



Staffordshire Gardens & Parks Trust

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News LETTER

“A Japanese Garden in a Christian Cemetery”

Anyone who was visiting a Japanese garden for the first time would find themselves being introduced to an entirely new concept of gardening, very distinct from the style of gardening inspired by Gertrude Jekyll with which they are more familiar and by which they will have almost certainly been strongly influenced. Instead of viewing swathes of plants laid out in blocks of colour, they will find themselves looking down from a viewing platform at not one but two practical demonstrations of Japanese garden design.

Look in one direction and you will see a Zen (or ‘dry’) garden characterised by a miniature landscape in which islands and mountains are represented by stones and rocks, water by sand and gravel, forests by trees, while shrubs clipped into the shape of domes also represent rocks.

This garden is not a garden to be walked in; rather, it is there to exercise the imagination, to stimulate thought and to encourage contemplation and reflection, for, unlike some of the great Western gardens, such gardens were not created as an exercise in self-aggrandisement or as a demonstration of political loyalty, but as a symbolic expression of religious belief, an appeal to the spiritual side of Man’s nature.

Look in the other direction and, by contrast, you will see an example of a Japanese garden built around a tea house approached by stepping stones lit by lanterns, and planted with carefully pruned shrubs and trees. Outside stands a stone water bowl, placed there so that guests can cleanse their hands before entering.

The thousand-year-old Tea Ceremony usually takes place in a small wooden hut, known as a ‘chashitsu’, designed exclusively for the ceremony, at which ‘matcha’, a finely-milled green tea, is



Japanese zen garden

prepared, served and drunk. This ceremony is unique to the Japanese and is both a form of entertainment of guests and a means of attaining a deeper satisfaction through silent contemplation, communication being restricted to polite movement and gesture and the whole ceremony being governed by strict ritual.

In this garden, too, a large gravel area represents the sea (in this case, ‘the sea

of nothingness’) into which a stream made up of pebbles (representing ‘the stream of life’) flows, a reminder of Man’s insignificance when measured against the cosmos.

Opened in August 1996, the Japanese Garden at Danescourt Cemetery was adopted by The Japanese Garden Society only as recently as 2009, since when members have been active in carrying out

a regular programme of maintenance. Said to be one of the best Japanese gardens in the country, it has been awarded a Landscape Award by 'Heart of England in Bloom' for the best structural garden in the Heart of England, the judges describing it as "an oasis of peace and tranquillity" in which "each tree and feature has a meaning, with each detail and piece of gravel expertly placed to portray the ethos of Japan".

The Trust is most grateful to Terry Bonham and Pam Timmins, members of The Japanese Garden Society, and Linda Bates, the member of Wolverhampton City Council's Bereavement Services team with responsibility for Danescourt Cemetery, for giving so generously of their time and expertise to make this such an informative and enjoyable occasion.



Japanese tea garden

WHITMORE HALL: "A fine Carolean Manor set in landscaped gardens and surrounded by a beautiful park"

