowers that grew in his teacher's garden and shows his interest in horticulture from an early date.³⁴⁸

Shenstone went to Halesowen Grammar School, his father being a governor there but after Thomas died in 1724 his mother sent him to Richard

³⁴⁵ Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Parish Records of Hagley: Marriages 1714.

³⁴⁶ Dudley Local History Archive, Parish Records of Halesowen: Christenings 1714 and 1716 Microfilm 126.

³⁴⁷ Shenstone, William, 'Ode to Memory' in Dodsley, James (ed.), *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Vol. I (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), pp. 116-118.

³⁴⁸ Shenstone, William, 'The School Mistress' in Dodsley, James, op. cit., pp. 265-267. His earliest education was a Dame School teacher who taught from her cottage at the end of Green Lane.

Crumpton's school at Solihull.³⁴⁹ His friend Richard Graves suggested that the reason why he attended this private school was because he was not used to genteel society and his mother intended to correct this.³⁵⁰ The fact that his father and mother had different opinions concerning his schooling suggests that the variation between the backgrounds of the two may have had a bearing on Shenstone's upbringing and personal development. For most of his existence he occupied an ambiguous social position: he was neither a farmer nor a landed gentleman, though he tried to be both.³⁵¹ Shenstone continued with his education at Pembroke College, Oxford where he followed a four-year study of Greek and Latin literature, particularly the poets, oratory, rhetoric, philosophy and Aristotelian logic.³⁵² In 1731, whilst at Oxford, Shenstone's mother died, followed by her brother who left him a share in the property at Harborough Hall and a legacy worth £300 a year.³⁵³ He became financially secure and did not return to college for his degree, but set up home at Harborough.³⁵⁴ His uncle, also called William Shenstone, took over the running of The Leasowes farm in 1732. An attempt was made to sell the lease as sale details were printed in the *Weekly Worcester Journal* of 1733, but no one seemed to have purchased it.³⁵⁵ Shenstone's uncle

³⁴⁹ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1788), pp. 11-12.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 40.

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp. 7-10.

³⁵² Lawson, John and Silver, Harold, *A Social History of Education in England* (London, Methuen & Co., 1976), p. 168.

³⁵³ Graves, Richard (1788), *op. cit.*, p. 12.

³⁵⁴ Lawson, John and Silver, Harold, *op. cit.*, p. 209. Degrees at the time were mainly used for getting positions in the church and a few for the law and medicine.

³⁵⁵ Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Foley Scrapbook, Ref. b899:31, B.A. 3762/6, Parcel 6, *Weekly Worcester Journal*, 1733.

continued to hold the lease and later his son John Shenstone took over the running of the farm.³⁵⁶ A letter Shenstone wrote to a Miss Lowe shows he had become melancholic living on his own: ‘I have been wandring about Harboroughs Gloomy walks & Pools like a Shepherd ‘Despairing beside a crystal stream’³⁵⁷ and in 1739 he returned to The Leasowes, boarding with his cousin, John Shenstone and his wife.³⁵⁸ John soon left to farm elsewhere and at that point the idea of creating a *ferme ornée* – an ornamental farm apparently came to him.³⁵⁹

3.3 The individual gardener

The eighteenth century was a period in which there were ‘new customs of social engagement and new forms of social organisation’.³⁶⁰ One way in which this affected Shenstone was that his acquaintances had variable professional status in society: Joseph Spence and Thomas Warton stayed at university; Richard Graves and Richard Jago went into the church as ministers; George, Lord Lyttelton and Ferdinando Lea, Lord Dudley became politicians and Samuel Johnson and James Thomson lived on their literary talents. According to Marjorie Williams, the editor of Shenstone’s letters, he never

³⁵⁶ National Archives, Kew, Chancery Records C12/1892/22, Inventory of the property of William Shenstone dated 26th November 1764, Shenstone was recorded in 1763 as paying £50:0:0 rent to Lord Lyttelton of Hagley.

³⁵⁷ William Shenstone to Miss Lowe, no date, Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, 1939), p. 5; Graves, Richard (1788), op. cit., p. 50. Shenstone’s feelings of insecurity are clear when reading his letters and the description of his life by Graves.

³⁵⁸ W. S. to Richard Jago, 1739 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone*, (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 12.

³⁵⁹ Graves, Richard (1788), op. cit., pp. 48–50.

³⁶⁰ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 42.

acquired a profession, nor wanted one.³⁶¹ The main reason why he ‘retired’ to his birthplace and home at The Leasowes Farm and constructed his own domain there was probably because he did not feel secure with people, particularly with persons he did not know.³⁶² Alexander Carlyle visited The Leasowes in 1756 and commented that Shenstone was ‘shy and reserved’.³⁶³ Shenstone recognised this himself when he stated in his ‘Essays on Men and Manners’ that ‘The reserve and shyness of men of sense generally confines them to a small acquaintance’.³⁶⁴ This reserve led to him being reclusive and he avoided the industrial and urban world. He wrote that people are ‘more vicious in towns, because they have fewer natural objects there, to employ their attention – or admiration’³⁶⁵ and ‘It is only when reaping, making hay, or when he is hedging in his hurden frock’ that a person is at ease.³⁶⁶ Nature represented the infallible.³⁶⁷ The past was also safe because it had happened – the future was unfamiliar. This can be seen in the structures he erected – they were all historical. One of the main reasons that Shenstone devoted his

³⁶¹ Williams, Marjorie, *William Shenstone – A Chapter in Eighteenth Century Taste* (Birmingham, Cornish Brothers Limited, 1935), p. 12.

³⁶² Williams, Marjorie, ‘Introduction’ *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. x.

³⁶³ Carlyle, Alexander (1722-1805), *Autobiography of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Carlyle; containing memorials of the men and events of his time* (Edinburgh, W. Blackwood, 1861), p. 370.

³⁶⁴ Shenstone, William, ‘Essays on Men and Manners XLVII’ in Dodsley, James (ed.), *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 194.

³⁶⁵ Shenstone, William, ‘Essays on Men and Manners – On Politicks’ in Dodsley, James (ed.), *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 134.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148. Hurden – a coarse kind of linen.

³⁶⁷ Porter, Roy, *Enlightenment* (London, Penguin Books, 2001), Chapter 13 Nature. On page 295 Porter quotes Shaftesbury in saying: ‘...Nature linked the divine (eternal and transcendental) and the human; it pointed to the purification and perfection of mankind, and extended human sympathies beyond the narrow bounds of artifice’.

time to landscape gardening was because it allowed him to work on his own: perhaps it was a form of self-defence against the outside world.

He did not isolate himself entirely, however, but as Sandro Jung claimed, Shenstone had to 'apply himself extensively both mentally and physically to create a public illusion of romantic retirement'.³⁶⁸ Shenstone did allow selected people into his house and anyone who wished to see his garden. He did this, however, on his own terms. This can be seen in the paradox that on the one hand he relished solitude - nearly every feature at The Leasowes is placed there for an individual rather than a group - but he could not wait for visitors to walk around his garden and enjoy what he had created.³⁶⁹ As Marjorie Williams stated, 'Gardening was the most absorbing of his occupations', and he wished to share what he had achieved.³⁷⁰

Another aspect of his character was that Shenstone veered from elation to depression, and this affected his approach to gardening. Richardson claimed that it was 'poetic bipolarity',³⁷¹ a state of mind which George Cheyne called 'the English malady', a mental disorder reputed to especially affect intellectuals.³⁷² Stephen Bending commented that Shenstone's reason for

³⁶⁸ Jung, Sandro, 'William Shenstone's Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design', *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014) p. 4.

³⁶⁹ Shenstone was not alone here as most gardeners need their work to be seen and enjoyed by others.

³⁷⁰ Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. xi.

³⁷¹ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 454.

³⁷² Cheyne, George, *The English Malady, Or a Treatise of Nervous Diseases of all kinds* (London, G. Strahan, 1733), pp. 52-53.

working on his estate was that it was ‘a private space in which to indulge his melancholy humours’.³⁷³ One example being Shenstone’s dislike of autumn and loathing of winters when the world of nature apparently died. This dispirited him in an eighteenth-century version of ‘seasonal affective disorder’,³⁷⁴ and had the effect of intensifying his appreciation of the spring when life returned and allowed him to enjoy and work with resuscitated nature.

Estate improvement was also a reflection of Shenstone’s desire for status. Although he was of minor gentry and farming origins, his education and social position made him feel that he was destined for a higher station.³⁷⁵ He aspired to an aristocratic aesthetic and approval from his social superiors and he was aware of the importance of landscape gardening as an expression of taste in polite society.³⁷⁶ This led to a futile attempt to compete with the surrounding landowners who were wealthier and had larger estates, as his comments about the Lytteltons at Hagley Hall suggest. When he wrote that the ‘nobleman’s seat, whose ill-obtained superiority I cannot bear to recollect’, it displayed his irritation with Hagley.³⁷⁷ Despite his competitive spirit, revealed in a habit of over-criticising gardens he visited, particularly if

³⁷³ Bending, Stephen, “Uneasy Sensations: Shenstone, Retirement and Fame, ‘Arcadian Greens Rural’”, *New Arcadian Journal*, Nos. 53/54 (2002), p. 26.

³⁷⁴ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 455.

³⁷⁵ Graves, Richard, *The Spiritual Quixote* (London, James Dodsley, 1772), pp. 11-12.

³⁷⁶ Walshe, Paul, ‘Pleasure and Production – views of the countryside’, *New Arcadian Journal* (2002), pp. 6-7.

³⁷⁷ Shenstone, William (1768), p. 21. Shenstone’s remark about the Lyttelton’s of Hagley in his paper ‘Essays on Men and Manners - An Humorist’; There are numerous examples, but the one about Hagley was made in 1749; W. S. to R. J., 2nd June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 203; Bending, Stephen, op. cit., pp. 20-24.

they were anything like his own, his work at The Leasowes provided him with personal satisfaction.³⁷⁸ This gratification was revealed when he received gardenist visitors, such as Lord Temple, George Lyttelton and Sanderson Miller who approved of what they saw in his grounds. Shenstone commented ‘Many parts of my farm were extravagantly commended, but the Grove especially.’³⁷⁹

One reason why he may have started gardening was that although he did not have a profession he had enough money not to have to work. His dissatisfaction with life at Harborough Hall and his moving home to The Leasowes did not have the effect he wanted and his ennui increased, so much so that he wrote, quoting Jonathan Swift, that he was ‘forced to die in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole’.³⁸⁰ An additional explanation was that he wished to emulate his favourite poet, Alexander Pope’s garden at Twickenham which was created in the Picturesque style.³⁸¹ However, Twickenham was only a small garden, while The Leasowes was a farm and therefore provided the potential to expand his ideas. He was aware of the work at larger gardens such as Lord Burlington’s at Chiswick and Lord Temple’s at Stowe and he knew about Temple’s relationship with his neighbours the Lytteltons at Hagley.³⁸² Shenstone had also assisted Richard Graves’ brother Morgan, at

³⁷⁸ W. S. to Lady Luxborough, 22nd January 1749-50 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 252.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, W. S. to L. L., 30th August 1749, p. 215, and W. S. to L. L., 26th August 1753, p. 372.

³⁸⁰ Ibid, W. S. to Richard Jago, 1741, p. 34.

³⁸¹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 192.

³⁸² Cousins, Michael, ‘Hagley Park, Worcestershire’, Supplement to *Garden History*, Vol. 35 (2007), p. 38.

Mickleton, to develop his garden, and through his work there he became informed about the farm-estate idea that Philip Southcote was creating at Wooburn.³⁸³

However, his aspirations were considerably hampered by the fact that his income was not sufficient to maintain both his projected lifestyle and his landscape gardening.³⁸⁴ Throughout his life Shenstone's limited financial resources and his constant expenditure led to a drain on this income.³⁸⁵ Although his returns covered most of his day-to-day requirements it was not enough to construct a garden in the form he would have liked or to entertain in the way he felt necessary. Richardson noted that he often looked towards Hagley and would have liked to have placed more buildings within his landscape, but he did not have the funds for these.³⁸⁶ He also entertained visitors who came to The Leasowes, but this cost money, though he never mentioned in his letters how much he spent. To a certain extent he overcame his limited funds by making sure that his projects were inexpensive. He utilised the talents of his outdoor servant, Tom Jackson, who made features from waste material such as the root-houses constructed from wood that lay

³⁸³ Graves, Richard (1788), op. cit., pp. 48-50. Graves wrote a poem on his brother's improvements at Mickleton and published it in his collection of verse called *Euphrosyne, or Amusements on the Road of Life*, Part III, Encomiastic (London, J. Dodsley, 1776), pp. 122-123. He noted at the bottom of page 122 that Shenstone took his first hints of improving The Leasowes from his brother's property in 1735.

³⁸⁴ Williams, Marjorie, *William Shenstone - A Chapter in Eighteenth Century Taste* (Birmingham, Cornish Brothers Limited, 1935), p. 12. Shenstone's income would have permitted him not to have to work for a living as long as he lived frugally. Building structures, buying plants and entertaining visitors, however, cost money.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 140.

³⁸⁶ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 456.

around the farm. Knowing his finances were limited, his friends supplied him with plants and cuttings from their own gardens, as when Henrietta Knight sent him flowers to go around his hermitage. When describing his stone mason, Pedley, during his work on constructing the Gothic Alcove, he wrote: 'He is an honest man, and will be glad to work cheap.'³⁸⁷ There were occasions when objects were not in proportion. Urns that were too small reflected what he could afford, rather than what he would have preferred. It was only when people told him that they looked incongruous that he removed them and replaced them with something else.³⁸⁸ He also constructed features annually rather than all at once, but even these stringencies led to him overburdening his finances and eventually he was forced into mortgaging his surrounding properties.³⁸⁹ After his death his poor financial affairs led to the selling of the lease of his estate, to the subsequent detriment of the survival of his landscape garden.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ W. S. to L. L., 12th September 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 233.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, W. S. to L. L., 22nd March 1750, p. 264.

³⁸⁹ University of Birmingham, Special Collections, Cadbury Research Library, MS460 Mortgage document between Paul White and William Shenstone / Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Beinecke Library, Osborn Collection, Box 1, Folder 50: Papers belonging to William Shenstone including: a copy of accounts from 1753-5 for The Leasowes and MSS63 a draft mortgage surrender of mortgage between William Davies and William Shenstone.

³⁹⁰ Public Record Office, Kew, London, Chancery Proceedings, C12/1892/22 S2485. The Leasowes Estate, 1765.



Fig. 3.2: Portrait of William Shenstone by Thomas Ross, circa 1737. NPG4386 © National Portrait Gallery, London.³⁹¹

³⁹¹ National Portrait Gallery No. 4386; Kerslake, John, *Early Georgian Painters* (London, HMSO, 1977), p. 247. According to an attached testimonial to the painting it was given by Shenstone to Mary Cutler in 1754, but by 1780 it had come into the hands of his friend Richard Graves, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

3.4 Visits

Shenstone received much of his early knowledge of the new style of gardening from other locations. He was probably influenced by his annual trips to London in the early 1740s, when he visited landed property on his way there and back, though it was rare for him to mention these gardens in his letters. One of the exceptions was Lady Mary Fane's garden at Basildon Park in Berkshire. Shenstone visited it in 1744 and wrote that it had cost her £5,000, about three times as much as her house was worth.³⁹² Another garden he visited was Richard Boyle's (Lord Burlington) who began to develop his garden at Chiswick in 1719.³⁹³ Burlington was obsessed with the Italian Renaissance style of architecture and brought William Kent from Italy to work on his house, but it was not till 1728 that Kent started to naturalise the garden into a 'Plinian' landscape: 'It stamped classical and scholastic authority on the concept of natural surroundings as an important element of a man-made landscape', which others would use in the future.³⁹⁴ This idea of using classical themes within the landscape may have prompted Shenstone not only to build classical features, but also to include quotations from Latin poets. Burlington was a great collector and had acquired the *Liber Veritatis*, a

³⁹² W. S. to Richard Jago, 30th May 1744 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 89.

³⁹³ Pamela Denman Kingsbury, 'Boyle, Richard, third earl of Burlington and fourth earl of Cork (1694–1753)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31336>]; Hunt, John Dixon & Willis, Peter, *The Genius of the Place* (London 1990), p. 245.; Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott: Henrietta Luxborough, Poetic Gardener and Irrepressible Exile* (London, 2006), p. 64. Brown records that Shenstone's friend Henrietta Knight had visited most of the great gardens of the 1720's including: Chiswick, Stowe, Richings as well as her step-brother's at Dawley; McKillop, A. D. 'Thomson's visit to Shenstone', *Philological Quarterly*, XXIII (1944), pp. 283-286.

³⁹⁴ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 276.

bound collection of almost two hundred drawings by Claude Lorraine which he showed to all his visitors. Shenstone's friend, Henrietta Knight, was a constant visitor to Chiswick in her younger days, and both may have discussed the garden and the drawings.³⁹⁵

There is no evidence that Shenstone ever met Kent, but at least one of Kent's structural ideas - the Dripping Fountain - was used at The Leasowes. Kent was a water-colour painter who secured the position of paid companion to the architect William Talman, when he went to Italy.³⁹⁶ Kent became fond of the Italian Renaissance style and received painting, interior design and artistic adviser commissions from the English aristocrats who passed through Rome. Lord Burlington brought him back to England to work on his home at Chiswick. Burlington introduced him to Pope and Kent regularly visited him at his Twickenham home, where he applied Pope's gardening ideas on Burlington's estate.³⁹⁷ Kent was an artist, not a gardener and his gardening skills amounted to inventing a style that owed much to painting, set design and interior decoration, but he did learn from Pope that garden episodes might be linked together in 'the story' of a garden.³⁹⁸ Each episode in the landscape needed a beginning, middle and an end, while the garden as a whole had to function as an entity. He also believed that the rhythm of paths and passageways created by distance and perspective was as important as the

³⁹⁵ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 65.

³⁹⁶ John Harris, 'Kent, William (*bap.* 1686, *d.* 1748)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2007 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15424>]

³⁹⁷ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 266.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 271.

structures that he built.³⁹⁹ Although he was fond of the Italian Renaissance, he was also a pioneer of the English Gothic style.⁴⁰⁰

Richard Bateman, who created a garden at Grove House, Old Windsor from the 1730s was another influence. It consisted of a circular walk, with garden seats and small kiosks in classical, Chinese and Gothic styles. The Chinese style was perhaps influenced by his father's business interests in the Far East. These kiosks provided a view into the surrounding countryside.⁴⁰¹ Shenstone had been to Bateman's garden because, whilst there, he copied the Latin inscription on the mausoleum to Caducanus, Bishop of Bangor.⁴⁰² A circular walk with garden seats was later created at The Leasowes, though whether or not it was based on what he had seen at Grove House is open to question; however, this appears to have been one of the first gardens with this feature that he saw. On another of his London visits in the spring of 1744, Shenstone went to see Mr Powis's Woods in Harleyford, Buckinghamshire and he wrote that if he had the money, he would like to make similar improvements to his own farm.⁴⁰³ This was one of the earliest comments that Shenstone made about his future involvement in gardening at The Leasowes, though by then he had made a number of improvements to his own farmscape.

³⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 272.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 268.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 428-429.

⁴⁰² Laird, Mark, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds 1720-1800* (Pennsylvania, 1999), p. 109. In Shenstone's copy-book, now in the Wellesley College Library, is a pasted slip of paper from a smaller notebook towards the rear with notes on the mausoleum which suggests he was at Grove House at the time of writing.

⁴⁰³ W. S. to R. J., 1st March 1743-4 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 88.

Shenstone went further afield, as he journeyed to Belton in Lincolnshire which was owned by Sir John Brownlow, 5th Baronet, Baron Charleville and Viscount Tyrconnel. Brownlow patronised the sculptor, Henry Cheere, the poet, Pope and the artist, Thomas Smith of Derby, and it is possible that one of these contacts enabled Shenstone to hear about his garden.⁴⁰⁴ The visit may have influenced him in what not to do as the only thing he said about the garden is that he did not like the waterfall.⁴⁰⁵

Another influence was Stowe, which began as a formal garden in the 1680s, created by Sir Richard Temple, later Viscount Cobham. It was continued in the new English landscape style by his successor, another Sir Richard Temple, who was created Baron Cobham. Temple initially employed Charles Bridgeman (?-1738) as the landscape-gardener. When he fell out with the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole after 1733, he retired to improve his estate by employing William Kent and the architect James Gibbs.⁴⁰⁶ Stowe, as in many gardens of the time, had a political message in being ‘an eloquent rebuke and embarrassment to those Whig landowners’, whom the Tories thought had over-decorated the grounds of their estates.⁴⁰⁷ Sir Richard

⁴⁰⁴ Herdman, Sue, ‘Mapping the way Home’ *National Trust Magazine* Spring, 2011, pp. 18-19. Thomas Smith made drawings for Shenstone in The Leasowes landscape garden, but no connection with Henry Cheere have been discovered to date.

⁴⁰⁵ W. S. to Richard Graves, 24th November 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 534.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid, W. S. to L. L., October 1749, p. 227. Shenstone also had in his library a copy of James Gibbs, *Book of Architecture, containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments*, published in 1728.

⁴⁰⁷ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., pp. 219-222. Actually Temple was a Whig, but his falling out with Walpole had anti-government repercussions.

Temple died in 1749, and his successor Richard Grenville, First Lord Temple of Stowe, employed foreign gardeners to work on the estate.⁴⁰⁸ The Temple family were kinsmen to the Lyttelton family and the two families made visits to each other's houses.⁴⁰⁹ Lord Temple occasionally visited The Leasowes due to the relationship Shenstone had with the Lytteltons. One visit occurred in 1753, when Shenstone wrote that he had arrived and was keen to see his gardening work and reported that his lordship thought the view from the house, 'his Terraces and Virgil's Grove', was very good.⁴¹⁰ Stowe could be considered as the ultimate in the Picturesque style and it is likely that Shenstone wished that he could afford its features. In a letter to Sherrington Davenport in January 1763, barely a month before his death, Shenstone bemoaned the fact that he could not afford what he would like: 'We, who cannot erect temples, or even add a new garden-seat every spring.'⁴¹¹ He did not, however, enjoy everything he saw at Stowe. A statue of Venus painted in gold had been placed in the rotunda, to which he took a strong dislike as he did not believe it was a suitable component in a natural landscape. He criticised it in his poem on Venus de Medici when he exclaimed 'far be driven the sumptuous glare of Gold from British groves'.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁸ Leland J. Bellot, 'Grenville, Richard, second Earl Temple (1711–1779)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11495>, accessed 21 Aug 2015]; Robinson, John, Martin, *Stowe Landscape Gardens* (London, The National Trust, 1990), pp. 3–4.

⁴⁰⁹ Cousins, Michael, 'Hagley Park, Worcestershire,' *Garden History Supplement*, Vol. 35, 2007, p. 23.

⁴¹⁰ W. S. to L. L., 26th August 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 372.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, W. S. to Sherrington Davenport, 4th January 1763, p. 647.

⁴¹² Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of The Leasowes' in Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II (London, 1768), p. 320.

There is no mention of Shenstone visiting Oakley Woods, near Cirencester, the main estate of Lord Bathurst,⁴¹³ which he began landscaping in 1714, but as it was known to Graves, it is likely that Shenstone was also aware of it. It was a large property of 2,500 acres, and Bathurst planted many thousands of trees, which made it commercially viable. Pope, who was a friend to Bathurst, wrote about one visit saying that they drew plans for ‘open avenues, cut glades, [and] plant firs.’⁴¹⁴ Bathurst also had a hunting lodge built in his woods though this was intended for his other three favourite accomplishments: drinking, gambling and wenching.⁴¹⁵ At Cirencester Park, Bathurst probably built the first Gothic structure in England in 1732, Alfred’s Tower.⁴¹⁶ Apart from his literary guests, Pope and Swift, there is some evidence that Switzer advised on the overall plan of Cirencester Park.⁴¹⁷ Shenstone’s friend Graves who wrote *The Spiritual Quixote*, described the Methodist, George Whitfield, in the guise of Geoffrey Wildgoose, as the anti-hero of the tale. Graves was an Anglican clergyman and like most of his fellow churchmen was suspicious of what they saw as Methodist enthusiasm and proceeded to tell of the misadventures of this young evangelist and his wanderings over the west of England. In Chapter V, Wildgoose came to ‘Park Corner’ near to Lord Bathurst’s Woods. The travellers walked along a fine avenue within the woods with a church steeple in the background: the

⁴¹³ W. P. Courtney, ‘Bathurst, Allen, first Earl Bathurst (1684–1775)’, rev. Philip Carter, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1692>].

⁴¹⁴ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 205.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, p. 205.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, p. 205.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, p. 210.

parish church of Cirencester. Most of Bathurst's main views were of the steeple of the church as an eye-catcher.⁴¹⁸ When Shenstone created his landscape at The Leasowes, he did the same with the steeple and the church of St. John the Baptist at Halesowen. Whether he was copying Bathurst's ideas or not, is unknown.

3.5 Friendships and Acquaintances

Although many garden historians have referred to Shenstone's friendships few have looked at their influence on his work at The Leasowes. Those writers who have referred to the topic, Richardson and Mowl, have repeated the comment by Samuel Johnson in *Lives of the Poets* that the Lyttelton family attempted to belittle his work as they could afford to do things to their landscape park at Hagley that he could not.⁴¹⁹ Shenstone certainly found his lack of money irksome, but this did not stop him borrowing ideas from others including the Lytteltons, just as they borrowed ideas from him (see Chapter Ten).⁴²⁰

His friendships with some of the leading landscape gardeners of the early and mid-eighteenth century, were invaluable in assisting him with his gardening ideas. In particular, there were the surrounding gentry,

⁴¹⁸ Graves, Richard (1772), op. cit., pp. 125-127.

⁴¹⁹ Johnson, Samuel, 'Shenstone' *Lives of the Poets*, Vol. 1 (Dublin, J. Moore, 1801), p. 620; Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 445; Mowle, Timothy, *Historic Gardens of Worcestershire* (Stroud, Tempus, 2006), p. 59.

⁴²⁰ This aspect was mentioned by the writer in a presentation entitled: 'An Interim Study of the influences of William Shenstone on Other Gardens in 18th Century England' in New Research in Garden History, the 2nd GHS Graduate Symposium, Garden History Society, The Garden Museum, Lambeth, London, 13th July 2012.

particularly Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough. This acquaintance involved visits to each other's properties and correspondence, which tells of the efforts they put into helping one another with their respective gardens, as revealed in later chapters.⁴²¹ Another gardening associate was Ann Somerset, Countess of Coventry, who after the death of her husband, the 2nd Earl of Coventry of Croome moved to Snitterfield.⁴²² Little is known of her influence upon his thinking or his input into her garden. According to Catherine Gordon she knew William Somerville and Richard Jago, associates of Shenstone. It is likely that he had been invited to Snitterfield on a few occasions as she also was enthusiastic about horticulture. The Countess was said by Catherine Gordon to have shared Shenstone's 'enthusiasm for botany and horticulture' during his visits to see her.⁴²³

The Lytteltons of Hagley were another family who as neighbours to Shenstone became close acquaintances. They were of a far higher status than Shenstone, who was a tenant on one of their farms. Normally, there would only have been an economic connection between them, but as Shenstone went to university and was a poet, George Lyttelton found they had a lot in common.⁴²⁴ Shenstone probably first viewed the grounds of Hagley Hall in about 1736, after he had met and befriended Lyttelton.⁴²⁵ Lyttelton's father,

⁴²¹ Hodgetts, John (ed.), various.

⁴²² Gordon, Catherine, *The Coventrys of Croome* (Chichester, Phillimore, 2000), p. 66.

⁴²³ *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

⁴²⁴ Christine Gerrard, 'Lyttelton, George, first Baron Lyttelton' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17306>, accessed 8 Sept 2014].

⁴²⁵ Graves, Richard (1788), *op. cit.*, p. 78.

Sir Thomas Lyttelton (1686-1751), married Christian Temple (1688-1748), third daughter of Sir Richard Temple of Stowe (1634-97) and sister of the first Lord Cobham (1675-1749), so it was George Lyttelton's grandfather and later cousin who held Stowe.⁴²⁶ The Lytteltons were also close friends of the poet, Pope, who visited Hagley and advised on some of the features there.⁴²⁷ Sir Thomas Lyttelton started to work on landscaping at Hagley before Shenstone began at The Leasowes, by placing features on the estate in a similar way to his father-in-law. It is unknown whether he turned the stream bed into a series of pools, but he created the cascades and it may have been these features that impressed Shenstone.⁴²⁸ The hydrological works at Hagley could have provided the impetus to begin creating similar schemes at The Leasowes. The High Cascade at The Leasowes, is a more natural feature than the cascade at Hagley, but the smaller cascades shown as being stepped in a painting by Mrs Phillips are very similar.

⁴²⁶ Cousins, Michael, *op. cit.*, p. 11. The Lytteltons were related to the Pitt, Grenville and Temple families.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 117.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 11.

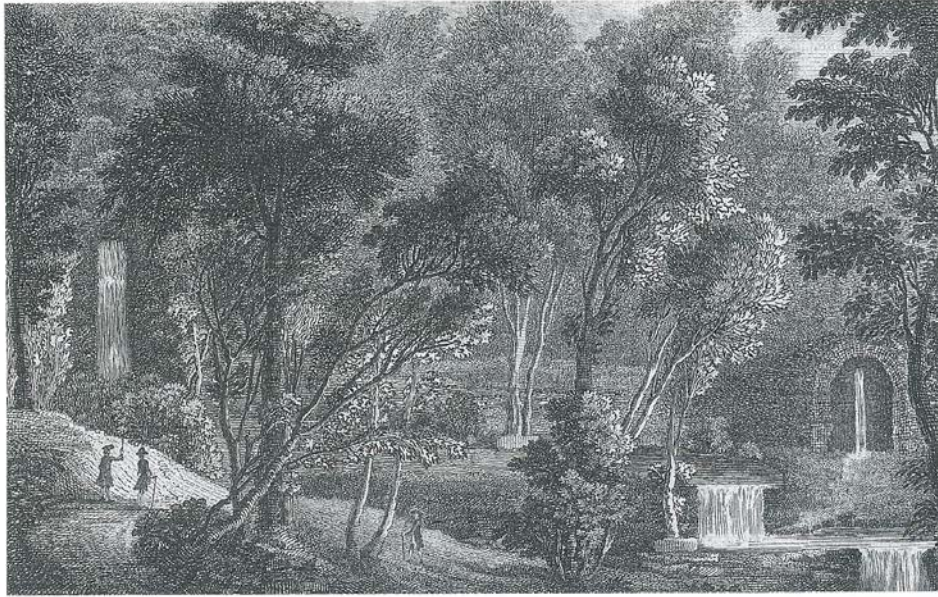


Fig. 3.3: Virgil's Grove painted by Thomas Smith of Derby, 1748, engraved by James Mason, 1752.⁴²⁹



Fig. 3.4: 'From the Palladian Seat Hagley Park', perhaps by Mrs Phillips (no date), Birmingham Art Gallery.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁹ R. W. Boodle, *Worcestershire Scrapbook* Vol. II (1903), Birmingham Central Library.


⁴³⁰ Cousins, Michael, op. cit., Plate III. Elizabeth Phillips of Edgbaston from an Album of water-colours on loan to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery from Hagley Hall. Photographic number S6464.

Another Hagley feature that may have inspired Shenstone was Thomas Lyttelton's ruined castle, designed by Sanderson Miller, which was constructed in 1747.⁴³¹ Shenstone's later Ruined Priory was built in 1755-7 by taking stone from an existing structure, as he did not have the finances to afford new masonry (see Appendix One and Two – Ruined Priory).⁴³²

The gentleman-architect Sanderson Miller, of Radway Grange, Edge Hill was another acquaintance.⁴³³ He designed many of the structures that were placed in the gardens at Hagley and Enville and was introduced to Shenstone by George Lyttelton.⁴³⁴ Miller appreciated Shenstone's skills and questioned him on some of his own ideas. He built a Gothic Tower at Radway that attracted the attention of connoisseurs of medieval architecture and became the doyen of Gothic castle building. As well as Hagley and Enville, Miller designed buildings for estates all over the English shires, including, Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire, Warwick Hall, Cumbria, Ingestre, Staffordshire, and Lacock, Wiltshire.⁴³⁵ He first met Shenstone when he, his wife Susannah, William Pitt the Elder and George Lyttelton

⁴³¹ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 103.

⁴³² This was the ruins of the medieval St. Mary's Abbey, Lapal, Halesowen that was owned by the Lyttelton family.

⁴³³ Peter Leach, 'Miller, Sanderson (1716–1780)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37767>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

⁴³⁴ W. S. to L. L., 30th August 1749, pp. 114-116 and W. S. to L. L. 30th August 1749 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 215.

⁴³⁵ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., pp. 362-3.

visited The Leasowes in August of 1749.⁴³⁶ Shenstone remarked in a letter that he had heard that Miller had compared his grove with groves at Hagley and stated that he had thought that the one at The Leasowes was the best.⁴³⁷ The goodwill between the two men led to Shenstone visiting Radway Grange, where he saw Miller's Gothic Tower. Shenstone was frequently unhappy with people doing similar things to him and over-exaggerated the deficiencies in the work. He wrote in a letter that he had suffered with vertigo while he was climbing the tower, though whether this was true or an example of his envy is not certain. At the commencement of their relationship he was critical of much of Miller's work. Miller designed the new Hagley Hall and asked Shenstone what he thought of the plans while they were dining together at Hagley. Shenstone stated that he did not know what to say as he did not want to upset him, implying that he did not like it.⁴³⁸ The two men regularly met one another at their respective homes and by 1753 Miller had become a *confidant*.⁴³⁹ It may have been the good relations between them that led to Miller giving Shenstone's name to Philip Yorke at Wimpole Hall, to conduct some garden work there.

In February 1750, Harry Grey, 4th Earl of Stamford, (1716-1768), who lived at nearby Enville Hall, visited The Leasowes for the first time.⁴⁴⁰ He had begun to develop his own park and this visit led to Shenstone giving him

⁴³⁶ W. S. to L. L., 30th August 1749 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 215.

⁴³⁷ Ibid, W. S. to L. L., 5th December 1749, p. 244.

⁴³⁸ Ibid, S. to L. L., 21st October 1751, p. 322.

⁴³⁹ Ibid, S. to R. J., 27th February 1753, p. 351.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid, W. S. to L. L., 4th February 1749-50, p. 256.

advice on the lay-out.⁴⁴¹ Grey was a friend of Sanderson Miller and George Lyttelton and they may have suggested the visit to The Leasowes. The Earl was very wealthy and could afford finer built structures than Shenstone. One of the buildings Stamford first erected was called the Gothic Greenhouse and it was mentioned by Shenstone as being under construction in 1749-1750.⁴⁴² Shenstone also constructed his Gothic Alcove in 1749 but it is not clear whether Shenstone inspired Stamford or *vice versa*, or whether they were unaware of each other's works by that date. Stamford also built the Gothic Gateway in about 1752 as an eye-catcher. The archivist, Sandy Haynes thought it was designed by Sanderson Miller.⁴⁴³ This may have been the inspiration for Shenstone's Priory Gateway, which was not built until c.1757. The two men became friends and when Shenstone opened the 'South Cascade', he constructed an edifice which he called the Stamford Root house at the base of it.⁴⁴⁴ Stamford later reciprocated by calling a chapel in his wood the Shenstone Chapel. Haynes found an eighteenth-century annotated plan of the Enville parkland at Enville Hall, which she called 'The Shenstone Plan', as it had been suspected that he had some input into the lay-out of the new parkland features.⁴⁴⁵ That Shenstone had a great deal to do with the creation of the Enville landscape can be seen in Chapter Ten.

⁴⁴¹ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 69. Haynes in analysing the expenditure of Stamford assumed it was mainly on the gardening as it seemed to start in 1751.

⁴⁴² W. S. to L. L., 4th February 1749-50 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 256.

⁴⁴³ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 95.

⁴⁴⁴ No precise name is given for the cascade in Shenstone's time.

⁴⁴⁵ Symes, Michael, & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 82.

William Pitt, 'the Great Commoner', later the Earl of Chatham (1708-1778) became Prime Minister after Shenstone's death.⁴⁴⁶ He was related to George Lyttelton (his brother had married Lyttelton's sister, Christian) and was introduced to Shenstone as a friend of Lyttelton.⁴⁴⁷ Pitt and Lyttelton visited The Leasowes at the same time as Sanderson Miller and his wife in August 1749. Shenstone was finishing the Gothic Alcove at the time of the visit and he wrote that Pitt approved of what he saw.⁴⁴⁸ Graves wrote that Pitt had said to Shenstone, 'that Nature had done everything for him', and Shenstone replied: 'He hoped he had done something for nature too, by displaying her beauties to the best advantage.'⁴⁴⁹ Pitt saw that there were possibilities of adding improvements to The Leasowes landscape and as Shenstone's finances were not sufficient, he sent a message via Sanderson Miller that he was willing to give him two hundred pounds. Shenstone thanked him but refused the gift and considered it 'as a dalliance with his mistress, to which he could not submit'.⁴⁵⁰

A neighbour of Shenstone in the 1750s, who became close to him was John Scott Hylton, who bought Lapal House, not far from The Leasowes in 1754.⁴⁵¹ In 1760, he began to construct a pool on his property.⁴⁵² Shenstone,

⁴⁴⁶ Peters, Marie, 'Pitt, William, first earl of Chatham [Pitt the elder] (1708–1778)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22337, accessed  21 Sept 2012].

⁴⁴⁷ W. S. to R. J., 17th September 1747 in footnote 3, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 110.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid, W. S. to L. L., 30th August 1749 pp. 114-116, and W. S. to L. L. 30th August 1749, p. 215.

⁴⁴⁹ Graves, Richard (1788), op. cit., p. 82.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 82-3.

⁴⁵¹ W.S. to R. J., 16th June 1764 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p, 400.

not wishing to be outdone, decided to do the same, but produced something larger. The Priory Pool was a late-comer to The Leasowes landscape garden. Dodsley described the pools at The Leasowes, as having once been part of the Abbey Ponds.⁴⁵³ He may have received this misinformation from Shenstone who believed this, or thought it appropriate, since he had built the Ruined Priory close by.

Through his friendship with the Lytteltons, Shenstone became acquainted with some of the nation's literary men, in particular the poet James Thomson and writers Joseph Spence and Thomas Percy.⁴⁵⁴ As a friend of the Lyttelton family, Thomson went to visit them at Hagley.⁴⁵⁵ William Lyttelton introduced him to Shenstone in 1746, when they visited The Leasowes together⁴⁵⁶ and Thomson congratulated him on his accomplishments.⁴⁵⁷ After Thomson's death in 1748, Shenstone stated in a letter that he would place a memorial to him in Virgil's Grove.⁴⁵⁸ Lyttelton also introduced him to the literary scholar, Joseph Spence (1699-1768), Professor of Poetry at Oxford and one of Pope's earliest supporters.⁴⁵⁹ When Spence moved to Byfleet in

⁴⁵² Ibid, W. S. to Thomas Percy, 15th February 1760, p. 552.

⁴⁵³ Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of The Leasowes' in Shenstone, William, Vol. II, p. 292.

⁴⁵⁴ Roy Palmer, 'Percy, Thomas (1729-1811)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21959>, accessed 8 Sept 2014].

⁴⁵⁵ James Sambrook, 'Thomson, James (1700-1748)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2008 [<http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/27306> accessed 8 Sept 2014].

⁴⁵⁶ W. S. to R. G. 1746 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 106.

⁴⁵⁷ McKillop A. D., op. cit., pp. 283-286.

⁴⁵⁸ W. S. to L. L., 25th September 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 172.; Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 105-144.

⁴⁵⁹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 431.

Surrey, he was close to Southcote's Wooburn and publicised some of Southcote's ideas.⁴⁶⁰ He practised the natural form of gardening that Pope had supported and Shenstone went on to improve.⁴⁶¹ Spence was also a friend of George Lyttelton and visited the West Midlands often. He spent a week with Shenstone at The Leasowes in 1758.⁴⁶² It was on this visit that Shenstone stated in a letter to Graves that Spence chose a position in his landscape garden where a seat would be dedicated to him.⁴⁶³ While Spence was staying at The Leasowes, he made notes on the features in the landscape called 'The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise' and drew the earliest plan that is known of the landscape.⁴⁶⁴ Although it seems unlikely that Spence added much to The Leasowes landscape garden, he did promote it (see A1.1 Spence's plan).⁴⁶⁵

The most important literary friend of Shenstone was Robert Dodsley,⁴⁶⁶ a leading publisher in London, who distributed the works of Pope, Edmund Burke, Thomas Gray, Samuel Johnson, Laurence Sterne, Jonathan Swift, Horace Walpole and Tobias Smollett.⁴⁶⁷ If Joan Edwards was correct and Pope had recommended Shenstone to Dodsley, this started a connection

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 425.


⁴⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 430-431.

⁴⁶² W. S. to R. G., 22nd July 1758 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 486.

⁴⁶³ Ibid, W. S. to R. G., 25th November 1758, p. 495.

⁴⁶⁴ Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA, HM 303 12, 'The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise' (with the Spence Plan of the Leasowes, 1758).

⁴⁶⁵ A number of contemporary plans of The Leasowes estate are shown in Appendix One.

⁴⁶⁶ James E. Tierney, 'Dodsley, Robert (1704–1764)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7755>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

⁴⁶⁷ Tierney, James (ed.), *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733-1764* (Cambridge, University Press, 1988), p. xiv.

between the two men that lasted throughout Shenstone's later life.⁴⁶⁸ Dodsley was invited and stayed at The Leasowes during the summer months of the 1750s and early 1760s.⁴⁶⁹ Dodsley especially appreciated Shenstone's garden and published poetry and prose about The Leasowes.⁴⁷⁰ It was probably due to Dodsley that The Leasowes became famous and so well visited. As he grew to know Shenstone, he engaged him as a literary expert to write as well as to correct work by other writers.⁴⁷¹

In his later years, Shenstone started a correspondence and friendship with the Reverend Thomas Percy. Their relationship was a literary one as Percy, with Shenstone's help, was putting together a collection of old ballads, which was published after Shenstone's death.⁴⁷² Percy and his wife frequently visited The Leasowes and they were aware of the importance of the landscape garden. In a letter of 1762 he wrote:

While you are leading Spectators of taste around your garden you may insensibly give them lectures in taste, and on the best manner of laying out ground: it is a subject both needful and acceptable; and might teach people of Fortune

⁴⁶⁸ Edwards, Joan, 'The Contribution of an Eighteenth-Century Bookseller to Garden History', *Garden History*, Vol. 8, No. 1, spring (1980), p. 27.

⁴⁶⁹ Letters in Williams, Marjorie (1939), op. cit., pp. 431-644; Tierney, James E., op. cit., pp. 204-467.

⁴⁷⁰ W. S. to Thomas Percy, September 1761 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 591. There are many examples of Dodsley's attempts to promulgate information concerning The Leasowes. In this letter Shenstone recorded that Dodsley had published a poem he had written about The Leasowes in the *Gentlemen's Magazine* and it was also going to be printed in his own publication the *London Magazine*. Dodsley's poem on his first arrival at The Leasowes in 1754 is published in 'Verses to Mr Shenstone' Shenstone, William, Vol. II, pp. 328-330.

⁴⁷¹ Tierney, James, op. cit., p. 19.

⁴⁷² Percy, Thomas, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, J. Dodsley, 1765), p. XII. Percy wrote in the forward of this volume that he had been helped in their collection by Shenstone.

not to be led by the nose by such Cabbage-planters as (word unrecorded).⁴⁷³

According to Dodsley in 1758, Shenstone had written a description of The Leasowes but did not do anything with it.⁴⁷⁴ Percy decided that he should be at the forefront of the publicity for The Leasowes landscape garden and in a letter from him to Shenstone in January 1760 he stated that he was writing a brief description of The Leasowes, which he had ‘hastily drawn up in 1753’.⁴⁷⁵ There is a problem in the date 1753 that Percy mentioned, as there is no evidence that he knew Shenstone then.⁴⁷⁶ In fact, the earliest correspondence between them that has survived is dated 1757, and the formal style suggests that Percy had only just started to write to him. In a letter of 1760, Shenstone said that Percy’s ‘account of the Farm here must be a little adjusted’, signifying it was not completely correct.⁴⁷⁷ As he did not criticise his acquaintances very often, this could be an indictment of what Percy had written. Shenstone also stated in a letter of 1762 to Percy that he had not done any more to correct his description, which may have implied that he had no intentions of doing so as it was so poor.⁴⁷⁸ In a letter written

⁴⁷³ T. P. to W. S., 5th October 1762 in Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & William Shenstone* Vol. VII (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977), p. 161. Who he meant by the ‘cabbage planters’ is not clear, but this phrase of disparagement was first used by John Evelyn.

⁴⁷⁴ R. D. to W. S., 10th October 1758 in Tierney, James E. (ed.), op. cit., p. 375. This can be taken as read only if the 1753 date is used.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid, T. P. to W. S., January 1763 in Brooks, Cleanth, p. 46.

⁴⁷⁶ T. P. to Thomas Warton 28th May 1761, Robinson, M.G. & Dennis, Leah (ed.) *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Thomas Warton* Vol. III (Binghampton, Louisiana University Press, 1951), p. 1. In note 2 to this letter the editors felt that Percy had drawn up a Description in 1753; Brooks, Cleanth, op. cit., p. 1, quotes Percy’s returned letters from Shenstone after his death stating on an early page that their acquaintanceship had begun in 1757.

⁴⁷⁷ W. S. to T. P., 7th January 1760 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 540.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid, W. S. to T. P., 14th November 1762, p. 634.

the same month to Dodsley, Shenstone in writing about Percy stated that 'he also would needs (sic) to write a Description of the Leasowes', indicating that Dodsley had planned to or already had begun a description of his own. Shenstone may again have had his doubts about Percy's ability to write one to his satisfaction.⁴⁷⁹ Dodsley, in fact, had been collecting information about The Leasowes since 1759 and wrote about it in a letter to Shenstone.⁴⁸⁰ Whether Percy was the actual author or not of the 'Description' in the published works of Shenstone is debatable and the Dodsley-Percy debate about who wrote what continued after the death of Shenstone and after *The Works* was published. Percy categorically stated in a letter he wrote to Richard Farmer that Dodsley did not have a hand in the 'Description', which he repeated as an annotation beside the 'Description' in his copy of Shenstone's *The Works*, Vol. II:

...of this description, I do not believe Mr Dodsley wrote a single line. It was begun by Mr Jago, myself and another friend or two of Mr Shenstone's; who meeting at the Leasowes in Autumn, 1762, agreed to draw up a short account of its Beauties; but Mr Shenstone's Death prevented our giving it a more correct finish.⁴⁸¹

Percy did not mention whether Spence helped, but as previously indicated there is evidence that he wrote a description of the estate. The question of who wrote the published 'Description of the Leasowes' is complicated; Jago, Spence and Percy are all contenders, as well as Dodsley, or even Shenstone

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid, W. S. to R. D., 20th November 1762, p. 642.

⁴⁸⁰ R. D. to W. S., 1st December 1759 in Tierney, James E., op. cit., p. 432.

⁴⁸¹ Brooks, Cleanth (ed.) Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 45, 216.

himself.⁴⁸² For the purpose of this thesis, the description of The Leasowes will be cited as Dodsley's as he edited *The Works*, but this is open to debate.⁴⁸³

Shenstone's university contacts provided other influences. Often these people did not claim to be professional gardeners, but they affected the shaping of his landscape garden through suggestions, opinions and more importantly, through their own circle of acquaintances. One was Richard Jago, who was the son of the Rector of Beaudesert in Warwickshire.⁴⁸⁴ Both Shenstone and Jago attended Solihull School and went up to Pembroke College together in 1732 and they kept in touch for the rest of their lives.⁴⁸⁵ Jago's connection with the Warwickshire gentry led to Shenstone's friendship with the huntsman-poet, William Somervile of Edstone.⁴⁸⁶ Like Shenstone, Jago wrote poetry: one poem was called 'Hail Solihull' and included in it a description of his friend at school, two lines of which went 'Or with him range in Solitary Shades, / And scoop rude Grottoes in the shelving Bank', thus suggesting Shenstone's early interest in nature and his ability to work with it in a Picturesque way.⁴⁸⁷ Jago eventually became the Rector of

⁴⁸² Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), p. 204. Brooks quoting John Scott Hylton's notes in his copy of Shenstone's *The Works* stated that 'The Description of the Leasowes was the product of several of Mr Shenstone's friends, in Concert with himself; and after all is not altogether a perfect account of the Place.'

⁴⁸³ Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of the Leasowes' in Shenstone, William, Vol. II, pp. 287-320.

⁴⁸⁴ F. D. A. Burns, Jago, Richard (1715-1781) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2006 [<http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/14585>, accessed 8 Sept 2014]: Gordon, Catherine, op. cit., p. 65.

⁴⁸⁵ Graves, Richard (1788), op. cit., pp. 12-13.

⁴⁸⁶ Brown, Jane, op. cit., pp. 133, 152.

⁴⁸⁷ Jago, Richard, 'Hail Solihull – a poem' (Cheltenham, Martlet, 1964), p. 4; my definition of the Picturesque is a general term for the English landscape garden, whereas Naturesque is about the natural landscape.

Snitterfield and introduced him to Henrietta Knight of Barrells, who became Lady Luxborough, and to Lady Ann Somerset, Countess Dowager of Coventry.⁴⁸⁸ Jago often visited The Leasowes with his wife and Percy stated that he contributed to Dodsley's description of his landscape garden in Shenstone's *The Works*.⁴⁸⁹

Another long-term university friend was Richard Graves who became Rector of Claverton, his patron being Ralph Allen of Prior Park, Bath.⁴⁹⁰ Although Graves gardened at his own home at Claverton, he was not a landscape gardener like Shenstone, but he supplied him with various plants. In his novel, *The Spiritual Quixote*, Graves described Shenstone at home on his landscape garden, as a hard-working man with a sense of humour, but he appears to have felt that Shenstone's indolence led to him not achieving his full potential.⁴⁹¹ His novel *Columella; or, the Distressed Anchoret*, contains as the main character a thinly disguised Shenstone, who spent his time landscape gardening but was never happy.⁴⁹² Graves was not the only one who wrote fictional accounts about Shenstone and his gardening style. After Shenstone's death, Joseph Cradock wrote *Village Memoirs* in 1765⁴⁹³ referring to

⁴⁸⁸ Gordon, Catherine, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴⁸⁹ Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), op. cit., p. 216.

⁴⁹⁰ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 331.

⁴⁹¹ Graves, Richard (1772), op. cit., pp. 354-359. He meant not taking up a profession.

⁴⁹² Graves, Richard, *Columella; or, the distressed anchoret A Colloquial Tale* Vol. I, II (London, James Dodsley, 1779).

⁴⁹³ Cradock, Joseph, *Village memoirs: in a series of letters between a clergyman and his family in the country, and his son in town* (London, T. Davies, 1765), p. 80. (A wood that) 'Mr. Arlington had used to call Shenstone's Grove, for the urn to his memory was prettily executed, and the placing of the statue of the Sibyl in front of it, which seemed to exclaim *Procul O procul este profani!* was in my opinion a very happy thought—however, they are all to be swept away, to make room.'

‘Shenstone’s Grove’, and Samuel Jackson Pratt, under the pseudonym Courtney Melmoth wrote *Shenstone Green*, a story of the creation of a ‘perfect’ village in 1799.⁴⁹⁴

Shenstone’s relations also helped in his creation at The Leasowes. After their parents died, Shenstone and his brother Thomas stayed with their uncle, aunt and cousins Dolman, at Broome Rectory and the two families became close. After they returned to The Leasowes, Shenstone often went back to Broome to stay with his cousins. His affection for his cousin Maria Dolman is revealed by him giving her poems to read prior to publication.⁴⁹⁵ A poem to her, which he left on her table, suggests that on his side their relationship was intended to be a romantic one.⁴⁹⁶ In one letter, she praised The Leasowes, by mentioning the ‘Beauties of the Place’.⁴⁹⁷ The shock he received on hearing of her death of smallpox, at the age of 21, while she was on a visit to London in 1754, prompted him to place an urn dedicated to her at the end of a walk.⁴⁹⁸ The walk was not originally part of The Leasowes Farm, but was on the property of Ferdinando Dudley Lea, Lord Dudley, though Shenstone used a path within it to go from one part of his farm to another.

⁴⁹⁴ Pratt, Mr. (ed.), Courtney Melmoth) *Shenstone Green or the New Paradise Lost* (London, R. Baldwin, 1799). With a comment made by Shenstone on the title page ‘Had I a Fortune of Eight or Ten Thousand pounds a Year I would build myself a neighbourhood’.

⁴⁹⁵ Maria Dolman to W. S. 25th October 1751 in Hull, Thomas, *Select Letters between; the late Duchess of Somerset, Lady Luxborough, Miss Dolman, Mr Whistler, Mr R. Dodsley, William Shenstone, Esq and others*, 2 vols. (London, J. Dodsley, 1778), pp. 124-126.

⁴⁹⁶ Burns, Francis, Daniel, Alexander, ‘William Shenstone: A critical biography and an edition of his poetical work’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1971), p. 183.

⁴⁹⁷ M. D. to W. S., 23rd January 1749 in Hull, Thomas (ed.), op. cit., p. 86.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid, John Scott Hylton to W. S., 1754, pp. 213-215.

Shenstone leased the land from Lord Dudley in 1751 and proceeded to place features beside the path and eventually gave it the name Lover's Walk.⁴⁹⁹

Lord Dudley was another of Shenstone's relations who influenced his gardening, although in a negative way. He was Shenstone's cousin, through their common great grandfather, John Shenstone (see Appendix Six). He had inherited the designation Lord Dudley when the Dudley dynasty, the Wards, ran out of male heirs and his mother, a Ward, was given the title.⁵⁰⁰ His home was The Grange across the Stour Valley from The Leasowes. They were friends and drinking partners and often stayed at each other's houses.⁵⁰¹ Shenstone, however, complained about Lord Dudley's gardening habits, for instance allowing yew trees for instance to hide his walks, suggesting that he was learning from him what not to do at The Leasowes.⁵⁰² This criticism did not affect their friendship, as when Lord Dudley bought a new greenhouse, he gave his old one to Shenstone to place in his kitchen-garden.⁵⁰³

3.6 Conclusion

The influence of Shenstone's personality was an important part of the shaping of The Leasowes landscape garden. According to Symes and

⁴⁹⁹ W. S. to R. J., 28th March 1751 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 304.

⁵⁰⁰ Hemingway, John, *An Illustrated Chronicle of the Castle and Barony of Dudley 1070-1757* (Dudley, The Friends of Dudley Castle, 2006), pp. 118-119.

⁵⁰¹ W. S. to L. L., 25th January 1752 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 330.

⁵⁰² Ibid, W. S. to L. L., 9th November 1748, p. 175 and W. S. to L. L. 19th July 1753, p. 369.

⁵⁰³ Ibid, W. S. to R. J., 1744, p. 93.

Haynes: 'If ever a garden expressed its owner's spirit, it was The Leasowes, in all kinds of ways it reflected the mind, opinions, personality and circumstances of the man who created it.'⁵⁰⁴ But the work and advice of acquaintances and friends were also essential parts of the creative impulse that led to the formation of the landscape garden. Although Shenstone rarely recorded visits, some of them have been documented which suggests that they provided ideas which he implemented on his estate, as some of his design elements were in existence elsewhere before he began work on his farm. Ideas that probably influenced him were garnered at Bateman's estate at Grove House and Bathurst's at Cirencester Park. Many of the practical ideas he put into place at The Leasowes came from associates. They included gardeners well-practised in the theory and art of gardening such as the Lytteltons, Miller and Spence, but also friends who looked after their own gardens like Henrietta Knight, Hylton and Graves who were just as important. Thomson, Dodsley and Jago supported his ideas verbally and in print which gave him the confidence to continue with the work. Maria Dolman was a person revered at The Leasowes, and her death inspired him to create Lovers Walk. These influences, added to his personality and cultural attributes, enabled Shenstone to produce an original creation at The Leasowes, but his finances constrained him from creating what he would like to have achieved.

⁵⁰⁴ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

Chapter Four

Grandeur, beauty and variety: Shenstone and the ferme ornée

4.1 Introduction

The ferme ornée (ornamented farm) was first conceived by Philip Southcote at Wooburn in Surrey nearly a decade before William Shenstone began to create his own version, and The Leasowes has often been compared with it. Although the gardens appeared to be similar, when they are studied closely differences become apparent. As the garden writer Thomas Whately stated, Southcote's was not the simple farmscape that the designation implied.⁵⁰⁵ Shenstone's ferme ornée on the other hand appeared to be a validation of the phrase. This chapter attempts to define what constituted a ferme ornée and compares the similarities and differences of Wooburn and The Leasowes. Compared with Southcote, Shenstone obeyed finer principles of proportion, balance and symmetry and with these he added perspective, time and imagination. To him scenes of 'grandeur, beauty, and variety'⁵⁰⁶ were the important elements, which were realised in the natural-looking landscape that he created. It was these aspects of Shenstone's gardening that helped make The Leasowes distinctive as an eighteenth-century landscape.

⁵⁰⁵ Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, T. Payne, 1770, re-printed Memphis, USA, General Books, 2010), p. 71.

⁵⁰⁶ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 111.

4:2 The ferme ornée

The ferme ornée is a style of gardening usually defined as an ornamental farm, but it really means an ornamented farm. An ornamental farm is one that was created to be decorated, while an ornamented farm is a pre-existing unit that is later decorated.⁵⁰⁷ Many estates have subsequently been called a ferme ornée: Painshill, Blenheim, Rousham, even Stowe, but in most cases they were ornamental.⁵⁰⁸ The ornamented farm was one in which farming activity operated, as at The Leasowes, where haymaking and stock grazing occurred.⁵⁰⁹ The idea of the ornamented farm pre-dated the use of the term ferme ornée. David Brown and Tom Williamson believed the notion came from Joseph Addison's 1712 article in *The Spectator*: ...'why may not a whole estate be thrown into a garden...?'⁵¹⁰ but R. W. King claims that the idea, rather than the phrase, came from Stephen Switzer in his *Ichnographia rustica* in 1718:⁵¹¹

That Profit and Pleasure may well be mix'd together, that those Methods that have made Gardening and Planting burthensome and expensive, may in some measure be remove'd and that the Designs be more rural, natural, more easy, and less expensive.⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁷ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley & The Leasowes* (Bristol, Redcliffe Press, 2010), p. 37.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 56.

⁵⁰⁹ Haymaking – W. S. to Richard Graves 3rd July 1743 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.) *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 66; Cattle - Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Osborn, c. 20, 1 v; Hull, Thomas (c.1760) Shenstone's Walks, MSS of 30 pages, p. 22.

⁵¹⁰ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 207.

⁵¹¹ King, R. W., 'The Ferme Ornée: Philip Southcote and Wooburn Farm,' *Garden History*, Vol. II, No. 3 (1974), p. 33.

⁵¹² Switzer, Stephen, *Ichnographia Rustica* (London, Brown, D. Barker, K. King, C., 1718), pp. 1-2.

When Switzer asked ‘Why not a whole estate be thrown into a kind of garden’: ‘Tis There that Nature is truly imitated’, he was promoting what would be later called the *ferme ornée*.⁵¹³ The details of the form he suggested included borrowed landscapes. These were scenes adopted from outside the area that the farm encompassed: ‘...that all the adjacent Country be laid open’.⁵¹⁴ Internally the hedgerows should be mixed in a natural fashion with primroses and violets.⁵¹⁵ Switzer gave classical authority to his ideas by referring to the villa gardens of Pliny and Horace and claimed that ‘it is visible that the Roman Genius, which was once the Admiration of the World, is now making great advances in *Britain* also’.⁵¹⁶ According to Tim Richardson, the idea emerged in the late 1720s as a Tory response to the large landscape gardens of the Whigs.⁵¹⁷ He argued that Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope lampooned the Whigs for promoting their own type of informal landscape gardening in the guise of the supposed *ferme ornée*. Other examples of this ‘Tory protest farm’, included Riskins in Buckinghamshire and Down House in Hertfordshire, though both of them contained straight paths and regular lines, which were not consistent with what came to represent the style.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹³ Ibid, p. 341. Switzer set out his theories in Chapter IV Rural and Extensive Gardening (pages 44 - 77) in Volume 3 of his work, p. 87.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid, p. xviii

⁵¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 324, 335-6.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 8-9 & p. xvi.

⁵¹⁷ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 164.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid, p. 220; Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

Most Picturesque gardens could be considered to be examples of the ferme ornée as they used the land for both arable and stock farming. The stock could be wild or domesticated, so a deer park could be as much a ferme ornée as a sheep farm. Viscount Bolingbroke's model farm at Dawley, Uxbridge was said to be an early example.⁵¹⁹ He was the step-brother of Henrietta Knight, Shenstone's friend,⁵²⁰ and had created Dawley in 1725 as a model Tory landscape, it being a physical expression of his politics.⁵²¹ He cleared away the formal landscape of the estate and set about turning it into a working farm. Dawley was an example of competition with the Whigs, who were in the process of turning their properties into ornamental parks.⁵²² According to Richardson, Dawley was the first important sub-genre of the ferme ornée, but Henrietta Knight in a letter to Shenstone denied this.⁵²³ He did, however, decorate the house with appropriate rural embellishments.⁵²⁴ Pope, a visitor, wrote to Swift that Bolingbroke had painted his hall 'with Trophies rakes, spades, prongs, &c'.⁵²⁵ Dawley, however, was novel because it was an actual farm owned by an aristocrat who lived and worked on it. Perhaps Shenstone's ideas about a farm being an appropriate place for a gentleman to reside came from Bolingbroke. A piece of information Shenstone learned from Henrietta Knight was that during Bolingbroke's

⁵¹⁹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 220.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, pp. 214-215. Bolingbroke had been a Jacobite Tory and had escaped to France after James II had been replaced by William of Orange, but had been allowed back by Robert Walpole, the Prime Minister in 1725.

⁵²¹ Ibid, pp. 216-217.

⁵²² Ibid, pp. 218-219.

⁵²³ Henrietta Knight to William Shenstone, 28th April 1748 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 22

⁵²⁴ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 220; Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 170.

⁵²⁵ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 220.

enforced exile in France he bought an estate called *La Source* at Orléans in 1720.⁵²⁶ There he inscribed mottoes on marble and composed a dirge that was placed on a river god's temple over a spring.⁵²⁷ Shenstone chose and composed pieces to go in his landscape garden and *La Source* may have been the impetus for many of the poems that were featured at The Leasowes.


4:3 Southcote's ferme ornée

The principles of the Picturesque garden movement were elevated in the early years of the eighteenth century by Southcote who brought the idea of a ferme ornée⁵²⁸ to a practical beginning when he moved to Wooburn Farm in 1735 (Fig. 4.1: Plan of Wooburn).⁵²⁹ Switzer thought the phrase ferme ornée came from France, but it was not a term that the French used and it does not appear in print until he used it in 1742.⁵³⁰ King expressed the idea that it was introduced by Southcote as he had spent part of his adolescence in France and spoke the language fluently. Joseph Spence made the suggestion that the ferme ornée was inspired by English visitors on the Grand Tour seeing the agricultural fields of Italy, though there is no evidence that Southcote ever went to Italy.⁵³¹ Spence, however, was a friend of Southcote and stated categorically that 'Mr Southcote was the first that brought in the garden farm

⁵²⁶ Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott: Henrietta Luxborough, Poetic Gardener and Irrepressible Exile* (London, Harper Press, 2006), p. 44.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 45.

⁵²⁸ Ferme ornée was not a French expression, despite the use of French words, it was devised by Philip Southcote in England. This is why it is not placed in italics.

⁵²⁹ John Martin, 'Southcote, Philip (1697/8–1758)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53221>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Richardson, Tim, op cit., p. 424.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 210.

⁵³¹ *Ibid*, p. 404.

or ferme ornée' to England.⁵³² Southcote was aware of the proto-ferme ornée's that had been made at Riskins (Allen Bathurst, 1st Earl Bathurst,) Worksop (Edward Howard 9th Duke of Norfolk) and what Petrie was doing at Thorndon (Robert Edward 8th Baron Petrie). His uncle, Thomas, was a great friend of Pope and through that connection he had a link with William Kent.⁵³³ Spence refers to the Kent connection and one of Southcote's summerhouses was a copy of one that Kent had designed for Chiswick.⁵³⁴ This relationship was not all one-sided, as Southcote also advised Kent on how to plant flowers in his 'natural' way of gardening.⁵³⁵

⁵³² King, R. W., op. cit., p. 34.

⁵³³ Chambers, Douglas D. C. *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden* (London, Yale University Press, 1930), p. 159.

⁵³⁴ King, R. W., op. cit., p. 32.

⁵³⁵ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 427.

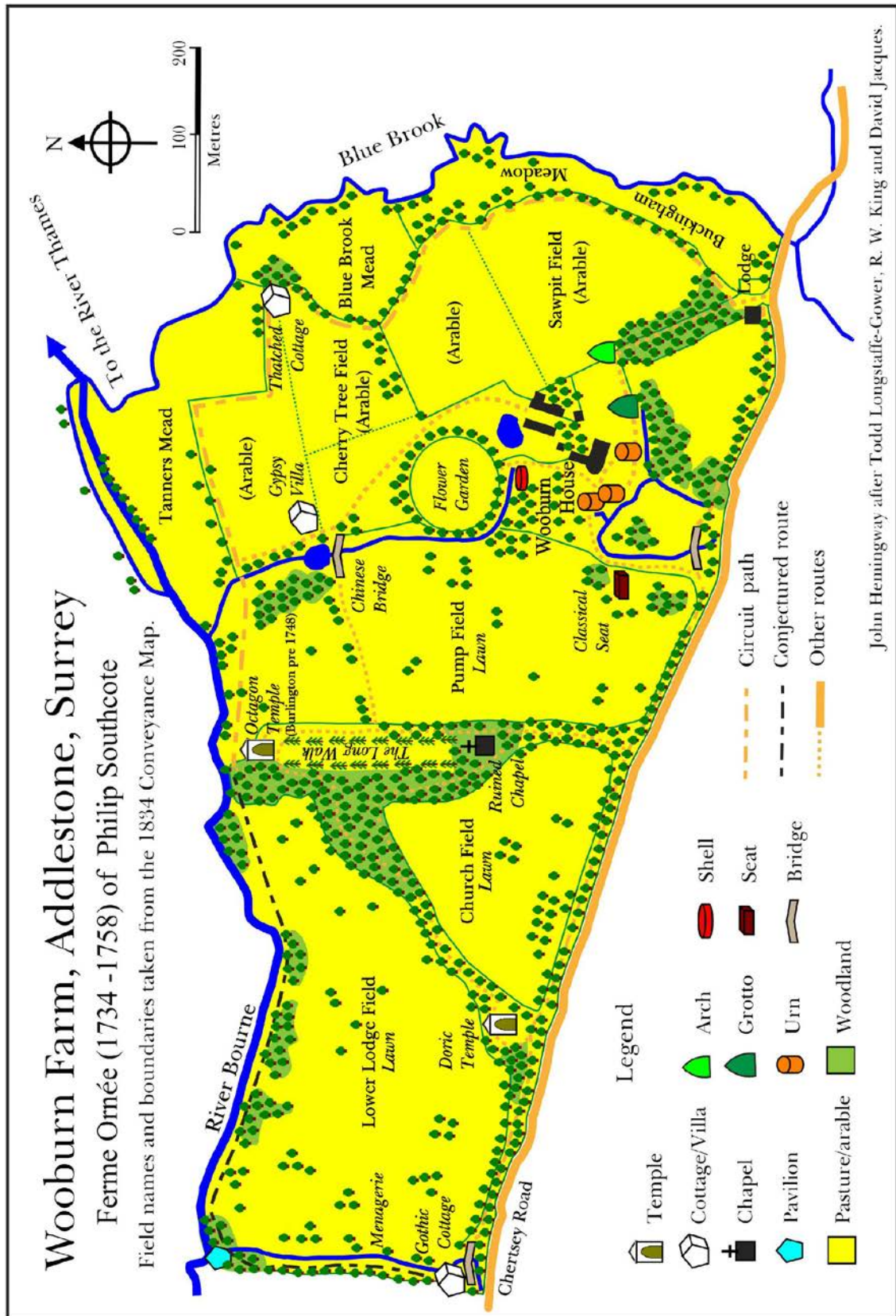


Fig. 4.1: Philip Southcote's ferme ornée at Wooburn.

Southcote reiterated some of Pope's instructions when he wrote that the landscape must be dealt with pictorially by obeying the painter's rules of 'perspective, prospect, distancing and attracting'.⁵³⁶ Perspective meant looking under trees to some distant object and prospect meant looking past trees to focus on a distant object. Attracting (or foreshortening) was the opposite of distancing, and made things look closer. The landscape had variety, but always with a principal view. His comments: 'tis best to look up to a wood and down to water' and ornaments 'should stand on rising ground', reflect Southcote's prescriptive approach to garden design.⁵³⁷ Like Pope, Southcote linked his landscape with paintings and used perspective, prospects and long views, as well as the horticultural picturesque with theatrical effect and copied many of Switzer's instructions, but added other features that included historical associations. One of Wooburn's prime features was a circuit walk. Southcote dug a serpentine pool in the middle of his fields and then surrounded them by a peripheral footpath. The pathway on the boundary side was planted in a graduated fashion with trees at the back, shrubs in the middle, and herbaceous flowers in front. The path divided this border from the fields on the opposite side. He called this landscape garden a *ferme ornée*, but whether it was or not is debatable. Whately observed: 'The simplicity of a farm is wanting, the idea is lost in the profusion of ornament; a rusticity of character cannot be preserved amidst all

⁵³⁶ King, R.W., op. cit., p. 35.

⁵³⁷ Ibid, p. 35.

the elegant decorations.’⁵³⁸ There were, however, lessons to be learnt at Wooburn, as George Mason suggested: ‘Mr Southcote taught us to form others (i.e. views) through the branches of a single tree only; and shew’d us how the opening might be made natural and easy, and (as it were) perfectly accidental.’⁵³⁹

The creation of the landscape garden at Wooburn began nearly a decade earlier than The Leasowes and there were similarities between the two (see Fig. 4.2). Both contained a walk that circumnavigated the farm, and fields were used as arable and pasture land. Southcote also had a ruined chapel and a Gothic building, together with seats, bridges and alcoves, and his cattle and sheep were allowed to graze the lawns, accompanied by the waterfowl that swam in the man-made streams. Although there were parallels there were many differences. The dissimilarities were that Southcote generally shut out the outside of his farm with ‘thick and lofty hedgerows’⁵⁴⁰ whenever he could, whereas Shenstone used his external views as a borrowed landscape which were visually part of the estate. According to Thomas Whately, the walk at Wooburn with its trees, shrubs and flower beds on the edge of the fields was ‘rather too profusely strewed and hurt the eye by their littleness’, a feature that Shenstone used only for his shrubbery and even then it was semi-wild and had a practical use, acting as a weather screen.⁵⁴¹ The lawns

⁵³⁸ Whately, Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁵³⁹ Mason, George, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁵⁴⁰ Whately, Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 72.

were similar to The Leasowes, but the hedges were heavily planted with flowering shrubs. Southcote's over-use of plants led to a lack of variety that did not always sit well with his many visitors. Whately criticised this over-exuberance of planting where 'every corner or vacant space, is a rosary, a close or open clump, or a bed of flowers', which lacked moderation.⁵⁴² Southcote's 'contrivance of formal textures and colours and pigments' was as far as his design went, but Shenstone was a literary figure and much more interested in human action and this was an addition to his landscape.⁵⁴³ According to Symes and Haynes, Whately did not consider The Leasowes to be a *ferme ornée*, but described it as a grazing farm and believed Wooburn to be a true example of the *ferme ornée*.⁵⁴⁴ This is not accurate as Whately described them both as grazing farms. Shenstone thought his creation was a *ferme ornée* and stated categorically that The Leasowes was one in 1748.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴² Ibid, p. 71. The term 'rosary' may have been in recognition that Southcote was a Roman Catholic.

⁵⁴³ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Picturesque Garden in Europe* (London, Thames and Hudson, 2003), p. 50.

⁵⁴⁴ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 50.

⁵⁴⁵ W. S. to Richard Graves, 21st August 1748 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 156.

	Similarities	Dissimilarities
<p style="text-align: center;">Philip Southcote at Wooburn Farm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pictorial landscape: perspective, prospect, distancing & attracting) - Historical association; (Windsor Castle, Richmond Park) - Water features: (Man-made streams and pools, existing brooks) - Arable and pasture fields with cattle and sheep grazing - Circuit Walk circumnavigated farm - Gothic and classical buildings: Gothic building, Doric Temple, Ruined chapel - Urns - Straight Walk through wood - Woodland (Hanging Woods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shut much of outside view from farm - Over planting of flower beds - Hedges thickly planted with flowering shrubs - Entrance Lodge, Octagon Temple, Pavilion, Chinese, Gypsy, Grotto, Arch, Summerhouse and Thatch structures - Interest in floral colour - Straight Walks - Three bridges - Menagerie - Few Seats - Metalled Paths
<p style="text-align: center;">William Shenstone at The Leasowes Farm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pictorial landscape: perspective, prospect, distancing & attracting) - Historical association (St. John the Baptist Parish Church) - Water features: (Man-made streams and pools, existing brooks) - Arable and pasture fields with cattle and sheep grazing - Circuit Walk circumnavigated farm - Gothic and classical buildings: Gothic Alcoves, Pan's Temple, Ruined Priory - Urns - Straight Walk through wood - Woodland (Hanging Woods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Borrowed landscape outside farm - Flower beds only in shrubbery in semi-wild state - Hedges left to form trees or cut to provide views - Literary interest: Poems - Many Seats - Serpentine Walks - One bridge - Obelisk - Birds (Ducks, guinea fowl, geese) - Unmetalled Paths

Table 4.1: Comparison of Wooburn and The Leasowes gardens.

There was, however, a connection between Southcote's Wooburn and Shenstone's The Leasowes. Shenstone's friend, Richard Graves' mother, was Elizabeth Morgan and a sister of Richard Morgan of Warlies in Essex, who practised what Southcote was doing at Wooburn. Morgan Graves (Richard's older brother) took over his father's house at Mickleton, Gloucestershire in 1729 and a few years later began to landscape the garden in the Southcote/Morgan style. Richard Graves lived at Mickleton House in the 1730s and Shenstone often visited the family there. Graves stated that Shenstone began to help his brother develop his new landscape garden.⁵⁴⁶ It is not known if Shenstone ever went to Wooburn or Warlies, but he seems to have absorbed aspects of the new style. Possibly, in this early phase of his gardening work, he was still adjusting his ideas and this can be shown in his work on surrounding properties. The Kiftsgate garden lay next to Mickleton and legend has it that while Shenstone was staying with the Graves family, he put in the Elm Avenue, a line of Scots firs and lime trees on the estate.⁵⁴⁷ The lines of trees are a conundrum, as he never put anything in a straight line at The Leasowes, but this was at the commencement of his gardening style and his ideas were probably fluid. This knowledge and experience seem to have convinced him that he was capable of implementing a similar approach on

⁵⁴⁶ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq* (London, J. Dodsley, 1788), pp. 122-123.

⁵⁴⁷ There is a reference to Shenstone and Kiftsgate in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kiftsgate_Court_Gardens


his own farm. Although he often wrote that his role in life was as a poet, the most important purpose lay with his work in landscape gardening.⁵⁴⁸

4.4 Shenstone's *ferme ornée*

George Mason in *An Essay on Design in Gardening*, published in 1768, stated that although Alexander Pope provided the theory of Picturesque gardening the world should acknowledge the practical work of Shenstone both at The Leasowes and in his literary accomplishments.⁵⁴⁹ Shenstone's earliest work at The Leasowes occurred between 1739 and 1744 and was concerned with positioning features for his personal use and interest (see Appendix One). He cleared the farmyard's untidiness, and placed a few structures in out-of-the-way locations. It was not until 1745 that he created his *ferme ornée* by adding features to the landscape.⁵⁵⁰

Shenstone's gardening work on his farm, however, had to confront a fundamental issue that all gardeners have to face: weather conditions. As Mark Laird wrote 'The discovery of weather – day in and day out – is an unsung artist as well as the despoiler of gardens.'⁵⁵¹ Shenstone was fortunate for the period he was working in was a hiatus when climatic conditions were

⁵⁴⁸ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 445.

⁵⁴⁹ Mason, George, op. cit., p. 28; Baridon, Michel, 'Understanding nature and the aesthetics of the landscape garden' in Calder, Martin (ed.), *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 65-85; James Sambrook, 'Mason, George (1735–1806)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18271>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

⁵⁵⁰ Various drawn plans showing the evolution of The Leasowes estate are in Appendix One.

⁵⁵¹ Laird, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), p. 18.

considered to be wretched. This has often been labelled as the 'Little Ice Age'.⁵⁵² In 1739-40, when he first instigated the placing of structures in his landscape, the River Thames was iced over, and other major rivers froze as well. The chilly conditions remained for twelve months.⁵⁵³ The next big freeze did not occur for another three decades, until after Shenstone's death. This fair weather period fell within the duration of his landscape activity.⁵⁵⁴ The intervening years varied, but generally experienced mild winters and early springs which encouraged early flowering.⁵⁵⁵ There were periods when the weather grew worse as in 1752 and 1756 when summers were wet,⁵⁵⁶ but generally it was good growing weather, suggested in the summer of 1748 when Shenstone wrote: 'I have brought my place to greater perfection than it has ever yet appeared.'⁵⁵⁷ The evidence that Shenstone was concerned with meteorology was his 'weather glass' barometer,⁵⁵⁸ recorded at The Leasowes in the Chancery inventory made on his death.⁵⁵⁹

Although climatic conditions were important there were a number of other considerations. Primarily, there was Shenstone's choice of the *ferme ornée* as

⁵⁵² Ibid, p. 133.

⁵⁵³ Ibid, p. 362. The Ice Fairs that occurred at this time were well documented.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 19. Laird stated that in the years 1743-1763 it was 'almost as warm as the later twentieth century.'

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 188-9.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 405.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 23-4; W. S. to R. G. June 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 152.

⁵⁵⁸ www.antiques-clocks.co.uk/antique-clocks/barometers. The Italian, Evangelista Torricelli, is universally credited with inventing the barometer in 1643. Shenstone's instrument was likely to have been a stick barometer. Their limitations for accurately predicting weather were well known. Richard Neve in his "Baroscopologia" in 1708 noted sixteen natural phenomena that should be used in conjunction with the instrument. He also noted that many gentlemen did not know how to use them.

⁵⁵⁹ National Archive, Kew, C12/1892/22 S2485: Chancery Proceedings of The Leasowes Estate, 1765; Inventory. No page number.

the type of garden that he wished to create. He had seen other gardens that had used the natural environment in their formation, and this led him to recognise that nature was the best instructor. Secondly, his farm lay on a hillside and therefore lent itself to a variety of views within as well as external to his estate. Thirdly his interest in the past led to him to copy contemporary gardens in constructing Greek, Roman and medieval structures which were appropriate to this new style.⁵⁶⁰ Fourthly, and possibly uniquely for the time, he introduced classical verse and English poetry as a complementary aid to help visitors to understand what the scene represented. Finally, not having a great deal of surplus money, he had to create it fairly cheaply.

Although Shenstone demonstrated that he had implemented some of Southcote's repertoire of Picturesque strategies, he compiled his own rules about gardening in his work 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening'.⁵⁶¹ Richardson thought that this 'handbook of aphorisms' was second only to Pope's 'Epistle to Burlington', as a touchstone for mid-eighteenth-century landscape theory.⁵⁶² In his essay Shenstone explained some of the labels he used, for instance 'landskip' was a term for home scenes within the grounds

⁵⁶⁰ The Gothic style of architecture that Shenstone used was a revival of the structures erected in the medieval period. Gothic architecture actually varied over the period and Shenstone used a mixture of Early English and Decorated styles. Batty Langley (Shenstone recorded he had one of his gardening books) wrote a book which was entitled *Gothic Architecture Restored and Improved by Rules and Proportions* which was published in 1734 as well as other books on the same subject.. Despite opprobrium by other writers his 'were the most widely used architectural textbooks of the eighteenth century.' Lloyd, Nathaniel, *A History of the English House* (London, The Architectural Press, 1975), p. 135.

⁵⁶¹ Hunt, John Dixon, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 49; Shenstone, William, op. cit. pp. 111- 131.

⁵⁶² Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 446.

of his estate, while ‘prospect’ referred to the area external to the farm, which should ‘take in the blue distant hills’. Some of the other terms he used seem to have changed in meaning. He refers to the word ‘sublime’, which was associated with terror and fear.⁵⁶³ He also wrote about things that he did not wish to apply in his farmscape. In his essay ‘On Taste’ he stressed that irregularity was essential to stop the work looking ‘unnatural and disagreeable’.⁵⁶⁴ As a Naturesque gardener he felt that formal gardens, particularly their straight lines in avenues and paths, gave ‘pain to a person of taste’,⁵⁶⁵ and he did not wish his plantings to appear like man-made flower beds which Southcote created.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶³ In Latin *sublimis* is the quality of greatness, but in the eighteenth century it was thought of as the quality of nature as distinct to beauty. See Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, R. & J. Dodsley, 1764), p. 6.

⁵⁶⁴ Shenstone, William, ‘On Taste’, *The Works*. p. 284.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 114 - 116.

⁵⁶⁶ W. S. to Lady Luxborough 14th May 1749, *op. cit.*, 193.

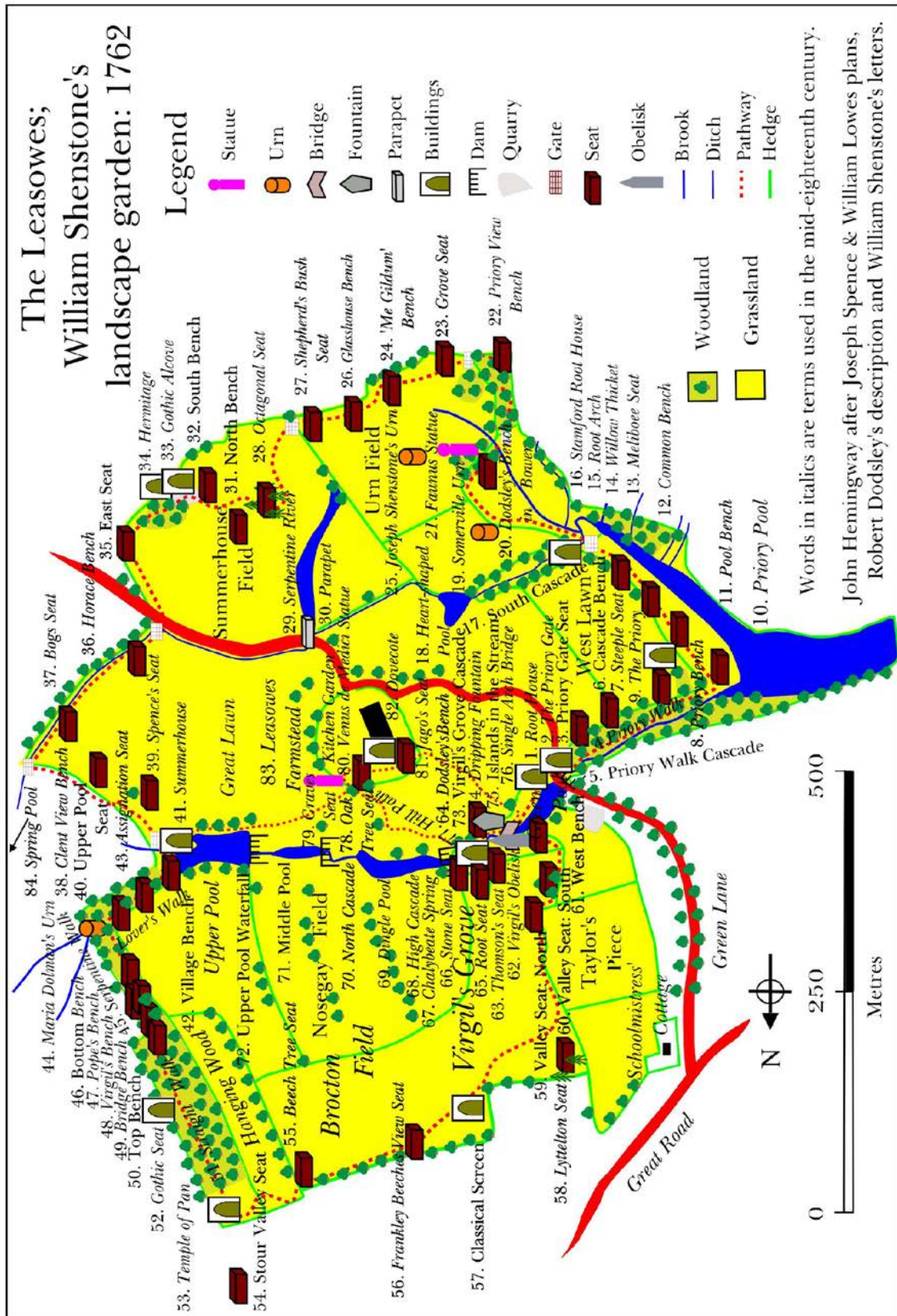


Fig. 4.2: Conjectural plan of The Leasowes landscape garden in 1762 by the writer.

He arranged his landscape in a similar manner to the way the Italian landscape was painted by contemporary artists, to emphasise three distinct planes: ‘a foreground, a middle ground, and a distant view’,⁵⁶⁷ and stated that a ‘landskip should contain variety enough to form a picture on a canvas’.⁵⁶⁸ Shenstone, however, believed that creativity should be used discreetly as when he stated: ‘Art, indeed, is often required to collect and epitomise the beauties of nature; but should never be suffered to set her mark upon them.’⁵⁶⁹ Art and nature, he believed should always be kept apart and he proposed a rule that all of the forms in landscape design should never ‘be allowed that make a discovery of art’.⁵⁷⁰ For instance, he thought hedges were universally bad as ‘they discover art in nature’s province’.⁵⁷¹ As far as scenes within a garden are concerned: ‘the more uncommon they appear, the better, provided they form a picture, but not so as to encroach on nature’.⁵⁷² This emphasised his understanding of the dangers of making how he did it more important than what was done.⁵⁷³

John Dixon Hunt summed up the practices that Shenstone accomplished: he called in the country around, he changed perspectives, carefully placed seats, made associations through the use of inscriptions, and ensured a variety of

⁵⁶⁷ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Sutton, Stroud, 1998), p. 59.

⁵⁶⁸ Shenstone, William, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 126.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 119, 120.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 125.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, p. 121.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 115.

scenery (see Fig. 4.3).⁵⁷⁴ It was Pope who first used the phrase ‘calls in the country’, which meant using the perspectives of the landscape outside of the property in what is now called a borrowed landscape.⁵⁷⁵ The sightlines that were created by Shenstone at The Leasowes reveal how effective this was (see Fig. 4.4). Sightlines radiated from many of his features, but the most frequent came from the views to the west, as his farm lay on the west side of the watershed with the ridge at the rear of the property. As The Leasowes Estate was elevated it looked down the Stour Valley and included the town of Halesowen, and the villages around it. The hills on either side comprised the Clent Hills to the south and the high land of Pensnett Chase to the north.⁵⁷⁶ The views varied between the woods and coppices on the hillsides with cultivated arable and pasture fields in the valley below and displayed the English countryside that observers began to see as in danger of vanishing in the new world of agrarian and industrial change.⁵⁷⁷ The purpose of the view, however, was not only a passive one: Shenstone also wanted people to engage in an intellectual conversation with the scenery and, to make sure that his visitors had time to see and meditate upon these scenes, he placed seats in situations for them to contemplate what they saw. This ‘view of the world’ which he celebrated in his Stour Valley Seat in particular was not a

⁵⁷⁴ Hunt, John Dixon, op. cit., pp. 23, 49.

⁵⁷⁵ Pope, Alexander, ‘Epistle to Burlington’ in Alexander, W.C. Armstrong (ed.), *The Complete Works of Alexander Pope* (Boston, Lee & Shepard, 1879), p. 92.

⁵⁷⁶ Hemingway, John, *An Illustrated Chronicle of Dudley Town and Manor* (Dudley, MFH Publishing, 2009), p. 189. Pensnett Chase was enclosed in 1784, twenty years after Shenstone’s death.

