

MORE
THAN
A
PARK

A LANDSCAPE HISTORY OF CHARLECOTE PARK

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INTRODUCTION

This is an incomplete history. The history of the landscape is buried not just in the deposits of ground, root, and material, but also in the greater context in which each successive layer finds meaning. Easy answers and convenient truths are imaginary. Landscape history is not a straightforward history; it is complex and revelatory, incorporating many truths and perspectives. The study of the landscape, especially in a contemporary context that welcomes diversity of background and opinion, is an inclusive endeavour comprising a kaleidoscope of realities. The following landscape history only scratches the surface.

The approach to this project was based on three understandings. First, Charlecote Park is inseparable from the surrounding environment; unlike its deer, its history cannot be confined by porous fencing. Second, the landscape history of Charlecote does not begin nor belong to the Lucy family. The story of what came to be the park, and the natural and social terrain within which it sits, goes much further back than the twelfth century when the ancestors of the Lucy family first arrived. Even after, there were many contemporaneous, if not competing, views- most never recorded. Lastly, nature and culture are indivisible. The social perspectives of the people that helped shape the landscape are not separate from aesthetics, especially in the site's former interpretation of a single Victorian heiress' "passion for the past, present, and future." The flowerbeds and parterres shroud real secrets.

The hope is that this project is just the beginning. Much more deserves inquisitive attention and focused exploration. An addendum at the end proposes a framework for further research.

While a beginning may be imagined, landscape history has no end. History, after all, is made everyday, with every footstep. The fuzzy origins of the story of Charlecote Park are considered in the next chapter.

1 :: ORIGINS

Charlecote Park's early history is deep, rich, and complex. The earliest evidence of activity nearby is a hand axe from the lower Palaeolithic¹ (**Figure 1**), an almost incomprehensibly vast period lasting for 350,000 years prior to 150,000 BCE in which early homo-sapiens gradually replaced Neanderthals, and glacial ice sheets covered vast swaths of northern Europe. Two early Neolithic and Bronze Age ring ditches², (**Figure 2**) dating from 4,000 – 600 BCE, have been located in the fields just beyond Camp Ground, to the north of Half Moon Spinney. Air photography evidence seems to suggest that the woods and heathlands of the Arden was a lightly settled area used as seasonal pasture in prehistoric times.³ The Arden, the common Celtic name for forest, stretched to about the current extent of Warwickshire north of the Avon, and was primarily inhabited by the herders of the Wiccian Ceangi tribe. The woodland character of the Arden bled into the Feldon, the relatively open area to the south of the Avon.⁴ The further into the Feldon, the less the forest dominated, and vice versa. Later, the forest would play a conflicted role in the medieval imagination.

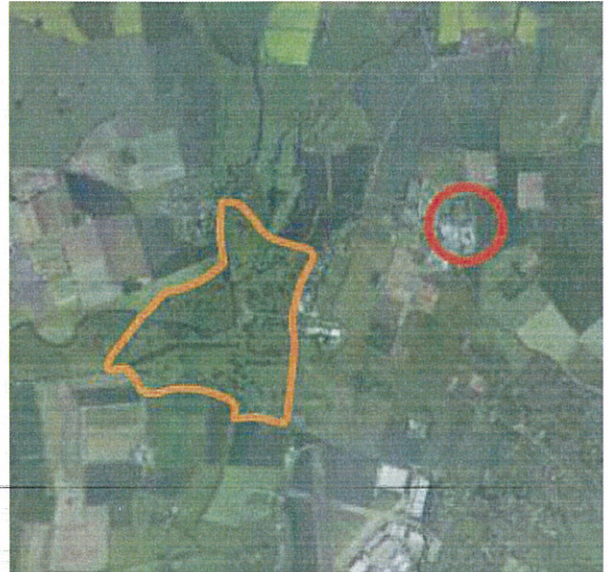


Figure 1

Following the Roman invasion, new or re-planned centres of commerce and reorganized agricultural systems emerged at various scales across the landscape. Roads, such as the Fosse Way just to the east of Charlecote, and other infrastructural improvements, connected nodes of trade and integrated local production and craft. Several archaeological sites from the Romano-British period exist nearby, including a possible settlement in a field just to the north of Charlecote (**Figure 3**, next page). Between the Romans and the Normans, several waves of immigration and colonization brought new peoples, customs, and ideas of land management to the forests, clearings, and open fields.



Figure 2

The changes, according Warwickshire scholar Samuel Timmins in his 1889 county history, “occurred slowly and silently.”⁵ The centralizing drive of the Romans gave way, over time, to the agrarian and domestic habits of the Saxons.

By early medieval times, kilns took advantage of plentiful timber at the edges of the Arden where villages, scattered within clearings, relied on adjacent land held in common.⁶ Divided into long, narrow strips, the fields, ploughed repetitively by teams of oxen into ridges and furrows, developed a distinctive character. The remnants of medieval ridge and furrows still visible in West Park south of the Lime Avenue may date from the period of colonization in Arden and Feldon in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The expansion of settlement into previously peripheral spaces, such as waste and woodland, suggests growing pressures on limited resources especially, as J.B.