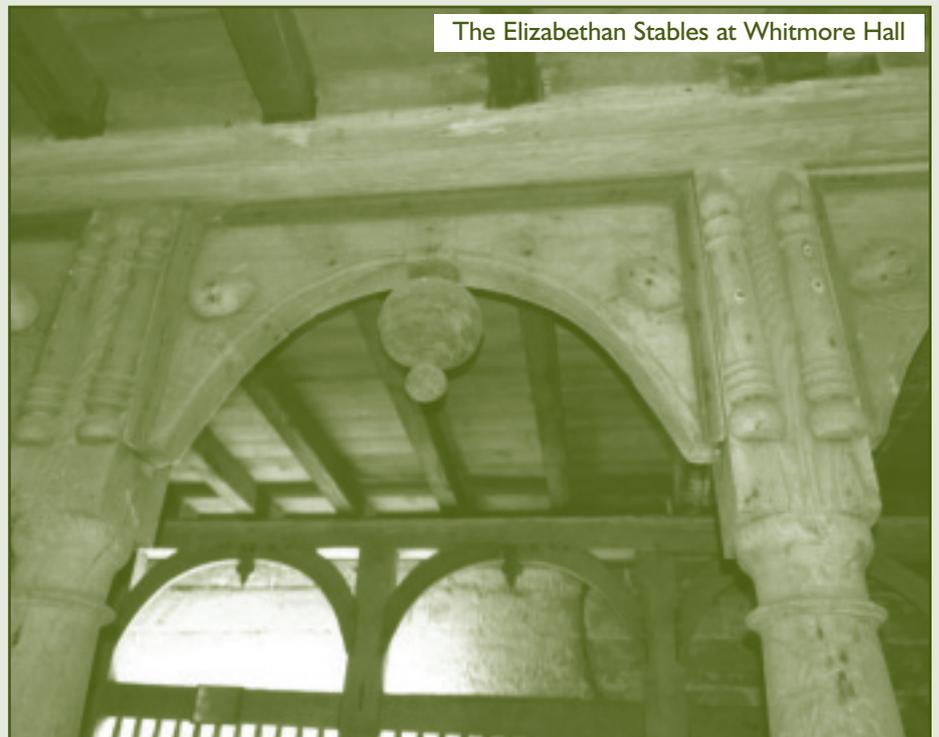
Two features make Whitmore Hall stand out amongst Staffordshire's historic estates: it has been owned by the same family since 1086, and ownership has passed on by inheritance, never by purchase (though on three occasions it has passed through the female line of the family); and it has the oldest stables in the country.

There has been a house on the site since Saxon times, but the house we see today dates back only as far as 1676, when the earlier timber-framed house, which dates from the 1400s, was encased in red brick.

Once E-shaped in the traditional Elizabethan manner, later additions drastically altered its shape and appearance, and the hall now stands in place of the courtyard.

The rear of the house is Victorian and replaces an earlier part which was burnt down in 1880 (The fire burnt for twelve hours and was eventually put out by estate workers with buckets of water drawn from the lake!).

The stable block dates back to Elizabethan times and has a partly



The Elizabethan Stables at Whitmore Hall

cobbled floor and nine compartments divided by oak-carved pillars, similar to those at Peover Hall, in neighbouring Cheshire. The Mainwarings of Whitmore are, in fact, descended from the Mainwarings of Over-Peover, who owned Peover Hall, and who acquired Whitmore when Edward Mainwaring married Alice de Boghay, heiress of the

manor of Whitmore, in 1546. However, the stables at Peover date back only to the middle of the seventeenth century.

The house is surrounded by landscaped gardens in which a three-acre man-made lake is a prominent feature, and, while it has been suggested that the grounds may have been laid out by

'Capability' Brown, who worked at nearby Trentham Gardens, no definitive proof has emerged (Unfortunately, the threat of rain curtailed a guided tour on the evening of the AGM).

Another outstanding feature is the lime avenue which runs from the front of the house to the main road, though it is no longer the main driveway to the house.

Visitors may wonder why an Australian flag is flying at the front of the house.

Gordon Mainwaring, one of Admiral Rowland Mainwaring's many sons, was, like many land-hungry younger sons, sent to Australia to make his fortune, though, in his case, it was following an abrupt end to his army career after he had been cashiered for dereliction of duty! A farmer, he inherited the Whitmore estate in 1862, and it is from him the present owner traces his descent. As result, Guy has inherited property in Australia, and he and Christine spend substantial part of each year there.

(In addition to Admiral Mainwaring, who took part in the Battle of the Nile during the Napoleonic Wars, the family can point to another later member of



The Carolean Stables at Peover Hall

the family who enjoyed a very successful naval career, Captain Maurice ("Ginger") Mainwaring, first, ace submariner in World War Two and, later, ADC to the Queen).

The present estate extends to 1500 acres, of which 1000 acres are farmed.

A landscape management plan was prepared by Dr. David Jacques in 1999, and this has formed the basis of an

ongoing maintenance programme.