⁵⁷⁷ Porter, Roy, *Enlightenment* (London, Penguin Books, 2000), pp. 316-7. Porter quoted the dismay of John Byng in 1790 at seeing industrialised mills in pastoral vales and commented that the environmental degradation was tellingly shown in Oliver Goldsmith’s poem, *The Deserted Village*.

new idea in gardening as artists and map makers had been revealing these aspects in their engraved views of estates since the Renaissance.⁵⁷⁸ What was new was the intellectualisation of the scenery. Richardson wrote that Shenstone's interventions were to 'enhance rather than obscure the true genius of the place'.⁵⁷⁹

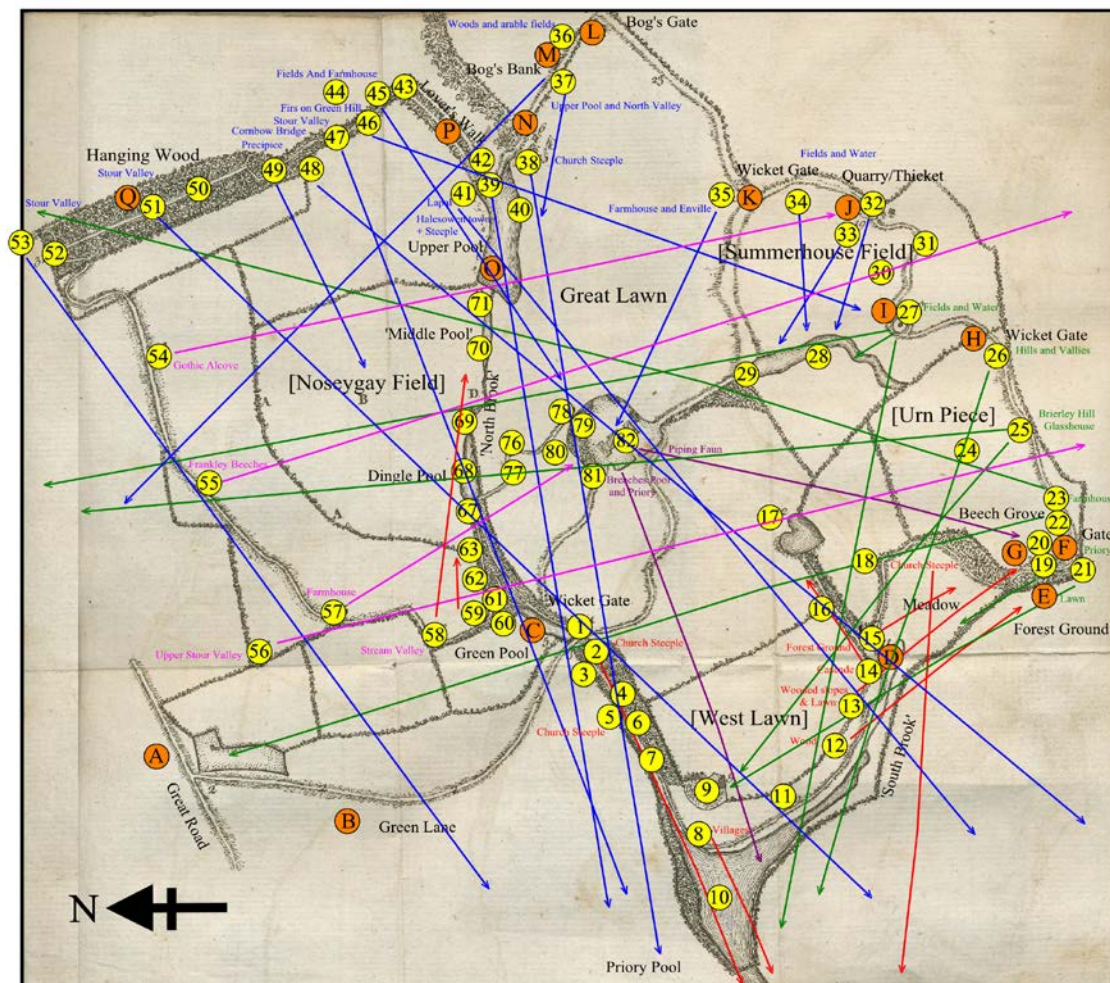


Fig. 4.3: Sightlines at The Leasowes emanating from Shenstone's garden features. Created by the writer from Lowes plan of 1768.

⁵⁷⁸ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio, (trans. David Stanton) *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010), p. 44.

⁵⁷⁹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 448.

One of the major differences between Wooburn and The Leasowes was their position in the landscape. Wooburn was on a comparatively flat flood plain with a hill in the centre; this made it difficult to vary the landscape as much of it could be seen from one position. The Leasowes, on the other hand, was on the side of a hill with two brook valleys bisecting it, compartmentalising it into different elements. Shenstone enhanced the views by putting in his circuit route. Each section of the route varied in what was seen and appreciated. On the south side the visitor was climbing in open grassland and the eye level was on features in the foreground. He placed seats at intervals so that the visitor could rest and take in the longer view but it was the intermediate features that were intended to be seen. On the east side the walks ran along the upper part of the hill and although long views were obtainable the main sight was in the intermediate ground. This was also achieved on the north boundary with a view of the farmscape itself. As the route was going downhill visitors could see the long view outside his farm, but this grew less the further down the slope one went. On the west side, in the meadowlands, the view was further compartmentalised by the valleys. The woodland was an important element of The Leasowes as it broke up the long views of the farm and the woods varied between the darkness of the ancient trees in the dingles and the Forest ground, and the lighter trees of the Hanging Wood. It was this change of scene that Shenstone wrote about

when he stated ‘to move on continually and find no change of scene, must actually give pain to a person of taste’.⁵⁸⁰

As Hunt noted, Shenstone was aware that perspective was an important part of any scene and his use of this element was revealed in his ability to create changing views. Richardson stated that Shenstone’s garden showed a ‘psychological management of mood through the design of successive garden episodes’,⁵⁸¹ that is, he had the ability to understand how to change perspective in order to allow people to appreciate the numerous features. His landscapes were visually fluid. Shenstone’s awareness of his choice of optimum perspectives was also observed by Whately when he wrote of The Leasowes: ‘Every natural advantage of the place has been discovered, applied, contrasted, and carried to the utmost perfection, in the purest taste and with inexhaustible fancy.’⁵⁸² This sense of wonder was described by another visitor, Jabez Maud Fisher, in 1776:

Here the Prospect is too copious for the Eye, the Scene too great, the Variety too profuse. But if Hills and Vallies (sic) of happy Forms; if Woods and Clusters of Trees; if Lawns and Meadows chequered with Deer and Sheep, Cornfields of variegated hues, Villages, Spires, Cottages and Sheets of Water can make a view delightful this is most certainly so.⁵⁸³

Shenstone’s views from the lower part of the farm were mainly within the farmscape itself, but even there, St. John the Baptist Church in nearby

⁵⁸⁰ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’, op. cit., p. 116.

⁵⁸¹ Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 197.

⁵⁸² Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 170.

⁵⁸³ Morgan, Keith, (ed.) Fisher, Jabez Maud, *An American Quaker in the British Isles* (New York, The British Academy, 1992), p. 259.

Halesowen was seen between the trimmed branches of trees. Thomas Hull mentioned in his essay on Shenstone's walks 'that nature is merely guided a little – that is, some of her excrescences (if I may so term them) pruned – but no smaller Portion of his Bounty destroyed - for those prunings are merely mowings'.⁵⁸⁴ The placement of seats was very important to ensure optimum views, whether above a brook bubbling over stones, viewing an urn in a woodland grove, commanding a view of the surrounding country or in the case of the Octagonal Seat, being able to see eight different views from the same location (see Fig. 4.5). This scenographic principle allowed the viewer to observe telescopically the surrounding area both near and far and thus intensified the experience.

⁵⁸⁴ Beinecke Library, Yale University, USA, Osborn c. 20, Hull, Thomas, 'Notes on the Leasowes Landscape Garden c.1760,' p. 1.



Fig. 4.4: Drawing by David Parkes of an urn sitting on the table on his sketch of the Octagonal Seat.⁵⁸⁵

The management of imagination was probably one of the most important dimensions of Shenstone's repertoire of experiences for his visitors. He wrote that Picturesque gardening consisted of pleasing the imagination by 'scenes of grandeur, beauty and variety'. He knew, however, that these terms were often closely associated and thought that simplicity was the essential

⁵⁸⁵ Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shrewsbury Record Office. The urn was not there in Shenstone's day, presumably it had been placed in this position by a successor to the estate, perhaps Edward Horne?

ingredient of grandeur.⁵⁸⁶ He stated that a large mountain, whose sides are unvaried with objects, was grander than one with infinite variety and that ‘grandeur and beauty are so very opposite that you often diminish one as you increase the other’. Shenstone gave as an example a large hill, which when varied by art became more beautiful but less grand.⁵⁸⁷ To destroy natural magnificence in order to increase beauty was disadvantageous.⁵⁸⁸ Like Edmund Burke he realised that ‘the sublime has generally a deeper effect than the merely beautiful’.⁵⁸⁹ Beauty related to items of gentle appreciation, the sublime related to power and movement that was out of the reach of man to control. Like the waters over his High Cascade, once he turned them on they were uncontrollable.

Variety was one of the most important concepts in eighteenth-century aesthetic theory.⁵⁹⁰ Shenstone believed that ‘Variety is the principal ingredient in beauty’,⁵⁹¹ and thought that it contributed to pleasure: ‘as the eye passing from one form or color, to a form or color of a different kind, finds a degree of novelty in it’s present objects which affords immediate satisfaction’.⁵⁹² This was provided by the diversity of trees at The Leasowes.⁵⁹³ Variety was not confined to the stationary positions, and the scene changed

⁵⁸⁶ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 131.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 130.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 129.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 114. Shenstone had Burke’s book in his library, see Appendix 2.

⁵⁹⁰ Longstaffe-Gowan, Todd, *The London Town Garden 1740-1840* (New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 2001), p. 115.

⁵⁹¹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 131.

⁵⁹² Ibid, pp. 112-113.

⁵⁹³ Ibid, p. 122.

as the visitor walked along his circuit path, where one scene transformed into another: from a woodland path, to an open glade, through a circle of trees and via water features. The visitor would encounter ‘a number of punctuating moments that’ would ‘trigger specific somatic responses’.⁵⁹⁴ The experience was similar to walking through a landscape painting. William Hogarth, however, had voiced the opinion that ‘variety is a check upon itself when overdone’.⁵⁹⁵ Shenstone agreed and annotated in his copy of Hogarth’s book ‘too great variety in one scene’.⁵⁹⁶ As he observed variety could be excessive: ‘Variety in some instances, may be carried to such excess, as to lose its whole effect.’⁵⁹⁷ Shenstone wrote that familiarity bred contempt in gardens and a ground that was always the same, however good its appreciation, would eventually be ‘extinguished by indulgence’.⁵⁹⁸ He further claimed that ‘Concerning scenes, the more uncommon they appear, the better, provided they form a picture and include nothing that pretends to be of nature’s production, and is not.’⁵⁹⁹ Whether he was describing Wooburn is not clear, but Whately suggested that Southcote’s use of flowers would have been more effective as ‘a more moderate use of them would however have been better, and the variety more pleasing, had it been less licentious.’⁶⁰⁰ Southcote’s

⁵⁹⁴ Jung, Sandro, ‘William Shenstone’s Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,’ in *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014), p. 5.

⁵⁹⁵ Hogarth, William, *Analysis of Beauty* (London, J. Reeve, 1753), p. 43.

⁵⁹⁶ The annotation is on page 82 of Shenstone’s copy of Hogarth’s book in the Harvard library.

⁵⁹⁷ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 213.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid, pp. 125-126.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 121.

⁶⁰⁰ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 71.

herbaceous borders were not the natural-looking landscape that Shenstone wanted.⁶⁰¹

Shenstone recognised that novelty had its place in his garden, but knew that novelty for its own sake was a symptom of bad taste: in gardening one needed to impart the grandeur of beauty by surprise; by looking at the same thing continuously, the mind was satiated and cloyed.⁶⁰² For instance, he used the image of looking at a series of lawns, which can be disrupted with 'broken rocks and rugged ground'; this imparted a 'pleasure equal to more shapely scenes'.⁶⁰³ Not that Shenstone believed in crowding the landscape - 'a plain space near the eye gives it a kind of liberty it loves', - and he never overfilled his landscape garden.⁶⁰⁴ He put this into practice at The Leasowes, where the house was surrounded by open lawns, allowing the eye to look across to woodland and the distant valleys and hills.

Amongst Shenstone's guidelines were his comments on the use of buildings. He stated that generally in the foreground of a scene should be a structure, as he believed that a rural prospect was 'never perfect without the addition of some kind of building'.⁶⁰⁵ If there was no structure then a rock should be inserted to focus the eye.⁶⁰⁶ If the built object was to one side of the frame, another item needed to be symmetrical on the other side to create an

⁶⁰¹ King, R. W., *op. cit.*, pp. 27-60.

⁶⁰² Shenstone, William, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 130.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 128.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 128.

appropriate view:⁶⁰⁷ ‘The eye requires a sort of balance’ otherwise there is something missing from the scene (see Fig. 4.5). The point that a built structure was the first thing that the viewer saw as it stood out against the background would again have a philosophical purpose as it would ‘connect ideas, that convey reflexions of the pleasing kind’.⁶⁰⁸



Fig. 4.5: Ruined Priory and The Leasowes Farmstead, engraving by D. Jenkins for *The Modern British Universal Traveller*, 1797.⁶⁰⁹

The reflections that all his structures provided were mental images that imported the dimension of time, because they all related to past periods. Ruined structures became popular after Aldus Manutius published *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* in 1499 which included Roman ruins in a garden. The Vercellonis considered that the aesthetics of a ruin were most important

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 118.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, pp. 112, 118-119, 121.

⁶⁰⁹ Engraved by D. Jenkins for Burlington, Charles, Murray, Alexander & Llewellyn Rees, David, *The Modern British Universal Traveller* (London, John Cooke, 1797).

as they ‘stimulated responses that were not only emotional and romantic, but also methodological and archaeological,’ and that they became an essential marker of human culture.⁶¹⁰ Ruins were not the same as newly built houses and other structures as they conveyed memories from the past which added sentiment to the viewer. When Shenstone built the Ruined Priory he considered what it represented and stated: ‘A ruin, for instance, may be neither new to us, nor majestic, (sic) nor beautiful, yet afford that pleasing melancholy which proceeds from a reflexion on decayed magnificence.’⁶¹¹ One of the pleasing powers of ruined structures arose from the irregularity of their surfaces, which stimulated the viewer’s imagination. Shenstone thought that structures were very important in the landscape, but care should be taken with their siting: ‘When a building or other object, has been viewed from its proper point, the foot should never travel to it by the same path which the eye has travelled before.’⁶¹² This discloses that he considered the place of a feature within the whole landscape whenever he constructed an edifice.

Shenstone referred to the imagination repeatedly, because it led to ‘agreeable sensations’.⁶¹³ He stated: ‘Objects should indeed be less calculated to strike the immediate eye, than the judgement or well informed imagination; as in

⁶¹⁰ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton), *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁶¹¹ Shenstone, William, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁶¹² *Ibid*, p. 116.

⁶¹³ *Ibid*, p. 111.

painting’.⁶¹⁴ As Williamson wrote: ‘The experience and imagination of the individual mind was thus cultivated.’⁶¹⁵ Hunt argues: ‘The imagination trained within landscape-gardens soon formed and explained its experience of natural scenery in terms first learnt and tested among the landscapes of such places as Stowe, Stourhead, or The Leasowes.’⁶¹⁶ David Lambert went further when he stated that Shenstone ‘was one of the mid-eighteenth century’s most influential gardeners’, because he cultivated a particular kind of imagination – mental pictures - and his work at The Leasowes gave this aspect full rein.⁶¹⁷ One of the mental pictures he used can be seen in Dodsley’s referring to The Leasowes as Tempe.⁶¹⁸ Tempe was the Pass of Thermopylae, a valley in Thessaly, Greece and was described as a pleasant and romantic place, for its situation and its mildness of climate.⁶¹⁹ By comparing The Leasowes with places of classical antiquity Shenstone showed his landscape garden was greater than just a site on the side of a hill in Shropshire. Imaginative creation became associated with natural gardening.

The recognition that Shenstone was producing something distinctive started early. One of the earliest writers was Resta Patching who visited The Leasowes in 1755 and published a description of the landscape garden in

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, p. 112.

⁶¹⁵ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 67.

⁶¹⁶ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape: Poetry, Painting, and Gardening during the Eighteenth Century* (London, John Hopkins Press, 1989), p. 249.

⁶¹⁷ Lambert, David, ‘William Shenstone and the Fairy Landscape’ in *Report & Journal of The Georgian Group* (Lavenham, 1986), p. 67.

⁶¹⁸ Dodsley, Robert, ‘Verses by Mr Dodsley on his first arrival at the Leasowes’ in Shenstone, William, op., cit., p. 329.

⁶¹⁹ Lemprière, John, *A Classical Dictionary* (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820), p. 756.

1757. He stated that he ‘had two hours very agreeable Amusement in surveying this Place’.⁶²⁰ He described the work that Shenstone had conducted on the farm:

He has laid out very pleasant Walks round the Fields, which are confined to the Hedge side without encroaching on the Pasture and at proper Distances has placed Seats which command delightful Views over different Parts of the Country, each Prospect being terminated by some agreeable Object; over each bench is described in *Latin* or *English* some apt Verse.⁶²¹

Patching acknowledged it as an ornamented farm where Shenstone placed seats as prompts for his visitors to stop and admire the landscape. He also noticed that these were supplemented by appropriate Latin and English texts which added to the composition.⁶²² He particularly liked Shenstone’s hydrological scheme and stated that the:

Two cascades are here remarkable for their Beauty and Simplicity; exceeding many Things of more costly Workmanship, having the Advantage of unaffected Nature on their side and are indeed so elegantly rude, so rural and romantic, as must inspire the Beholders with a Notion, that the poetic Descriptions of *Arcadia* and *Fairyland* are not altogether Fictions.⁶²³

Patching’s comment that the cascades were ‘rude’, ‘rural and romantic’ is evidence that Shenstone was creating man-made features that looked like nature at work. The implication of this being that creating natural-looking scenes was not an easy thing to do and that Shenstone was achieving it.

⁶²⁰ L80 72244, Patching, Resta, *Topographical Letters Written in 1755 upon a journey thro Staffordshire etc.* (London, n. p., 1757), Birmingham Archives and Heritage Service Central Library, p. 58. He went there on the morning of Tuesday the 5th August 1755.

⁶²¹ *Ibid*, p. 58.

⁶²² *Ibid*, p. 57. Patching did not have time to copy them on the visit, but he wrote that many had been published by Robert Dodsley.

⁶²³ *Ibid*, p. 57. The cascades he mentions were in Virgil’s Grove.

Patching was the first person to write about the landscape garden as an Arcadia and this point defined one of the essences of Shenstone's garden plan in that he was creating a pre-industrial European fantasy within his landscape. Samuel Johnson, like Shenstone a student at Pembroke College, Oxford,⁶²⁴ also commented on The Leasowes after a visit on 19th September 1774. He wrote that Shenstone had begun:

to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters, which he did with such judgement and fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great and the admiration of the skilful: a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers.⁶²⁵

Mrs Thrale who accompanied Johnson on his trip wrote a poem while she was at The Leasowes in which she decried the great gardens like Kedleston, Chatsworth and Hagley and finished with the lines: 'From artful Hagley I repair/ to thine and natures shade.'⁶²⁶ For Mrs Thrale The Leasowes was the ultimate Picturesque garden. Another visitor who was overawed with the landscape work was John Wesley, the Methodist preacher, who visited The Leasowes on the 13th July 1782 and wrote a detailed appreciation in his *Journal*:

Went to the leasowes, a farm so called and never was so surprised. I have seen nothing in all England to be compared with it. It is beautiful and elegant (sic) all over. There is nothing grand, nothing costly; no temples so called, no statues (except two or three which had better be spared); but such walks, such shades, such hills and dales, such lawns,

⁶²⁴ Boswell, James, *The Life of Johnson* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1793), Vol. IV, p. 151. Samuel Johnson while taking some friends around Pembroke College showed them his and a room close by which he said was William Shenstone's.

⁶²⁵ Ibid, p. 457.

⁶²⁶ Broadley, Alexander Meyrick, *Dr. Johnson and Mrs Thrale* (London, John Lane, 1910), p. 213.

such artless cascades, such waving woods, with water intermixed, as exceed all imagination. On the upper side from the openings of a shady walk, is a most beautiful and extensive prospect. And all this confined within the compass of three miles! I doubt if it be exceeded by anything in Europe.⁶²⁷

These observations recognised the aesthetic qualities of The Leasowes.

4.5 Conclusion

The Leasowes farmscape was an ornamented farm. The *ferme ornée* was conceived by Philip Southcote at Wooburn in 1735 and Shenstone applied the style at The Leasowes by 1745. He used the principles of proportion, balance and symmetry to create his garden and his application of perspective, time and imagination together with scenes of grandeur, beauty, or variety were designed to create an idyllic scene. Detail was added through physical structure, antique features and verse. Following nature was especially important because the natural landscape was not meant to look artificial like the formal gardens that pre-dated it. Many writers were enthusiastic about what he had accomplished and realised that his garden was much more than a pretty picture, as it revealed to the visitor a hidden element, a philosophical constituent that other gardens did not have. His garden may not have been unique: what was distinctive was the way in which he put it together.

⁶²⁷ Wesley, John, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley* Vol. 4 (London, J. M. Dent, n. d.), pp. 237-238.

Chapter Five

Improvements to the natural landscape: clay, rock and water

5.1 Introduction

The enhancements that Shenstone made to the natural landscape at The Leasowes have not been examined in the past to any degree, except in archaeological reports and topographical surveys.⁶²⁸ Chapters five, six and seven provide an important dimension for understanding Shenstone's skills in producing a landscape garden from a plain pastoral farm. This chapter asks to what extent Shenstone used the existing landscape, how he worked with it, managed his hydrology through water courses, dams and cascades and created his circuit footpath that tied his garden features together. One of Shenstone's important accomplishments was creating close views – seen from the proximity of the site - and remote views – seen from a distance.

5.2 The natural landscape

Tom Williamson saw the eighteenth-century English landscape garden as a place increasingly 'geared to exploration' as an aid to 'more variety of

⁶²⁸ Currie, Christopher, *Archaeological recording at The Leasowes, Halesowen, Dudley, West Midlands* (Eastleigh, CKC Archaeology, 1998); Dingwall, Lucie, *An Archaeological Evaluation at Leasowes Park, Halesowen, West Midlands* (Birmingham Field Archaeology Unit, 1996); Dix, Brian *An Archaeological Investigation of The Lower Dam at The Leasowes* (Dudley, Brian Dix, 2004); Hemingway, John, 'A Photographic Survey of the watercourses of Leasowes Park' (unpublished, 1994); Hemingway, John, 'A Watching Brief during the construction of a building at the rear of Leasowes House' (unpublished, 2005); Hemingway, John, 'A Survey of the upper part of the north brook valley' (unpublished, 2012); Hemingway, John, 'A Survey of the upper part of the south brook valley' (unpublished, 2013); Hemingway, John, 'Observations made during a survey of Virgil's Grove' (unpublished, 12th July 2013).

experience'.⁶²⁹ Variety was the 'most important structural element of the eighteenth-century garden',⁶³⁰ but the important question is: variety in what sense? Joseph Addison in *The Spectator* wrote that the 'works of Nature' was what was applicable, and this involved managing the natural landscape.⁶³¹ Starting with John Milton, artists and poets for over a hundred years had been extolling the natural landscape⁶³² and this idea was taken up by Shenstone.

Nature, however, is not random. There are mathematical patterns in everything from the location of trees, the winding of brooks, to the topographical situation of hills and hillocks. Man has realised this since the classical Greek philosophers.⁶³³ Shenstone's gardening was an attempt to replicate this natural order of things by adhering to the innate mathematical constants.⁶³⁴ Shenstone had the ability to understand this and The Leasowes was appreciated because everything obeyed these rules of nature. Many writers have commented on Shenstone's natural-looking landscape, even to the extent of censuring features which were not natural. One of the most important garden writers of the second part of the eighteenth century was Thomas Whately who visited The Leasowes in or before 1770 and published

⁶²⁹ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Alan Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 45.

⁶³⁰ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Bantam Press, 2008), p. 144.

⁶³¹ Addison, Joseph, and Steele, Richard (ed.) Henry Morley, *The Spectator: A New Edition, Reproducing the Original Text Both As First Issued and As Corrected by its Authors*, No. 420, June 1712.

⁶³² Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape* (London, Softshell Books, 1989), p. 54.

⁶³³ Stevens, Peter S. *Patterns in Nature* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974), p. 3; M'Mahon, Rev. John Henry (trans.) *The Metaphysics of Aristotle* (London, H. G. Bohun, 1857), p. 22. This idea has great antiquity. Aristotle noted that the Pythagoreans recognised that mathematics was the principle of everything.

⁶³⁴ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1788), p. 23. As well as logical and natural philosophy Shenstone studied mathematics and sciences at Pembroke College.

his thoughts in his *Observations on Modern Gardening*. He was much more interested in the natural features than the man-made ones and thought the landscape was ‘a perfect picture of his (Shenstone’s) mind, simple, elegant, and amiable’ and criticised the spaces and scenes that disturbed the naturalness of the landscape; the Serpentine Path and the Straight Walk, for instance, he thought were ‘too artificial for the character of the Leasowes’.⁶³⁵

As Williamson observed: ‘Many eighteenth-century landscapes thus contained seventeenth-century and in some cases earlier structures and features.’⁶³⁶ The pre-existing form of The Leasowes was a stock and hay farm. This farming landscape was utilised by Shenstone in creating his landscape garden. Only a few writers have looked at his ground work at The Leasowes and then in an unfocused manner,⁶³⁷ but the topography and geology of his estate provided the raw material which dictated everything else. The topography or land formation in and around the estate is the eastern side of a ridge that forms the watershed between the Tame and Stour valleys.⁶³⁸ The two brooks that flow through and out of it on the western side are tributaries of the River Stour and have carved-out valleys that were called dingles in the eighteenth century.

⁶³⁵ Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, T. Payne, 1770), pp. 64 - 66.

⁶³⁶ Harwood, Edward, Hunt, John Dixon, Leslie, Michael, Williamson, Tom, ‘Whither Garden History?’ in *Studies in the history of gardens & designed landscapes* (London, Taylor & Francis, 1998), p. 101.

⁶³⁷ Gallagher C. & Phibbs J., *The Leasowes - Summary of Proposals* (Debois Landscape Survey Group, 1991); Gallagher, C., *Summary of Known References to Buildings at The Leasowes, including a list of Illustrations* (1997), unpublished.

⁶³⁸ This is the watershed of England as the waterways on either side descend into the sea on the east and west coasts of the country.

Shenstone's elaborate use of these waterways in the landscape made the farm particularly celebrated.

The geology of the area consists of the Upper Carboniferous Westphalian sandstone and coal measures with an area sub-section called Halesowen Sandstone.⁶³⁹ This sandstone was utilised by Shenstone, and was probably taken from a quarry in Green Lane, to fabricate various watercourses and cascades. Shenstone also built structures out of the local sandstone: Pan's Temple, three stone and brick seats and four urns.⁶⁴⁰ Although the sandstone was easy to cut and dress, it is extremely porous and easily weathers, which explains why his built structures quickly decayed.⁶⁴¹ Lying scattered across the steep banks of the eastern part of the estate there were also assorted sandstone pieces that may have broken off where the natural stone came to the surface. It was this rubble that was used for infilling many of Shenstone's built features (see Fig. 5.1).

⁶³⁹ Kay, Henry, 'On the Halesowen Sandstone Series of the South Staffordshire Coalfield, and the Petrified Wood found therein at the Witley Colliery, Halesowen (Worcestershire)' in the *Quarterly Journal of The Geological Society*, Vol. 69, pp. 432-454.

⁶⁴⁰ Palmer, T. J., *Geological Report on Stone Samples Recovered from Various Sites at the Leasowes, c.1km East of Halesowen* (Aberystwyth, University of Wales, 1997), p. 6. As virtually nothing of these features have survived it is difficult to determine if they also came from the same place. Only part of the body of the Somerville Urn still exists and that, according to the geological survey of the site, came from a rock stratum found between the canal and Halesowen town to the west of The Leasowes.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 6.



Fig. 5.1: Shenstone's use of sandstone rubble coursing observed in the curved Ruined Priory wall.⁶⁴²

Above the natural sandstone lay up to a metre of boulder clays brought there during past glacial conditions.⁶⁴³ Shenstone used these in his dam construction material and probably applied clays to make his brook features watertight. The soil above the clay consisted of a thin loam over most of The Leasowes farm. The shallowness of the loam prohibited the planting of many species outside

⁶⁴² Photograph taken by the writer on the 6th December 1998 during the Currie excavation.

⁶⁴³ Maddy, Darrel, and Lewis, Simon G., 'The Lower Severn Valley' in Lewis, Colin A. and Richards, Andrew E. (eds.) *The Glaciation of Wales and adjacent areas* (Logaston, Logaston Press, 2005), p. 76. A glacial material possibly laid down in the MIS 12 phase during the Anglian Glacial Maximum 450,000 years ago.

the valleys unless the level was raised to at least 230mm, which gives us one of the reasons why Shenstone left the surrounding fields for hay and grazing.⁶⁴⁴

The Leasowes farm had tracts of woodland and Shenstone chose to use these in his garden design. This was appropriate as the natural garden style came out of the wildernesses of the formal garden period.⁶⁴⁵ Groves and woods existed on the periphery of these geometric gardens, but they became more important to eighteenth-century landscape gardeners like Shenstone. Although the tree cover may not have been natural at The Leasowes, most of it had been part of the landscape for a hundred years or more and so can be considered as a pre-existing part of the gardening landscape. In 1771 Arthur Young, the agriculturalist, in *A Six Month Tour through the North of England* described a visit to The Leasowes in 1769 and commented that the ‘intermixing of wood and water is amazingly fine’ and thought that the general view had a ‘beautiful variety’.⁶⁴⁶

5.3 Hydrology

Many cultures have considered water to be an essential ingredient in a garden, either spurting like springs and fountains, running as brooks, or

⁶⁴⁴ Rodale, Robert & Furner, Brian, *The Basic Book of Organic Gardening* (London, Pan/Ballantine, 1972), p. 24.

⁶⁴⁵ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 36.

⁶⁴⁶ Young, Arthur, *A Six Month Tour of the North of England* (London, 1771), Letter XXI, p. 64. Further study of the woodland can be found in Chapter Eight.


languid as pools.⁶⁴⁷ Hydrological work had often occurred in post-medieval gardens but its purpose altered in the eighteenth century. The water features and cascades of Stephen Switzer were very different from their geometrically modelled predecessors because they took on a more natural look.⁶⁴⁸ As Judith Roberts and Martin Hargreaves observed:

By the 1730s these formal sheets of water were giving way to serpentine and irregular lakes; there was a desire for rapid movement and for water which was broken into white water as it dashed over rugged rocks.⁶⁴⁹

It is this natural look that Shenstone promoted. Further to this. Water became an integral part of Shenstone's landscape garden and he managed it by improving the water courses through cleaning out brooks, building dams, constructing cascades and digging out pools. Water, according to David Fairer, was 'a shifting medium because of its contrasting moods and modes' and Shenstone recognised that it could be used in various ways as the 'element could have such force or such stillness'.⁶⁵⁰

William Gilpin wrote that the cascades were Shenstone's greatest work: 'his cascades, rocks, and stream are all exact copies of nature, as we anywhere

⁶⁴⁷ Wescoat, Jnr. James L., 'Water and Waterworks in Garden Archaeology' Malek, Armina-Aicha, *Parc et Jardins*, Vol. 1: Sourcebook for Garden Archaeology (Berne, Peter Lang, 2013), pp. 421-422.

⁶⁴⁸ Brogden, W. A., 'Switzer, Stephen (*bap.* 1682, *d.* 1745)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26855>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Roberts, Judith and Hargreaves, Martin, 'Switzer, Stephen, Hydrostaticks and Technology in the Country House Landscape', in *Transactions of the Newcomen Society* Vol. 73, No. 2 (2003), p. 166.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁶⁵⁰ Fairer, David, "'Fishes in his water": Shenstone, Sensibility and the Ethics of Looking' in *The Age of Johnson* Vol. 19 (2009), p. 140.

find'.⁶⁵¹ Shenstone's hydrological skills were appreciated by his visitors, but one motive for creating them was to achieve motion.⁶⁵² Animation was represented within the landscape in his use of streams and cascades. Trees, shrubs and flowers move with the wind, but they are locked into the soil by their roots; water has a life of its own, and added a fluid dimension to the static phenomenon of the garden. Water journeyed through The Leasowes via different stages: a bubbling rill, a silent pool, a cascade over pebbles, a deep plunge over a waterfall and then a drop through smaller waterfalls until it entered a large pool and journeyed down the valley and out of his property (see Fig. 5.2).

Shenstone's management of the waters of The Leasowes highlighted his response to technological issues. The amount of water-flow through his various watercourses was regulated to be fast or slow depending on how they were observed. The fast waters generally associated with the dams and cascades were created in order that the viewer was filled with excitement at the experience. The slow-to-still waters were restful, allowing the viewer to see reflections of the surrounding scene and encapsulated Burke's philosophical idea of beauty.⁶⁵³ Whately, for example, identified how Shenstone had varied his waters when he observed the stillness and

⁶⁵¹ Gilpin, William, *Observations on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*, Vol. 1. 3rd edition (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), p. 64.

⁶⁵² William Shenstone to Richard Jago, June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.) *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 202.

⁶⁵³ Burke, Edmund *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, R. & J. Dodsley, 1754), p. 224.

reflectivity of the Upper Pool in comparison with the dull darkness of the Green Pool, and the precipitous cascades culminating in the High Cascade with the slow meandering of the 'lovely rivulets'.⁶⁵⁴ They were expressions of Shenstone's desire to shape experiences in his landscape garden.



Fig. 5.2: Engraving by Charles Grignion from an original drawing by David Bond showing an island and cascades in the stream of Virgil's Grove.⁶⁵⁵

It is not certain that Shenstone had read Switzer's work *Hydrostaticks and Technology in the Country House Landscape*, published in 1729, but it was written as a manual for both owners and practitioners on the appropriate

⁶⁵⁴ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 69.

⁶⁵⁵ Source: Dodsley, John, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II, p. 320; Tierney, James, E., op. cit., pp. 293, 298. This engraving first appeared at the end of Robert Dodsley's poem *Melpomene*, which was appended to his play *Cleone* in the 1759 edition. See *Melpomene in Cleone; A Tragedy*, 4th Edition (London, J. Dodsley, 1771), p. 91.

use of waterworks in designed landscapes.⁶⁵⁶ If he had not read it, his activities at The Leasowes reflected Switzer's ideas. Most of Book I was concerned with 'discovering springs, surveying methods to obtain correct levels and falls, methods of conducting water and the constructing of reservoirs and basins'.⁶⁵⁷ Practical knowledge, as outlined by Switzer, would have been needed to create the Spring Pool. Archaeological work at The Leasowes identified that the Spring Pool was the major source of water for all of his waterworks. This comprised a spring with water gushing out of a natural rock wall on the north side and falling into a three-metre-square water cistern. The precise age of this reservoir is uncertain, but evidence in Shenstone's letters suggests that a feature of this type and in this position was constructed by him before March 1751.⁶⁵⁸ The writer surveyed the reservoir in August 2012. The clay dam of the reservoir was over a metre wide and was typical of the dams Shenstone had created elsewhere. Bricks lined the internal side of the reservoir on the west side of the feature and were larger in size than were usual in the mid-eighteenth century, suggesting they belonged to a later phase of construction.⁶⁵⁹ This feature was not on Shenstone's circuit path so was not intended to be seen by any of his visitors, but without it his water system would not have been accomplished. Shenstone was fortunate as the waters of his streams and tributaries fell

⁶⁵⁶ Roberts, Judith and Hargreaves, Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-178.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁶⁵⁸ W. S. to R. J. 28th March 1751 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 304.

⁶⁵⁹ 'Brick sizes through the ages' unpublished report. A collection of dated brick sizes was collated by the writer during his time as Archaeological Officer for Dudley. As the dam would not have needed to be of this size with the brick lining, it was considered that it held the original waters of Shenstone's reservoir and that the lining was inserted at a later date to either make it safe or more water-tight.

downhill so that he did not need to pump them back up into the reservoir. Having gravity-fed waters made for simpler work. The water from the reservoir originally flowed into two water courses: a natural one that flowed west into the north brook and a man-made one, that Shenstone constructed, which flowed south along the eastern boundary down to the Serpentine Pool, and then through the ‘South Cascade’, joining up with the south brook.⁶⁶⁰

Shenstone’s work on the rills and brooks in the landscape varied from the simple (removing the detritus in the watercourses and laying pebbles in them) to more complex work by constructing dams to make waterfalls and creating cascades. This can be seen in the north brook, where he cleared the rills between the reservoir and the Upper Pool (Beech Water) to keep the waters fresh and provide an aural experience. Dodsley described this detail in the part of the brook that ran through Lover’s Walk.⁶⁶¹ As the circuit path ran alongside the brook the detail was intended to be seen. The lining did not survive long after Shenstone’s death and once it was washed away the brook dug deeper cuts and wandered from side-to-side, making new paths across the landscape.⁶⁶²

⁶⁶⁰ The term ‘South Cascade’ was not used in Shenstone’s time.

⁶⁶¹ Dodsley, Robert, ‘A Description of The Leasowes’ in Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 307.

⁶⁶² Miller, Hugh, *First Impressions of England and its People* (London, James & John Rivington, 1865), p. 137. All the courses of the brooks at The Leasowes have undergone some change in the years since Shenstone worked on them, as Hugh Miller found in the mid-nineteenth century when many of the waterways had silted-up and levelled out, becoming bogs. The evidence of this is that the old Shenstonesque courses which became dry can still be made out today.

The Upper Pool existed in its present size in Shenstone's time as the dam was shown at its present height in a water-colour he painted (see Chapter Two). This structure pre-dated Shenstone's period as it seems to have been there when he moved back to The Leasowes in 1736.⁶⁶³ The large clay dam stopped the waters of the Upper Pool from flowing west other than by a waterfall that fell over the central area and descended into the valley. Although Shenstone did not create it, he added to it as Christopher Currie's archaeological examination of the dam revealed. Pieces of un-worked red sandstone rubble lay beside the modern concrete stepped-cascade and he suggested that these were part of Shenstone's cascade.⁶⁶⁴ These were laid in the cascade area of the dam and were intended to appear to be a natural collection of rocks that the waters tumbled through.⁶⁶⁵

From the Upper Pool the brook entered an area where there was a second pool which may be called 'Middle Pool' and a small clay dam constructed by Shenstone lay at the west end.⁶⁶⁶ The 'Middle Pool' was a smaller feature, it

⁶⁶³ W. S. to R. J. 1741, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 33. The evidence of the Upper Pool being there is that Shenstone records in this letter that he had constructed a building on his farm – presumably this is the Summerhouse which was erected on an island in the pool.

⁶⁶⁴ Currie, Christopher K., *Archaeological recording at The Leasowes, Halesowen, Dudley, West Midlands* (Eastleigh, CKC Archaeology, 1998), pp. 9-10.

⁶⁶⁵ Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Osborn c.20, 1 v., Hull. Thomas (c.1760) Shenstone's Walks, MSS of 30 pages, pp. 6, 7.; Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of The Leasowes' op. cit., p. 294.

⁶⁶⁶ Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA, HM 303 12, Plan of The Leasowes Farm, 1758 drawn by Joseph Spence; W. S. to Christopher Wren, 9th September 1750 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 288; The term 'Middle Pool' was not used in Shenstone's time.

being less than nine metres in length,⁶⁶⁷ but in Shenstone's time it did not have trees on either side so the water would have acted like a mirror reflecting the sky in the landscape.⁶⁶⁸ The brook then wound through the lower part of this section of the valley called the 'East Cascade'.⁶⁶⁹ The base of this stream had been cleared by Shenstone of sand, silt and organic debris revealing bedrock. As the bedrock consisted of sheets of sandstone, which lay in broken layers, the waters formed a natural cascade down the slope making a series of mini-waterfalls that Shenstone utilised.⁶⁷⁰ None of this middle area was supposed to be seen close to as the circuit walk was some way away, so this represented a distant view. Shenstone painted two opposing views of the brook in this area: one showed the seat on the northern side of his estate (Fig. 5.3) and the other looked south showing his farmstead (Fig. 5.4).⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁷ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁶⁶⁸ Two of Shenstone's water-colours show this. See figure 5.3 and 5.4.

⁶⁶⁹ The term 'East Cascade' was not used in Shenstone's time.

⁶⁷⁰ Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of The Leasowes' *op. cit.*, p. 313.; Hemingway, John, 'A Photographic Survey of the watercourses of Leasowes Park' (unpublished, DMBC, 1994).

⁶⁷¹ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.

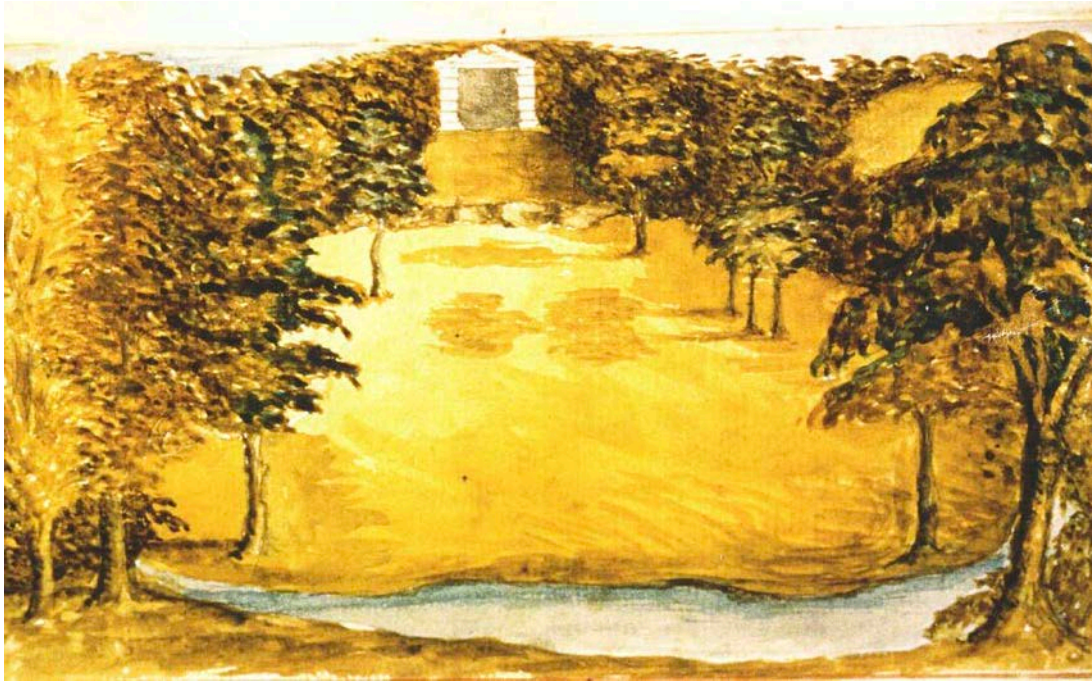


Fig. 5.3: A Classical Screen with a poplar tree on the left beside the brook, from the south. Water-colour painted by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁶⁷²



Fig. 5.4: The View of the Leasowes Farmhouse from the Classical Screen, looking south. Water-colour painted by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷² Ibid.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

The winding brook then carried the water to the Dingle Pool that fed the High Cascade. The dam that formed the west edge of the pool was constructed by Shenstone in about 1744.⁶⁷⁴

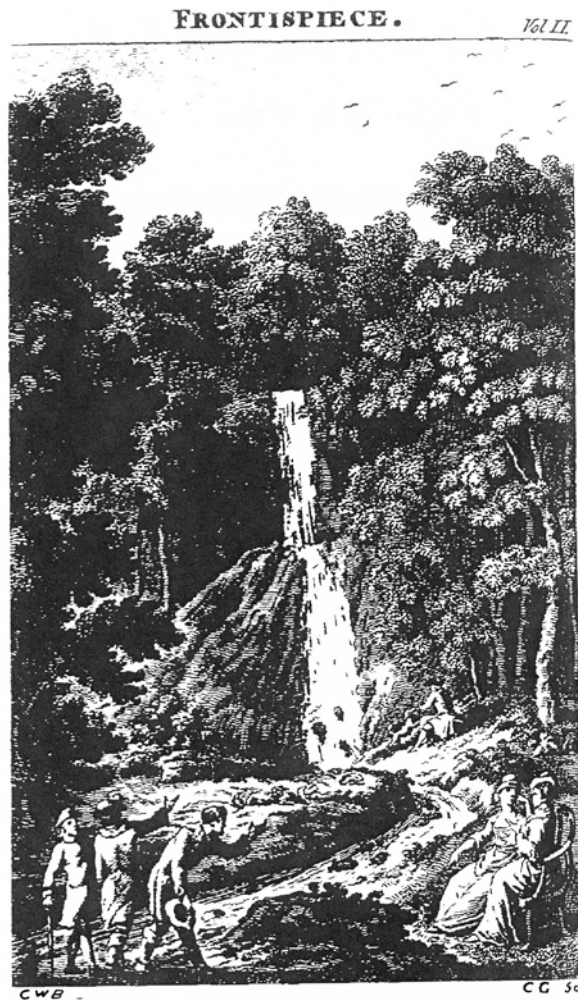


Fig. 5.5: Engraving of a High Cascade suspected to be after William Shenstone's creation.⁶⁷⁵


⁶⁷⁴ The date is revealed by the period in which Shenstone started work on Virgil's Grove. This has since been covered by a new rock 'cliff' and the earlier material cannot now be seen.

⁶⁷⁵ Source: Richard Graves' novel *Columella* Vol II, Frontispiece. Although *Columella* was a fictional work, elements in it can be seen to be based on fact. This engraving shows three figures in the lower left-hand corner possibly representing Shenstone's three university friends: Jago, Whistler and Graves. The figure on his own with the dog underneath the fall is likely to be Shenstone, while the seated ladies may have been the wives of Jago and Graves; Whistler like Shenstone never married. Archaeological evidence revealed a burnt shale deposit in the area where the seat is sited, but as this was un-dated it cannot be construed as being placed there by Shenstone. C.W.B on the left-hand side at the base of the engraving stands for Coplestone Warre Bampfylde, a landscape painter and gardener, who

The High Cascade was a dominant part of Virgil's Grove (see Fig. 5.5). Currie's archaeological trench in the dam revealed that it had been constructed with a timber box-frame core that had distinct clayey sands built up on either side of it. The timber had disintegrated due to the acidic conditions of the soil, leaving two separate fills in front and behind (see Fig. 5.6). This was well in keeping with an eighteenth-century treatise on dam-building by Switzer.⁶⁷⁶ Shenstone allowed the flow over the dam in the form of a natural-looking cascade to be intensified by placing stones jutting out from its face, thus making a fall of water that could be seen and heard from a distance. The circuit path ran over the top of the dam giving his visitors two views: one upstream showing the open area of the pool and the other downstream showing the wooded landscape of Virgil's Grove. Access over the dam was presumably by stepping stones which would have saved visitors from getting their feet wet. William Marshall visited The Leasowes in about 1796 and published his views in a work called *Planting and Rural Ornament*.⁶⁷⁷ He was impressed with the High Cascade, and described it as 'not a flight of steps but a tolerable imitation of a natural waterfall - ten or more feet in height and below this a shorter fall is seen'.⁶⁷⁸

had met Shenstone and been to The Leasowes. This suggests the image was what he saw while he was there.

⁶⁷⁶ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), op. cit., p. 22; Switzer, Stephen, *An Introduction to a general system of hydrostaticks and hydraulicks, philosophical and practical* (London, T. Astley, S. Austen and L. Gilliver, 1729), book II, pp. 129-132.

⁶⁷⁷ G. E. Mingay, 'Marshall, William (bap. 1745, d. 1818)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18155>, accessed  22 Aug 2015].

⁶⁷⁸ Marshall, William H. *Planting and Rural Ornament* (London, 1796), pp. 314-318. Note the similarity in this description with the image shown in Graves' *Columella*.



Fig. 5.6: Archaeological section through the High Dam in Virgil's Grove from the east showing the soil colour change of the disintegrated timber division between the two sides.⁶⁷⁹

Shenstone placed a number of separate features close together in Virgil's Grove and like other parts of his estate used the various springs that flowed into his brook. One example is the Chalybeate Spring, used by him for medicinal purposes (a cup is recorded as lying next to it), which lay next to the High Dam.⁶⁸⁰ The spring was an example of the English interest in medicine, botany and gardening. As mentioned by the Vercelloni's: 'There

⁶⁷⁹ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), *op. cit.*, photographic archive Plate 2.

⁶⁸⁰ Hemingway, John, 'Observations made during a survey of Virgil's Grove,' unpublished report 12th July 2013. The present Chalybeate Spring rises to the east of the High Dam and is thought by the writer to have been caused by the golf club's earth-moving activities in the Nosegay Field which have disrupted the original flow. It is possible that this occurred when the golf club began to make greens to the north of the brook. The recent building of a stone wall on the west side of the dam to house a water-fall chamber is supposed to be a restoration of the Shenstone Cascade. This has led to a side valley occurring on the west side of the dam that has undermined Shenstone's original Chalybeate Spring site.

was no dichotomy between botanical science and the practice of gardening, as there was in other European countries.⁶⁸¹ On Joseph Spence's plan of 1758 a tributary to the brook flowed from the north side of the main brook into the Grove further west than the Chalybeate Spring. Shenstone used this small valley for part of his circular path which took his visitors away from the High Cascade, thus hiding the water features, and then bringing them back to it.⁶⁸² His purpose in doing this was to suddenly surprise viewers by confronting them with the close proximity of the waterfall.

Another spring that he used flowed out of the south bank of Virgil's Grove and had a stone arch and back built around it. This was called the Dripping Fountain and was probably one of the earliest features to be built in the Grove. The Dripping Fountain is curious as it is not a natural feature, but it is in a natural setting. This is the reason the writer feels it was an early feature, before Shenstone had fully settled on his natural theme.⁶⁸³ An archaeological excavation of the site of the feature by Currie found the fast-flowing rill coming from the roots of a Beech Tree (Fig. 5.7). Although most of the original sandstone structure had been removed, a single piece of cut

⁶⁸¹ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton) *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010) p. 62. They referred to John Gerard's *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes* published in 1597, which led the way for the use of plants in the garden.

⁶⁸² This valley has been partially back-filled by the golf club and only a pipe now drains into the Grove.

⁶⁸³ The Dripping Fountain is thought to be an early feature due to the fact that it is very similar to structures made by William Kent as displayed at Chiswick and in the Lower Cascade in the Vale of Venus at Rousham.

stone from the arch remained.⁶⁸⁴ This is likely to have come from the Dripping Fountain.⁶⁸⁵



Fig. 5.7: Christopher Currie excavating the area of the Dripping Fountain and its course to the north brook from the Beech Tree on the right. The arch stone lies in the foreground.⁶⁸⁶

Broken sherds of pottery identified as flower-pots with drainage holes in the side (not at the base as in pots made later) were found close to the natural surface of the rill that flowed from the Dripping Fountain. These are

⁶⁸⁴ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone* (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 315. In September 1996 Lucie Dingwall did an evaluation excavation close to the site where the rill mentioned by Dodsley was found and considered further work would be useful.

⁶⁸⁵ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), op. cit., p. 24. See contemporary illustration of Virgil's Grove.

⁶⁸⁶ Photograph taken by the writer on 4th October 1998 during the Currie excavation.

characteristic of gardenware made prior to 1760.⁶⁸⁷ Were these flower pots used to bring plants into Virgil's Grove, as Shenstone recorded he did in 1749, and were the plants planted beside the Dripping Fountain?⁶⁸⁸ From Virgil's Grove the waters of the brook flowed into another pre-Shenstone feature, Green Pool, and then down the 'Priory Walk Cascade', similarly constructed to the north tributary previously mentioned, into the Priory Pool.⁶⁸⁹

Shenstone's ability to work in his landscape is revealed effectively in his drainage scheme in the middle valley. The watercourse leading south from the Spring Pool reservoir was not a natural feature, but was constructed by him to supply extra water for his hydro-engineering. It transported water through a number of existing ditches from the reservoir in the north valley (for most of this route there was a fall in land, but twists and turns were needed to follow the contours overland) into the middle valley.⁶⁹⁰ The ditches that led to the 'South Cascade' entered the middle valley above the Horse Pond. The pond was a pre-Shenstone farming feature that collected the waters flowing from the top of the hill and was extended by him and made into the Serpentine Water that resembled a river (see Appendix One). This feature may have been influenced by the Serpentine River created in

⁶⁸⁷ Currie, Chris, *Garden Archaeology: A Handbook* (York, 2005) p. 110.

⁶⁸⁸ W. S. to Lady Luxborough 3rd June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 199.

⁶⁸⁹ The term 'Priory Walk Cascade' was not used in Shenstone's time. As stock rearing was done on the farm it is assumed that these pools were for watering the animals and perhaps for washing the wool prior to shearing sheep.

⁶⁹⁰ Hemingway, John, 'The Leasowes, 2012' unpublished survey report.

Hyde Park, London in 1730 for Queen Caroline by Charles Bridgeman.⁶⁹¹ It is likely that Shenstone had seen it on his trips to London in the early 1740s.⁶⁹² In order to hide that it was not a river he hid its extremities by placing a parapet to suggest a bridge on the north side and concealed it with woodland on the south side. It was never seen close to as the circuit path was placed some way away so as not to reveal this subterfuge. The waters then drained into a ditch that led to the Heart-shaped Pool which he created to act as a reservoir above the 'South Cascade' (see Appendix One). Why he created the Heart-shaped Pool in this position is unclear as the 'romantic' part of the grounds was Lover's Walk.⁶⁹³

The Heart-shaped Pool drained into the 'South Cascade'. This feature was noted by Dodsley as a 'mini-Niagara' and said to be a beautiful piece of nature (see Fig. 5.8).⁶⁹⁴ It was one of the most successful features in Shenstone's landscape design and Young recognised that the area was 'astonishingly romantic'.⁶⁹⁵ Samuel Johnson commented that he visited all fifteen of the waterfalls that were situated in one place⁶⁹⁶ and Mrs Thrale, who accompanied him, was much more emotive and fell in love with the

⁶⁹¹ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 115.

⁶⁹² W. S. to R. J. 21st January 1741 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 15; W. S. to R. J. 30th May 1744, p. 88. Shenstone recorded in his letters that he went to London from 1741 to 1744.

⁶⁹³ The writer believes that this feature was part of Shenstone's earlier attempt to bring a romantic allusion to his landscape and that he started it in this position before abandoning it for Lover's Walk.

⁶⁹⁴ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' in *The Works*, op. cit., p. 294.

⁶⁹⁵ Young, Arthur, *A Six Month Tour through the North of England* (London, 1771), Letter XXI, p. 280.

⁶⁹⁶ Boswell, James, *The Life of Johnson* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1793), Vol. V, p. 457. This is presumed to be the 'South Cascade'.

place stating that: ‘The cascades, however, are so lovely, so un-artificial to appearance, and so frequent that one must be delighted, and confess that if one had to chose (sic) among all places one has seen, the Leasowes should be the choice to inhabit oneself.’⁶⁹⁷ William Marshall thought it was delightful as it fell down ‘precipices’ of five to six and three to four feet.⁶⁹⁸ It was the display of the waters of the ‘South Cascade’ that Sir John Parnell thought looked particularly striking: he visited The Leasowes in April of 1770 and published an account in his *Journal of a Tour through England and Wales*.⁶⁹⁹ He noted that the criss-cross dashing of the water was not formed by the tree roots as was imagined, but by flagstones and dams built for the purpose.⁷⁰⁰ Whately also saw the importance of the ‘South Cascade’ in looking like a natural feature: ‘issuing from a wood which hangs on one of the declivities’, then winding its way through a succession of cascades of ‘a hundred and fifty yards in continuance’. He wrote that the trees that line and lie within the waters, making them trickle around the base of the trunks, and here and there a space between the larger specimens allows a ‘sunbeam to play upon the water’.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁷ Purkis, E Monro, *William Shenstone, Poet and Landscape Gardener* (Wolverhampton, 1931), p. 81.

⁶⁹⁸ Marshall, William H., op. cit., p. 318; Coke, David, *The Triumph of Pleasure, Vauxhall Gardens 1729-1786* (London, The Foundling Museum, 2012), p. 9. Marshall contrasted these falls and the ones at Vauxhall in London and wondered which one inspired the other. The cascade at Vauxhall was created in 1752 and was a mechanical feature created out of thousands of strips of tin foil fixed to rollers. When this was operated after dark it looked and sounded like a natural cascade. It seems unlikely that Shenstone ever saw it as he had ceased going to London by that date.

⁶⁹⁹ Sambrook, James, ‘Parnell’s Garden Tours: Hagley and The Leasowes’ in *Eighteenth Century Life* (College of William and Mary & Colonial Williamsburg Foundation January 1983), pp. 61-64.

⁷⁰⁰ Coll. Misc. 38, op. cit., p. 103.

⁷⁰¹ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 65.



**Fig. 5.8: 'South Cascade', water-colour by William Shenstone.
Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁷⁰²**

An archaeological survey took place of the 'South Cascade' in 1994.⁷⁰³ It revealed that although the steep fall of water had eroded the base, for the first eighty metres sandstone blocks were found embedded in the banks, while others had fallen into the present bed.⁷⁰⁴ Like the sandstone found beside the waterfall from the Upper Pool dam these blocks would have been

⁷⁰² Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number. The building shown at the top of the cascade was never placed there. It was likely to be his summer house which he intended to move from the Upper Pool to this position, but was destroyed in a flood.

⁷⁰³ Hemingway, John, 'A Photographic Survey of the watercourses of Leasowes Park' (unpublished, 1994).

⁷⁰⁴ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

fragments of Shenstone's work. These may have been part of the original lining of the cascade which when built-up into layers produced the falls of water that were enjoyed in the eighteenth century. An excavation close to where the cascade was supposed to run was performed to find evidence of the Stamford Root house shown in Fig. 5.9, but nothing was found. A stone-lined feature, however, was revealed (see Fig. 5.10). It was assumed that this was part of Shenstone's Cascade, though the brick lining was a later feature.⁷⁰⁵ From the base of the 'South Cascade' the waters wound around the slope before entering the south brook which then led into the Priory Pool.

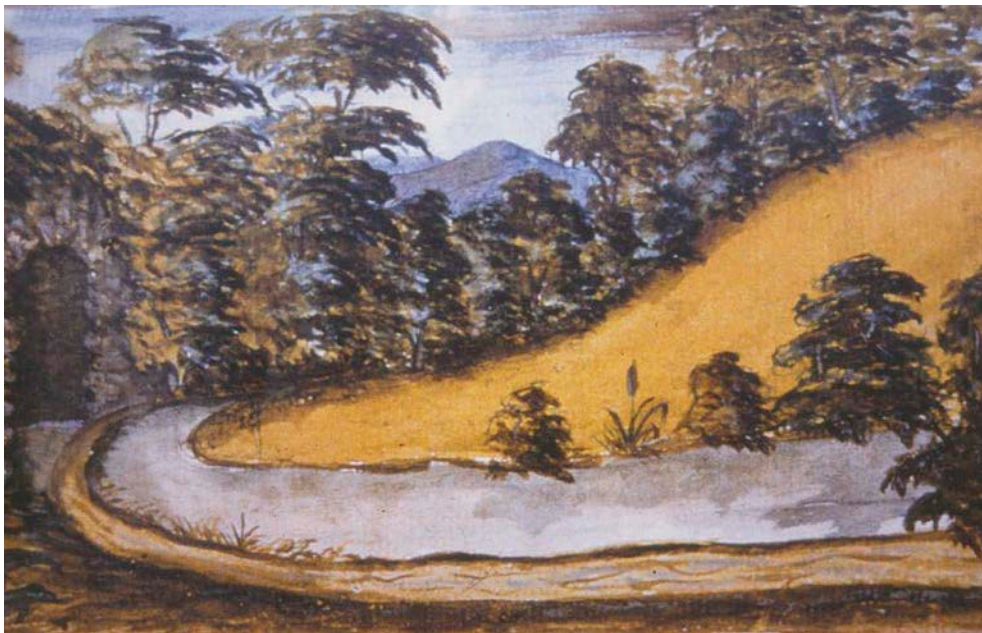


Fig. 5.9: The Stamford Root house and brook at the base of the 'South Cascade', water-colour painted by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰⁵ The brick-lined feature had been inserted within it possibly during the nineteenth century, judging by the brick size. There were a number of people in the later period with the time and money to do this kind of work.

⁷⁰⁶ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number. The hedgerow in the background is the one that the 'South Cascade' follows. The root house is facing south.



Fig. 5.10: Archaeological excavation of part of a watercourse close to the site of Stamford's Root house from the north-west showing the external stone fill and the internal brick floor and sides.⁷⁰⁷

Erosion on the hillside that made up most of The Leasowes landscape would have been a problem to Shenstone. Soil eroded down-slope as colluvium into the brook valleys to make alluvium. The alluvium content of the valleys was variable. Silt was thin in the steeper fast-flowing brook beds, but much thicker where they levelled off and the current slowed down, particularly at the upper area of the pools as it does today (see Fig. 5.11). This may have been of great concern to Shenstone as the collection of silt filling his cascades and pools would have eventually turned them into quagmires. An example was a pathway that ran through Lover's Walk which lay in the path of a number of rills. He would have had to be constantly cleaning these out to

⁷⁰⁷ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), *op. cit.*, photographic archive, plate 8.

keep water flowing.⁷⁰⁸ Gilpin, writing ten years after Shenstone's death, complained that he might have 'drained and cleaned the ground' more. In addition he stated that Shenstone's use of water was too profuse and that by placing a lake and a river there he was 'forcing nature', particularly as many of his ponds were now 'impregnated with filth, which generates from stagnation.'⁷⁰⁹ This supports the conclusion that by 1772 little had been done to clear the various waterways.⁷¹⁰ Much of The Leasowes was meadow land and Shenstone was very aware that over-draining would have led to the disappearance of many of his spring and early summer meadow flowers, one of the pleasing highlights of The Leasowes landscape.⁷¹¹ If this was a reference to the drainage of his fields then Shenstone knew his land better than Gilpin.

Erosion could not be prevented, but Shenstone displayed his hydrological engineering skills by slowing it down by placing sandstone plates and pebbles on the brook bed.⁷¹² Some of these plates can still be observed embedded in the bank of the 'South Cascade' with a single plate just beneath Leasowes

⁷⁰⁸ W. S. to L. L. 4th February 1749-50 in Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., p. 256. Despite Shenstone's work many of his paths were still muddy, as shown in a letter regarding the Earl of Stamford's visit. The reason why the original walk through Lover's Walk is not now used is because the rills have turned into quagmires overflowing onto the path.

⁷⁰⁹ Gilpin, William, *Observations on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*, Vol. 1, 3rd edition (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808) pp. 61-62.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid, p. 61.

⁷¹¹ W. S. to R. J. 14th December 1756 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 460.

⁷¹² Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 307. Dodsley stated that the rill above the Upper Pool rolled over pebbles and fell over small cascades. As pebbles would not have made the cascades it can be assumed that they were created out of pieces of sandstone.

Lane Bridge (see Fig. 5.12).⁷¹³ The purpose of these pieces, until the nature of Shenstone's construction work was realised, had not been recognised before.



Fig. 5.11: Green Pool looking west in 2013 showing the silting-up that has occurred since the pool was cleaned out in the early 2000s.⁷¹⁴



Fig. 5.12: Photograph of sandstone plate next to Leasowes Lane Bridge.⁷¹⁵

⁷¹³ Hemingway, John (2013), *op. cit.*

⁷¹⁴ Photograph taken by the writer on the 23rd September 2013. Silt traps are the modern way of getting over this problem, but Shenstone probably used his pools as traps to catch the material and removed the silt when it started to build up.

⁷¹⁵ Photograph taken by the writer on the 23rd September 2013.

Shenstone did not have enough water to flow through both valleys simultaneously so when his visitors arrived he had one turned off as they left the north valley and the other turned on as they entered the south valley. This control of the waters can be seen in a letter in a description of Tom Jackson, his servant. He described Jackson acting like a 'River-god' turning off the waters from the north stream and on to the south stream.⁷¹⁶ This mythological reference is an example of how Shenstone often referred to his landscape, as a classical Arcadia with gods and spirits not only living, but also working within it. Thomas Hull described a scene in 1757-1759 in which he saw Jackson opening the sluices and this 'presents us with a very noble Cascade, that appears falling down different parts of the hills, & Water the Meadows beneath, besides supplying that Bason for the use of cattle.'⁷¹⁷

5.4 Circuit path

The circuit path was another feature Shenstone created. One of the earliest meandering paths was placed in 1705, by Henry Wise and Stephen Switzer, in Wray Wood, Yorkshire.⁷¹⁸ They were designed to conduct visitors through a garden on a carefully guided route, and became a feature of many notable eighteenth-century English gardens. Ralph Harrington stressed its importance in his essay on *The Leasowes*.

⁷¹⁶ W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1754, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 415-6.

⁷¹⁷ Beinecke Library, Hull. Thomas (c.1760), p. 22. Cattle was a general term at the time, including cows and sheep.

⁷¹⁸ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

The path united the garden space, the objects, views and experiences which it contained, and the wider natural landscape in which it existed, into a single consumable unit; defined its boundary with the 'unimproved' natural world outside and served to programme the walk through the garden by ensuring that its features were seen to their best advantage, from particular viewpoints and in a particular order.⁷¹⁹

Harrington pointed out that although the path wandered around The Leasowes apparently aimlessly it was in fact carefully controlled in order to present the scenes as Shenstone wanted them viewed.⁷²⁰ He noted that any deviation from the route was to 'subvert the carefully sustained spatial, pictorial and emotional construct which is the garden'.⁷²¹ Sandro Jung went further when he stated:

Shenstone's system of paths demarcates a proto-religious way to self-realisation, a passing through a symbolically inscribed landscape in which various physical objects, vistas and textual stimuli in the form of poems and inscriptions affect the spectators sensory, psychological and somatic experience.⁷²²

The idea of placing a path around his farm came slowly to Shenstone and it was not until 1754 that he noted: 'The line of my path is now almost universally extended to the sides of my hedges'.⁷²³ The path wound around the outside edge of his farm in what Philip Southcote called a 'garden belt'.⁷²⁴

⁷¹⁹ Harrington, Ralph, *Nature dressed and undressed: William Shenstone, the Leasowes and the English garden transition, c.1740 - c.1763* (unpublished Master of Studies essay, Lincoln College, Oxford, 1994), p. 18.

⁷²⁰ Ibid, p. 20.

⁷²¹ Ibid, p. 21.

⁷²² Jung, Sandro, 'William Shenstone's Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,' in *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014) p. 18.

⁷²³ W. S. to Sherrington Davenport, 1st July 1754 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 415.

⁷²⁴ Jacques, David, *Georgian Gardens: Reign of Nature* (London, 1990), p. 25.

The circuit path was a feature that followed the high and low points of the topography, thus increasing the viewer's ability to see the maximum extent of the landscape, as well as leading visitors into enclosed glades and wooded walks.

Once the path extended to the farm's boundaries Shenstone constructed features along its route. Many of the southern features on the path post-dated its inception, which is further proof of the evolutionary character of his garden (see Appendix One). The path acted as a guide that led the visitor through various experiences. In Lover's Walk it conducted the visitor as if on a lifelong journey. In Virgil's Grove it ran from the gentle spirits of the earth (Green Pool) to the raw nature of the High Cascade. This latter feature was a typical example of Edmund Burke's representation of the sublime in that the waters violently poured over the falls.⁷²⁵ Heely's description of the High Cascade seems to support this interpretation when he described the 'white foaming precipitately tumbling into a deep expanse'.⁷²⁶ Shenstone appeared to understand how people were affected by a sensory landscape.

The pathway of Shenstone's circuit walk has survived in places as shallow depressions.⁷²⁷ Although many of Shenstone's paths have eroded, Currie excavated a depression of one next to the remains of Virgil's Obelisk and

⁷²⁵ Burke, Edmund, op. cit. p. 224.

⁷²⁶ Heely, Joseph, *A Companion to the Leasowes, Hagley, and Enville* (Birmingham, Swinney & Hawkins, 1799-1800), p. 31.

⁷²⁷ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), op. cit., pp. 11. 23-24.

found no sign of gravel metalling, supporting Shenstone's objection to it, but it is intriguing how Shenstone marked out the pathways.⁷²⁸ In late spring and early summer the grass and other plants would have rapidly made the paths indistinguishable from their surroundings. If he cut a path through the growth this would have had to have been a regular activity. Perhaps the lineal depressions now seen in The Leasowes landscape were the result of constantly cutting through the vegetation to make the course of the path clear.⁷²⁹

5.5 Conclusion

The Leasowes was natural-looking because Shenstone did little to the basic structure of his hill farm, but his knowledge of the topography and geology was used to great benefit. Most of the stone in his brooks and buildings came from his fields, and archaeological investigations identified them and made it possible to understand how he used sandstone plates in his waterworks. Shenstone's work on the water systems at The Leasowes disclosed his technical skills in that he could shut the water supply off in the one valley and open it in the other when his visitors were walking in the latter. Shenstone managed his water creatively and understood its erosive properties. He knew how to keep water flowing and prevent silting-up. By identifying the circuit path that took his visitors around an ever-changing landscape he gave them the opportunity to view both the natural scene within the estate and the adjacent Stour valley.

⁷²⁸ W. S. to L. L. Thursday 20th June 1750, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 280

⁷²⁹ In May and June the writer needs to cut the grass on his lawns twice a week. Due to the size of The Leasowes this would have taken a great deal of time, which would have left little time to do anything else. Another consideration is that the depths of these depressions could be caused by erosion through the many hundreds of visitors who used them.

Shenstone built features that looked natural in the root houses that were dotted around the landscape. Thomas Hull commented on their effectiveness: 'that every place, which is termed a Bower, is just such made by nature, & a seat put into it.'⁷³⁰ Shenstone did not wish his creations to look constructed, and other than the Dripping Fountain, they looked artless and unsophisticated and he demonstrated, where appropriate, that he had the ability to modify the landscape to make it look like a natural setting.

⁷³⁰ Beinecke Library, Hull. Thomas (c.1760), op. cit., p. 2.

Chapter Six

The gentrification of Shenstone's residence: exterior and interior design

6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the origins of William Shenstone's architectural knowledge and the extent to which he created a polite gentleman's residence from a simple farmhouse. Shenstone had aspirations to live in a building that gave others the impression that he was a gentleman. He did not appear to have an overall plan for his home, as it evolved throughout his life (see Appendix 1), but he developed architectural ideas from advice given by his friends and acquaintances, reading, visiting other properties and practical experience. A central issue, however, was that he believed a building should sit well in a garden environment, so he integrated the external landscape with his home. Previous garden historians have concentrated on his garden, but since none have looked at what he did with his house and surrounding buildings, this provides a new perspective on Shenstone.⁷³¹ Although he achieved a great deal the buildings were far from being the perfect home that he desired.



6.2 The sources of his architectural knowledge

⁷³¹ A number of historians, including the original listing inspectors, have assumed that the house appears in most of the engravings of The Leasowes was where he lived. This structure, however, was built after he had died and therefore was not a Shenstonesque feature.

In the eighteenth century a new architectural impulse was given to the designs of a great variety of houses from palatial edifices to more humble dwellings, and it has been claimed that the architecture of the house was to a large extent closely tied to that of the gardens.⁷³² One of the most popular styles, in the first half of the century, was the Italianate designs of the Venetian Andrea Palladio (1508-1580).⁷³³ Others followed and many of the English architects were amateurs, including men such as William Kent (1685-1748), a painter and Batty Langley (1696-1751), a gardener.⁷³⁴ Diane Buie has argued that Shenstone displayed his architectural abilities in an ‘industrious, professional footing’, and noted that his skills were applied in a ‘project management capacity’,⁷³⁵ by telling his employees what he wanted.⁷³⁶ His interest in architecture grew when he began to design urns for his grounds. His work then evolved into designing structures until he made changes to his farmhouse that demanded engineering and architectural knowledge, and an understanding of rules of proportion. His finances, however, were insufficient to enable him to achieve much more than a piece-meal improvement of his house. Nevertheless, his creation seemed to satisfy his more prosperous guests

⁷³² Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 36.

⁷³³ Lloyd, Nathaniel, *The History of the English House* (Ware, Omega Books Ltd, 1975), p. 123.

⁷³⁴ John Harris, ‘Kent, William (*cap.* 1686, *d.* 1748)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2007 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15424>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Eileen Harris, ‘Langley, Batty (*cap.* 1696, *d.* 1751)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16022>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Lloyd, Nathaniel, *ibid.*, pp. 130-131, 133-15.

⁷³⁵ Buie, Diane, *Melancholy and the idle lifestyle in the eighteenth century* (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Northumbria, 2010), p. 163.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

such as Fernando Dudley Lea, Lord Dudley of The Grange, Halesowen and Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough of Barrells, Warwickshire.⁷³⁷

Shenstone's interest in architecture probably reflected his parental background. Although his father was a farmer, his mother Ann Penn came from the minor gentry of Worcestershire. Her childhood home was Harborough Hall and there she had been used to a finer house than her later home at her husband's abode on The Leasowes farm. It was likely that Shenstone was brought up to appreciate the genteel residence of his maternal grandparents,⁷³⁸ and it is probable that his mother began the gentrification of The Leasowes farmhouse that Shenstone carried on after her death. Shenstone's aspirations as a gentleman provided the main impulse that led him to develop his architectural skills. He was university-educated and had an income that allowed him not to have to work, so he had the desire to show that he belonged to a higher status than his paternal origins suggested and wished for a house and landscape garden that 'polite' people would come to visit and enjoy. His distant cousins, Lord Dudley of The Grange, Halesowen and Viscount Ward at Himley Hall had fine Italianate Palladian houses and they regularly invited him to their estates.⁷³⁹ His acquaintances Lord George Lyttelton of Hagley, Earl Harry Grey of Enville

⁷³⁷ William Shenstone to Henrietta Knight, 25th January 1752 in Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 330; W. S. to H. K. 30th September 1752, p. 341.

⁷³⁸ Nash, Treadway Russell, *Collections for a history of Worcestershire* Volume I, (London, John White, 1789), p. 589.

⁷³⁹ W. S. to Richard Graves, 3rd October 1752 and W. S. to R. G. 16th October 1789, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 344, 528. There are numerous references to him visiting their homes.

and Uther Lewis, Lord Plymouth of Hewell Grange also had property suitable to their status and he visited their estates on a regular basis.⁷⁴⁰ Shenstone also saw other fine houses as in his early days he visited Bath,⁷⁴¹ Birmingham,⁷⁴² Cheltenham,⁷⁴³ London, Lichfield⁷⁴⁴ and Worcester.⁷⁴⁵ He recorded in his letters that he had been to the estates of: Lord Temple at Stowe, Lord Burlington at Chiswick, Thomas Anson at Shugborough, Sharington Davenport at Davenport and Lord Foley at Witley.⁷⁴⁶ Their advice and what they did with their houses was invaluable for his work at The Leasowes.

His architectural skills were first developed through his friendship with Henrietta Knight. Her letters and his subsequent reading helped to provide him with the practical ability to change and construct things and she lent him Isaac Ware's volume, *Designs of Inigo Jones and others* on Ash Wednesday 1749, and another book on architecture in October 1749.⁷⁴⁷ At first Henrietta Knight acted as a guide for this subject when she made the comment that: 'I will enquire of the knowing which are the proper books in architecture for

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid, W. S. to R. G. July 1743, W. S. to Thomas Percy 1st December 1758, W. S. to L. L. 11th November 1753, pp. 69, 499, 384. There are numerous references to him visiting their homes.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid, W. S. to R. G. 11th May 1746, p. 103.

⁷⁴² Ibid, W. S. to Winny Fletcher, 28th November 1745, p. 99.

⁷⁴³ Ibid, W. S. to Miss Aubrey, 1743, p. 83.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid, W. S. to R. G. 22nd November 1745, p. 97.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 97.

⁷⁴⁶ McKillop, A. D, Thomson's visit to Shenstone, *Philological Quarterly*, XXIII (1944) pp. 283-286 and Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 274, 450, 320, 643. Numerous letters.

⁷⁴⁷ H. K. to W. S. 23rd March 1748-9 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), pp. 85-86. Isaac Ware was one of the Burlington set, the book on designs was published in 1731. Most of the designs are internal, but there are a few of garden buildings shown though none that Shenstone seems to have copied.

your use and in the meantime will send you the only one I have that teaches the rudiments of that science.’⁷⁴⁸ His technical reading had improved by November 1749, as he sent her James Gibbs on architecture which suggests that he was now able to choose suitable books on the subject for himself.⁷⁴⁹

6.3 Transforming The Leasowes farmhouse

The Leasowes farmhouse and its 90-acre estate had been leased to the Shenstone family in 1717 by the Lytteltons of Hagley Hall. The house, originally a timber-framed structure possibly built in the sixteenth century, was added to by subsequent tenants.⁷⁵⁰ Shenstone painted a water-colour of the house in about 1740 (see Fig. 6.1).



Fig. 6.1: The east side of The Leasowes farmhouse from an original water-colour by William Shenstone in the David Parkes Collection.⁷⁵¹

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 10th October 1749, p. 130.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 8th November 1749, p. 139. The book was probably *A Book of Architecture, containing designs of buildings and ornaments* published in 1728.

⁷⁵⁰ The additions to the farmstead can be made out by examining the images made of it prior to its demolition.

⁷⁵¹ Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury, David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, p. 80. This painting is not in Parkes style, but it is in Shenstone's. Perhaps it was a copy of the original?

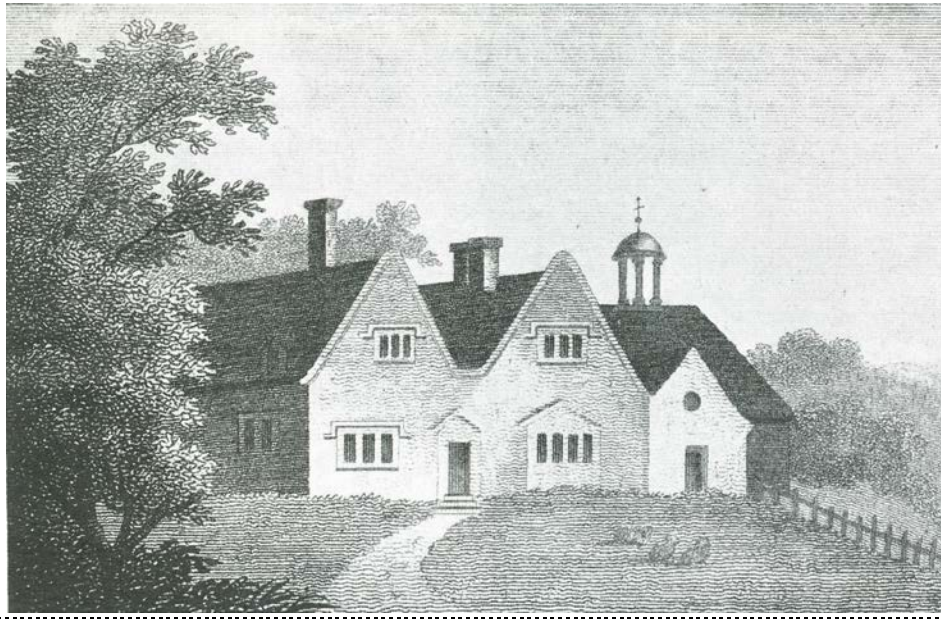


Fig. 6.2: Drawing of The Leasowes Farmhouse by William Shenstone and copied by David Parkes. Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shrewsbury Record Office.

The original build seems to have been a single rectangular structure with a pitched roof aligned west to east in the centre of the water-colour. As very few farmsteads were built in stone and none at all in brick in the sixteenth century in what is now Dudley Borough, the central part was probably a remnant of the timber-building phase built at that time.⁷⁵² A significant feature was the large central series of windows within a porch-type feature on the ground floor of its east-facing gable. This appears to be a blanking-off of an earlier entrance way. This central structure was also wider than the later building to the left. This later building on the same alignment, but slightly longer and narrower, was added to the original structure on its south side. This structure is certainly post-Civil War as this was the period when

⁷⁵² Hunt, Julian, *A History of Halesowen* (Chichester, Phillimore, 2004), p. 107. The earliest record of the farm is in 1558 when Richard Underhill is recorded as leasing the estate.

building in brick began to be a growing feature of West Midland house construction.⁷⁵³ Ann Shenstone may have instigated the build to gentrify the house. The quarry to the south of the house in which Shenstone placed his hermitage may have been the clay source for the brick. It was this part of the house that Shenstone later gentrified.

The plan below, Fig 6.3, shows an original two-up, two-down building with its associated barn and byre. A servants' hall and brew house were also added on the north side to the original building. The hall may have originally been a barn with the brew house and granary attached to it. The main domestic part of the farmhouse was where the later dairy and servants' hall were situated. These pre-dated Shenstone's occupation of the farm and was the building that he inherited.

Shenstone was aware that his home was a basic farmhouse and in a letter to Henrietta Knight in 1749 he made an amusing list of all its deficiencies:

I never walk beneath my Roof, but one room cries out, 'Pray why am I not paper'd? On which another takes ye Alarm directly, and answers, 'why am not I stuccd?' a third, 'why have not I a chimney-piece'? a fourth, 'why not I, a new Floor'? to which two of them rejoin at once, 'And pray why have not we any floors at all'? These are not a quarter of the Complaints; my beds grown old and decrepit desire to resign there office in favour of others more alert & able. My Chairs suggest they want companions; that being divided one in a room they are not able to perform ye ceremonies of it. Nay ye pictures I lately purchased have caught the infection -

⁷⁵³ This comment is based on the writer's experience over the last thirty years on historic buildings in: Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire and Dudley Borough.

They also are malcontents; calling out upon the windows to afford them more Light, to which ye testy old windows reply with a sarcasm, 'Plague not us with your continual teizings; we transmit Light enough for all ordinary occasions; & peradventure, if we transmit more, it will be only to discover ye Cracks & other Imperfections yt are in ye.' Midst all this Hellish uproar, I walk contemplatively; seldom uttering a syllable besides these 'Have Patience good People!'⁷⁵⁴

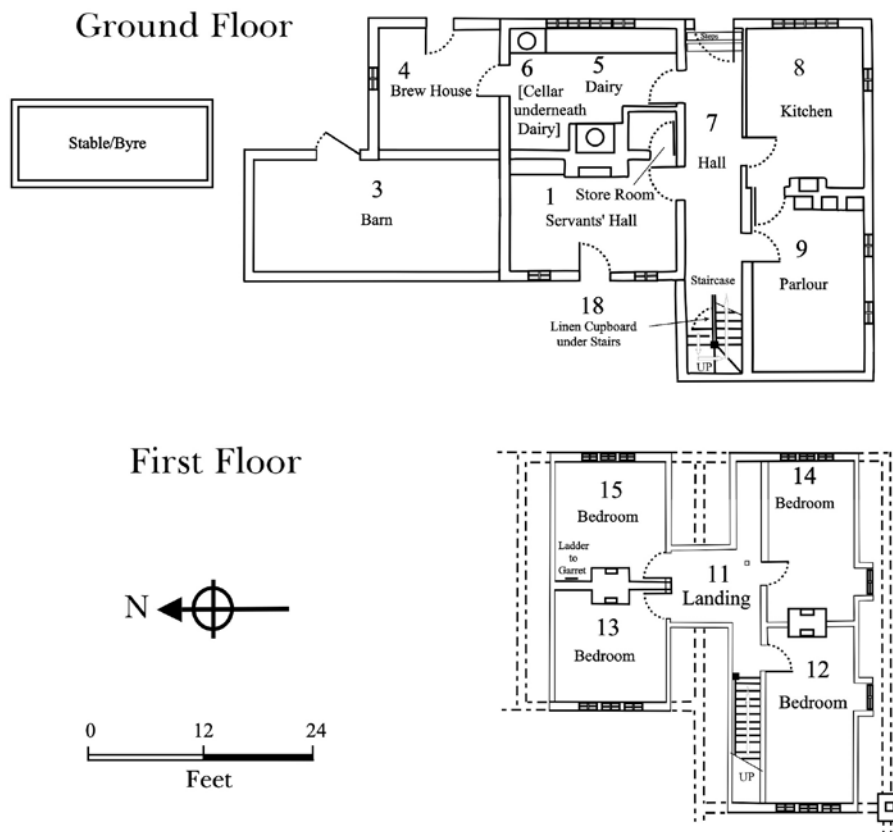
⁷⁵⁴ W. S. to H. K. 6th June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 198.

The Leasowes Farmstead

After Shenstone/Parks, Jenkins/Wilson
and 1764 Inventory.

Order of Rooms prior to the changes by William Shenstone.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Servants' Hall | 9. Parlour |
| 2. Store Room | 10. Linen Cupboard |
| 3. Barn | 11. Landing |
| 4. Brew House | 12. Bedroom |
| 5. Dairy | 13. Bedroom |
| 6. Cellar | 14. Bedroom |
| 7. Hall | 15. Bedroom |
| 8. Kitchen | 16. Garret |



John Hemingway/Peter King 2011

Fig. 6.3: Floor plan of The Leasowes farmstead prior to changes made by William Shenstone.⁷⁵⁵

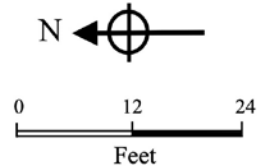
⁷⁵⁵ Plan by the writer of the house was made by adopting the information in the itinerary of the rooms in the Chancery Proceedings with the descriptions made in various letters that were written by Shenstone.

The Leasowes Farmstead

After Shenstone/Parks, Jenkins/Wilson
and 1764 Inventory.

Order of Rooms in Inventory of William Shenstone, 1764

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Kitchen | 11. Library |
| 2. Store Room | 12. Green Room |
| 3. Servants' Hall | 13. Gothic Room |
| 4. Brew House | 14. Chamber over Parlour |
| 5. Dairy | 15. Red Room |
| 6. Cellar | 16. Garret |
| 7. Hall | 17. Staircase |
| 8. Dining Room | 18. Linen |
| 9. Breakfast Room | 20. The Grounds |
| 10. Drawing Room | |



Shenstone stated that he reduced the hall floor and some other rooms by 10 inches. This made the door and the external level higher than the hall.

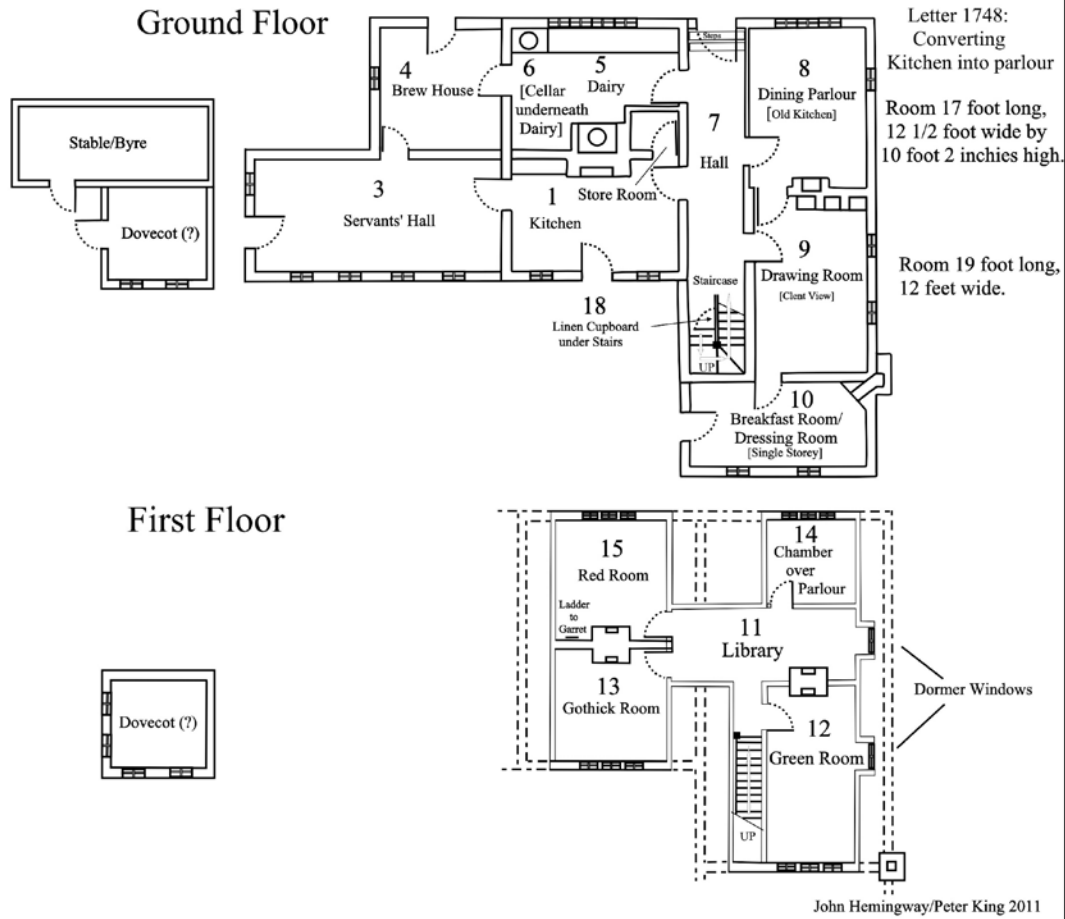


Fig. 6.4: Floor plan of The Leasowes after changes made by William Shenstone circa, 1763.⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵⁶ The research that led to the formation of this plan was made by the writer while he was doing an unpublished study of the now demolished structure in the late 1990's.

Not to be put off by his home's imperfections he re-constructed the farmhouse. He had theories about the role of a building as he wrote: 'In designing a house and gardens, it is happy when there is an opportunity of maintaining a subordination of parts.'⁷⁵⁷ He meant that the house should not be too grand or too small for the view⁷⁵⁸ and saw the house and garden as a whole. In his estimation one would not work without the other. Shenstone's desire to gentrify his home led to a number of internal changes, which began in 1748. Richard Graves refers to the rebuilding at the farmhouse:

The same genius was discovered in improving, that, in some measure, appeared in whatever Mr Shenstone undertook. He often made his operators perform what they represented as impracticable; and remove partitions, the consequence of which, according to their maxims, would prove the downfall of the whole edifice. He gave his hall some magnificence, by sinking the floor, and giving it an altitude of ten feet instead of seven. In short, by his own taste, and his mechanical skill, he acquired two tolerably elegant rooms from a mere farmhouse of a most diminutive dimension.⁷⁵⁹

Graves' description of the hall as 'magnificent' is probably an exaggeration. No doubt it was superior from a 'polite' point of view, but it could never have looked like the grand halls of the Palladian mansions. Whether Shenstone received detailed ideas from other parties and places or formulated them himself is difficult to prove from the evidence. The two 'elegant rooms' that Graves referred to were the dining parlour and the drawing room. As Shenstone was not concerned with day-to-day farming activities he turned

⁷⁵⁷ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II, (London, 1768), p. 114. Also see Phibbs, John, 'Pleasure Grounds in Sweden and their English Models' *Garden History* 21, 1, (1993), p. 72.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 72; W. S. to Richard Jago 17th September 1747, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 114.

⁷⁵⁹ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1788), pp. 71-72.

the kitchen, which was formerly at the south-east corner of the house, into a dining room or parlour, and moved the kitchen to the rear of the original house. The accoutrements of the old kitchen could not so easily be removed, as Shenstone recorded in a letter of the 18th December 1748:

...employ'd a Mason & Carpenter to proceed in modelling my Parlour, or rather converting a kitchen into one. When they will finish, is beyond my Power of Conjecture; but until they do, I am obliged to give Directions. The most that I shall gain, will be, a Room 17 Feet long, 12 F & ½ Broad, and ten Feet two Inches high; the walls plain stucco with a Cornish; a Leaden Pipe conveying water into a Bason at one end, over a slob.⁷⁶⁰

Whether he kept the basin and slob, like a modern kitchen sink in his dining parlour, is unknown. In 1805 Thomas Percy described 'a neat marble cistern, which by turning a cock, was fed by living water'; this may have been the aforementioned slob.⁷⁶¹ The ten foot, two inch-high room is pertinent as farmhouses of this period invariably had low rooms from seven to eight feet high. Shenstone wanted a higher ceiling, more in common with the halls and mansion houses that were being built for the aristocracy, but this would have meant digging out the ground inside the room, and hence there were doubts about its safety. Shenstone recorded that he had masons as well as carpenters working on his premises. If they had to support the house as they lowered the floor their activity would have been time-consuming and he was concerned by the time they took. On the 6th June 1750 he wrote in a letter to

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 179.

⁷⁶¹ Mitford, John (ed.), *The correspondence of Thomas Gray and the Rev. Norton Nicholls; with other pieces hitherto unpublished* (London, W. Pickering, 1843), pp. 192-3.

Henrietta Knight that over the last six weeks he had been inundated with workmen on his house:

I have not been a day since yt time without two masons & their Attendants, two Carpenters & some times three, a Painter, a Plummer, glazier & the Lord knows who beside. My House is a bottomless Pit....

That he had so many skilled workmen changing his property supports the conjecture that what he planned was significant.⁷⁶² He describes the alterations he was making to his drawing room:

However I must acquaint you that one of my alterations has been to enlargement of a Drawing-Room or Library (for I know not which I shall determine to make of it) And this will be but about 19 Feet by 12; yet when finish'd will be one of ye Pleasantest Rooms I shall have. It is neither floor'd nor Plaister'd, & I'm greatly afraid will not be so this Summer.⁷⁶³

He also thought about adding decoration on the walls: 'I then thought to have only plain walls & a plain Cornice: wheras I am now thinking to indulge myself in two or three light festoons – but all this must be defer'd.'⁷⁶⁴ On the 25th January 1752 Shenstone records that he had been looking at '...Patterns of Paper for my drawing room', so the idea of plain stucco (plastered) walls did not last long.⁷⁶⁵ By the 14th March in the same year he stated:

I have amused myself of late with the Choice of Paper for two Rooms (Dining & Drawing) & having seen more than fifty sorts, have at last fix'd upon two yt are flock'd: The One, a green and Buff-colour; the other a Red and Buff-colour.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶² The barn on the pre-Shenstone plan suggests that previous tenants had raised arable crops. The fact that he changed the barn into a servants' hall, with a subsequent lack of a corn-holding area suggests that he had no intention of arable farming.

⁷⁶³ W. S. to H. K. 6th June 1750 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 237.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid, W. S. to H. K. 8th August 1750, p. 286.

⁷⁶⁵ Graves, Richard, op. cit., p. 330.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 336.

His choice of green, buff and red was in keeping with the colour schemes of nature. An anecdote regarding one of Shenstone's wall coverings was published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1823. It told the story of John Baskerville, the Birmingham printer, taking his friend, Dr. William Small, to The Leasowes. Several of the rooms were fitted in the Gothic style and one was painted to imitate trellis-work, overhung with hazel-trees. As the gentlemen were taking refreshment in the room, it may have been the kitchen, the décor prompted the following comment:

Mr. Baskerville, who was intimate with Shenstone, one day took his friend Dr. Small to see the Leasowes. After admiring the tasteful disposition of the grounds, Mr. Shenstone conducted them into the house to take some refreshment, which was prepared in the room alluded to. 'How admirably this apartment is fitted up,' exclaimed Dr. Small. 'Those surely cannot be artificial (pointing to one of the walls): — they must be real hazel-nuts.'—"Wall-nuts, if you please," replied Mr. B. drily. For once the sombre countenance of Shenstone disappeared, and, after various efforts to suppress a smile, he at length left the room in a complete laugh.⁷⁶⁷

It was in this use of external objects that Shenstone demonstrated how he brought his garden landscape inside his home. A very similar painting style as this can be seen in classical Roman villas, though whether Shenstone was aware of this ancient wall decoration is unknown.⁷⁶⁸ Shenstone thought of his house and garden as one and the same and this can be seen in a poem he wrote for Maria Dolman, of which one line ran: 'But would she leave her

⁷⁶⁷ *The Gentleman's Magazine* August 1823, p. 105; Pardoe, F. E., op. cit., p. 18.

⁷⁶⁸ Hadas, Moses, *Imperial Rome* (London, Time-Life Books, 1966), p. 114. Livia (wife to the Emperor Augustine) had a fresco in her villa showing a woodland scene together with fruit on trees and painted wild birds.

curling craft, and live in the greenwood with me', signifying the whole of the landscape and buildings were part of his 'greenwood'.

Although it is rare that Shenstone ever gave credit to others, Henrietta Knight's influence can be seen in the way he absorbed ideas from her home. She had plaster work on her ceilings and after a visit to her home at Barrels in September 1752 he stated: 'The middle of my Drawing Room Ceiling (sic) was rendered like yr Ladyships ye Monday after I came Home.'⁷⁶⁹ The ceilings in his two 'best rooms' may have been previously more elaborately decorated, as he stated in a letter to Henrietta Knight on the 6th June 1752: 'I have taken down the Pine-Apple from the middle of my ceiling, and send it to you with some other ornaments which were never fixed up.'⁷⁷⁰

Shenstone had plans for the room next door to the dining parlour, which he related in December 1748.

At the other End a door leading into a room, that, (whenever I can afford to finish it) will be my Favourite. As you enter this last, the point of Clent Hills appears visto-fashion thro ye Door & one of ye windows. The same will be reflected in a Peer-glass at ye End of the former Room. This last room I purpose to cover wth Stucco-Paper, to place my Niche-chimney Piece from my Summer house at one end of it, over that Mr Pope's Busto, & on each side my Books. The windows open into my principal Prospect.⁷⁷¹

⁷⁶⁹ W. S. to H. K. September 1752 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 343. Shenstone's underlining.

⁷⁷⁰ Pardoe, F. E., op. cit., p. 338-9.

⁷⁷¹ W. S. to H. K. 18th December 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 179-180.

The object of the exercise was a view of the Clent Hills and was an example of Shenstone bringing an exterior perspective into the house.

While he was dealing with his drawing room he stated in June 1750 that another intended project was the building of a single-storey structure on the west side of the drawing room. He initially called this his breakfast room, and it was one of the first rooms recorded that had painted rather than papered walls. Shenstone had views on paint colour: 'I only use quicklime, and either blue or yellow sand, to take away the objection I have to whitened wall.'⁷⁷²

This probably meant that the walls on all the subsequent rooms had a blue or yellow colour, possibly emulating the sky and sun outside.⁷⁷³ On the 3rd October 1752 he referred to the breakfast room again, at which time it seems to have been just finished. He had erected a chimney from his summer house from the island in the Upper Pool, inside the room: '... it makes part of an elegant chimney-piece in a genteel, though little breakfast-room, at the end of my house.'⁷⁷⁴ He subsequently changed his mind about the use of room: 'My little Breakfast Room has a glass, & has become my Dressing-Room.'⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷² Ibid, W. S. to R. G. 17th September 1751, p. 319.

⁷⁷³ During the restoration of nearby Wollescote Hall, the home of Thomas Milward, Shenstone's solicitor, an eighteenth-century doorway was removed, displaying the wall painted in an egg-shell blue colour. Perhaps this was the colour Shenstone used in his rooms?

⁷⁷⁴ W. S. to R. G. 17th September 1751 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 344.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid, W. S. to H. K. 11th November 1753, pp. 384-5.

Shenstone also made improvements to the first floor.⁷⁷⁶ Whether he lath and plastered the sides of the bedrooms to make them look more stylish or left the ceiling to come down at an angle to the floor level is unknown, but given his desire to enhance the quality of the establishment, the former is more likely. The Green Room was the fullest of all the bedrooms in terms of what was included in the inventory taken on his death and if it was windowed on the south side it would have given a view of Shenstone's favourite landscape: Clent Hill.⁷⁷⁷ This was likely to have been the Master Bedroom where Shenstone slept.

It is not certain what the room above the hall was used for before 1753, if it existed other than a landing. Shenstone stated:

I have been making a little alteration in ye room over my hall; wch is now my Library upon a somewhat a better Foot yn it has hereto been; yet I retain my Press bed in it for unexceptionable Reasons.⁷⁷⁸

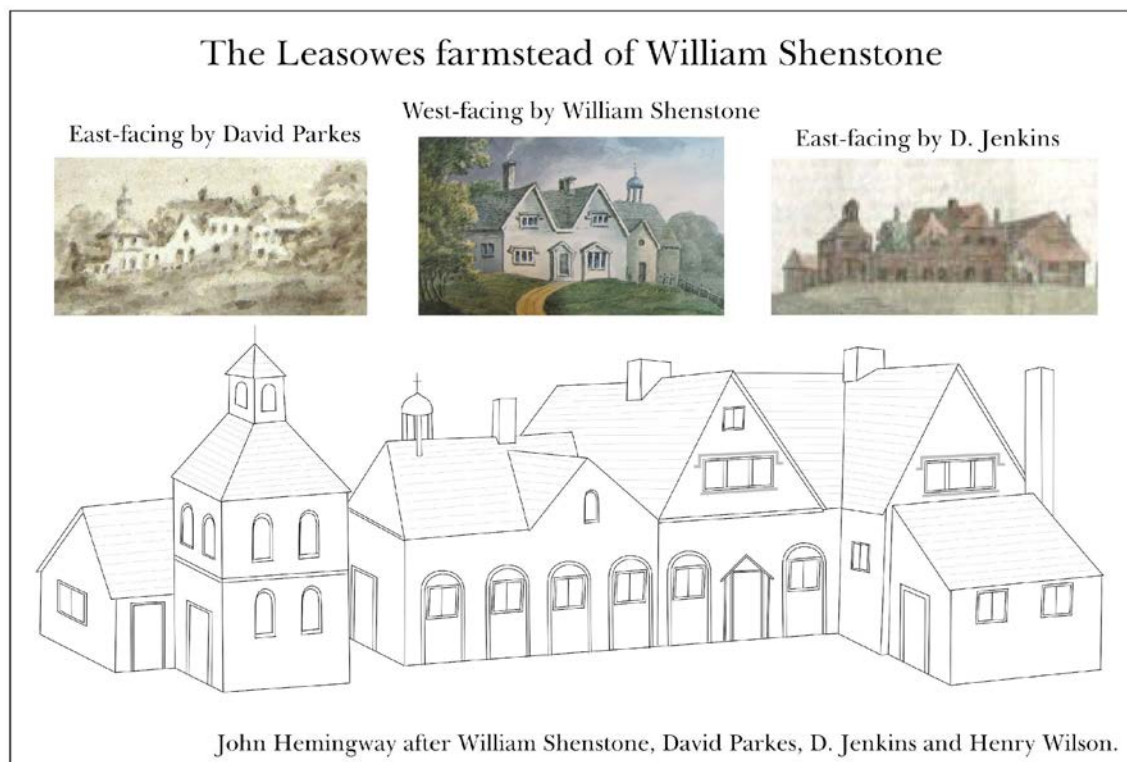
There was no light on the landing as there was no window, so it seems likely that Shenstone changed the direction of this 'room', running it north – south rather than east – west and then placing a dormer window on the south side over-looking his garden. He could also have made it wider by taking up space in the Chamber above the Parlour to the east. According to the

⁷⁷⁶ Peter King pers. comm., Historic Building Architect at Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. The first-floor lay-out was compiled with the help of the late Peter King and it was he who identified that the first floor was virtually all in the roof space and that would have an effect on the amount of room Shenstone would have available for use.

⁷⁷⁷ National Archives, Kew, C12 1892/22, 2458, Inventory of the property of the late William Shenstone 26th November 1764.

⁷⁷⁸ W. S. to H. K. 11th November 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 384-5. A press bed is one which folds up into a cupboard.

inventory, his books were on shelves in this room.⁷⁷⁹ His library was a valuable resource, particularly allowing him to learn about landscape architecture and design as well as pursuing his other literary and garden interests (see Appendix Three). The work that he did on the building improved the farmhouse, but not to the extent he wished for and he was forever making additions to it up until his death in February 1763.⁷⁸⁰



⁷⁷⁹ National Archives, Kew, op. cit., Inventory.

⁷⁸⁰ W. S. to R. G. 14th September 1761 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 497.

⁷⁸¹ Based on Parkes copy of David Bond's drawing, D. Jenkins' water-colour, and Henry R. Wilson's sketch. Probably collected for D.M.B.C. Conservation Area Committee, Dudley Local History and Archives Service, Wilson H. R. (ed.), Photocopy of Manuscripts and Illustrations of The Leasowes, including extracts made from the Sketch Book which had at once belonged to William Shenstone and used by David Parkes, Halesowen (unpublished, 1977).

The west side view, Fig. 6.5, was taken from drawings and water-colours of the house prior to 1775.⁷⁸² This is how the building may have looked at its ultimate stage during Shenstone's lifetime.

6.4 Rebuilding the adjacent structures

As well as the improvements to the farmhouse Shenstone turned the farmyard into a kitchen garden and shrubbery, and built structures within it. The shrubbery was again a garden feature in an otherwise built environment (see Chapter Eight). The yard can be seen in the water-colour he painted before he started to work (see Fig. 6.1). No contemporary illustrations were made subsequent to this. The external work he did is difficult to project as the plan by William Lowe only shows only a stylised building in the house plot (see Appendix One). Shenstone's letters, however, are a source of information and Jenkins' engraving does show structures on the west side of the farmhouse. The image illustrates a single-storey byre or stable and a two-storey square building. According to a letter he wrote in 1758, Shenstone stated: 'I have finished a new building opposite to the new stable, which I think you saw.'⁷⁸³ Whether Shenstone meant his new stable to be a rebuild of the old Byre/Stable or the move of this building into an area east of the farmyard is unknown. Quite what the New Building (a two-storey tower) must remain a matter for conjecture. He did state to Henrietta Knight,

⁷⁸² The only difference in comparing the Shenstone and Jenkins paintings is the 'servant's hall', which Shenstone places running north to south and Jenkins/Wilson put west to east. It is unlikely that Shenstone rebuilt the structure, so his drawing and the above plan are taken as the correct alignment.

⁷⁸³ W. S. to R. G. 14th September 1761, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 497.

however, that he was thinking of building a dovecot so perhaps it was used for that purpose. The idea of ornamental dovecotes was an eighteenth-century phenomenon and a contemporary example in Melbourne Park looks like the building shown in Jenkins' engraving.⁷⁸⁴

Shenstone also made cosmetic changes to his farmstead. On the west façade of the farm buildings he placed arches over the windows and doors to make it look as if all parts of the building were constructed at the same time (see Fig. 6.5). These changes together with the two-storey tower gave the whole farmhouse complex an Italianate look. Perhaps they were his conception of what Roman villas looked like in the Classical Age, in an attempt to make his house and grounds comparable with his idea of Virgil's home. Shenstone recorded another change to the farmstead in a letter to Richard Graves: 'I have made some little improvements about my place; have taken away the wall in front, and made a handsome ring.'⁷⁸⁵ Presumably this means a waist-high garden or boundary wall. This seems to be at odds with the 1758 Plan of The Leasowes shown by Spence, where a circular boundary around the eastern curtilage of the farmstead is already displayed (see Appendix One). Shenstone was certainly writing regular letters to Graves in the interim so it is odd that he did not mention something he had done at least three years before.

⁷⁸⁴ Hussey, Christopher, *English Gardens and Landscapes 1700 – 1750* (London, Country Life, 1967), illustrations, No. 55, Colonel Coke's Dovecot.

⁷⁸⁵ W. S. to H. K. 11th November 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 588.

According to John Scott Hylton Shenstone's farmhouse was demolished in 1776 by Edward Horne.⁷⁸⁶ His comment that it had been moved ten yards to the west meant that any ground work on the east side of the present house might reveal evidence of its existence. In January 2005 the erection of a large shed to store machinery occurred in this area and the writer performed a watching brief on it. Two trenches were observed: (trench one), next to the building itself and a water pipe trench (trench two) leading to the east side of the present house.⁷⁸⁷ The section in trench one (see below) had been cut away to create a flat floor for the building, displaying a series of layers from a natural sub-deposit to the present day.⁷⁸⁸ The layer coloured yellow in the section below suggests that loam had been brought in to make a deeper tilth. The finding of eighteenth-century pot sherds in this layer may also suggest that this was created in the William Shenstone phase and the undulating surface above would be of the same period. The undulations suggest that an

⁷⁸⁶ LD 942.47, Hal. Wilson H. R. (ed.), *Photocopy of Manuscripts and Illustrations of The Leasowes, including extracts made from the Sketch Book which had at once belonged to William Shenstone and used by David Parkes, Halesowen* (Collected for D.M.B.C. Conservation Area Committee, 1977). Extracts from Notes by Mr Hylton of Lapal, 1770-1778. '1776. The old house was pulled down and a new one begun on a site 10 yards from the old one, in the direction of Halesowen. 1778. New house completed for Mr. Edward Horne.'

⁷⁸⁷ Hemingway, John, 'A watching brief during the construction of a building at the rear of Leasowes House 2005', unpublished report.

⁷⁸⁸ The lowest layer was the Halesowen Sandstone of the area. A soft brown clay lay above this which had been boulder clay brought in during a glaciation. The hole that lay in it may either have been a frost pocket or the results of tree root activity from above. The yellow clay with sandstone inclusions was boulder clay brought into the area during a later period of glaciation and picking up the local sandstone and mixing it as it moved through the area. The charcoal and green clay may have been introduced during the sixteenth century when a timber-framed structure was constructed on The Leasowes farmhouse site. The charcoal suggests wood burning, possibly during tree clearing as it seems likely that the estate was originally in a wooded area and the green clay was perhaps dumped during the levelling to make a flat-bed for the construction of the first building on the site. The rubble and yellow clay appears to be another deposit made during work to the house. It is possible that it related to the southern wing which may have been constructed in the early eighteenth century, possibly by Shenstone's mother, Ann. This would have led to waste material being removed to this position during levelling.

original use of the soil demanded moulding up. The likely use in gardening is for growing asparagus. The dark material on the surface suggests that it was allowed to grass over.⁷⁸⁹ The large amount of rubble and clay above this layer suggests that subsequent extensive development occurred on the site. The rebuilding of The Leasowes Farmhouse by Edward Horne may have been the reason for this dumping.⁷⁹⁰ Fewer layers were observed in trench two, suggesting that the upper material had been removed prior to the building of the present house, thus removing any evidence of Shenstone's farmhouse.

⁷⁸⁹ Maddy, Darrel, and Lewis, Simon G., 'The Lower Severn Valley' in Lewis, Colin A. and Richards, Andrew E. (eds.), *The Glaciation of Wales and adjacent areas* (Logaston, Logaston Press, 2005), p. 76. The clay was derived from a number of glacial maximums that covered the Stour Valley in the past.

⁷⁹⁰ The narrow trench two that ran from the store shed across the drive to the doorway of Leasowes House had fewer layers within it than trench one. The yellow clay at the base of this section was the same as that seen in the base section of trench one suggesting that the layers above had all been removed. This is likely to have been taken away during the building of the present house in 1775. The lack of evidence of all the layers above the yellow clay and rubble suggests that when Edward Horne decided to demolish Shenstone's farmhouse he had the soil and subsoil dug out to a depth of at least a metre. The foundations of the old farmstead should have been crossed in the trench, but they were not. This suggests that the sub-soil was removed as deep as foundation level. The large amount of loam beneath the present turf layer suggests that soil dumping had occurred during the nineteenth- and twentieth-century period. This soil lay in a bank that descended to the present gravel drive. The black road-stone with brick fragments was an early attempt at making a base for a flat area on the east side of the house. This may originally have had sets or slabs on the top of it. The later red road stone was probably the base for the present concrete surface that then had tarmac placed on it.

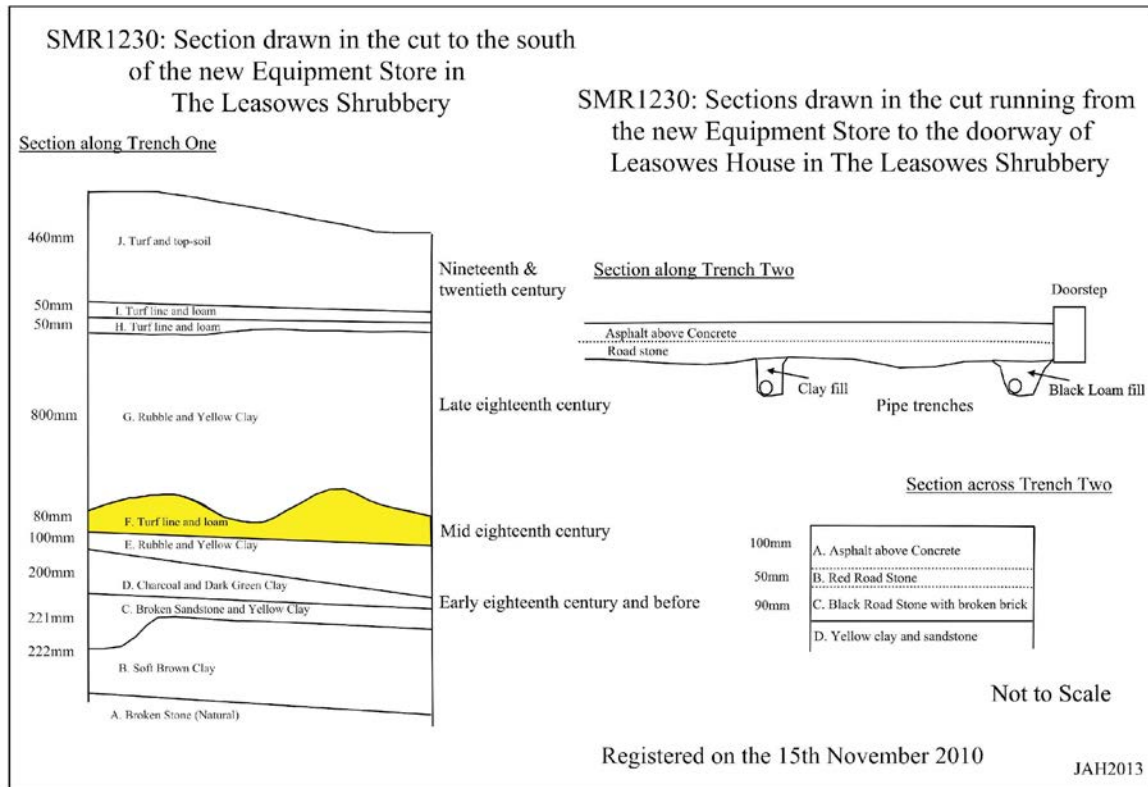


Fig. 6.6: Section of trenches in The Leasowes Shrubbery showing in yellow the suspected Shenstone layer.⁷⁹¹

6.5 Conclusion

Shenstone’s architectural alterations changed a set of farm buildings, causing them to appear in keeping with the edifices that the ‘polite’ people who visited The Leasowes were used to.⁷⁹² His architectural aspirations meant that he wished to give others the impression that he was of the same status as members of the landed gentry and aristocracy who visited his house, and not

⁷⁹¹ Hemingway, John, ‘Observations made during a survey of Virgil’s Grove,’ unpublished report 12th July 2013.

⁷⁹² W. S. to Edward Knight 17th March 1761, No. 00107, Kidderminster Library (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990). Some changes led to difficulties. The lowering of the hall floor meant that there was a deep step, or two steps, down from the front door into the hallway. In 1761 Shenstone received delivery of two figurines: an Apollo and an Antinous. The carrier who brought them missed his footing and fell down the steps, breaking the objects.

a farmer living in a farmhouse. He developed his abilities from his visits to other properties, advice given by his friends and acquaintances, by reading and through practical experience. He changed the rooms in the house, particularly the dining room and the parlour. His desire to entertain a higher class than he had come from was achieved, but only in part. Graves implied that what he did, by removing supporting walls of the house, was to risk its stability. The hall and the south wing may have been undermined and, although it survived after Shenstone's death, its instability probably led Edward Horne to demolish the building in 1776.⁷⁹³ The farmhouse and the built environment around it were designed to integrate with the landscape of his estate.

⁷⁹³ Somers, F. & K. M., *Halas, Hales, Hales Owen* (Hales Owen, 1932), p. 71.

Chapter Seven

‘Exterior place-making’: creating structures in the landscape

7.1 Introduction

Tom Williamson stated that ‘The history of particular gardens, as much as the development of broad styles of design, needs to be considered in relation to architectural history’,⁷⁹⁴ and John Dixon Hunt observed that a landscape architect is not only concerned with designing the landscape, he also creates structures within the landscape.⁷⁹⁵ Hunt describes this activity as ‘exterior place-making’.⁷⁹⁶ Although the idea of placing structures in gardens is ancient, the eighteenth-century approach came from post-Renaissance Italian precedents:

Italian gardens had always extended their iconographical design beyond the area of the house to areas of wood and field where statues and fountains would be found to entertain more energetic wanderers.⁷⁹⁷

As early as the 1650s, John Evelyn placed features in his garden at Sayes Court, which had been modelled on Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli, Italy.⁷⁹⁸ This practice grew, when the Italian paintings of Nicholas Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Gaspard Dughet and Salvator Rosa, with their portrayal of natural

⁷⁹⁴ Harwood, Edward, Hunt, John Dixon, Leslie, Michael, Williamson, Tom, ‘Whither Garden History?’ in *Studies in the history of gardens & designed landscapes* (London, Taylor & Francis, 1998), p. 100.

⁷⁹⁵ Hunt, John, Dixon, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 1. John Claudius Loudon first used the term landscape architect in 1840.

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁷ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape: Poetry, Painting, and Gardening during the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1989), p. 21.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 29-30.

and man-made scenery came to England at the beginning of the eighteenth century.⁷⁹⁹ The writings of Joseph Addison, Alexander Pope, Stephen Switzer and Batty Langley all advocated placing the use of artistic features that were used in the Italian paintings into the real landscape.⁸⁰⁰

William Shenstone was a practitioner of this process, and this chapter considers what structures he placed into his landscape garden, why he placed them there, and how he constructed them. The most obvious use of introducing structures to the landscape was the power of imagination. Shenstone placed a feature in his garden to allow a viewer to connect ideas 'that conveyed reflexions of the pleasing kind'.⁸⁰¹ That structures were useful to the landscape was observed by Whately, when he wrote that they would carry the imagination to something greater than is seen.⁸⁰² The way his ideas about designed structures evolved was a microcosm of the evolution of his landscape, each one adding an impression or a thought to the garden. The concept was that a variety of features - those in a natural setting, together with those demonstrating their classical and Gothic origin - would capture the visitor's interest. Their locations were designed to express a particular arrangement of landscape that the viewer looked at or stood within. The natural-looking and the classical features signifying age were generally surrounded by trees and shrubs, the Gothic features standing sentinel, as

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 39-40.

⁸⁰⁰ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998), pp. 48, 61.

⁸⁰¹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 112.

⁸⁰² Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 52.

ruined castle or monastic site were supposed to do. Tim Richardson wrote that the variation in classical and Gothic styles in the eighteenth century tended to reveal the gardenist's politics: classical - Tory, Gothic - Whig.⁸⁰³ If this was true then the mixture at The Leasowes might reveal that Shenstone was a-political - which is what he stated himself to be.⁸⁰⁴ Archaeological excavations in the 1990s discovered the remains of some of these features that had long since disappeared. This evidence together with correspondence and descriptions from eighteenth-century visitors have enabled a reconstruction of what they looked like, how he constructed them and in many cases why he was building them. Although much has been written about Shenstone's work at The Leasowes, little has been said about the detail and in particular the use of natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures in the landscape. The question that needs to be answered in this chapter is how he achieved the look that he did.

7.2 Natural-Looking Features

As is shown in Chapter Six, Shenstone's desire to make the landscape look natural led to him having root seats made and distributed round his landscape garden. These were placed at select positions and intended to give his visitors views of particular merit: a pool, a cascade, a waterfall or the spire of St. John the Baptist's church. Root seats were features made up of natural

⁸⁰³ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 287.

⁸⁰⁴ William Shenstone to Lady Luxborough, 17th April 1755 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 444.

items: stone (as an entrance way), branches, roots and growing climbers that represented part of the wooded landscape. That is, it was made to look like a natural bower, but a more prosaic use was to shelter his visitors and himself from the weather if it should rain.⁸⁰⁵ Sir John Parnell was particularly interested on how Shenstone constructed them, and drew a sketch plan of the one dedicated to the Earl of Stamford (see Fig. 7.1).⁸⁰⁶ He described it as ‘a sort of concave screen, about a yard and a half thick and sodded (sic) at the top.’⁸⁰⁷ This had a doorway in the side leading up to a pathway along the north side of the ‘South Cascade’.⁸⁰⁸

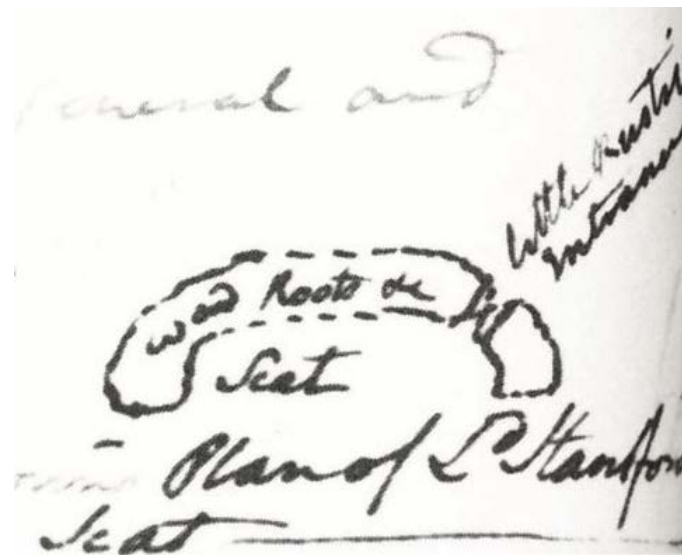


Fig. 7.1: Sketch of the Stamford Root Seat by Sir John Parnell.⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid, W. S. to John Scott Hylton 29th November 1757, p. 473. Although mid-century weather conditions were fair, rain could fall, and this would have made shelter in his grounds imperative.

⁸⁰⁶ E. M. Johnston-Liik, ‘Parnell, Sir John, second baronet (1745–1801)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21388, accessed 21 Aug 2015]; The London School of Economics and Social Science, Coll. Misc. 38: Handwritten journal of Sir John Parnell entitled ‘Journal of a tour thro’ England and Wales,’ anno. 1769, Journal III, p. 115.

⁸⁰⁷ Sodded – grass turves lain on top of a wooden frame.

⁸⁰⁸ The term ‘South Cascade’ was not used in Shenstone’s time.

⁸⁰⁹ Coll. Misc. 38 Parnell, Sir John, op. cit., p. 115.

It was the simplicity of these features which Parnell appreciated: ‘wooden pillars, mostly gothick, supporting a roof just brood (sic) enough to shade you from a summer shower’.⁸¹⁰ It was also evidence of how Shenstone had set some of these into the landscape that caught Parnell’s eye. Most of them were backed onto plantations which allowed the vegetation to grow by the sides of the seat (see Fig. 7.2 & 7.3). The branches of the trees would grow over them which would make an artificial cover, protecting the user from everything, but the heaviest of rain. This seemed to be a new feature to Parnell and was perhaps another idea Shenstone bequeathed to landscape gardeners of the future.

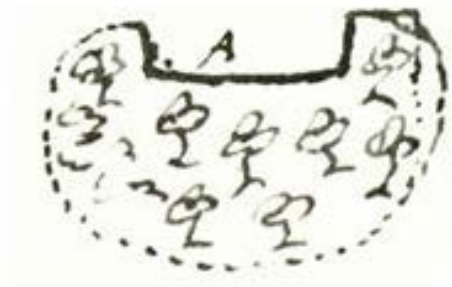


Fig. 7.2: Sketch by Sir John Parnell of seat backing on to a plantation at The Leasowes.⁸¹¹

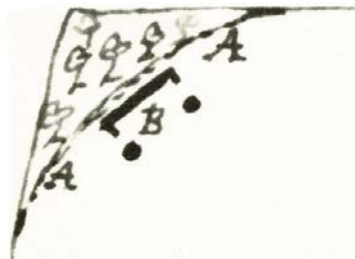


Fig. 7.3: Sketch by Sir John Parnell of seat in a corner plantation at The Leasowes.

⁸¹⁰ Ibid, p. 107.

⁸¹¹ Ibid, pp. 107-108.

Shenstone's garden philosophy was to create a natural-looking landscape, and Parnell commented on some of the practical ways that Shenstone had used in the spaces in his landscape design; for instance, he had concealed his field bounds by various natural-looking hedges.⁸¹² A technique Shenstone used was to round off his fields by placing small plantations in the corners so as to hide the square shape of the field boundaries.⁸¹³ Shenstone also used hedges within the estate which were often tied in with woods and when a plashed hawthorn hedge was used, Parnell stated it added to the scene rather than detracted from it.⁸¹⁴ Whately also commented on the hedge-planting, stating that it had a variety not always observed in other sites - each one different from the other: here 'a common quickset' (hawthorn), here 'a lofty hedgerow', next to it a 'continued range of trees', and there a 'broken' one below it.⁸¹⁵

There was another reason why he placed root seats in his landscape garden.⁸¹⁶ Shenstone was often melancholy and the way he compensated for it was to have features that were associated with his friends around him.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹² Ibid, 95-6.

⁸¹³ Ibid, p. 108.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid, p. 94. Plashed - a living hedge which has been laid by cutting the bases and laying the branches at an angle to the ground. This is kept in place by vertical rods and twisted hazel wands tied horizontally at the top of the hedge.

⁸¹⁵ Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, 1770 reprinted 2010, p. 69.

⁸¹⁶ Adams, William Howard, *The French Garden 1500-1800* (New York, George Braziller, 1979), p. 129. The origins of primitive architecture fascinated many eighteenth-century theorists. This went as far back as the Roman writer Vitruvius in the first century B.C.

⁸¹⁷ As a young man and a poet Shenstone had a very sensitive personality and espoused the idea noted by Horace and Pope that living a retired life in the country would make him contented. This did not occur, as the result was isolation. Due to a natural tendency to worry

The urns of dead family and friends were the most obvious, but the seats that he placed at various positions around his landscape also served to bring them closer. Shenstone had few close friends, but he celebrated those he had with dedicatory seats or urns in his surrounding garden. Objects dedicated to those who were still alive at the time - Richard Jago, Richard Graves, George Lyttelton and Joseph Spence - were placed in the open, while those dedicated to the dead were placed in glades, cocooned in a natural tomb of trees. Shenstone's motive for placing his dedications to those who were alive in the open and to the dead in an enclosed place, reflected his feelings that the living joyfully saw the sun, but the dead needed shade and to be mourned in a private place. The seats, as Humphrey's relates, 'could combine the liberating effect of natural scenery with the recollection of past or present friendships'.⁸¹⁸

7.3 Classical Features

In 1499 the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was published in Italy.⁸¹⁹ It was a romance and had a large number of woodcuts displaying gardens. At least one of them showed a Roman ruin, which was the first time they were ever shown in print. From then on ruins dominated parks and gardens. During

about things, Shenstone suffered from depression and melancholy, so he searched for something to do and found it in landscape gardening. In later years he suffered from dyspepsia due to overeating rich foods and drinking heavily, but this is not liable to be a symptom of melancholy, as has been suggested. Buie, Diane, op. cit., pp. 153-159.

⁸¹⁸ Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, CUP, 1937.), p. 105.

⁸¹⁹ Colona, Francesco, 'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili' (Venice, Aldus Manutius, 1499) in Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio, (trans. David Stanton) *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010), pp. 40-43.

the eighteenth century classical features represented the grandeur of Imperial Rome and the intellectualism of Classical Greece. Bringing features of these two cultures together was intended to inspire the viewer.⁸²⁰ Shenstone's appreciation of these eras can be seen in his use of classical structures in The Leasowes landscape. One of the features of his artistic landscape was the presence of iconic statues. Shenstone had two at The Leasowes: a Venus de Medici next to the farmhouse and a piping Faunus close to his forest ground. The Roman God Faunus acted as a Greek Pan-effigy, representing the nature god in the wilderness of his woodland, while Venus represented the Roman goddess of gardening and formal beauty. Shenstone's placing of the Faunus in the woodland and the Venus in his Shrubbery reflected his belief that they represented the two types of gardening. Dodsley recognised this dual nature of The Leasowes when he wrote that it was a 'mixture of savage and cultivated ground, held up to the eye.'⁸²¹ Shenstone expressed surprise that more statues were not placed in gardens, comparing them to the landscape-painters of the period who often placed them in their paintings.⁸²² Jabez Maud Fisher, like many visitors, understood the imagery that was being displayed there as he wrote: 'At the foot of this Cataract, Venus de Medici as if just rising from the Stream, is

⁸²⁰ Richardson, Tim, *op. cit.*, p. 906. Richardson thought that the classical temples of the 1730s were based on Palladianism, but Shenstone was an exponent of classical literature and this may have been the bases from which he received his appreciation of these features.

⁸²¹ Shenstone, William, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

⁸²² *Ibid*, p. 120.

placed on a Pillar, her feet on the Surface of the Water (see Fig. 7.4).⁸²³ This suggests that Fisher was aware that, according to legend, Venus/Aphrodite was born from the sea.⁸²⁴



Fig. 7.4: Nineteenth-century engraving by H. F. James of the High Cascade.⁸²⁵

⁸²³ Coffin, David, 'Venus in the Eighteenth-Century Garden', *Garden History* 28, Vol. 2, 2000, pp. 173 -193. This is evidence that the statue had been moved down to the High Cascade after Shenstone's death.

⁸²⁴ Fisher, Jabez Maud, 'The Travel journals of Jabez Maud Fisher 1775-1779' in Morgan, Kenneth (ed.), *An American Quaker in the British Isles: Records of Social and Economic History New Series XVI*, (New York, British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 259.; Grant, Michael, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969), p. 115.

⁸²⁵ Source: British Library Board, K Top xxxvi.21.3.d. The Venus statue can be seen beneath the waters of the cascade, being viewed by a couple on and close to a bench. The chalybeate spring lies to the left of another person on the left-hand side of the engraving apparently drinking the waters.

One of the most significant features in his landscape was the obelisk at the entrance to Virgil's Grove (see Fig. 7.5). An obelisk is an Egyptian element that has been used for ornamentation since the Roman period and gives an exotic air of antiquity, but it also signifies a vanished world. Shenstone's desire to make his garden an other-worldly experience was conveyed by this introduction. The inscription on the object was a dedication to his favourite Roman poet, Virgil.⁸²⁶ Fisher missed the point when he saw the obelisk in Virgil's Grove as being dedicated to Mars.⁸²⁷ The obelisk was designed to prepare the visitor for what came next, the mystic world of the grove itself.



Fig. 7.5: Drawing of Virgil's Grove Obelisk by David Parkes.⁸²⁸

⁸²⁶ Shenstone's appreciation of the poetical work of the Roman poet Virgil is shown in the quantity of Virgil's verse around his garden.

⁸²⁷ Fisher, Jabez Maud, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

⁸²⁸ Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shropshire Record Office.

The original obelisk was a brick feature that was finished with a stucco coat, and had disappeared by the nineteenth century. A brick base was discovered in the archaeological work in 1998 within the grove (see Fig. 7.6). Given the size and position of the feature this was almost certainly its base and revealed where it was sited.⁸²⁹



Fig. 7.6: Footings of Virgil's Obelisk from the north-west during excavation.⁸³⁰

The placing of memorial urns in memory of the departed was a classical Greek and Roman custom. As the dead in Roman law had to be buried

⁸²⁹ Photographed by the writer in May 1998 during the Currie excavation. The size of the base of this feature revealed that the height of the obelisk must have been close to human stature. The size of the bricks enabled the writer to compare other brick features belonging to Shenstone's period of construction.

⁸³⁰ Currie, Christopher K., *Archaeological recording at The Leasowes, Halesowen, Dudley, West Midlands* (Eastleigh, CKC Archaeology, 1998), photographic archive, plate 1. The present brook flows in a deep cutting to the south of this feature.

outside a town or village they were, so to speak, placed within the natural landscape. The classical tastes of the eighteenth century led to the urns' reintroduction as memorials to the dead in garden landscapes. The bodies could not be laid to rest there as English law required them to be buried in a churchyard, but urns to the dead became popular after Pope placed one in his garden at Twickenham during the 1720s.⁸³¹ Memorial urns were some of Shenstone's most important features as they reinforced the feelings that accentuated the spirit of the place. As Hunt writes 'Memorials are in business to recall and remind...'.⁸³² Shenstone showed a great nostalgia for his dead friends or, as Humphreys states, 'the mood of the ancient desiderium' a sense of longing or grief which was symptomatic of his feelings on loss.⁸³³ Shenstone became interested in placing of urns in his landscape garden for two reasons, as explained by Sandro Jung. An 'urn is an expression of intimacy and personal friendship,' and 'the visitor is expected to contemplate' this feeling.⁸³⁴ This was a method in which he communicated his relationships. When James Thomson died, Shenstone wrote: 'God knows, I lean on a very few friends; and if they drop me, I become a wretched misanthrope,'⁸³⁵ and he erected an urn to Thomson in Virgil's Grove. In Whately's opinion, urns were 'the principal ornaments of the place', either in 'a lonely grove' (to William Somerville) or 'in the midst of a field' (to Joseph

⁸³¹ Batey, Mavis, *Alexander Pope; The Poet and the landscape* (London, Barn Elms, 1999), p. 71.

⁸³² Hunt, John Dixon (2000), op. cit., p. 120.

⁸³³ Humphreys, Arthur, Raleigh, op. cit., p. 101.

⁸³⁴ Jung, Sandro, 'William Shenstone's Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,' in *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014) p. 29.

⁸³⁵ W. S. to Richard Jago, 3rd September 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 163.

Shenstone). He thought that they were exempt from any censure he could make.⁸³⁶

Shenstone began designing urns in 1748 and confessed to Henrietta Knight in a letter that he had sent a carpenter over to Hagley to take the dimensions of the urns which indicated he was going to use them as a basis for his own designs (see Fig. 7.7).⁸³⁷ He displayed a proficient interest in how they were designed and his urns demonstrated that he understood architectural theory and followed the golden ratio in terms of his designs; that is the measurements should be proportional to one another.⁸³⁸ He stated that most bodies of urns were of the ratio of 7 to 8 and drew a sketch showing the measurement.

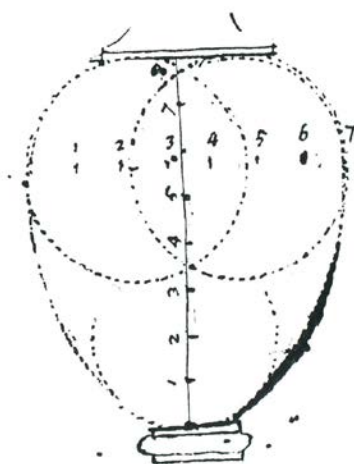


Fig. 7.7: A sample urn showing the relative height to width, drawn by William Shenstone.⁸³⁹

⁸³⁶ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

⁸³⁷ W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 230.

⁸³⁸ Huntley, H. E. *The Divine Proportion: A Study in Mathematical Beauty* (New York, Dover Publications, 1970). The Golden Ratio is an ancient Greek geometric calculation for the supposed perfect structure.

⁸³⁹ W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 235.

The first urn Shenstone had made was dedicated to his friend and mentor William Somervile of Edstone Hall, the poetic hunting squire who died in 1742 (see Appendix One and Appendix Two – Somervile Urn).



Fig. 7.8: Drawing of Somervile Urn by David Parkes.⁸⁴⁰

Shenstone first met Somervile through Jago, while he was a schoolboy at Solihull. Somervile had written a poem entitled ‘The Chase’ in 1719, which was his main claim to fame and he recognised that the young Shenstone had


⁸⁴⁰ Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shropshire Record Office. The first of the urns that Shenstone designed. It is very similar to the proportions of the one that Shenstone drew for Henrietta Knight (see Fig. 7.7).

a talent for writing poetry and encouraged him in his poetic endeavours. After Somervile died, Shenstone considered commemorating his life with an urn and discussed it with Henrietta Knight. The urn was placed beside a meadow and in front of his forest ground, which Shenstone probably thought was in keeping with a man who spent much of his life hunting (see Fig. 7.8). Shenstone did not write a great deal about his own urns, but did of Henrietta Knight's and through these we can record what he had in mind for his own pieces. As she also intended to raise an urn to Somervile's memory she remarked that she would be glad to see a model of the urn that he intended setting up in his grove, commenting that 'your urn (is) a very proper and friendly addition'.⁸⁴¹ In a letter to her he pointed out some thoughts that he had on the details of urn design, stating that: 'Urns are more solemn, if large and plain; more beautiful, if less and ornamented.'⁸⁴² Other comments were that 'the body should be decorated and the pedestal not,' though he drew flutes on the pedestal drawing below (see fig. 7.9).⁸⁴³ He thought that a wreath with a French horn on it would be suitable for the Somervile Urn as it would display his hunting prowess.⁸⁴⁴ He also pointed out that some attention needed to be given as to where the urn was to be placed. His urn was to be located in a hollow with the ground rising behind so he had considered making a double plinth above the pedestal raising it by

⁸⁴¹ L. L. to W. S. 10th October 1749 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 131.

⁸⁴² W. S. to L. L. October 1749 in William, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 228.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid*, W. S. to L. L. 7th December 1749, p. 247.

⁸⁴⁴ F. D. A. Burns, 'Somervile, William (1675–1742)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26026>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

two and a half inches.



Fig. 7.9: The pedestal of an urn for Henrietta Knight drawn by William Shenstone⁸⁴⁵

By October 1749 he had sent her four designs and asked her what she thought - Shenstone always liked to have a second opinion about what he produced - and she chose a mixture of two of them for the urn in her garden. In a subsequent thought she realised that her choice may be taken as a criticism to the rest and remembering his sensibilities she finished her comment by saying 'but I speak with great ignorance'.⁸⁴⁶ In a letter in November she enquired about what the size and the shape of her urn and what its decoration should be.⁸⁴⁷ Shenstone continued giving her ideas for the urn and replied in December by sending her some further sketches and she responded to the effect that she had made her choice and confessed she

⁸⁴⁵ L. L to W. S. 13th December 1749 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 155.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid, L. L to W. S. 10th October 1749, p. 131.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid, L. L to W. S. 8th November 1749, p. 138.

really was pleased by the fistula and pipe and the oval wreath on the first pedestal (see Fig. 7:10).⁸⁴⁸




Fig. 7.10: A pipe and fistula as drawn by William Shenstone.⁸⁴⁹

Her finished urn contained these design elements. The fact that Shenstone's abilities as a designer were vital to her can be seen in this account, and she considered that the Somerville Urn in particular was that commendable that she later had a painting made of it by Thomas Smith of Derby (see Fig. 7.11).⁸⁵⁰

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid, L. L to W. S. 13th December 1749, p. 155.

⁸⁴⁹ W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 231.

⁸⁵⁰ David Fraser, 'Smith, Thomas (*bap.1720x24? d. 1767*)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2010 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25914>, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

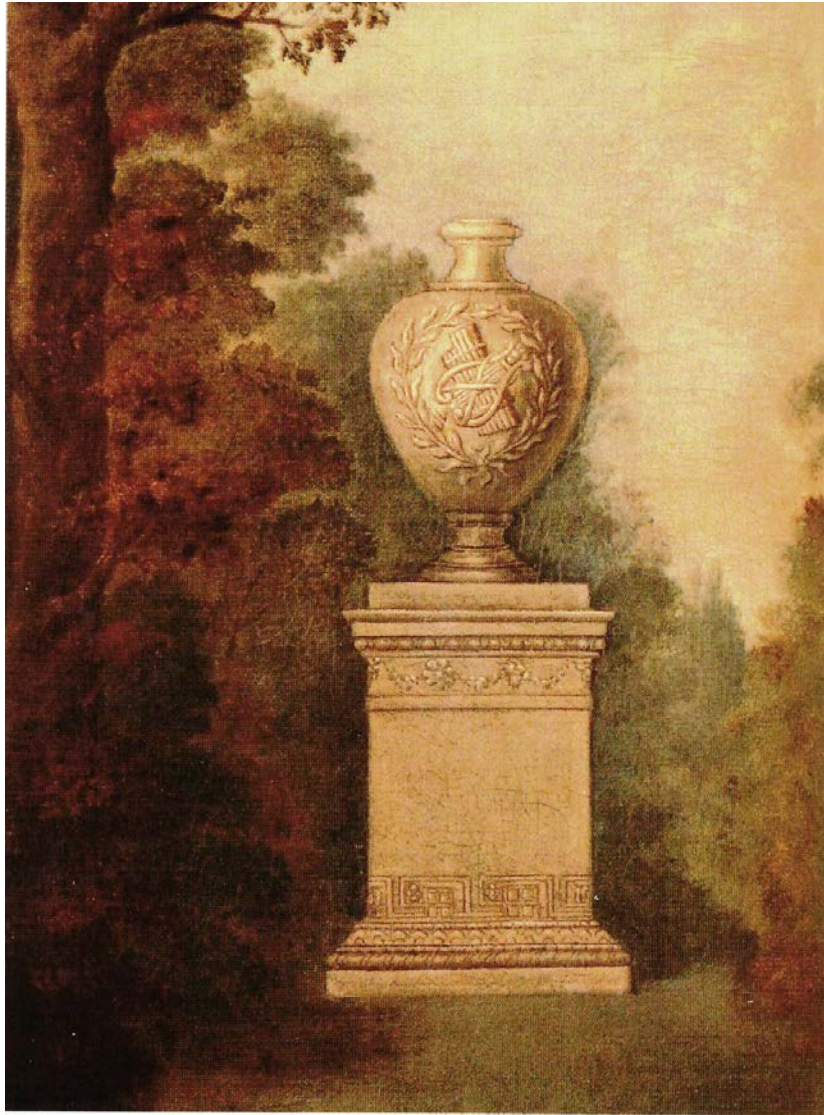


Fig. 7.11: Somervile Urn at Barrells Park, painted by Thomas Smith of Derby (c.1720-1767).⁸⁵¹

What is notable is that he recorded in a letter how much it might cost. Shenstone's interest in the financial details of what he was creating was uppermost. His income was not as great as that of those people who were doing similar things to their estates around him and the price of things

⁸⁵¹ Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott: Henrietta Luxborough, Poetic Gardener and Irrepressible Exile* (London, 2006), no page number. The painting of the urn is in private hands. Although permission was requested from the owner they have as yet to reply to my correspondence.

invariably comes up in his letters. Shenstone related his experience to Henrietta Knight:

First then ye stone itself will cost you about half a Guinea for ye Urn & Pedestal, exclusive of Carriage. As far as I can gather, it is somewhat more yn a Month's Work for one Man this Winter Time; & less in proportion for two... ..As for ye stone it will cost you three-pence or three pence half penny a foot & about 35 Foot will be sufficient. On ye whole I shou'd imagine a Plain Urn of this Size shou'd not exceed 3 Pounds, including stone and tho' you pay full Wages, wch, I own I do not...⁸⁵²

The fact that Shenstone is referring to the cost to someone who did not have his financial problems states more about his worries than they do about hers. In another letter he suggested ways of saving money on her workers' time by recommending that her ladyship have the base, the lower plinth, the shaft, the plinth, the body and the top of the urn the same, he added that 'The Workmen will not object to it, as it saves in work what it wastes in stone, & more.'⁸⁵³

When the Somerville Urn was finished Shenstone had another made. This was the one dedicated to James Thomson. It was carved by his mason, Pedley, and was placed in position.⁸⁵⁴ Shenstone stated that '...it has a charming effect, from ye situation I have given it in Virgil's Grove'.⁸⁵⁵ Although the water-colour of the urn Shenstone painted (see Fig. 7.12) attempted to show that it was of a reasonable size it was considered to be too

⁸⁵² W. S. to L. L. 5th December 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 244

⁸⁵³ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 20th December 1749, p. 250

⁸⁵⁴ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 165. Pedley had some reputation as a stone mason as he had been involved in constructing St Philip's Cathedral in Birmingham.

⁸⁵⁵ W. S. to L. L. 26th November 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 240.

small for the site and after various persons objected, he subsequently removed it. Shenstone took a great deal of notice of criticisms and this action demonstrates how he valued what his associates had to say. Jabez Maud Fisher stated on his visit in 1776 that the spot was ‘made sacred by an urn with a beautiful Latin inscription’.⁸⁵⁶ Where he got this piece of information from is unknown as by this time Shenstone had substituted the urn with a bench and placed the inscription carved on the urn on the rear of the seat.



Fig. 7.12: James Thomson’s Urn in Virgil’s Grove. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁸⁵⁷

⁸⁵⁶ Fisher, Jabez Maud, *The Travel Journals of Jabez Maud Fisher 1775-1779* in Morgan, Kenneth (ed.), *An American Quaker in the British Isles: Records of Social and Economic History New Series XVI* (New York, British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 259.

⁸⁵⁷ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone’s copy-book, no page number.

Romantic love was another important dimension of The Leasowes. Lover's Walk was a hangover from the erotic gardens of the European Renaissance,⁸⁵⁸ and was a metaphor for Shenstone's appreciation of romance. The walk began at a gate then ran beside a bubbling brook to the Upper Pool, representative of the tentative origins of love. It continued running along another brook to a meeting place at the Assignment Seat and finally passed on to Maria Dolman's Urn where it finished (see Fig. 7.13). The rites of passage were therefore shown in one path. The urn at the termination was of great importance to Shenstone as he seems to have hoped for a romantic attraction to Maria. She was Shenstone's favourite cousin who died young and the urn's existence was there to indicate that death was at the end of every relationship.

⁸⁵⁸ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio, *op. cit.*, p. 49.



Fig. 7.13: Maria Dolman's Urn drawn by David Parkes.⁸⁵⁹

The Scotsman, Alexander Carlyle, who visited The Leasowes in 1758, four years after Miss Dolman's death, observed 'the ornaments and mottoes'⁸⁶⁰ and was particularly taken by the inscription that Shenstone had written for the urn to her memory and stated that it was 'most beautiful'.⁸⁶¹ In his case the relevance of Shenstone's literary accomplishments were observed by someone who had come on a garden visit not a literary one. By his visit in 1700, Parnell lamented on the consequences of subsequent ownership by

⁸⁵⁹ Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shropshire Record Office. This urn designed by Shenstone was placed at the end of Lover's Walk shortly after her death in 1754.

⁸⁶⁰ Carlyle, Alexander, *The Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle, minister of Inveresk; containing memorials of the men and events of his time* (Bristol, 1990), p. 387.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 387.

stating that ‘Poor Miss Dolman’s Urn is quite destroyed.’⁸⁶² Gilpin two years later remarked that Maria Dolman’s Urn was ‘fetching’ and that it was ‘an urn to the memory of a beloved lady,’ pathetic and affecting, with ‘an inscription full of tenderness’.⁸⁶³ Considering Parnell’s comment, it would be interesting to discover what Gilpin was actually looking at - Dodsley’s writing about it, or a replacement urn? The base of the urn was found by the writer during an inspection of a tributary of the north brook in 2012. The brick work was revealed when it had recently been cut by the course of the waters of the brook and it was concluded that it was the foundation material for Maria Dolman’s Urn as no other feature of the Shenstone period was placed in this position.⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁶² Coll. Misc. 38, Sir John Parnell, op. cit., p. 101.

⁸⁶³ Gilpin, William, *Observations on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*, Vol. 1. 3rd edition (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), p. 60. He could not have seen the original urn as it was gone by his day. A gilded Coadstone replacement was erected there by Edward Horne at an unknown date.

⁸⁶⁴ Hemingway, John, ‘How a lost love inspired the works of William Shenstone’ in *Black Country Bugle*, No. 1088, 4th July, 2013, pp. 18-19. The bricks were of the same size and in the same lay-out as those that had been observed in Virgil’s Obelisk footings. A silted-up part of the brook was observed approximately one metre to the south of the feature, suggesting that the brook had moved to the north in the period after Shenstone’s death.



Fig. 7.14: Foundations to the plinth of Maria Dolman's Urn undercut by the present course of the brook.⁸⁶⁵

Access to the farmstead in Shenstone's day was from two directions: a main route to the east via Manor Lane, and a back route to the west via Mucklow Hill. The west route ran across the north brook and was situated crossing the top of the Green Pool dam. In January 2004 an archaeological excavation occurred to see if anything could be found of Shenstone's work and a stone surface was found beneath the modern tarmac. The archaeologist, Brian Dix, proposed that this may have been ascribed to the Shenstone period, but a quote from Shenstone stating that the weakness of a bridge over the brook unnerved him 'though the consciousness of a firm rail there would add to my

⁸⁶⁵ Photograph taken by the writer on 23rd August 2012.

tranquillity’, suggested something quite different.⁸⁶⁶ The fact that he mentioned a rail seems to suggest the earlier bridge was a pedestrian wooden feature possibly next to a fording place. Support for this conjecture was that the stone surface layer (which probably replaced an earlier one) is approximately level with the present Green Pool water level.⁸⁶⁷ This may mean that the original waters washed over the road surface and would have appeared to have been a natural looking feature which cascaded down the lower west side. As Shenstone had placed a seat next to the Priory Gate wall to view the cascade it is likely that the ford and fall was part of the scene. A real bridge which Shenstone constructed in Virgil’s Grove was the single-span stone bridge which allowed access across the north brook on his circuit walk, shown by him in a water-colour in Virgil’s Grove (see Fig. 7.15).⁸⁶⁸ Gilpin referred to this bridge as being ‘romantic’.⁸⁶⁹

⁸⁶⁶ W. S. to Richard Graves, 18th April 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 510-1.

⁸⁶⁷ Dix, Brian, *An Archaeological Investigation of the Lower Dam at The Leasowes, January 2004* (DMBC, 2004), Fig. 2. This is supported by the fact that the stone surface is wider and runs further than the bridge area on both sides of the brook and it has slumped on its south-west side into the disturbed earth of the demolished Priory Gate which led into the lower part of the valley. This would signify the surface is later than the demolition of the Priory Gate and therefore is unlikely to have been there in Shenstone’s day. Although the road surface is possibly eighteenth century, like the lining of the Spring Reservoir and the ‘South Cascade’, it may have been placed there by a later owner of the estate.

⁸⁶⁸ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone’s copy-book, no page number. Painted of Virgil’s Grove showing the obelisk at the entrance, the stone bridge and the dripping cascade; Heely, Joseph et., al., *A Companion to The Leasowes, Hagley & Enville* (Birmingham, Swinney & Hawkins, 1799-1800), p. 31. Heely records a wooden bridge in 1799-1800, but the documentary evidence is that it was replaced by a stone bridge and the present structure itself looks as if it has been rebuilt a number of times.

⁸⁶⁹ Gilpin, William, op. cit., p. 60.

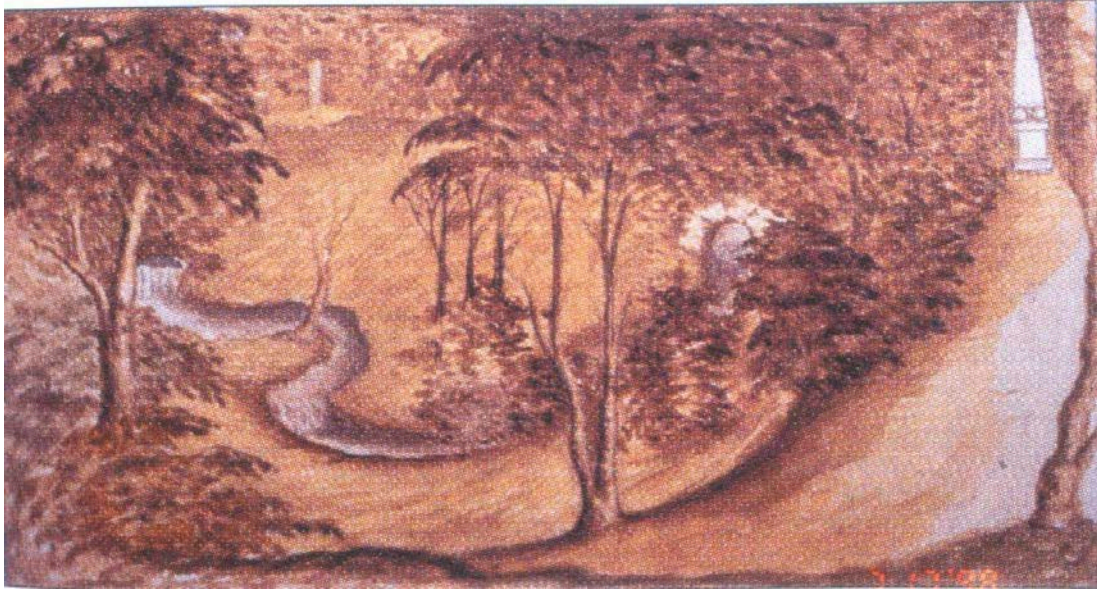


Fig. 7.15: Virgil's Grove showing the obelisk at the entrance, the stone bridge and the Dripping Fountain from a water-colour painted by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁸⁷⁰

7.4 Gothic Features

Although classical ruins had been used in England before Shenstone's time, Gothic features were a new phase in English garden architecture. They were constructed some time before the Gothic Revival became common in architectural history, so they have to be considered as an early attempt at the style.⁸⁷¹ Why Shenstone chose Gothic structures may have been because they represented the English past in comparison to the classical objects he had used elsewhere. These old English features also gave his garden an antique feel that the non-specialist could understand. As well as representing his perceived past his Gothic structures provoked a sensibility in all who saw

⁸⁷⁰ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.

⁸⁷¹ Reid, Richard, *The Book of Buildings: The architecture of Europe and North America* (London, Peerage Books, 1980), p. 190.

them. Thomas Gent's reaction to first seeing Kirkstall Abbey in 1728 is a good example of the excitement provoked by seeing the Gothic at first hand: 'Good God! Were enough to strike the most harden'd heart into the most serious reflection.'⁸⁷² Intellectual thought came about when looking at these objects and thinking was part of what The Leasowes landscape garden was about.

One of the earliest structures Shenstone had built was a summerhouse erected as a study in the early 1740s. This was a four-square building with a fireplace and a slate roof.⁸⁷³ It is only with the fenestration that we can see he was attempting to build a structure with some historical overtones, although very few of his colleagues tended to recognise it as such. The lancet windows with round heads are Romanesque forms – early Gothic.⁸⁷⁴ Despite the general abuse Shenstone received about it, Henrietta Knight had placated him by saying that:

I would not have it quite disregarded, and rather with it could be turned into some useful ornament. – Have you a dove-house? The nearness of the water would please the pigeons; and the sight of them would please you.⁸⁷⁵

This comment may have given him the idea to construct a dovecote closer to the farmstead (see Chapter 6). Another early building was the Temple of Pan (see Fig. 7.16). This was a rubble stone feature with round-headed doors and

⁸⁷² Gent, Thomas, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Loyal Town of Ripon* (London, A. Bettesworth & C. Hitch, 1733), p. 26.

⁸⁷³ W. S. to L. L. 12th September 1749, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 218. A shed-like structure.

⁸⁷⁴ Reid, Richard, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

⁸⁷⁵ L. L. to W. S. 8th September 1749 Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., pp. 119-123. Shenstone stated in a later letter that the building was painted white.

windows in the gable end. There was no Greek architectural detail in it, but the roundness of the orifices suggests that he was feeling his way to the Gothic style.



Fig. 7.16: Drawing of the Temple of Pan by David Parkes.⁸⁷⁶

Shenstone had sent Henrietta Knight a sketch of a wooden garden bench he was about to have constructed in June 1749. She pointed out that it ‘will be a more perfect thing than our famous restorer in the Gothic Style in building (Sanderson Miller) as yet given us.’ But then remembering he was always short of money, she added that she hoped he would be able to execute it at a

⁸⁷⁶ Source: David Parkes Sketch Book ref. 6001/154, Shropshire Record Office. This temple constructed out of random stone from his estates was one of Shenstone’s earliest features.

low price with his own timber.⁸⁷⁷ He liked to share his expertise and offered to sketch her some ‘Gothic temples and Gothic benches for garden-seats’.⁸⁷⁸

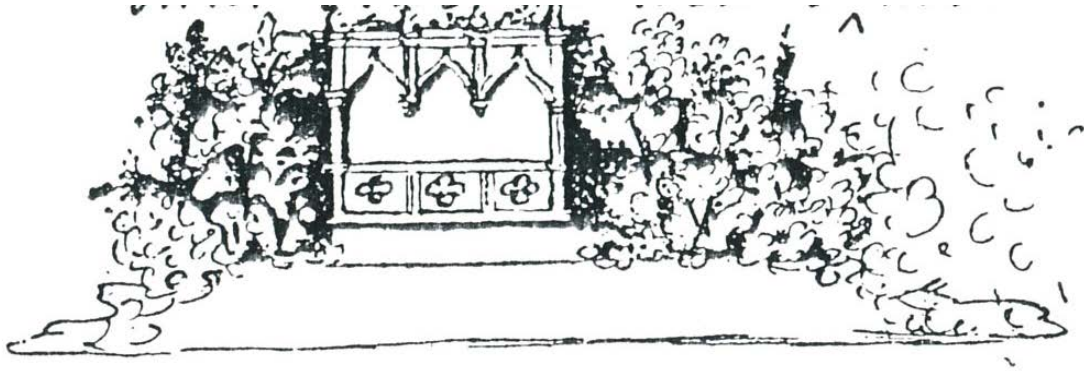


Fig. 7.17: Drawing of a Gothic Bench for Henrietta Knight by William Shenstone.⁸⁷⁹

He sent Henrietta Knight the sketch of a Gothic Bench (see Fig. 7.17) that he drew in July 1754 for her to see.⁸⁸⁰ The bench was designed like a medieval sedilia.⁸⁸¹ This suggests that Shenstone had either seen one extant, as in Worcester or Lichfield Cathedrals - he had been to both places - or had seen drawings of them. This is likely to have been very similar (if not the object itself) to the one later described as the Shepherd’s Bench at The Leasowes. The benches were also referred to as screens by Shenstone. He described how he had made these:

⁸⁷⁷ L. L. to W. S. 24th June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 106-7.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 9th July 1749, p. 205.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 17th July 1754, p. 408. This also looked like a bench that was placed in Foxhills Wood, Wodehouse. Barre, Dianne, ‘Sir Samuel Hellier (1763-1784) and his Garden Buildings; Part of the Midlands “Garden Circuit” in the 1760’-70’s’, *Garden History*, Vol. 36, (2008) p. 2.

⁸⁸⁰ W. S. to L. L. 15th July 1754, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 408.

⁸⁸¹ Randall, Gerald, *The English Parish Church* (London, Octopus Publishing Group, 1988), pp. 90-1. Sedilia – a decorated medieval stone seat normally found in the chancel of a church.

I know no form so good as that of a plain settee; the Back boarded, as it looks well at a distance when painted, and admits of any; ye seat consisting of bars, which let the wet thro. For ye Rest, they should be strong and large enough to receive four People conveniently... .. I have just finished one, so I speak by experience; yet must I be so just to confess that mine is hardly more yn 8F. long.⁸⁸²

This gives us rare details of how he constructed some of his features.⁸⁸³

In the winter of 1748-9 he planned to construct a stone structure for a seat above his Hermitage (see Appendix Two). This was to be in the Gothic style and was built by Pedley, who by now seems to have been regularly working at The Leasowes. The seat as designed by Shenstone had a mixture of different Gothic types, suggesting that he had a general understanding of the style but not a specific one. The structure was finished by the end of August when Messers Lyttelton, Pitt and Miller came and admired it. The fact that Shenstone had his doubts as to how his visitors would accept this new item to his garden suggests that he was aware of its deficiencies, but all seemed fine: 'The Building itself escap'd full as well as I cou'd reasonably expect.'⁸⁸⁴ Sanderson Miller was generally acknowledged as a 'doyen' of Gothic architecture and Shenstone was relieved when he praised the work.⁸⁸⁵ He had not finished with the structure for in November Pedley was 'hewing

⁸⁸² W. S. to L. L. 27th June 1750 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 279.

⁸⁸³ Barre, Dianne, op. cit., p. 319. A similar feature could be seen at Foxhills Wood.

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 30th August 1749, pp. 215-6.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 20th December 1758, p. 250; Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 362.

two small Gothic turrets for it',⁸⁸⁶ but thirteen days later he was writing that he wondered whether it was worth it as the expense was escalating.

The Devil take all Gothicism! I was told (& by an experienced Judge) that I might make two Pinnacles hewn in stone for my Gothick Building, for a trifle. They are now done, & have taken more stone than wou'd have built me as an urn; & cost within a Trifle as much as ye Building... .. but tis done! The Building is improv'd by them and I have gained Experience...⁸⁸⁷

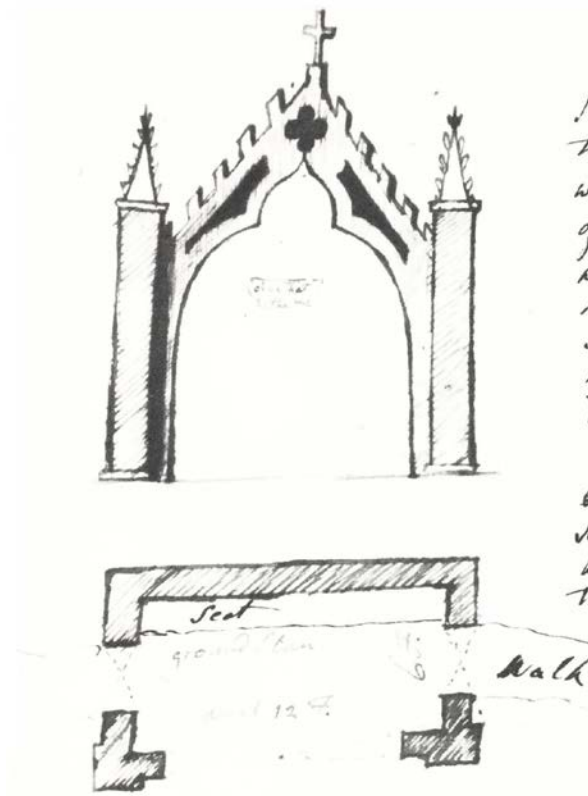


Fig. 7.18: Sketch of Gothic Seat with its pinnacles at The Leasowes by Sir James Parnell.⁸⁸⁸

The structure was sketched by Parnell and showed a Gothic-type form with a trefoil arch, a seat attached to the rear, with brick walls at the back, and two doorways on each side with a path leading from one to the other (see Fig.

⁸⁸⁶ W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 233.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 26th November 1749, p. 240.

⁸⁸⁸ Coll. Misc. 38, Parnell, Sir John, op. cit., p. 115.

7.18).⁸⁸⁹ The front of the feature was built in white brick,⁸⁹⁰ but probably stuccoed with a finial on each pinnacle with crockets and crenellations on a pitched parapet.⁸⁹¹ It was possibly the detail of the crockets that took the time and led to the high cost.



Fig. 7.19: Drawing of a Gothic Seat by David Parkes.⁸⁹²

Ten years later, in 1758, Shenstone had another Gothic Seat constructed in Hanging Wood which was basically a similar ground plan to the Gothic Alcove with the exception that the façade was much more in keeping with the established opinions of a Gothic doorway (see Fig. 7.19). By this stage in his designing life he was much more conventional in his choice of details. It had a pointed arch resting on two capitals, pilaster shafts and bases, buttresses

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 115.

⁸⁹⁰ W. S. to L. L. 25th September 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 172.

⁸⁹¹ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley & The Leasowes* (Bristol, 2010), p. 167.

⁸⁹² Shropshire Record Office, Ref. 6001/154, David Parkes Sketch Book.

occurred on the two west corners and crenellations on a flat pediment above. The doorway consists of an Early English hood-mould, and stops. Mouldings at the two upper corners (spandrels) appear to be some form of three-leaf pattern, possibly an extended fleur-de-lis.⁸⁹³ There is evidence suggesting that Shenstone may have acquired material from St. Mary's Abbey for this feature, just after he constructed the ruined priory. A sandstone block was found on the site of the Gothic Seat by the wardens of the park in 2012 (see Fig. 7:20).⁸⁹⁴ No chamfering has been recognised in The Leasowes buildings and therefore it may have come from somewhere else, possibly part of a course that reduced the upper part of a wall at the abbey.

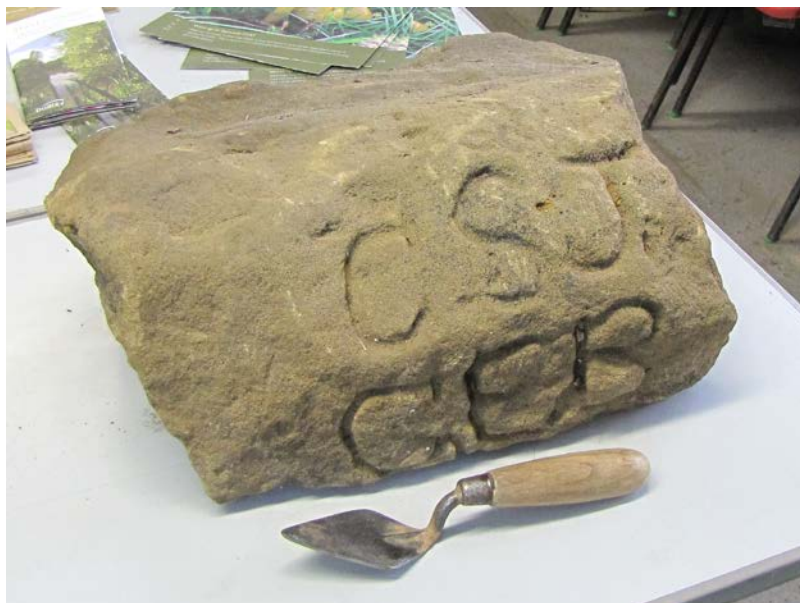


Fig. 7.20: Sandstone block with the initials C. S. J. above G. E. B.⁸⁹⁵

⁸⁹³ Lloyd, Nathaniel, *A History of the English House* (Ware, Omega Books Ltd, 1975), p. 305.

⁸⁹⁴ This ashlar stone although in a badly eroded condition appeared to have originally been carved. The initials refer to persons unknown and are likely to be graffiti.

⁸⁹⁵ Photograph by the writer in 2012.

The building of castles or monastic ruins was a growing feature of English gardens in the eighteenth century. The first one was Alfred's Tower at Cirencester in 1721, but the idea was new to Shenstone.⁸⁹⁶ Ruins were important as: 'All remains excite an inquiry into the former state of the edifice, and fix the mind in a contemplation on the use it was applied for.'⁸⁹⁷ The first we hear of his desire to construct the Ruinated Priory was in June 1750, when the Lytteltons were on one of their frequent visits to The Leasowes.⁸⁹⁸ In a letter to Henrietta Knight he explained:

I also enquired of Miss Lyttelton wt. stress they laid on the ruined Abby (wch is near me and which I must show your Ladyship) and intimated if that was not great, I shou'd be tempted to ask for a particular window or two ...⁸⁹⁹

The abbey windows were those of the ruins of the medieval St. Mary's Abbey, owned by the Lytteltons, to the south of The Leasowes farm.⁹⁰⁰ Shenstone's building a ruined priory was in answer to George Lyttelton who had already built a ruined castle at Hagley. Henrietta Knight replied: 'I hope Miss Lyttelton will get you the small statue and the old Abbey windows.'⁹⁰¹ The following month, Charles Lyttelton (brother to George) visited The Leasowes and Shenstone said that he 'lays no great stress on ye old Abby, wonders I should be afraid of him & will promote my Application all that lies in his

⁸⁹⁶ Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 64.

⁸⁹⁷ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 52.

⁸⁹⁸ Wilson, H. R., *David Parkes 1763-1833 (Life and Works)* (Halesowen, 1978), p. 37. Not 1746 when David Parkes said it was built.

⁸⁹⁹ W. S. to L. L., 27th June 1750 in Williams, Marjorie (1939), op. cit., pp. 281-2.

⁹⁰⁰ The Priory was demolished in the 1950s, but where it was sited was still known in the 1990s. In September 1996 the writer arranged and monitored an archaeological evaluation excavation by Lucie Dingwall on the site.

⁹⁰¹ L. L. to W. S. 30th June 1750, Williams, Marjorie (1939), op. cit., p. 209.

Power'.⁹⁰² Henrietta Knight replied in surprise that a person who was a Member of the Society of Antiquaries, should make such a comment: 'If the Antiquarian Dean lays no stress on the old Abbey. I think you may venture to pillage it without fear of holy war.'⁹⁰³

Shenstone's Priory was one of his major projects and although it represented religious belief and power, it also denoted the past, conveying the melancholy of the passing of time, 'which proceeds from a reflexion of decayed magnificence'.⁹⁰⁴ Whately pointed out that 'trees flourishing among ruins, shews the length of time they have been neglected. No circumstance so forcibly marks the desolation of a spot once inhabited, as the prevalence of nature over it.'⁹⁰⁵ The Priory was erected next to a small grove, with a cottage built on its north side (the same as Lyttelton's castle) hidden within the trees (see Appendix One).⁹⁰⁶ According to Whately, Shenstone's building the cottage next to it was also desirable as 'the site of a cottage amidst the remains of a temple, is a contrast both to the former and present state of the

⁹⁰² W. S. to L. L., 15th July 1750, Williams, Marjorie (1939), op. cit., p. 283.

⁹⁰³ L. L. to W. S., 15th July 1750, Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 282. Charles Lyttelton was always referred to in the Shenstone-Luxborough correspondence as Dean as he was Dean of Exeter Cathedral.

⁹⁰⁴ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 112; Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, CUP, 1937), p. 105.

⁹⁰⁴ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 112.

⁹⁰⁴ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 52.

⁹⁰⁴ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 112.

⁹⁰⁵ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 53.

⁹⁰⁶ Dingwall, Lucie, *An Archaeological Evaluation at Leasowes Park, Halesowen, West Midlands* (Birmingham Field Archaeology Unit, 1996), pp. 6-7. This was later extended by the Currie excavation which demonstrated that the west wall was brick and that it was a western extension to the original cottage. Currie reported that the extension with its cellar was constructed in the period 1859-1887. Currie, Chris, *Archaeological recording at The Leasowes, Halesowen, Dudley, West Midlands* (Eastleigh, CKC Archaeology, 1998), p. 30.

building'.⁹⁰⁷ Shenstone thought that a gardener was lucky who had a site that contained a scene of English history, as it would allow him to place objects in the area alluding to the past and encourage moral judgements.⁹⁰⁸ To add to the historicity of the site, Shenstone created Priory Pool nearby, which represented the fishponds that lay around the real St Mary's Abbey site just a mile to the south of The Leasowes.

An archaeological excavation on part of the priory revealed that it was constructed by using sandstone ashlar quoins for the corners, and window mouldings with an infill of random rubble sandstone (see Fig. 7.21). As the quoins and mouldings would have taken time to make and were of a harder material it was concluded that these came from the nearby abbey site. A number of stone samples were taken to the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences in Wales to be analysed. The writer of the report concluded that the ashlar stone was identical to that found at the abbey site and that the rubble stone had been chosen on purpose for a rusticated effect as there were more suitable and harder sandstones in the area which were more durable.⁹⁰⁹

⁹⁰⁷ Whately, Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁹⁰⁸ Shenstone, William, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁹⁰⁹ Palmer, T. J., *Geological Report on Stone Samples Recovered from Various Sites at the Leasowes, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences (Aberystwyth, University of Wales, 1997)* pp. 3-7, 9. The worked stone was of five different forms though all five were from the Halesowen vicinity and were found to be very similar to those found at St. Mary's Abbey. Most examples were local sandstones of the coal measures and one piece of basalt which can be found on the hilltop above The Leasowes, also known as Rowley Rag. One piece of sandstone was identified as coming from Hasbury Quarry to the south of the town of Halesowen where most of the local sandstone used in the surrounding district came from.



Fig. 7.21: Ruined Priory under excavation showing ashlar quoins at the corner.⁹¹⁰



Fig. 7.22: Extension of the nineteenth-century Priory Cottage in the central ground with part of Shenstone's cottage in the foreground during excavation.⁹¹¹

⁹¹⁰ Photographed by the writer on the 6th May 1998 during the Currie excavation.

⁹¹¹ Currie, Christopher K. (1998), photographic archive Plate 3.

The interior of the Priory was set out with appropriate ecclesiastical elements though Shenstone added his own with mock coats-of-arms placed around the walls to celebrate his friends.⁹¹² The cottage, hidden by the trees of the grove behind, was erected to house a tenant, but according to Hull, the family who eventually lived there never paid rent to Shenstone (see Fig. 7.22).⁹¹³ The priory gate was a later addition to his priory complex (see Fig. 7.23). It was intended, like a real medieval priory, to resemble a gatehouse that led to the main priory buildings. The pathway that ran through it entered a brook-side path that eventually arrived at the Priory Pool and the Priory.

⁹¹² W. S. to R. G. 25th November 1758 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 495.; Graves, Richard, *op. cit.*, p. 69; Currie, Christopher, K. (1998), *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28, 33. During the excavation fragments of painted Gothic armorial shields were found, made of a light brown ceramic.

⁹¹³ Beinecke Library, Yale University, USA, Osborn c20, Notes of Thomas Hull on the Leasowes Landscape Garden c.1760, p. 5.

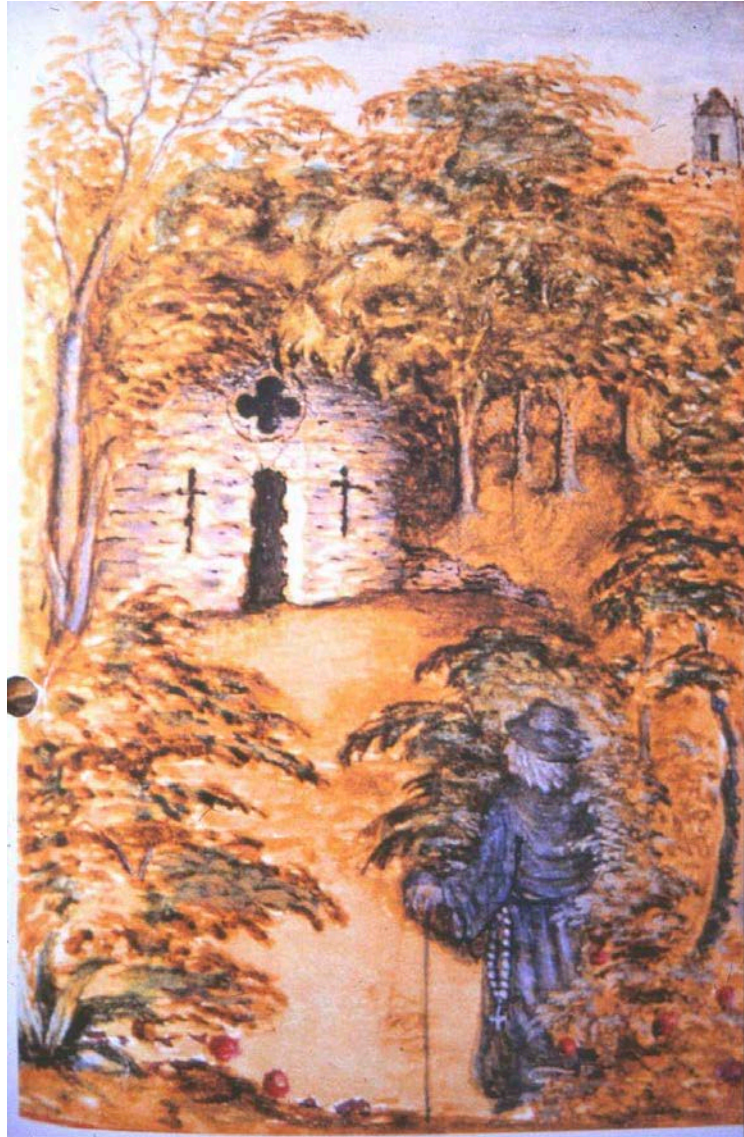


Fig. 7.23: Priory Gateway, water-colour painted by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.⁹¹⁴

7.7 Conclusion

Shenstone's use of different structural styles reveals how important variety was in his garden. Ideas for constructing classical features in a park or garden had been circulating around Europe for many years, but the

⁹¹⁴ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number. Shenstone painted this scene as if it was in the medieval period. A pilgrim is shown with beads and cross on his belt visiting the priory.

construction of Gothic features was a new concept. The variety of features and the way they appeared in and out of the landscape allowed viewers to never get bored with what they saw. The classical obelisk and urns demonstrated that in education Shenstone was a classicist, and the Gothic features reflected that he was an Englishman, proud of the English tradition. Many of his features were made out of natural materials, wood and stone that he could obtain from his estate; however, he also had structures built in more formal styles. The archaeological excavation of lost features at The Leasowes has begun to display Shenstone's capabilities as a landscape architect. No doubt further archival and site work at The Leasowes will reveal more features, but in the interim, those that have been discovered demonstrate that Shenstone was a pioneer in combining natural-looking, classical and Gothic styles in garden design.