The house is open between May and August. Opening times are Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.

Certainly, its architecture, contents (which include portraits of every owner since 1624) and grounds make this a very worthwhile visit for any member unable to attend this year's AGM.

"West Midlands History"

"West Midlands History" is an independent website set up at the beginning of this year to publicise the history of the achievements, both academic and industrial, of the people of the historic counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Although still in its infancy, it has already posted short films on the city of Lichfield, Erasmus Darwin and the Lunar Society, and, beginning in 2013, will organise tours to key historical sites throughout the region.

It is now about to launch a magazine whose forthcoming editions will include features on the Enlightenment, migration into the West Midlands and how it shaped the landscape, economy and culture of the region, and the development of

important industries such as glass-making, printing and publishing.

Anyone who would like to receive a free copy of the first issue of this magazine should register his or her interest on www.historywm.com.

A Date for your Diary

The first visit of the autumn programme will be to Burslem Park on Saturday, September 15th.

The afternoon will start with a guided tour of the recently-restored park, followed by a series of readings from the writings of Arnold Bennett given by members of The Arnold Bennett Society and finishing with tea.

A booking form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

A Day in London

The Borough of Lambeth is now, with a population approaching 300, 000, the most densely-populated borough in Greater London. The name 'Lambeth' means 'landing place for lambs' and is a reminder of its earlier history as a harbour from which sheep were transported, Lambeth then being very rural.

The present district of Lambeth was once part of the much larger ancient parish of St. Mary-in-Lambeth and was located in the county of Surrey, stretching as far as Croydon, but in 1889 it became part of the county of London. Finally, in the reform of local government under Edward Heath in 1965, the present London Borough of Lambeth was formed.

(By the way, when John Milton abandoned Heaven and returned to earth, it was to Lambeth that he travelled (according to William Blake, anyway), so, clearly, Lambeth had something going for it then as now!)

The Museum of Garden History is housed in the now-deconsecrated parish church of St. Mary's. Dating back to the fourteenth century but enlarged in the 1850s, it was closed in 1972 as the result of changes in the population, and it owes its survival to the indefatigable efforts of John and Rosemary Nicholson, who, though not professional gardeners, were following up an interest in the Tradescants by seeking out their tombs in the churchyard of St. Mary's.

They were dismayed to find the tomb hidden under vegetation in the overgrown churchyard and were even more appalled to discover that there were plans to demolish the abandoned and boarded-up church to make way for a coach park for Waterloo Station.



The museum of garden history

Encouraged by the then-Archbishop of Canterbury, Donald Coggan, they set about mounting a campaign to save the church. Their first proposal was to turn it into a gardeners' church, but, on discovering that a church, once deconsecrated, could not be re-consecrated, campaigned instead to turn it into a museum of garden history, the first in the world. The Tradescant Trust was founded in 1977, and our President has the

distinction of being one of the Founder-Trustees. A 99-year lease was granted by the Diocese of Southwark, who remain the Trust's landlords. The Museum, which now houses a collection of historic tools and other artefacts, mounted its first exhibition in 1981, and the restored churchyard, which was found to have not only the family tomb of the Tradescants but also that of Captain William Bligh, of mutiny fame, was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother two years later.

The presence of these tombs played an important part in saving the church and are now Grade II* listed.

A prominent feature in the garden is a knot garden designed in the late-seventeenth century style by Lady Salisbury, owner of Hatfield House, where John Tradescant the Elder was once employed as gardener. It is also said to contain the tallest climbing rose in the country!

John Tradescant the Elder, who is thought to have been born in Suffolk in about 1570, set up his business in South Lambeth in 1629, based in the grounds of a Elizabethan half-timbered farmhouse, where he specialised in fruit trees, including apple, pear, plum and cherry, as well as apricot, nectarine, peach and vine.