Chapter Eight

Planting The Leasowes: Shenstone's horticultural knowledge

8.1 Introduction


In 1993 Douglas Chambers asserted that the place of 'botanists, nurserymen and gardeners in the creation of these new landscapes' has been overlooked by most modern gardening historians.⁹¹⁵ This chapter remedies this by assessing Shenstone's planting at The Leasowes. Shenstone displayed not only ability in designing a garden, but also knowledge of how to care for plants which were already present in his garden or what he bought or received from others. Clare Hickman noted that late eighteenth-century teachers of botany at the universities, as well as physicians, were exploring the natural way plants should be presented and adapting their botanic gardens in order to place them in 'artificial reconstructions of their natural environment'. She noted that some of the persons she studied had been to The Leasowes so perhaps the visit gave an impetus to their thoughts and accomplishments.⁹¹⁶ Shenstone's letters rarely mention acquisitions from nurseries as his financial situation prevented him from spending too much money, but they reveal that he received a wide assortment of trees, shrubs and flowers from acquaintances. It is unlikely that he made any rules about what to acquire as he mainly relied on what he was given; his skill lay in

⁹¹⁵ Chambers, Douglas D. C. *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993), p. 1.

⁹¹⁶ Draft article 'Curiosity and Instruction: British and Irish botanic gardens and their audiences, 1760-1800' by Clare Hickman, p. 10.

being able to place them in what appeared to be their natural surroundings. His knowledge of flora, how to propagate them, and where to place them was acquired from his family and teachers, contemporary books on gardening and botany, and his own observational skills. Being a landscape-painter he had an aesthetic appreciation of colour and form, but was also interested in the efficacy of a plant's pharmaceutical use. Tim Richardson was one of the few garden historians who commented on Shenstone's 'surprisingly wide range' of species⁹¹⁷ and Mark Laird also drew attention to his significance by examining the poem written by James Woodhouse of the varieties that Shenstone placed in his garden.⁹¹⁸ As well as native species, imported tender species in the far from appropriate environment of England were also introduced.⁹¹⁹ Shenstone had an interest in utility as well as beauty as he grew vegetables and fruit, the *utile* and *dulce* of Horace.⁹²⁰ His greenhouse and hot beds allowed him to grow tender species including tomatoes, oranges and pineapples under cover.⁹²¹ This chapter measures the extent to which Shenstone created a horticultural landscape at The Leasowes. It also evaluates the application of his botanical knowledge and his introduction of different plant varieties.

⁹¹⁷ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Bantam Press, 2008), p. 255.

⁹¹⁸ William J. Christmas, 'Woodhouse, James (*bap.* 1735, *d.* 1820)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [[http://www. Oxforddnb.com/view/article/29924](http://www.Oxforddnb.com/view/article/29924), accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Laird, Mark, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds 1720-1800* (Pennsylvania, 1999), pp. 109-114.

⁹¹⁹ Woodhouse, James, 'The Leasowes – A poem' in *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, J. Dodsley, 1766).

⁹²⁰ This was also the motto of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce founded in 1754.


⁹²¹ Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone 12th May 1753, Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters written by the Late Honourable Lady Luxborough* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 338.

8.2 Shenstone's theoretical approach

The majority of plants, shrubs and trees that existed in gardens in the eighteenth century were not domestic. The impetus to fill a garden with a variety of sweet-smelling shrubs and flowers did not occur until after the medieval period and even then the modern English obsession with garden plants began slowly.⁹²² The impetus to grow foreign or exotic species began after the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope and opened up the sea-ways to the east, and after the Spanish reached the Americas in the fifteenth century. From then new species started to arrive in Europe and England.⁹²³ John Tradescant the Elder (1570-1638) and the Younger (1608-1662) were both keen collectors, travelling abroad to find new species.⁹²⁴ John the Elder recorded the new species he brought back in a book called *Plantarum in Horto*, published in 1634, but both the Tradescants worked for royal or aristocratic garden owners so information about the plants did not spread very far.⁹²⁵ Following the English Civil War (1643-1660), and the foundation of the Royal Society in 1660 there was a growing interest in the scientific approach to botany and gardening. John Evelyn's (1620-1706)

⁹²² Wulf, Andrea, *The Brother Gardeners* (London, William Heinemann, 2008), p. 8; Harvey, John, *Early Nurserymen* (Chichester, Phillimore, 1974), pp. 18, 45, 46. Most of the recorded medieval species were fruit and nut trees; Campbell-Culver, Maggie, *The Origin of Plants* (London, Headline, 2001). John Gurle of the Whitechapel Nursery was the earliest recorded seller of anything other than fruit trees in 1677.

⁹²³ Parry, R. H. *The Age of Reconnaissance* (New York, Mentor, 1964), Part Two: The Story of Discovery, pp. 146-224.

⁹²⁴ Arthur MacGregor, 'Tradescant, John, the elder (d. 1638)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27654, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Gregory, Philippa, *Earthly Joys & Virgin Earth* (London, Harper Collins, 1998 & 1999). The lives of John Tradescant Elder and Younger.

⁹²⁵ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 130.

Kalendarium Hortense or the Gardeners Almanac (1664) was a month-to-month guide for the gardener.⁹²⁶ By the early eighteenth century the interest in exotic plants and the publication of books on gardening increased.⁹²⁷ One of the most influential was Philip Miller's *The Gardeners Dictionary* (1731).⁹²⁸ Miller worked at the Chelsea Physic Garden and was a keen botanist and a practical gardener. From its first publication in 1731 until 1768 it went through eight updated editions and the seventh edition (1756-9) included the nomenclature changes invented by Carl Linné (1707-1778), better known as Linnaeus.⁹²⁹

Shenstone acquired knowledge of flowers and plants in his early days from those who surrounded him, as his poem 'The Schoolmistress' asserted:

Herbs too, she knew, and well of each could speak,
That in her garden sipp'd the silvery dew,
Where no vain flower disclosed a gaudy streak,
But herbs for use, and physic, not a few,
Of grey renown, within these borders grew;
The tufted basil, pun provoking thyme,
Fresh baum,⁹³⁰ and marigold of cheerful hue,
The lowly gill, that never dares to climb,
And more I fain would sing, disdaining here to rhyme.⁹³¹

As an adult he learnt about plants, probably from reading the works of Philip Miller and Batty Langley, whose books were in his library, and Stephen

⁹²⁶ Ibid, p. 138.

⁹²⁷ Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 49.

⁹²⁸ Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 4.


⁹²⁹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

⁹³⁰ Baum – lemon balm, Gill – wallflower.


⁹³¹ Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), Vol. I, p. 266.

Switzer.⁹³² Shenstone's interest in garden plants also included the technical study of botany and it seems he was familiar with the work of Linnaeus.⁹³³ Linnaeus, the self-defined 'prince of botanists', wrote *Systema Naturae*, a new way of classifying plants using a system based on their sexual organs, published in 1735.⁹³⁴ He came to England in 1736, to acquire American plants from Peter Collinson (1694-1768), to see Philip Miller (1691-1771), and to advertise his new classification.⁹³⁵ As Andrea Wulf noted, many English botanists were scandalised by his opinions that a plant had sexual parts, so he found it difficult to secure acceptance of his ideas.⁹³⁶ Linnaeus returned to his native Sweden in 1738 and was offered a professorship of botany at Uppsala University in 1740 and continued to write about his discoveries.⁹³⁷ Shenstone was aware of Linnaeus' work as his library contained a work co-edited by Linnaeus and Engelbert Jorlin, *Plantae Tinctoriae de Quibus Specimen Botanico Oeconomicus* (a compendium of all vegetable substances, whether indigenous or imported, which are used in the art of dyeing).⁹³⁸ The book also demonstrates Shenstone's interest in the commercial aspect of species. Another book in his library on botany

⁹³² ~~Washburn~~ Le Rougetel, 'Miller, Philip (1691–1771)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18734, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

⁹³³ Gina Douglas, 'Linnaeus, Carl (1707–1778)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/58691, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

⁹³⁴ Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 48.

⁹³⁵ Douglas D. C. Chambers, 'Collinson, Peter (1694–1768)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5964, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 48. Collinson had started collecting American species from John Bartram of Virginia.

⁹³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 59.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 65.

⁹³⁸ William Shenstone to John Scott Hylton 13th November 1759 in Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 530.

Rev. James Hervey's *Reflections on a Flower Garden in a Letter to a Lady*, and was recorded in a letter Shenstone wrote dated 5th May 1748.⁹³⁹ This is a didactic piece of literature that extols the virtue of an early riser wandering through his garden. Hervey records the species of flowers and fruiting plants as well as farming stock and points out the wonders of nature to a woman. Shenstone appreciated this book for three reasons: it covered the type of garden he was working on, the *ferme ornée* revealed his attitude to nature, and demonstrated the use of a garden as an educational tool.

Another book in Shenstone's library was Langley's *New Principles of Gardening*.⁹⁴⁰ He made reference to a number of principles that Shenstone followed: 'When we come to copy or imitate nature we should trace her steps with the greatest accuracy that can be.'⁹⁴¹ This became an ideal in Shenstone's gardening as it meant planting items where they would be found in nature. A second principle that Shenstone practised was:

a beautiful Plantation should not only be adorned with entire Walks and Hedges of Trees of all Sorts, as well Fruit as others - but intermix'd together in many parts, as if Nature had placed them there with her own Hand.⁹⁴²

Three sections in the work were particularly useful to Shenstone: 'Part 3, Of trees and their cultivation'; 'Part 4, Of evergreens'; and 'Part 5, Of flowering shrubs.' These described methods of propagation and the growing of various named plants. A comment that Langley made, however, that was ignored by

⁹³⁹ Ibid, W. S. to Lady Luxborough 5th May 1748, p. 141.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 23rd April 1749, p. 190.

⁹⁴¹ Langley, Batty, *New Principles of Gardening* (London, 1728), pp. v - vi.

⁹⁴² Ibid, p. xiv.

Shenstone was his suggestion that still water was not conducive to a good garden:

where Situations are low, they often abound in too great a Plenty of Water, which, when stagnant, or of a flow Motion, is very unhealthy. All Kinds of Fenny, Boggy, Marshy Lands, &c. whence Fogs and noisome Vapours arise, are always to be avoided.⁹⁴³

Shenstone used the variety of flowers, shrubs and trees intentionally next to his meadow land and pools.

Gardeners/gardenists in the eighteenth century believed that the colours of trees and shrubs contributed to the expression of the Picturesque principles. The colours of many species are particularly varied in the spring and an attempt was made to create a ‘perpetual spring – the classical *ver perpetuum*’ in the garden.⁹⁴⁴ By 1750 over sixty-one new trees and ninety-one new shrubs had been introduced into England and, as Hunt affirmed, ‘this diversity ensured planters’ infinite resources for the design of scenic effects’.⁹⁴⁵ It was not only the colours of trees and flowers, but also the multitude of greens that increased the palette. As Peter Collinson wrote to his plant collector, John Bartram, in colonial America: ‘Dark green being a greater foil to lighter ones, and bluish green to yellow ones, and those trees that have their bark and back of their leaves white, or silver make a beautiful contrast with the

⁹⁴³ Ibid, p. 192.


⁹⁴⁴ Laird, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), p. 171, *ver perpetuum* – spring forever, from Virgil’s *Georgics*.

⁹⁴⁵ Hunt, John Dixon, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000) p. 15.

others.’⁹⁴⁶ Shenstone was also aware that ‘painting’ his landscape with differing tree colours and their shapes achieved an artistic effect.⁹⁴⁷

8.3 Planting at The Leasowes

Much of our knowledge of what Shenstone grew at The Leasowes is recorded in letters and in contemporary descriptions (see Fig 8:1). There is no evidence that he had any plan of what plants he should place in his garden, as most of the species were either natural to The Leasowes or appeared to have been acquired from his friends and neighbours. He received what was given and then placed them in what he considered was an appropriate position. Although there is evidence that he purchased a few plants from local nurseries at Coventry and Quinton,⁹⁴⁸ many of the species grown at The Leasowes were wild plants of field, hedgerow and wood which were in keeping with his natural-looking landscape. Others were not indigenous, particularly his collection of sweet-smelling shrubs, and the varieties can be inferred from the correspondence that he sent and received from friends and the species that they had in their own gardens.

⁹⁴⁶ Frank N. Egerton, ‘Bartram, John (1699–1777)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/68442>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Hunt, John Dixon (2000), op. cit., p. 45.

⁹⁴⁷ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’ in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), Vol II, p. 119.

⁹⁴⁸ W. S. to L. L. 9th March 1755 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 436.

novelty; as the eye passing from one form or color, to a form or color of a different kind'.⁹⁴⁹ Shenstone's artistic talents were brought to fruition in his landscape garden by his use of colour, scent and shape and where he placed herbaceous species, shrubs and trees. Like a painter, Shenstone used the mixing of flowering shrubs, plants and evergreens to give a Picturesque effect by tinting and changing textures. The scents and shapes of different plants were placed together to harmonise with one another.

Shenstone worked to a premise of dividing his estate into three distinct parts: shaded woods and groves,⁹⁵⁰ dry open pastures and wet meadowland. Each would be planted appropriately or the natural flora left to flower in its own way. The groves were an important part of The Leasowes as they 'drew upon classical as well as scriptural authority'.⁹⁵¹ The effect was likened to a carpet, enamelled and embroidered, with 'flecks of colour' patterning the undergrowth.⁹⁵² Shenstone wrote: 'I have been embroidering my Grove with Flowers.'⁹⁵³ His pasture lands were 'composed of various grasses mixed with other low-growing plants, some of which had colourful flowers',⁹⁵⁴ and many of these flowers had their seeds spread across the turf at hay-making time to make further blooms in the next season. June and hay-making was a period which Shenstone esteemed when he could 'enjoy the fragrance of hay, the

⁹⁴⁹ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', op. cit., p. 112.

⁹⁵⁰ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 107. The difference between a wood and a grove is that there is an understorey in a wood but only standard trees in a grove.

⁹⁵¹ Laird, Mark (2015), op. cit., p. 181, 171.

⁹⁵² Ibid, p. 171.

⁹⁵³ W. S. to L. L. 14th May 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 193.

⁹⁵⁴ Laird, Mark (2015), op. cit., p. 187.

cocks and the wind-rows; admire that universal lawn that is produced by the scythe'.⁹⁵⁵ The fields, particularly in the 'mild winters and springs in 1748 and 1750 brought lush green grass and spectacular embroidered meadows'.⁹⁵⁶ The meadows were particularly rich in flowering species, principally those that were water-tolerant and many were native species. By placing plants in a situation appropriate to their nature Shenstone could expect them to grow well. This knowledge separated him from many of the gentlemen gardeners of his day who employed gardeners to do the menial work, and may not have understood the relationship between landscape design and planting.


In 1747, Shenstone recorded that he began cleaning up his 'walks'⁹⁵⁷ and wrote that his servants were doing the work and he had walked down once or twice a day to supervise.⁹⁵⁸ It is likely that Shenstone's servants did the heavy work and he reserved planting for himself.⁹⁵⁹ He wrote: 'I have a peculiar Talent at making things live',⁹⁶⁰ and admitted 'I plant in all seasons'.⁹⁶¹ That the plants lasted demonstrated that he was a practical plantsman, though it is unknown if he had any failures as he only wrote

⁹⁵⁵ W. S. to Christopher Wren 22nd July 1752 in Williams, Marjorie (1939), op. cit., p. 340.

⁹⁵⁶ Laird, Mark (2015), op. cit., p. 187.

⁹⁵⁷ L. L. to W. S. 1747 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 60.

⁹⁵⁸ W. S. to L. L. 24th May 1751 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 308.

⁹⁵⁹ Richard B. Sher, 'Carlyle, Alexander (1722–1805)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4692>, accessed  21 Aug 2015; Carlyle, Alexander, *The Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle, minister of Inveresk; containing memorials of the men and events of his time* (London, W. Blackwood, 1861), p. 370. Shenstone was described as a 'large heavy fat man' by Carlyle.

⁹⁶⁰ Letter to Edward Knight from William Shenstone, 22nd April 1759, Kidderminster Reference Library, 000101 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990).

⁹⁶¹ W. S. to L. L. 14th May 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 193.

about his successes. He also gained pleasure from planting and was particularly delighted in the delivery of new plants: he wrote in May of 1749 that he had no greater feeling of joy than when a new flowering shrub was delivered.⁹⁶² In a letter to Richard Jago he displayed his enthusiasm for planting when he wrote: ‘I have done little else than plant bushes hazel, hawthorn, crabtree, (sic) elder & together with some flowering shrubs.’⁹⁶³

On 15th March 1750 Shenstone stated that he had received ‘some flowering shrubs that I have had given to me’, but also that he had purchased shrubs to the value of twenty shillings.⁹⁶⁴ He did not very often mention where he was getting plants from,⁹⁶⁵ but in March 1755 he referred to Mr Whittingham of Coventry as a person from whom he had bought laurels ‘to hide the barns and outhouses in my shrubbery’.⁹⁶⁶ John Whittingham had a nursery at Charterhouse, possibly on the site of the old abbey gardens, and was recorded as selling a wide range of shrubs and trees.⁹⁶⁷ This may have been the same nurseryman that Shenstone mentioned a month later when he wrote about purchasing laurels.⁹⁶⁸ According to John Harvey, Whittingham had the earliest nursery recorded in the locality. Another nursery that he

⁹⁶² Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 3rd June 1749, p. 197.

⁹⁶³ Ibid, W. S. to Richard Jago, 15th March 1750, p. 262.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 15th March 1750, pp. 262-3.

⁹⁶⁵ Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 5. A nurseryman was mentioned as working during Shenstone’s time at Kinslet near Bewdley by the name of John Rea though it is not known if Shenstone ever used by him.

⁹⁶⁶ W. S. to L. L. 29th March 1755 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 436-7.

⁹⁶⁷ Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 94-95.

⁹⁶⁸ W. S. to Richard Graves, 4th April 1755 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 441; Brickell, Christopher, (Editor-in-Chief) *The Royal Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopaedia of Garden Plants* (London, 1997), p. 425.

may have used was John Brunton's at Perry Hill, Quinton,⁹⁶⁹ close to where Shenstone held property. The evidence that Shenstone had some form of plant nursery can be construed from a reference to a plan when he was advising on work at Wimpole Hall (see Chapter Ten).⁹⁷⁰ We cannot tell where this was located, but when Edward Horne moved to The Leasowes he constructed a walled garden on the opposite side of Leasowes Lane to the house which may have been the site of this nursery.

Virgil's Grove was particularly rich in existing vegetation. Robert Dodsley described some of the flora in the Grove thus:

The sides of which are inclosed with irregular tufts of hazel and other underwood; and the whole over-shadowed with lofty trees rising out of the bottom of the dingle, through which a copious stream makes its way through mossy banks, enamelled with primroses, and variety of wild woodland flowers.⁹⁷¹

The Grove was also an area where Shenstone placed bought or given material. He stated in a letter of the 6th June 1749 that he had acquired two or three peonies (*Paeonia lactiflora*),⁹⁷² which he had planted beside the ferns,⁹⁷³ and brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*) in a gloomy site near the water's

⁹⁶⁹ Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 95.

⁹⁷⁰ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 118.

⁹⁷¹ Dodsley, Robert, 'A Description of the Leasowes' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), p. 314.

⁹⁷² Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 32. This European species had arrived in England by the thirteenth century.

⁹⁷³ Hyde, Molly, *Hedgerow Plants* (Aylesbury, Shire, 1976), pp. 84-86. There are many varieties of ferns ranging from the tall bracken (*Pteridium aquilium*) to the small Harts Tongue (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*) growing in different conditions.

edge.⁹⁷⁴ James Woodhouse wrote that as well as primroses, (*Primula vulgaris*), there were violets (*Viola odorate* & *V. tricolour*), hyacinths - probably grape hyacinth (*Muscari armeniacum*),⁹⁷⁵ wood anemones (*Anemone nemorosa*) - the common name is windflower, tutsans (*Hypericum androsaemum*) - the common name is St. John's Wort⁹⁷⁶ - and English marigolds (*Calendula officinalis*) in the grove⁹⁷⁷ (see James Woodhouse's poem, Appendix Five).

Shenstone was conscious of his colour planting, utilising flowers, blossom or leaves and was aware when planting trees, that dark coloured leaves in the foreground and silver coloured leaves in the background altered the prospect of distance. He stated that the 'different coloured greens' of evergreens when planted near a building affected the view of it.⁹⁷⁸ Alexander Pope in the 1720s applied this art of creating perspective and optical illusion.⁹⁷⁹ What Shenstone planted and where contributed to the naturalisation of the landscape around his urns. In a letter to Richard Jago about the Somerville Urn he stated that he was going to plant 'hazel (*Corylus*), hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*), crab tree (*Malus sylvestris*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*) around it.'⁹⁸⁰ These sub-trees flower at different times in the season and extended the flowering period. In 1759, writing to Edward Knight, he

⁹⁷⁴ W. S. to L. L. 3rd June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 199.

⁹⁷⁵ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 684. Grape hyacinth is found naturally in south east Europe.

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 543.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 204; Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 59. The English Marigold was introduced from southern Europe about c.1100.

⁹⁷⁸ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', op. cit., p. 124.

⁹⁷⁹ Batey, Mavis, *Alexander Pope: The Poet and the Landscape* (London, Barn Elms Publishing, 1999), p. 70.

⁹⁸⁰ W. S. to R. J. 15th March 1750 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 262.

requested that Knight send him one of his Spindle trees (*Euonymus atropurpureus*).⁹⁸¹ These were an American import first recorded as being introduced in 1744/6, only fifteen years beforehand. This was evidence that Shenstone was keen on planting new variants in his garden, as well as old trusted varieties.⁹⁸²

Like the Spindle tree many of his plants probably arrived as saplings, cuttings and roots given to him from the various gardens of friends.⁹⁸³ In May 1753 Henrietta Knight wrote to Shenstone mentioning she could send him some seeds and plants.⁹⁸⁴ It is possible that he received many plants from her as some of the species that she grew at Barrells are recorded in both gardens. These included: laurustinus (*Viburnum tinus*), chestnut (*Castanea/Aesculus hippocastanum*), white poplar (*Populus alba*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) and limes (*Tilia europaea*).⁹⁸⁵ Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), elm (*Ulmus procera*)⁹⁸⁶ and elder (*Sambucus nigra*) are native tree/shrubs of hedgerows and would have grown naturally at The Leasowes. She also acquired the American magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) in 1751, though whether she gave him a cutting or a root is unknown.⁹⁸⁷ Her wild

⁹⁸¹ W. S. to Edward Knight 5th February 1759, op. cit. (000101).

⁹⁸² Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 253. Wulf recorded that John Bartram collected seeds in south-east Pennsylvania from this shrub and sent them to England at this date.

⁹⁸³ Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott: Henrietta Luxborough, Poetic Gardener and Irrepressible Exile* (London, Harper Press, 2006), p. 149.

⁹⁸⁴ L. L. to W. S. 12th May 1753 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 339.

⁹⁸⁵ Brown, Jane, op. cit., pp. 148-149, 107-200.

⁹⁸⁶ Rackham, Oliver, *The History of the Countryside* (London, Dent & Sons, 1986), pp. 232-247. Elm is not an indigenous species as it does not reproduce from seed in England. In Chapter 11 Rackham discusses the complicated history of elms and states that the evolution of the species is linked to human affairs, p. 233.

⁹⁸⁷ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 201.

flowers included: ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), snow drops (*Galanthus nivalis*), bluebells (*Endymion nonscriptum*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), poppies (*Papaver rhoeas*), ox-eye daisies (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), corn cockles (*Lychnis githago*) and campion (*Lychnis dioica*), all of which must have grown naturally at The Leasowes.⁹⁸⁸ A letter from her in 1747 stated that she would give him plants to put around his hermitage. They included: star of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum*)⁹⁸⁹ and cuttings of her passion flowers (*Passiflora caerulea*)⁹⁹⁰ ‘to make your hermitage more proper’.⁹⁹¹ She also supplied him with seeds of plants that were foods: ‘Love-apple, & ye Broccoli’ (*Brassica*).⁹⁹² Love-apples - *Pommes d'amour* were the eighteenth-century French term for tomatoes (*Lycopersicon esculentum*), a greenhouse species which was first brought to England in 1597 via Spain.⁹⁹³

The Leasowes Farm was a partly wooded landscape and Shenstone used existing trees as an important addition in his landscape garden design, but cautioned the tree-lover against placing too many into the landscape. He stated that it was the gardener’s role to remove trees filling up the low land, when they should have been planted on high land to increase the height of the hills artificially.⁹⁹⁴ Predominantly the tree cover at The Leasowes

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid, pp. 148-149, 107-200.

⁹⁸⁹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 95. The bulbs of this species were brought back from the Near East by the European Crusaders in the fifteenth century.

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid, pp. 113-4. This passion flower comes from the southern United States and was taken to Spain in the sixteenth century from where it was introduced into England.

⁹⁹¹ L. L. to W. S. 1747 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 60.

⁹⁹² W. W. to L. L. 13th May 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 361.

⁹⁹³ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 82.

⁹⁹⁴ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts in Gardening’, op. cit., p. 129.

included oaks (*Quercus rubra*) and beeches (*Fagus sylvatica*) recorded in the 'Description of the Leasowes' in *The Works*. Other tree species are referred to by Woodhouse in the Straight Walk, where Shenstone had cherry trees (*Prunus avium*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*).⁹⁹⁵ He also recorded Plane trees down near the 'South Cascade',⁹⁹⁶ probably the Oriental Plane (*Platanus orientalis*), which had been in the country since the fourteenth century rather than the London Plane which had only been recently introduced into Britain.⁹⁹⁷

Shenstone's removal of some of his hedges led to individual and clumps of trees standing out in his landscape. Some of them were planted in a circular pattern. The circle of Scotch firs may have been placed by the Lytteltons as eye-catchers at an unknown date, but the oaks and beeches must have predated these as they were described as being ancient. Dodsley described some of these trees as: 'well grown', 'magnificent', 'spreading', 'noble' and 'venerable', indicating their great age.⁹⁹⁸ Other descriptions of the planting at The Leasowes add to our knowledge. In a letter to John Scott Hylton, Shenstone notes that Lord Lyttelton's Gardener is going to supply him with conifers, possibly Pinasters (*Pinus*), though he says he would like 'six *Ichthyodontes Scutillati*'.⁹⁹⁹ The identity of these latter plants is unknown as the name does not appear to be recorded in plant encyclopaedias and

⁹⁹⁵ Woodhouse, James, op. cit., p. 112

⁹⁹⁶ The term 'South Cascade' was not used in Shenstone's time.

⁹⁹⁷ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 74.


⁹⁹⁸ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., pp. 293, 296, 312.

⁹⁹⁹ W. S. to J. S. H. 11th December 1756 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 459.

therefore may have been nomenclature invented by Shenstone.¹⁰⁰⁰ Other common small trees often associated with hedges included hazel and holly (*Illex aquifolium*) which are indigenous to Britain and most of these may have been self-sets at The Leasowes. Thomas Whately wrote about the hawthorn hedges that grew in between Shenstone's fields.¹⁰⁰¹ According to Whately, all of his hedges were treated differently: a few were kept low to allow views to be seen from his seats, but most were allowed to grow into trees, but reduced in places when they interfered with the lines-of-sight. As an example, he wrote that the hedge that divided Urn Field from Summerhouse Field was high because the 'path creeps under it'.¹⁰⁰²

Tree species grew alongside his pools and watercourses. The common alders (*Alnus glutinosa*) growing on the north side of the Upper Pool were natural to the damp nature of the place they grew in, but two poplars were recorded on the north bank in the mid-1750s in a water-colour painted by Shenstone (see Appendix Two.)¹⁰⁰³ These appear to be mature conical-shaped Lombardy poplars (*Populus nigra var. italica*). The present record for the introduction of this variety is that they were brought to England from Italy in 1758, but

¹⁰⁰⁰ Kew Gardens were approached on this species, but their records do not show it as existing as a plant name. Email from Craig Brough, Information Services Librarian, Herbarium, Library, Art & Archives Directorate, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, dated 19th September, 2012.

¹⁰⁰¹ Rory T. Cornish, 'Whately, Thomas (1726–1772)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29177>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, T. Payne, 1770, re-printed Memphis, USA, General Books, 2010), pp. 65-67.

¹⁰⁰² *Ibid*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁰³ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.

these specimens at The Leasowes seem to pre-date this period.¹⁰⁰⁴ Dodsley refers to poplars growing by the north brook seen from the Classical Screen and Shenstone painted a water-colour of the Classical Screen with a poplar tree shown on the left beside the brook from the south; these appear to be white poplars (*Populus alba*). As noted above, Henrietta Knight grew these in her garden which may have been where Shenstone obtained them.¹⁰⁰⁵ Shenstone wrote in March 1750-1 that he had been walking in his Cypress Grove and Richard Graves mentioned cypresses in a poem about Shenstone's garden.¹⁰⁰⁶ This species may have been the swamp cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). These trees were brought back from Florida in the 1640s by John Tradescant the Younger and possibly stood around the Green Pool.¹⁰⁰⁷ Thomas Whatley also mentions yew trees between the single-arch bridge and the Green Pool in Virgil's Grove.¹⁰⁰⁸ Whatley wrote about the ferns, alders and hornbeams (*Carpinus betulus*) that grew in and around the base of the 'South Cascade'¹⁰⁰⁹ and Shenstone also stated that he had planted Sallows there.¹⁰¹⁰ Joseph Heeley added to the species list in this place by the reference to chestnuts and larches (*Larix decidua*) around Stamford's Root house.¹⁰¹¹ Shenstone's use of waterside trees and other plants shows his use of

¹⁰⁰⁴ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 75.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 312

¹⁰⁰⁶ W. S. to L. L. March 1750-1 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 310. The Cypress Grove was not recorded on any of the contemporary plans of The Leasowes.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid, W. S. to L. L. 10th March 1750-1, p. 298; Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 312.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 67; Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 136.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., pp. 65-67.

¹⁰¹⁰ W. S. to L. L. 22nd March 1749-50 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 265

¹⁰¹¹ Heely, Joseph, *A Companion to the Leasowes, Hagley and Enville* (Birmingham, Swinney & Hawkins, 1800), p. 6. The name of the root house had been changed by the then owner of the property Edward Horne to The Woodhouse.

species natural to the location. Having the correct trees in an area where they would grow well emphasised that nature ruled in his landscape garden.

James Woodhouse' poem 'The Leasowes' said a great deal more about the plants which were planted at The Leasowes. The poem describes a walk along the designated path around the farm, interposed with comments of his appreciation of the character of Shenstone. It is the most descriptive text in terms of species that can be found in the many written descriptions of The Leasowes landscape garden. Many of the species were of course natural to the area, but Shenstone used these types of trees to indicate a feeling that he wanted to express about a particular place. In the shade of beech and oak trees was where he placed his seats and there his visitors could contemplate the scenery. The deeper colours of yew, firs and holly had a morbid feel about them which would remind viewers of their own mortality. As an aid to what they should have been thinking about he placed features there, such as his urns to the dead there. Conversely, the flowering chestnuts and light green-leaved limes presented a lightness of heart and expectation, and these he placed close to his cascades with the willows and alders that tended to grow alongside his watercourses and ponds waving in the breeze, and hence suggesting vibrancy. These existed in a life-reaffirming scene together with the pasture and meadow on his farm that was also part of the positive image with its 'flower bespeckled mead'¹⁰¹² which had 'cowslips (*Primula veris*), pinks (*Dianthus plumarius*) and pansies (*Viola tricolor*)' amongst other flowers

¹⁰¹² Woodhouse, James, op. cit., p. 138.

growing in it, such as daises and buttercups.¹⁰¹³ Shenstone also mentions climbers like ‘woodbine and jasmines’ in a letter of 1743; we can presume these festooned the trees.¹⁰¹⁴

Laird’s work on the planting schemes in England shows that planting plans have rarely survived from the eighteenth century. Therefore Woodhouse’s description, particularly of the shrubbery, is a very valuable piece of evidence for the ‘natural’ way in which Shenstone designed his garden.¹⁰¹⁵ The description of his shrubbery shows a great more detail and, given the restrictions of his rhyming pattern, it seems to show where the plants were placed. Shrubby was a new word in the eighteenth century. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* it was first used by Henrietta Knight in a letter to William Shenstone on the 16th October 1748.¹⁰¹⁶ Shenstone’s shrubbery was in the farmyard. On William Lowe’s plan he shows the main shrubbery to the north and lesser areas to the east and the south.¹⁰¹⁷ Laird observed that the James Woodhouse poem displayed the planting scheme in the shrubbery and stated that he conveyed ‘something of the graduated structure of the shrubbery: from the flowers and the ‘lowley’ laurustinus at the front to the dogwoods, yews and bays, larches, firs and pines in the centre and the

¹⁰¹³ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., cowslip p. 832, pansies p. 1054; Campbell-Culver, Maggie, pinks p. 39; Shenstone, William, *The Works*, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 100.

¹⁰¹⁴ W. S. to R. G. 3rd July 1743 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), (1939) p. 66. Woodbine is an alternative name for honeysuckle; Laird, Mark, (2015), op. cit., p. 177. Jasmine was introduced in the seventeenth century.

¹⁰¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 113-114.

¹⁰¹⁶ Online *Oxford English Dictionary* – shrubbery. 1748 Lady Luxborough *Let.* 16 Oct. in *Lett. to W. Shenstone* (1775) 56 Nature has been so remarkably kind this last October to adorn my Shrubby with the flowers that usually blow at Whitsuntide.

¹⁰¹⁷ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 286.

‘tow’ring planes’ and ‘lofty sycamores’ at the rear.’¹⁰¹⁸ He suggested that ‘Shenstone’s shrubbery was an accomplished design employing a relaxed approach to graduation and intermixing, some artifice in ‘plunging’¹⁰¹⁹ and a practised art in mixing Lord Petre’s ‘Europeans, Americans and Asians’.¹⁰²⁰ This graduated form of planting was first described by Thomas Fairchild in *The City Gardener* published in 1722.¹⁰²¹ Batty Langley also referred to this habit.¹⁰²² The difference in Shenstone’s scheme from others created in the eighteenth century, such as the one by Philip Southcote at Wooburn, is that it was less regimented with a freer planting.

The first lines of Woodhouse’s poem describe the shrubbery, mention the scents as the visitor walks up to the entrance, then refer to the first shrub that is seen: ‘So here the bright-streak’d phillyreas between / And broad-leaved laurels ever shining green’. The ‘Phillyrea’ is a member of the olive family sometimes called green privet which is indigenous to the Mediterranean.¹⁰²³ As laurel (*Prunus*) which comes next is a large family we cannot be sure which one he wrote about, perhaps the cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*)¹⁰²⁴ which comes from Eastern Europe and was brought to England c.1576.¹⁰²⁵ Like the

¹⁰¹⁸ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 114.

¹⁰¹⁹ Plunging – growing a plant in a container and sinking it to its rim into the soil of a plant bed. Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 1076.

¹⁰²⁰ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., pp. 113-114.

¹⁰²¹ Ibid, p. 30.

¹⁰²² Ibid, p. 30.

¹⁰²³ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 782.

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid, p. 838.

¹⁰²⁵ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 118.

Phillyrea it has a spreading habit and eventually grows into a tree so it could have been used as a windbreak at the back (north-side) of the border.

A Medicean Venus charms impart
A sudden impulse to each gazer's heart;
Thus by an oval bason's grass-grown side,
Dimpling, whose surface glist'ring gold-fish glide,
She stands beneath a fair Liburnum's Head,
With saffron-tassel'd blossoms overspread:

The next feature is the Venus Statue with its bowl of goldfish beneath a yellow-flowered laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides syn. vulgare*). The laburnum is a central European tree that was first brought to England in the 1560s.¹⁰²⁶ The reference to grass suggests that either a small lawn or ornamental grass grew close to the bowl.

These intermixing, purple lilacs meet,
And fragrant myrtle blooms beside her feet;
Geraniums spread their painted honours by,
And orange-plants, whose fruitage tempts the eye:

The purple lilac which was mentioned next was probably the lilac-coloured version of the *Syringa Vulgaris*;¹⁰²⁷ this shrub flowers and grows stems and leaves from the ground and would have stood next to the laburnum not under it as stated by Woodhouse. The lilac (the word is Persian) came from south-east Europe and they were introduced into England from Turkey about 1562. The genus name *syringa* is derived from Greek *syrinx*, meaning a hollow tube or pipe, and refers to the broad pith in the shoots in some species, which since time immemorial have been used to make reed pipes. This was appropriate given Shenstone's interest in the Roman deity Pan. The

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid, p. 118.

¹⁰²⁷ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., pp. 993-995.

name *Syringa* although now used for lilac, was also used for the mock-orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*) in Shenstone's day.¹⁰²⁸ The myrtle (*Myrtus communis*) is a sub-shrub from the Mediterranean region and is tender, so would have needed to have been placed indoors or in a greenhouse during the winter so would have stood in front of the lilac, possibly in a container.¹⁰²⁹ The common geranium is called a cranesbill in England, but *Pelargonium inquinans*¹⁰³⁰ from South Africa are also called geraniums. This last variety first came to England in 1714, so it was another recent introduction.¹⁰³¹ Shenstone's friend John Scott Hylton of Lapal was growing these latter flowers: we know this because Shenstone asked Hylton to send him a few as he wanted to have them included in a painting that Edward Alcock was undertaking of him: the flowers are visible in the portrait.¹⁰³² Another species that can be seen in the painting was Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*), which was introduced from south and eastern Europe in 1573.¹⁰³³ The geraniums that Woodhouse mentioned were small and would have stood at the front of the border. Orange trees (*Citrus*) come next and again they would have been in tubs, being tender plants.¹⁰³⁴ The building of orangeries for winter protection was a contemporary craze but there is no evidence that Shenstone had one. 'By these prickly-leaved oak you see, / And with fronted leaves the tulip-tree;' Oaks were important trees at The Leasowes and Shenstone

¹⁰²⁸ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 148.

¹⁰²⁹ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 688.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid, p. 758.

¹⁰³¹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁰³² W. S. to J. S. H. 16th January 1760 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 544. See portrait of Shenstone at the beginning of this thesis.

¹⁰³³ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 118.

¹⁰³⁴ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 272.

mentioned them in his ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’: ‘Oaks are in all respects the perfect image of the manly character.’¹⁰³⁵ In this case it was a foreign oak in the shrubbery a prickly-leaved oak or kermes oak (*Quercus coccifera*) and is a Mediterranean variety.¹⁰³⁶ The tulip tree (*Liriodendron*) which he described next in front of the oak came from the east coast of North America.¹⁰³⁷ Maggie Campbell-Culver records that in the first part of the eighteenth century, America was one of the main areas from which plants were imported.¹⁰³⁸ Wulf noted that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the second and third presidents of the United States, found American shrubs and trees at The Leasowes when they went there. Adams commented about the visit and wrote that of so many ‘rare Shrubbs and Trees, to which the Collection America has furnished her full Share’.¹⁰³⁹

The plants mentioned next were small in stature and were probably in the middle or the front of the border.

Here yellow blows the thorny barberry-bush,
And velvet roses spread their bright’ning blush;
And here the damask, there the province rose,
And cerasus’s double blooms disclose;

¹⁰³⁵ Shenstone, William, ‘Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening’ op. cit., p. 118.

¹⁰³⁶ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 853.

¹⁰³⁷ Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 257. This tree was first brought back to England by John Tradescant the Younger from Virginia circa 1638, but John Bartram exported them from Virginia in the thousands in the early and mid-eighteenth century; Jellicoe, Sir Geoffrey, & Jellicoe, Susan, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (Oxford, 1991), p. 15.

¹⁰³⁸ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁰³⁹ Wulf, Andrea, *The Founding Fathers; How the Revolutionary Generation Created an American Eden* (London, William Heinemann, 2011), p. 58.

The barberry (*Berberis*) is a shrub and belongs to another large family. There are a good many yellow varieties.¹⁰⁴⁰ Roses also come in a very large variety, but the forms mentioned here were grouped into three variants: velvet rose, damask rose and the Provence rose (*Rosa centifolia*).¹⁰⁴¹ The damask rose is thought to have been introduced into England in 1573.¹⁰⁴² The cerasus (*Prunus cerasifera* syn. *Cerasus vulgaris*) which is next is called Cherry Plum or Myrobalan and is a sour cherry native to Europe.¹⁰⁴³ 'With rip'ning fruit domestic raspberry glow, / And sweet Americans their scents bestow.'¹⁰⁴⁴ Laird considered the next object to be the Virginian raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*),¹⁰⁴⁵ but given that James Woodhouse called it a 'domestic raspberry' it is probably a (*Rubus idaeus*).¹⁰⁴⁶ The fact that Shenstone mixed fruit-bearing raspberries with flowering scented shrubs is further evidence that he grew things that could be eaten as well as look attractive.

The next items grow into tall shrubs, so were in the middle or placed at the back of the border. 'White lilacs and syringes shed perfumes, / And gelder-roses hang their bunchy blooms.' The white lilac is probably the form (*Syringa alba*), as the colour of the other syringes are not stated it could be assumed that they were the common lilac colour. The lilac is supposed to

¹⁰⁴⁰ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., pp. 170-173.

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid, pp. 888-913.

¹⁰⁴² Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁰⁴³ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 836.

¹⁰⁴⁴ The 'Americans' may have been American Roses so called by Richard Woods, nurseryman of Chertsey in 1759-60 in Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 204.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 114.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 195.

represent love which also supports Shenstone's romantic side.¹⁰⁴⁷ The Guelder-rose is not in fact a rose, but a *Viburnum opulus* and is native to Europe. It has bunches of small white flowers that come out in spring-early summer.¹⁰⁴⁸ 'And tow'ring planes erect their heads sublime, / And, by the sweet-briar flow'ring willows climb.' The plane (*Platanus orientalis*), which originally grew in south-east Europe, normally in wet sites, and was brought to England in the fourteenth century, was probably at the back of the border.¹⁰⁴⁹ Woodhouse also mentions the sweet briar (*Rosa eglanteria*) which is a European form with single rose-pink flowers that come out in mid-summer. It is a common rose and very vigorous, so would be suitable to climb trees.¹⁰⁵⁰ The willow may have been the Bay or Sweet Willow that has very showy male yellow catkins.¹⁰⁵¹ This species was recorded by Joseph Spence as growing at Southcote's Wooburn Farm in 1749.¹⁰⁵²

The following series of shrubs may have been situated in the middle of the border. 'Here flimsy-leaved acacia drooping weeps, / And lowly laurustinus humbly creeps.' Acacias (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) grew in the warm temperate regions around the Mediterranean, particularly Egypt. A popular form was *Acacia nilotica*.¹⁰⁵³ It was originally taken to France and was given to

¹⁰⁴⁷ Connolly, Shane & Baldwin, Jan, *The Language of Flowers* (London, Conran Octopus, 2004), p. 44.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 1050.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 896.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid, p. 925.

¹⁰⁵² Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid, p. 114.

Tradescant the Elder by Jean Robins in 1630.¹⁰⁵⁴ Quite where Shenstone's came from is unknown. The Laurustinus which is mentioned next is the *Viburnum tinus* and also comes from the Mediterranean area. It bears small white flowers in late winter and spring.¹⁰⁵⁵ 'The foreign dogwood shoots its sanguine sprays': Woodhouse referred to the dogwood next and was aware that it came from abroad, but he did not state from where. The indication that this variety was red probably meant it was red-barked dogwood (*Cornus alba*) from Siberia,¹⁰⁵⁶ although its 'sanguine sprays' may suggest that another candidate was the European cornel (*Cornus mas*) and is native to south-eastern Europe.¹⁰⁵⁷ This latter variety had been in England since 1551 and was referred to in a list of plants as the cornelian cherry in 1732.¹⁰⁵⁸ Henrietta Knight stated in a letter to Shenstone that Richard Graves was to give her the latter in 1752.¹⁰⁵⁹

The subsequent series of plants grew tall so were at the back of the border. 'And sable yews combine with cheerful bays.' Another species which he refers to is the dark-green Yew (*Taxus*), which are fully hardy in England and have grown here for centuries either wild, in groves or singularly - normally in churchyards. They are often used for topiary, but as Shenstone did not agree with pruning trees and shrubs into shapes these were probably planted as a

¹⁰⁵⁴ Campbell-Cutler, Maggie, op. cit., p. 136.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 1051.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Campbell-Cutler, Maggie, op. cit., p. 165.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 297.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 35; Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 118.

¹⁰⁵⁹ L. L. to W. S. 12th May 1753 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 339.

wind break.¹⁰⁶⁰ Woodhouse mentioned the bay (*Laurus nobilis*) which was introduced into England in 1562.¹⁰⁶¹ Despite it coming from the Mediterranean it is not often considered to be tender, but hard winters can cut it down.¹⁰⁶² Shenstone may have placed it in front of the yew to protect it; alternatively he may have placed it in a container and moved it to a shelter in inclement weather.¹⁰⁶³

While by the double-blossom'd hawthorn stands
Curl'd laurel, brought from Portugalian, strands;
And arbour-vitae's rear their fetid heads,
And stinking effluvia spreads;

There are a vast number of hawthorn (*Crataegus*) shrubs/tree species and in the 1750s many of the American thorns started to appear.¹⁰⁶⁴ According to Laird, the one referred to was *Crataegus oxyacanthus* 'Plena' which has double flowers.¹⁰⁶⁵ Next Portuguese laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*) is a species of cherry not a laurel, but has grown well in England since it was introduced in 1648.¹⁰⁶⁶ The arbour-vitae, which comes next, was an alternative name given to the white cedar. These were North American conifers that have since been reclassified as Thujas.¹⁰⁶⁷ Laird considered this one to be the common variety (*Thuja occidentalis*).¹⁰⁶⁸

¹⁰⁶⁰ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., pp. 1000-1001.

¹⁰⁶¹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 118.

¹⁰⁶² Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 595.

¹⁰⁶³ Laird, Mark (2015), op. cit., p. 177. Laird refers to the weather conditions of the eighteenth century and although it has been described as the Little Ice Age, between 1550 and 1800, it did have a range of warmer temperatures and in the 1740s there were hot and dry summers.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 114; this species is described as a *Crataegus laevigata* by Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 140; Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 838.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 264. This species was first imported into England circa 1536, but John Bartram found it again in 1738 while on a plant-hunting expedition to

Here Scotch and silver firs, the shrubs among,
And lovely larch with hairy verdure hung,
And sycamores their lofty summits rear,

It seems as if Shenstone had a small arboretum at The Leasowes with its mixture of trees. Apart from the Scotch firs (*Pinus sylvestris*), which have been in Britain since the end of the last Ice Age,¹⁰⁶⁹ Silver firs (*Abies alba*), were introduced in 1603 from the mountains of central Europe¹⁰⁷⁰ and European larch was brought back from Russia by John Tradescant in 1620.¹⁰⁷¹ The Sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) were not native, but their introduction is unknown and they are the only non-conifers in this group. As they grow tall they were probably at the back of the border.¹⁰⁷²

The final species are all low-growing so would have stood at the front of the border.

And silver-border'd foliage hollies wear;
While this above, with various others, twine,
Beneath the piony and catch-fly shine;
Narcissus fair, and early daffodil,
Between their stems the vacant spaces fill.

The silver holly (*Ilex aquifolium* var. *Argentea marginata*) is a native shrub and tends to creep rather than climb.¹⁰⁷³ Other plants described by Woodhouse

western Virginia and sent it regularly to England after this date; Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., pp. 1008-1009.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 114.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Rackham, Oliver, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 145.

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid, p. 145.

¹⁰⁷² Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 57/803/592/68; Rackham, Oliver, op. cit., pp. 56-7.

¹⁰⁷³ Brickell, Christopher, op. cit., p. 548-549.

include: the peony (*Paeonia officinalis*)¹⁰⁷⁴ which is a perennial herbaceous plant introduced into England during the early middle ages,¹⁰⁷⁵ the English catch-fly (*Silene anglica*), a cornfield flower that has been noted as being naturalised in the Stour Valley, and spring bulbs such as narcissus and daffodils. These all together suggest it was a very mixed and quite a wild border in keeping with the Shenstonesque ideal of a natural-looking garden.¹⁰⁷⁶

Shenstone may have read a warning from the works of Switzer about planting exotics out of context. Their situation would corrupt nature's *simplex munditiis* – simple purity - and he would have been careful where he placed them¹⁰⁷⁷ Many of them were probably grown in his greenhouse which he constructed 'from the excrescences of Lord Dudley's' (sic).¹⁰⁷⁸ This is not mentioned in the inventory taken after his death, but was presumably constructed in his Kitchen Garden about 1744. In the aforesaid inventory two orange trees were mentioned, though whether they were Seville orange (*Citrus aurantium*), sweet orange (*Citrus sinensis*), or clemantine, mandarin or satsuma species (*Citrus reticulata*), is not clear. They all had been introduced

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 741.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., p. 32. It had been introduced into England before the late Anglo-Saxon period as Abbott Aelfric recorded it in A.D. 995.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Amphlett, John & Rea, Carleton, *The Botany of Worcestershire* (Birmingham, Cornish Brothers, 1909), p. 48.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Switzer, Stephen, *The Nobleman, Gentleman, and Gardeners Recreation* (London, 1715), pp. xxix, xiii-xiv in Longstaffe-Gowan, Todd, *The London Town Garden 1740-1840* (New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 2001), p. 96.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Symes, Michael, & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 93.

into England before 1722.¹⁰⁷⁹ These would all have been greenhouse varieties in the winter months. The tomato plants that Henrietta Knight had given him were kept in the greenhouse for the whole season. Another allusion to the growing of tender species was a reference to hot-beds. It was probably Lord Dudley's gardener at The Grange who started growing plants in a hot-bed as Shenstone refers to it, but by August 1747 Henrietta Knight wrote to Shenstone thanking him for the visit she had just had to The Leasowes and said that she enjoyed the pineapple that she had been given, presumably that he had grown himself.¹⁰⁸⁰ On the 12th May 1753 she sent her gardener to consult him about how to make the hot-bed as she wished to grow melons.¹⁰⁸¹ The idea of a hot-bed to rear tender plants had been introduced from Holland during the reign of William and Mary (1689-1701). It consisted of a shallow brick structure filled with horse manure or tanner's bark.¹⁰⁸² That Shenstone may have had one suggests he was up-to-date with eighteenth-century gardening accoutrements.¹⁰⁸³ Although the variety was not stated Shenstone mentions that he had been watering his carnations (*Dianthus*) in the summer of 1749.¹⁰⁸⁴ Carnations are normally red, but since they have been in this country since the eleventh century it could have been any one of

¹⁰⁷⁹ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

¹⁰⁸⁰ L. L. to W. S. 11th August 1753 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid, L. L. to W. S. 12th May 1753, p. 338.

¹⁰⁸² Wulf, Andrea (2008), op. cit., p. 41.

¹⁰⁸³ Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit. p. 103. Garden plans of some of the planting scheme at Wooburn are shown on this page.

¹⁰⁸⁴ W. S. to R. J. June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 201.

a number of varieties.¹⁰⁸⁵ The fact that he had to water them suggests that they were in pots.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter looks at the origins and use of Shenstone's general botanical knowledge, plants and planting including specimens in his shrubbery and his introduction of tender species. It is not known whether Shenstone knew anything about the details of the eighteenth-century gardens of Italy, but the lay-out of the shrubbery appears to be based on Italian ideas of the period. Following Alexander Pope's call to 'First follow Nature', most of Shenstone's landscape garden looked natural despite the fact that parts of it had been planted by him.¹⁰⁸⁶ His planting included the introduction of species from home and abroad and this was remarkable given his financial problems. Although he bought some plants from local nurseries many of these varieties were sent by friends from their own gardens. His use of the species he planted as well as the existing cover on his farm show how his artistic talents were applied in his use of colour, scent and shape. The positions in which he placed herbaceous species, shrubs and trees added to the way in which he wanted them to encourage thoughts and emotions. He was generally commended for the way he placed these species within his landscape. Shenstone's gardening skills did not only consist in creating a natural-looking landscape, but also in growing tender species. His cultivation of flowers,

¹⁰⁸⁵ Campbell-Culver, Maggie, op. cit., pp. 38-9. The Latin *carnatio* means flesh coloured.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Pope, Alexander, *Essay on Criticism* (London, Henry Lintot, 1749), p. 16.

vegetables and fruit showed that he had an interest in both value and beauty. This adds another dimension to the landscape gardening talents of William Shenstone.

Chapter Nine

Shenstone's literary landscape: 'a garden to be read'

9.1 Introduction

Roy Porter observed that the eighteenth-century fascination with nature led to: 'books in brooks, sermons in stones and the writing was on the trees'.¹⁰⁸⁷ This was literal for The Leasowes, as William Shenstone's literary skills were reflected in the many pastoral inscriptions he placed in his garden. This chapter considers the extent to which Shenstone added meaning through verse and poetry, and created moods in the landscape by conveying thoughts and emotions.¹⁰⁸⁸ Although all have now disappeared from the landscape, their nature and location can be found in contemporary written sources. The verse and poems encompassed a variety of subjects including his hydrological schemes, woods and groves, the animals that were in his fields, the pastoral life of shepherds, and the benefits of living a simple life. The inclusion of classical gods and other supernatural beings within the landscape added feelings of enchantment, but love in its many forms was also a common theme. His use of Latin demonstrated his knowledge of a classical language, together with his ability to write poetry in English. These talents were not affected by his financial constraints and complemented his skills as a landscape gardener. George Mason idealised this ability of Shenstone and he placed lines from Shenstone's poem 'Rural Elegance' on the title page of his

¹⁰⁸⁷ Porter, Roy, *Enlightenment* (London, Penguin, 2000), p. 299.

¹⁰⁸⁸ In this chapter the term verse will be used for his lines in Latin and poetry for his lines in English.

book, reiterating that his verse was an important part in his landscape gardening.¹⁰⁸⁹ William Gilpin also observed that the inscriptions on the monuments were ‘well written and properly adapted’ to their location,¹⁰⁹⁰ being placed at strategic points: for him The Leasowes was ‘truly a garden to be read’.¹⁰⁹¹

9.2 Poetry and Gardens

Shenstone introduced the concept of garden poetry to gardening, and to the *ferme ornée* in particular. John Dixon Hunt saw that gardening and poetry had similar requirements when he wrote that ‘gardens focus the art of place-making or landscape architecture in a way that poetry can focus the art of writing’.¹⁰⁹² Isaac Disraeli in his *Curiosities of Literature* went further when he observed of Shenstone’s ‘place-making’ that:

It was now that he entered into another species of poetry, working with too costly materials, in the magical composition of plants, water and earth; with these he created those emotions which his more strictly poetical ones failed to excite.¹⁰⁹³

Although Disraeli did not seem impressed by Shenstone’s poetry, he recognised that his garden was poetical. The Leasowes included verse and poems that Shenstone collected from other writers and wrote himself.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Mason, George, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Gilpin, William, *Observations on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*, Vol. 1. 3rd edition (London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), p. 62.

¹⁰⁹¹ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 448.

¹⁰⁹² Hunt, John Dixon, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000) p. 11.

¹⁰⁹³ Disraeli, Isaac, *Curiosities of Literature* Vol. III (Boston, William Veazie, 1859) p. 426.

Thomas Whately claimed Shenstone was raising the farm to ‘above the ordinary level’ with his poetic endeavours.¹⁰⁹⁴ Hunt was more profound in his awareness of the role poetry played in gardens when he commented: ‘This habit of verbalising about a landscape’s particular *virtù* was derived from the experience of exploring classical ruins – a *locus classicus* in Poussin’s *Et in Arcadia Ego* – and extended beyond the garden’. This stress on classicism as a subject was reiterated by Ralph Harrington in his observation that the ‘invocation through text and imaginative association of a classical conception of the pastoral’ was an important part of the image of The Leasowes.¹⁰⁹⁵ Tim Richardson also recognised that Shenstone was following the ‘classical poetic precedent with the identification between his state of mind and the natural landscape’.¹⁰⁹⁶ It was with the natural landscape that Douglas Chambers noted the similarity between the themes used at The Leasowes and the language of Virgil when he referred to the famous description of Tempe from *Georgics* II of a distant view ‘diversified with a cottage, and a road that winds around a farmhouse and a fine clump of trees’.¹⁰⁹⁷ Mavis Batey’s comment that Shenstone responded to ‘romantic ideas of imagination, historical association and a sense of place’¹⁰⁹⁸ validated Chambers’ recognition that with Virgil’s Grove, Shenstone created a

¹⁰⁹⁴ Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, 1770 reprinted 2010), p. 68.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Harrington, Ralph, ‘Nature dressed and undressed: William Shenstone, the Leasowes and the English garden transition, c.1740 - c.1763’ (unpublished Master of Studies essay, Lincoln College Oxford, 1994), p. 10.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Richardson, Tim, *op. cit.*, p. 446.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Chambers, Douglas, *The Planters of the English Landscape Garden* (New Haven & London, Yale University, 1993), p. 181.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Batey, Mavis, *Alexander Pope: The Poet and the Landscape* (London, Barn Elms Publishing, 1999), p. 128.

landscape that resonated with the past: ‘the genius of the place as the sacred grove of antiquity, translated into England as surely as the genius of ancient poetry and politics had been’.¹⁰⁹⁹

Not all the verse and poetry at The Leasowes was classically inspired: some was based on contemporary philosophy. Hunt recognised that the call from the landscape itself ‘deepens the consciousness of the poet’,¹¹⁰⁰ and that ‘The garden provided an exciting territory in which the poet could discover and practice his poetry of introspection.’¹¹⁰¹ He quoted Alexander Pope’s poem ‘Essay to Man’ in which he ‘...establishes an implicit equation between the mind’s activity and the different features of an English park that the conversationalists visit during their philosophical stroll.’¹¹⁰² Shenstone’s verse and poetry was apposite as it was designed to lead to contemplation of The Leasowes landscape. This was echoed by Sandro Jung who wrote that Shenstone interwove the ‘cultural-sentimental textural cultures of his poetry with the material culture of The Leasowes’.¹¹⁰³ Jung recognised that ‘The pastoral world Shenstone describes in his poetry is one that facilitates Arcadian self-realisation and a balance between men and nature.’¹¹⁰⁴ The

¹⁰⁹⁹ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 179.

¹¹⁰⁰ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape* (Maryland, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 221.

¹¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 249.

¹¹⁰² Ibid, p. 58.

¹¹⁰³ Jung, Sandro, ‘William Shenstone’s Poetry, The Leasowes and the intermediality of Reading and Architectural Design,’ in *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2014), p. 6.

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid, pp. 6, 46.

inference was that the thoughts of the ancient Roman poets could not only be heard at The Leasowes, but felt in his landscape garden.

Poetry is personal, but it is also read by others, so it is a form of communication. Shenstone understood its relevance and by placing Latin verse and English poetry in his garden he strengthened the impressions he wanted to convey to those who visited. He displayed texts on seats, urns and statues to show what he thought the garden should say and how it should instruct his visitors, by sharing his thoughts of the different scenes. J. C. Loudon in 1834 recognised that The Leasowes ‘was intended as an emblematical scene’,¹¹⁰⁵ and Patrizia Granziera highlighted this aspect of the eighteenth-century landscape in what was called the ‘poetic garden or emblematic, learned garden’.¹¹⁰⁶ Visitors to Shenstone’s landscape garden, as well as using their own impressions, were expected to decipher the meanings of his texts. What they saw was virtually a page from a book, and page followed page as they walked along the circuit path.¹¹⁰⁷

Shenstone brought carefully constructed descriptions, images and deliberations to his landscape garden, with simple words and rhymes that mostly consisted of the iambic foot, following normal English speech

¹¹⁰⁵ Loudon, J. C. *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (London, 1834), p. 32.

¹¹⁰⁶ Granziera, Patrizia, ‘The Ideology of the English Landscape garden’ (Unpublished PhD thesis Department of the History of Art, University of Warwick), September 1996, p. 23; Paulson, Ronald, *Emblem and Expression: Meaning in English Art of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1979), p. 20. A concept made by Paulson.


¹¹⁰⁷ H. F. Clark, ‘Eighteenth Century Elysium, The Role of Association in the Landscape Movement’, *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* Vol. VI, 1943, pp. 165-89.

patterns.¹¹⁰⁸ It worked both ways, for his garden - like a poem - was composed of content, form and rhythm. The form was Arcadian, the content was the English landscape and the rhythm was water – rills, brooks, cascades and pools. The rhythm also included movement through the atmosphere by the sight and sound of the English climate of wind, rain and sun.¹¹⁰⁹ The most familiar inscriptions are the lines recorded by Robert Dodsley in a ‘Description of The Leasowes’ in Shenstone’s *The Works*.¹¹¹⁰ Other examples were noted by the theatrical impresario, Thomas Hull, and the garden writer Joseph Heely.¹¹¹¹ Heely included translations of the Latin by poets of the day: Thomas Warton (1728-1790), who was Professor of Poetry at Oxford and Poet Laureate,¹¹¹² Philip Francis (1708-1773), a translator, poet and playwright, Christopher Pitt (1699-1748), a poet and translator of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, and Arthur Young (1741 – 1820), the agricultural writer.¹¹¹³ Many more transcriptions are now lost, such as the one recorded by Shenstone as having been made by a ‘Mr Coom’, when he and a friend went to The

¹¹⁰⁸ Untermeyer, Louis, *Collins Albatross Book of Verse* (London, William Collins & Sons and Company, 1968), p. 641. In English prosody the rhythm is based on the stress or accent on the second syllable of every two syllables in the verse, there generally being five stresses in the line (pentameter).

¹¹⁰⁹ Hemingway, John, ‘William Shenstone: the Landscape as Art’ in Association of Gardens Trusts, *The Ferme Ornée working with Nature: Conference Proceedings*, (Priorslee, Staffordshire Parks and Gardens & Trusts, 1998), p. 32.

¹¹¹⁰ Dodsley, Robert, ‘A Description of the Leasowes’ in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq* Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768).

¹¹¹¹ Trevor R. Griffiths, ‘Hull, Thomas (1728–1808)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14109, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Osborn c. 20, 1 v: Hull, Thomas, (c.1760) Shenstone’s Walks, MSS of 30 pages.

¹¹¹² William Shenstone to Richard Graves, 30th May 1758 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 482. Shenstone recorded that Warton was to be a guest at The Leasowes that summer. It may have been then that he did the translations which are shown in this chapter.

¹¹¹³ Heely, Joseph, *A Description of Hagley, Enville and the Leasowes* (London, G. Robinson, 1775), pp. 19, 37; W. S. to Lady Luxborough 19th July 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), p. 368. Shenstone copied a poem by Philip Francis in this letter.

Leasowes in June of 1753. Shenstone commented that ‘They took a minute description of ye Place & every single Motto &c.’¹¹¹⁴

9.3 Latin at The Leasowes

Latin was the language of classical Rome and a means of cultural discourse in eighteenth-century Europe. Shenstone belonged to the eighteenth-century Augustan Poetry School, named after the poets who wrote verse during the time of the Emperor Augustus Caesar (63 B.C. – A.D. 14).¹¹¹⁵ The verse of Virgil (70 B.C. – 19 B.C.) and Horace (65 B.C. - 8 B.C.) struck a chord in Shenstone’s mind, replicating the work of John Evelyn, who wrote the poem, *Sylva*, where the text of Virgil’s *The Georgics* was elegantly introduced.¹¹¹⁶ Evelyn also designed a garden at Albury, Surrey, for Henry Howard which included a re-creation of Virgil’s Tomb.¹¹¹⁷ Virgil’s poetry was central to Shenstone’s theories about the creation of his ferme ornée. He wrote that Virgil had less wit and more taste than any writer in the world as he was cautious about the images he introduced, and pursued simplicity rather than surprise.¹¹¹⁸ Shenstone also used verse by Horace who was another important classical mentor and had influenced Philip Southcote in shaping Wooburn

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid, W. S. to Henrietta Knight, 22nd June 1753, p. 363.

¹¹¹⁵ Lang, Andrew, *A History of English Literature* (London, Longmans, Green And Co, 1912), pp. 382-393.

¹¹¹⁶ Evelyn, John, *Sylva, a discourse of forest trees...* (London, Jo. Martyn and Ja. Allestry, 1670), p. 235.


¹¹¹⁷ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 8. When James Thompson visited The Leasowes he and Shenstone were deliberating as to whether a tomb should be placed to Virgil in Virgil’s Grove. See McKillop, Alan D. Thomson’s Visit to Shenstone’, *Philological Quarterly*, 23, (1944), pp. 283-234.

¹¹¹⁸ Gammans, Harold Winsor, ‘Shenstone’s Appreciation of Virgil’, *Classical Weekly* Vol. 14, (1929), pp. 90-91.

Farm in 1734. Thomas Whately noted that Southcote was able ‘to blend the useful with the agreeable betraying the Horatian origins of the *ferme ornée*’.¹¹¹⁹ Horace, like Shenstone himself, had lived on a farm and written about rural life.

During his visit in 1755 Resta Patching observed that many of the features at The Leasowes had inscribed Latin text. Shenstone’s motive for the use of Latin verse was its association with the classical world; he wanted to explain the purpose and the meaning of his landscape via the inscriptions on his features. The use of imagery to represent different concepts was important, not only in the wording, but in the monuments themselves, such as the Roman-styled urns on plinths. They enabled the viewer/reader to feel they were walking through the past. The most important Latin lines were on Virgil’s Obelisk at the entrance to Virgil’s Grove. The lines were more than a signpost to the section of the landscape the visitor was entering; they were also intended to evoke a pensive and poetic landscape which helped to sustain his classical and Arcadian vision. Thomas Hull recorded the inscription as *Genio P. Vigilii Maronis, Lapis iste cum Luco, Sacer esto!*¹¹²⁰ Hull’s translation was ‘To the Genius of Publius Virgilius Maro, be the stone & Grove Sacred!’¹¹²¹ By bringing Imperial Rome into his garden, it produced, as Arthur Humphreys stated, a ‘mood of the ancient desiderium, the longing

¹¹¹⁹ Rory T. Cornish, ‘Whately, Thomas (1726–1772)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29177>, accessed

 21 Aug 2015]; Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 156.

¹¹²⁰ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 314.

¹¹²¹ Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Beinecke Library, Osborn c. 20, 1 v: Hull, Thomas (c.1760) Shenstone’s Walks, MSS of 30 pages, p. 23.

for what has irrecoverably departed'.¹¹²² Loss and sorrow were important themes in The Leasowes.

It was through the subject of loss and sorrow that Shenstone displayed his ability to write appropriate inscriptions for memorial urns. In *Hermippus Redivivus* written in 1744 Johann Heinrich Cohausen wrote:

It was a laudable custom of the Antients, to perpetuate the Memory of all singular Events, and especially such as in any Degree might be useful to Posterity by Inscriptions. These had a peculiar stile, in which three things were principally regarded; Succinctness, Elegancy and Clearness.¹¹²³

It is not certain if Shenstone ever read this book, but he conformed to its ruling. His memorial urns were a public display of a private sorrow, which meant they were to be seen. The inscriptions demonstrated his grief and affection for the person who had died and at least their memory was at peace in his landscape garden. The inscriptions on the urns turned The Leasowes into a memorial garden, seemingly one of the earliest examples of this type of landscape feature.

Only one memorial urn had a quote from a classical poet (the other urns that he placed in his landscape garden had Latin inscriptions of his own making), and this was to his brother Thomas Shenstone who died in 1752. Hull gives the inscription on the obverse side of the urn as being: *Fratri ejus unico*.

¹¹²² Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth – Century Portrait* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1937), p. 101.

¹¹²³ Cohausen, Heinrich, Johann (trans. by Campbell, John,) *Hermippus redivivus or The Sage's triumph over old age and the grave: wherein a method is laid down for prolonging the life and vigour of a man* (London, J. Nourse, 1744), p. 1.

Fratrum amantissimo. Juvenum suavissimo. Hominum integerrimo. G.S. Posuit, Aliorum moestitiae consulens. Et suae 1752. This he translated as: To his only and the best of Brothers, the sweetest of youths. The worthiest of men W.S. Tho' fond indulgence to his private, As well as the public grief, raised this monument, 1752.¹¹²⁴ On the reverse side was the inscription *Postquam te fata tulerunt ipsa Pales agros, atque ipse reliquit Apollo. Virgil*, which Warton translated as 'Thee to whom the fates in anger have snatch'd away, / Pales nor Phoebus deigned a longer stay.'¹¹²⁵ Shenstone was fond of his brother and these lines display the grief that he felt on his death. Before Thomas' death Shenstone had remarked to Henrietta Knight that this would be a good inscription for a memorial urn.¹¹²⁶ Three years later he used it to memorialise his brother.

Shenstone's poetic mentor had been William Somerville and on his death in 1742 he put up an urn to the man who had been his guide.¹¹²⁷ In a letter to Richard Jago Shenstone meditates on what he was going to inscribe on the urn:

...I have only room to desire you would give me your opinion how I should inscribe my urn to Mr Somerville.

¹¹²⁴ Beinecke Library, Osborn c.20, Notes of Thomas Hull on the Leasowes Landscape Garden c.1757. pp. 9, 10. Heely observed that some of the inscription that Hull noted had disappeared by the time he saw it.

¹¹²⁵ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 30. Pales was Pallas Athena and Phoebus is Phoebus Apollo; Day Lewis, C. (trans.) *Virgil: The Eclogues and The Georgics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 22. These words were taken from Virgil's *Eclogue V*, lines 34-35.

¹¹²⁶ W. S. to H. K. October 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 229.

¹¹²⁷ Somerville, William, *The Chase, A Poem with a sketch of his life* (London, Suttaby, Evance & Co; Crosby, 1811) p. iii.

‘Author of the Chase’ cannot be tolerably expressed in Latin without a circumlocution.¹¹²⁸

Dodsley recorded that on the obverse side it read *Ingenio et amicitie Gvlielmi Somerville*, which translates as ‘To the genius and friendship of William Somerville’ and on the reverse *G. S. Posvit, Debata fpargens lacrima favillam Vatis amici*.¹¹²⁹ ‘William Shenstone erected this urn, sprinkling with tears the ashes of his poetical friend.’¹¹³⁰ This is another ‘call from the heart’ displaying grief about a man who had given much to him and who would be sorely missed. Hull, who knew Shenstone, commented that the viewer should sit ‘still one Minute to contemplate on the Probity, & true & happy Religious Turn of Mind which can thus mark the loss of his dearest Connections in life’,¹¹³¹ showing that he had picked up the wider message which Shenstone intended from the memorial.

A small urn was dedicated to James Thomson in Virgil’s Grove and Shenstone painted a water-colour of it, but due to its diminutive size the urn was replaced by a seat. According to Hull, the inscription on the seat was ‘*Celeberrimo poetae Iacobo Thompson, prope fontes illi non fastiditos G. S. sedem hanc ornavit*.’¹¹³² He translated this as ‘To the most celebrated poet James

¹¹²⁸ Ibid, W. S. to Richard Jago 15th March 1749-50, pp. 262-3. Circumlocution – verbose style.

¹¹²⁹ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 293. Dodsley’s spelling of ‘f’ for ‘s’ and ‘v’ for ‘u’ has been used in this chapter.

¹¹³⁰ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 24.

¹¹³¹ Beinecke Library, Hull, Thomas, op. cit., p. 7.

¹¹³² The wording on the water-colour of the urn is *Celeberrimo Poetae Jacobo Thomson qui cum quicquid abig Teris est aum andenum aut varium miri depinexerit, hose avium fontes non fastiditos*. This is a variant of Hull’s version.

Thomson beside his favourite spring. This seat was erected & beautified by W. S.' Shenstone then added a few lines to it *Quæ tibi, quæ tali reddam pro carmine dona? Nam neque me tantum venientis fibilis austri, Nec percuffa juvant fluctu tam litora, nec quæ Saxofas inter decurrunt flumina valles.*¹¹³³ Warton's translation and poetization of these lines, which Heely recounted was:

What thanks, what recompense, can my weak lay,
For such exalted strains as thine repay?
Not from fresh whispers of the southern breeze,
Nor gentle dashings of the calmest seas;
Nor from the murm'ring rills, such joys I feel,
That gliding down the pebbly valleys steal.¹¹³⁴

Although Shenstone barely knew Thomson these words demonstrate the appreciation he had of his talents. He recognised Thomson's ability in describing nature in his poem 'The Seasons'.

Probably the most affectionate lines were dedicated to Maria Dolman, which may have reflected Shenstone's romantic attachment to his cousin. These lay on an urn which was sited at the end of Lover's Walk. Dodsley refers to this inscription as having on the obverse side the words '*Peramabili Suae Consobrinae M. D.*' 'Sacred to the memory of a most amiable kinswoman M. D.'. Shenstone added the words '*Ah Maria puellarum elegantissima, Ah Flore venustatis abrepta, Vale! Heu quanto minus est Cum reliquis versari, Quam tui Meminisse!*'¹¹³⁵ The translation by Hull was:

¹¹³³ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., pp. 314-315. Shenstone's water-colour of the urn in Virgil's Grove shows a variation in this text.

¹¹³⁴ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 53.

¹¹³⁵ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 307.

Ah! Maria! Most elegant of Women. In thy flower of Beauty
Untimely snatched, Ah! Farewell! The bare remembrance of
thy Perfection, Alas! How far exceeds it the living enjoyment
of all others!¹¹³⁶

Those who saw it were encouraged to recognise how greatly the loss of Maria Dolman affected Shenstone: his love for her could not be hidden. Shenstone's interest in the painting *Et in Arcadia Ego* by Nicholas Poussin led to another inscription that went on the pediment in the October of 1759 as he stated in a letter:

Did you ever see a print or drawing of Poussin's Arcadia?
The idea of it is so very pleasing to me, that I had no peace
till I had used the inscription on one side of Miss Dolman's
urn, *Et in Arcadia Ego*.¹¹³⁷

Neither Dodsley nor Hull mentioned this inscription at The Leasowes. If it was inscribed on the stone then perhaps this gives us a date for the *terminus post quem* of their noting down the texts and transcriptions.

David Lambert considered that 'Behind the creation of an actual landscape, then, lay an ideal landscape, waiting to be conjured up in the mind by allusion, association, and carefully guided contemplation.'¹¹³⁸ Shenstone had an appreciation of classical mythology and mythical spirits were part of this ideal landscape. Ancient gods and nature spirits haunted classical texts and frequently were described by Shenstone in his verse. He utilised the idea of these other-worldly spirits to increase the expectation of his visitors while

¹¹³⁶ Beinecke Library, Hull, Thomas, op. cit., p. 19.

¹¹³⁷ W. S. to R. G., 3rd October 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 524-5.

¹¹³⁸ Lambert, David, 'William Shenstone and the Fairy Landscape' in *Report & Journal of The Georgian Group* (Lavenham, 1986), p. 69

walking around his garden. Although imaginary rather than real, the impression that the spirits populated the landscape raised the mental sensations that he wished to promote. In September 1751, Shenstone suggested that he should write a description to go with his Chalybeate Spring.¹¹³⁹ Dodsley recorded it as *Fons ferrugineus Divae quae secessu isto froti concedit*¹¹⁴⁰ translated by Hull as ‘To the Health of the Goddess, Who gave the enjoyment of such a recess Sacred to this Mineral!’¹¹⁴¹ Shenstone’s friend, the Reverend Richard Graves, would probably not have approved of celebrating a pagan divinity. Perhaps Geoffrey Wildgoose’s pulling down of the Pan Statue at The Leasowes in Graves’ novel *The Spiritual Quixote* was what he would have liked to have achieved.¹¹⁴² The invocation, however, is clear and displays the classical landscape that Shenstone strove to create at The Leasowes.

Shenstone’s pseudonym for himself in his poetry was Damon,¹¹⁴³ the shepherd referred to in the eighth section of Virgil’s *Eclogues*. Shenstone continued with the shepherd theme in the Temple of Pan. Pan was the Greek god of shepherds and woodland and in the classical world temples were built for him close to caves, springs and woodlands. Dodsley referred to

¹¹³⁹ W. S. to R. G. 17th September 1751 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 320.

¹¹⁴⁰ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 317.

¹¹⁴¹ Beinecke Library, Hull, Thomas, op. cit., p. 28.

¹¹⁴² Graves, Richard, *The Spiritual Quixote* (London, J. Dodsley, 1772), p. 357.

¹¹⁴³ W. S. to R. J. 1739 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 7. In the letter Shenstone records a poem he has composed ‘When bright Ophelia...’ where he describes himself as Damon; Day Lewis, C. (trans.) *Virgil: The Eclogues and The Georgics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 33; Evidence for sheep grazing at The Leasowes is in his poem ‘The Pastoral Ballad’ in the section entitled ‘Hope’ where he refers to the line ‘And my hills are white-over with sheep’ Shenstone, William, *The Works*, Vol. I, p. 151.

this inscription, and stated that Shenstone placed a Latin couplet underneath the trophy above the temple door. This was the first time he used lines by Virgil: *Pan primus calamos cera conjungere plures Edocuit; Pan curat oves, oviumque magistros*¹¹⁴⁴ 'Twas mighty/ Pan taught to join with wax the various reeds began / Pan, great god of all our subject plains / protects and loves the cattle and the swains.'¹¹⁴⁵ Shenstone also associated himself with Pan in other ways as he had a bust of the deity in his own portrait by Edward Alcock.¹¹⁴⁶ Shenstone's appreciation for the shepherd theme can be seen in the inscription on the Meliboee Seat. It read *Huc ades, O Melibœe! caper tibi falvus et hædi; Et fi quid ceffare potes, requiesce fub umbra*.¹¹⁴⁷ Warton translated it as: 'Hither, Meliboeus haste! Safe are your goat and kids, one idle hour / Come waste with me beneath this cooling bower'.¹¹⁴⁸ The last line reveals Shenstone's wish for his visitors to relax, reduce their worldly cares and for a while find peace. This was also the wording in Virgil's Seat on the Serpentine Path. Dodsley referred to this inscription as *Hic latis otia fundis Speluncæ, vivique lacus, hic frigida Tempe, Mugitusque boum, mollesque fub arbore fomni*,¹¹⁴⁹ translated by Warton as 'Leisure and ease, in groves and cooling vales, / Grottos, and bubbling brooks, and darksome dales; / The lowing oxen, and

¹¹⁴⁴ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 310. The word *oves* actually refers to sheep, but he used cattle because it had two syllables.

¹¹⁴⁵ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 47; Day Lewis, C. (trans.) (2009), op. cit., p. 8; These lines were from John Dryden's (1631-1700) translation of Virgil's *Eclogue*, number II, lines 32-33. Cattle was a plural that originally referred to any ruminant animal.

¹¹⁴⁶ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 296.

¹¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 293.

¹¹⁴⁸ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 22; Day Lewis, C. (trans.) (2009), op. cit., p. 5. Meliboeus was a shepherd and features as a main character in Virgil's *Eclogue* I, and these words come from lines 49-52.

¹¹⁴⁹ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 308.

the bleating sheep, / And under branching trees, delicious sleep.’¹¹⁵⁰ This theme of Shenstone’s to mitigate against the ‘busyness’ of life, as he saw it, was used repeatedly in the landscape. The topic of relaxation and the country scene occurs again at the Priory Gate Seat, which was another feature inscribed with lines from Virgil. Dodsley recorded that this seat stood behind the gateway. The lines went *Lucis habitamus opacis, Riparumque toros et prata recentia rivis Incolimus.*¹¹⁵¹ A translation by Pitt was ‘unsettled we remove / as pleasure calls from verdant grove to grove; / stretched on the flow’ry meads, at ease we lie, / and hear the silver rills run bubbling by’.¹¹⁵² Shenstone’s message to all who read his lines was that they should quieten their thoughts because it was only by clearing the mind of outside influences that they could appreciate The Leasowes landscape to its fullest extent.

Water was a *leitmotif* in the poetry and prose in The Leasowes landscape and complemented the physical features. It signified nature without Shenstone having to do much to manage it. It had a number of attributes: thundering rapids and waterfalls where it is wild and tempestuous, but as it slows down it demonstrates repose. Dodsley refers to the inscription on the Brook View Seat as: *Rura mihi, et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes, Flumina amera, silvasque inglorius!*¹¹⁵³ Warton translated this as ‘May the lowly vales, and woodlands

¹¹⁵⁰ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 45; Lewis, C. Day. This is from Virgil’s *Eclogue* V, line 46.

¹¹⁵¹ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 290.

¹¹⁵² Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 19; this was from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, book VI, lines 673-675.

¹¹⁵³ Beinecke Library, Hull, Thomas, op. cit., p. 27.

please, / and winding rivers, and inglorious ease'.¹¹⁵⁴ Water slowly winding its way along the valley made the viewer pensive. The watery theme was continued in lines associated with a bench below the Chalybeate Spring, a feature not recorded by Dodsley, but by Hull, that also had words from Virgil. The lines ran *Claudite iam rivos, pueri, sat prata biberunt*. 'Close up the sluice, & spare the rill - The meadows now have drunk their fill.'¹¹⁵⁵ This referred to the High Dam which controlled the waters of his north brook. The inscription that introduced spirits of the waters, the nymphs, was engraved on the High Cascade Stone Seat and cited by Dodsley as, *Intus aquae dulcis, vivoque sedilia saxo; Nympharum domus*,¹¹⁵⁶ which Warton translated as 'The haunt of Nereids, fram'd by nature's hands; / Where polish'd seats appear of living stone, / And limpid rills, that tinkle as they run.'¹¹⁵⁷ Another watery verse was that used in Shenstone's shrubbery and dedicated to Richard Graves: *Amicitiae et Meritas Richardi Graves: Ipsae te, Tityre, pinos, ipsite fontes, ipsa haec arbusta vocabant*¹¹⁵⁸ which was translated by Warton as: 'To the friendship and merits of Richard Graves, Thee Tityrus! For thee detained the pines, the shrubs, the bubbling springs complained.'¹¹⁵⁹ Water was important as an active ingredient in the landscape garden.

¹¹⁵⁴ Heely, Joseph, *Letters on the beauties of Hagley, Enville and the Leasowes* (London, R. Baldwin, 1777), p. 35.

¹¹⁵⁵ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 60; Virgil's *Eclogue* III, line 59.

¹¹⁵⁶ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 317.

¹¹⁵⁷ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 60.

¹¹⁵⁸ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 318.

¹¹⁵⁹ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 22. Tityrus was the shepherd conversing with Meliboeus that featured as a character in Virgil's *The Eclogues* I and again Shenstone personifies the waters.

The attributes of trees and woodland were also reinforced in his Latin verse. Trees are a symbol of permanency, but woodlands are not always considered to be safe places, particularly when one is solitary. Shenstone realised this dual effect the wooded landscape had on his visitors and in the following verse he combined and alluded to the creatures that were supposed to inhabit these places. These lines from Horace's opening ode were used on the Horace Bench, and were reported by Dodsley as: *Me gelidum nemus Nympharumque leves cum fatyris chori Secernant populo.*¹¹⁶⁰ Francis translated them as: 'Be mine amid the breezy grove, / In sacred solitude to rove; / To see the nymphs and satyrs bound, / Light dancing through the mazy ground.'¹¹⁶¹ Shenstone's fantasy of classical creatures cavorting in this place added an element of eeriness to this woodland spot. The Horace Bench was sited just outside the Beech Grove so this was an appropriate dedication.

The tree theme is recorded on the north-east side of The Leasowes. Hull states the original inscription was '*patulae recubans sub Tegmine Fage, Silvestrem tenui musam meditaris Avena,*' which he translated as 'Beneath the spreading Oak thus stretched along, / on humble Pipe I'll tune my Sylvan Song.'¹¹⁶² Again Shenstone used classical imagery to make this place a sacred experience. This verse was removed by him in 1758 and replaced by lines dedicated to Joseph Spence. Hull's manuscript has been dated by Yale

¹¹⁶⁰ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 297; Allcroft, A.H. & Hayes, B. J. (trans.) Horace, *The Odes*, Liber Primus, Carminium (London, University Tutorial Press, 2012), lines 30-31, p. 18.

¹¹⁶¹ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 28.

¹¹⁶² Beinecke Library, Hull, Thomas, op. cit., p. 17. *Fage* or *fagus* is actually Latin for beech not oak, suggesting that botany was not one of Hull's stronger subjects.

University, who hold the original, as being circa 1760, however, given that Hull used the pre-Spence lines, the manuscript must pre-date the summer of 1758 when Spence visited The Leasowes.¹¹⁶³ Dodsley recorded the lines inscribed to Joseph Spence after 1758 as *Iosepho Spence, Eximio nostro Critoni; Cui dicari vellet Musarum omnium et gratiarum chorus, Dicat amicitia Mdcclviii*,¹¹⁶⁴ translated as ‘Friendship dedicates to Joseph Spence, our most excellent Crito; to whom the chorus of all the Muses and the Graces would have wished it to be dedicated, 1758.’¹¹⁶⁵ Crito was a classical Greek name that all Spence’s friends knew him by because he had written a book on this friend of Socrates, who had been present at the philosopher’s death.¹¹⁶⁶

The most prominent view from The Leasowes was from the high point of the Stour Valley Seat where the spectator could see the countryside that lay around the garden. Shenstone chose appropriate epic lines to go with it. Dodsley refers to this inscription as ‘*Divini gloria ruris!*’ ‘O glory of the sylvan scene divine!’¹¹⁶⁷ Chambers states *divini gloria ruris* was the central text of the eighteenth-century landscape garden.¹¹⁶⁸ Shenstone’s reason for using this was his understanding that it was only when the world is seen from above that ego-centrism can be left behind and the glories of nature could be

¹¹⁶³ It is possibly dated to the year before, 1757.

¹¹⁶⁴ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 306.

¹¹⁶⁵ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley and The Leasowes* (Bristol, Redcliffe Press, 2010), p. 169.

¹¹⁶⁶ Church, F. J. (trans.), Plato, *Crito – a dialogue* (London, Macmillan, 1887), pp. 79 – 102. According to Plato, Crito was a follower of the philosopher Socrates and conversed with him in his cell before he drank the poison hemlock.

¹¹⁶⁷ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 310.

¹¹⁶⁸ Chambers, Douglas, op. cit., p. 28.

observed without interruption, to their full effect. There were less impressive, but more elucidating lines placed elsewhere. Humphreys, like other garden writers, saw Shenstone as a melancholy soul, but the following Latin verses suggest that he was not always of this frame of mind.¹¹⁶⁹ A Horace quote which suggests that Shenstone's garden gave him contentment was on a bench beneath a spreading Beech Tree at the top of the farm. Dodsley referred to this inscription as *Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus, Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquae fons, Et paulum fylvae fuper his foret. Auctius atque Dii melius fecere:*¹¹⁷⁰

I often wish'd I had a farm,
 A decent dwelling snug and warm;
 A garden, and a spring as pure,
 As crystal, running by my door,
 Besides a little ancient grove,
 Where at my leisure I might rove,
 The gracious gods to crown my bliss,
 Have granted this, and more than this.¹¹⁷¹

If nothing else, these lines as translated by Francis denoted a satisfaction that the poet felt he had achieved at The Leasowes.

Love was an important theme in The Leasowes landscape garden verse, but it was often represented as unrequited. The Assigination Seat in Lover's Walk was, as its name suggests, dedicated to a meeting place for lovers. Dodsley refers to this inscription as *Nerine Galatea! thymo mihi dulcior Hyblæ, Candidior*

¹¹⁶⁹ Humphreys, Arthur Raleigh, op. cit., pp. 7-10; Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 445; Williams, Marjorie, *William Shenstone, A Chapter in Eighteenth Century Taste* (Birmingham, Cornish Brothers Limited, 1935), p. 127.

¹¹⁷⁰ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 304.

¹¹⁷¹ Francis, Philip in Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., pp. 36-37. This was taken from Horace, *Satires* II, VI, lines 1-6.

*cygnis, hedera formosior alba! Cum primum pafti repetent praefepia tauri, Si qua tui Corydonis habet te cura, venito.*¹¹⁷² Warton's translation was: 'O Galatea! Nymph than swans more bright, / More sweet than Hybla thyme, more fair than ivy white: / When pastur'd herds at ev'ing seek the stall, / Haste too my arms! Nor scorn thy lover's call.'¹¹⁷³ Galatea was a Greek Nereid, a sea-nymph (her name means milk-white) who fell in love with Acis, the son of Faunus. The Cyclops Polyphemus threw a boulder at Acis and killed him, so Galatea turned him into the River Acis in Sicily. Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorraine painted pictures of her, and John Gay wrote a libretto for George Frederick Handel's opera in 1718 (rewritten in 1739) on the theme of the couple.¹¹⁷⁴ Act 1 is a rural scene in which shepherds and nymphs enjoy the 'pleasure of the plains'. Acis' friend, the shepherd Damon, brings the couple together. Act 2 sees the arrival of Polyphemus and Acis ignores Damon's warning of the 'fleeting existence of love's delights' and is killed.¹¹⁷⁵ The Assignation Seat represented unrequited love and was perhaps a warning to lovers that true love never runs smoothly. Given that Maria Dolman was not interested in Shenstone romantically, it may have been that he had their relationship in mind when he placed the inscription there. Shenstone's use of

¹¹⁷² Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 307. This is a version of the story told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, book XIII.

¹¹⁷³ Heely, Joseph (1775), op. cit., p. 49; Woodhouse, W. J. (revised by Marchant, B. G.) *The Tutorial History of Greece* (London, Universal Tutorial Press, 1965), p. 38. Hybla in Sicily was famed for its honey in the classical Roman world and the word became a Greek adjective that meant honeyed - sweet.

¹¹⁷⁴ Grant, Michael, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), p. 440.

¹¹⁷⁵ Gammond, Peter, *The A-Z of Classical Composers* (Godalming, Bramley Books, 1997), pp. 80-83.

Latin verse not only served to demonstrate his ability in its use, but also added classical romanticism to his landscape garden.

9.4 English poetry at The Leasowes

The eighteenth-century writer Thomas Whately related Shenstone's gardening directly to the contemporary ideas of pastoral poetry in English.¹¹⁷⁶ He wrote: 'a place conformable to them is deemed a farm in its utmost purity. An allusion to them evidently enters in the design of The Leasowes.'¹¹⁷⁷ Whately began his section on The Leasowes in his book *Observations on Modern Gardening* with the idea that pastoral poetry had become a 'standard for simplicity', presumably suggesting that Shenstone's garden had been at the forefront in devising this form of art in a garden.¹¹⁷⁸

In 1746 James Thomson visited The Leasowes with William Lyttelton. Shenstone stated in a letter that Thomson had said;

What a wonderful place this is for a person of a poetical genius. I don't wonder you're a devotee to the Muses. 'This place,' says Lyttelton 'will improve a poetical genius.' 'Aye,' replied Thomson 'and a poetical genius will improve this place'.¹¹⁷⁹

This suggestion that Thomson could recognise the significance of the poetical muse in Shenstone's landscape work adds to our understanding of its importance. Shenstone used poetry as a guide to what his visitors should be

¹¹⁷⁶ Harrington, Ralph, op. cit., p. 28.

¹¹⁷⁷ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 64.

¹¹⁷⁸ Ibid, pp. 64-68.

¹¹⁷⁹ McKillop, Alan, D. 'Thomson's Visit to Shenstone' *Philological Quarterly*, 23 (1944), p. 284. This item came from an original manuscript written by Shenstone which turned up in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, April 1800. The writer has been unable to trace the original text.

thinking and its purpose is explained in a poem about The Leasowes by his friend Joseph Giles:

Here we ascend some airy seat,
Or little temple's close retreat,
Beneath a shady bow'r:
And oft some moral sentence find
To please, or to instruct the mind,
And pass each tedious hour,¹¹⁸⁰

His poetry, however, did more than just please and instruct: in his 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' Shenstone stated that inscriptions strengthened the effect of a particular part of the garden 'supporting its title by suitable appendages'.¹¹⁸¹ This comment suggests that Shenstone thought that poetry was an essential component of his garden.

When Shenstone started to add poetry to his landscape in 1749 it was a new idea. People had been adding inscriptions to monuments since classical times, but they did not usually include whole poems, or compose poems to be located in different areas. His poems in English therefore can be considered as being a new inclusion into the landscape garden. Although the poetry was in the vernacular, the subject matter of some of his verse was still classical, and the most important deity he used in his poetry was the Roman goddess of love, Venus. A popular eighteenth-century sculpture was the Venus de Medici statue. This was a Greek marble figure depicting Aphrodite the

¹¹⁸⁰ Giles, Joseph, *Miscellaneous Poems* (London, J. Dodsley, 1771), p. 4. Shenstone assisted Giles as well as other fellow poets in composing their verse, just as they assisted him.

¹¹⁸¹ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* (London, James Dodsley, 1793), p. 113.

Goddess of Love (the Greek name for Venus).¹¹⁸² The statue is not a sexual temptress, but a chaste maiden like Botticelli's painting of the 'Birth of Venus' arising from the waves.¹¹⁸³ In October 1759, Shenstone visited Sherrington Davenport's garden at Worfield in Shropshire and composed a poem honouring a statue of Venus in a grotto in the garden. He stated: 'Tis, you know, ye Venus of Medici; which has a more bashful attitude yn any other, & is almost hid there in a Recess', but in November Shenstone informed his friend Thomas Percy that he was changing the poem and, since Davenport had moved to Bath, he was going to make other use of the poem for himself.¹¹⁸⁴ Soon Shenstone recomposed the poem to become an ode on taste in terms of the pose of Venus. During their correspondence, Percy remarked: 'I wonder that this Figure which stands in almost every garden, hath never furnished hints of the subject of taste to any Poet before.'¹¹⁸⁵ The poem suggested that Shenstone did not see the Venus as a carnal figure, as she appeared in many gardens of the time, but as a coy young woman who wished to conceal herself from lascivious glances. He stated in a letter that the newspapers secured the text and 'caused a copy of my Verses on the

¹¹⁸² Haskell, Francis, & Penny, Nicholas, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900* (Yale University Press) 1981, p. 325. The statue was a first-century B.C. marble copy, made in Athens, of an original bronze sculpture made at the end of the second century B. C. During the Renaissance it became the property of the de Medici family in Florence and from then on became one of the major examples by which the progress of the Western Classical tradition is traced. It is the most widely-copied piece of Greek sculpture in the world, and was particularly popular in the eighteenth century.

¹¹⁸³ Pischel, Gina, *The Golden History of Art* (New York, 1968), pp. 373-4.

¹¹⁸⁴ W. S. to Thomas Percy 3rd October 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 522.

¹¹⁸⁵ T. P. to W. S. 12th March 1760 in Brooks, Cleanth (ed.), *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & William Shenstone* Vol. 7 (New Haven, Yale University, 1977), p. 55.

Venus de Medicis (sic), to be printed'.¹¹⁸⁶ The underlying message in the poem was a direction by Shenstone of how to create a landscape garden not with 'pomp at large displayed', but by underplaying the features within the landscape. He suggested that like Venus hiding her virtue, gardeners should not fill the site with features in their landscape when they planned it, but place objects around, hidden elements that reveal themselves only when they were found. His words: 'Let fancy paint the rest' underlie his belief that one cannot understand a garden simply by looking at it. Imagination must be brought into play. His final lines stress 'reserve' and eschew the use of ostentatious elements. 'And far be driv'n the sumptuous glare / Of gold, from British grove' was actually an attack on the gold-coloured Venus put up at Stowe which Shenstone thought was a feature that was inconsistent with the ethos of a natural-looking garden.¹¹⁸⁷ His intellectualisation of his garden is seen here.

Shenstone's use of classical deities continued at the Chalybeate Spring. He planned to add a few lines of poetry to the inscription on the spring: they were recorded in a notebook that he gave to his housekeeper, Mary Cutler, in 1759. He called it an 'Inscription for a medicinal Fountain In my

¹¹⁸⁶ W. S. to Thomas Percy September 1761 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 592. Williams incorrectly stated it was Warfield in Berkshire; Coffin, David, 'Venus in the Eighteenth-century English Garden,' *Garden History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter 2000), pp. 184. By January 1761, The *London Magazine* printed Shenstone's revised poem with a note that it stood under a statue of Venus at The Leasowes. The form of this poem is an iambic tetrameter (unaccented syllable followed by an accented one) as a quatrain (stanza of four lines) with a rhyming pattern a-b-a-b.

¹¹⁸⁷ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 320.

Farm'.¹¹⁸⁸ In it the nymph of the healing waters is summoned and the god Phoebus (Apollo) and his sister Artemis are called on to bathe and drink the waters.¹¹⁸⁹ These English lines, like his Latin verse, are a personification of the water. Shenstone was often concerned with his health, calling himself a hypochondriac, so this request to a spirit who could prescribe assistance to him, together with the help of Apollo and his kin suggested that he was going to the highest possible divinities for assistance.¹¹⁹⁰ Another classical deity was the lead statue of Faunus that Dodsley gave Shenstone to place in his garden. Faunus was a Roman horned and hooped god of the plains, forests and fields. He was a nature god and was associated in literature with the Greek god Pan.¹¹⁹¹ Although the Faunus Statue was a classical inspiration, Shenstone chose English for the poem. Perhaps because the statue was a gift from Dodsley, Shenstone thought it better to use a language that his friend was more familiar with. The first lines were 'Come then my friend! Thy sylvan taste display'.¹¹⁹² The poem stresses Shenstone's recurring theme that at this spot worldly cares should disappear.

¹¹⁸⁸ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number. The additions were not made to the feature in his landscape garden before he died.

¹¹⁸⁹ Seltman, Charles, *The Twelve Olympians* (London, Pan Books, 1952), pp. 111-112, 130. Apollo was a sun god who had the power of divination. Artemis was a goddess of streams, rivers, groves and forests and so was a suitable adjunct to Shenstone's pantheon; this is another poem in iambic tetrameter, a quatrain with a rhyming pattern a-b-a-b.

¹¹⁹⁰ W. S. to R. G. 30th May 1758 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 481. Hypochondria was thought to be a medical condition in the eighteenth century.

¹¹⁹¹ Grant, Michael, op. cit., p. 357. He was often worshipped for his oracular powers; it is the Pan form that the statue is related to, having Pan's Pipes in his hands.

¹¹⁹² Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 295; this poem is an iambic pentameter. It is a quatrain and is common in ballads. The rhyming pattern is again couplets: a-a-b-b.

Shenstone, however, was not always looking to the classical world for source material. His poetry also showed that he had an appreciation of the mystical folklore of the British Isles. The 'fairy world' that Shenstone applied in his landscape was summed up by Resta Patching in a remark made in 1755 which was particularly appropriate to The Leasowes when he suggested that the landscape garden demonstrated 'that the poetic descriptions of Arcadia and Fairyland are not altogether Fictions'.¹¹⁹³ Whately also referred to the 'allusions to modern fables', commenting on the 'fayes and fairies' at The Leasowes.¹¹⁹⁴ Shenstone mentioned fairies in his opening poem at the Green Pool, but in a letter to Henrietta Knight he is somewhat apologetic about his interest in them. He explained it away in that he did it for 'the common folk who delight in such things'.¹¹⁹⁵ It is interesting, however, that he collected old ballads and rhymes with Thomas Percy, many of which were about the fairy folk.¹¹⁹⁶ Percy later published them, an event that later stimulated a general interest in folk stories and songs.¹¹⁹⁷

The Green Pool Root house was the site where the most important fairy image was used (see Fig. 9.1). This was the first feature visitors would see when they entered his landscape garden and therefore it was important that it placed them in the right frame of mind to view the rest of it. Shenstone's positioned the first poem in English that he wrote for his garden on the seat

¹¹⁹³ L80 72244, Patching, Resta, op. cit., p. 58.

¹¹⁹⁴ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

¹¹⁹⁵ W. S. to H. K. 3rd June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 197.

¹¹⁹⁶ Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., pp. 84-85.

¹¹⁹⁷ Percy, Thomas, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, J. Dodsley, 1765).

of this Root house. He described the way in which he placed poems in features round his landscape to Henrietta Knight on 3rd June 1749 by pasting his writing paper 'on some strips of deal and printing them with a pen'.¹¹⁹⁸ This poem had a number of uses: it summed up the scene as an enchantment and prepared his visitors for the magic of the rest of the garden and also warned visitors (particularly from the nearby town of Halesowen) not to do any damage while they were walking in his garden. Sandro Jung recognised the belief that Shenstone 'had in the magical character of The Leasowes'.¹¹⁹⁹ Magic was thought to be powerful and as Shenstone had trouble with the local children picking his flowers, as many people still believed in fairies, he may have considered this to be a useful warning to them to stop injuring his plants.¹²⁰⁰ The poem was 'signed' by Oberon, the king of the fairies, and began with the evocative lines: 'Here, in cool grott, & mossy Cell, / We Fauns & playful Fairies dwell.'¹²⁰¹ The first two verses set the scene suggesting that the fairy folk played in the spot after nightfall, but then the third verse tried to clear the minds of his visitors to prepare them for what they were going to see as they walked around the landscape garden. The fourth verse gave a warning of retribution for anyone desecrating the scene.¹²⁰²

¹¹⁹⁸ W. S. to H. K. 3rd June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 197.

¹¹⁹⁹ Jung, Sandro, op. cit., p. 51.

¹²⁰⁰ W. S. to H. K. 3rd June 749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 197.

¹²⁰¹ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., pp. 289-290; this poem is an iambic tetrameter (four-foot line) and has a rhyming pattern of couplets: a-a-b-b.

¹²⁰² Woodhouse, James, *Poems on several occasions* (London, Dodsley, 1766) p. x.; W. S. to R. J. June 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 102. Woodhouse stated that he was very upset about the damage that was done. While this sentiment has been reiterated by many



Fig. 9.1: Green Pool with the root house on the opposite side of it. A water-colour painting by William Shenstone. Courtesy of Wellesley College.¹²⁰³

The Green Pool Seat poem was an example of how much notice he took of what others said about his verse. An example being in a letter of 1749 when Henrietta Knight commented:

I had the pleasure to read the other inscriptions in one of your moss-seats, and have it also by me in a former letter of yours. I see you have put Harm Betide instead of Ill betide: the difference is of small consequence; yet I am unwilling to give up the first (Ill betide). If you have a mind for a little criticism from such a Non-Critic as myself, I think Sportive Fawns may supply the place of Rural Fawns, as they were

writers on The Leasowes, Shenstone in fact blamed it on children picking flowers and was circumspect about the whole thing.

¹²⁰³ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.

jocular deities. You have put Fringed Cell instead of Mossy Cell; which Oberon first called it; but I love Mossy Cell; so attached am I to the first of your Editions.¹²⁰⁴

The last remark suggests that Shenstone returned to the phrase 'Mossy Cell' at a later date on her recommendation. This is evidence that Shenstone often relied on others to offer changes to his poems.

Shenstone composed poems in English on the shepherd theme as well as using Latin. One such poem was placed on the back of a Gothic Seat, called the Shepherd's Bush Seat, which was dedicated to the life of a shepherd. This poem stressed that it was only by being like a shepherd that an individual could enjoy the simple things in life. It began with the lines 'Shepherd, would'st thou here obtain / Pleasure unalloyed with pain?'¹²⁰⁵

The persons who are reading the verse are then asked to forget the hurried life of the outside world and to relax in the comfort of more simple things. In the next lines Shenstone refers to the concept of love and how important it is in life. However, readers are warned that there are always things to upset contentment even in the finest of situations. 'Crimson leaves the rose adorn, / But beneath'em lurks a thorn; / Fair and flow'ry is the brake / Yet it hides the vengeful snake.' In the last few lines he also lets slip his thoughts concerning the perfect woman – a shepherdess who loves the simple rural life as well as

¹²⁰⁴ H. K. to W. S. 8th September 1749, Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters Written by the Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), pp. 119-123; Brooks, Cleanth, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977), p. 131. Percy also stated that Shenstone's first attempts in his poetry were normally his best.

¹²⁰⁵ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., pp. 298-300; this poem is in a similar form to the previous one, but is a tetrameter.

he. It finishes with the point that happiness is transient: 'Seek no more - the rest is vain; Pleasure ending soon in pain'. As Lambert states 'Shenstone's pastorals are haunted by just such a disillusioned landscape.'¹²⁰⁶

Not all of his poems ended morbidly, and the one in the Gothic Alcove was another example of a contented Shenstone. The poem harked back to the medieval period. Thomas Whately referred to the antiquarian inscription on the Gothic Alcove as particularly appropriate, written in an 'obsolete language' (Gothic characters).¹²⁰⁷ In 1749, having finishing building the Gothic Alcove, Shenstone was considering the inscription that was to be placed on it. In a letter dated to the August of that year to Henrietta Knight he discussed what sort of lines he should use: 'I am upon ye search for a Motto to my Gothick Building, which I would have consist of a Stanza or two of old English Verse; & which I woul'd cause to be inscribed in old English Letters.'¹²⁰⁸ He even suggested that Henrietta Knight might help him. She replied in the same month:

How pleased should I be if I could help you to a proper Motto for your Gothic Building, which even Spencer has denied you in your present search.....As to the lines you desire me to write in my own hand upon one of your screens, I am ready to do it;¹²⁰⁹

By the end of August he had decided on the lines he was going to use and stated:

¹²⁰⁶ Lambert, David, op. cit., p. 71.

¹²⁰⁷ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 68.

¹²⁰⁸ W. S. to H. K. 20th August 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 213.

¹²⁰⁹ H. K. to W. S. 20th August 1749 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 113

I had just fix'd up ye Lines I enclose in my Gothick Building,
when who shou'd arrive but Mr Lyttelton, Mr Pitt & Mr
Miller. T'was impossible for me to conceal these, as I was
obliged too accompany my Visitants all round my Walks...¹²¹⁰

George Lyttelton, however, objected to two of the lines of the poem so Henrietta Knight sent him a few suggested changes. This is further evidence of his taking note of what others said about his poetry.¹²¹¹ The inscription on the back of the Gothic Alcove Seat was really an *apologia* for Shenstone's life. He knew that even his best friends criticised him for 'burying himself in the country' and in particular for being so indolent, but it was here he said he was happy through not being affected by the outside world. It began 'O you that bathe in courtly blyffe / Or toyle in fortune's giddy fpheare; / Do not too rafhly deeme amyffe / Of him, that bydes contented here.'¹²¹² The poem's message showed how important the protective cocoon of The Leasowes was to him.

The poetic ideals in the Gothic Alcove continued in the High Cascade Seat where Shenstone wrote about solitude, freedom and the lack of ambition that his life encapsulated. In verses two and three he wrote of the birds and fish that used his brooks and - pools in particular, the kingfisher that he used as a symbol for himself, when he was considering having a coat-of-arms.¹²¹³ The

¹²¹⁰ W. S. to H. K. 30th August 1749 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 215.

¹²¹¹ H. K. to W. S. 8th September 1749 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., pp. 119-123.

¹²¹² Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., p. 303; this poem is an iambic pentameter, a quatrain with a rhyming pattern a-b-a-b.

¹²¹³ W. S. to T. P., 6th June 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), p. 515.

kingfisher was featured in a classical Greek myth.¹²¹⁴ The first pair of halcyon (kingfishers) was created from the marriage of Alcyone and Ceyx. As gods, they committed sacrilege by referring to themselves as Zeus and Hera. They died for this, but the other gods, in an act of compassion, turned them into birds and thus restored them to their original watery habitat. In addition, special halcyon days were granted to them. These are the seven days on either side of the winter solstice when storms should never again occur. Subsequently, halcyon days were for caring for the winter-hatched chicks, but the term also refers specifically to an idyllic time in the past, or in general to a peaceful time. Presumably this is why Shenstone adopted it. The kingfisher is shown on the title page of Book II of his *The Works* and his water-colour, from which it was taken, is in his note book (see Fig. 9.2).



Fig. 9.2: William Shenstone's water-colour of a kingfisher from a copy-book he once owned.¹²¹⁵

¹²¹⁴ Smith, William, (ed.) *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology* (Boston, Little, Brown & Company, 1867), Vol. 1, p. 108.

¹²¹⁵ Ref. 600/124. Inside cover of a copy-book owned by David Parkes, Shrewsbury Archive.

The poem began ‘O let me haunt this peaceful fhade; / Not let Ambition e'er invade / The tenants of this leafy bower.’ The poet then hears the spirit (Naiad) of the stream stating its beauty and calls her to ignore those who do not appreciate her waters.¹²¹⁶ In the last verse he answered those critics who said that his brooks were inconsequential by personification: ‘Flow, gentle fstream, nor let the vain/ Thy fmall unfully'd ftores difdain.’¹²¹⁷

The poetry in The Leasowes landscape garden was an expression of Shenstone’s thoughts, but occasionally the lines of someone else were included. Lines from a poem with the theme of love by Alexander Pope was one example. Dodsley referred to the words on Pope’s Seat as: ‘Divine oblivion of low thoughted care!’¹²¹⁸ These lines came from Pope’s poem ‘Eloïsa and Abelard’ ‘with its Miltonic landscape of Gothic cells and twilight groves’.¹²¹⁹ The verse they are taken from is where Eloisa attempts to distance herself from Abelard’s love. Although on the surface it followed the theme of unrequited love, it could have had the more positive interpretation that Shenstone wished his visitors to forget outside life and dwell on the Arcadian landscape of The Leasowes. For Shenstone, all care was of a lesser worth and it was only in the divine that oblivion would occur. This was a prayer to

¹²¹⁶ The word naiad came from the Greek ‘to flow,’ and ‘running water’. In Greek mythology naiads were a type of nymph who presided over fountains, wells, springs, streams, and brooks; this is an iambic pentameter, a quatrain with a rhyming pattern a-a-b-b.

¹²¹⁷ Dodsley, Robert, op. cit., pp. 316-317. Dodsley had also written a poem on his first arrival at The Leasowes in 1754, which was published in *The Works*, Vol. II, pp. 328-330.

¹²¹⁸ Ibid, p. 308; ‘Eloïsa to Abelard’ in *Poets of the English Language III: Milton to Goldsmith* (London, Heron Books, n. d.), p. 337, line 228.

¹²¹⁹ Batey, Mavis, op. cit., p. 127.

achieve that end. A complete poem by Dodsley was placed on a bench in Virgil's Grove. The verse started with the words 'Sweet Naiad, in this Chrystal wave', and like the Green Pool Root house, it suggested that if one was quiet, the observer might see these watery spirits.¹²²⁰ Shenstone's English poetry demonstrated his ability to write appropriate verse to connect with the particular site where he placed it. It taught his readers an object lesson that the quality of life was central to The Leasowes experience.

9.5 Conclusion

Shenstone's verse and poetry complemented the features and scenery of the landscape. According to Richardson, Shenstone was the 'Horace of Halesowen' who integrated his poetry with his landscape work, and made it 'a living embodiment of pastoral poetry in the spirit of Virgil'.¹²²¹ Shenstone's garden acted as a three-dimensional poem, bringing the imagination to bear on the viewer. His use of Latin on his memorial urns not only displayed scholarship, but also his ability to place pertinent phrases within the landscape. His pastoral poems in English had simpler messages than those in Latin and were designed to relate to the places where they were situated. Shenstone's verse had various intentions. Firstly, he felt that people had difficulty in behaving in a relaxed way away from the busy life that permeated the eighteenth-century society that surrounded The Leasowes:

¹²²⁰ Hull, Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 27; this is a poem composed in iambic tetrameter, a quatrain with a rhyming pattern a-a-b-b-c-c-d-d.

¹²²¹ Richardson, Tim, *op. cit.*, p. 445.


the verses on the comfort of the rural scene gave a feeling of contentment. Secondly, his verse spoke of simple people - the shepherd and modest pleasures - to sit and listen to nature at play, an accomplishment that he believed should be learnt by all. Thirdly, love played a central part in his garden: a love of his friends and relations both male and female, and a love of nature. The fourth subject gave a mythological dimension with its classical spirits: Faunus, Pan and Venus with Nereids and naiads, nymphs, satyrs and English fairies. These fabled creations may have been intended to inculcate in his visitors not only a feeling of enchantment, but also an awareness that there was something greater in the landscape than themselves.¹²²² All human feelings were contained in the poetry of the garden: joy, sadness, ambition and indolence, but contentment was the most important. His garden, like a poem, told a story, a story of mankind and nature, but with its imitation classical Roman urns and medieval structures it related to a time that was lost. The Leasowes landscape garden was a retreat which Shenstone created to convey emotions through verse and poetry where he was able to reveal his inner-most thoughts. Many visitors to The Leasowes were themselves poets and gardeners, such as William Mason of Nuneham Courtney who delighted

¹²²² The use of supernatural imagery was not always considered as worthy material for a poet. As Johnson, Samuel, *The Plays of Shakespeare with Notes* Vol. V, Part 2, p. 1 (Dublin, Thomas Ewing, 1771), stated that the use of it should be 'censured as transgressing the bounds of probability'; Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, R & J Dodsley, 1761), pp. 73-74, on the other hand, stated that 'terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too close', by which he meant through a suspension of belief; Porter, Roy, *Enlightenment* (London, Penguin Books, 2000), p. 226. Most of Shenstone's visitors did not believe in supernatural creatures, but felt they were a suitable adjunct to the garden.

in the work of Shenstone.¹²²³ In his extended poem 'The English Garden' written in the 1770s Mason referred to Shenstone and The Leasowes:

Nor, Shenstone, thou
Shalt pass without thy meed, thou son of peace,
Who knew'st perchance to harmonise thy shades,
Still softer than thy song; yet was that song
Nor rude, nor inharmonious, when attun'd
To pastoral plaint, or tale of slighted love.¹²²⁴

Mason realised that Shenstone's garden and poetry were complementary, and that the poetry served to intensify the experience of the garden.

¹²²³ Jules Smith, 'Mason, William (1725–1797)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2014 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18293>, accessed  21 Aug 2015]; Hunt, John Dixon, *The Figure in the Landscape: Poetry, Painting, and Gardening during the Eighteenth Century* (London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 224.

¹²²⁴ Humphreys, A.R., *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, 1937), p. 60.

Chapter Ten

Shenstone's influence on garden designs during his lifetime

10.1 Introduction

Very few garden historians have discussed the influence of Shenstone's garden designs on his contemporaries in any detail, and therefore this topic is comparatively new.¹²²⁵ Individual garden designers rarely attempt to reproduce a garden, but rather they choose elements that they think are appropriate for their own gardens. Often they do not consciously pick up ideas directly, but dwell on what they have seen and then at a later date add elements without thinking about what they have borrowed. Most of Shenstone's ideas may have emerged in this way and no doubt many were transmitted to other gardeners in a similar fashion. All the gardenists in this chapter visited The Leasowes during Shenstone's life and the examples chosen show major and minor influences during his lifetime. The gardenists who were influenced include: Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough (1699-1756) at Barrells; Henry Grey, Lord Stamford (1716-1768) at Enville; Uther Lewis, Lord Plymouth (1731-1771) at Hewell Grange; Phillip Yorke, Earl of Hardwick (1690-1764) at Wimpole; John Baskerville (1706-1775) at Easy Hill, Birmingham;¹²²⁶ Coplestone Warre Bampfylde (1720-1791) at

¹²²⁵ Exceptions including: Brown, Jane, *My Darling Heriott: Henrietta Luxborough, Poetic Gardener and Irrepressible Exile* (London, Harper Press, 2006) p. 205; Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Bantam Press, 2008) pp. 462-462.

¹²²⁶ James Mosley, 'Baskerville, John (1706-1775)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb>].

Hestercombe; and Henry Hoare, (1705-1785) at Stourhead.¹²²⁷ Other gardenists are also considered, due to the choice of features placed in their gardens similar to those at The Leasowes. These include the estates of George, Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773) at Hagley Hall and Sir Francis Dashwood (1708-1781) at West Wycombe.¹²²⁸ The choice of features that implied evidence of replication of Shenstone's landscape garden includes hydrology (cascades, brooks and pools), natural looking, classical and Gothic structures (root seats, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats and statues), urns, paths (particularly circuit ones), and poetry. This chapter evaluates the extent to which his work influenced other gardenists during his lifetime and the type of features that were replicated, based on documentary evidence.

10.2 Reasons for influences

The Leasowes was a popular garden to visit in the eighteenth century and it would be surprising if it did not inspire those who came to see it. Proving an influence on the many sightseers to The Leasowes during his lifetime is, however, often difficult. Amongst garden writers only Mark Laird has suggested an influence and this in only one garden,

Bampfylde's at [com/view/article/1624](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1624), accessed 30 Sept 2014]. John Baskerville (1706–1775):doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/1624.

¹²²⁷ Victoria Hutchings, 'Hoare, Henry (1705–1785)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37552, accessed 21 Aug 2015].

¹²²⁸ 'Dashwood, Francis, eleventh Baron Le Despencer (1708–1781)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7179, accessed 30 Sept 2014]. Francis Dashwood (1708–1781): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/7179.

Hestercombe;¹²²⁹ however, even this is debated by Edward Hyams who wrote that it was the other way around – with Bampfylde influencing Shenstone.¹²³⁰ There are a number of ways, however, in which people may have been influenced by Shenstone’s garden: they could have chosen the many wider landscape designs at The Leasowes or picked individual features or ideas. They could have received this knowledge by direct advice from him or by looking at features within his garden. There are, however, certain examples where influence can be proposed and the following can be considered as relevant case studies.

10.3 Direct influence on garden designers

One garden where Shenstone’s guidance is proven was at Barrells Park, Warwickshire, the home of Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough.¹²³¹ In most cases he only gave general advice to fellow gardeners and did not involve himself in detailed work, but his relationship with Henrietta Knight led to a close working partnership. She was a highly intelligent woman, but due to an indiscretion with the poet John Dalton she was banished to the Knights’ rural family home of Barrells Park, far away from London.¹²³² Her experience in gardening can be discovered in a letter where she stated that she had visited, amongst other great landscaped estates of the gentry, Dawley Manor as a

¹²²⁹ Laird, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), p. 171

¹²³⁰ Hyams, Edward, *The English Garden* (Norwich, 1968), p. 50.

¹²³¹ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 116.

¹²³² Ibid, p. 121.

guest of her stepbrother, Viscount Bolingbroke.¹²³³ She therefore was in the position to observe what other Picturesque gardening experimenters were attempting to do. She also recognised that Shenstone was an instigator rather than a disciple. Henrietta Knight appreciated intelligent male companionship, and she secured this when she first moved to Barrells in 1739 with William Somerville, the one-time mentor of Shenstone, who died in the summer of 1742.¹²³⁴ She first met Shenstone at Somerville's Edstone estate in 1740¹²³⁵ and their friendship blossomed soon after. Shenstone may have taken Somerville's place, and their letters revealed a very close relationship. Evidence of an intimate relationship can perhaps be seen when Peggy Banks visited The Leasowes in 1753 and Shenstone gushed over her beauty, causing Henrietta Knight to become jealous.¹²³⁶

At Barrells a range of influences were adopted (see Fig. 10.1). There were no water features as there was no natural water source there, but natural-looking, classical and Gothic features such as grottoes, root seats, a hermitage and a pavilion were included. She also placed urns in the garden with a statue within a circuit walk. Shenstone began helping Henrietta Knight with her garden as early as the spring of 1742 when he gave her a piping faun

¹²³³ Henrietta Knight to William Shenstone 28th April 1748 in Hodgetts, John (ed.), *Letters written by the late right honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone* (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), pp. 22-23; Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Bantam Press, 2008), p. 220. Richardson considered Dawley to be a *ferme ornée*.

¹²³⁴ Brown, Jane, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4. Somerville's poem 'Song to Asteria' was about Henrietta Knight and her appreciation of her garden. She also was a kindred spirit in writing poetry and Shenstone advised Dodsley to publish some of her poetry which also concerned gardens.

¹²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹²³⁶ H. K. to W. S. 12th September 1753, Hodgetts, John (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 346.

statue that was made by a Mr Rackstrow. She commented that Rackstrow had taken Shenstone's advice on the hands of the statue.¹²³⁷ Very little is known about their work together in the early and mid-1740s but there is evidence of Shenstone spending time on The Barrells garden from 1748. In a letter dated the 23rd March she stated: 'If anything is done here, it will be owing to the advice you are so kind to give me.' In the same letter she discussed his idea of placing a hermitage in her shrubbery and to make a serpentine walk bordered by service trees (*Sorbus domestica*) back to the hermitage.¹²³⁸ She took his advice about planting two elms (*Ulmus procera*) on either side of the gateway. She ended the letter by asking him if he could come and instruct her carpenter and mason as to what is required.¹²³⁹ This was followed by a letter written in the summer that stated she was waiting for Shenstone's direction on remodelling her shrubbery.¹²⁴⁰ In August of that year she suggested that she might build a garden seat as he had suggested, to 'terminate a walk or view'.¹²⁴¹ By late 1748 Shenstone had planned the whole lay-out of the garden as in the December of that year he issued instructions as to what she should be doing.¹²⁴² Another letter in April 1749 included a sketch of his alterations.¹²⁴³ It appeared that she took his advice and completely changed her garden as she listed the amount of work that was

¹²³⁷ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 29th May 1742, Hodgetts, John (ed.), pp. 3–4.

¹²³⁸ Actually the Chestnut Coppice; perhaps she thought at the time that the whole woodland area was her shrubbery.

¹²³⁹ H. K. to W. S. 23rd March 1748 Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 90.

¹²⁴⁰ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. Summer, 1748, p. 28.

¹²⁴¹ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 11th August 1748, p. 15.

¹²⁴² W. S. to H. K. 30th December 1748 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), pp. 182-184.

¹²⁴³ Ibid, W. S. to H. K. 23rd April 1749, pp.189-192.

being done.¹²⁴⁴ She wrote that she needed his help as she was picking out designs in Batty Langley's book,¹²⁴⁵ which Shenstone had given her, for the floor of her pavilion. In a letter on the 24th June 1749 she asked that he contrive a serpentine entrance to her grotto,¹²⁴⁶ and in the September inquired as to how he made his moss seats which were in Virgil's Grove as she intended to do the same.¹²⁴⁷ In November he stated that he was coming over to help her in her planting which showed he was actively involved in transforming the estate.¹²⁴⁸ At the same time her servants collected dead branches for Shenstone's man (Tom Jackson) to construct a root house.¹²⁴⁹ Shenstone advised her to take away the gravel of the walks to make them look more natural.¹²⁵⁰ He also advised her to join her kitchen garden to her coppice which she did by removing the palisade fence that separated them.¹²⁵¹ On May Day 1749 she wrote to him saying 'thank you for your little sketch of alterations in my Shrubbery'.¹²⁵² In May 1751 she thanked him for directing her to make her kitchen garden longer.¹²⁵³ She stated that she would fill the walk with shrubs as he proposed, but inquired how the pavilion should be floored and how the coppice should be entered. She commented: 'You are very good in instructing me how to amend mine, and to improve

¹²⁴⁴ H. K. to W. S. 1st May 1749, Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 95.

¹²⁴⁵ Langley, Batty, *New Principles of Gardening* (London, 1728, reprinted Garland 1982).

¹²⁴⁶ H. K. to W. S. 24th June 1749 Hodgetts, John (ed.), op. cit., p. 111.

¹²⁴⁷ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 11th September 1749, p. 125. Green Pool Root house.

¹²⁴⁸ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 1st November 1749, p. 134.

¹²⁴⁹ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 29th November 1749, 145.

¹²⁵⁰ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 25th April 1750, p. 200. None of his paths at The Leasowes had gravel on them.

¹²⁵¹ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 31st August 1750, pp. 220-1.

¹²⁵² Ibid, H. K. to W. S. May Day 1749, p. 95.

¹²⁵³ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 27th May 1751, p. 263.

the limited and scanty beauties of my situation.'¹²⁵⁴ It was clear that by that period his help in designing her garden was invaluable.

It is not surprising that the lay-out was similar to, although smaller than The Leasowes, considering that Shenstone planned so much of her garden. It contained a boundary walk with features dotted all the way round and the house was surrounded by lawns, shrubberies, copse/coppice and groves that blended into the landscape. There was also the borrowed landscape of the arable fields to the west and east and the meadowland to the south. Henrietta Knight was also taught by him to make external features like church towers (Oldberrow) and hills (Skiltz) to catch the eye by clearing the trees at sight lines and placing seats there for her visitors to enjoy the view. An urn dedicated to Shenstone was also placed in the garden, presumably as a reward for all the advice he gave. Barrells Park was probably his most extensive creation outside The Leasowes itself.

¹²⁵⁴ Ibid, H. K. to W. S. 16th April 1751, p. 254.

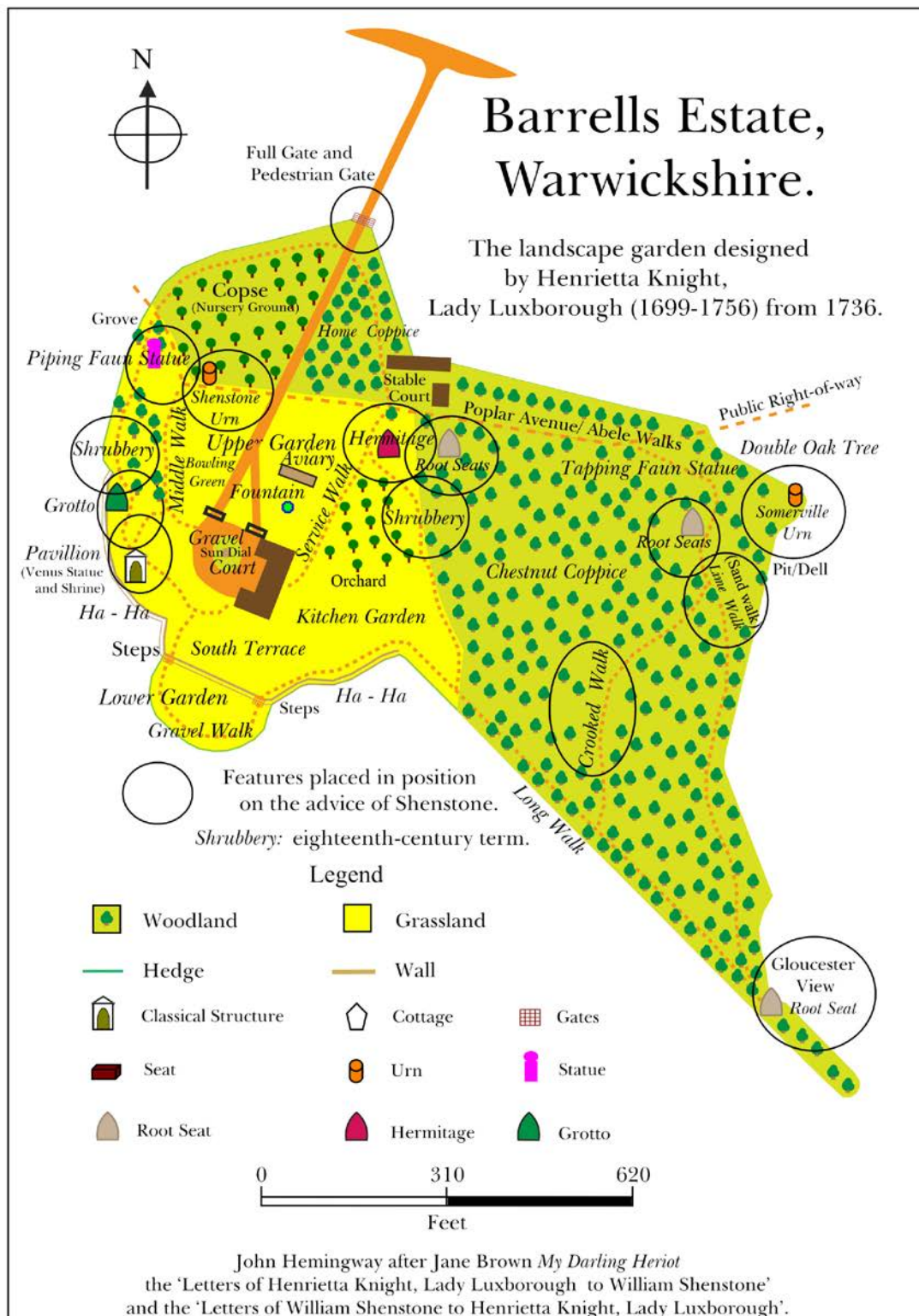


Fig. 10.1: Plan of Barrells Estate, Warwickshire.¹²⁵⁵

¹²⁵⁵ Plan after Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 162. There is no plan of the garden as it stood in Henrietta Knight's day. The above was made from a copy in Brown's book on Henrietta Knight, with changes made by the writer on reading both the 'Letters of Henrietta Knight,

Enville Park was a garden in which Shenstone's ideas were important in the change from a formal to a natural-looking park. He first met Harry Grey, Third Earl of Stamford of Enville, Staffordshire, in February 1750, noting in a letter to Henrietta Knight that the:

Earl of Stanford call'd on me with three other Gentlemen, this week, to see my walks - he was much struck with Virgil's Grove, & particularly ye Cascade you were us'd to admire. He gave me many invitations to Enfield, (sic) where he is building a Gothick (sic) Greenhouse.¹²⁵⁶

After Grey's first visit they visited each other's property often. His last trip to Enville was to see Grey over a possible pension that his lordship was trying to secure for him from the king; unfortunately, Shenstone died a few weeks later without getting the advancement.¹²⁵⁷ It was during these visits that Shenstone advised him on work in the Enville grounds. A range of features were placed there probably as a result of Shenstone's advice. These included hydrological work on his cascades and pools, natural-looking features such as a grotto, classical features including temples and Gothic structures plus seats and a gateway. To these were added urns, a statue and a circuit walk (see Fig. 10.2).

In the 1990s a plan of the Enville estate was found in the archive of Enville Hall dated to the 1750s. The plan was annotated and showed the change from a formal landscape to a more natural-looking one. On the dorsal side of

Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone' and the 'Letters of William Shenstone to Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough'.

¹²⁵⁶ W. S. to H. K. 4th February 1750, Williams, Marjorie, (ed.), op. cit., pp. 255-226.

¹²⁵⁷ Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 11th January 1763, pp. 644-645.

the plan were the words: 'A Plan for landscaping Enville Park – mid 18th century – possibly by William Shenstone'.¹²⁵⁸ The plan shows an enlargement of the pools with water gushing through rocks in a naturalist design and the long cascades running through a series of pools and falls like that at The Leasowes. Other Shenstonesque features were observed; clumps of trees, shrubberies, a Serpentine Seat and benches were built with a view over to Enville Church. There was much in the design that reflected Shenstone's gardening ideas as specified in his 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', particularly on variety. Perhaps the greatest testament to his assistance with the garden was the Shenstone Chapel built like his Ruinated Priory next to a wood. The chapel was erected in 1753, but it was not until after Shenstone's death in 1763 that Grey dedicated it to the friend who had helped him create a distinguished landscape garden. Enville, however, was not a replica of The Leasowes as it had a greater acreage and the circular route around it actually went outside the parkland. Also some of the structures did not appeal to Shenstone (for instance, the Chinese Temple on the island in the middle of the pool) but much of the inspiration that came from The Leasowes was embedded in the Enville landscape.¹²⁵⁹

¹²⁵⁸ Symes, Michael, & Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley & The Leasowes* (Bristol, Redcliffe Press, 2010), p. 140. A copy of the plan was made by the writer after a visit to Enville Hall.

¹²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 82.

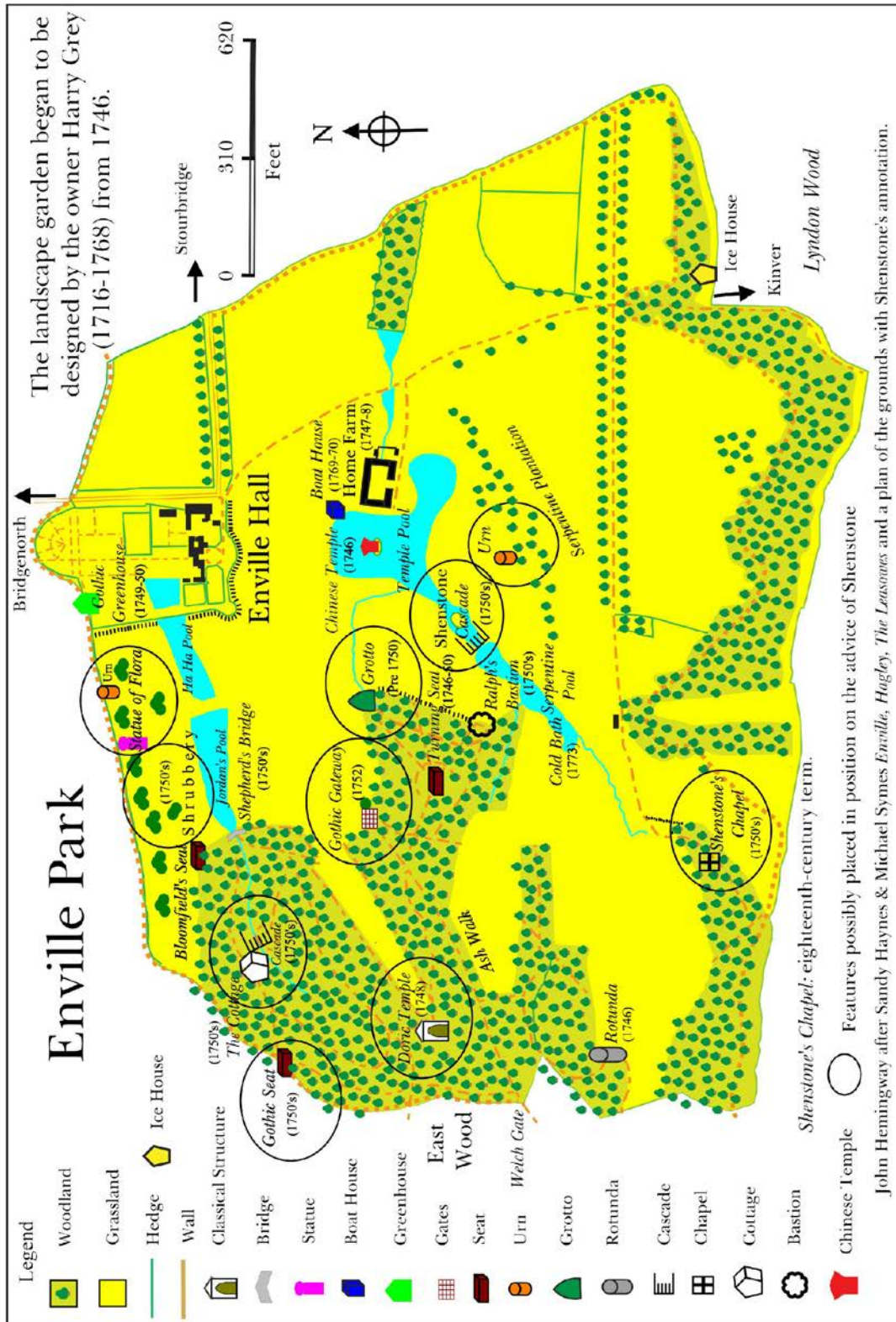


Fig. 10.2: Plan of Enville Park.¹²⁶⁰

¹²⁶⁰ Plan after 'Proposed new designs for the grounds at Enville c.1752', *ibid*, p. 82.

In a few estates there is evidence of elements being inspired by Shenstone at the beginning of the parklands creation, for example, at Hewell Grange, Worcestershire. Shenstone met Uther Lewis, Earl of Plymouth in a visit the Earl and Countess made to The Leasowes in 1753.¹²⁶¹ On this visit the Earl asked Shenstone to design his park as they were just beginning to landscape their grounds.¹²⁶² Lewis was a close acquaintance of Lord Dudley and he and Shenstone were invited to Hewell Grange a number of times.¹²⁶³ In 1754, Shenstone advised him on how to manage the streams that flowed into the lake, make cascades, create a river made out of the fens that lay in the valley, and to conceal elements that they did not want to see by placing aquatic plants in appropriate places (see Fig. 10.3).¹²⁶⁴ Shenstone also suggested that the lake should be made into a serpentine river like the Horse Pool at The Leasowes.¹²⁶⁵ Other Shenstonesque features may have been the many small groves of trees with specimen trees. Not having a plan of the period makes it impossible to identify which built features were placed in the parkland by Shenstone. Moreover, the issue is further clouded because Lancelot Brown with Nathaniel Richmond did work there later.¹²⁶⁶

¹²⁶¹ W. S. to H. K. 11th November 1753 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p.382.

¹²⁶² Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 29th January 1754, p. 393.

¹²⁶³ Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 29th January 1754, p. 392

¹²⁶⁴ Ibid, W. S. to H. K. 11th November 1753, p. 384.

¹²⁶⁵ Ibid, W. S. to R. J. 29th January 1754, p. 392-393.

¹²⁶⁶ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, *Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men* (London, Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 142.

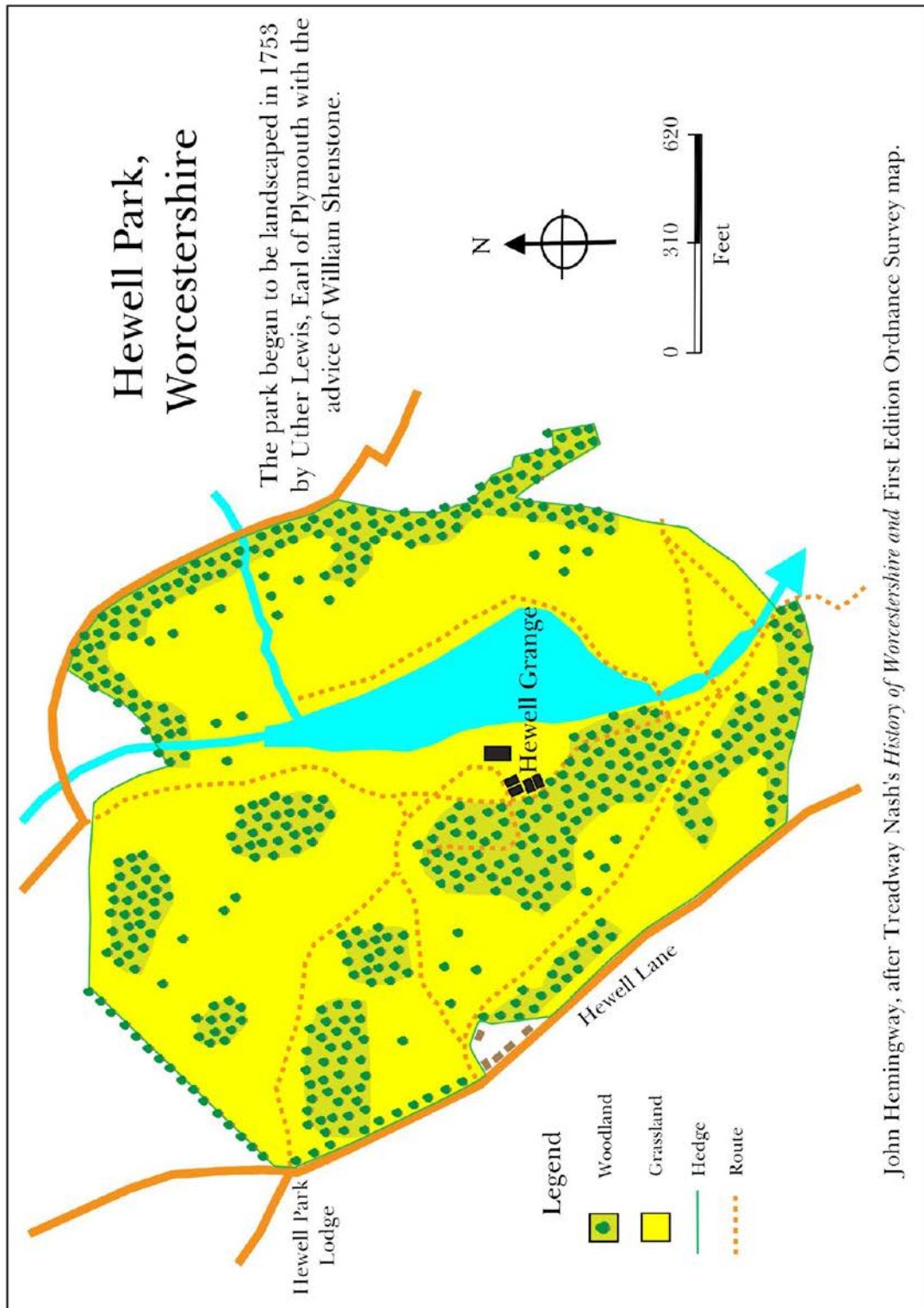


Fig. 10.3: Plan of Hewell Grange Park.¹²⁶⁷

¹²⁶⁷ The plan was completed by using the First Edition 1831 Ordnance Survey Map and Treadway Nash's engraving and description of the house and estate in *Collections for a History of Worcestershire* Vol. 2 (London, John White & Horace Head, 1781) p. 410.

A document of 1752 in the British Library contains a proposal from ‘Mr S’ to alter the garden belonging to Philip Yorke, First Earl of Hardwick at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire.¹²⁶⁸ The Jellicoes and Mark Laird have attributed ‘Mr S’ to Shenstone.¹²⁶⁹ The connection between Shenstone and Wimpole may have been George Lyttelton and Sanderson Miller who visited Wimpole in 1749.¹²⁷⁰ It appeared that Yorke wanted a ruined castle similar to the one Miller had placed at Hagley.¹²⁷¹ The old garden was a parterre type which had been modified by Charles Bridgeman, but Yorke wanted one in the English landscape style.¹²⁷² There is no evidence that he had been to The Leasowes, but it remains a possibility as he must have been aware of Shenstone’s work. Neither is there any evidence that Shenstone visited Wimpole. Robert Greening was employed by Yorke as a garden designer in 1752,¹²⁷³ and he seems to have used the ideas that were offered. The Shenstonesque features at Wimpole included a circuit path with woods intermixed with shrubby plants. No structures are known, nor water features as Wimpole had no natural water at the time, but the ‘naturalness’ of the landscape can be seen in the plan (see Fig. 10.4). These are shown in two plans of the grounds made about the same date as the ‘Hints’ and gave

¹²⁶⁸ British Library, Hardwicke Papers, Vol. 331, MS 35679, fol. 67.

¹²⁶⁹ Jellicoe, Sir Geoffrey, & Jellicoe, Susan, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (Oxford, 1991), p. 609; Laird, Mark, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds 1720-1800* (Pennsylvania, 1999), pp. 115, 118.

¹²⁷⁰ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 207. Sanderson Miller’s appreciation of Shenstone’s point of view about landscape gardens was taken up when he worked at Farnborough Hall, Warwickshire which took its cue from the setting.

¹²⁷¹ Hunt, John Dixon & Willis, Peter, *The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (London, 1990), p. 29.

¹²⁷² Laird, Mark, op. cit., p. 115.

¹²⁷³ Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, op. cit., p. 115.

detailed directions of what should be done. Details of the 'Hints' suggested that like The Leasowes, Yorke should have a wide expanse of lawn in the garden of the house and groups of trees at intervals from one another. The lawn should be landscaped in such a way to resemble a valley, so the east side of the garden was raised. The old straight walks were removed and were replaced by a favourite Shenstonesque feature, the serpentine walk, which was taken around the garden as a circuit path. According to the document the tree clumps were composed of evergreens and syringes, honeysuckle and roses and encompassed with flowers. Shenstone's favourite plants, laburnum and Portugal laurels were also mentioned. Another Shenstone habit was to hide parts of the garden with trees and shrubs. At Wimpole this was achieved by making three separate 'garden rooms'. 'Mr S' also gave advice on buildings: 'Both ye pavilions at ye end of ye garden shd be pulled down' as they interfered with the view. He advised that Johnson's Hill, which lay in the West Park, should be the focus of the prospect and he recommended extensive tree removal and pruning in the garden in order to see it. His quote 'To examine what Trees my own Nurseries or Spinnies will afford' is particularly informative as it may have suggested that Shenstone had a nursery ground or there were areas within The Leasowes where he placed young shrubs and trees for transplanting. It indicated that he, like many gardeners, was always ready to replace losses in his garden.¹²⁷⁴

¹²⁷⁴ British Library, op. cit., fol. 78-79; Laird, Mark (1999), op. cit., p. 118. Laird quoted the 'Proposals relating to the Alterations of the Garden at Wimpole' in its entirety.

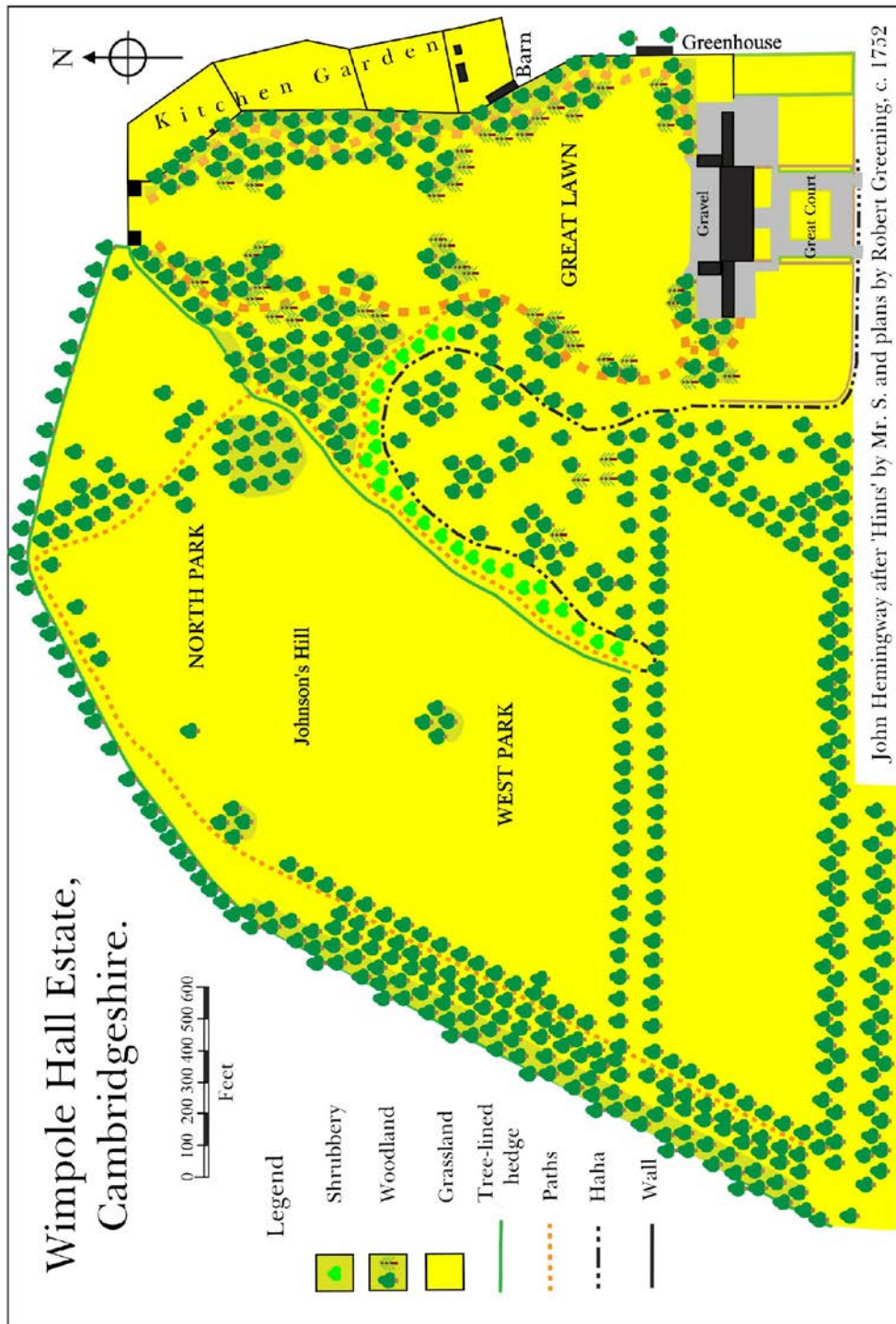


Fig. 10.4: Plan of Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire c. 1752.¹²⁷⁵

¹²⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 116; Brown, David & Williamson, Tom, op cit., pp. 131-135. The plan is a composite based on two drawings by Greening. Miller's castle was eventually placed on Johnson's Hill by Lancelot Brown in the period 1767 - 1772.

John Baskerville's Easy Hill, in Birmingham, Warwickshire, was an estate where we have evidence that Shenstone assisted the owner, but unfortunately there are no details of what he did, only comments about what it looked like. Shenstone's letters demonstrate that he and Baskerville visited one another's homes, socially and for business,¹²⁷⁶ and that Shenstone introduced Baskerville to Robert Dodsley the publisher, who engaged Baskerville to print some of his books.¹²⁷⁷ William Hutton recorded that John Baskerville moved to Easy Hill, on the west side of Birmingham, in the 1750s and wrote that he had turned his garden into 'a little Eden' with the help of Shenstone.¹²⁷⁸

After Mrs Baskerville's death in 1788 it was put up for sale in *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* and it was said to contain:

...a good Garden, with Green-House, and Garden House...
...together with about seven acres of rich Pasture Land in high condition, part of which is laid out in Shady Walks, adorned with Shrubberies, Fish Ponds, and a Grotto; the whole in a Ring-Fence, the great part of it enclosed by a Brick-Wall.¹²⁷⁹

¹²⁷⁶ W. S. to H. K. 17th July 1754 in Williams Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 409. Shenstone regularly wrote about Baskerville. This letter records a visit to Easy Hill where Baskerville and he had a cider drinking session and Shenstone used Baskerville's bust-maker to make one of himself.

¹²⁷⁷ Tierney, James, E. (ed.) *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733-1764* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 16.

¹²⁷⁸ Hutton, W. S., *An History of Birmingham* 3rd edition (Birmingham, Thomas Pearson, 1795), p. 121; Bennett, William, *John Baskerville the Birmingham Printer, his Press, relations and friends* (Birmingham, 1937), p. 71; Ballard, Phillada, Loggie, Val & Mason, Shena, op. cit., p. 6.

¹²⁷⁹ Birmingham Archive, MS1660/1; *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, Monday, May 12th. 1788, Vol. XLVII, No. 2426, p. 2; Pardoe, F. E. *John Baskerville of Birmingham Letter-Founder & Printer* (London, Frederick Muller Limited, 1975), p. 14; B.A. MS 3782/6/190/201. Matthew Boulton Collection. A recent discovery by Professor Caroline Archer of a list of plants bought by Baskerville from James Gordon of London in 1766 suggested that he was using the

The shrubbery, fish pond, grotto and the serpentine path were likely to have been Shenstonesque features and, although not a *ferme ornée*, the pasture land to the north and west gave the impression of being a farm (see Fig. 10.5). A writer in the *Birmingham Daily Mail* of February 3, 1886, described the Easy Hill residence of the period as follows:

The pasture was luxuriant, great elm trees shaded the park like expanse of verdure, an ample fish-pond stretched away westwards, and a picturesque disused windmill standing upon a slight elevation was ready to be converted into the most captivating of summer houses. . . ¹²⁸⁰

It eventually was developed as an industrial site and this explains why nothing of the period can be seen on the position today. The following map is based on a number of engravings which were not intended to show the garden in any detail (see illustrations Fig. 10.6 and Fig.10.7.)

greenhouse for sub-tropical species as he purchased seeds of plants which would not survive English winters.

¹²⁸⁰ *Birmingham Daily Mail*, 3rd February 1886, p. 4; Benton, Josiah, Henry, *John Baskerville Type-founder and Printer* (Boston, 1914), p. 5.

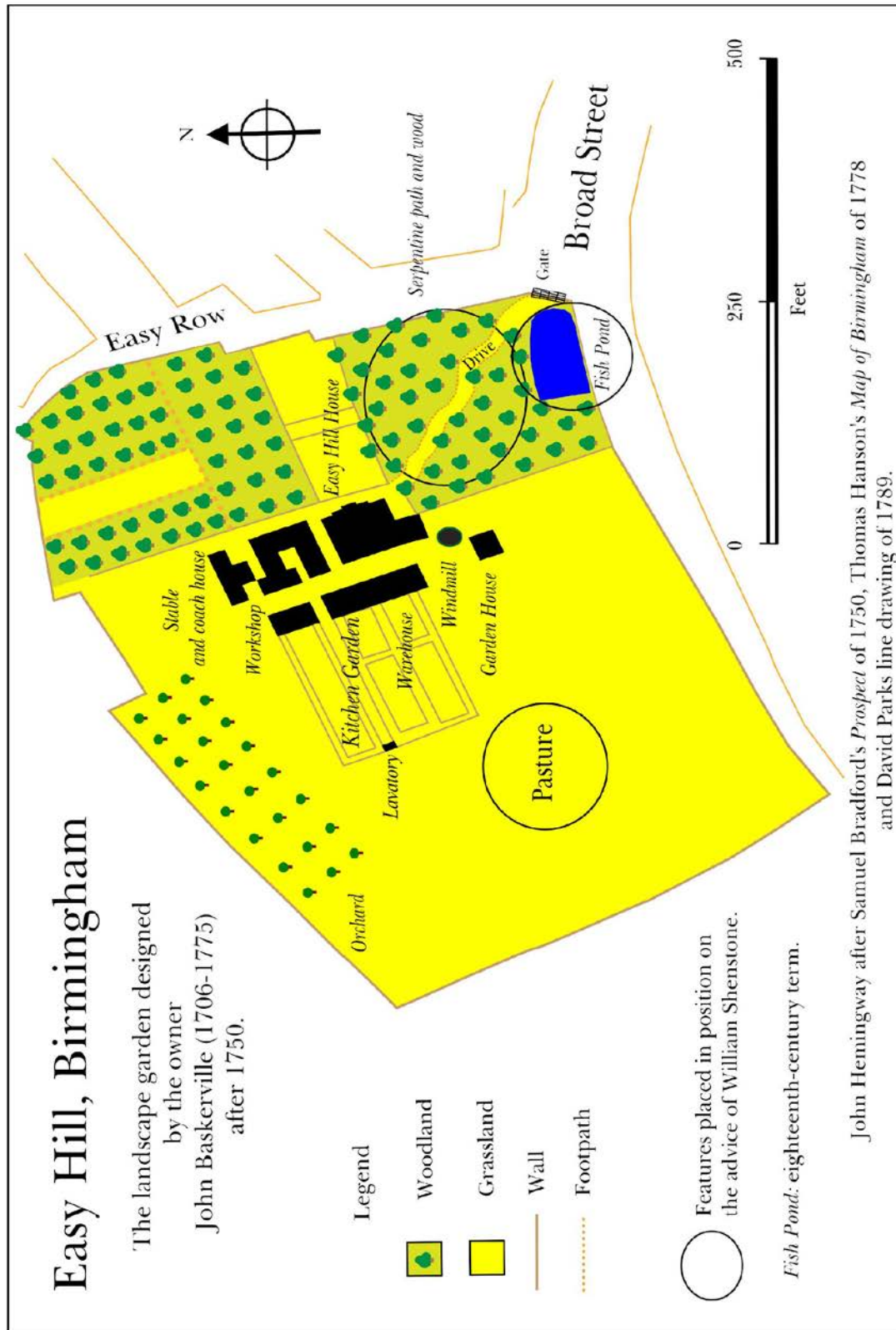


Fig. 10.5: Plan of John Baskerville's garden at Easy Hill, 1750-1758.¹²⁸¹

¹²⁸¹ Plan of Birmingham after Samuel Bradford's 1750 prospect, Thomas Hanson's plan of 1778.

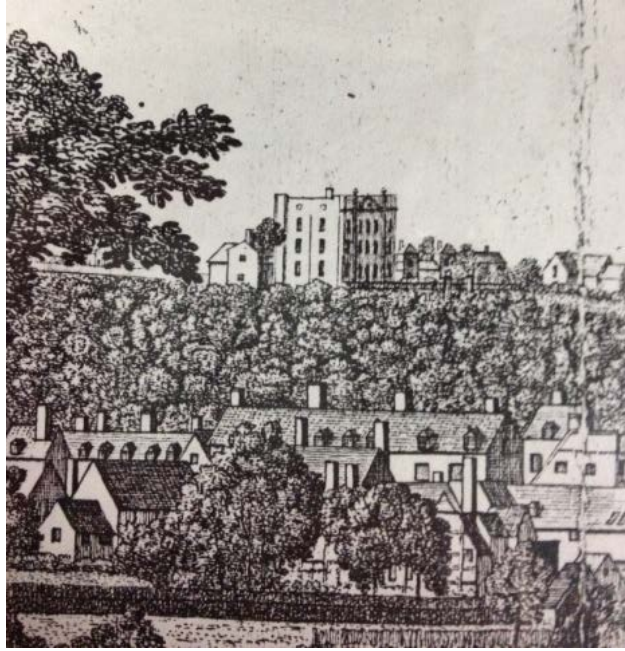


Fig. 10.6: Baskerville's house and garden at Easy Hill showing woodland on the south-east side on a Plan of Birmingham by Bradford 1758.¹²⁸²

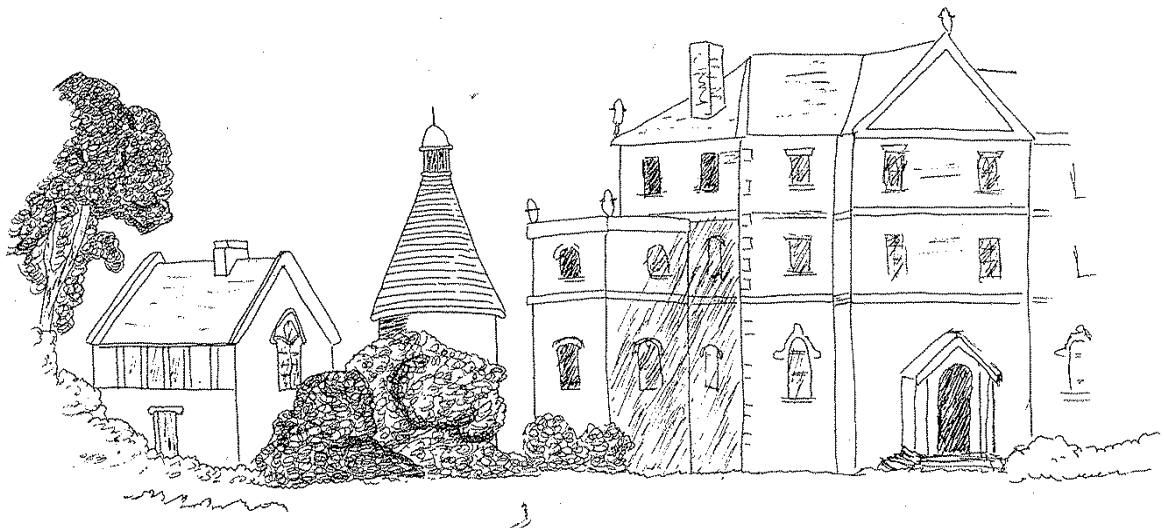


Fig. 10.7: Easy Hill Mansion House, Windmill and Garden House after David Parkes, 1789.¹²⁸³

¹²⁸² Detail of print from Bradford's Prospect of Birmingham, 1758.

¹²⁸³ Mckenna, J., 'Birmingham Windmills' in *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society* Vol. 93 (1986-1987), pp. 96-7. David Parkes also drew scenes at The Leasowes in an empty drawing book that had once been owned by Shenstone.

Wolverley Hall is another estate where details of what Shenstone suggested are few. Edward Knight of Wolverley (1734-1812) first met him when he was taken to The Leasowes by Thomas Wren in 1758.¹²⁸⁴ They became friends and Knight nicknamed Shenstone Hesiod after the Greek writer, probably because they both were farmers, poets and claimed to be shepherds.¹²⁸⁵ In April/May 1759 Shenstone went to visit Mr Deane at Whittington, Staffordshire and paid a visit to Wolverley. While he was there he talked to Knight about his horticultural activities.¹²⁸⁶ The following week, Shenstone wrote a letter advising him on making improvements to his estate (see Fig. 10.8).¹²⁸⁷ Knight followed Shenstone's *ferme ornée* idea in that he had woodland, a lawn and riverside meadow with a circuit path going around his wood. The whole he called 'Pine Valley', but he had no natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures. The 'naturalness' of the landscape could be seen by the pool, and a brook that went into the River Stour via a meadow.

¹²⁸⁴ Laurence Ince, 'Knight family (*per. c.* 1680–1897)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47501>, accessed 21 Aug 2015]; W. S. to M. B. 30th May 1758 Williams, Marjorie, *op. cit.*, p. 482; Lewis, Roy, 'William Shenstone and Edward Knight - some new letters' in *The Modern Language Review* Vol. XLII, No. 4 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1947), p. 422. Edward Knight was a successful businessman, owning a number of slitting-mills on the River Stour. He became Sheriff of Worcestershire in 1769. Thomas Wren was the brother of Christopher Wren, one of Shenstone's university colleagues, p. 423; Edward Knight was a cousin to Richard Payne Knight, *pers. comm.* Dr. Roger Bruton.

¹²⁸⁵ Shropshire Record Office, 6001/154, David Parkes Sketch Book, p. 15; Wender, Dorothea, *Hesiod - Theogony, Works and Days* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 14-15, 23. Hesiod was a Greek poet, a contemporary of Homer, who claimed in his poem 'Theogony' that on his farm beneath Mount Helicon he was a shepherd before the gods gave him the ability to poetise. There was a shrine to the muses on Mount Helicon and a festival to them was celebrated in a sacred grove there; another similarity between Hesiod and Shenstone was that, according to Giles, his farm was a 'seat of the muses'. (Giles, Joseph, *Miscellaneous Poems on Various Subjects* (London, J. Godwin, F. Newbery, J. Walter, G. Riley, W. Domville and J. Whebley, 1771), p. 9.

¹²⁸⁶ Lewis, Roy., *op. cit.*, p. 424

¹²⁸⁷ Kidderminster Library Collection, 000100 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990), W. S. to Knight, Edward, 5th February 1759, p. 102.

Shenstone wrote that he would supply him with goldfish to go in the brook by his lower walk.¹²⁸⁸

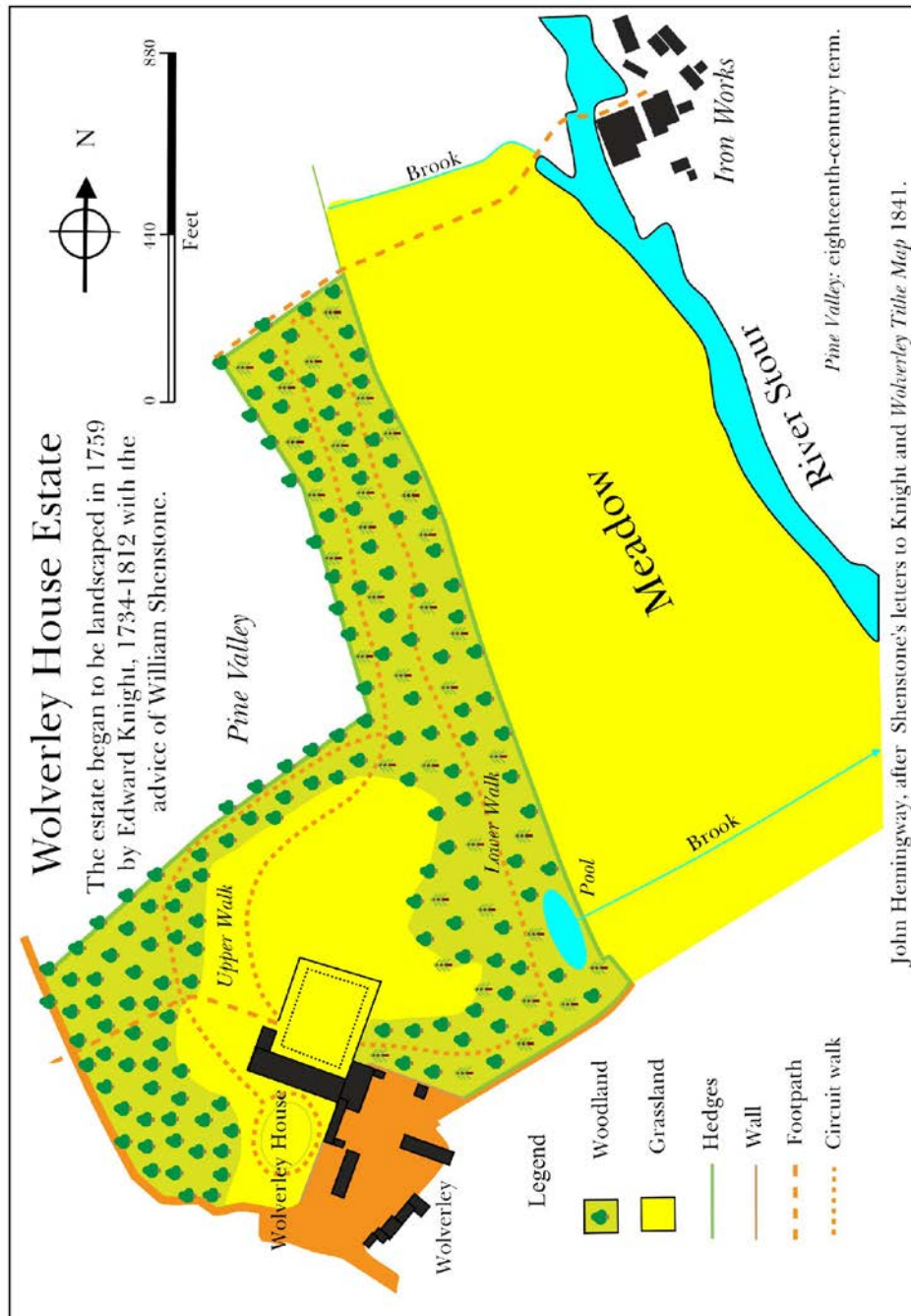


Fig. 10.8: Plan of Edward Knight's garden at Wolverley House.¹²⁸⁹

¹²⁸⁸ Kidderminster Library Collection, 000102 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990), W. S. to Knight, Edward, 5th May 1759.

¹²⁸⁹ After Shenstone's letter to Knight 5th May 1759 & Ordnance Survey maps 1814, 1882.

Hestercombe is a prime example where ideas from The Leasowes were replicated. Coplestone Warre Bampfylde inherited the estate of Hestercombe in Somerset from his father, John Bampfylde and mother Margaret Warre in 1750.¹²⁹⁰ Edward Knight of Wolverley's sister, Mary, married Bampfylde in 1755.¹²⁹¹ As Knight was greatly attracted by The Leasowes he told his brother-in-law about it and they visited Shenstone's landscape garden together, which took place in the summer of 1762 and was mentioned by Shenstone in a letter.¹²⁹² Bampfylde was impressed with what he saw, particularly the High Cascade, and on returning home he created a feature in its image – the Great Cascade at Hestercombe. Mark Laird recognised the importance of The Leasowes to Bampfylde when he stated that Hestercombe 'was modelled in part on William Shenstone's The Leasowes' (see Fig. 10.9).¹²⁹³

The proposed evidence of replication of features from The Leasowes can be seen in several components, in particular, the hydrology including brooks and pools with the Box Pond Cascade in particular. This was another feature

¹²⁹⁰ White, Philip, *Hestercombe Gardens: An Illustrated History and Guide* (Hestercombe, Hestercombe Gardens Project, 1999), p. 1.

¹²⁹¹ www.countyhistorian.com/knol/...edward-knight-of-wolverley-ironma.html

¹²⁹² W. S. to R. G. 20th November 1762 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 628; An oil painting was discovered by the writer in the Art Gallery Store at Dudley depicting Coplestone Warre Bampfylde and his wife Mary. Presumably this had been originally given to the Knights at Wolverley? The painting had a tropical background, but Mark Laird (pers. comm.) had no idea that the Bampfylde's ever went to the tropics, so the background to the painting is still a mystery.

¹²⁹³ Laird, Mark, *A Natural History of English Gardening* (London, Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 171-2.

that may have owed its origins to The Leasowes and it was described by Henry Hawkins Tremayne of Heligan:

On the opposite hill a beautiful cascade of several falls seems to pour out of the wood and down the opposite hill. You see nothing but this cascade for which purpose a vista is cut through the wood from the cave. The murmur of this water the gloom of the wood the fanciful ornaments of the cave renders this spot a piece of poetic scenery that is infinitely pleasing.¹²⁹⁴

There was a circular walk around the estate and the natural-looking, classical and Gothic features included an urn, the Temple Arbour, built in the 1770s¹²⁹⁵ and the Witch House - a root house first recorded in 1761. This latter structure was described in 1785 by Henry Hawkins Tremayne as 'composed of the stocks and roots of trees. It is half octagonal on the outside. The dead branches of Trees are twisted in the most fantastic shapes.' The 'naturalness' of the woodland was also commented upon and the habit Shenstone had of cutting 'windows' through woods in order to see other features was also noted.¹²⁹⁶ Another Shenstonesque feature Bampfylde placed close by to the High Cascade was the Rustic Seat on which the visitor could sit and contemplate the falling waters.¹²⁹⁷ Bampfylde also attached poems to his features: the Mausoleum, built in the mid-1750s, has four lines of text on retirement based on Horace.¹²⁹⁸ Shenstone mentioned a number of times that he was going to reciprocate Bampfylde's visit, normally when he

¹²⁹⁴ Cornwall Record Office, Tremayne, Henry, Hawkins, op. cit., No page number.

¹²⁹⁵ White, Phillip, op. cit., p. 6.

¹²⁹⁶ Cornwall Record Office, Tremayne, Henry, Hawkins, 'Travel Journal, 1785,' T. 1341/11.

¹²⁹⁷ White, Phillip, op. cit., p. 4.

¹²⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 9.

was going to stay with Richard Graves who lived close to Hestercombe, and if he went he may have given advice whilst there.¹²⁹⁹

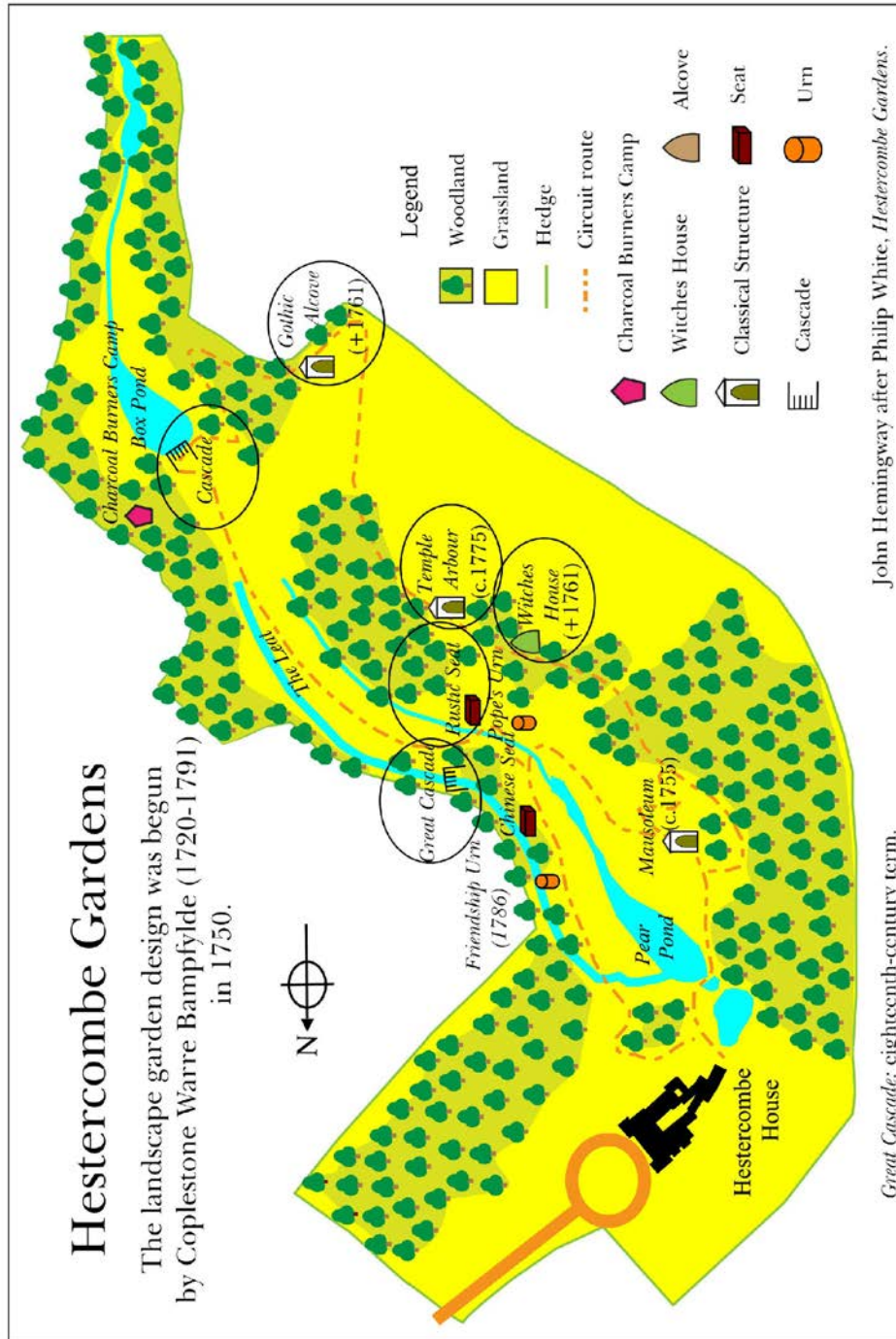


Fig. 10.9: Plan of Hestercombe Gardens.¹³⁰⁰

¹²⁹⁹ W. S. to R. G. 7th July 1760 & 2nd May 1761 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 557 & p. 580.

There is no evidence that Shenstone and Henry Hoare ever met, but there are similarities between their estates. As Coplestone Warre Bampfylde painted pictures of the Stourhead garden and was a friend of Hoare, it is likely that he told him about The Leasowes. The Hoare family were bankers and Henry Hoare inherited Stourhead in Wiltshire from his father who died in 1724.¹³⁰¹ Hoare had spent three years in Italy studying gardens and art and returned to England in September 1741.¹³⁰² Some work on the garden had started in the 1730s with a walk and the two ponds, but it was not until 1743 that Hoare began to fill the landscape with classical and other Picturesque style features. He started constructing a dam to make the pond larger in 1744, but it was still two pieces of water by 1754.¹³⁰³ Stourhead was essentially a park landscape, but the similarities to features at The Leasowes included the hydrology, with its cascade and pool; natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures, including, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats, urns and statues; and the ‘naturalness’ of the scattered woodlands of the landscape. Details of the features that were placed within the park included an obelisk in 1746, the Temple of Ceres in 1745, a grotto in 1748, a bridge in 1749 and the Pantheon (Temple of Hercules) in 1753.¹³⁰⁴ Bampfylde advised Hoare on some of his water features, particularly the cascades after his High

¹³⁰⁰ Plan after White, Philip, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

¹³⁰¹ Brown, Jane, op. cit., p. 110. Robert Knight sent his wife Henrietta to Quarley in 1735 after he had discovered she had had an affair with John Dalton. The occupier at Quarley, Hampshire was Henry Hoare before he moved to Stourhead. Jane Brown asked the question that as Henrietta Knight was already a gardener, did this ‘rub off’ on this then ‘hard riding sportsman’?

¹³⁰² Richardson, Tim, op. cit., p. 408.

¹³⁰³ Woodbridge Kenneth, *The Stourhead Landscape* (London, 2001), p. 53.

¹³⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 17.

Cascade replicated from The Leasowes was such a great success.¹³⁰⁵ Other features which had inscriptions similar to Shenstone's were: the grotto in which there was a translation of four lines by Alexander Pope cut into marble on the rim of the cold bath;¹³⁰⁶ and the River God's Cave, which faced the exit of the Grotto and housed a lead sculpture of the river god Peneus by John Cheere paid for in 1751.¹³⁰⁷ Hoare's Stourhead is a good example of the use of individual features that could be found at The Leasowes, though whether Shenstone's estate was the source for these is unknown (see Fig. 10.10). If they were, then perhaps Hoare was another person who picked individual features rather than adopting the whole conception.