Previously, he had worked as gardener for some of the most powerful men in the



Tradescant tomb

land, including, successively, Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and, finally, Charles I, which had given him the chance to travel. In fact, both Tradescants travelled abroad extensively in search of new plants: John the Elder travelled to the Low Countries, from which he brought back the cherry laurel, to Russia, from where he brought back white helleborine, as well as varieties of bilberry, cranberry and cloudberry, and to North Africa, where he returned with the Algerian peach and varieties of pomegranates; John the Younger travelled as far as Virginia (three times), from where he brought back the tulip tree, the swamp cypress, the common pitcher plant (popularly known as 'Huntsman's Cup) and the five-leafed ivy or Virginia Creeper.

He also exhibited a collection of miscellaneous items, known as his "Ark of Curiosities", which became as celebrated as, some say even more celebrated than, his horticultural business; attracting fee-paying visitors from far and wide, it is now regarded as the first museum in England ever opened to the paying public.

John the Younger bequeathed the Ark to Elias Ashmole, the Staffordshire-born



Lunch at the Museum

antiquary, which led to a dispute between Ashmole and John's widow, who claimed that her husband made the bequest while drunk, but the courts upheld Ashmole's claim and the collection became the nucleus of the Ashmolean Museum, built specially by Oxford University to contain it.

After the death of John the Younger, his widow, Hester, ran the business, their son, also called 'John', having predeceased his father. A detailed account of the garden has been left by John Aubrey, the late seventeenth-century writer, who also provided the inscription on the Tradescant tomb. The last recorded account of the garden is dated 1749; nowadays, it lies under late Victorian housing development, though the actual site of the garden is known and can still be visited.

Following a guided tour of the Museum and garden, the party made its way the short distance across Westminster Bridge



...tea at the House of Lords

to the Houses of Parliament, where, following security checking, we were led to the Attlee Room, where our President warmly welcomed us.

After tea, many of the group took the opportunity to take a seat in one of the visitors' galleries, where they could admire the beauty of Pugin's magnificent chamber and to listen to part of the ongoing debate.

This was an exceptional event in the Trust's calendar of visits, and we are very grateful to our President for his invitation – and to our Chairman, who carried out the task of organising the visit with customary efficiency.

MONKS WALK GROUP – LICHFIELD CAMPUS

AUTUMN EVENT – FRIDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2012

6.00 – 7.30pm



An Evening Tour of the Monks Walk Garden in the company of LYNN TANN-WATSON from the WITCH'S GARDEN in Donisthorpe.

Her talk will focus on the newly planted physic border in the Monks Walk Garden and will include descriptions of the magical and mystical uses of plants as well as recipes using herbs.

*Light refreshments available at a small charge.
Plants and produce will be on sale.*

The Group have continued their efforts during the season and the gardens are looking good and well worth a visit.

**For further information please ring me on
01543 473222 - Sarah**

Location: Lichfield Campus
The Friary Lichfield (behind the Library)

“ANOTHER ACTIVE YEAR”

(THE CHAIRMAN’S REPORT TO THE 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING)

I am delighted to see you all here this evening and would echo our President’s thanks to our generous hosts, Guy and Christine Cavenagh-Mainwaring, who have made it possible to hold this AGM in such special surroundings.

You will know that every year I put out a request for volunteers to join us on the Council of Management or assist the working of the Trust in other ways. I am delighted to say that this year my request has been heeded, and we are delighted to welcome our new Treasurer, Catherine Thorpe, and our Webmaster, Jackie Moseley, to Council (assuming, of course, that you vote for them later in this meeting!). As always, there is plenty of scope for volunteers to help in other areas: if you are interested, please have a word with any of the members of the Council who are here today or with myself. I have now been Chairman for 6 years and, as I said last year, if anyone else fancies a shot at chairing the Trust please don’t be shy and step forward.

On the business front, I am pleased to report that the Trust has enjoyed another active year in 2011 - 12. Our Treasurer’s report to this meeting has indicated our finances remain sound, although it is disappointing and slightly worrying to note a slight decrease in our membership numbers. Please do encourage your friends and others with an interest in Staffordshire’s gardens and parks to join and help our work in promoting the conservation and understanding of the county’s rich heritage of designed landscapes.