¹³⁰⁵ Richardson, Tim, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

¹³⁰⁶ Woodbridge, Kenneth, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

¹³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 49.

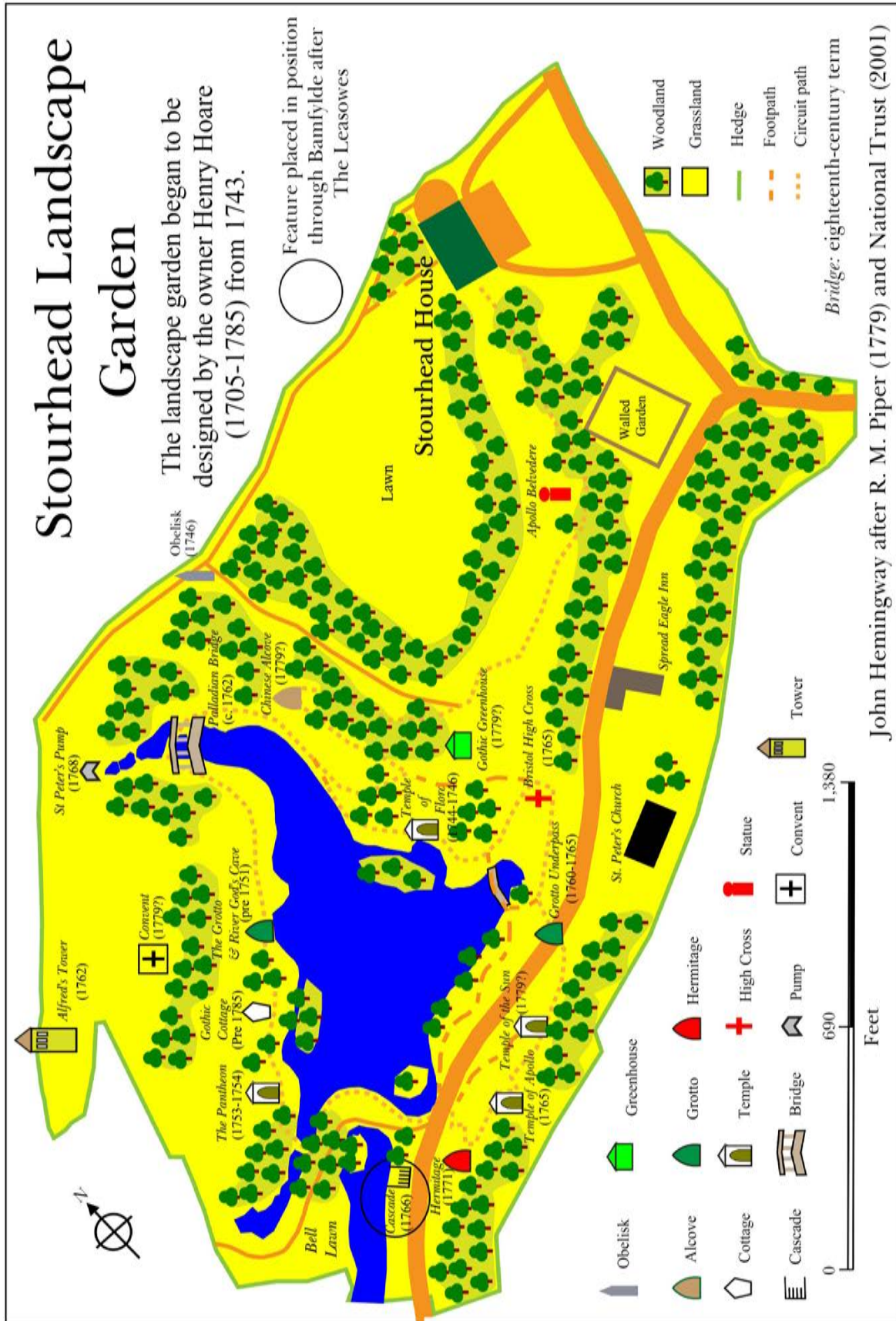


Fig. 10.10: Plan of Stourhead Gardens.¹³⁰⁸

¹³⁰⁸ Plan after 'Plan of the Grounds on Henry Hoare's death in 1785', *ibid*, p. 15.

10.4 Indirect influence of The Leasowes on other garden designs

Visitors to The Leasowes did not always record the influence that it had on them, but indirect evidence of influence is found by comparing features in other gardens after Shenstone had placed them within his estate. People who visited The Leasowes who may have been influenced in this way included George Lyttelton and Francis Dashwood.

George, Lord Lyttelton at Hagley, Worcestershire was probably one of the most important fellow gardenist that Shenstone knew. Though Shenstone was a tenant of the Lyttelton family, he was often invited as a guest to Hagley Hall and wandered around the park, taking notes and giving advice on a number of topics.¹³⁰⁹ The advice he gave may have been what to place and where to position various features in the landscape. Similarities with the Leasowes can be found in the hydrology of Hagley, which included the cascades and pools. The natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures, comprising, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats, urns and statues and the 'naturalness' of the scattered woodlands may also have been due to Shenstone. A way in which this conclusion can be made is by comparing the dates of the placing of the various features at Hagley when compared with The Leasowes (see Fig. 10.11). Several Hagley features arrived after features at The Leasowes, and as the Lyttelton family were regular visitors to The Leasowes it is possible that they were copies of Shenstone's features. These

¹³⁰⁹ W. S. to John Scott Hylton 11th August 1759 in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 519.

include the obelisk on Monument Hill which post-dated Virgil's Obelisk, the Temple of Theseus which post-dated the Temple of Pan, the greenhouse in the walled garden, the hermitage, the Gothic Seat in its alcove and the alcove next to one of the pools. George Lyttelton was aware of Shenstone's accomplishments, and after Shenstone died he placed an urn dedicated to him next to a pool.¹³¹⁰ The Inscription ran:

To the Memory of
WILLIAM SHENSTONE Esq.
In whose Verse
Were all the natural Graces
And in whose Manners
Was all the amicable Simplicity
Of Pastoral Poetry
With the sweet Tenderness
Of the Elegiac.¹³¹¹

Ostensibly it was a memorial to Shenstone the poet, but it may also have commemorated Shenstone the landscape gardener and his input into the Hagley gardenscape.

¹³¹⁰ Heely, Joseph, *Description of Hagley, Enville & the Leasowes* (London, G. Robinson, 1775), p. 67.

¹³¹¹ Graves, Richard, *Recollection of some particulars in the life of the late William Shenstone Esq.* (London, 1788), p. 187.



Fig 10.11: Shenstone's Urn, Hagley Park.¹³¹²

¹³¹² Photograph from Cousins, Michael, 'Hagley Park, Worcestershire,' *Garden History* Supplement, Vol. 35, 2007, p. 71.

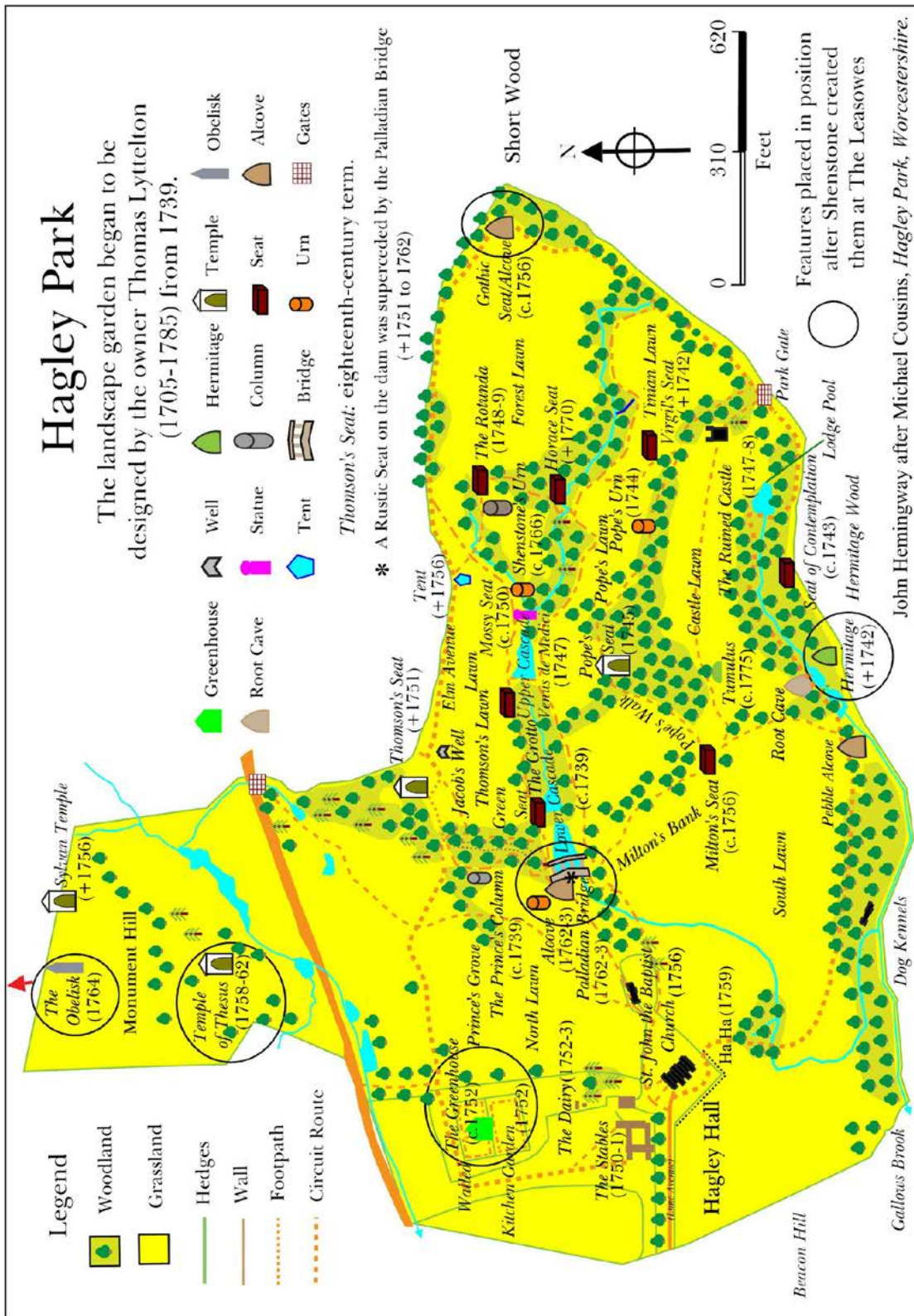


Fig. 10.12: Plan of Hagley Park, Worcestershire.¹³¹³

¹³¹³ Plan after Michael Cousins 'Hagley Park, Worcestershire,' *Garden History* Supplement, Vol. 35, 2007, pp. 6-7.

West Wycombe in Buckinghamshire was a park that appears at first glance to be unlike The Leasowes, but some influence seems to have occurred. Sir Francis Dashwood started to develop the park at the same time as Shenstone began his landscape garden at The Leasowes. The early park of the former may have been designed, at least in outline, by Dashwood when he came back from the Grand Tour in 1739 - at first in a formal style, later in an early - Picturesque form, and later still in the full-blown natural style.¹³¹⁴ There is little evidence of Shenstone influencing Dashwood but when the hydrology, cascades, brooks and pool, the natural-looking and classical structures, including the temples and a mausoleum are studied, they are similar in style to what he did at The Leasowes (see Fig. 10.12).

It was during the 1740s when some of Shenstone's work was completed that Dashwood started to curve the paths in the new style and created a circuit route at Wycombe.¹³¹⁵ About the same time the Temple of Venus was built. This was within a grove of winding paths much like The Leasowes and consisted of a small cave with an oval door and a curving flint stone wall on either side with obelisks standing on piers at intervals. Above the cave was a high mound with an open rotunda on top with a replica figure of the Venus de Medici, similar to the statue that Shenstone had at The Leasowes. Dashwood, unlike Shenstone, was known for his strong sexual proclivities

¹³¹⁴ Knox, Tim, *West Wycombe Park* (London, National Trust, 2009), p. 30; Lacy, Nigel, *A Guide to St. Lawrence's Church and the village of West Wycombe* (Benefice of West Wycombe, 2006), p. 6.

¹³¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 31.

and the oval door and the curving wall was supposed to represent the female form with open legs, the doorway a vagina and the mound the *mons veneris*.¹³¹⁶ The Medicean Statue of Venus, however, was not the sexual image that one might expect as here she was a coy figure with her arms over her breast and covering her pelvis.

Thomas Phillibrown visited West Wycombe Park in 1752 and stated: 'On ye grand canal (a probable precursor to the lake) are a great number of wild ducks and in it great quantities of fish; and in a bason of water facing the greenhouse are great numbers of gold and silver fish from India.'¹³¹⁷ In the early autumn of 1758 Sir Francis Dashwood visited The Leasowes and walked around Shenstone's grounds.¹³¹⁸ Like a number of Shenstone's connections, Dashwood came via family contacts. Henrietta Knight of Barrells was a friend and neighbour of Thomas, Baron Archer of Umberslade, Henley-in-Arden. His father Andrew Archer had married Elizabeth Dashwood, the daughter of Sir Samuel Dashwood and sister to Sir Francis Dashwood. The Archers knew about The Leasowes as early as 1748, but whether Francis Dashwood had heard about it from his family is unknown.¹³¹⁹ Dashwood gave Shenstone an invitation to visit West Wycombe, though it is not known whether he took up the offer. When Dashwood returned home he wrote a letter to Shenstone offering some goldfish from

¹³¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 41-2.

¹³¹⁷ Green, Herbert, *Village Life in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1976), p. 11. If the lake was a canal this was a change Dashwood made to it later than 1758.

¹³¹⁸ W. S. to R. G. 25th November 1758, Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 496.

¹³¹⁹ www.geni.com/people/Thomas-Archer-1st-Baron-Archer-of-Umberslade.

his estate.¹³²⁰ There is no documentary evidence that he accepted his offer, but by the time Dodsley was writing his description Shenstone, like Dashwood, was said to have goldfish in a basin in the shrubbery close to the house.

From 1761 to 1763, Dashwood reconstructed St. Lawrence's Parish Church in a classical design as an eye-catcher from the park.¹³²¹ It could be viewed from most parts of the landscape, similar to the way that the tower and spire of St. John the Baptist Church in Halesowen could be seen from The Leasowes. This was a landscape feature that Shenstone had created two decades earlier. Dashwood certainly continued to work for another decade on the park, making it a more 'natural' landscape.¹³²² The formal canal was enlarged and irregularised and many of the features such as a fort, menagerie and greenhouse were eventually demolished, but he never built Gothic structures like Shenstone - they were all classical.¹³²³ West Wycombe would appear to be another park that may have adopted some of Shenstone's ideas.

¹³²⁰ W. S. to R. G. 25th Nov 1758 Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit., p. 496.

¹³²¹ Jackson-Stops, Gervase, *West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire* (London, 1972), p. 2.

¹³²² Knox, Tim, op. cit., p. 30-42.

¹³²³ *Ibid*, p. 32.



Fig. 10.13: Water-colour of the Upper Pool, The Leasowes, painted by William Shenstone in the 1750's.¹³²⁴



Fig. 10.14: Music Temple at West Wycombe painted by Thomas Daniell, circa. 1781.¹³²⁵

¹³²⁴ Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.
The similarity of the composition between this water-colour and the painting of the Music Temple is notable.

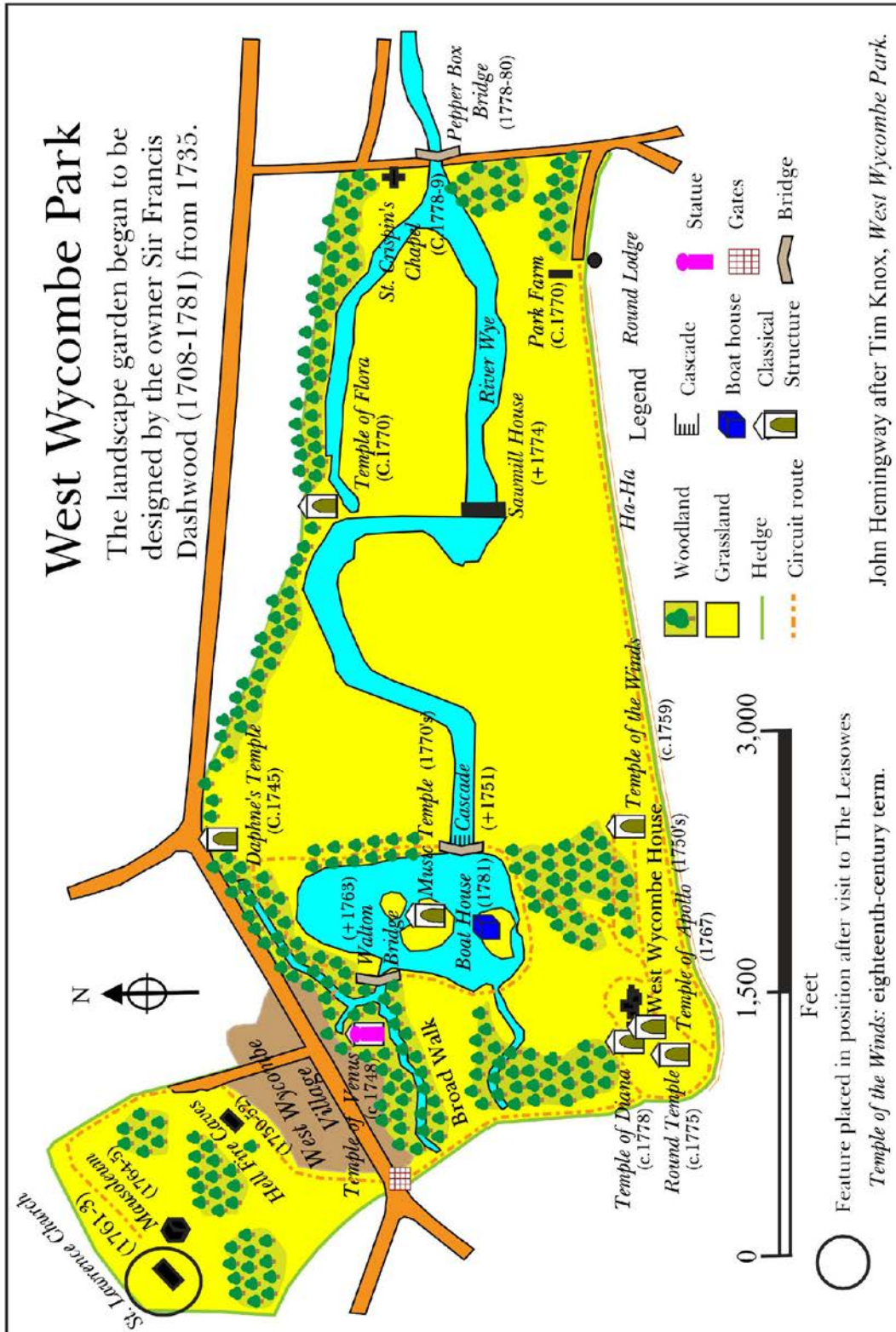


Fig. 10.15: West Wycombe Park.¹³²⁶

¹³²⁵ Knox, Tim, op. cit., 'The Music Temple; painted by Thomas Daniell c.1781.' p. 38.

¹³²⁶ Ibid, p. 30.

10.4 Conclusion

Many features of William Shenstone's gardening at The Leasowes can be found in other landscape gardens, which may suggest that other gardeners used his ideas. Most of the persons who may have replicated features during Shenstone's lifetime were either his friends, well known to him, or visitors to The Leasowes. The way in which they learnt about the items they reproduced was by correspondence and visits. They generally did not adopt his style of gardening wholesale, but often chose individual features to place in their own grounds as Shenstone did in his own garden. The replication of features included cascades, brooks and pools and natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures, including root seats, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats, statues, and urns. The most important elements were the pathways, particularly a circuit one, and the 'naturalness' of the landscape.

The most important garden where there is clear evidence of Shenstone's influence was Henrietta Knight's at Barrells Park, but Grey's at Enville Park, Bampfylde's at Hestercombe and Lyttelton's at Hagley show a certain amount of potential replication (see Fig. 10.16). He may have given advice to Yorke at Wimpole, Lewis at Hewell Grange, Baskerville at Easy Hill, and Dashwood at West Wycombe Park, although by how much is not clear. At least one of his ideas was used at Stourhead through Bampfylde. Shenstone affected the way many of these gardens developed to a greater or lesser degree as many gardens during his lifetime replicated features from The

Leasowes. For many landowners, Shenstone creations were worthy of reproduction and their inclusion recognised that he had ideas worthy of emulation.

Features in other estates similar to those at The Leasowes - A								
Estate	Hydrology	Natural features	Classical features	Gothic features	Urns	Statue	Path	Poetry
Barrells	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	—
Easy Hill	+	+	—	+	—	—	+	—
Enville	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	—
Hagley	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	—
Hestercombe	+	+	+	+	+	—	+	+
Hewel	+	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	—	Unknown
Stourhead	+	?	?	?	—	?	?	—
Wimpole	—	—	—	—	—	—	+	—
Wolverley	+	—	—	—	—	—	+	—
Wycombe	+	+	+	—	—	+	+	—

Table 10.1: Table of features in other estates similar to those at The Leasowes created during Shenstone’s lifetime.

Chapter Eleven

Shenstone's influence on garden designs after his death

11.1 Introduction

Garden writers rarely mention the influence that The Leasowes had on other gardenists in the period after Shenstone's death in February 1763. Michael Symes and Sandy Haynes refer to it, but do not analyse the influence in any detail and only briefly mention Samuel Hellier in Staffordshire, and the Marquis de Girardin and Claude-Henri Watelet in France.¹³²⁷ This did not mean Shenstone's garden work was unknown because the publication of 'A Description of the Leasowes' in *The Works* by Robert Dodsley, brought knowledge of The Leasowes to a wider public.¹³²⁸ The writer Isaac Disraeli commented that Shenstone had 'planned a paradise amidst his solitude' and stated:

When we consider that Shenstone, in developing his fine pastoral ideas in the Leasowes, educated the nation in that taste for landscape gardening, which has become the model for all Europe, this itself constitutes a claim on the gratitude of posterity.¹³²⁹


Many visitors who wrote descriptions of The Leasowes acclaimed the garden and replicated what they saw, but few actually stated that they were imitating it. This chapter evaluates the possible impact of Shenstone's ideas after his death, and considers national and international ways in which estates


¹³²⁷ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, *Enville, Hagley & The Leasowes* (Bristol, Redcliffe Press, 2010), pp. 187-189.


¹³²⁸ Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* three vols. (London, J. Dodsley, 1764).


¹³²⁹ Disraeli, Isaac, *Curiosities of Literature* Vol. III (Boston, William Veazie, 1859) p. 426.

contained examples of similarities to his landscape garden. It examines those where there is a record of direct evidence of influence or indirect evidence of influence, and those where we have no record of imitation except for the parallels in style. The evidence of replication of The Leasowes can be divided into several categories: hydrology including cascades, brooks and pools); natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures including root seats, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats, urns and statues; pathways (particularly a circuit); and the ‘naturalness’ of the landscape. The proposed replication of Shenstone’s work in England includes Henry Hawkins Tremayne (1741-1829) at Heligan,¹³³⁰ William Whitmore (1745-1815) at Dudmaston, Sir Samuel Hellier (?-1751) at Wodehouse, Matthew Boulton at Soho Hill, Birmingham (1728-1809)¹³³¹ and Edmund Pytts (?-1781) at Kyre Wyard, Worcestershire. Internationally, it includes the Marquis de Girardin (1735-1808) at Ermenonville, France, Baron Caspar Voght at Flotbek, Germany (1752-1839), Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) at Monticello, Virginia, USA,¹³³² John Adams (1735-1826) at Peacefield, Massachusetts, USA,¹³³³ and Claude-Henri Watelet, (1718-1786) at Moulin-Joli Paris, France. The study considers

¹³³⁰ Edwin Jaggard, ‘Tremayne family (*per.* 1741–1901)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/97938, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

¹³³¹ Jennifer Tann, ‘Boulton, Matthew (1728–1809)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article2983, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

¹³³² P. S. Onuf, ‘Jefferson, Thomas (1743–1826)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com /view /article/63233, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

¹³³³ Richard Alan Ryerson, ‘Adams, John (1735–1826)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb. com/view /article/68575, accessed  21 Aug 2015].

the ways in which Shenstone's ferme ornée had an impact on gardens nationally and international.

11.2 Indirect influence in England

A number of visitors to The Leasowes after Shenstone's death appeared to be influenced by what he had placed in his landscape by reproducing some of its features. Influence is determined by evidence of people visiting The Leasowes and the similarity of items in their own gardens when compared with The Leasowes.

Henry Hawkins Tremayne of Heligan, Cornwall, began to plan a landscape garden on his farm in the 1770s, as suggested by the estate plan drawn up in that decade by William Hole (see Fig. 11.1). It reveals that although the fields were still hedged, a circuit walk was introduced. Whether he planned his garden after reading Dodsley's description of The Leasowes, which came out ten years before is not known but in the 1780s he visited many of the well-known gardens of England to provide inspiration for what to introduce in his own estate.¹³³⁴ His visit to The Leasowes in 1785 was recorded in a journal:

July 3rd. The Leasowes... walked around the Leasowes that beautiful Ferme Ornee (sic) of Shenstone's creation... Here everything is natural but it is Nature in her most charming style and apparent negligence at the same time nothing is suffered to escape the eye that can please. It is a charming place.¹³³⁵

¹³³⁴ Humphreys, A.R., *William Shenstone: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait* (Cambridge, 1937), p. 36.

¹³³⁵ Travel Journal T.1341/1, Cornwall County Record Office.

He decided to make changes to his estate when he returned home and hired Thomas Gray to draw up a plan of the new garden (c.1780-1790) (see Fig. 11.1). The similarity of this plan to The Leasowes is noticeable.¹³³⁶ At Heligan there was a range of influences that seems to have been adopted. The hydrology work including pools and brooks; natural-looking features including a grotto with a classical structure on a hill to the south; the circuit walk, and the ‘naturalness’ of the landscape all suggest derivatives of The Leasowes. Being a farm Heligan was no doubt originally designed as a ferme ornée. As Shenstone had done at The Leasowes Tremayne removed a number of hedges to improve the view of his internal and borrowed landscape. He planted groves so that his circuit walk went in and out of woodland and placed seats at regular intervals with view-points both within and out of the estate. Named fields served as pasture land for his stock as they did on Shenstone’s farm, with an eye-catcher on a neighbouring hill in the form of a small temple like the Temple of Pan at The Leasowes. In a similar way to Shenstone’s Hanging Wood a serpentine path led up through woodland to this feature. Similarly, the estate used streams on its west and south sides and pools - some working (a mill pond) and some ornamental. It seems highly likely that the original idea of Heligan was to produce a parallel landscape to The Leasowes, given the similarities of the topography and the structures that lay within it.

¹³³⁶ Smit, Tim, *The Lost Gardens of Heligan; A Brief History and Guide* (St. Austell, 1998), pp. 5-6.

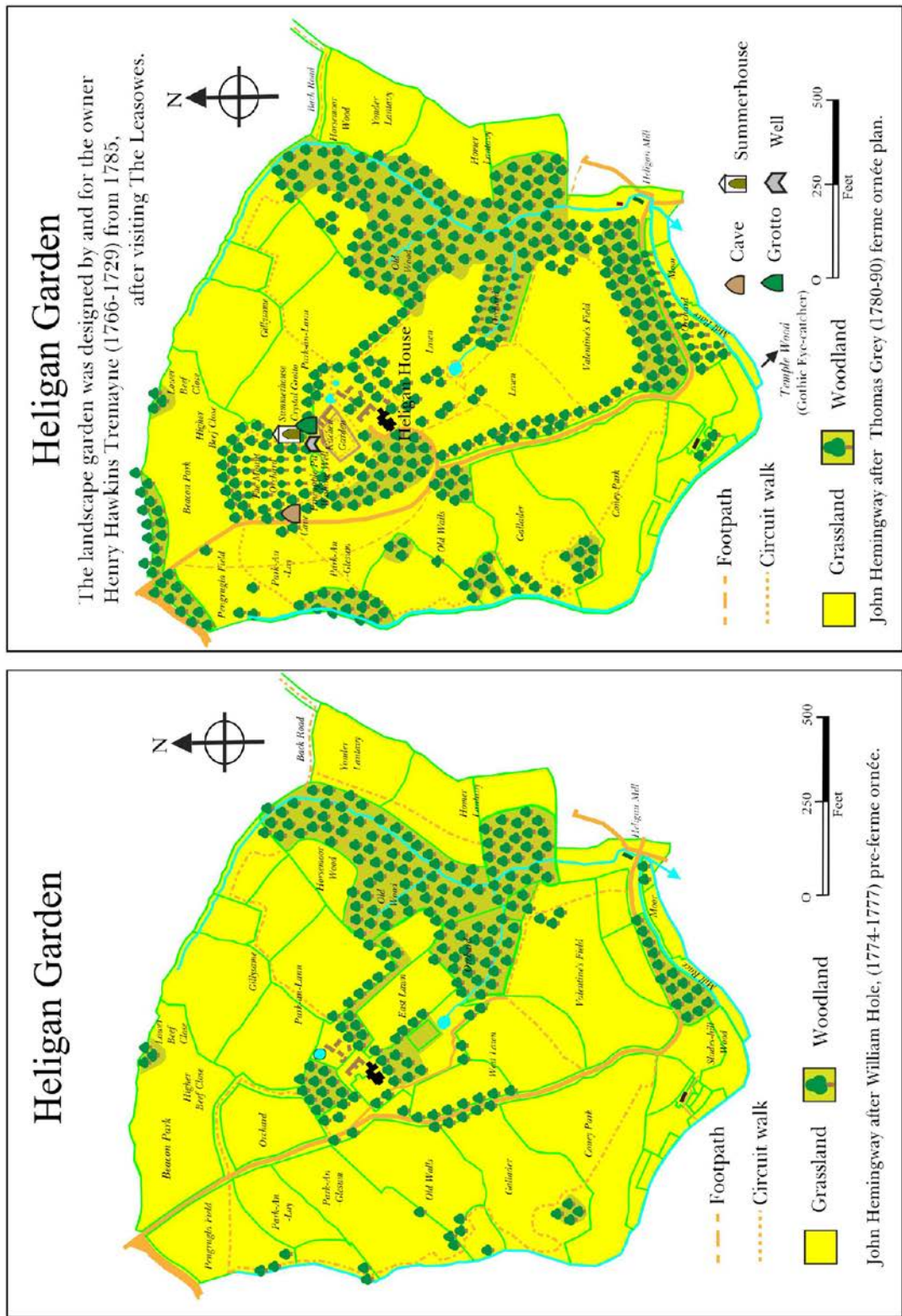


Fig. 11.1: Plan of Heligan Gardens.¹³³⁷

¹³³⁷ William Hole Map X.148/2 & Gray Map X.148/10. Plan made from two maps in the Cornwall Record Office.

William Whitmore of Dudmaston at Quatt in Shropshire succeeded to his estate in 1774, but left his wife, Frances Lister, and his gardener, Walter Wood, to develop the grounds. Wood had been to The Leasowes and became greatly influenced by the work of Shenstone. He proposed to copy it, but only in part of the estate, and that was the Dingle at Dudmaston as the rest of the estate was in the parkland style of Lancelot Brown and Humphry Repton. Whitmore's daughter, also called Frances, wrote: 'The Dingle was a pet of my dear mothers. She laid out the walks therein, placed seats and formed cascades in conjunction with Walter Wood.' She went on to explain where Wood had obtained his ideas: 'This man had imbibed his taste at Shenstone's Leasowes and the Badger and Dudmaston Dingle were long Picturesque rivals.'¹³³⁸ The influences at the Dingle included the brook, pools and cascade, with bridges over the brook and a serpentine path that ran around the small wooded valley (see Fig. 11.2).

From the details we have of Wood's work he had carefully controlled Quatt Brook south of the hall, and reshaped its course through the Dingle. Though little now survives, his small cliffs, waterfalls, rustic bridges, urns and a hermitage created a framework for the winding paths and seating areas that were laid out in typical Shenstonesque style, very similar to Virgil's Grove. The Dingle was a special part of the landscape and demonstrated that Shenstone's ideas were sometimes were appropriate in small areas, but not

¹³³⁸ Garnett, Oliver, *Dudmaston, Shropshire: Warrington*, (The National Trust, 2005), p. 18. Garnett wrote that Wood had worked at The Leasowes. The writer can find no evidence of this.

always in large ones. Garnett records that Shenstone's 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' was in the Dudmaston library.¹³³⁹

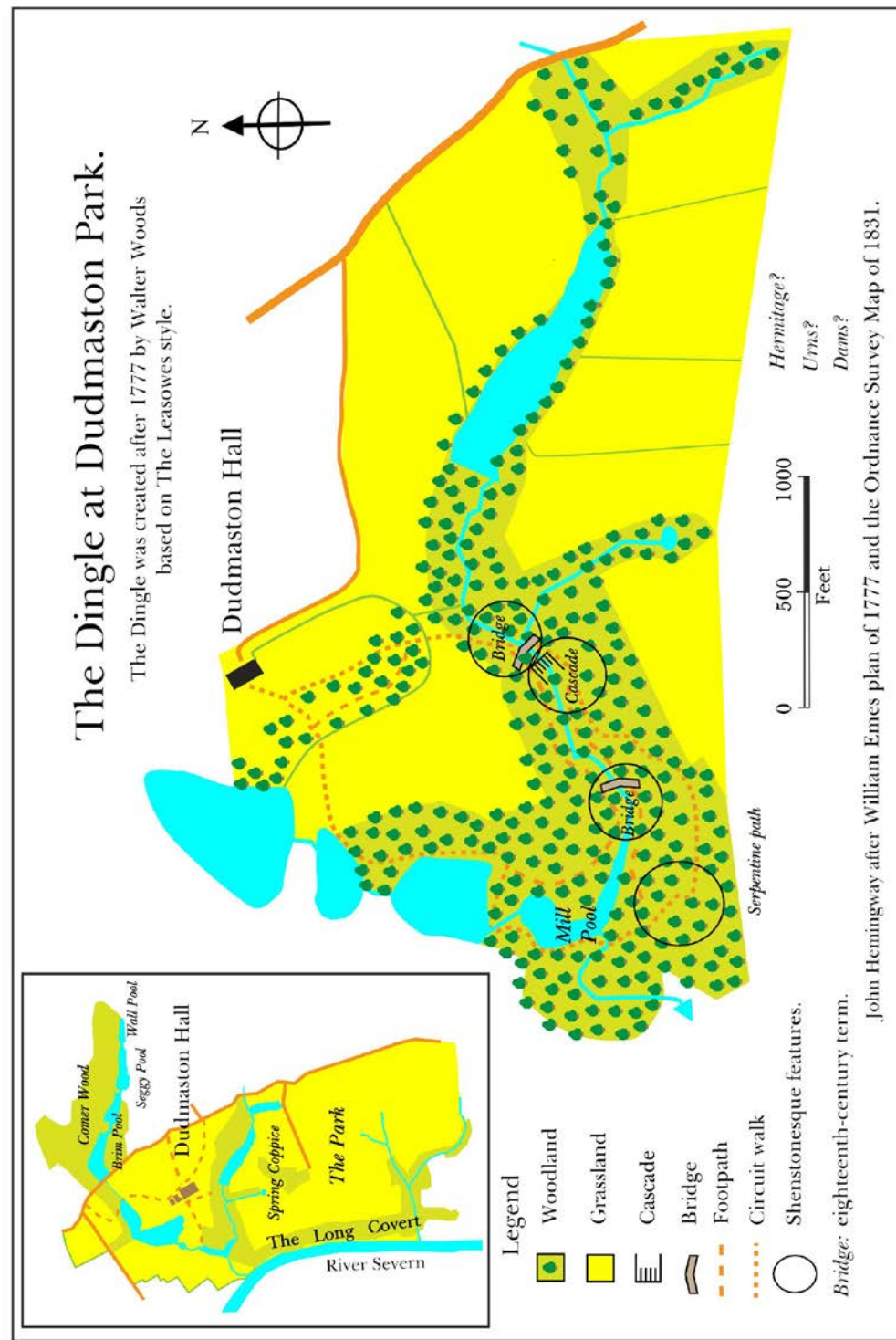


Fig. 11.2: Plan of Dudmaston Garden.¹³⁴⁰

¹³³⁹ Ibid, p. 24. A site visit was made by the writer on the 22nd May 2013 and only the sandstone cliffs, the rustic bridge, a single cascade and a number of seats were identified.

Sir Samuel Hellier's estate at Wodehouse near Wanborough began to be developed in 1763 after Shenstone had died.¹³⁴¹ In a letter to Edward Knight in 1759 Shenstone stated that Hellier had visited The Leasowes¹³⁴² and had been greatly inspired by his garden (see Fig. 11.3).¹³⁴³ The Wodehouse property included an eight-acre wood and within the wood it can be seen that a whole range of influences seem to have been adopted. Water features are absent as there was no natural water source there, but natural-looking, classical and Gothic features included grottoes, root seats, a hermitage, temples, seats and urns, surrounded by a circuit walk and poems placed on trees. A number of glades and clearings lay within the wood and details of the features in these included, a music room, a hermitage, Handel's Temple, seats, root houses, an obelisk, a grotto and a Druid's Temple. Most of these features were similar to those that Shenstone placed in his landscape. The hermitage in particular was a primitive feature 'consisting of several compartments, moss and roots the materials'. Hellier also planted flowers and shrubs in the woods and placed poetry on boards around his walks, in direct counterpart to those at The Leasowes.¹³⁴⁴ John Loveday described them in 1765 as 'hung on trees up and down, are well suited to the places

¹³⁴⁰ Plan of Dudmaston garden was taken from William Emes plan of 1777 and the Ordnance Survey Map of 1831.

¹³⁴¹ Barre, Dianne, 'Sir Samuel Hellier (1763-1784) and his Garden Buildings; Part of the Midlands "Garden Circuit" in the 1760s-70s' *Garden History* Vol. 36:2 (2008).

¹³⁴² William Shenstone to Edward Knight, 5th February 1759 in Kidderminster Library Collection, 000100 (transferred to the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in 1990).

¹³⁴³ Ballard, Phillada, Loggia, Val & Mason, Shena, op. cit., p. 6.

¹³⁴⁴ Symes and Haynes, op. cit., p. 188.

assigned to them'.¹³⁴⁵ Unfortunately no plan of the landscape garden is extant, though drawings of some of the features were made.¹³⁴⁶ Consequently, although we know that these features existed, we are not aware at the present where they were sited.



Fig. 11.3: Drawing of The Hermitage at Foxhills Wood by J. Hughes (1773). Courtesy of Mr John Phillips.¹³⁴⁷

¹³⁴⁵ Richardson, Tim, *The Arcadian Friends* (London, Transworld Publishers, 2008), p. 453.

¹³⁴⁶ Barre, Dianne, op. cit., pp. 312-319. Barre shows a number of these drawings in her article.

¹³⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 314. The similarity with the root houses at The Leasowes and the poem nailed to a tree on the left-hand side is noticeable.

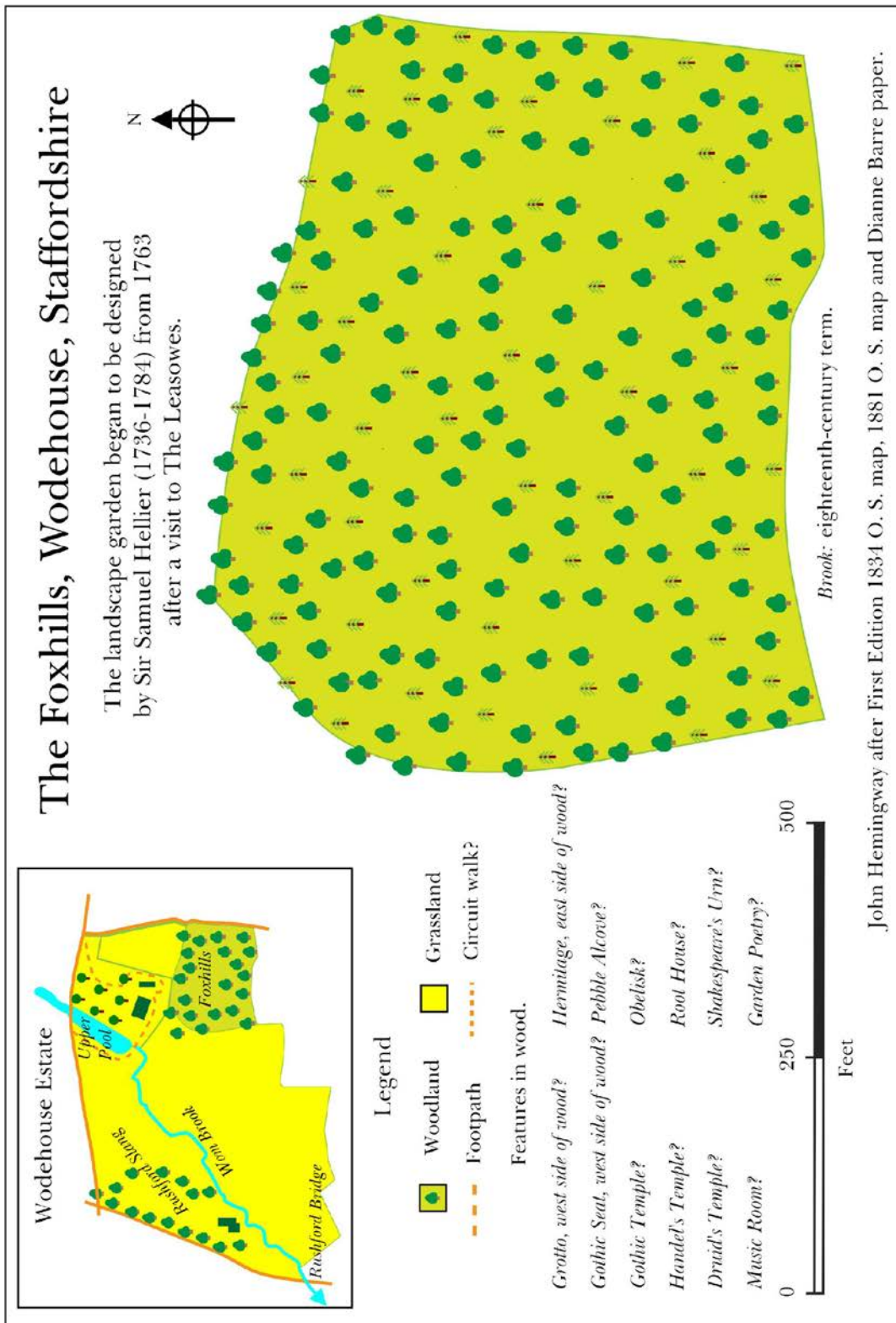


Fig. 11.4: Plan of Wodehouse Estate.¹³⁴⁸

¹³⁴⁸ This plan was created from the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1834, the O.S. Map of 1881 and Dianne Barre's article in *Garden History*.

11.3 Similarities in design in England.

There is only slight documentary evidence that the following were influenced by Shenstone and that they visited his landscape garden, but the replication of some of the features within them suggest that such influence was present. When analysed, parts of their gardens show a remarkable resemblance to what Shenstone did and they may have been inspired by The Leasowes.

Although there is little evidence that Matthew Boulton of Soho Hill, Handsworth, near Birmingham was influenced by Shenstone, he was an associate and correspondent of him from at least the summer of 1758.¹³⁴⁹ Boulton and his family visited The Leasowes because Shenstone, in a letter of 1761, remarked that they had not been to see them for some time.¹³⁵⁰ The garden that Boulton began to create at Soho from 1757 was a typical example of the English landscape garden of the period and very similar to Shenstone's work (see Fig. 11.5).

Water from Hockley Brook was channelled into pools, which had both commercial use for his Soho manufactory as well as ornamentally for his garden. It is doubtful that Shenstone promoted these but the multiplicity of cascades, the natural-looking hermitage, the classical Temple of Flora, the serpentine walk, the circuit walk, the shrubbery and woods all have the mark

¹³⁴⁹ William Shenstone to Matthew Boulton, 25th December 1761 in Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 614. In this particular letter Shenstone remarks on Boulton's long absence from The Leasowes.

¹³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, W. S. to M. B. 25th December 1761, p. 614.

of the Shenstonesque style about them. Boulton never acknowledged in any of his writings that he had received ideas from The Leasowes, but rather stated that he picked individual ideas from other gardens that he visited such as Painshill.¹³⁵¹ Boulton started gardening at the end of Shenstone's life so perhaps he wanted a living gardenist to guide him. Also the lack of attribution was possibly because Soho was more like a small park than a farm. Features of Soho that seem to have been derived from Shenstone were the poems that Boulton wrote for distribution around the grounds and a stone monument that he erected to his friend and fellow member of the Lunar Society, Dr William Small, soon after Small's death in 1775. On the sarcophagus were verses composed by Erasmus Darwin and it bore a striking resemblance to the monuments of the dead in Shenstone's garden at The Leasowes.¹³⁵²

¹³⁵¹ Ballard, Phillada, Loggie, Val & Mason, Shena, op. cit., p. 6

¹³⁵² Loggie, Valerie Ann, 'Soho Depicted: Prints, drawings and water-colours of Matthew Boulton, his manufactory and estate', 1760-1809 (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, January 2011), p. 327. pp. 358-362. Loggie refers to the verse that Shenstone used as a memorial on his urns and surmised this is where Boulton got the idea from to use at Soho. Loggie. Valerie Ann, op. cit., p. 362. Boulton placed a few poems in his garden some of which he composed himself.

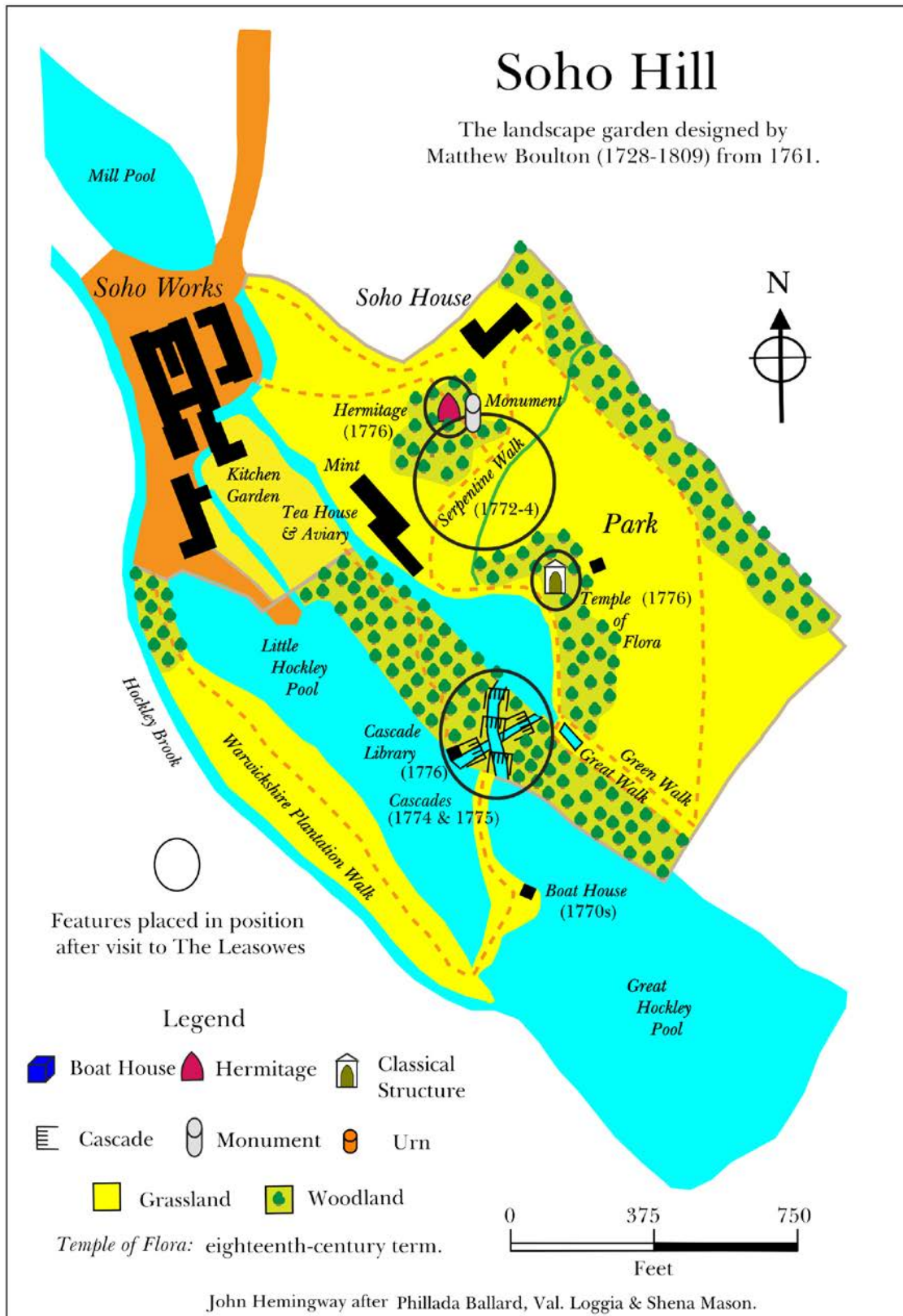


Fig. 11.5: Plan of Soho Gardens, Birmingham, 1794.¹³⁵³

¹³⁵³ Ballard, Phillada, Loggia, Val & Mason, Shena, op. cit., p. 6.

The ferme ornée of Edmund Pytts, who succeeded to Kyre Wyard in Worcestershire in 1753, is a good example of a Shenstonesque garden without any evident documentary connection to Shenstone. Pytts died in 1781 which gives us a *terminus post quem* for his work. Documents of the period suggest that the shrubbery was laid out after 1754, with its chain of ponds, and winding walks something like a mile long.¹³⁵⁴ Lancelot Brown has often been given the credit for creating this landscape, although there is no apparent evidence of his work - and beside he did not create ferme ornées, nor did he place ruined buildings in his landscapes. He was thought to be involved because Pytts' step-mother was dowager Lady Coventry of Croome and Brown began to work there in 1753.¹³⁵⁵ The design of the grounds at Kyre Park, however, was close to that of The Leasowes (see Fig. 11.6).

Like The Leasowes the Park, situated west of Kyre House, had an anti-clockwise circuit walk proceeding from the north side of the ground where a widened stream was situated.¹³⁵⁶ At Kyre the range of possible influences with Shenstone's work is particularly rich: the hydrology work including pools, (one in which there was an island), brooks and cascades; Gothic features including a ruin and a belvedere; and above all there was the circuit walk.

Like The Leasowes there were rapids or, as Shenstone would have described them, cascades. Following the western boundary a Water Lily Pool lay like

¹³⁵⁴ Amphlett, John, *Court Rolls of the Manor of Hales 1270-1307* (Oxford, 1912), p. xvi, Introduction.

¹³⁵⁵ Gordon, Catherine, *The Coventrys of Croome* (Chichester, Phillimore, 2000), p. 104.

¹³⁵⁶ The following description of Kyre Park and The Leasowes landscape is mainly based on the writer's field work. Other material from the *Kyre Park Shrubbery Guide* (no page numbers, no date and no publisher) were noted.

the Dingle Pool at The Leasowes. There was a tunnel just to the north of this in what appeared to be the remains of a quarry. Perhaps it was created in emulation of Alexander Pope's at Twickenham. At the west end of the pool a waterfall descended from a higher pool like Shenstone's High Cascade. It appears that Pytts placed rocks in the bed of the fall to make the water froth in a similar way to that achieved at The Leasowes. A higher pool, called Hanning's Pool, extended to the western boundary and was fed by a cascade descending from an upper pool called The River, similar to Shenstone's Southern Cascade. 'The River' was serpentine-shaped so that it looked like a larger version of The Leasowes Serpentine River. Halfway along this, but closer to the southern boundary, was another pool called Top Pool. In between the two waters was a Picturesque ruin like Shenstone's Ruinated Priory and from there the pathway ran in a serpentine manner around The River, to the house. There is no evidence in Shenstone's letters that Edmund Pytts ever visited The Leasowes, but in the mid-1750s Shenstone had many visitors, most of whom he did not name. It seems highly likely that Pytts visited The Leasowes as it was the only *ferme ornée* in the area and the similarity in lay-out to Shenstone's landscape garden was unlikely to have been coincidental.

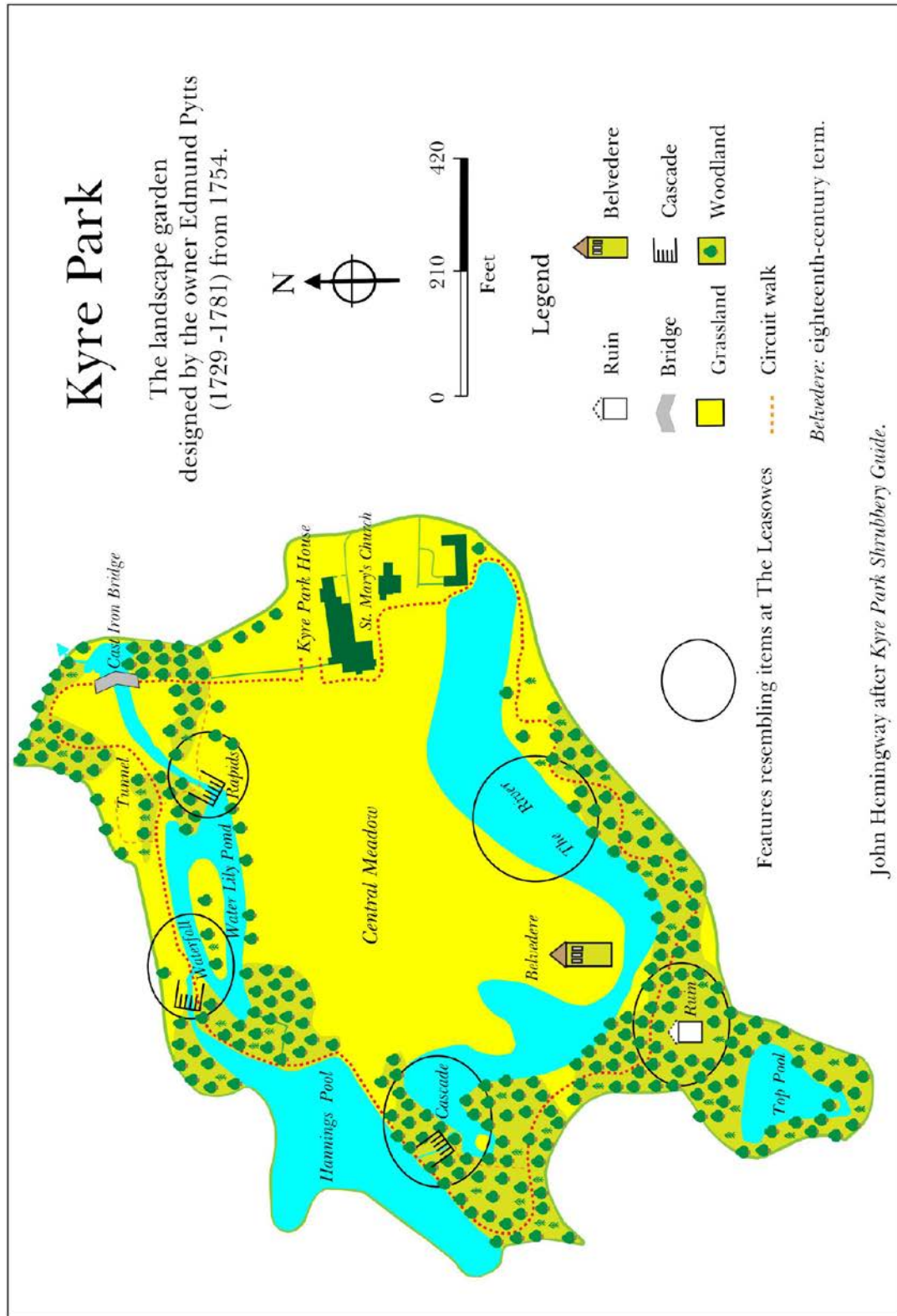


Fig. 11.6: Plan of Kyre Park Estate.¹³⁵⁷

¹³⁵⁷ Plan after *Kyre Park Shrubbery Guide*; handout.

11.4 Direct and indirect influence of The Leasowes on garden designs in Europe and the United States of America

Renée-Louis, Marquis de Girardin, Comte de Ermenonville, created the pre-eminent Shenstonesque garden in France. He had originally served with Stanislaus Leszczyński, the exiled King of Poland, who was also a landscape garden enthusiast at Rocher, Luneville in Paris in the late 1730s-early 1740s.¹³⁵⁸ It was at Rocher that Girardin saw the re-creation of a rural scene with farms, dovecotes and a miniature monastery in its own rural landscape. During the 1760s Girardin made a tour of the gardens of England which extended his horizons.¹³⁵⁹ He particularly appreciated The Leasowes, which he visited in 1763, just after Shenstone's death. When he returned to his own estate at Ermenonville, thirty miles north of Paris, he imbued the Park with Shenstone's ideas. The evidence of replication of The Leasowes features can be seen in many instances; hydrology including cascades, brooks and pools; the natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures including caves, grottos, a hermitage, temples, seats and an obelisk; pathways (particularly a circuit one went around the park); but above all the 'naturalness' of the landscape (see Fig. 11.7).

¹³⁵⁸ Racine, Michel, *Créateurs de Jardins et de paysages en France de la Renaissance au début du XIXe siècle* (Actes Sud, École Nationale Supérieure du Paysage, 2001), pp. 169-170.

¹³⁵⁹ Calder, Martin, 'Promenade in Ermenonville' in *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth-Century* (Oxford, Peter Lang, 2005), p. 113.

Although many of the Picturesque estates in France had the assistance of painters in their composition, Ermenonville came from Girardin's poetic instincts as much as his painting or landscape concerns.¹³⁶⁰ It was probably his liking for Shenstone's poetry, as well as his gardening that prompted Girardin to appreciate the Englishman's talents.¹³⁶¹ He placed literary 'prompts' around the park including quotations from Shenstone in the Grotto of the Naiads, and poems by James Thomson, Virgil, Theocritus, Petrarch, Montaigne and his favourite French writer, Rousseau.¹³⁶² His appreciation of Shenstone, however, went further as he placed a pyramid in the park inscribed with the following:

This plain stone
 To William Shenstone.
 In his verses he display'd
 His mind natural:
 At Leasowes he lay'd
 Arcadian greens rural.
 Venus fresh rising from the foamy tide,
 She evr'y bosom warms,
 While half withdrawn she seems to hide,
 And half reveals her charms.
 Learn hence, ye boastful sons of taste!
 Learn hence, to shun the vicious waste
 Of pomp, at large display'd.¹³⁶³

An obelisk was also placed nearby with an image of Shenstone's face. Girardin called Ermenonville 'The Leasowes of France', clearly indicating Shenstone's importance for his landscape gardening.¹³⁶⁴ Although the estate

¹³⁶⁰ Hunt, John Dixon, *The Picturesque Garden in Europe* (London, 2004), p. 118.

¹³⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 117-119. This is proven by the lines he had inscribed in the garden and the poems by Shenstone that he placed in his landscape at Ermenonville.

¹³⁶² (unknown) *A Tour to Ermenonville* (London, T. Becket, 1785), p. 77.

¹³⁶³ Monkton, G., *A Tour through part of France* (London, T. Cadell, 1789), *Letter XXII*, p. 235.

¹³⁶⁴ Girardin, Renée Louise (trans. R. L. Girardin), *An Essay on Landscape* (London, J. Dodsley, 1783), p. 5.

was typically of the Shenstonesque style Girardin had political interests (it was where Rousseau ended his days and the Marquis placed his tomb on an island in the lake) and some of his features were designed to be seen in this light. Another difference was the size of Ermenonville: it was very large and this allowed him to build a rural landscape. The estate included a *Hameau* (village) with a watermill and a brewery.¹³⁶⁵

Girardin wrote a book entitled *De la composition des paysages* (On the composition of landscapes), published in 1777, and many of his ideas were borrowed from Shenstone's landscape garden as well as Shenstone's writings.¹³⁶⁶ William Adams writing in *The French Garden* realised that: 'Girardin's treatise was, in fact, more closely related to Shenstone's essay on gardening than any contemporary French garden writer...'¹³⁶⁷ The ingredients of Girardin's book, which came from Shenstone, were the shaping of the garden 'to produce the moral landscape which delights the mind'; while the final chapter declares: 'true enjoyment can only be procured by seeking the most simple, the most natural ornaments; because these only are lasting to the effect.'¹³⁶⁸ Repeating Shenstone's advice, Girardin wrote that gardens should be composed of a series of scenes, like paintings, and

¹³⁶⁵ Symes, Michael & Haynes, Sandy, op. cit., p. 187; Heely, Joseph, *A Description of Hagley, Enville and the Leasowes* (London, G. Robinson, 1775), p. 11. Heely included a quote of Shenstone's to the effect that if he had had more money he would have built a whole village with a church on his land, suggesting that his ideas and Girardin's had more in common than has previously been suspected.

¹³⁶⁶ Girardin, Renée Louise, op. cit.,

¹³⁶⁷ Adams, William Howard, *The French Garden 1500-1800* (New York, George Braziller, 1979), p. 128.

¹³⁶⁸ Girardin, Renée-Louise, op. cit., pp. 150, 149.

that it would be ‘unpleasant to return home by the same route’.¹³⁶⁹ Each aspect was to be seen from a different point of view and at different times of day to achieve an emotional effect. Some scenes should evoke solitude, others the pleasures of bucolic life, and still others the ideals of harmony and innocence. These scenes could be discovered by following a winding path through the garden, with a series of different views coming as surprises.¹³⁷⁰ From page 52 to 63 he describes his perfect landscape garden which is so similar to The Leasowes it could have been a description of it.¹³⁷¹ Most pertinently, Girardin stated that gardens were not best created by architects and gardeners,¹³⁷² but by poets and painters; it was only then that a landscape would be composed to ‘please the understanding and the eye’.¹³⁷³ Adams wrote that ‘Ermenonville’s great size and its use of architecture was a major departure from Shenstone’s model’;¹³⁷⁴ nevertheless the Marquis de Girardin had learnt a great deal about recreating a natural-looking landscape from The Leasowes.

¹³⁶⁹ Ibid, pp. 15, 49.

¹³⁷⁰ Ibid, pp. 129-133

¹³⁷¹ Ibid, pp. 52-63

¹³⁷² Adams, William Howard, p. 131. François-Joseph Bélanger (1744 - 1818) was an architect and one of the major commissioners of French Picturesque gardens and is said to have assisted both Girardin and Watelet at their respective gardens. He had visited England in the period 1777-1778 and this included visiting The Leasowes. See Stern, Jean, *A l'ombre de Sophie Arnould: François-Joseph Belanger, architecte des Menus Plaisirs, premier architecte du comte d'Artois* 2 vols. (Paris, 1930.)

¹³⁷³ Girardin, Renée Louise, op. cit., p. 15.

¹³⁷⁴ Adams, William Howard, op. cit., p. 129.

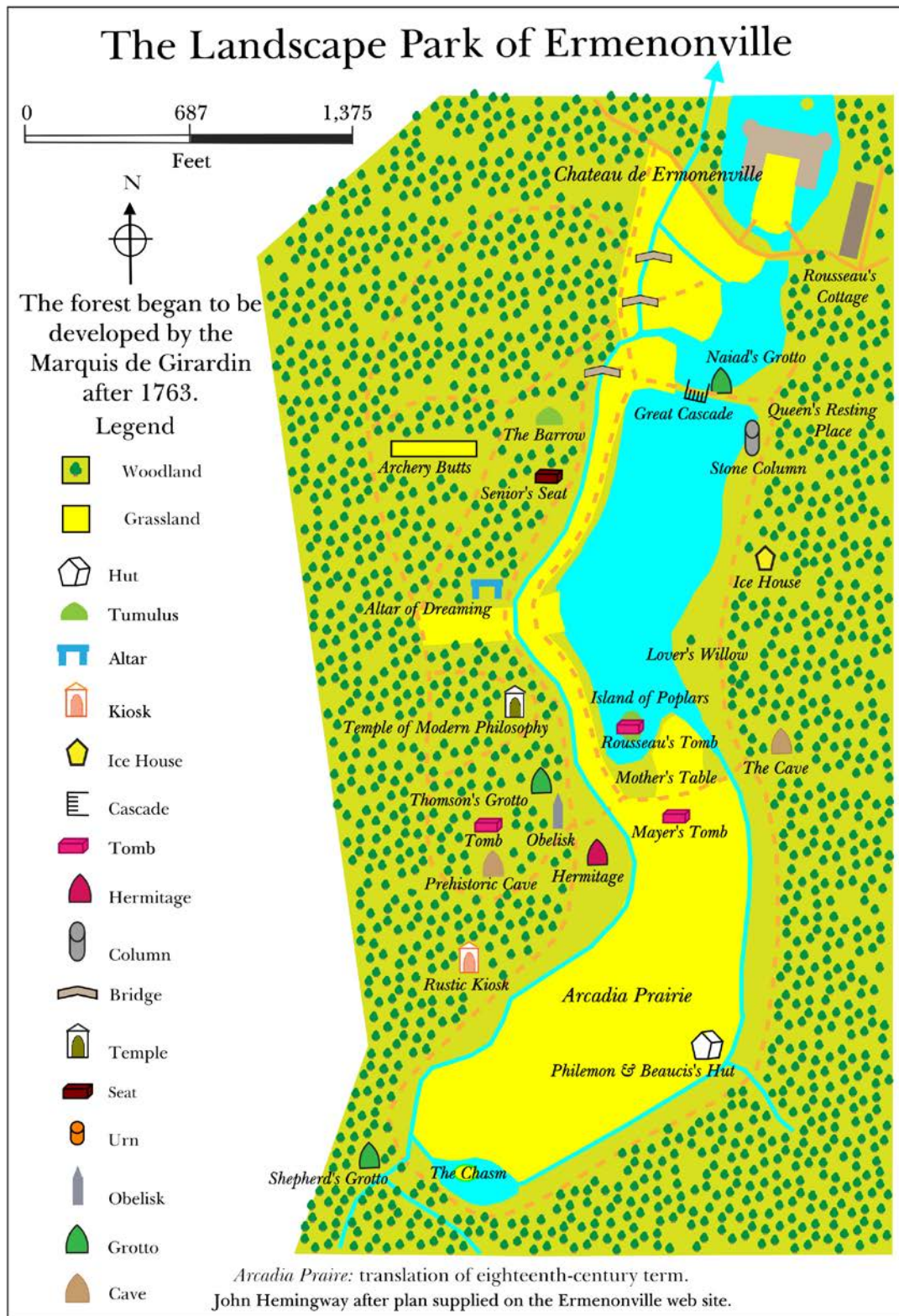


Fig. 11.7: Plan of Ermenonville Park, France.¹³⁷⁵

¹³⁷⁵ Adopted from a map supplied on the Ermenonville web site. <http://thlandscapoedesign.blogspot.co.uk/2012/01/rousseau-inspired.html>.

Baron Caspar Voght of Flottbek, (1752-1839) was a leading Hamburg merchant, but by 1785 he had become more interested in horticulture and left his business arrangements to his partner. He purchased land at Flottbek (now called Jenisch Park) outside the city of Altona and experimented with landscape gardening. In June and July of that year he came to England and visited The Leasowes. He recorded his thoughts about the visit in a letter to Martin Johann Jenisch in 1828, writing that his visit to The Leasowes had given him the idea to do the same with Flottbek.¹³⁷⁶ He listed the salient points that he had observed, including ‘the lovely variation of hill and valley, the diverse group of trees’ and stated that he used these and other prospects at Flottbek.

The evidence of similarities with The Leasowes can be seen in Flottbek’s hydrology with its winding brook and pools (see Fig. 11.8). Voght’s estate was like a *ferme ornée* and had herds of animals within the park. His natural-looking structures included moss seats and thatched cottages and he placed a circuit path around the estate. To add a Shenstonesque flourish he placed poetry, including verses by Virgil, Horace and James Thompson within the landscape, but above all he made it to look as if it was natural. He did this by guiding paths that ran to various locations and made sure that as one walked through different areas a changing landscape was revealed. He was careful to

¹³⁷⁶ Schultz, Simone, ‘Horticulture, agriculture and poetry of William Shenstone and his *Ferme Ornée* ‘The Leasowes’ in the mirror of his literary circle’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Free University of Berlin, 2004) p. 361. Voght sold Flottbek to Jenisch in that year so was probably informing him of how he came to create the estate. He was staying with the French Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte, at the time.

follow Shenstone's rule to 'avoid doing anything petty and to hide the hand of art everywhere'.¹³⁷⁷ Like Shenstone, he also held musical evenings there. His purpose was to make it a place of ease and rural retirement where his friends and his books took pride of place and which would have the 'approval of heaven'.¹³⁷⁸ Like others who replicated the style of The Leasowes, the garden at Flottbek owed a great deal to Shenstone both intellectually and practically.

¹³⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 360. Extract taken from Ehrenberg, Richard, *Aus der Vorzeit von Blankenese* (Hamburg, 1897) pp. 111-112.

¹³⁷⁸ Ibid, pp. 361-362.

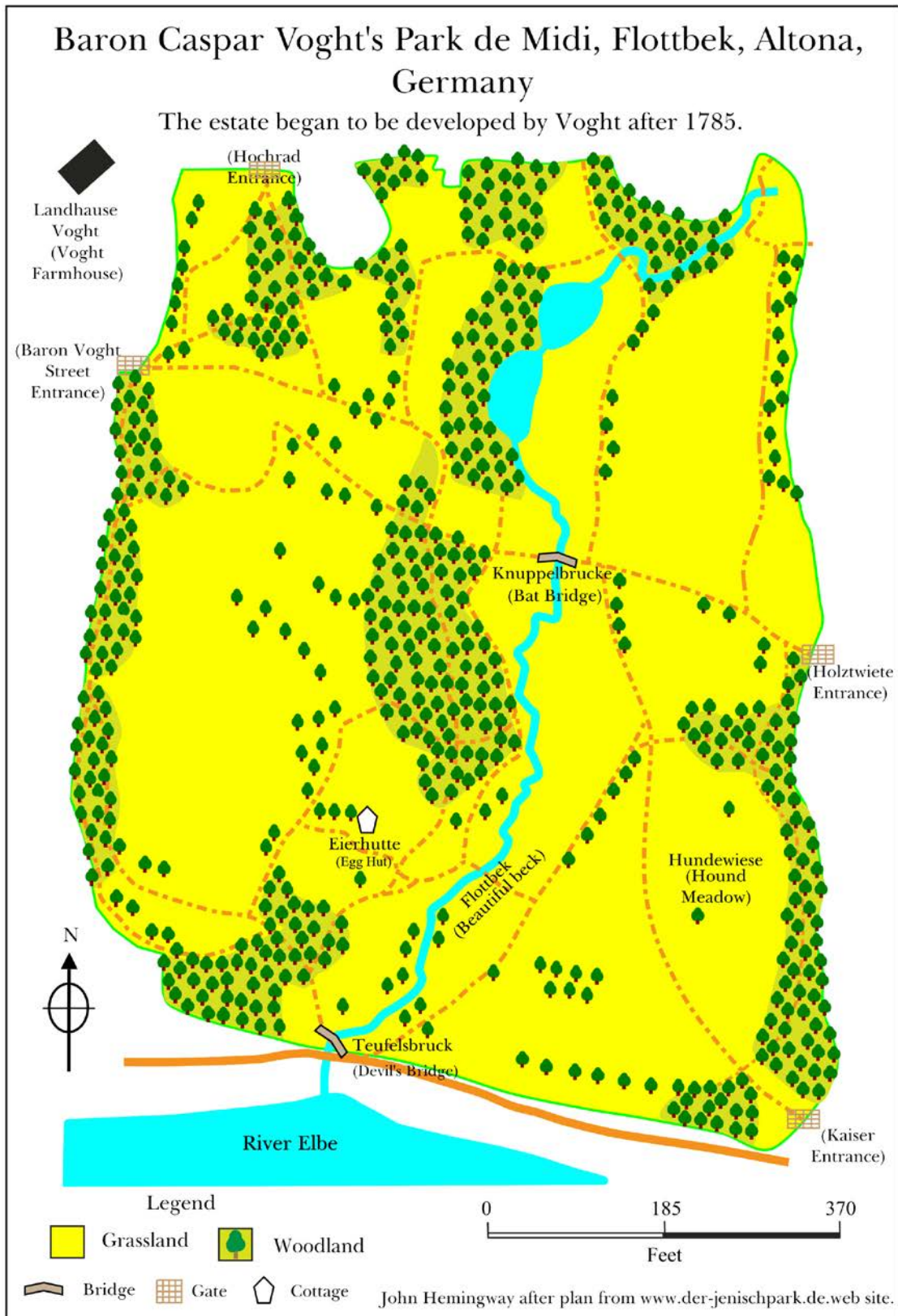


Fig. 11.8: Plan of Park de Midi, Klein-Flottbek, Germany.¹³⁷⁹

¹³⁷⁹ Base map from www.der-jenischpark.de.

John Adams of Peacefield, Massachusetts, became the second president of the newly founded United States of America.¹³⁸⁰ After the American War of Independence (1775-1783) he had been sent to England as the American Minister to the Court of St. James to secure trade agreements.¹³⁸¹ He was a friend of Thomas Jefferson and in 1786 he accompanied him on a tour of English gardens.¹³⁸² They visited the most important gardens in England including: Chiswick, Twickenham, Esher Place, Claremont, Painshill, Caversham, Wotton, Stowe, The Leasowes, Hagley, Enville, Blenheim, Moor Park and Kew and made notes on each of the gardens they saw. Adams particularly liked The Leasowes as it was more in keeping with the American idea of a working garden.¹³⁸³ As Andrea Wulf commented ‘The Leasowes was a metaphor for a republican and simple way of life, influenced by the writings of Homer and Virgil, for whom working the soil was a model of republican values.’ It was therefore not surprising that the Americans identified with it.¹³⁸⁴ Adams wrote: that ‘Shenstones (sic) Leasowes is the simplest and plainest, but the most rural of all. I saw no Spot so small, that exhibited such a Variety of Beauties.’¹³⁸⁵ In another letter he stated it was ‘beautiful’.¹³⁸⁶ His wife Abigail believed ‘An ornamented Farm, appears to me

¹³⁸⁰ Wulf, Andrea, *The Founding Gardeners* (London, William Heinemann, 2011), p. 136.

¹³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹³⁸² Adams, John, diary 44, 27th March – 21st July 1786, in Adams Electronic Archive from the Massachusetts Historical Society, <http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/>.

¹³⁸³ Wulf, Andrea, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹³⁸⁴ *Ibid.* p. 56. He was not influenced by Homer.

¹³⁸⁵ Adams, John, to Abigail Adams, April 1786 from London in Adams Electronic Archive from the Massachusetts Historical Society, <http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/>.

¹³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

to be an innocent and desirable object'. When he returned to the United States he began to put into practice what he had seen in England.

As Peacefield was a farm and already looked like a *ferme ornée* it was simple to follow the ideas he had seen at The Leasowes (see Fig. 11.9).¹³⁸⁷

Unfortunately, there is little evidence of what he did in it as his son later turned it into a park. Consequently, we are left with only the barest descriptions of it. What we do know is that like Shenstone's landscape garden the views outside the estate were just as important as the ones inside, with Adams stated in his diary: 'We have opened up the prospect, so that the meadows and the Western Mountain may distinctly be seen'.¹³⁸⁸ He stated that in America:

Nature has done greater Things and furnished nobler Materials there. The Oceans, Islands, Rivers, Mountains, Valleys are all laid out upon a larger Scale.¹³⁸⁹

There was a profound difference between The Leasowes and Peacefield, however, as there were no classical or Gothic structures in the latter. Adams wanted to emphasise the contemporary agriculture of America, not the European past.

¹³⁸⁷ Wulf, Andrea, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

¹³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹³⁸⁹ John Adams diary 44, 27th March – 21st July 1786, Adams Family Papers.

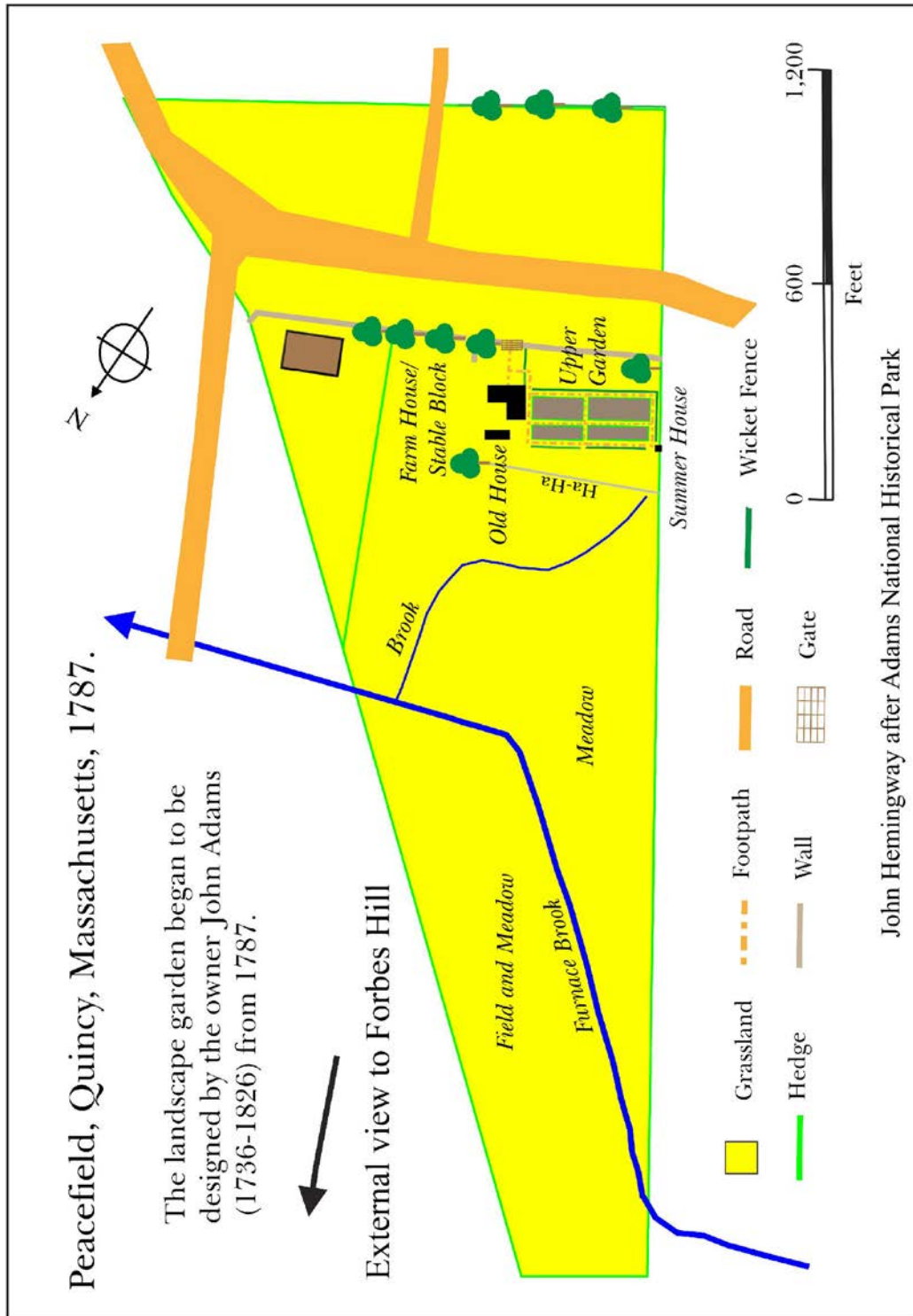



Fig. 11.9: Plan of Peacefield, Quincy, Massachusetts, 1787.¹³⁹⁰

¹³⁹⁰ Plan of Peacefield after Adams National Historical Park in Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 246.

Thomas Jefferson of Monticello, Virginia, was the third President of the United States of America in 1797 after George Washington and John Adams. Jefferson was the United States representative in France and came to London in February 1786 on business.¹³⁹¹ In April he started a tour of the gardens of England with Adams. He liked to be prepared for his visit and had read Thomas Whatley's, Joseph Heely's and Robert Dodsley's accounts.¹³⁹² He must have taken Dodsley's account with him as he walked around the estate as he mentioned the numbers that Dodsley recorded of some of the features.¹³⁹³ In Jefferson's 'Memorandums Made on a Tour to Some of the Gardens in England' he recorded his visit to The Leasowes which occurred on the 7th April. Jefferson wrote:

Leasowes in Shropshire. – Now the property of Mr Horne by purchase. One hundred and fifty acres within the walk. The waters small. This is not even an ornamental farm – it is only a grazing farm with a path around it, here and there a seat of board, rarely anything better. Architecture has contributed nothing. The obelisk is of brick. Shenstone had three hundred pounds a year, and ruined himself by what he did on his farm. It is said he died of the heart-aches which his debts occasioned him.¹³⁹⁴

¹³⁹¹ Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 160; Cadbury, Paul, *The Lunar Society of Birmingham Bicentenary* (London, University of London Press, 1966) p. 1; Joan Lane, 'Small, William (1734–1775)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40490>, accessed  22 Aug 2015]. Dr. William Small of the Lunar Society was a visitor to The Leasowes during Shenstone's lifetime and had been Professor of Natural Philosophy at the College of William and Mary in Virginia. Jefferson had been one of his pupils.

¹³⁹² Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 55; Thomas Jefferson to Robert Skip, at Monticello, Aug. 3, 1771. He advised Skip to buy the works of Shenstone, 46. Thomas Jefferson, Miscellaneous, American History from Revolution to Reconstruction, a hypertext online history. www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/thomas-jefferson/letters.../jeff05.php / Jefferson noted lines from one of Shenstone's poems in his memoranda for the improvement of his grounds.

¹³⁹³ Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 56. This suggests he had Volume II of *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*

¹³⁹⁴ Jefferson, Thomas, 'A Tour to Some of the Gardens of England' in Betts, Edwin Morris, (ed.) *Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book 1766-1824* (Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society, 1981), p. 113. His notes consisted of thirteen lines on The Leasowes.

He continued in his description by stating that although in his opinion it was merely a grazing farm, he acknowledged that much was lost from Shenstone's day.¹³⁹⁵ He particularly liked the cascades and said that the first and second were 'beautiful'. He enjoyed the prospects from the Octagonal Seat and High Seat, and the walk through the woods, commenting that the views of the landscape from point eighteen (Octagonal Seat) and prospect thirty-two (the *Divini Gloria Ruris* Seat) were fine.¹³⁹⁶ He was, however, disparaging about the architecture, in particular, Virgil's Obelisk. The obelisk, which was shown rendered in earlier drawings, was revealed as a basic brick structure as the stucco had fallen off. Some of the 'Seats of Board' still existed on the route to the 'South Cascade', but he did state that many of the inscriptions were lost.¹³⁹⁷

Despite Jefferson's criticism of what Shenstone's garden looked like when he visited The Leasowes, it did have an effect on him, and he began to create his own *ferme ornée* at Monticello.¹³⁹⁸ It was only after seeing Shenstone's landscape garden that Jefferson realised how easy it would be to carve such gardens from the American forests, at practically no expense.¹³⁹⁹ There is no evidence of replication of the hydrology, as the Monticello estate was on the top of a hill, but like Shenstone he made the house part of the garden (see

¹³⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 113.

¹³⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 110-113.

¹³⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 113. The term 'South Cascade' was not used in Shenstone's time.

¹³⁹⁸ Kelso, William M., 'Jefferson Garden: Landscape Archaeology at Monticello', *Archaeology* Vol. 35, No. 4 (1982) p. 38.

¹³⁹⁹ Wulf, Andrea, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

Fig. 11.10). The west lawn between the grove and the house had a border of flowers and shrubs created in 1808 similar to the one Shenstone had in his shrubbery.¹⁴⁰⁰ It was planted to look natural, but he also placed ornamental trees close to the house for the texture of their foliage, repeating Shenstone's instructions on the same.¹⁴⁰¹ He started planting the grove in 1806 which lay on a slope to the west of the house.¹⁴⁰² Jefferson, in a similar way to Shenstone, created a number of circuit paths which led through his grove. Like Shenstone he was also interested in the classical tradition and saw the value of placing structures in his garden as well as including views of the landscape both internally and externally. During his presidency he wanted to add 'temples, a grove of the highest trees and a labyrinth of shrubs' to his property and to include 'vistas across the sea of mountains that stretched to the West'.¹⁴⁰³ He also planned an arbour and other garden buildings, but the structures were never built as he ran out of money. Jefferson's landscape was comparable with The Leasowes in that it had a gradation of different scenes. As Andrea Wulf stated, the approach to the house was 'a journey from wilderness to civilisation'.¹⁴⁰⁴ Like many landscape gardeners of the period, including Shenstone, he also gave tours around his garden to anyone who wished to see it. It is evident that Jefferson took notice of what Shenstone wrote about gardening as, apart from his Day Book, the style of what he did

¹⁴⁰⁰ <http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/monticellos-west-lawn> and <http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/winding-flower-border>

¹⁴⁰¹ Shenstone, William, 'Unconnected Thought on Gardening' in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone, Esq.*, Vol. II, p. 124.

¹⁴⁰² <http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/grove>.

¹⁴⁰³ Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 196.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 200.

with his garden is evidence of this.¹⁴⁰⁵ He also liked his poetry, and when he made a list of the books he had in his library that he recommended to Robert Skip in 1771 he placed Shenstone's *The Works* well up in his list.¹⁴⁰⁶

¹⁴⁰⁵ Beiswanger, William L., 'The Temple in the Garden: Thomas Jefferson's Vision of the Monticello Landscape' in *Eighteenth Century Life* (Charlottesville, College of William and Mary Colonial Foundation, 1983) pp. 172-3. Jefferson bought Shenstone's *Works* in 1765 and noted lines from one of Shenstone's poems in his memoranda for the improvement of his grounds; see *Virginia Gazette Daybook 1764-1765* Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Thomas Jefferson to Robert Skip, 3rd August 1773, The Letters of Thomas Jefferson 1743 to 1786 in www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/thomas-jefferson/letters.../jefl05.php.