The Trust’s website launched last year continues to grow. If you have not visited the site, do have a look. It contains information about the Trust and how to join, our current and future activities; and a lot more. The traffic flow on the website has been steady - a possible development for next year would be to put a web counter on the site so we know how many visits or hits we are getting. We are now linked via the Association of Gardens Trusts site, so in a sense have a national presence. Locally, we have had some interaction

with Cheshire Gardens Trust via the web, and a link has been formed between websites.

The biggest single development in the last 12 months has been to put the archive list of sites onto the website, so these can be viewed by anyone with internet access. We have had queries on some sites included so know that this list is being viewed.

The Monks Walk project, about which I will report in a moment, has its own page on the site. The site is updated regularly, especially after every meeting of the Council of Management and whenever an issue of the Newsletter is published. An archive of newsletters is available on the website dating back to 2006, along with the future programme of events. The website is still free of charge to the Trust, as it is part of a package that we have for hosting it. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Richard and Jackie Moseley, who have put the website together for us and manage it impeccably.

Please do take a look: all comments welcomed. A reminder of the site address,:

www.staffordshiregardensandparks.org

On the planning side the Trust has continued to be consulted on a number of draft local development framework documents by local authorities. We have had little to say on them, as most have had little or no heritage impact. We wait to see how the government’s new National Planning Policy Framework and localism agenda will affect our area of work. I mentioned last year that the Trust had objected to a proposal for erection of two turbines below Kinver Edge which would fall right in the historic sightlines between the registered parks at Enville and Hagley. Joe Hawkins represented the Trust at a public inquiry in August and,

although the Inspector placed little weight on the historic parks objections, he did reject the appeal on greenbelt and other heritage grounds. More recently, a proposal to erect five turbines at Brineton near Church Eaton which would be very visible from the Knoll within Weston Park has also been rejected on appeal.

Our Archivist reports that the overall total of sites recorded on our inventory remains unchanged at 441. An analysis of the 181 sites for which we hold the most information has been placed on our website, the internet now being the quickest, most comprehensive method of basic research for individual parks and gardens. It is interesting to note that since the Trust was first set up, research methods have changed dramatically and it is now possible to access the catalogues of the major repositories, local history information, Victorian horticultural journals and old gardening books, not to mention Wikipedia, over the internet. It is also possible to view what, if anything, remains of a garden by means of aerial views such as Google Earth, all of which could be said to have made our paper records assembled over the years obsolete. Many more people are researching garden history than when we were set up (an encouraging sign), which compensates for the fact that, as a Trust, our pure research effort has reduced considerably in recent years.

However, after a very full discussion, Council considers that our bibliography compiled over 20 years from Ray Desmond’s Bibliography of Parks and Gardens, the catalogues of the County Record Office and the William Salt Library and publications, historic and current, still has a relevance as a first point of reference. Volunteers currently doing cataloguing work on a variety of material at the CRO and WSL have

been encouraged to look out for references to garden history and these are added to our record. Our archive and research work goes on - though in a very different way to when we started.

I mentioned the Monks Walk garden restoration project in Lichfield earlier. The small group working on this has tackled the third section of the herbaceous border this year using the Grassroots Grant to produce the 'Physic Garden'. They used a local landscape contractor to lay the bricks in the Autumn 2011 and followed up with a Spring Working Party in April, when a small but active group cleared the borders and planted over 100 herbs and medicinal perennial plants in less than 2 hours. With the current weather, the establishment has been good, so rain is useful for something!

A major change to the garden has been the need to remove the mature copper beech at the entrance and replace with a semi-mature standard walnut... so walnuts will add to our bounty in the years to come.

An 'Open Garden Event' in July, which included stalls and live music in the garden, was a challenge. The weather was less than kind, and the wind blowing the gazebos and the rain discouraged some stall holders. The Ukulele Group played on and the Lichfield Poets tried to find a quiet corner, but those who came enjoyed the event and we made a small profit of £150.00. The group reflect that they will need to learn some fund-raising tactics, as Grant Funding is harder to find while we are in the general maintenance phase.