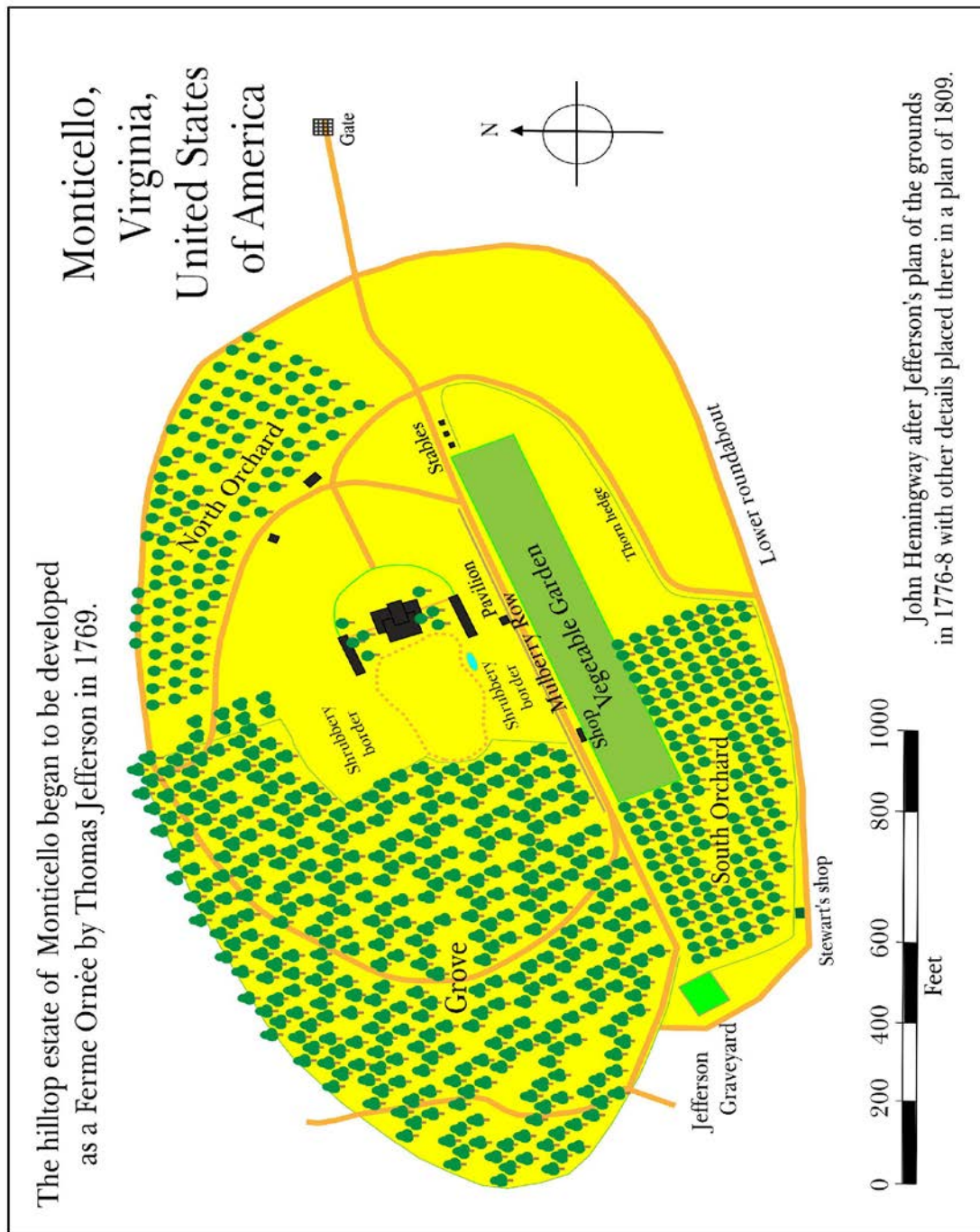


Fig. 11.10: Plan of Monticello Estate, Virginia, United States of America.¹⁴⁰⁷

¹⁴⁰⁷ (1809) Wulf, Andrea, op. cit., p. 248; (1776-8) Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale.

Another garden with similarities to The Leasowes was Claude-Henri Watelet's at Moulin-Joli in France which was also a *ferme ornée*. He was the first Frenchman to create a garden in the Picturesque style. Symes and Haynes pointed out that there is no evidence that Shenstone's landscape had any influence upon it; however, there are so many details that could be Shenstonesque elements within the estate that it would be surprising if some derivations had not occurred.¹⁴⁰⁸ Watelet purchased the dilapidated estate of Moulin-Joli, west of Paris in 1754.¹⁴⁰⁹ It was a riverside property on the River Seine that included three islands and some Picturesque ruins including a mill, which gave the estate its name.¹⁴¹⁰ The evidence of similarities with The Leasowes includes: the hydrology, the natural-looking and classical features including a Statue of Venus, pathways, (particularly a circuit route), the 'naturalness' of the landscape and the poetry he placed in his garden (see Fig. 11.11). Like The Leasowes, Moulin-Joli was a farm where water figured prominently. Watelet, in comparison with Shenstone, placed walks around and through his property, particularly a circuit walk along the banks of the several courses of the River Seine on the island. Most of the internal walks were straight because the object that the eye rested on was often outside his estate, and this shaped the viewer's perspective. The natural wildness of the place was encouraged by its owner, particularly the poplars and willows along the banks of the river, descending in an enormous vault around the

¹⁴⁰⁸ Symes, Michael, & Haynes, Sandy, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

¹⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁴¹⁰ Watelet, Claude-Henri (ed.) & Danon, Samuel (trans.) *Essay on Gardens: A Chapter in the French Picturesque* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 2003), p. 6.

observer.¹⁴¹¹ Another similarity to Shenstone's creation was that Watelet placed inscriptions along his walks to give his visitors something to reflect on as they journeyed through the property.¹⁴¹² One of his visitors was the Prince de Ligne who was particularly taken with the scenes and effusively wrote that 'the panorama of your soul would unfold as you walked along the river banks, as you read the inscriptions look around and weep'. Horace Walpole also visited Moulin-Joli, but he considered it an 'old fashioned French garden abandoned to studied disarray, including every nettle, thistle and bramble'. Shenstone grew what have been called 'weeds' at The Leasowes; therefore it would have been surprising if Walpole, who did not approve of Shenstone, had appreciated this French version.¹⁴¹³ Watelet eventually wrote a book called the *Essai sur les Jardin (or Essay on Gardens)* in 1774.¹⁴¹⁴ The similarity of parts of this essay to Dodsley's description of The Leasowes, as well as the use of elements of Shenstone's own writing in his 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening', suggests that Watelet had read *The Works* but was disinclined to mention it.¹⁴¹⁵

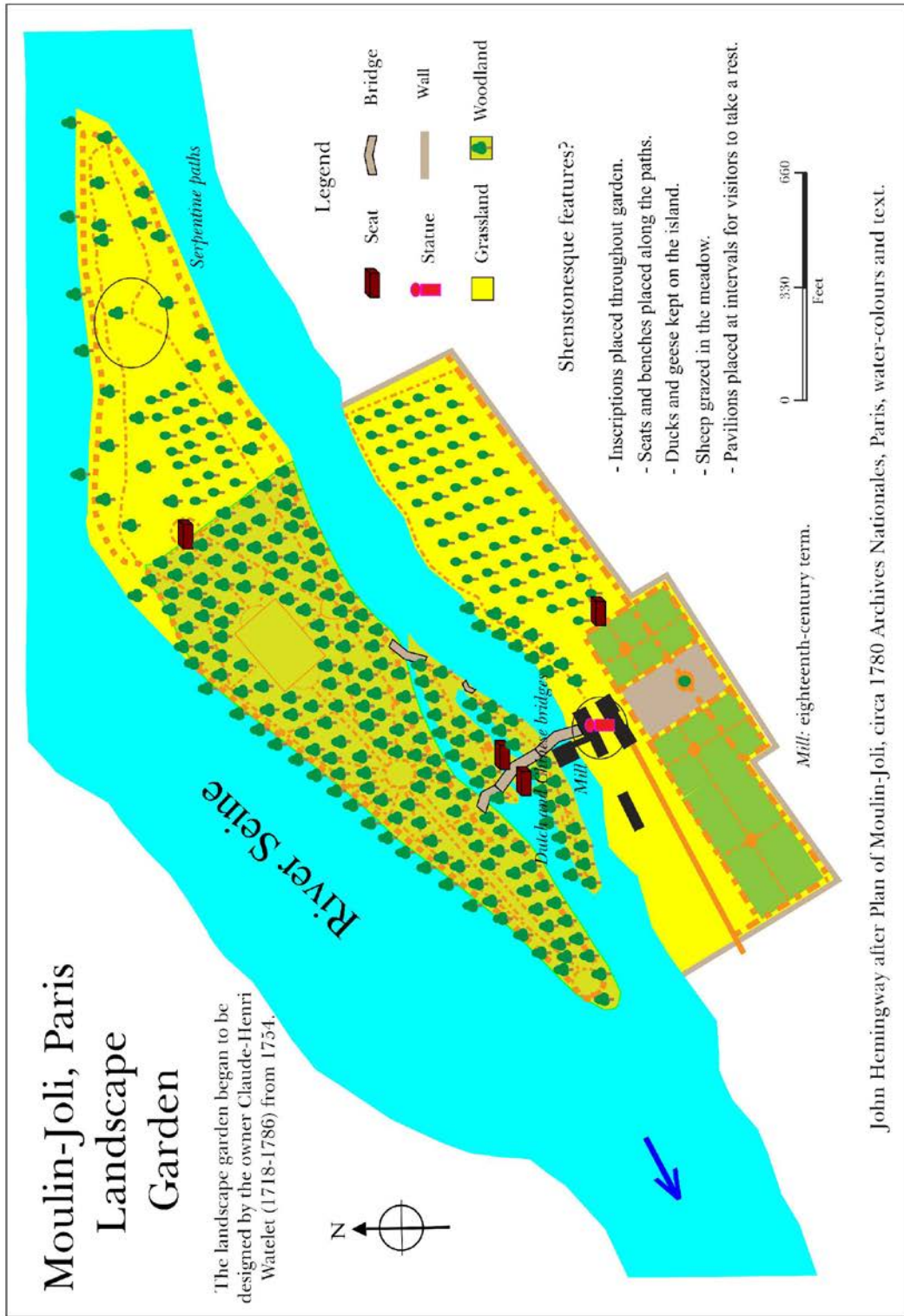
¹⁴¹¹ Ibid, pp. 60-72.

¹⁴¹² Ibid, p. 68.

¹⁴¹³ Hunt, John Dixon, (2004), op. cit., p. 117.

¹⁴¹⁴ Watelet, Claude-Henri op, cit., p. 4.

¹⁴¹⁵ Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, Vol. II, (London, J. Dodsley, 1768). Despite his following of Whately's *Observations* and Chambers *Dissertation* Watelet did not refer to any of the English garden writers that were then available.



John Hemingway after Plan of Moulin-Joli, circa 1780 Archives Nationales, Paris, water-colours and text.

Fig. 11.11: Plan of Moulin-Joli Estate, France.¹⁴¹⁶

¹⁴¹⁶ The plan of Moulin-Joli was drawn by the writer from an assortment of material, including the 1780 plan in the Archives Nationales, Paris with the description by Claude-Henry Watelet in *Essay on Gardens* together with contemporary engravings of the site in the same volume.

11.5 Conclusion

Many people read about and visited The Leasowes landscape garden after Shenstone died and in this way knowledge of his ideas and approaches spread. Most of the gardenists who worked on the gardens below had been to The Leasowes, while others were likely to have read about it. The range of influences that were adopted included the hydrology, (cascades, brooks and pools), natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures, (root seats, bridges, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats, urns and statues), paths - particularly a circuit route, and the ‘naturalness’ of the landscape.

Features in other estates similar to those at The Leasowes - B								
Estate	Hydrology	Natural feature	Classical feature	Gothic feature	Urn	Statue	Circuit path	Poetry
Dudmaston	+	+	—	—	+	—	+	—
Ermenonville	+	+	+	+	—	—	+	+
Flottbek	+	+	—	—	—	—	+	+
Heligan	+	+	+	+	—	—	+	—
Kyre	+	—	—	+	—	—	+	—
Monticello	—	—	—	—	—	—	+	—
Moulin Jolie	+	—	—	—	—	+	+	+
Peacefield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Soho Hill	+	+	+	—	+	—	+	+
Wodehouse	—	+	+	—	+	—	+	+

Table 11.1: Table of features at other estate similar to those at The Leasowes created after Shenstone’s death.

Shenstone's influence was variable (see Table 11.1) suggesting that copying depended on what attracted individual gardenists. A few garden designers, however, referred to Shenstone's work as a source for their own creations and these included Henry Hawkins Tremayne of Heligan, William Whitmore of Dudmaston and Sir Samuel Hellier of Wodehouse. Although it is not always easy to state categorically that elements of gardens were influenced by The Leasowes, analysis of parts of some estates reveals a remarkable resemblance to what was achieved there, for example, at Matthew Boulton's garden at Soho Hill and Edmund Pytts' at Kyre Wyard. Shenstone's ideas were not only restricted to the British Isles. Their international reach occurred in France, Germany and the United States of America. Direct evidence of this influence is available in the gardens of the Marquis de Girardin of Ermenonville, Baron Caspar Voght of Flottbek, Thomas Jefferson of Monticello, and John Adams of Peacefield, and possible influences can be seen in Claude-Henri Watelet's work at Moulin-Joli. The Shenstonesque style travelled widely: and as this chapter has indicated William Shenstone was a gardenist who had an international following.

Chapter Twelve

Conclusion

12.1 Introduction

Geoffrey Barraclough wrote that history is ‘the attempt to discover on the basis of fragmentary evidence the significant things about the past’.¹⁴¹⁷ This thesis attempts to use ‘fragmentary evidence’ to present the garden work of William Shenstone in a more substantial way than has been previously achieved. This is the first major work on Shenstone’s landscape design and adds to an understanding of the origins, nature and impact of his work. The study has been accomplished by applying the new garden history methodology of using multiple sources and approaches. Primary material in the research includes correspondence to and from Shenstone, his paintings, poems and prose,¹⁴¹⁸ written descriptions of the garden by others and engravings, together with archive material from the libraries of the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the United States of America. Equally important has been the evidence gleaned from the archaeological and geological investigations at The Leasowes during the last twenty-four years. They aided in the exploration of the life and times of his garden and in the attempt to separate fact from supposition.

¹⁴¹⁷ Barraclough, Geoffrey, *History in a Changing World* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 29-30.

¹⁴¹⁸ The study is not a literary examination of his work, but his poetry was an essential part of his landscape garden design.

The writer first visited Shenstone's home at Leasowes Park in 1993 and observed a golf course with greens, sand bunkers and tees enclosed within two tree-lined valleys: the landscape garden of Shenstone appeared to have gone. When, however, the documentary evidence was studied, the site could be reconstituted mentally. This led to a deeper inspection of the physical evidence, which revealed that although uncared for, overgrown or buried, details of what had been there had partially survived. This inspired the writer to study how Shenstone had used the natural landscape and how he had added to it in keeping with the native scenery. The result was research for this thesis. This thesis attempts to answer several questions by setting Shenstone within the cultural and social context of the early eighteenth century: where his ideas concerning gardening came from, how his character and social aspirations affected his work, and to what extent. It looks at how he put his ideas into practice, and how his structural engineering skills fitted in with his environmental ideas. Important lines of inquiry explored what were his ideas of the natural landscape, the ways in which his planting adhered to his concepts, what purpose did his lyrical lines and poetry have, and how did he influence others in garden design both before and after his death? Shenstone's landscape garden has not been at the centre of recent garden studies and this re-evaluation attempts to assess its importance.

This study has demonstrated that The Leasowes was an important part of the evolution and development of the eighteenth-century landscape. Shenstone

created a garden that was considered in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries to be a model of design. His landscape existed as a multi-sensory environment in which sight, sound, touch and movement were integral parts of the experience. His constructions of classical and Gothic features were erected to look primeval and antique as an adjunct to the natural landscape, and were also intended to enable his visitors to respond to his ideas of peace and tranquillity. His urns were placed in secluded positions to promote contemplation and reverentially thinking about the dead. Features provided a series of views from different points, which encouraged visitors to stop, meditate and think about what they saw. These acted as punctuation marks in the landscape where a visitor was encouraged to react emotionally or reflect philosophically. Shenstone also used Latin quotations in the landscape. These, together with his own poetic abilities in English, demonstrated a man who used a range of cultural attributes. A detailed picture of The Leasowes' achievement reveals that Shenstone should be seen as a significant exponent of the Enlightenment landscape.

12.2 Shenstone's English landscape

The chapters of this thesis have looked at various facets of Shenstone's landscape garden. Where his ideas came from was the subject matter of chapter two. Although much has been written about his work, few have thought it essential to find out what led to his thinking. The analysis presented here discloses that he was a man who appreciated the cultural

norms of the society in which he lived. The way in which his thoughts responded to contemporary ideas then in circulation can be seen in subjects such as nature and taste. 'Nature' was a recent discovery at the time and Shenstone valued it very highly. He understood it a great deal more than most, living on a farm and being of farming stock. 'Taste' was what many eighteenth-century people thought essential to possess, and Shenstone was considered to be an expert in the field, creating 'a landscape of the senses, of sound, sight and feeling' combined and this was identified by most who saw it as being tasteful.¹⁴¹⁹ Shenstone had philosophical assumptions about what lay behind his garden scenes and structures. Chapter two looked at elements that made up Shenstone's thinking and concluded that it was not a simple task to judge him on his garden alone, as has been done in the past. Instead it was crucial to search for other factors that made up the man and his works. Shenstone was an important gardenist and his approach came from a fusion of various sources. This fusion was recognised by the observers who praised his work.

The question that was asked and answered in chapter three was how Shenstone's education, character and social aspirations affected his gardening skills. These were revealed by reading his letters. Due to the lack of detailed use of this evidence by historians, his motivation has rarely been considered. Shenstone's university education probably gave him an ability to

¹⁴¹⁹ Hemingway, John, 'William Shenstone: the Landscape as Art' in Association of Gardens Trusts, *The Ferme Ornée working with Nature: Conference Proceedings*, (Priorslee, Staffordshire Parks and Gardens & Trusts, 1998), p. 32.

relate to people of a higher social position, but coming from a farming background he was often at a social disadvantage when participating in polite and aristocratic society. He was naturally reclusive, which did not help him connect with others, but this trait encouraged him in solitary pursuits such as gardening which he combined with his love of nature and antipathy to modernity. Many of the ideas that he applied were in circulation before he began to work on his garden. These ideas came from other gardens of the gentry and aristocracy he visited, others that he had heard about, and advice given by individuals, but many came from his classical education. Little has been said in earlier studies of where many of these ideas originated, but his visitors like Harry Grey, William Pitt, John Scott Hylton and Joseph Spence provided ideas of what to place in his own landscape. Richard Graves, Richard Jago, Robert Dodsley, James Thomson and Thomas Percy also supported his thoughts about gardening, both in print and verbally, and this gave him the confidence to continue. As a reward for their help he often placed monuments to them in his garden. Shenstone's correspondence shows that he obtained great satisfaction from the hundreds of visitors who saw his work and from approval of gardenists such as Lord Temple, George and Thomas Lyttelton and Sanderson Miller.

The influence of Philip Southcote on Shenstone's landscape garden has often been mentioned in the past but no one has investigated this aspect in any depth. The subject matter of chapter four was an analysis of the

characteristics of the gardens of Southcote and Shenstone. The *ferme ornée* or ornamented farm originated in Philip Southcote's Wooburn Farm, which was in the contrived Picturesque mode. Shenstone, however, took the approach of making his garden more in keeping with a natural landscape and thereby creating an environment that was different from others. Compared with Southcote, he used a distinctive practical, imaginative and philosophical viewpoint in his creation. In his own words, the garden on the practical side was a combination of 'scenes of grandeur, beauty, variety and novelty',¹⁴²⁰ but always in keeping with what can be seen in nature. Imagination was added by his antique features that gave visual cues like scenes in a painting. By introducing verse and poetry he made the garden a multi-dimensional poem. By contemplating the landscape, the viewer could perceive a wider intellectual and spiritual universe. Although the garden evolved over time Shenstone followed consistent rules so that everything related to his overall concept: to convey his image of nature. Many who visited The Leasowes realised its uniqueness. Few garden historians have previously disclosed the views of these visitors.

Chapter five looks at Shenstone's practical applications to create a natural-looking garden. Evidence has come from archaeological work at Leasowes Park and is so far unrecorded outside specialised reports. As a resident of The Leasowes Shenstone knew and understood his farmscape, and this

¹⁴²⁰ Shenstone, William, 'Essay in Manners and Men', *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* (London, J. Dodsley, 1763), p. 121.

insight led him to enhance his estate by working with the ‘genius of the place’.¹⁴²¹ He understood its geology and topography, and used raw materials that were found on the farm and natural organic and inorganic components in their normal setting. He followed hydrological rules of placing water features where they were appropriate. In order to show his estate in its best aspect to his visitors he created a circuit path that enabled them to gain the most from the views. He understood that the walks, water works and other features needed constant attention because without it the landscape garden would have quickly deteriorated. The archaeological work provides evidence of the features he designed - paths, cascades and waterfalls - within his ideal landscape.

No previous studies have been pursued on The Leasowes farmhouse or its surrounding buildings. The structures were demolished in 1776, and the writer used archaeological and documentary sources to reconstruct what they probably looked like. Chapter six considered how capable Shenstone was as a structural architect. He created a polite structure out of a simple farmhouse by using the classical ideas that were then prevailing in architectural design. He believed that a building should be part of the garden environment and developed the ideas of building reconstruction from friends, acquaintances, reading, visiting other properties and practical experience. His built architectural features demonstrated that he understood the theory, even if

¹⁴²¹ Hunt, John Dixon, & Willis, Peter, *The Genius of the Place* (London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1990), p 212. The phrase is from Alexander Pope’s poem ‘An Epistle to Lord Burlington’ (1731).

he ignored it at times. His attempts to make his farmhouse look like a more elegant building by gentrifying it did allow him to entertain polite people and the setting of the structures within his landscape was successful, but it was far from being the Palladian home of his acquaintances and was almost certainly awkwardly remodelled.

Chapter seven looked at Shenstone's structural garden features which have been barely studied before. Shenstone used three distinct styles: natural-looking, classical and Gothic. These were applied to the native root houses, the Roman-style urns, through to the Gothic seat and alcoves that he placed around his landscape. The urns and other features were designed from an understanding of the golden ratio of architectural theory. Shenstone also believed that variety was an important facet of the landscape, but he never over-positioned features in his garden by placing them close to one another. His designs were admired and understood by those visitors who appreciated his knowledge, and several placed facsimiles in their own gardens, as a testimony to his influence.

Chapter eight considered what types of plants Shenstone introduced, where they originated and how appropriate they were in his natural-looking landscape. This is another subject which has rarely been considered. He chose plant species not to make floral beds, like many landscape gardeners, but to emphasise the natural-looking landscape. He also cultivated a comprehensive number of species of plants from home as well as abroad.

Knowledge of plant use in eighteenth-century gardens is presently in its early stages and the work of Mark Laird, Douglas Chambers and Maggie Campbell-Glover is starting to yield evidence that the usage of foreign varieties was increasing. Their studies add to our understanding of how Shenstone acquired and used these plants. Although some were bought from local nurseries, he acquired many varieties from friends. He applied his artistic talents in the employment of colour, scent and shape and the positioning of herbaceous species, shrubs and trees to create the illusion that his landscape was not designed. His gardening skills also demonstrated an ability to grow tender species and his cultivation of vegetables and fruit as well as flowers showed that he had an interest in utility as well as beauty.

Shenstone was a classical scholar and the importance of his use of Latin verse and English poetry in inscriptions that he placed on features around his landscape garden is considered in chapter nine. Although there have been many essays on his poetical verse, his garden poetry has never been isolated from the corpus. Consequently, it is important to explore it in the context in which it was meant to be read. Solemn texts were placed on his urns to the dead, and tranquil verse at many of his seats. Mourning was particularly evident, as in Maria Dolman's urn after the life-enhancing Lover's Walk. In his English verse feelings of humanity were conveyed in the garden: joy, sadness, ambition and indolence. His English poetry, in particular, displayed thoughts that varied in significance from how to create an intellectual garden

in the Venus poem to how to behave in his garden as intimidated in the poem at the Green Pool Root house. These, together with the texts on the brooks that flowed down his farm and the impact upon his visitors' thoughts, were important components of the experience.

Chapter ten considered the extent to which Shenstone's gardening influenced other landscape gardens. Although other gardens did not always reproduce The Leasowes landscape wholesale, they borrowed features when and where it was thought to be appropriate. The evidence of replication of The Leasowes garden can be divided into hydrology (cascades, brooks and pools), paths (particularly the circuit one), urns, natural-looking, classical and Gothic structures (root seats, hermitages, temples, alcoves, seats and statues) and the 'naturalness' of the landscape, but the extent and degree of probability of influence is very variable. Most of the persons who replicated features that were at The Leasowes during Shenstone's lifetime were friends or visitors. The way in which they reproduced the items at The Leasowes was often by direct communication with him and seeing the landscape. Barrells Park was probably the most important garden where he had a substantial input, but others such as Enville Park, Wimpole, Hewell and Hestercombe show evidence indicating the use of his gardening ideas. Less evidence of these ideas is available at Easy Hill, Hagley and West Wycombe, though some suggestion of the effects of his gardening style can be seen in the way these gardens developed. Shenstone's creations were worthy of reproduction.

Chapter eleven is a continuation of the study of Shenstone's influence and it has shown that, after he died, his effect on landscape gardeners continued and travelled further afield. This increase was partially due to the publication of *The Works*, but the proliferation of garden visitors also led to the spread of knowledge about his gardening. When analysed, parts of many gardens show a remarkable resemblance to what was done at The Leasowes. As in chapter ten, the evidence of replication of The Leasowes garden can be divided into various classifications and the degree of probability of influence is also variable in intensity. Many garden designers intimated that Shenstone's work was a source for their own creations; these included Tremayne at Heligan, Whitmore at Dudmaston and Hellier at Wodehouse. Other gardens where imitation of some elements is clear, but not stated include Boulton's at Soho Hill and Pytt's at Kyre Wyard. The Shenstonesque style travelled far, to France, at Ermenonville and Moulin-Joli, near Paris; to Germany at Flottbek and to the United States of America at Monticello, Virginia, and Peacefield, Massachusetts. In the past Shenstone's *ferme ornée* landscape has often been thought of as a deviation of the norm,¹⁴²² and inconsequential in landscape garden design, but as this chapter has indicated, Shenstone was an international gardenist and further work may reveal more examples of people who followed his path in their landscape gardens.

¹⁴²² Hyams, Edward, *The English Garden* (London, Thames and Hudson, 1968) p. 50.


12.3 Enlightenment, the Picturesque and Naturesque

Shenstone's work throws light on various aspects of the English Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was 'a period when the culture of the educated man was thought to take in the whole of human knowledge'.¹⁴²³ It saw reason, individualism and the liberation of the human mind as its main objectives. Shenstone was part of this process, but he was also a forerunner of another movement, Romanticism, that came to fruition in the late eighteenth century and as the Vercelloni in their book *The Invention of the Western Garden* stated: 'the Romantic spirit lay at the heart of the landscape garden.'¹⁴²⁴ This movement validated feelings as a source of aesthetic experience. It placed a new emphasis on individual emotions, such as fear and awe, especially when experienced in confronting the sublimity of untamed nature and its Picturesque qualities. It elevated the ballads of folk verse into something that was culturally rich. Shenstone enhanced their value both collecting and copying ballads for publication with Thomas Percy.¹⁴²⁵ Romanticism reached beyond the rational and classicist ideal models to

¹⁴²³ Hampson, Norman, *The Enlightenment* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books Ltd, 1981), p. 11.

¹⁴²⁴ Vercelloni, Matteo, and Vercelloni, Virgilio (trans. David Stanton) *The Invention of the Western Garden* (Glasgow, Waverley Books, 2010), p. 106.


¹⁴²⁵ Shenstone, William, in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1939), Appendix II, Shenstone's Billets, pp. 657-673.

¹⁴²⁵ Whately, Thomas, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, 1770, reprinted 2010), p. 64; Percy published *The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, J. Dodsley, 1765). On page xiii he mentioned that they had intended to have a joint share in the publication if it had not been for Shenstone's death in 1763; Roy Palmer, 'Percy, Thomas (1729–1811)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21959>, accessed  15 Aug 2014]. Thomas Percy (1729–1811): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/21959. According to *the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* it was 'a seminal work of English Romanticism and considered a landmark in European literature'.

elevate a revival in medievalism.¹⁴²⁶ To his contemporary, the novelist Henry Fielding, Gothic was a term of abuse, but this was not Shenstone's belief at The Leasowes.¹⁴²⁷ Shenstone was an exponent of this new style.

For a long time the word Picturesque has been used in common parlance, and many papers have been printed on the subject, but writers often differ in terms of how they define it. The present writer believes that what is required in the case of The Leasowes is a more appropriate concept. In his thesis Min Wood used the expression 'Naturesque', meaning the process of allowing the landscape to evolve in its own way, and stated that Shenstone used Naturesque techniques in his *ferme ornée*.¹⁴²⁸ The present study suggests that this would be a more suitable term for Shenstone's accomplishment at The Leasowes rather than the Picturesque.

Shenstone's adoption of the *ferme ornée* raised gardening to another level by not including anything that would look out of place in nature. Many designers of parks and gardens attempted to do this, but not on this scale nor with the same effect. Shenstone who invented the expression landscape-gardening was a leader in the field of landscape garden design. By creating his landscape in a natural fashion he proved that landscape gardening could be devised to look as if it was in a setting that related to nature. The closest

¹⁴²⁶ Webb, R. K., *Modern England: from the 18th century to the Present* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1980), pp. 125-127. 

¹⁴²⁷ Hampson, Norman, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

¹⁴²⁸ Wood, Min, 'The Search for Elysium' (unpublished M. Phil. Thesis, University of Bristol, 2010), pp. 76, 80.

anyone had come to this before was Philip Southcote at Wooburn, though even he was tied into the flower-bed approach: by ‘filling every corner, or vacant space, is a rosary, a close or an open clump, or a bed of flowers,’ a habit that Shenstone warned people not to pursue.¹⁴²⁹

12.4 Future research

Many books, articles, and reports have been written about Shenstone’s landscape garden at The Leasowes, but generally without delving into the substance of the details of what actually was there. Most of Shenstone’s landscape features have gone or have changed markedly, but it is rare that something disappears completely. Practical garden study is an important element in helping to reveal the landscape and therefore archaeology and geological work can be used in future revisions of what is a poetic public park. Williamson’s comment that ‘the more we find out, the less we know’ is particularly pertinent with The Leasowes.¹⁴³⁰ More archaeological investigation can be pursued on features, such as the Gothic seats and alcove and Pan’s Temple. The writer’s mapping of the Shenstonesque landscape, particularly the circuit path is unfinished work, but it is hoped it will be used by The Leasowes Park wardens and Dudley Council’s Local Access Forum to reinstate the rights-of-way around the site.¹⁴³¹

¹⁴²⁹ Whately, Thomas, op. cit., p. 71. The rosary was a gibe based on Southcote being a Roman Catholic; Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 123.

¹⁴³⁰ Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 5.

¹⁴³¹ At a meeting of the Local Access Forum at the Council House in Dudley on the 18th February 2014 the writer showed plans that he had made of the path network that he would like to see made definitive on the council’s rights-of-ways strategy.

Another aspect that needs further study is the influence Shenstone's landscape garden had elsewhere. A few of the plans of influence shown in this thesis are incomplete due to only a tentative approach in retrieving documentary evidence and short walk-overs of some of the estates. The evidence varies a great deal from Foxhills, Wodehouse where little information is available to Hagley Park where a great deal can be found. The writer has identified thirty-nine named visitors who had sizeable estates and visited The Leasowes during Shenstone's lifetime.¹⁴³² A brief study of estate plans and descriptions of their holdings displays tantalising evidence that there may be elements in their landscapes that owe their origins to what he was doing at The Leasowes. Further studies need to be pursued on these parks and gardens, in particular gardens that have been suggested as being influenced by Shenstone, such as Sir John Parnell's at Rathleague, Ireland, Dr Erasmus Darwin's at Lichfield, Dr. John Hope's at Edinburgh and Dr. William Cullen's at Glasgow who stated in 1788 that he hoped 'in a few years to shew a Leasowes in Scotland'.¹⁴³³ This research could be based on a documentary study of estate and local authority archives which may produce

¹⁴³² This research was based on the information acquired in Williams, Marjorie (ed.), op. cit.,

¹⁴³³ Wilson, Philip K., Dolan, Elizabeth A., & Dick, Malcolm, *Ann Seward's Life of Erasmus Darwin* (Studley, Brewin Books, 2010); Burke, Sir Bernard, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage* (London, Harrison & Sons, 1880); Thompson, John, *An Account of the life and lectures and writings of William Cullen* (Edinburgh, William Blackwood, 1832), Vol. I, p. 565. All these personages are recorded as visiting The Leasowes. In a draft paper 'Curiosity and Instruction: British and Irish botanic gardens and their audiences, 1760-1800' by Clare Hickman stated that Hope was a lecturer in botany at the University of Edinburgh and superintendent of the Leith Walk garden which was used to display plants for his students. She shows an archive plan, dated 1777, depicting the garden laid out in a natural style with serpentine paths.

plans and textual information not yet seen. Most estates are well wooded and therefore a LiDAR survey may produce physical evidence of what lies on the ground.¹⁴³⁴ This could show pathways that were normally used to reach the features that were erected there. A watching brief at the sites may then reveal the remains of the structures. Physical inspection would involve the photography and recording of whatever is left in advance of archaeological excavation of each site. This may provide future ways of exploring the influence of Shenstone.

Hugh Miller wrote: 'England has produced many greater poets than Shenstone, but she has never produced a greater landscape gardener.'¹⁴³⁵

Although Shenstone created his garden with the idea of attracting other people, The Leasowes landscape garden was fashioned and evolved for his own advantage. His income always dictated what he could do and by the time he died the leasehold on his farm was heavily mortgaged and the estate was sold. The people who subsequently held the lands had little idea of what he attempted to do and his Arcadia gradually became a ruin,¹⁴³⁶ supporting his observation that things begin to fall down as soon as they are built.¹⁴³⁷ By the

¹⁴³⁴ Gleason, Kathryn, & Leone, Mark, 'Reading The Landscape: Fieldwork In Garden Archaeology' in Malek, Armina-Aïcha, *Parcs et Jardins*, Vol 1: Sourcebook for Garden Archaeology (Peter Lang, 2013), p. 106. LiDAR - acronym for Light Detection and Ranging, and is an aerial survey using a photographic process of illuminating a target with laser light. This allows details beneath trees to be seen.

¹⁴³⁵ Miller, Hugh, *First Impressions of England and its People* (London, 1865), p. 150.

¹⁴³⁶ Simond, Louis, *Journal of a tour and Residence in Great Britain 1810-1811* Vol. Second (Edinburgh, Archibald Constable, 1815), p. 97. Simond's visit in March 1811 saw only the Stamford Root house which he stated was 'damp and forlorn'; Loudon, J. C., *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (London, 1825), p. 321. By the time of Loudon's visit he stated that the whole of the landscape was then 'in a state of indescribable neglect and ruin.'

¹⁴³⁷ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 121.

end of the eighteenth century attitudes to the *ferme ornée* changed and ornamented farms were considered to be inappropriate as they wasted land that could be better used agriculturally. By the nineteenth century a farm of ninety acres like The Leasowes needed to make a profit. Farming and gardening were thought to be incompatible. Whatley recognised this dichotomy in 1770: 'Fields profusely ornamented do not retain the appearance of a farm; and an apparent attention to produce, obliterates the idea of a garden.'¹⁴³⁸ By the mid-twentieth century the landscape garden of The Leasowes had become a golf course and a public park. Nothing disappears completely in the landscape, however, including the features that once adorned Shenstone's garden and for those who attempt to look for them, a careful search may reveal 'ghosts' of what existed in the past.

The spirit of Shenstone at The Leasowes may now be obscured, but his published works endured and his 'Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening' became an invaluable text for later gardeners and writers. Harry Gilonis stated that it was Shenstone's study of garden theory and his practical use of the ideas which made the work so celebrated. Many writers have praised what Shenstone achieved. The creation of a garden is not just about placing plants in an appropriate position, but involves designing a whole landscape and means that every aspect of a person's learning, thought and feelings needs to be used, so it was with Shenstone. A final assessment of his work can be found in the words of Gilonis who wrote that The Leasowes was 'a

¹⁴³⁸ Whately, Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

spot with certain ideas about nature, the countryside, history and poetry and expressive of a certain vision of the wilderness.’¹⁴³⁹

¹⁴³⁹ Gilonis, Harry, ‘Emblematical and Expressive: the gardenist modes of William Shenstone and Ian Hamilton Finlay,’ *Arcadian Greens Rural*, *New Arcadian Journal*, No. 53/54 (2002), p. 86.

Shenstone Time-Line	
1714	William Shenstone born at The Leasowes Farm, Halesowen, Shropshire.
C.1719	Attended the Dame School at the end of Green Lane.
C.1721	Attended the Halesowen Grammar School as father governor there.
1724	Thomas Shenstone, William's father, died.
C. 1725	Attended private school at Solihull. Met Richard Jago and William Somerville.
1731	Ann Shenstone, William's mother, died.
1732-1736	Attended Pembroke College, Oxford. Met Richard Graves and Anthony Whistler. Stayed with the Dolmen's at Broome during the recess.
1735	Graves stated that Shenstone assisted his brother, Morgan with his garden work at Mickelton.
1737-1739	Shenstone inherited share in Harborough Hall where he lived.
1737	Shenstone returned to college to have his poems published in <i>Poems on Various Occasions</i> (Oxford, 1737).
1737-1739	He returned to The Leasowes to board with his cousin. Met Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough at William Somerville's house at Edston Hall.
1740-1744	Shenstone's annual trips to London.
1740-1741	He had articles published in the <i>Gentleman's Magazine</i> .
1741	Shenstone had a summerhouse constructed on the Upper Pool island. He met Robert Dodsley who published his poem 'The Judgement of Hercules'. Samuel Howard published some of his poems in <i>The British Orpheus</i> .
1742	His poem 'The Schoolmistress' was published by Robert Dodsley.
1744	Shenstone took over the running of The Leasowes when his cousin left.
c. 1745	He started work on Virgil's Grove. Placed first garden poem on a seat in the grove.
1746	James Thomson and William Lyttleton visited The Leasowes.
1747	Shenstone made a straight walk in the Hanging Wood.

1748	Shenstone had poems published by Robert Dodsley in <i>Collections of Poems by several hands</i> . He began to make changes to The Leasowes farmhouse.
1749	William Pitt the elder, Sanderson Miller and George Lyttelton visited. Shenstone showed them round his newly built Gothic Alcove. He extended the circuit path all around his farm. Erected the Somerville urn.
1750	Reverend Pixell arranged Birmingham Music Club to play in the landscape garden. Met Harry Grey, 4th Earl of Stamford of Enville when he came to inspect The Leasowes garden.
1751	Shenstone made a chalybeate spring a feature in Virgil's Grove.
1752	He placed an urn in 'Urn Piece' after the death of his brother, Thomas.
1753	The Earl of Plymouth consulted him on the landscape of Hewel Grange.
1754	Maria Dolman died and Shenstone erected a n urn to her memory. He constructed the 'South' Cascade.
1755	Shenstone had poems published in another edition of <i>Collections of Poems by several hands</i> by Robert Dodsley.
1756	His friend Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough died.
1757	The ruined priory with an attached cottage was constructed. Dodsley presented him with a statue of Faunus. Reverend Thomas Percy began corresponding with him.
1758	Joseph Spence spent a week at The Leasowes. Shenstone wrote an epilogue for Dodsley's play, Cleone. Had more poems published in another edition of Dodsley's <i>Collections of Poems by several hands</i> .
1759	A number of his poems were published in <i>A Collection of Songs with the Recitatives and Symphonies for the German flute, Violins etc with a through base for the Harpsichord</i> by Rev. John Prynne Parkes Pixell.
1760	The construction of Priory Pool began.
1761	Shenstone wrote introduction and index for Robert Dodsley's <i>Selected Fables of Esop and other fabulists</i> .
1762	Involved in the preparation of getting an act of parliament for the construction of the Stourbridge Turnpike road.
1763	Shenstone died.

**Appendix One:
Plans and Tables of The Leasowes Landscape
Garden**



Fig. A1.1: HM 303 12. Spence's 1758 plan from 'The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise.' This plan is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA.

The earliest extant plan of The Leasowes is the Spence Plan drawn up in July 1758 when Joseph Spence stayed at The Leasowes for a week.¹⁴⁴⁰ In a letter dated August 19th he stated that he was eager to learn more about its natural history and ‘in what Order, you laid out every Part of your Garden’. The fact that Spence needed a plan of the grounds was for it ‘to enable me to take the round of it’.¹⁴⁴¹ There is a little more detail on Spence’s Plan than subsequent drawings. The site of an old hedge-line can be seen in The Nosegay which is missed off in other plans but the line of trees shows that a field boundary once divided the field. Presumably the hedge itself was removed when Shenstone was removing other hedges in the mid-1740s, leaving the groups of trees to show where it once was. The Priory Pool was not there and the brooks still flowed through the lower part of the farm. The footpaths through Virgil’s Grove are different from later plans of them and in fact look far more correct than later descriptions. An anomaly was the Serpentine River, the siting of which Spence does not seem to be clear about. What is not understood is why Spence included the Bogs Field in the east corner of the farm as it was not Shenstone’s property. Perhaps this was because Shenstone’s water courses ran across the field (shown in grey) and he did utilise a path within it on its western boundary. In the plan the main track ran to the east of the farmstead, proving that the east side was considered to be the front of the farmhouse. The numbers relate to features shown on later

¹⁴⁴⁰ Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA. HM 303 12, Joseph Spence: *The Round of Mr Shenstone’s Paradise* (with the Spence Plan of the Leasowes, 1758).

¹⁴⁴¹ Hull, Thomas, (ed.) *Select Letters between; the late Duchess of Somerset, Lady Luxborough, Miss Dolman, Mr Whistler, Mr R. Dodsley, William Shenstone, Esq and others*, 2 vols. (London, 1778), p. 240.

plans, but this is the only contemporary plan that uses so many. This looked like a base plan that all the others were derived from as all these have an identical scale.¹⁴⁴² Shenstone must have known about Spence's map yet he writes in the following year to Graves stating that he will be sending a 'neat plan of my farm' drawn by William Lowe to him and Spence.¹⁴⁴³ Perhaps he wanted to erase the inaccuracies it contained.

¹⁴⁴² Spence goes from number 30 to 40 in Hanging Wood, thus missing out nine numbers. This was corrected in the Lowe plan.

¹⁴⁴³ William Shenstone to Richard Graves, October 3rd 1759 in Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 525.



Fig. A1.2: Plan of The Leasowes drawn up by William Lowe in 1759. Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Box 1, Folder 50.

This seems to be a copy of the Spence Plan as it includes the Bogs Field and other early features, though it states it was drawn up by William Lowe.¹⁴⁴⁴ Perhaps Lowe copied Spence's plan when he needed to note some details of the farm prior to doing one of his own?¹⁴⁴⁵ The text information shows only a select number of fields with their acreage being noted. These included: The

¹⁴⁴⁴ Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, a plan of The Leasowes drawn up by William Lowe in 1759, Box 1, Folder 50.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Lowe was used as a surveyor a number of times by Shenstone. He arranged for him to do a survey of his Churchill Farm property in 1760. Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Box 1, Folder 51, List of the fields on the farm at Churchill.

Schoolmistress's Cottage next to the Great Road, Taylor's Piece, Quarry Field, West Field, Bogs Field and the Meadow where the Priory Pool would later be. As The Priory (built in 1757) is also recorded perhaps the named fields were items of Shenstone's estate which he intended to sub-let to the tenants?

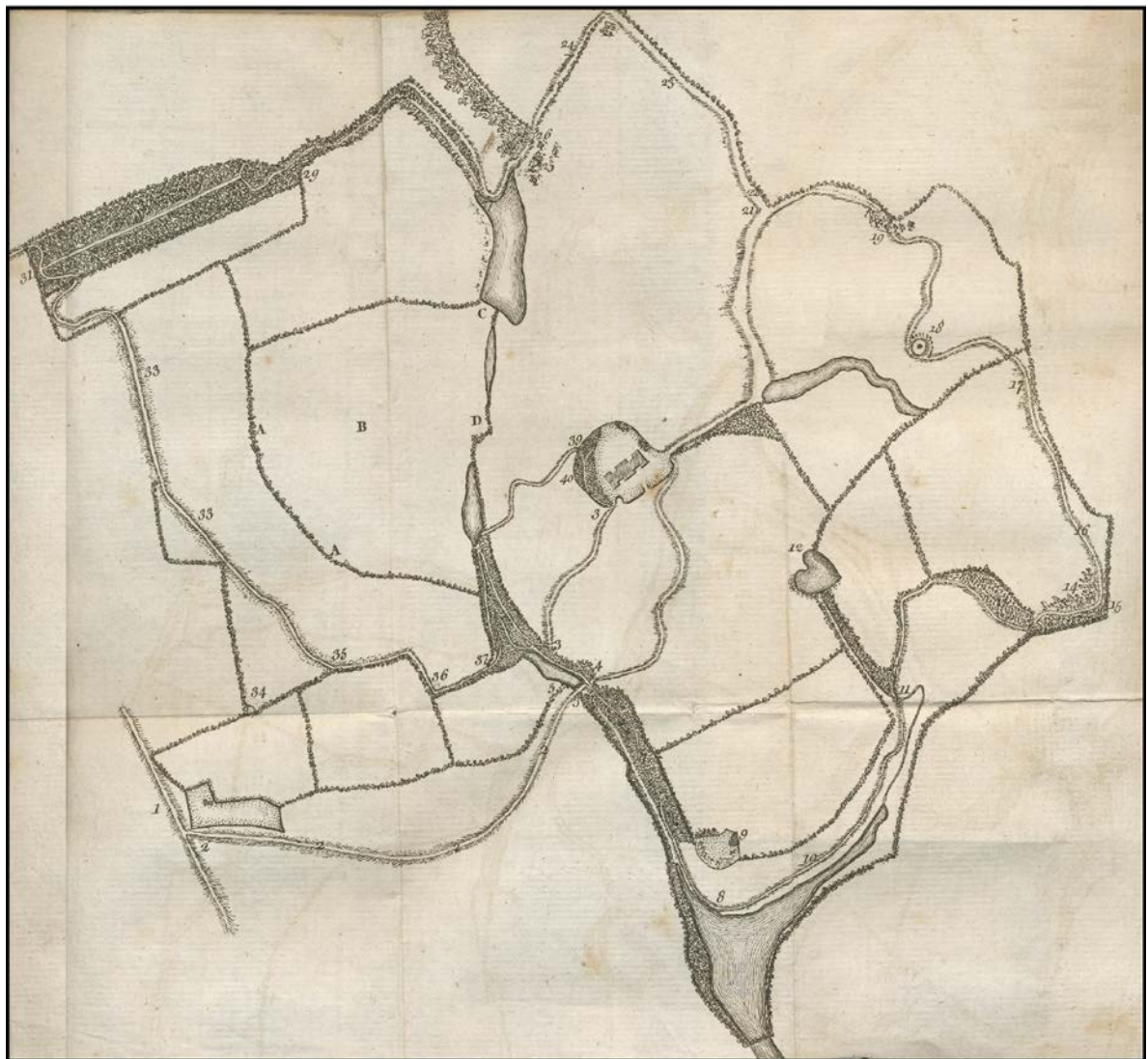


Fig. A1.3: Lowe's Plan in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Third Edition, 1768, p. 287.

This map of The Leasowes was included in the first edition of William Shenstone's *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone*, published by Robert & James Dodsley in 1764. According to Shenstone it was drawn up by William Lowe in 1759, but as noted above it was very close in design to Spence's Map. In a letter dated October of that year Shenstone wrote to Thomas Percy stating that he had had his estate surveyed and then had the plan reduced to a small scale.¹⁴⁴⁶ It was this reduced plan that he sent to Robert Dodsley in the December. Dodsley was planning to publish a pamphlet describing The Leasowes and was collecting other illustrations for it. Although this project never came about, some of the material he had collected he later published in *The Works*.¹⁴⁴⁷ Both the Spence plan and the Lowe plan put letters of the alphabet in the Nosegay Field. What they represented is not certain; 'A' may represent the north field boundary and 'B' the centre of the field. In Lowe's plan he adds 'C' and 'D' which are the two routes of streams on either side of the Middle Pool. Some of the numbers on the plan are in an incorrect position particularly 25 which is described in the Bogs Field but is placed in the Great Lawn and 34 and 35 which are misplaced in the Nosegay Field. This is further evidence that the plan was made up by a person not aware of the finer details of The Leasowes landscape.

¹⁴⁴⁶ W. S. to Lady Luxborough, February 4th, 1749-50 in Williams, Marjorie, op, cit., p. 256.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Robert Dodsley to W. S. December 1st 1759 in Tierney, James E., (ed.) *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 432. See footnote 52 in Chapter 4 for the discussion as to whether Dodsley wrote the 'Description of The Leasowes' in Shenstone's *The Works*.

referred to in the notation. This plan shows the island in the Upper Pool, the first one to do so. It also includes The Bogs and Lord Dudley's land next to Lover's Walk. New features include: Mucklow Hill, a term not used in Shenstone's day and is a description of the field on The Leasowes north-east boundary, and the route running into Green Lane from Halesowen to the west. The route of the circuit walk around the farm is still shown.

Mapping the Past

In 2013 Kathryn Gleason and Mark Leone wrote that ‘The first stage (in garden archaeology) is to assess the mapping available and to create a map or plan at a scale appropriate to study the garden and its surrounding environment.’¹⁴⁴⁸ This has been done at The Leasowes by using existing eighteenth-century plans of the landscape, as shown above. As none of the contemporary plans show all the features and, those which do, their positions are not always correct, these should be used only as a tentative source. In order to display more effectively what was there the writer has drawn up plans to show their approximate positions. As most of the features recorded in the eighteenth century have disappeared from view today (2017), this should only be considered as an imprecise exercise.

Not all positions are unknown, however; some of the buried features have been excavated - the High Cascade dam, The Priory, Dripping Fountain, and Virgil’s Obelisk. A few, such as the Priory Pool, Green Pool and the Upper Pool still exist and the positions of some of the watercourses have been recognised during field walking exercises. Some watercourses have been re-routed and their previous positions have been determined by dried-out beds. Although only a few features have been archaeologically excavated, others can be determined by earthworks, but most need to be searched for.

The problem with seeking them out is that many features were natural,

¹⁴⁴⁸ Gleason, Kathryn, & Leone, Mark, ‘Reading The Landscape: Fieldwork In Garden Archaeology’ in Malek, Armina-Aïcha, *Parcs et Jardins*, Vol 1: Sourcebook for Garden Archaeology (Peter Lang, 2013), p. 99.

particularly trees, and these have disappeared from the landscape.

Shenstone's root houses and seats tended also to be also ephemeral, as many were made from roots and tree trunks (the seats being trunks that were cut a foot or so above the ground and served to hold planks). If excavated, these would appear only as natural root holes, making it difficult to determine if they ever held a man-made feature.

As many features are yet to be precisely positioned, the following plans are designed to be used, as are others in this thesis, only as a tool to indicate the crude position of the features for testing their presence on the site.

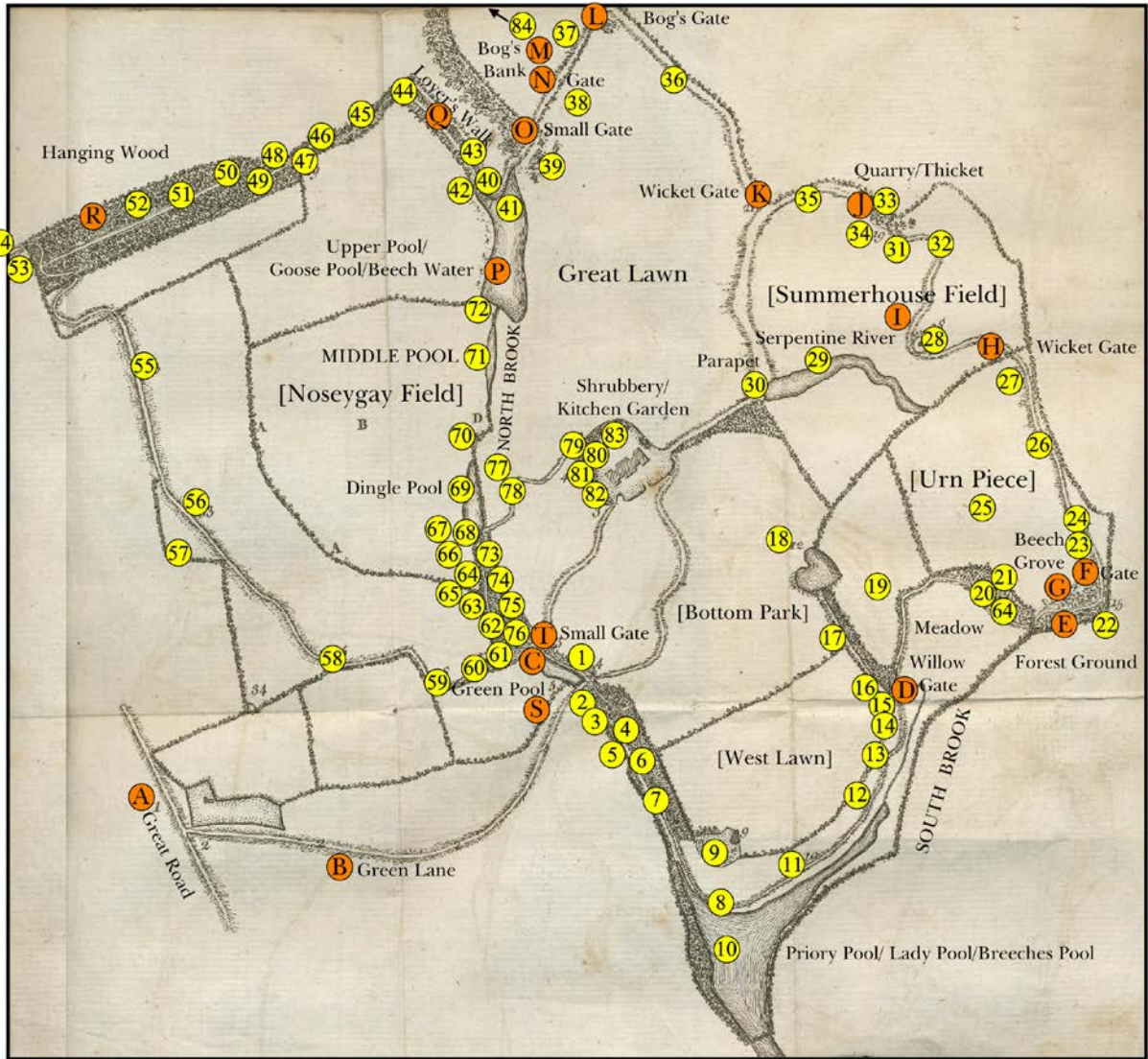


Fig. A1.5: Composite plan of features in The Leasowes garden landscape based on a Lowe map of 1768.¹⁴⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴⁹ The numbers recorded at the beginning of the features belong to a numerical system devised by the writer of those that existed in the landscape. This was done as no other plan records all the features that were there. These are shown on the attached index to the Composite Plan.

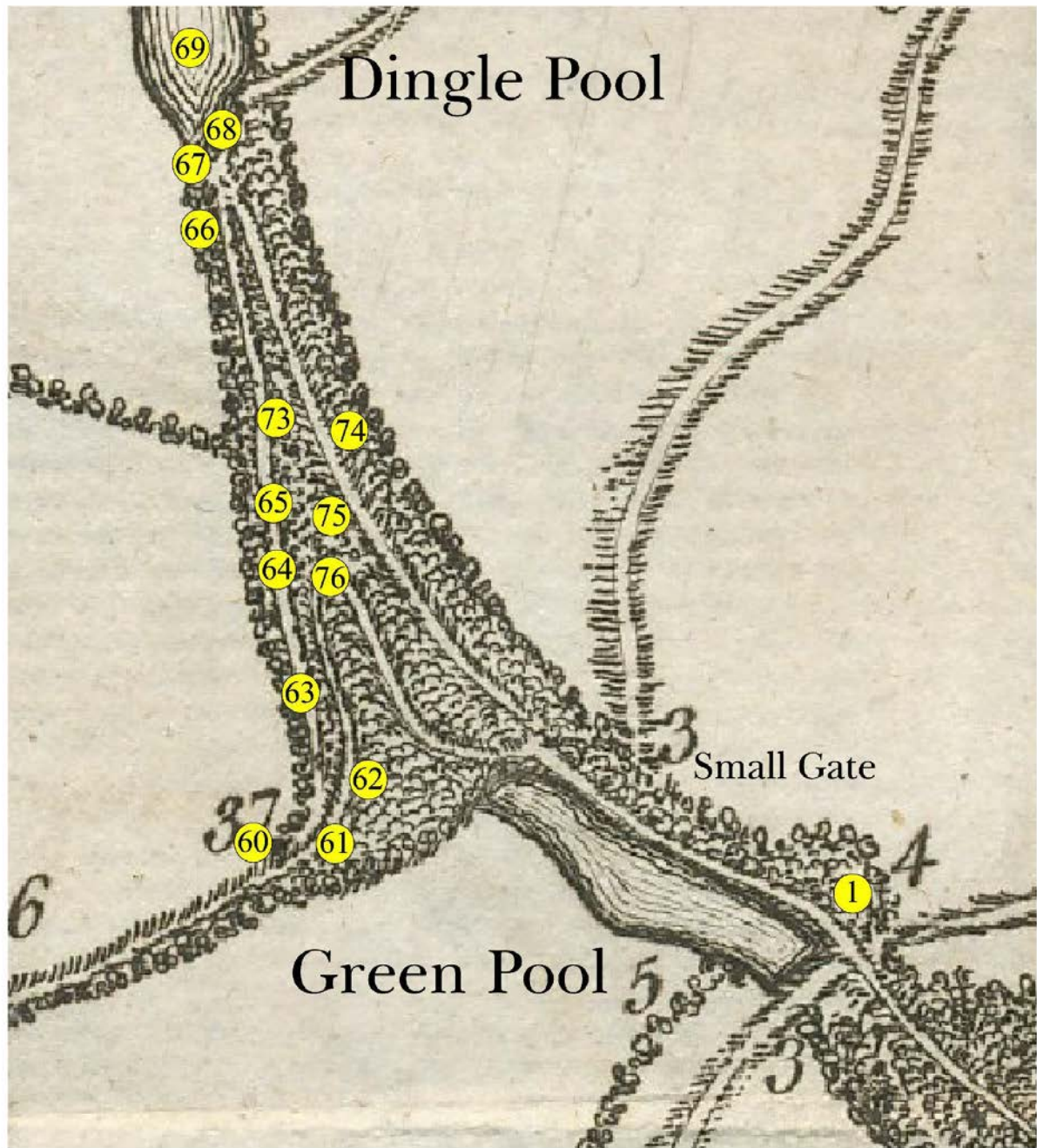


Fig. A1.6: Detailed plan of Virgil's Grove from the Lowe map consisting of a number of features which Shenstone continued adding to from 1745 until the mid-1750s, though not all can be precisely dated.

1	Green Pool Root House	25	Joseph Shenstone's Urn	49	Serpentine Path, Bridge Bench	73	VIRGIL'S GROVE CASCADE
2	Priory Gate	26	Glasshouse Bench	50	SERPENTINE PATH, TOP BENCH	74	Dripping Fountain
3	Priory Gate Seat	27	Shepherd's Bush Seat	51	Straight Walk	75	ISLANDS IN THE STREAM
4	Priory Walk	28	Octagonal Seat	52	Gothic Seat	76	Single Arch Bridge
5	WEST CASCADE	29	Serpentine River	53	Temple of Pan	77	Hill Path
6	CASCADE BENCH	30	Parapet	54	STOUR VALLEY SEAT	78	Oak Tree Seat
7	Steeple Seat	31	SOUTH-EAST BENCH - NORTH	55	Beech Seat	79	Graves's Seat
8	Priory Seat	32	SOUTH-EAST BENCH- SOUTH	56	Frankley Beeches Seat	80	Venus de Medici Statue
9	The Priory	33	Gothic Alcove	57	CLASSICAL SCREEN	81	Jago's Seat
10	Priory Pool	34	Hermitage	58	Lytelton Seat	82	Dovecot
11	Pool Bench	35	EAST SEAT	59	VALLEY SEAT - NORTH	83	Kitchen Garden
12	Common Bench	36	Horace Seat	60	VALLEY SEAT - SOUTH	84	Spring Pool (not shown on plan)
13	Melbooe Seat	37	The Bogs Seat	61	WEST BENCH		
14	Willow Thicket	38	Clent View Bench	62	Virgil's Obelisk		
15	Root Arch	39	Spence's Seat	63	Thomson's Urn (replaced by seat)		
16	Stamford Root House	40	UPPER POOL BENCH	64	Doddsley's Bench		
17	SOUTH CASCADE	41	Summerhouse	65	Root Seat		
18	Heart-shaped Pool	42	NORTH BENCH	66	High Cascade Stone Seat		
19	Somerville Urn	43	Assniation Seat	67	Chalybeate Spring		
20	Dodley's Seat in Bower	44	Maria Dolman's Urn	68	High Cascade		
21	Faunus Statue	45	Serpentine Walk	69	Dingle Pool		
22	Priory View Bench	46	SERPENTINE PATH, BOTTOM BENCH	70	NORTH CASCADE		
23	Grove Seat	47	Serpentine Path, Pope's Bench	71	MIDDLE POOL		
24	'Me Gelidum...' Bench	48	Serpentine Path, Virgil's Bench	72	UPPER POOL WATERFALL		

Index to the Composite Plan of Features in The Leasowes Landscape

JAH 2012

Fig. A1.7: Index to Composite plan of The Leasowes landscape garden. Names in capital letters have been determined by the writer.

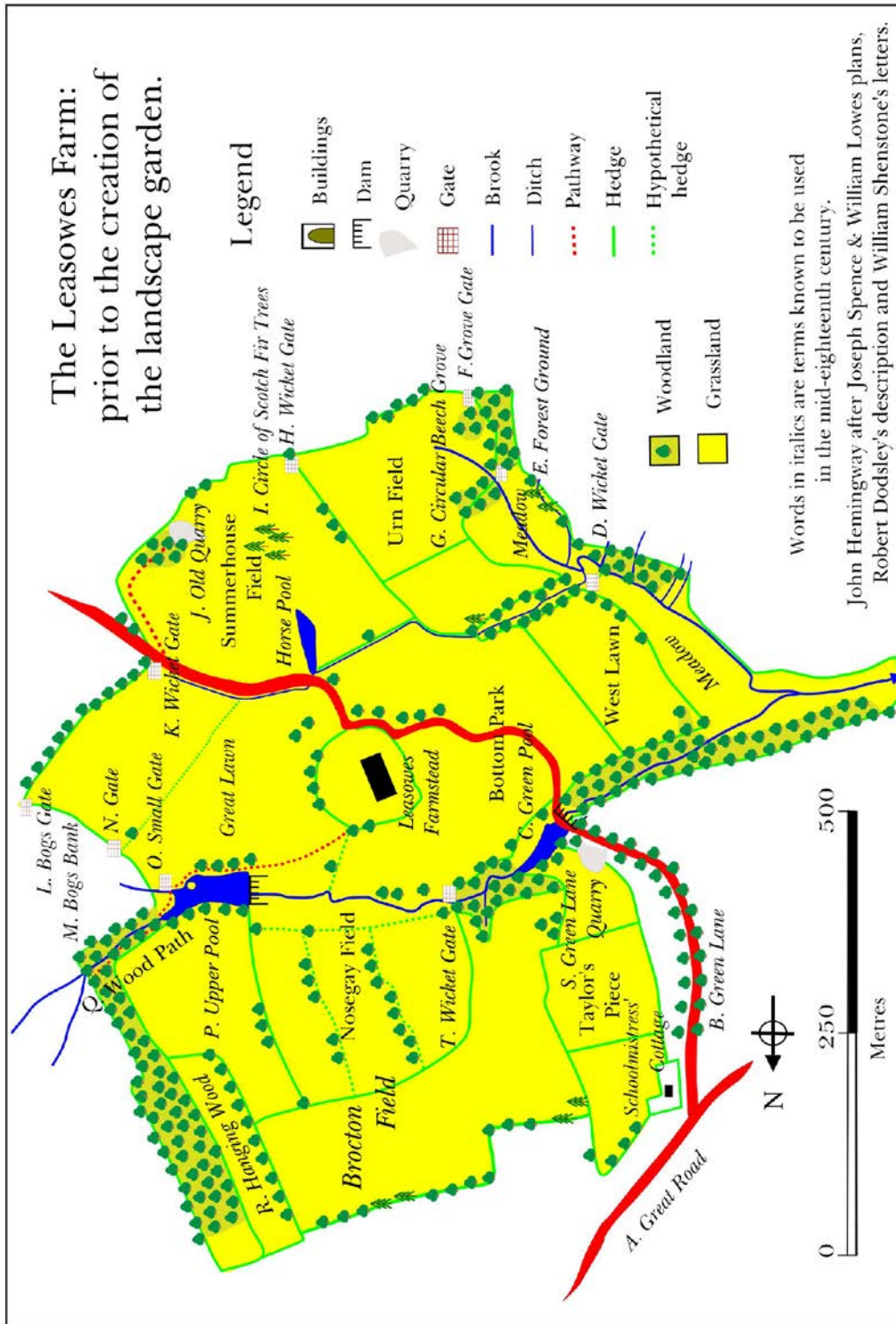


Fig. A1.8: Pre-ferme ornée features of the estate prior to 1739 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Pre-ferme ornée features within the farmscape of The Leasowes			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
A	SO978846	Great Road	Called Mucklow Hill in the twenty-first century, it ran from Halesowen in the west to Birmingham in the east. It was converted into a turnpike road in Shenstone's lifetime and he was a commissioner of the Parliamentary Act.
B	SO979839	Green Lane	Called Leasowes Lane in the twenty-first century. This route lay between two high roads (now called Mucklow Hill and Manor Lane). Shenstone reported that the lane was un-metalled as part of it is today (2015).
C	SO979840	Green Pool	Called Green Pool in the eighteen century. It lay on the east side of Green Lane and the north side of the farm boundary. Robert Dodsley described the circuit walk as beginning near this feature.
D	SO978837	Willow Wicket Gate	Situated as a gateway out of the West Lawn into the grove. Wicket gates were small pedestrian entrances. The term relates to Shenstone planting assorted willows around the area.
E	SO978837	Forest Ground	A woodland area, situated at the south-west corner of the farm and used by Shenstone as part of his landscape after 1750.
F	SO978838	Grove Gate	This gate was part of a boundary that divided the field later called Urn Piece from the Forest Ground. It was a large gate that allowed wagons to pass to collect timber.

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Table A1.1: Pre-ferme ornée features.

Pre-ferme ornée features within the farmscape of The Leasowes			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
G	SO978838	Circular Beech Grove	This is not a natural grove and was planted as a decorative feature, but not by Shenstone. It was placed there earlier possibly by the Lyttelton Family who owned The Leasowes Farm.
H	SO981839	Wicket Gate	A pedestrian gate leading from Urn Field to what was later called Summerhouse Field.
I	SO981839	Circle of Scotch Fir Trees	These fir trees were another decorative feature that pre-dated Shenstone's work. This clump is very similar to Frankley Beeches that lay a short way away and placed there by the Lyttelton family.
J	SO982840	Old Quarry	This quarry may have been used for the excavation of clay during the erection of the farm buildings. It had become disused and overgrown by hazel in Shenstone's time.
K	SO978840	Wicket Gate	A pedestrian gate that lay on the north-east side of Green Lane and was an access point to the Great Lawn.
L	SO979844	Bogs Gate	This pedestrian gate lay on the north-east boundary of the Great Lawn. The Bogs Field was not part of The Leasowes holding and was a coppice woodland until the occupier removed the trees much to Shenstone's annoyance.

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Table A1.2: Pre-ferme ornée features.

Pre-ferme ornée features within the farmscape of The Leasowes			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
M	SO982841	Bogs Bank	Outside The Leasowes holding, but the grassy bank lay on a path that Shenstone used as it gave a good view of the Hanging Wood and the north of his farm.
N	SO982841	Gate	This pedestrian gate gave access from Bogs Field into the Great Lawn.
O	SO982841	Small Gate	This pedestrian gate gave access from Great Lawn into Lord Dudley's Wood.
P	SO981842	Upper Pool	Subsequently called Goose Pool, and later the Beech Water. Used as a watering spot for stock as well as a place for washing sheep prior to shearing.
Q	SO981842	Wood Walk	The walk was an old track leading west to east from another path crossing the hillside from north to south within Lord Dudley's Wood. Shenstone leased part of the wood in 1751 for the location of Lover's Walk.
R	SO981844	Hanging Wood	This wood lay on a very steep slope of Mucklow Hill on the north-east side of Shenstone's estate. Presumably the tree growth was self-set as nothing much else could be done with the land.

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Table A1.3: Pre-ferme ornée features.

Pre-ferme ornée features within the farmscape of The Leasowes			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
S	SO979840	Green Lane Quarry	This quarry lay outside Shenstone's property.
T	SO979840	Wicket Gate	This pedestrian gate gave access from Bottom Park into Virgil's Grove.

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Table A1.4: Pre-ferme ornée features.

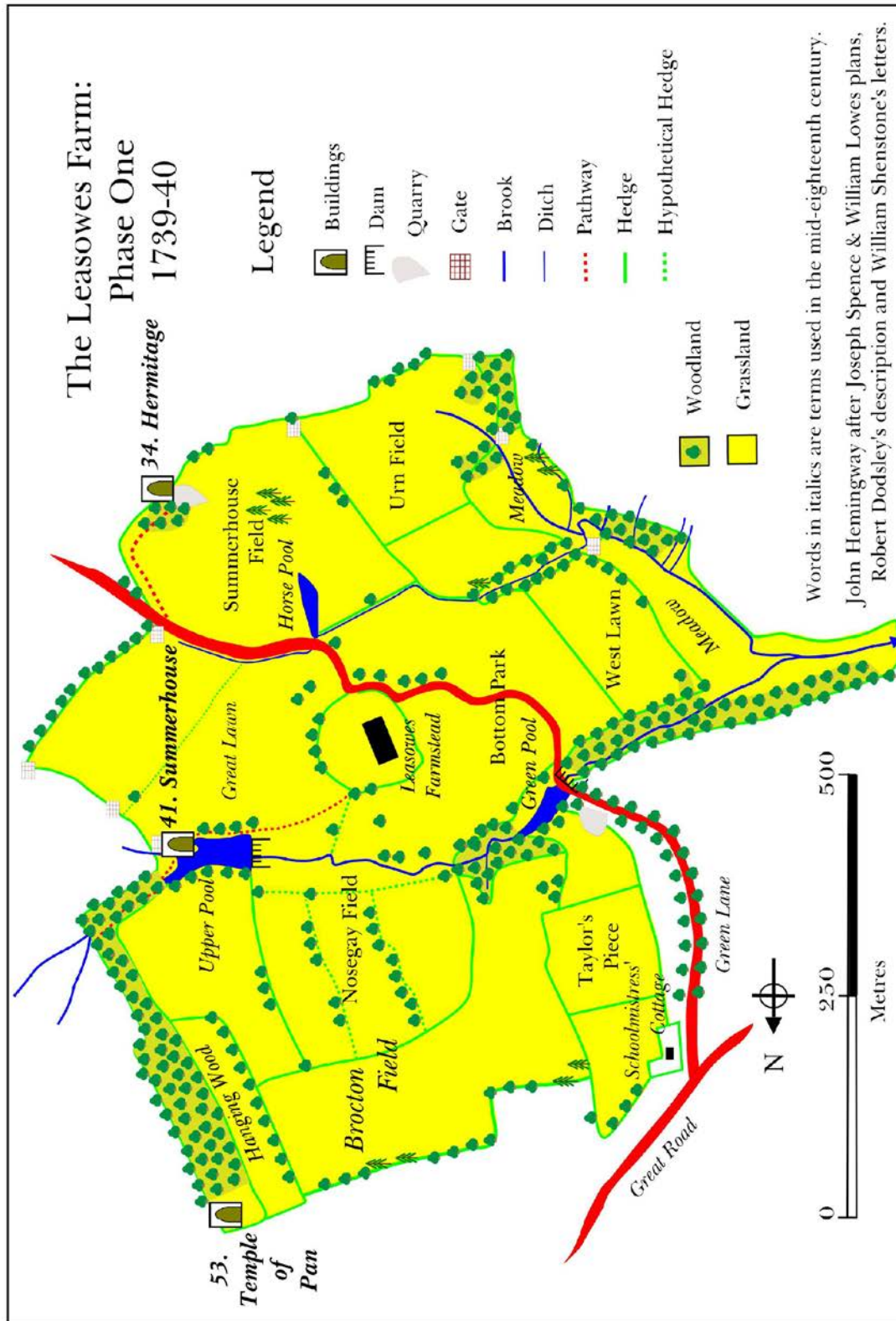


Fig. A1.9: Plan of the estate in 1739-40 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1739-1740			
34	SO9882838	Hermitage	One of the earliest features Shenstone set up. It was sited in the back of a quarry being a hole dug out of the quarry wall and a doorway and cross placed over it. It did not survive the late 1750s.
41	SO981842	Summerhouse	This feature was another early construction being a square building with a fireplace set up on an island in the Upper Pool. Shenstone used it as a study while his cousin was managing the farm. It was destroyed in a flood of July 1754 after Shenstone took over the running of the property.
53	SO979845	Temple of Pan	The temple was erected at the end of the Hanging Wood. It was a classically inspired rough stone building with a trophy of Tibia and Syrinx placed above the entrance. It had two doorways on either side and large doorway at the front facing west.

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Table A1.5: ferme ornée features.

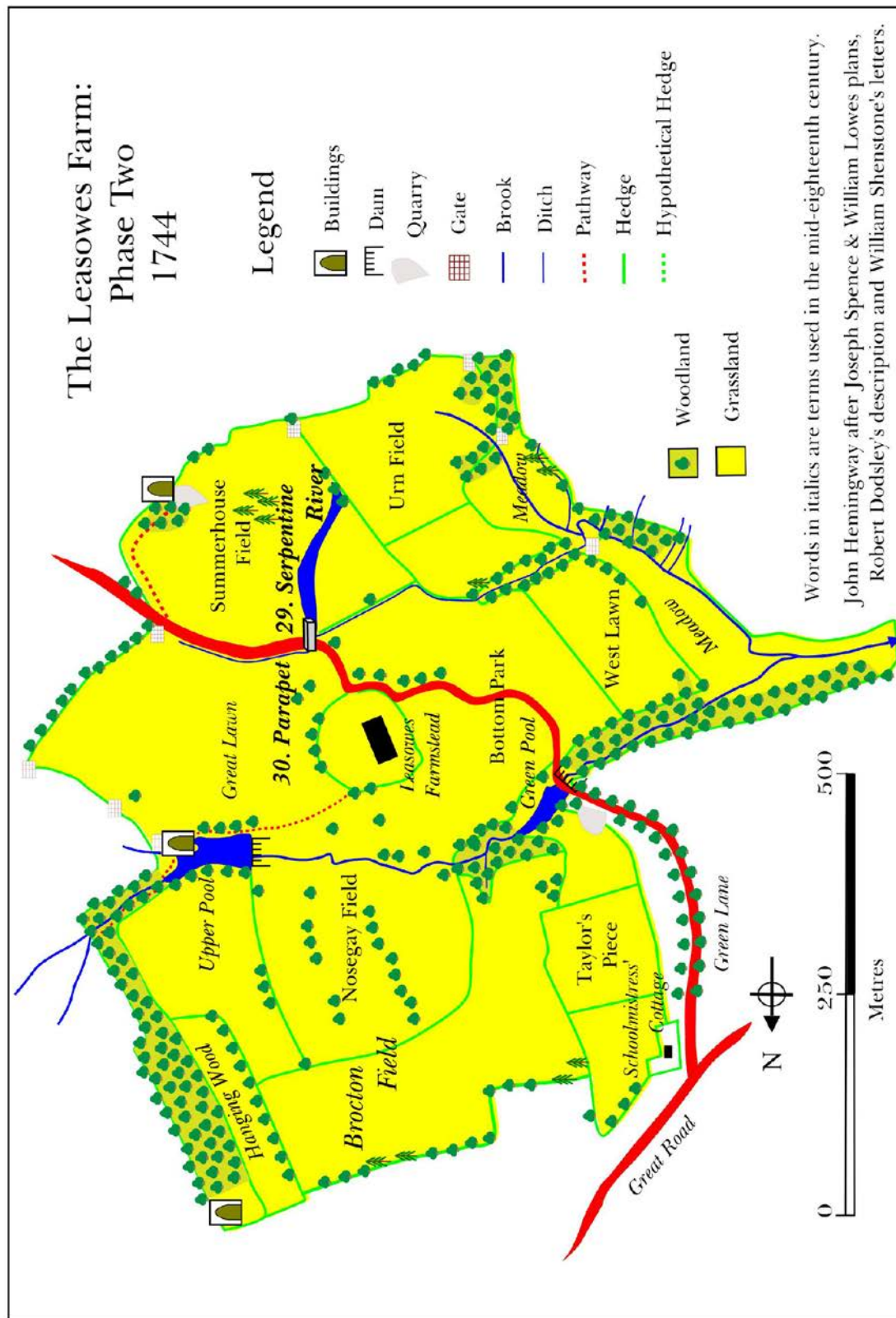


Fig. A1.10: Plan of the estate in 1744 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1744			
29	SO981842	Serpentine River	This began life as the farm's Horse Pond. Shenstone lengthened and curved it making it look as it was a river from a distance. It was less than half a metre deep. The feature was normally viewed from the high land to the east.
30	SO981844	Parapet	This lay at the north edge of the Serpentine River and was placed there in order to mask the fact that the feature did not go any further. The feature may have been a single parapet showing on the south side of Green Lane.

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Table A1.6: ferme ornée features.

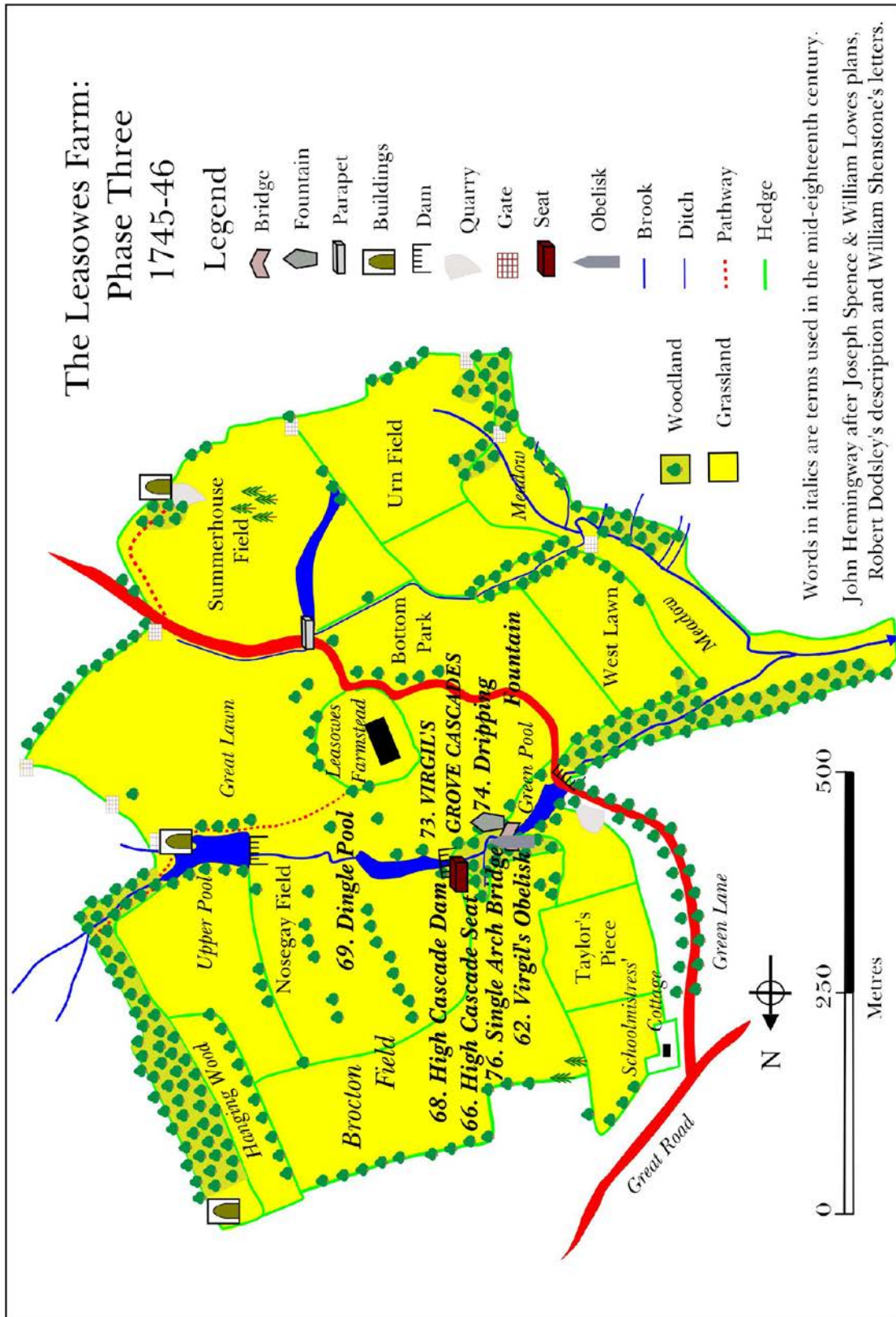


Fig. A1.11: Plan of the estate in 1745-6 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1745-1746	(Virgil's Grove)		
74	SO979841	Dripping Fountain	This is shown in a contemporary engraving as a roundheaded stone feature with a sunken interior and water pouring out of the rock work. This was an early feature within the grove, being similar in design to William Kent's waterfall at Rousham.
62	SO979841	Virgil's Obelisk	This feature was built out of brick and then stuccoed in plaster. It was erected in 1746 and was placed at the commencement of the circuit path as it led into Virgil's Grove.
76	SO979841	Single Arch Bridge	The simple single arch bridge was built by Shenstone before the two cascades and was shown in a watercolour by him in the late 1740s.
68	SO979841	High Cascade	This waterfall called the High Cascade by Robert Dodsley was created by damming up the north brook with silty clay and then covering it with stone slabs to prevent erosion.
69	SO979841	Dingle Pool	The pool was created in the north valley by the damming up of the brook to create the High Cascade.
66	SO979841	High Cascade Stone Seat	The position of this feature is a little mystifying as it lay next to the High Cascade but was not part of it. Robert Dodsley described it as being in a cave which presumes that like the Hermitage Shenstone had dug out an area of the bank to place his stone seat in.

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Table A1.7: ferme ornée features.

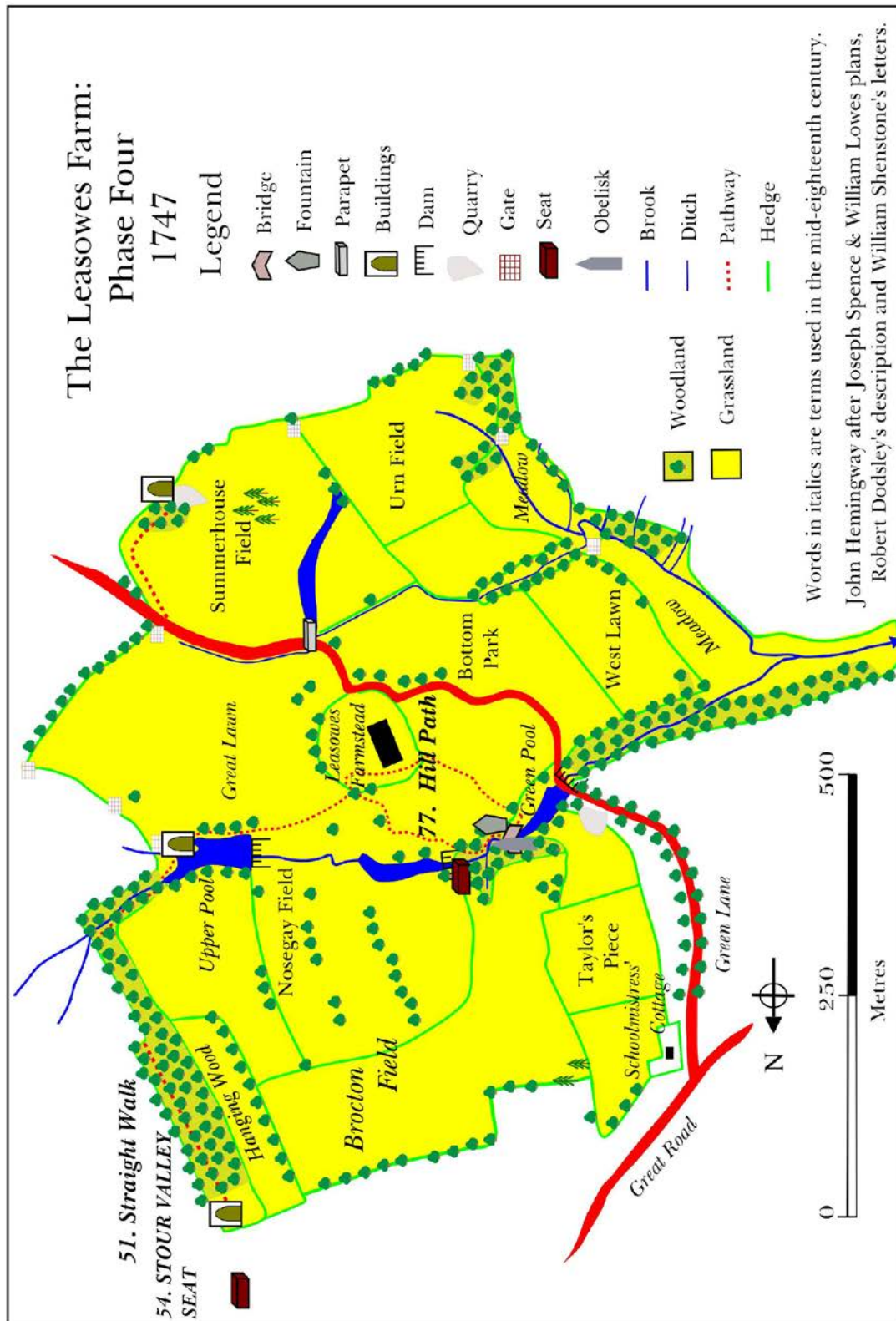


Fig. A1.12: Plan of the estate in 1747 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1747			
51	SO981844	Straight Walk	This walk was created in 1747 nearly nine years after he had built the Temple of Pan which it led to.
54	SO979846	STOUR VALLEY SEAT	This seat (of unknown construction) was placed on a high spot outside Shenstone's property at the end of the Hanging Wood in order that the upper Stour Valley could be seen to its fullest extent.
77	SO979841	Hill Path	Shenstone created this path as part of his circuit route from Virgil's Grove up to his farmhouse in 1747.

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Table A1.9: ferme ornée features.

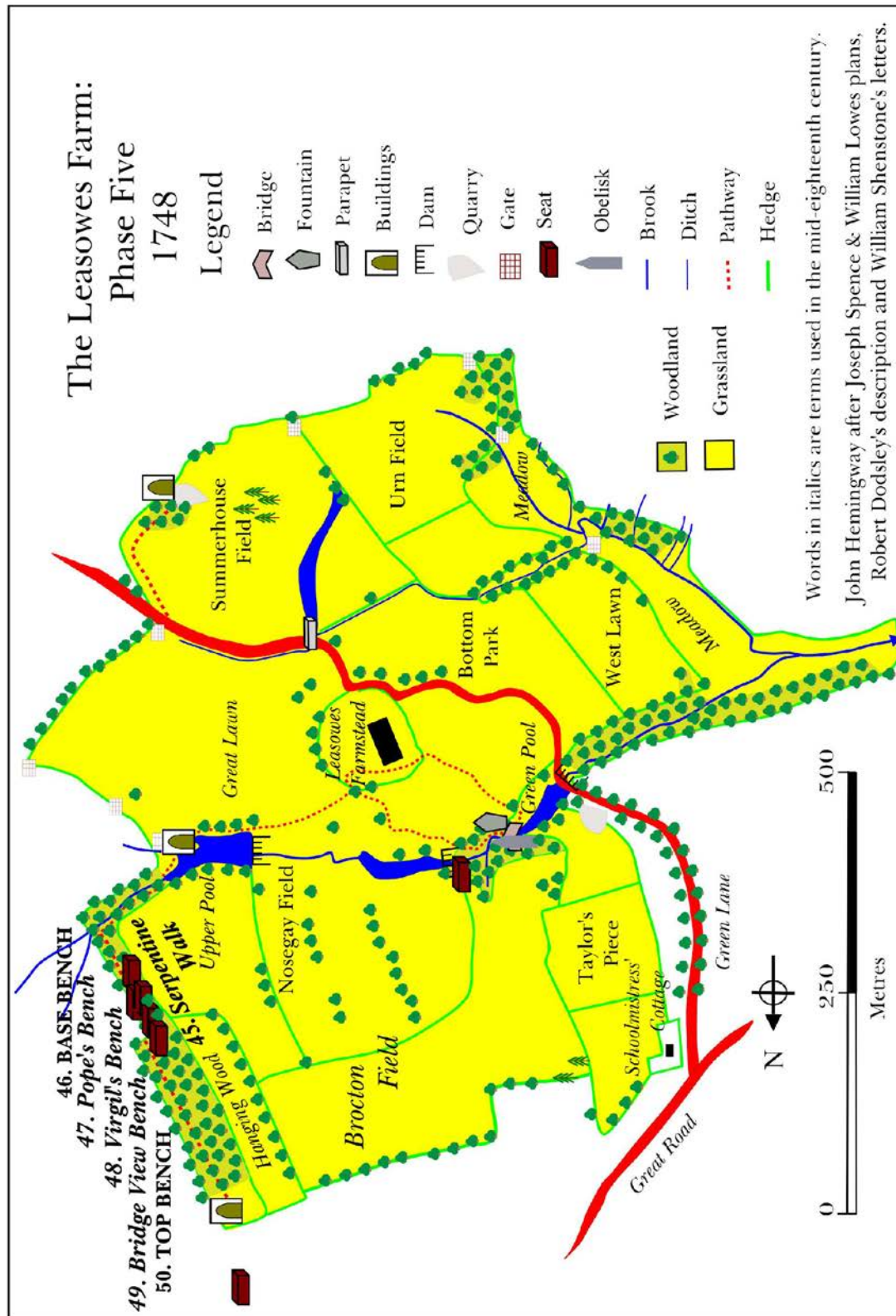


Fig. A1.13: Plan of the estate in 1748 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1748			
45	SO981842	Serpentine Walk	Cut in 1748 the sinuous path wound it's way up the steep hillside that led to the Straight Path through the Hanging Wood. Seats were placed at each spot were it turned back on itself.
46	SO981842	BASE BENCH	This simple bench lay at the base of the Serpentine Path up the hill.
47	SO981842	Pope's Bench	This bench had lines from Alexander Pope's 'Eloisa' on it.
48	SO981842	Virgi's Bench	This bench had lines from Virgil on it.
49	SO981842	Bridge Bench	This bench had a view of the southern bridge over the River Stour in Halesowen.
50	SO981842	TOP BENCH	This bench was at the top of the Serpentine Path were it leads on to the Straight Path.