Regular working sessions continue to be held, and visitors are always welcome. I have put some fliers about the project out at the back. These have details of forthcoming events, so if you are interested please take one or visit our website.

On the Activities side we followed up last year's AGM at The Wodehouse, Wombourne, with two visits to Biddulph Grange and the adjacent

Country Park. These visits coincided with the bicentenary of the birth of James Bateman, which was being commemorated by a week of talks and events part-sponsored by the SGPT.

The autumn programme included a visit to Shugborough for a talk by Joe Hawkins, the Head Gardener, on Thomas Wright, "The Wizard of Durham", and a tour of some of the monuments, including Wright's best-known creation, the enigmatic Shepherd's Monument. A foggy day in November provided members with an atmospheric walk through the woods at Alton Towers, albeit denying them the opportunity of enjoying the panoramic views usually seen.

The year ended with a talk by Dr. David Jacques on the gardens of Rajasthan and the Delhi/Agra area, which he had visited earlier in the year.

This year members have visited the Japanese Garden at Danescourt Cemetery, in Wolverhampton; two further visits are imminent, to The Temple of Diana at Weston Park and to Blithfield Hall. Our autumn programme will include a visit to Burslem Park, and to Trentham Gardens to see work that is being carried out in the North Park.

Our photographic competition announced at last year's AGM produced some very varied entries, some of which are included on the new display panels on show at this meeting. Two issues of the Newsletter were produced, and the Editor is grateful to members who provide him with material.

The Chairman of the activities group is very grateful for the support of fellow members who offer suggestions for visits and play an active part in arranging and leading them. Without their support and professional expertise it simply would not be possible to provide members with such a varied programme each year.

It is always my pleasure at the AGM to thank many people for their commitment and hard work in supporting the Trust and its activities

over the past year. Firstly, our president, Lord Cormack, who has found time in a very busy year in which he has moved house to Lincoln and taken up a new role in the House of Lords to continue to support and encourage us throughout the year and travelled over from Lincolnshire specially to chair our proceedings tonight. We have also to thank Lord Cormack for arranging our most distant visit yet - a trip last month to the Garden Museum in Lambeth followed by tea in the House of Lords with access to a debate in the Chamber. Those of us who were able to go had a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable day for which we thank you very much indeed.

As always, our thanks extend to our Company Secretary, Hayden Baugh-Jones, and his team at South Staffordshire District Council for all their quiet work behind the scenes running the day to day administration of the Trust; to the District Council for allowing them the time to do this and for continuing to host our company address; to our former Treasurer for his work in masterminding our finances and ensuring we remain solvent and prudent in our expenditure; and to our new treasurer both for volunteering for the role and continuing that work so diligently. My special thanks are due to all my colleagues on the Trust's Council for their continued input and support; and also to yourselves our members without whose interest and encouragement we would not be able to continue. And finally as every year I cannot let the moment pass without a very special thanks offered to Bryan Sullivan, who tirelessly organises our Council meetings, takes our minutes, produces the newsletter and organises our varied and always interesting programme of events.

Alan Taylor

The formal business of the evening was followed by two entertaining and informative talks by Guy and Christine Cavenagh-Mainwaring and a guided tour of the grounds.

Gardeners, How are your Love-Apples this year?

This was the first name by which the tomato was known; introduced to Europe in the late 16th century it was thought to be aphrodisiac, hence the name. John Gerard in his Herbal (1597) wrote that in Spain and other hot countries they were eaten as 'sauce to their meat' but he thought they were not nutritious.