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Table A1.10: ferme ornée features.

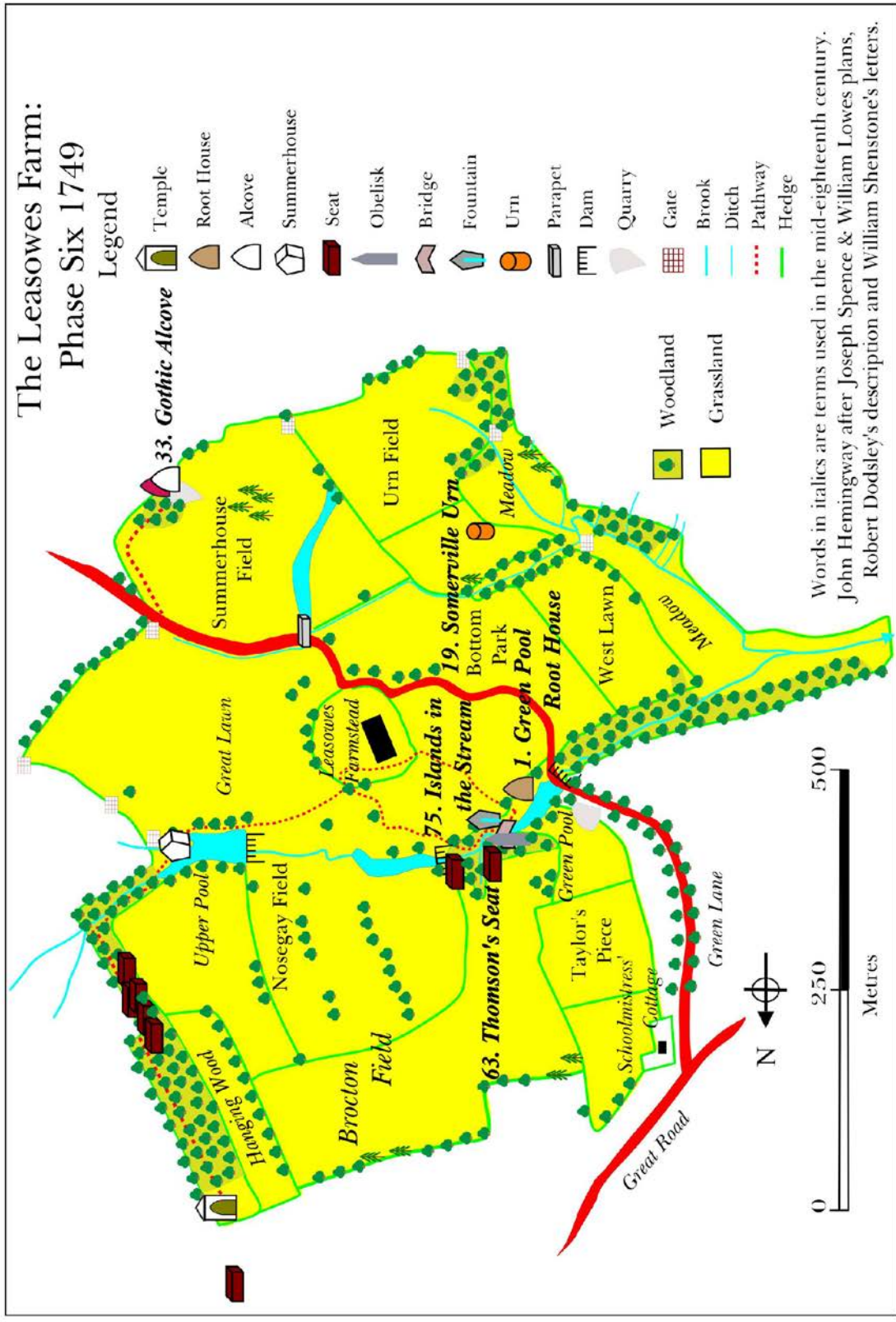


Fig. A1.14: Plan of the estate in 1749 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1749			
19	SO979848	Somerville Urn	This classical shaped urn was placed besides the 'Forest Ground' facing a meadow. Shenstone thought this was an appropriate spot to place an urn to his friend's hunting prowess.
63	SO979841	Thomson's Seat/Urn	An urn dedicated to James Thomson was placed in Virgil's Grove in November 1749. Complaints by Thomas Smith amongst others of it being too small led to him replacing it with a seat.
75	SO979848	ISLANDS IN THE STREAM	Shenstone recorded that he had made two little islands in the brook through Virgil's Grove in November 1749.
1	SO979848	Green Pool Root house	Thomas Jackson, an employee of Shenstone, constructed this root house in 1749 from roots, trunks and branches of trees with a stone front to it. Henrietta Knight recorded in a letter it had a 'moss-seat' inside and Shenstone placed his first garden poem above the seat.
33	SO979848	Gothic Alcove	This stone and brick feature was built for Shenstone by his stone mason, Mr Pedley, with a seat, two doors at the side and an open west facing front.
5	SO979848	PRIORY WALK CASCADE	This cascade was created in 1749 by laying stone slabs to disrupt the flow of water. It ran from the bridge over Green Lane to the Priory Pool area.

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Table A1.11: ferme ornée features.

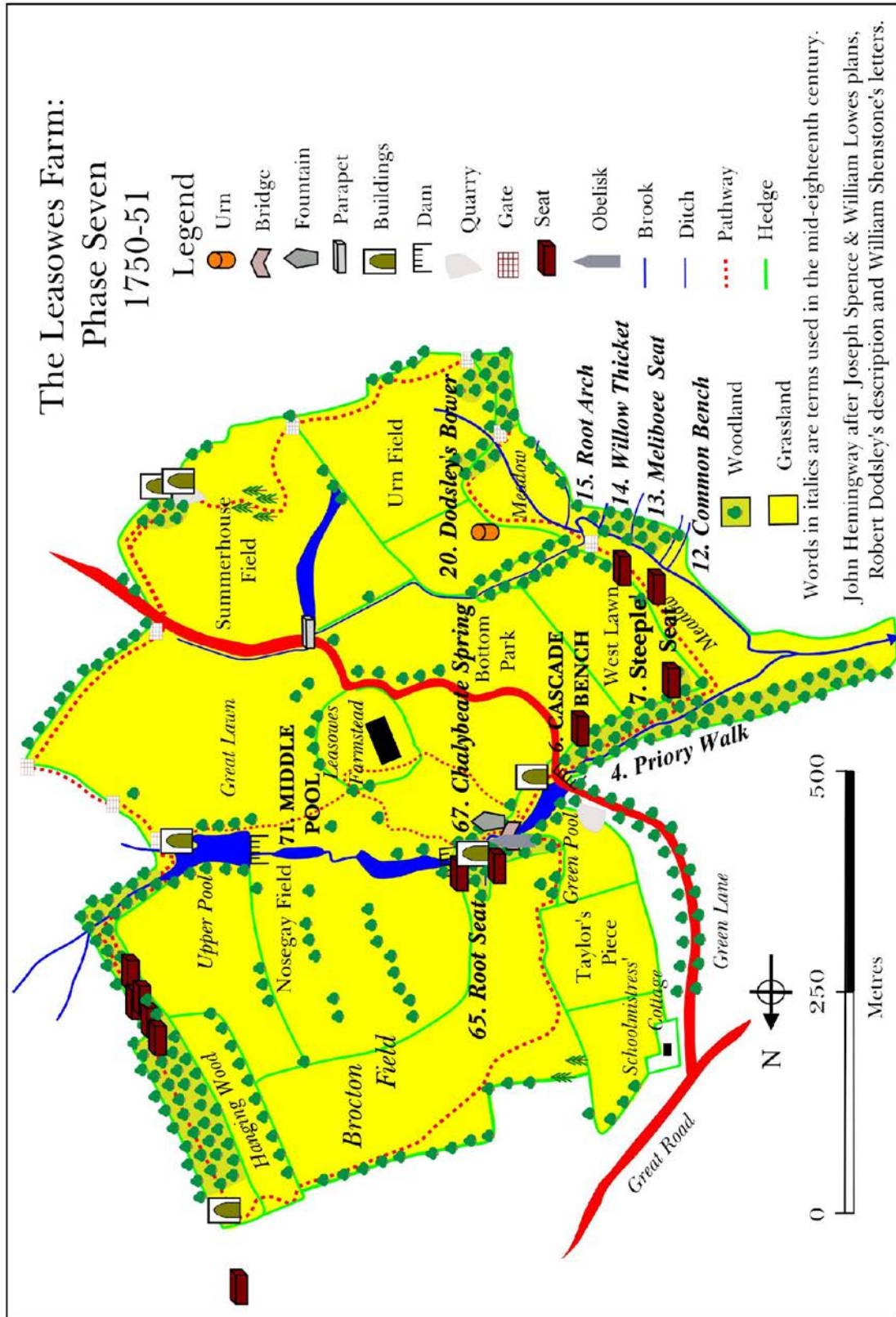


Fig. A1.15: Plan of the estate in 1750-51 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1750-1751			
71	SO931830	MIDDLE POOL	Shenstone stated he was constructing a dam in a letter of 1750. There was only one pool that was made at this date and it is Middle Pool.
65	SO979841	Root Seat	The Root Seat lay in Virgil's Grove between Thomson's Seat and the High Cascade. It may have stood close to where a tributary entered the main brook as it was there that two views could be observed.
4	SO979848	Priory Walk	This walk lay alongside the West Cascade (see 5). Shenstone recorded later called it Priory Walk after he had constructed The Priory.
6	SO979848	CASCADE BENCH	The bench was situated a quarter of the way down Priory Walk and according to Dodsley had been made by placing a transverse board over two tree stumps.
7	SO979848	Steeple Seat	This seat was at an angle in the path of Priory Walk facing due west. The steeple of the parish church of St. John the Baptist was its focal point and Shenstone had cut branches out of the trees so that it could be seen.
67	SO979848	Chalybeate Spring	This spring ran out of the rocks on the north side of Virgil's Grove beside the High Cascade. Its mineral content stained the surrounding rock. Shenstone had chained an iron cup to it so that the waters could be drunk.

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Table A1.12: ferme ornée features.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1750-1751			
12	SO976838	Common Bench	This bench lay beside the path that left Priory Pool and may have been a plank sited on two tree stumps. It probably faced south as Dodsley stated the view was of the south brook.
13	SO978838	Meliboee Seat	The seats manufacture is unknown, but the view is to the south as far off as the Piping Faun statue. Shenstone placed his Meliboee poem on the bench.
14	SO978838	Willow Thicket	The thicket lay beyond the gate that led into the South Cascade. It is likely to have originated as an old Osier Bed, but Shenstone added different types of willow to it.
15	SO978838	Root Arch	The Root Arch lay on a hedge line running east-west and seems to have been made up of roots and stone. Shenstone had added living climbers so that it appeared to be a natural feature.
20	SO979838	Dodsley's Bower	On the south side of the South Cascade dingle was a circle of oak trees. An inscription was placed in this bower dedicating it to Robert Dodsley.

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Table A1.13: ferme ornée features.

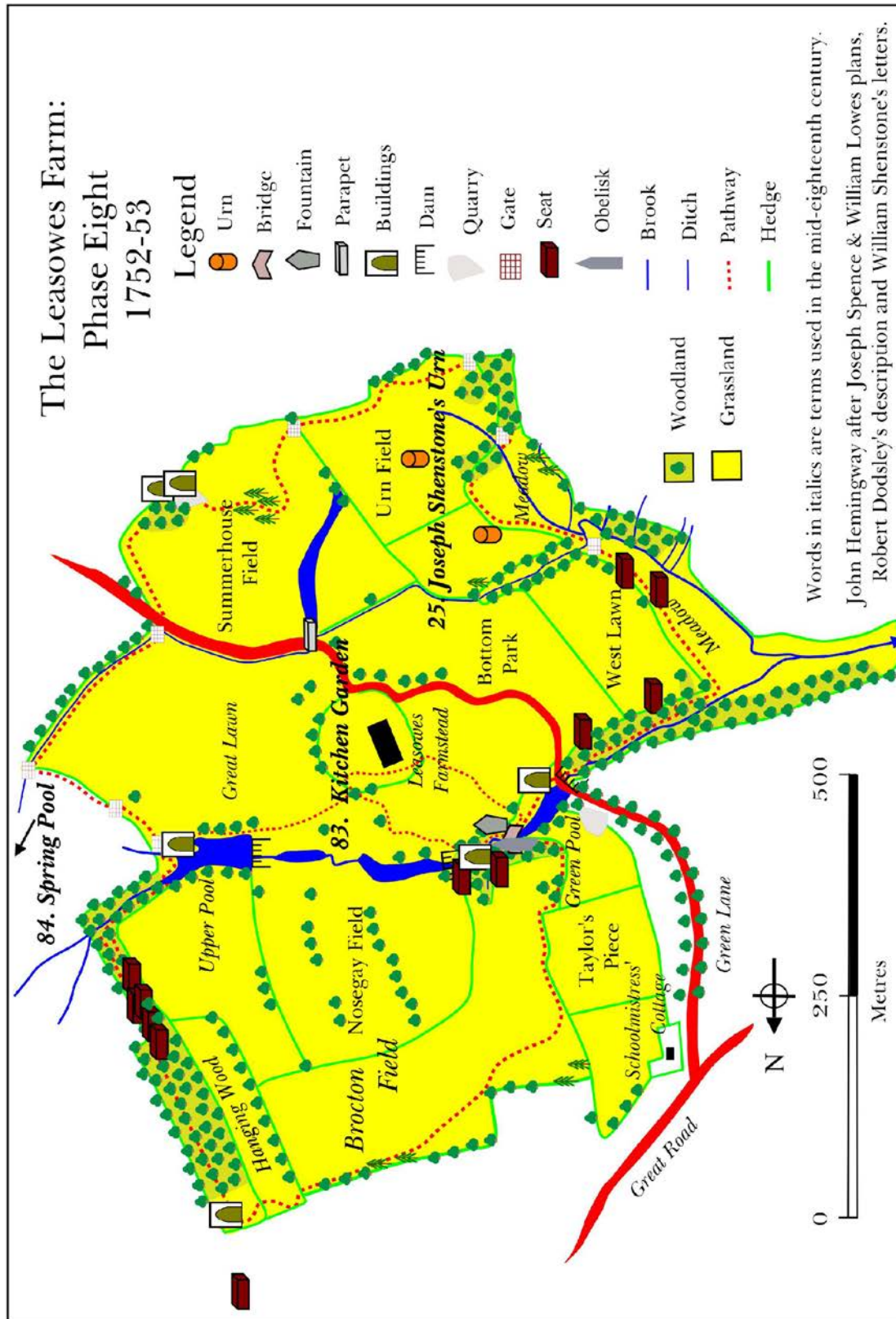


Fig. A1.16: Plan of the estate in 1752-53 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1752-1753			
84	SO981829	Spring Pool	Although there is no date for this feature it had to be here prior to 1754 when Shenstone began to create the South Cascade as he needed the water to make it operate properly.
25	SO981848	Joseph Shenstone's Urn	This classical type urn lay in the middle of the later named Urn Piece. Joseph Shenstone died in November 1751 and Thomas Hull records the urn had the date 1752 written on it together with some verse in Latin.
83	SO980480	Kitchen Garden	The earliest mention of the Kitchen Garden was in 1753, but it probably pre-dated this period.

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Table A1.14: ferme ornée features.

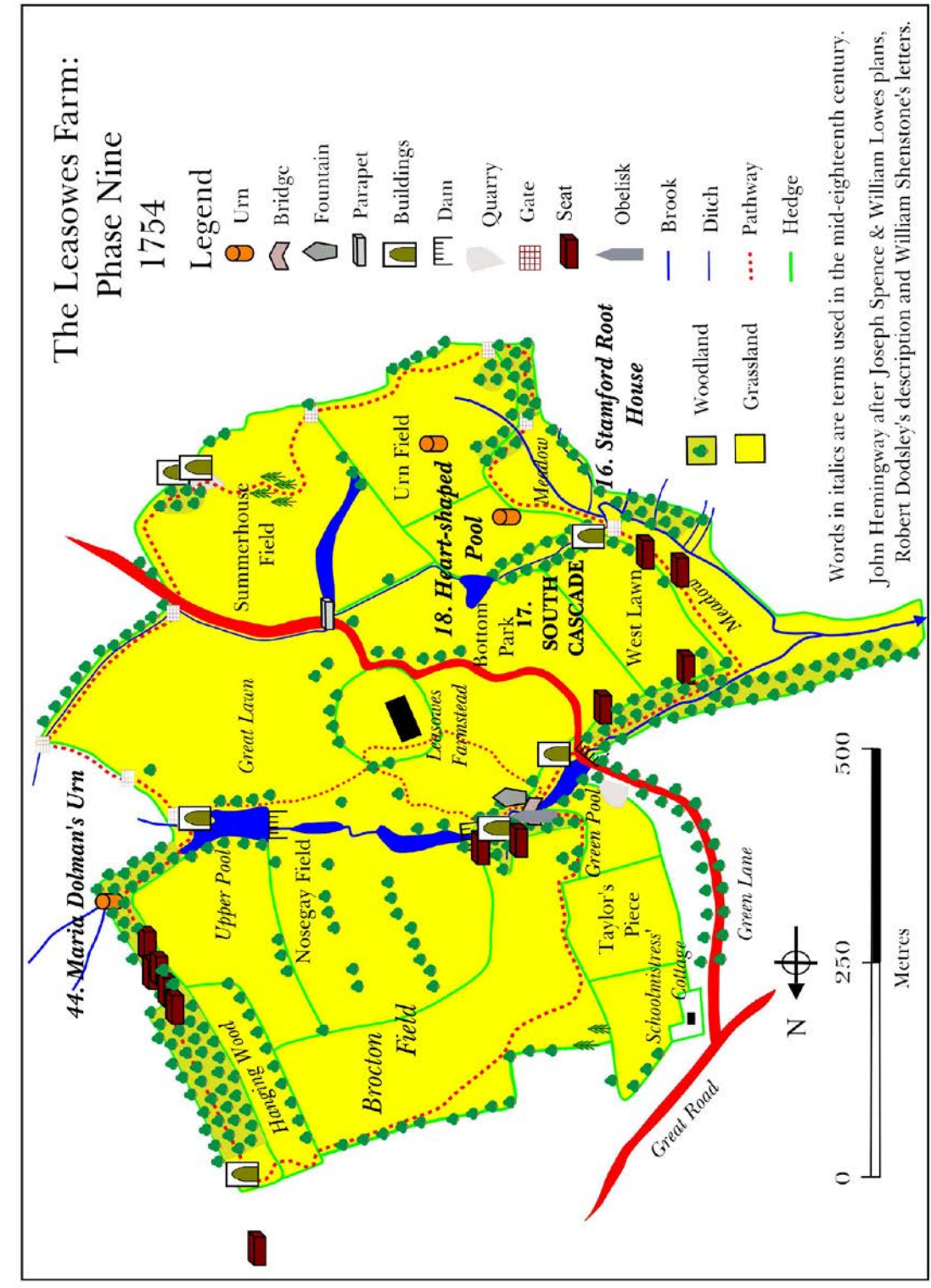


Fig. A1.17: Plan of the estate in 1754 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1754			
17	SO979838	SOUTH CASCADE	The South Cascade had started life as an east-west drain descending the slope. Shenstone lined it with stone and built a number of small waterfalls to make a series of cascades.
16	SO979838	Stamford Root House	The Stamford Root House lay beside the South Cascade and the junction of the circuit path and the South Cascade path.
18	SO979838	Heart-shaped Pool	This pool was the source of the water for the South Cascade. Its shape may have had something to do with Shenstone's desire to have a romantic part of his garden.
44	SO980380	Maria Dolman's Urn	This classical urn was placed at the end of Lover's Walk after Maria Dolman's death in 1754.

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Table A1.15: ferme ornée features.

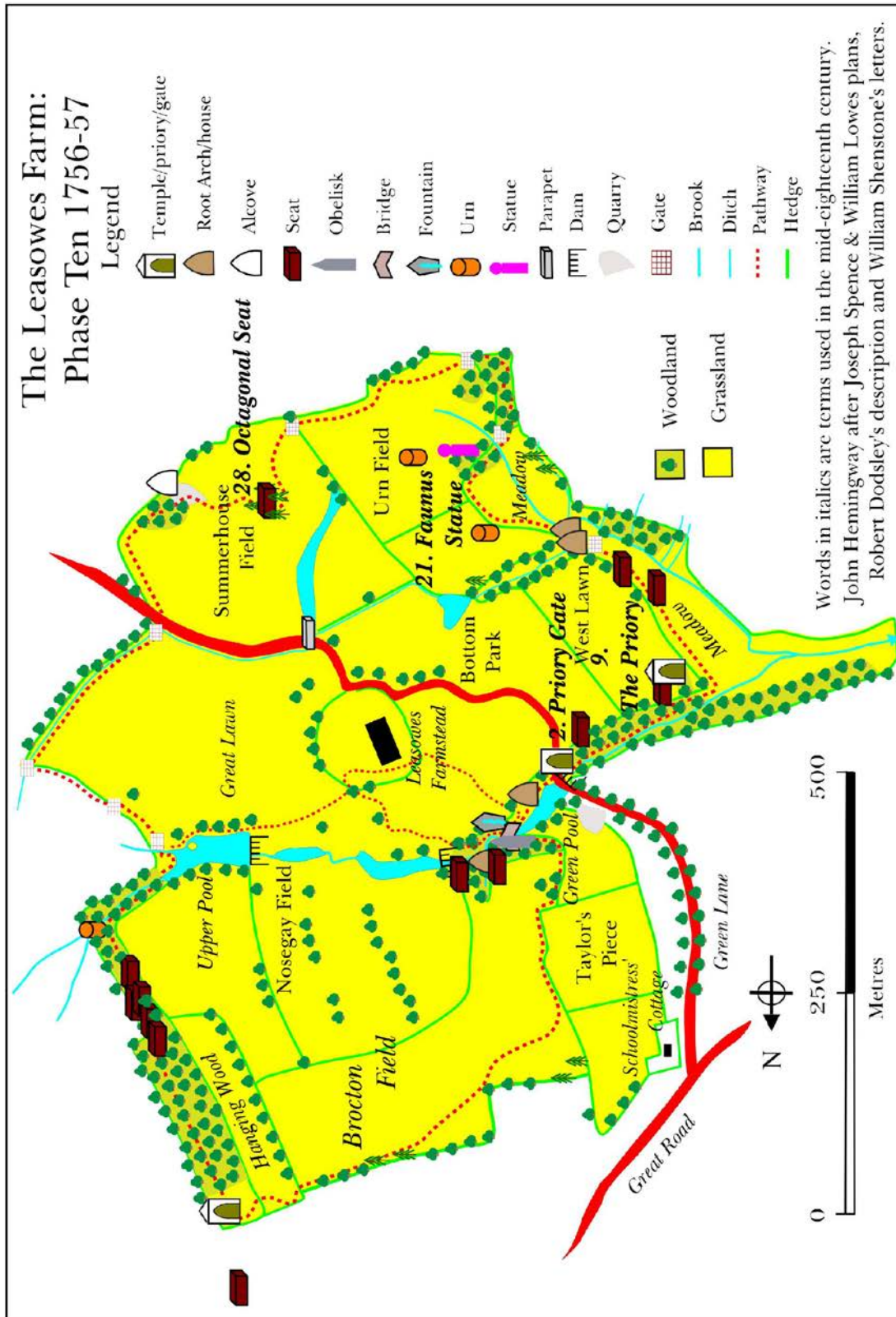


Fig. A1.18: Plan of the estate in 1756-57 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1756-1757			
28	SO982838	Octagonal Seat	The Octagonal Seat lay in the middle of Shenstone's circle of fir trees (see No. 1) in the later named Summerhouse Field. The Scotch firs acted as a frame for a multitude of views across his landscape garden and beyond.
9	SO977839	The Priory	The ruined Medieval-type priory was started in 1756 built of ashlar blocks from St. Mary's Abbey, Lapal and rough stone from Shenstone's farm. He added items to the inside in order to make a shrine and built an attached cottage for a tenant.
2	SO982838	Priory Gate	Priory Gate was erected in rough stone with a thatched roof at the commencement of Priory Walk next to the Green Lane bridge. It had arrow loops on either side of a very narrow entrance. It appeared to have been designed as a medieval defensive structure.
21	SO979838	Faunus Statue	The Faunus Statue was a gift of Robert Dodsley. It was sited on a rise close to the Forest Ground. It may have stood on a stone plinth and was a lead reproduction. John Cheere made statues of this type for gardens.

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Table A1.16: ferme ornée features.

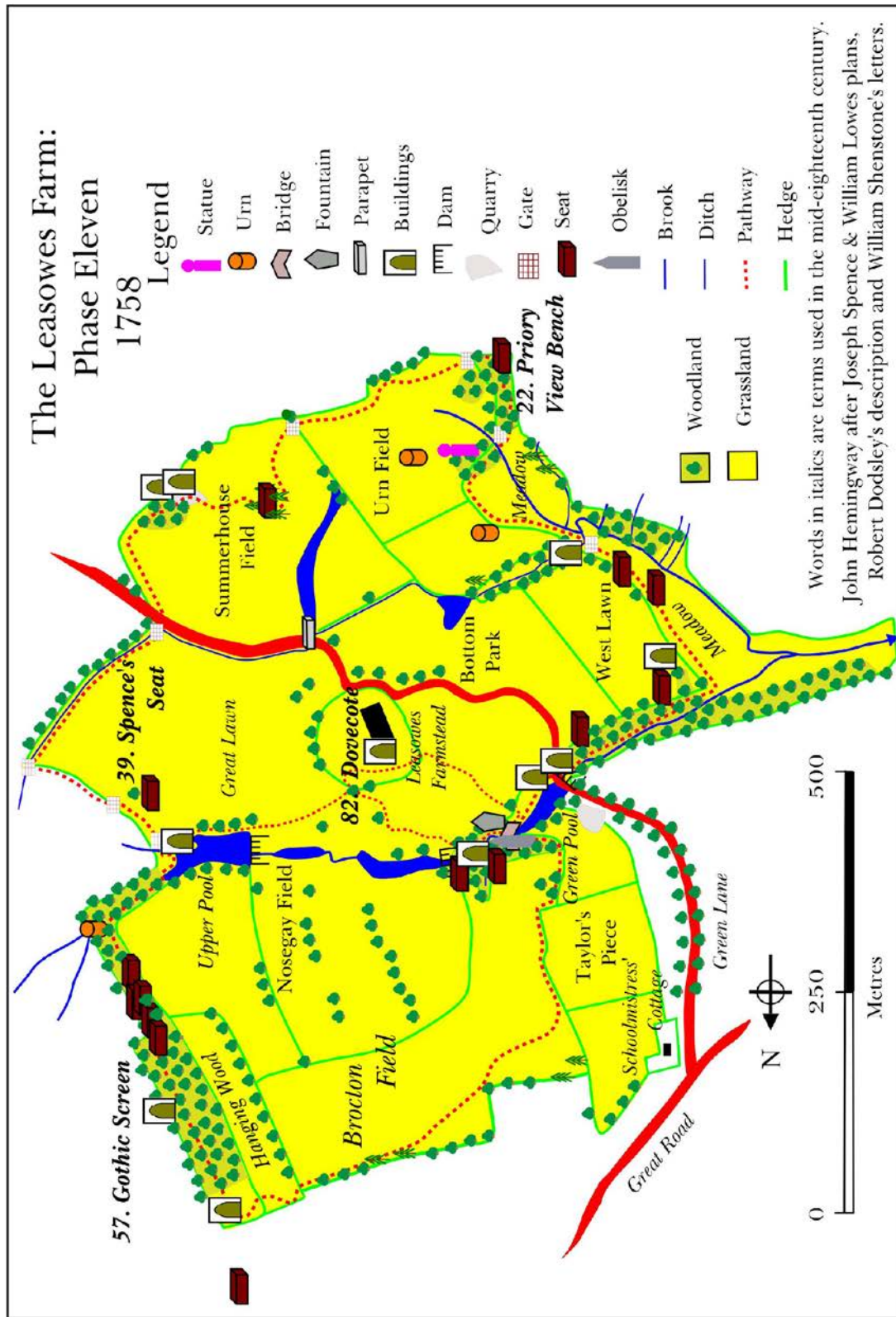


Fig. A1.19: Plan of the estate in 1758 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden				
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description	
1758				
22	SO9879836	Priory View Bench	This bench of unknown manufacture lay at the southwest corner of the estate.	
39	SO982841	Spence's Seat	This seat is of unknown manufacture but was sited in the Great Lawn by the east boundary. Joseph Spence visited The Leasowes for a week in 1758 and chose a place under a beech tree where he would like a seat to be placed dedicated to him.	
52	SO981843	Gothic Seat	Shenstone recorded that he had built this structure in stone in 1758 for a price of £10. It was sited in the middle of Hanging Wood with views towards the west.	
82	SO980840	Dovecote	Shenstone recorded that he had built a new building opposite the stable in his farmyard in 1758 and that it gives 'my house a degree of splendour'. It is likely that the Italianate building shown in engravings of the farmstead was what he meant. Dodsley referred to it as a menagerie for doves.	

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Table A1.17: ferme ornée features.

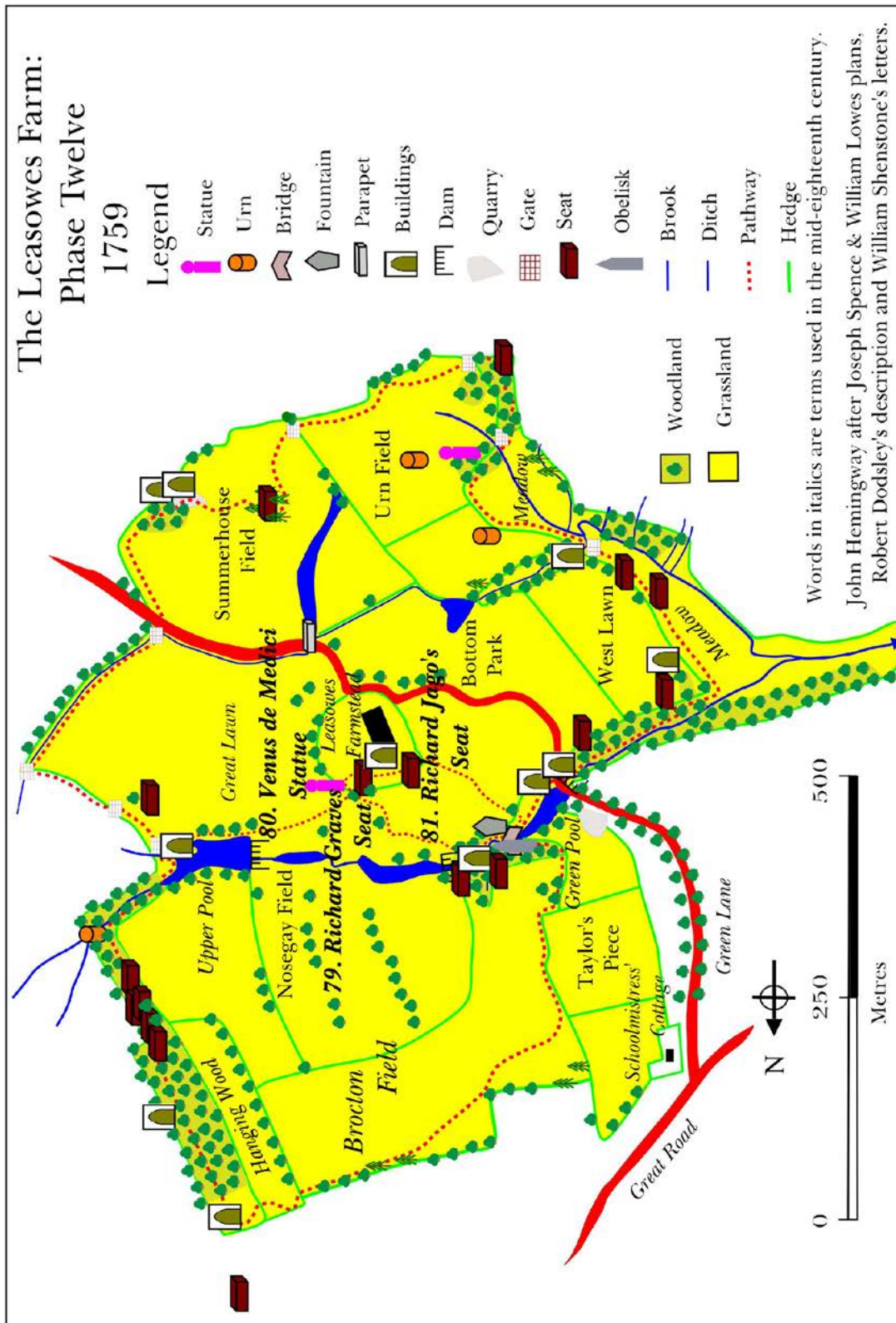


Fig. A1.20: Plan of the estate in 1759 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1759			
79	SO980840	Richard Graves Seat	The seat was of unknown manufacture and was sited in Shenstone's shrubbery.
81	SO980840	Richard Jago's Seat	The seat was of unknown manufacture and was sited in Shenstone's shrubbery.
80	SO980840	Venus de Medici Statue	This statue, which Shenstone placed in his shrubbery, was made of lead covered by gesso. The statue seems to have been acquired after he saw a copy in his friend Sherrington Davenport's garden in 1759.
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Table A1.18: ferme ornée features.

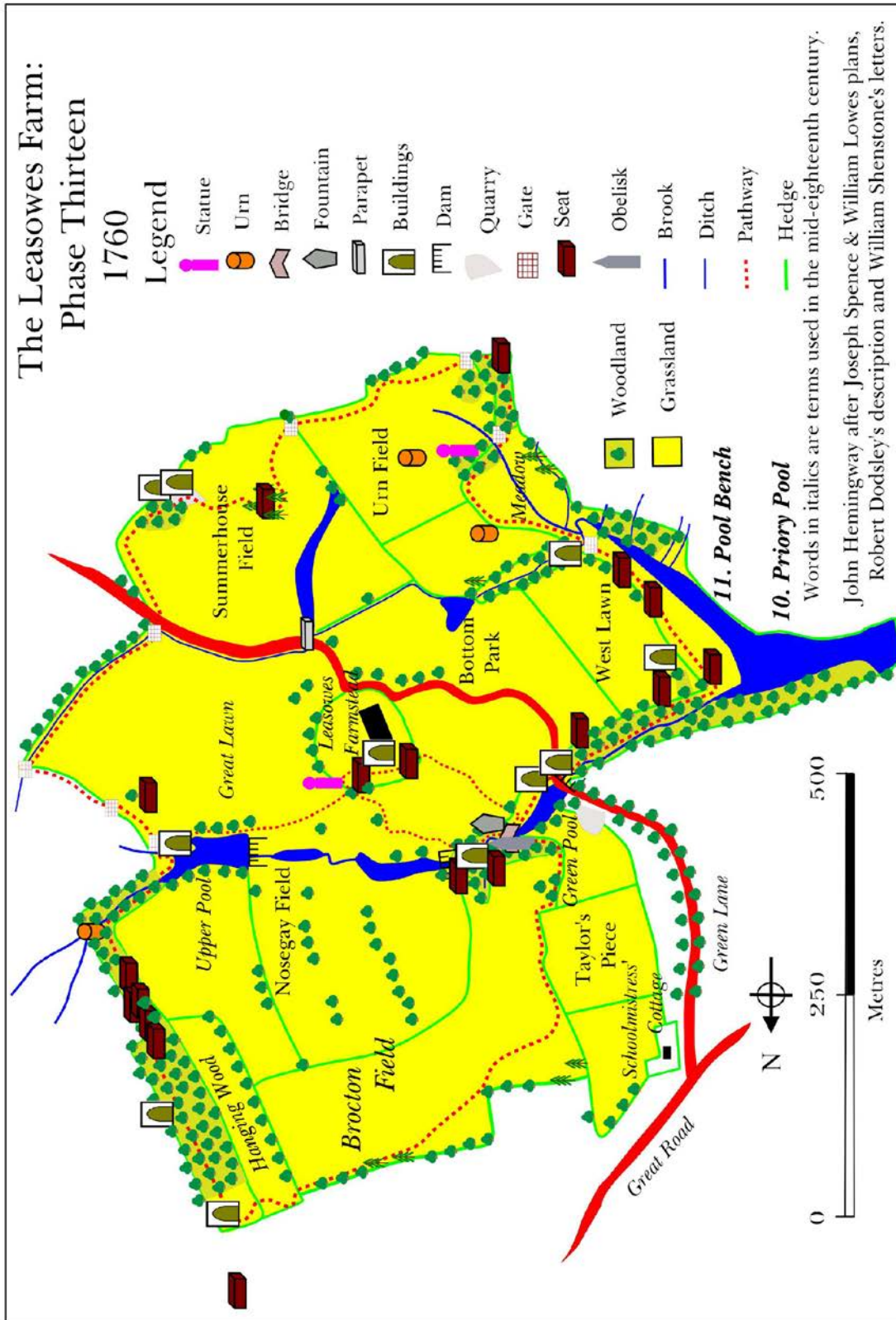


Fig. A1.21: Plan of the estate in 1760 taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
1760			
10	SO976836	Priory Pool	Shenstone started to work on this pool, which he made from his meadow in March 1760. The pool continued to occupy the men working on it for some years after. It curved around the fields and was intended to look like a river.
11	SO976836	Pool Bench	A bench of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the east side of the pool.

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Table A1.19: ferme ornée features.

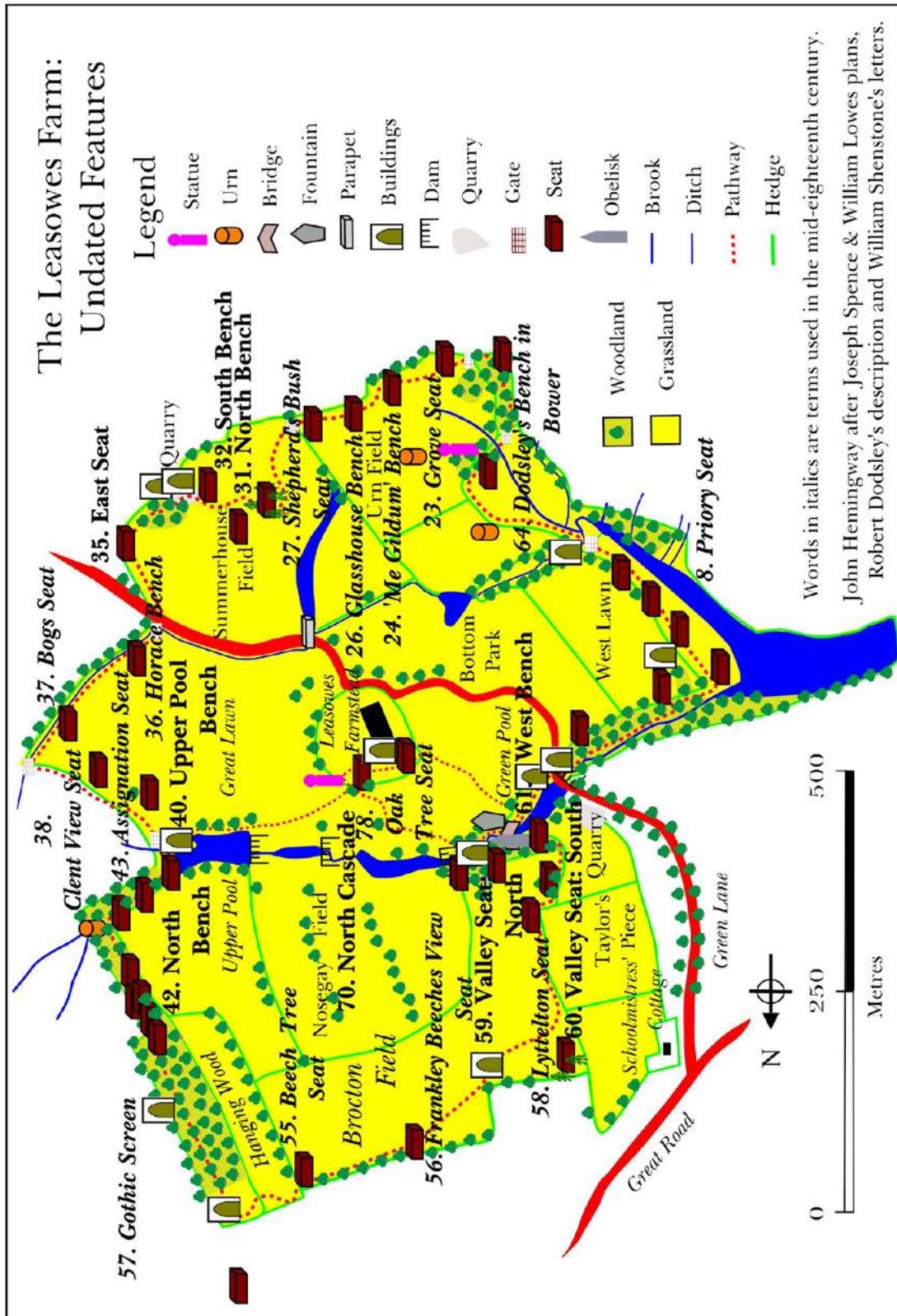


Fig. A1.22: Plan of the undated features of the estate taken from various descriptions of The Leasowes.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
Not dated			
8	SO978839	Priory Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the west side of the Priory.
23	SO980837	Grove Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Urn Piece.
24	SO980840	'Me Gildum' Bench	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Urn Piece.
26	SO980840	Glasshouse Bench	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Urn Piece.
27	SO980840	Shepherd's Bush Seat	This seat may have been decorated in the style of a drawing that Shenstone sent to Henrietta Knight and was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Summerhouse Field.
31	SO980840	NORTH BENCH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Summerhouse Field.

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Table A1.20: ferme ornée features.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
Not dated			
32	SO980837	SOUTH BENCH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Summerhouse Field.
35	SO980840	EAST SEAT	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Summerhouse Field.
36	SO980840	Horace Bench	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay underneath a beech tree on the east boundary of the estate in the Great Lawn field.
37	SO981841	Bogs Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the south-east side of the estate in Great Lawn.
38	SO982841	Clent View Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the south-east side of the Great Lawn.
40	SO981842	UPPER POOL BENCH'	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the north-west side of the Lover's Grove.

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Table A1.21: ferme ornée features.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
Not dated			
42	SO981842	NORTH BENCH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the north-west side of the Lover's Grove, facing north.
43	SO981842	Assignment Seat	This seat, which seemed to be half hidden by the branches of a beech tree, was sited besides the north brook in Lover's Walk.
55	SO983840	Beech Tree Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited on the east side of the estate in Brocton Field.
56	SO9879843	Frankley Becchcs View Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the north side of the estate in Brocton Field.
57	SO977839	CLASSICAL SCREEN	This screen of unrecorded manufacture was built in the middle of the north boundary of the farm.
58	SO981841	Lyttelton Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the north side of the estate in Brocton Field.

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Table A1.22: ferme ornée features.

Features that lay within The Leasowes landscape garden			
Plan Number	Map reference	Site	Description
Not dated			
59	SO981842	VALLEY SEAT: NORTH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the west side of the estate in Brocton Field.
60	SO981842	VALLEY SEAT: SOUTH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the west side of the estate in Brocton Field.
61	SO981842	WEST BENCH	This seat of unrecorded manufacture lay on the south-west side of the estate in Brocton Field.
64	SO979838	Dodsley's Bench in Bower	This bench of unrecorded manufacture lay in Dodsley's Bower within a circle of oak trees.
70	SO980841	NORTH CASCADE	This cascade lay between the Middle Pool and the Dingle Pool.
78	SO983840	Oak Tree Seat	This seat of unrecorded manufacture was sited underneath an oak tree on the east side Virgil's Grove half way across the Great Lawn leading to the farmstead.

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Table A1.23: ferme ornée features.

**Appendix Two:
Books, Periodicals and Pamphlets in William
Shenstone's Library**

A4.1 Introduction

There were seven hundred and seventy four books recorded in the inventory of his estate made on Shenstone's death in 1763.¹⁴⁵⁰ As no detailed list was recorded of what was there the writer has searched through various correspondences in order to find out what he had. The research revealed that Shenstone and his friends, Richard Graves, Henrietta Knight and Robert Dodsley refer to two hundred and thirty books and nine periodicals, over a quarter of the amount recorded in his library.¹⁴⁵¹

Although he liked books for their own sake, as a literary man he liked to keep abreast of what was being published, particularly poetry. His friend, the publisher, Robert Dodsley, sent volumes of the latest works, as well as books that John Baskerville published at his Birmingham printing works. He is also recorded as collecting and reading periodicals and newspapers and in the Chancery Proceedings a bill for newspapers was also included.¹⁴⁵² This suggests that although he lived a rural life he was not divorced on what was going on in the country at large.

Shenstone was recorded as having a book press. This was an instrument for pressing pages down during the process of binding: loose pages were sewn

¹⁴⁵⁰ C12/1892/22 S2485, 1765 Inventory, Chancery Proceedings, Public Record Office. These proceedings were made after Shenstone's death by his housekeeper Mary as a means of getting monies due her.

¹⁴⁵¹ Shenstone, William, in Williams, Marjorie *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939).

¹⁴⁵² C12/1892/22 S2485, 1765 Inventory, op. cit.

together, pressed and then a cover of card and leather glued to the spine. In a letter to his friend Richard Jago on the 13th November 1748 he wrote how to do it.¹⁴⁵³ Thomas Percy on 15th February 1760 also recounts his book-binding accomplishments. It is probable that he had sheets from the printers which he bound himself and possible that he also bound the various periodicals that he received.

The library of William Shenstone passed into the hands of others at the same time as his property was sold on his death. A few of the books turned up at a sale in London in 1765, two years later, where they were advertised in a catalogue of folio books for sale by Thomas Davies bookseller of Covent Garden. Although the list of titles of the books was described unfortunately the sale was part of two other gentlemen's collections and it is now impossible to state which were his and which belonged to others.¹⁴⁵⁴

A4.2. Not mentioned, but probably in the collection

The Holy Bible.

Shakespeare, William, *The works of Shakespeare: in eight volumes. Collated with the oldest copies, and corrected*, ed. Lewis Theobald, 8 vols. (London, 1740).

Somerville, William, *The Chase* - a poem (London, George Hawkins, 1725).

Bunyan, John, *Pilgrims Progress* 2nd Edition, (London, 1736).

¹⁴⁵³ Shenstone, William, in Williams, Marjorie, op. cit., p. 177.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Houghton B1705.785.20. Page from *Public Advertiser*, 6th July 1765, Harvard University Houghton (Cambridge, Massachusetts).

Switzer, Stephen, *Ichnographia Rustica* (London, Brown, D. Barker, K. King, C., 1718).

A4.3 Recorded Magazines and Newspapers that Shenstone read

Critical Review 1756-1816: Edited - Tobias Smollet, book reviews, (Tory) Bi-monthly. Referred to in: William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 6th January 1759, Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 504.

Edinburgh Review 1755-1756: half yearly. Graves, Richard, *Recollections in the life of the late William Shenstone*, (London, J. Dodsley 1788), p. 20.

Gentleman's Magazine 1731-1922: Monthly (Tory) W. S. to Richard Graves, 6th February 1741, Williams, Marjorie, op. cit., p. 21. Carpenter, I. S. (1749) 'Memoirs of the late Duke of Somerset', *Gentleman's Magazine*, W. S. to Lady Luxborough, 26th November 1749, ibid, p. 241. According to Graves Shenstone was involved in a contest with other writers in this magazine against enigmas and riddles. Graves, Richard, op. cit., p. 98.

London Chronicle or Universal Evening Post 1757-1765: thrice weekly. A Dodsley Publication. Cost two pence, W. S. to R. G. 28th November 1745, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 100. Article in same: Chambers, William, 'An Essay on the Chinese manner of laying out a Garden Ground' Tierney, James E. (Ed.) *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733-1764*, (Cambridge, University Press, 1988), p. 279.

London Magazine or The Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, 1732-1785 (Whig) W. S. to R. J. 2nd June 1749, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 203.

The Rambler (A periodical by Dr. Samuel Johnson published 1750-1752.) W. S. to R. G. 9th February 1760, ibid, p. 549.

The Annual Register 1758- "A View of the History, Politicks and Literature of the Year ..." A Dodsley Publication. Edited - Edmund Burke. W. S. to Robert Dodsley February 11th 1761, ibid, p. 571.

The Monthly Review 1749 – 1845: W. S. to R. G. 22nd July 1758, ibid, p. 486.

The Spectator 1711-1714: Thrice Weekly; Joseph Addison and Richard Steel, (Whig). Graves, Richard, ibid, p. 20.

The Tatler 1709-1711 Graves, Richard, op. cit., p. 20.

A4.4 Recorded Books in Shenstone's Library

Akenside, Dr., *Odes on Several Subjects* (1745) W. S. to Thomas Percy, 3rd October 1759, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 532.

Arbuthnot, John, *History of John Bull* (1712) W. S. to L. L. 1750, *ibid*, p. 272. 'Shenstone thought it was by Jonathon Swift'.

Baldwin, Sew'd, *Memoirs of the Life and Ministerial Conduct of the late Lord Bolingbroke* (1752) W. S. to R. J. 27th Feb 1753, *ibid*, p 352.

Baskerville, John, *Virgil* (1757) W. S. to R. G. 7th March 1757. *ibid*, p. 464.

Baskerville, John, *An Ode Upon the Fleet – poem* (1761) 14th September 1761 in *ibid*, p. 588. Presented to Shenstone by John Baskerville on 13th September 1761.

Baskerville, John, *Horace* (1761) W. S. to Mr MacGowan October 1761, *ibid*, p. 596.

Bolingbroke, Lord, St John, Henry (London, A. Miller, 1752) *Letters on the spirit of patriotism* W. S. to R. J. 2nd June 1749. *ibid*, p. 203.

Bolingbroke, Lord, St. John Henry, *Epitaph for Daniel Pulteney*, W. S. to L. L. 30th June 1750, Hodgetts, John, (ed.), *Letters Written by the late Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone Esq.*, (London, J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 208.

Beaumont, Francis, & Fletcher John, *Bondica – a play* (1610) W. S. to L. L. 8th February 1753, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 374.

Boyle, John, Earl of Orey, *Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Swift* (1751) W. S. to R. G. 25th January 1752, *ibid*, p. 331.

Brooke, Henry, *Fables for the Female Sex*, (1743) W. S. to R. J. 29th January 1743, *ibid*, p. 349.

Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, (1757) W. S. to R. G. 3rd October 1759, *ibid*, p. 525. Dr. Schwartz had the book in which he said that Shenstone and Graves (who had it after Shenstone's death) made annotations in it. Williams, Marjorie, *William Shenstone; A Chapter in Eighteenth Century Taste*, (Birmingham, Cornish Bros, 1935) p. 111.

Burton, John, *Sacerdos Paroecialis Rusticus* (Oxford, 1757) Brookes, Cleanth, (ed.) *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977), p. 2.

Butler, Samuel, *Hudibras*, (1663) W. S. to R. J. 23rd December 1762, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 37.

Butler, Samuel, *The Genuine Remains in Verse and Prose of Mr Samuel Butler* (1759) W. S. to R. G. 26th October 1759, *ibid*, p. 528.

Bruyere, de la *The Works of Monsieur de La Bruyere* (two vols.) (1755), W. S. to R. G. 22nd July 1758, *ibid*, p. 486. Sent by Mr M'Gowan of Edinburgh. This book was in the possession of Captain Pleadwell of Washington, USA who stated that it had little flourishes in it drawn by Shenstone. Williams, Marjorie, (1935) op. cit., p. 111.

Capell, Edward, *Probusians* (1760) W. S. to T. P. 11th August 1760, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 560.

Carte, Thomas, *History of England* (1747) W. S. to L. L. 14th February 1747-8, *ibid*, p. 125.

Carter, Miss., *Poems on Several Occasions* (1762) W. S. to Miss M. 3rd March 1762, *ibid*, p. 611.

Chalmers, Mr., *Poets XI: An Elegy to an old Beauty* W. S. to Christopher Wren 2nd November 1750 *ibid*, p. 291.

Gibber, Colley, *Apology for Life* (1740) W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749, *ibid*, p. 236.

Cicero, *Fam.*, W. S. to Sherrington Davenport 4th January 1763, *ibid*, p. 646.

Clayton, Robert, *The Essay on Spirit wherein the doctrine of the Trinity is considered in the light of Nature & Reason* (1751) W. S. to John Hylton 3rd November 1759, *ibid*, p. 530.

Collins, William, *Persian Eclogues* (1742) W. S. to T. P. 16th February 1760, *ibid*, p. 552.

Colman, Robert & Lloyd, Robert, *Odes to Obscurity and Oblivion* (1760) W. S. to T. P. 11th August 1760, *ibid*, p. 560.

Cooper, Elizabeth, *The Muses Library*, (1737) Brookes, Cleanth, op cit., p. 161.

Cooper, Anthony Ashley, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1737) W. S. to L. L. 16th June 1748, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) op. cit., p. 148.

Cooper, John Gilbert, *The Life of Socrates* (1749) W. S. to L. L. 13th November 1749, *ibid*, p. 236.

Cooper, John Gilbert, *Letters on Taste* (1754) W. S. to R. G. 21st March 1755, *ibid*, p. 434.

Cooper, John Gilbert, *Epistles to the great, from Aristippus in Retirement* (1758) W. S. to T. P. 4th January 1758, *ibid*, p. 478.

Cotton, Charles, *Scarronides or the First Book of Virgil Travestie* (1664) Graves, Richard, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

Cotton, Charles, *Essays of Michael Seignure Montaigne* (3 vols. London, T. Basset, 1685) W. S. to R. D. 19th March 1759, Tierney, James E., *op. cit.*, p. 407.

Coventry, Francis, *Penshurst, a poem, inscribed to William Perry Esq and the Hon. Mrs Elizabeth Perry* (1750) W. S. to R. G. 21st March 1755, Williams, Marjorie, (1939) *op. cit.*, p. 434.

Coventry, Francis, *The History of Pompey the Little, or the Life of a Lap-Dog* (1751) W. S. to L. L. 25th May 1751, *ibid*, p. 310.

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Young, Edward, *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1742) W. S. to R. G. August 1742, *ibid*, p. 59.

Young, Edward, *The Brothers* (1753) W. S. to L. L. 28th March 1753, *ibid*, p. 356.

Young, Edward, *A Letter to Richardson, Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759) W. S. to T. P. 6th June 1759, *ibid*, p. 513.

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Unknown, *Letters wrote by a Peruvian Lady from the French* W. S. to L. L. 18th December 1748, *ibid*, p. 181.

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Unknown, *Juvenalis et Persius* Presented to William Shenstone by John Baskerville May 6th 1761. Bennett, William, *John Baskerville*, (Birmingham, City of Birmingham School of Printing, 1937) p. 170.

**Appendix Three:
Poems and Verse used at The Leasowes**

1. ¹⁴⁵⁵ **Green Pool Root house**

Here, in cool grott, & mossy Cell,
We Fauns & playful Fairies dwell,
Tho' rarely seen by mortal Eye,
When ye pale Moon, ascended high,
Darts thro' yon Limes her quiv'ring beam,
We frisk it near this crystal stream.

Her beams, reflected from the wave,
Afford the light our revels crave;
The turf, with daisies broider'd o'er,
Exceeds, we wot, the Parian floor;
Nor yet for artful strains we call,
But listen to the water's fall.

Would you then taste our tranquil scene,
Before your bosoms be serene;
Devoid of hate, devoid of strife,
Devoid of all that poisons life:
And much it'vails you in their place,
To graft the love of human race.

And tread with awe these favour'd bowers,
Not wound the shrubs, nor bruise the flowers,
So may your path with Sweets abound!
So may your couch with rest be crown'd!
But harm betide the wayward swain
Who dares our hallow'd haunts profane!

Oberon.¹⁴⁵⁶

Fauns: a rustic forest god or place-spirit (*genii*) of Roman mythology often associated with Greek satyrs and the Greek god Pan.

Parian: Paros the Greek island famous for its white marble.¹⁴⁵⁷

Oberon: King of the fairies.¹⁴⁵⁸

¹⁴⁵⁵ All the initial numbers are of the features recorded in the writers numbering system.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Shenstone, William, *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.* Vol. II (London, J. Dodsley, 1768), pp. 289-290.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Grant, Michael, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1962), pp. 330,119.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Rose, Carol *Spirits, Fairies, Leprechauns and Goblins: An Encyclopedia* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1996), p. 207.

8. Priory Gate Seat

*"Lucis Habitamus opacis,
Riparimque toros et prata recentia rivis
incolimus."*

We dwell in shady groves,
And seek the woods with cooling streams refreshed,
And trace the verdant banks.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁵⁹

13. Meliboeus' Seat

*Huc ades, O Meliboee! Caper tibi falvus et hoedi; Et fi quid ceffare potes, reqiefce fub
umbra.*

Come Hither, O Meliboeus! Thy herds, thy goats, secure from harm, repose;
If happy leisure serve a while to stay, Here rest thy limbs beneath these
shady boughs.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁶⁰

Meliboeus: A shepherd, who featured as a character in the first Eclogue of Virgil's *The Eclogues*. He is bemoaning his fate to his colleague Tityrus that he has lost his lands.¹⁴⁶¹

19. Somerville Urn

Ingenio et amicitie Gulielmi Somerville
To the genius and friendship of William Somerville.

G. S. Pofuit, Debita fpargens lacrima favillam Votis amici.
Sprinkling the ashes of a friendly bard with tributary tears.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁶²

William Somerville of Edstone Hall, Wootton was a hunting squire and poet. Shenstone was introduced to him by his school friend, Richard Jago and they became great friends. Somerville's most famous poem 'The Chase' was published in 1735. He realised that the young Shenstone had a talent for

¹⁴⁵⁹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 290.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 293.

¹⁴⁶¹ Lewis, C. D. *Virgil: The Eclogues and The Georgics* (Oxford University Press, 2009) p. xvii.

¹⁴⁶² Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 293.

poetry and pushed him into that direction, so it is probable that Shenstone saw him as his mentor.¹⁴⁶³

27. Shepherds Bush Seat

Shepherd, would'st thou here obtain
Pleasure unalloyed with pain?
Joy that suits the rural sphere?
Gentle shepherd, lend an ear.

Learn to relish calm delight,
Verdant vales and fountains bright;
Trees that nod on sloping hills,
Caves that echo tinkling rills.

If thou can'st no charm disclose
In the simplest bud that blows;
Go forsake thy plain and fold,
Join the crowd and toil for gold.

Tranquil pleasures never cloy;
Banish each tumultuous joy;
All but love - for love inspires
Fonder wishes, warmer fires.

Love and all its joys be thine -
Yet, ere thou the reins resign.
Hear what reason seems to say,
Hear attentive and obey.

Crimson leaves the rose adorn,
But beneath 'em lurks a thorn;
Fair and flow'ry is the brake
Yet it hides the vengeful snake.

Think not she, whose empty pride
Dares the fleecy garb deride,
Think not she, who, light and vain
Scorns the sheep, can love the swain

Artless deed and simple dress'
Mark the chosen shepherdess;
Thoughts by decency controlled,
Well conceiv'd, and freely told.

¹⁴⁶³ Somerville, William, *The Chase – a poem* (Suttaby, Evance & Co, 1811) pp. iii-iv.

Sense, that shuns each conscious air,
Wit, that falls ere well aware;
Generous pity, prone to sign
If her kid or lamkin die.

Let not lucre, let not pride,
Draw thee from such charms aside;
Have not those their proper sphere?
Gentler passions triumph here.

See, to sweeten thy repose,
The blossom buds, the fountain flows;
Lo to crown the healthful board,
All that milk and fruits afford.

Seek no more - the rest is vain;
Pleasure ending soon in pain;
Anguish lightly gilded o'er:
Close thy wish and seek no more.¹⁴⁶⁴

33. Gothic Seat

O you that bathe in courtly blysse
Or toyle in fortune's giddy spheare;
Do not too rashly deeme amyssse
Of him, that bydes contented here.

Nor yet disdeigne the russet stoale,
Which o'er each careless lymbe he flyngs;
Nor yet deryde the beechen bowle,
In wyche he quaffs the lympid springs.

Forgive him, if at eve or dawne,
Devoide of worldlye care he stray:
Or all beside some flowerye lawne,
He waste his inoffensive daye.

So may he pardonne fraud and strife,
If such in courtlye haunt he see:
For faults there beene in busye life,
From which these peaceful glennes are free.¹⁴⁶⁵

¹⁴⁶⁴ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 298-300.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 303.

36. Horace Seat

*Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus, hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquae
fons, et paulum sylvae super his foret. Actius atque dii melius fecere.*

Horace.¹⁴⁶⁶

I often wish'd I had a farm, a decent dwelling snug and warm; A garden, and
a spring as pure, as crystal, running by my door, besides a little ancient
grove, where at my leisure I might rove. The gracious gods to crown my
bliss, have granted this, and more than this.

Trans. Philip Francis.¹⁴⁶⁷

Quintus Horatius Flaccus (8 December 65 BC – 27 November 8 BC), known
in the English-speaking world as Horace, was the leading Roman lyric poet
during the time of the Emperor Augustus. The rhetorician Quintilian
regarded his Odes as almost the only Latin lyrics worth reading. In 38 B.
Horace met and became the client of the artists' patron Maecenas, who
provided Horace with a villa in the Sabine Hills.¹⁴⁶⁸

43. Assignation Seat

*Nerine Galatea! thymo ducior Hyblae, Candidior cygnis, hederiformosior alba! Cum
prius partu repetent praefepia tauri, Si qua tui Corydonis habet te cura, venito.*

O Galatea! Nereus' lovely child, sweeter than Hybla thyme, more undefil'd
than down of swans, or ivy's purest white, When the full oxen, warn'd by
fading light, home to the stall their sober footsteps bend, if Damon's dear, to
Damon's call attend.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁶⁹

Galatea was a Classical Greek Nereid, a sea - nymph (her name means milk-
white) who fell in love with Acis, the son of Faunus. The Cyclops Polyphemus
threw a boulder at him and killed him so she turned him into the River Acis
in Sicily.¹⁴⁷⁰

Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorraine painted pictures of her and George
Frederick Handel, William's favourite composer, composed an opera on the

¹⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 304.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Heely, Joseph, *A Description of Hagley, Leasowes and Enville* (Birmingham, M Swinney, 1775), pp. 36-37.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Michie, James, (trans.) *The Odes of Horace* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Classics, 1970), pp. 11-14.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p.307.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Grant, Michael, op. cit., p. 440.

theme of the couple. The opera was originally composed in 1718, but Handel reworked it in 1739. Act 1 is a rural scene in which shepherds and nymphs enjoy the 'pleasure of the plains'. Acis' friend, the shepherd Damon, brings the couple together. Act 2 sees the arrival of Polyphemus and Acis ignores Damon's warning of the 'fleeting existence of loves delights' is killed.¹⁴⁷¹

Shenstone called himself Damon in his poetry and the poem seems to represent unrequited love and given the lack of interest that Maria Dolman had in him romantically it may have been their relationship that he had in mind when he created Lovers Walk.

44. Maria Dolman's Urn

Peramabili Suae Consobrinae M. D.

Sacred to the memory of a most amiable kinswoman M. D.

"Ah Maria Puellarum Elegantissima Ah Flore Venustatis Abrepta, Vale! Heu Quanto Minus Est Cum Reliquis Versari Quam Tui Meminisse!"

Ah! Maria! Most amiable of nymphs! Snatched from us in thy bloom of beauty, how much inferior is the living conversation of others to the bare remembrance of thee!

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁷²

In Broome so neat, in Broome so clean,
In Broome all on the Green.
O! there did I see as bright a lass,
As bright as ever was seen.

Her hair was at that very brown,
That doth all browns excell;
And theres never a hair on all her head,
But curls delightfully well.

"O! what shall I do," the poet said,
"My fate is past compare,
For she takes all the verses that ever I make,
And with them curls her hair".

"She twirls her hair ere break of day,
And makes so sure a chain,
That never was heart entangled there,

¹⁴⁷¹ Gammond, Peter, *The A-Z of Classical Composers* (Bramley Books, 1997), pp. 80-83.

¹⁴⁷² Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 307.

Did ever get loose again."

"But would she leave her curling craft
And dwell in the greenwood with me;
I'd give her a bonnet as green as the grass
And a mantle down to her knee."

"Alas! Alas! and well-a-day!
This foolish heart of mine.
To think that a sonnet so vile and mean,
Should tempt a lass so fine.

A poem Shenstone wrote about Maria Dolman.¹⁴⁷³

62. Virgil's Obelisk

Genio P Vigilii Maronis, Lapis iste cum Lucio, Sacer esto!

To the Genius of Publius Virgilius Maro, be the stone & Grove Sacred!

Trans. Thomas Hull.¹⁴⁷⁴

Publius Vergilius Maro (October 15, 70 BC – September 21, 19 BC), usually called Virgil in English, was an ancient Roman poet of the Augustan period. He is known for three major works of Latin literature, the Eclogues (or Bucolics) from the Greek meaning a selection, the Georgics, and the epic Aeneid. Virgil is traditionally ranked as one of Rome's greatest poets.¹⁴⁷⁵

63. James Thomson's Seat

Celeberrimo poetae Iacobo Thompson, prope fontes illi non fastiditos G.S. sedem hanc ornavit.

To the most celebrated poet James Thomson this seat was placed near his favourite spring, William Shenstone.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁷⁶

Quae tibi, quae tali reddam pro carmine dona? Nam neque me tantum venientis fibilus austri Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam litora, nex quae Saxofas inter decurrunt flumina valles.

¹⁴⁷³ Burns, Francis, Daniel, Alexander, 'William Shenstone: A critical biography and an edition of his poetical work' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1971), p. 183.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA, Hull, Thomas, Osborne, c. 20, 1 v: Hull, Thomas, (c.1760) Shenstone's Walks, MSS of 30 pages.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Lewis, C. D., op. cit., pp. xi, xii.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 314.

What thanks, what recompence, can my weak lay, For such exalted strains as
thine repay? Not from fresh whispers of the southern breeze, Nor gentle
dashings of the calmest seas; Nor from the murm'ring rills, such joys I feel,
That gliding down the pebbly valleys steal.

Trans. Thomas Warton.¹⁴⁷⁷

64. Robert Dodsley's Bench

Sweet Naiad, in this Chrystal wave
Thy beauteous limbs with Freedom love,
By friendly shades encompast fly
The rude Approach of vulgar Eye –
Yet grant the courteous & the kind
To trace thy footsteps unconfined,
And grant the Swain thy Charms to see,
Who from these friendly shades for thee.

*Robert Dodsley*¹⁴⁷⁸

66. High Cascade Seat

O let me haunt this peaceful shade
Not let Ambition o'er invade
The tenants of this leafy bower
That shun her paths and flight her power
Hither the peaceful Halcyon flies
From social meads, and open skies
Pleased by this rill her course to steer
And hide her sapphire plumage here.

The trout, bedropt with crimson stains,
Forsakes the river's proud domains;
Forsakes the fun's unwelcome gleam,
To lurk within this humble stream.
And sure I hear the Naiad say,
Flow, flow, my stream, this devious way,
Tho' lovely soft thy murmurs are,
Thy waters lovely cool and fair.

Flow, gentle stream, nor let the vain
Thy small unfully'd stores disdain:
Nor let the pensive sage repine,

¹⁴⁷⁷ Heely, Joseph, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 58.

Whose latent course resembles thine.¹⁴⁷⁹

Halcyon: Kingfisher.

Naiad: Water nymphs; a type of nymph who presided over fountains, wells, springs, streams, and brooks.¹⁴⁸⁰

67. Chalybeate Spring

Fons Ferrugineus Divae quae secessu isto frui concedit Salute S

The Chalybeate Fountain; sacred to the Goddess Health, by whose favour we enjoy this retirement.

Trans. Robert Dodsley.¹⁴⁸¹

Inscription for a medicinal Fountain in my Farm.

Thy sacred Nymph! whose pious fair
Pours from thy urn this mineral rill
Whose healing Draughts, like crystal fair,
In pleasing murmurs here distill!

Where guidst ye stream, in joyst to dwell
Where murmurs soft wch use agree,
May Phoebus haunt this hallow'd well
And all his sisters learn of thee.

W.S.^{1482*}

*Found in William Shenstone's copy-book now in the Wellesley College Collection, Massachusetts, USA.

Phoebus: Another name for Apollo. The word Phoebus means god of light and the sun.¹⁴⁸³

80. Semi-reducta Venus

To Venus, Venus here retired,
My sober vows I pay;

¹⁴⁷⁹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., pp. 316-317.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Grant, Michael, op. cit., p. 441.

¹⁴⁸¹ Shenstone, William, op. cit., p. 317.

¹⁴⁸² Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, Margaret Clapp Library, Special Collections - microfilm), Shenstone's copy-book, no page number.

¹⁴⁸³ Grant, Michael, op. cit., pp. 133-141.

Not her on Paphian plains admir'd,
 The bold, the pert, the gay;
 Not her whose amorous leer prevail'd
 to bribe the Phrygian boy;
 Not her who, clad in armour, fail'd
 To save disast'rous Troy.
 Fresh rising from the foamy tide,
 She ev'ry bosom warms,
 While half withdrawn she seems to hide,
 And half reveals, her charms.
 Learn hence ye boastful sons of Taste!
 Who plan the rural shade;
 Learn hence to shun the vicious waste
 Of pomp at large display'd.
 Let sweet concealment's magic art
 Your mazy bounds invest,
 And while the sight unveils a part,
 Let fancy paint the rest.
 Let coy reserve with cost unite,
 To grace your wood or field,
 No ray obtrusive pall the sight,
 In aught you paint or build.
 And far be driven the sumptuous glare
 Of gold, from British grove,
 And far the meretricious air
 Of China's vain alcoves.
 T'is bashful beauty ever twines
 The most coercive chain;
 Tis she, that sovereign rule declines,
 Who best deserves to reign.¹⁴⁸⁴

Paphian: Paphos an ancient city of Cyprus sacred to Aphrodite/Venus.
 Phrygian: Ovid tells the story of a handsome boy called Attis, keeper of
 flocks, who was beloved by the goddess Cybele. He promised to be true but
 due to Venus, (Love) he broke his word with a nymph. Cybele killed the
 nymph and Attis castrated himself at being caught and turned into a pine
 tree.¹⁴⁸⁵

¹⁴⁸⁴ Shenstone, William, op. cit., pp. 319-320.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Grant, Michael, op. cit., pp. 146, 282.

**Appendix Four:
‘The Shrubby’.
An extract from James Woodhouse’s Poem ‘The
Leasowes.’¹⁴⁸⁶**

¹⁴⁸⁶ Woodhouse, James, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1766).

Across a verdant flowr-besprinkled mead,¹⁴⁸⁷
 To where a thousand scents the shrubbry yields,
 Diffusing fragrance o'er surrounding fields,¹⁴⁸⁸
 Approaching thoughtless near, with careless gaze,
 Each startled bosom beats with soft amaze:
 For as a lover, by some rural shade,
 Nor yet expecting his dear sylvan shade,
 His heedless looks o'er all the prospect rove,
 Hills, woods, and fields, when turning tow'rds the grove,
 She from a thicket starts before his eyes,
 And fills his breast with pleasure and surprize:
 So here the bright-streak'd phillyreas between.
 And broad-leaved laurels ever shining green;
 A Medicean Venus charms impart
 A sudden impulse to each gazer's heart;
 Thus by an oval bason's grass-grown side,
 Dimpling, whose surface glist'ring gold-fish glide,
 She stands beneath a fair Liburnum's Head,
 With saffron-tassel'd blossoms overspread:
 These intermixing, purple lilacs meet,
 And fragrant myrtle blooms beside her feet;
 Geraniums spread their painted honours by,
 And orange-plants, whose fruitage tempts the eye:
 By these prickly-leaved oak you see,
 And with fronted leaves the tulip-tree;
 Here yellow blows the thorny barberry-bush,
 And velvet roses spread their bright'ning blush;
 And here the damask, there the province rose,
 And cerasus's double blooms disclose;
 With rip'ning fruit domestic raspberry glow,
 And sweet Americans¹⁴⁸⁹ their scents bestow;
 White lilacs and syringes shed perfumes,
 And gelder-roses hang their bunchy blooms,
 And tow'ring planes erect their heads sublime,
 And, by the sweet-briar flow'ring willows climb;
 Here flimsy-leaved acacia drooping weeps,
 And lowly laurustinus humbly creeps;
 The foreign dogwood shoots its sanguine sprays,
 And sable yews combine with cheerful bays;
 While by the double-blossom'd hawthorn stands
 Curl'd laurel, brought from Portugalian, strands;

¹⁴⁸⁷ Lawn to the Shrubbry: This tells us that he treated his lawns like meadows and cut them only at hay-making time. If he cut them earlier there would have been no flowers.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Shenstone had a number of sweet-scented shrubs in his shrubbry.

¹⁴⁸⁹ The Americans may have been American Roses so called by Richard Woods, nurseryman of Chertsey in 1759-60 in Harvey, John, op. cit., p. 204.

And arbour-vitae's rear their fetid heads,
And stinking effluvia spreads;
Here Scotch and silver firs, the shrubs among,
And lovely larch with hairy verdure hung,
And sycamores their lofty summits rear,
And silver-border'd foliage hollies wear;
While this above, with various others, twine,
Beneath the piony and catch-fly shine;
Narcissus fair, and early daffodil,
Between their stems the vacant spaces fill.

**Appendix Five:
Occupiers of The Leasowes: 1763-2015.**

Occupiers of The Leasowes 1763 - 2016			
Dates	Occupier	Status	Removal of feature
1763 -1764	John Hodgetts	Tenant	Faunus Statue
1765 -1769	Joseph Turnpenny	Tenant	—————
1769 -1771	Richard Powell	Tenant	Maria Dolman's Urn
"	" "	"	Cascades
"	" "	"	Stour Valley Seat
1771 -1773	Henry Walnoth Disney Roebuck	Private Estate	Gothic Seat
1773 -1778	Edward Horne	"	Horace Bench
"	" "	"	Pitt's Seat
"	" "	"	East Seat
"	" "	"	Spence's Seat
"	" "	"	Stone Seat Bench
"	" "	"	Green Pool Root House
"	" "	"	Gothic Screen
"	" "	"	Joseph Shenstone's Urn
"	" "	"	Stamford Root House
"	" "	"	Shepherd's Seat
"	" "	"	Stone Bridge
1778 -1794	John Dewlap Halliday	"	Venus Statue (6th June 1785).
"	" "	"	Lyttelton Seat
1794 -1808	Edward Hartrop Wigley	"	Gothic Seat
"	" "	"	Dripping Fountain

Dates	Occupier	Status	Removal of feature
1794 -1808	Edward Hartrop Wigley	"	Dodsley's Bench
"	" "	"	Graves Bench
"	" "	"	Priory View Seat
Dudley No. 2 Canal built in 1798 hid external views by an embankment.			
1808 -1829	Mathias Attwood	"	Steeple Seat
1829 -1854	George Attwood	"	—————
1854 -1873	Benjamin Gibbons	"	Temple of Pan
"	" "	"	Virgil's Obelisk
"	" "	"	Priory Gate
"	" "	"	Gothic Alcove
"	" "	"	Octagonal Seat
			Horace Seat
1873 -1924	Elizabeth Gibbons	"	—————
1924 -1934	John Skipworth Gibbons	"	—————
1934 -1976	Halesowen District Council	Public Park	Priory Complex
1976 -2017	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	Public Park	—————

JAH 2017

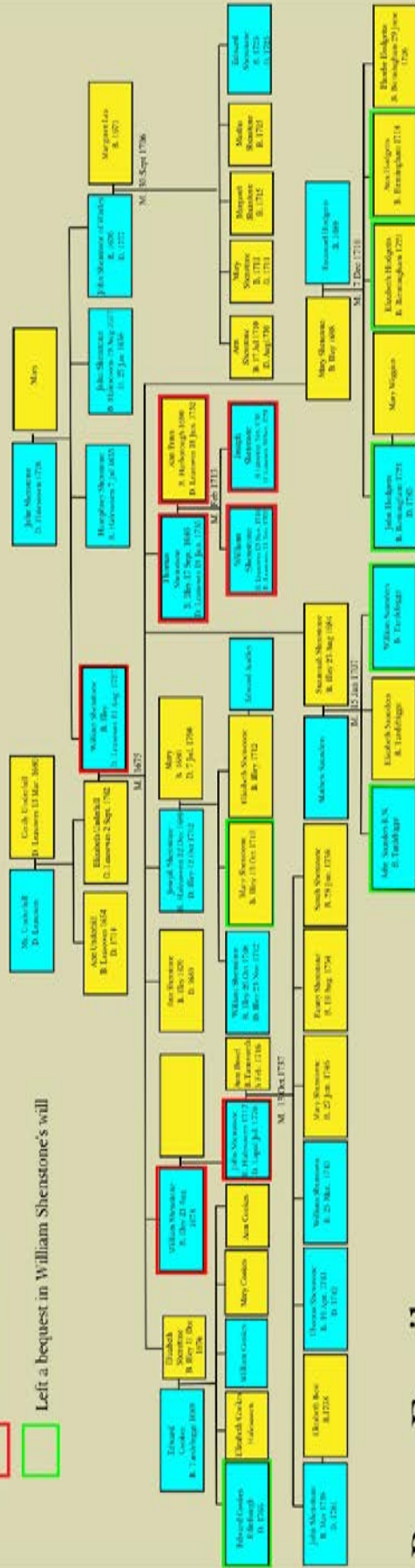
Appendix Six: Shenstone Family Trees

The information in these trees was gathered through the Ancestry. com website; LP B Shenstone: Worcester Archive, Palfrey Collection; Grazebrook, Henry Sydney, *Family of Shenstone the Poet: extracts from the parish registers of Halesowen, co. Worcester and from Rowley Regis, co. Stafford.* (1890); and by noting the relationships in Williams, Majorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939).

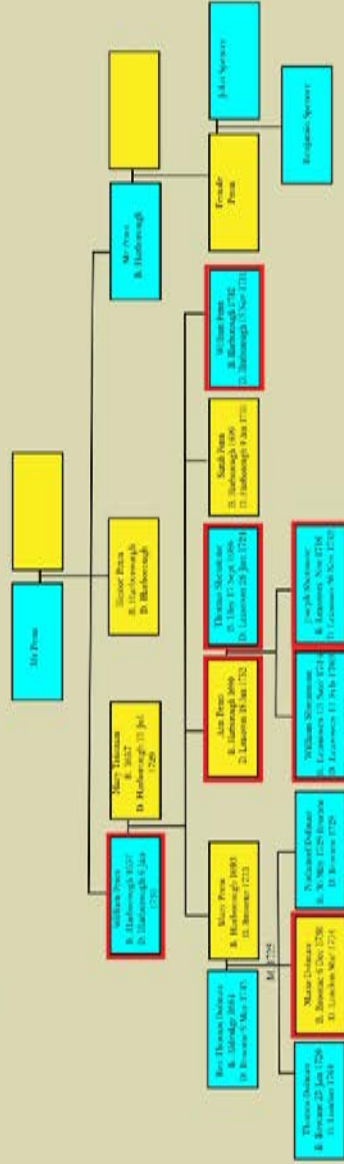
Shenstone Family

Mentioned in thesis

Left a bequest in William Shenstone's will



Penn Family



Appendix 6:1

John Hemingway, <http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/78231187/family>; LP B Shenstone, Worcester Archive, Palfrey Collection, Grazebrook, Henry Sidney, Family of Shenstone the Poet: extracts from the parish registers of Halesoven co. Worcester and from Rowley Regis co. Stafford (n. p., n. p., 1890).

**Appendix Seven:
Permission acquired to include the following
illustrations.**

Beinecke Library, Yale University, Connecticut, USA

App. 3/2: Plan of The Leasowes drawn up by William Lowe in 1759, Box 1, Folder 50.

- Sent letter to Yale 21/03/2014
- Permission granted 17/04/2014

Birmingham Archives and Heritage Service

Ch. 8/3: Baskerville's house and garden at Easy Hill showing woodland on the south side on A Plan of Birmingham by Bradford, 1758.

App. 3/5: Plan of The Leasowes made 1771-1773 made for Edward Horne.

App. /4-9: Detail of drawing of Dripping Fountain painted by Thomas Smith of Derby, 1748, engraved by James Mason c.1752. Source: R. W. Boodle, *Worcestershire Scrapbook*, Vol. II, (1903). The engraving by James Mason is now at the Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, Connecticut, USA.

- Sent email to Birmingham Library 20/03/2014
- Needed to know what exactly I wanted / sent list 21/03/2014
- Sent email 22/05/2014
- Received reply they have lost my request 02/06/2014
- Sent request forms by post 02/06/2014
- Received email giving permission 05/06/2014

British Library

App. 2/7: James, H. F. '19th century engraving showing the High Cascade', British Library Board, K Top xxxvi.21.3.d.

- Permission granted 20/03/2014

Dudley Archive and Local History Service

Ch. 5/7: Henry R. Wilson's drawing of the Leasowes farmhouse based on D. Jenkins painting of the Priory.

- Sent email 20/03/2014
- Had reply 21/03/2014, Forwarded to Service Manager.
- Sent email 22/05/2014
- Decide to include own drawing, so permission not needed.

Huntington Archive, California, USA

App. 3/1: Spence's Plan, 'The Round of Mr Shenstone's Paradise' 1758.

- Sent letter to Huntington 21/03/2014
- Permission granted 27th March 2014

London School of Economic and Political History

Ch5/15: Sketch of a root seat at The Leasowes by Sir John Parnell.

Ch5/16: Two sketches by Sir John Parnell.

Ch5/18: Sketch of a Gothic Seat at The Leasowes by Sir John Parnell.

- Sent email 20/03/2014

- Out of copyright

Lydiard House, Lydiard Tregoze, Swindon

Ch. 10/8: Somerville Urn at Barrells, By Thomas Smith of Derby.

- Sent email to Lydiard House 19/03/2014
- Received reply painting held by private individual will get in touch 20/03/2014
- Sent email 09/05/2014
- No reply.

National Portrait Gallery, London

App. 1/1: Portrait of William Shenstone by Thomas Ross circa 1737, NPG4386.

- Sent email 20/03/2014
- Need to register/registered 20/03/2014
- Sent request 23/03/2014
- Permission granted 22/03/2014

- Sent email 28/05/2014 for portrait of William Shenstone by Edward Alcock, 1760, NPG263.
- Write applying for permission 28/05/2014
- Permission granted 28/05/2014

National Gallery, London

Ch. 2/2 'Mr and Mrs Andrews' painted by Thomas Gainsborough in 1748, NG6301.

- Sent email 22/03/2014
- Need to register/registered 24/03/2014
- Sent request 24/03/2014
- Permission granted 31/03/2014

Palais du Louvre, Paris.

Ch. 2/3. *Et in Arcadia* by Nicholas Poussin painted in 1637-8.

- Wikimedia, in public domain.

Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury

Ch. 5/6: Water-colour of The Leasowes farmhouse in the David Parkes Collection.

Ch. 7/2: Water-colour of a Kingfisher by William Shenstone.

App. 2/2: Drawing of the Temple of Pan in the David Parkes Collection.

App. 2/3: Drawing of The Leasowes Farmhouse made by William Shenstone and copied by David Parkes.

App. 2/11: Drawing of Virgil's Grove Obelisk in the David Parkes Collection

App. 2/10: Drawing of Somerville Urn in the David Parkes Collection.

App. 2/15: Drawing of the Gothic Alcove in the David Parkes Collection.

App. 2/21: Drawing of Maria Dolman's Urn in the David Parkes Collection.

App. 2/22: Drawing of Octagonal Seat in the David Parkes Collection.

- Sent email 20/03/2014
- Received email they need to know what I am copying so as to find out who owns it / Sent list of images / they would like a copy of my thesis.
- Permission granted, order 027.

The Modern Universal Traveller (London, 1797)

App. 2/24: The Ruinated Priory and Leasowes Farmstead. Engraved by D. Jenkins. Hand coloured at a later date.

- Wikimedia, in public domain

Viscount Cobham, Hagley Park, Worcestershire

Ch3/1: From the Palladian Seat, Hagley Park', perhaps by Mrs Phillips (no date)

- Sent email 20/03/2014
- Sent email to Joe Hawkins requesting permission 28/05/2014
- Reply, loaned to Birmingham Art Gallery
- Sent email to Birmingham Art Gallery
- Problems with copyright Domniki Papadimitriou to find out who I need permission from 21/08/2015.
- No idea of the owner, suggestion that I place the permission granted the same as Cousins does 09/2015.

Wellesley College Library, Massachusetts, USA

Ch. 8/4: Water-colour of the Upper Pool by William Shenstone.

Ch. 7/1 & App/12: James Thomson's Urn by William Shenstone.

App. 2/9: Virgil's Grove showing the obelisk at the entrance, the stone bridge and the dripping cascade by William Shenstone.

App. 2/14: Green Pool with the root house on the opposite side of it, water-colour painting by William Shenstone

App. 2/15: The Gothic Screen by William Shenstone.

App. 2/17: The View of the Leasowes Farmhouse from the Gothic Screen by William Shenstone.

App. 2/18: South Cascade from the West, water-colour painted by William

Shenstone.

App. 2/19: The Stamford Root house and South Cascade/Brook by William Shenstone.

App. 2/23: The Priory Gate, water-colour painted by William Shenstone.

- Sent letter to Wellesley College 21/03/2014
- Permission granted 02/04/2014

Williams, Marjorie, *The Letters of William Shenstone*, (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939)

Ch. 5/11: Pipe and fistula drawn by Shenstone.

Ch. 5/12: A sample urn showing the relative height to width drawn by Shenstone.

Ch. 5/13: The pedestal, of an urn for Henrietta Knight drawn by Shenstone.

- Sent letter to Blackwell's.
- Reply out of copyright.

Mr John Phillips, The Wodehouse, Wombourne

Ch. 11/4: The Hermitage, Foxhills Wood, drawn by J. Hughes.

- Sent letter to Mr Phillips 26/04/2016.
- Received reply giving me permission to use it 03/05/2016.

National Trust Picture Library/West Wycombe Estate

Ch. 8/5 Music Temple at West Wycombe painted by Thomas Daniell, circa 1781.

- Sent email to National Trust 20/03/2014
- Need to register/communicate with Dashwood at West Wycombe Park
- Sent email to West Wycombe Park /03/2014
- Permission granted 21/03/2014

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