Philip Miller, curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, thought that as a flowering plant it was useful and advised in 1735, that the seeds must be sown on a hot-bed in March and transferred to the borders of the flower garden in May, supported with sticks. He cautioned against growing them in a rich soil as they would 'grow to a prodigious size and produce large quantities of fruit in autumn which makes an odd figure'. As well as the plants' habit of getting too large, the gardener needed to exercise care in placing them in his borders lest they be 'brushed by the clothes, when they send forth a very strong disagreeable scent'. Gerard was less polite, he thought 'the whole plant is of a rank and stinking savour'. Miller agreed with Gerard that 'the Italians and Spanish eat these apples as we do cucumbers with pepper, oil and salt, and some eat them stewed in sauces, but considering their great moisture and coldness, the nourishment they afford must be bad'.

90 years later, the plant was still called 'the love-apple' by some gardeners but the majority were using the name 'tomato' and it had risen in popularity, doubtless due to the fashion for employing French cooks. In 1822, Henry Phillips, author of a 'History of Cultivated Vegetables' thought that it had become common on upper class tables but that 'they are not used by middle and lower classes of English families who have yet to learn the art of improving their dishes with vegetables'. Gardeners on large estates therefore were required to provide a crop. William McMurtrie, gardener at Shugborough, was expected to provide two bushels annually to the Anson family, although the Staffordshire climate made this difficult. In 1827, he wrote to the Caledonian Horticultural Society to help his countrymen overcome this problem. He explained that growing plants in the open against

the kitchen garden walls and finding it difficult to ripen the fruit, he discovered that if he cut all of it on the 20th October and hung the green ones up in his hot-house, he could achieve the required crop. He advised that a warm kitchen would do in the absence of this facility.

This method of growing and ripening the fruit seems to have been common practice, although a Tottenham gardener advised readers of the Gardener's Magazine in 1832 that he was not obliged to hang his fruit in a warm room to ripen. He attributed his success, not to the milder climate of London but to his practice of training the plants horizontally on the walls in the manner of fruit trees, as espaliers. By 1842, another gardener reported that 'to a considerable extent near London there being scarcely a gentleman's garden either large or small in which the love apple may not be found growing and bearing fruit although very often the fruit will not come to maturity in cold situations and bad seasons'. His remedy for this was to protect the plants from the middle of September by placing frame-lights against the walls, by which method he claimed to have several gatherings of ripe fruit during the autumn.

You may wonder at this point why it had not occurred to gardeners to grow the tomato crop inside, under glass. Robert Errington, gardener at Oulton Park, Macclesfield explained in 1854 that 'few can afford house room for it except during the nursing season in its young state' so he suggested sowing the seed in October when there was space in the glass-houses. He planted them out in May, nailing them to a warm wall as was accepted practice. He had solved the problem of excessive leaf growth by root pruning, 'driving in a spade a foot from the stem all round'. Errington recommended

the fruit 'to those who are as yet unacquainted with this powerful peculiar zest, to say nothing of Soyer's' fancy dishes, I would say just try a little with first rate rump steak when the appetite is thoroughly whetted with several hours keen exercise'.

Isabella Beeton in 1861 gives a recipe for this sauce which was to stew tomatoes with gravy, mace and cayenne for an hour, then sieve. She also provides a recipe for 'Tomato sauce for Keeping' which seems remarkably similar to ketchup. These recipes were not new, however, as in 1826, Mr John Anderson, gardener to the Earl of Cassiobury sent some 'receipts' to the Gardener's Magazine which he had 'procured from an eminent French cook lately in the Earl's service'. This cook's 'sauce for cold meat' differed only from Mrs Beeton's in that he included an ounce of garlic. He also bottled, pickled and made jam from tomatoes and used them as dried fruit: 'the pulp reduced, add a pound of fine sugar to a pint of pulp, pour it on your tin and dry it in a stove; when nearly dry, cut it into what shape you please, it does for ornament in the dessert'.

It was not until the late nineteenth century that tomato growing in glass-houses became common and what was once an aggressive weed of South America became indispensable in a salad or sauce but not in a flower border.

Sue Gregory
July 2012

'Alexis Soyer was the most celebrated cook in Victorian London, chef at the Reform Club, organiser of soup kitchens for the poor and field kitchens for the army, he was the Jamie Oliver of his day.'