Harley's seminal 1958 article in *Economic History Review* proposes, from over-population. As per-capita resources became scarcer, settlement densities shifted from south to north, from the more populated Feldon to the woodlands of Arden.⁷ However, more contemporary research adds the importance of local and regional scales, revealing a complex sponge-like pattern of growth. As colonization stretched the pale of settlement, marginalized spaces grew in tandem. By about the 14th century, over one-third of the settlements surrounding Charlecote in the Kinton hundred, ten main and seventeen likely secondary, were abandoned. The "retreat from the margin" shifted rural populations to the relative stability and support of parochial centres.⁸ In medieval England, commercial routines and religious rituals shared common ground. Places of worship also functioned as places of trade, craft, and learning. Even at crossroads where no church or monastery was present, markets were sanctioned by the presence of a cross.

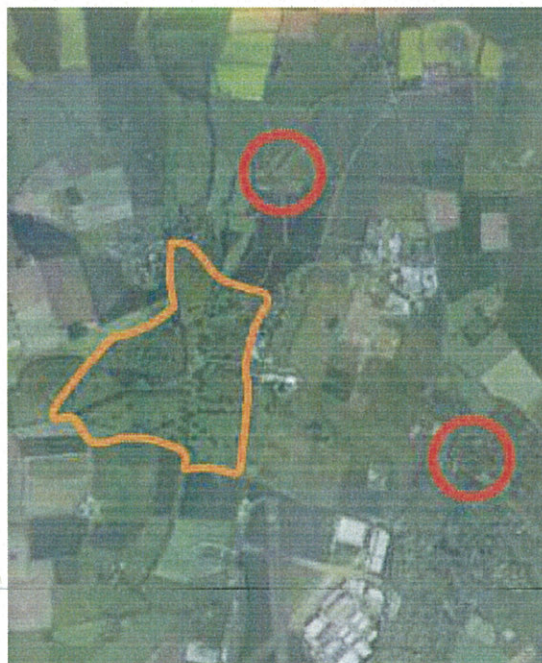


Figure 3

In 1214, Sir William de Lucy gave the church of St. Leonard at Charlecote to the nearby Thelsford Priory,⁹ along with adjacent land, 13 acres near the priory and half a virgate, about 15 acres, near the church, with the caveat that a hospital was to be built for the local poor and visiting pilgrims.¹⁰ The presence of relief and support of the poor, in a time when the vast majority of the population were dependent on the unpredictability of weather, coupled with a space for pilgrims, travellers who brought information and news, may have made Charlecote an attractive place to resettle from the margins. Between 1086, when Charlecote was first mentioned as Cerlecote in the Domesday Book, and the hundred rolls of 1279, its population increased by 143%, a change from 23 to 56 households.¹¹ Within 70 years, the Black Death would arrive in England.

The estimates of the death rate from the Plague, the combination of both bubonic and the more virulent pneumonic form, are varied, from one-fifth to six-tenths of the population. The effects on Charlecote specifically deserve further investigation. In Warwickshire in general, the much-reduced population could no longer support the labour intensive open field system, marking the beginning of the end of the old order. In the Arden, according to Della Hook, ownership was re-appropriated as surviving peasants purchased lands of the deceased.¹² Once again, growth and decay spread unevenly throughout the landscape. In many places, standardized holdings marked off by merestones in open fields charging equal rents shifted to irregular units grazed, at least in part, by animals owned by outsiders. Christopher Dyer, co-editor of *Deserted Villages Revisited*, writes, "people who had learnt in youth to observe and respect merestones, furlongs, and rules of crop rotation must have been disoriented by the change which were dissolving their once ordered world."¹³ The disorienting change in field systems was coupled with the increasing necessity of enclosure of separate agricultural functions.

Over time, the growing importance of the wool trade, cloth making, root vegetables, and an overall variation in diet, required further divisions and enclosures of once open, common ground. The switch from arable to mixed farming also represented an era of greater liberties, technical innovations, and growth of guilds in Stratford, except between 1480 and 1490. This could be because, according to Dyer, Charlecote was made into a deer park about in 1485, the village moved, and its original location deserted.¹⁴ However, Samuel Timmins conflicts with this early date, explaining that the deer park at Charlecote was created during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603) and not emparked until after Sir Thomas Lucy purchased Fulbrook, a former

royal park, in 1615.¹⁵ Though certainly deer could have been moved between the two parks, the conflicting estimates need further clarification.

The remnants of the village can still be seen in the house platforms, hollow way, and ridges and furrows of Old Town¹⁶ in West Park. The possible movement of the village to another site is a unique case in a landscape dotted with dozens of deserted villages (**Figure 4**) and deserves archaeological study. Medieval Charlecote may have extended far beyond Old Town to the south of the church of St. Leonards, the site of another possible abandoned medieval settlement¹⁷. The creation of the deer park at Charlecote may presage or correspond with the construction of a new brick house and the centralization of power and influence towards the landed gentry.

The earliest deer parks were originally scattered across wooded wastes and not associated until much later with great houses within them. The space of deer parks in the manorial system, which was slowly replaced by the market economy, offered several layers of economic and recreational functions. As a provisional warehouse, the parks contained timber and venison, and provided grounds for hunting. According to Gerry Barnes and Tom Williamson, parks, located at the “edges of the cleared and cultivated land... were powerful symbols of lordly appropriation of the remaining areas of wild land.”¹⁸ By 1425, the gradual removal of the open field system in favour of the landscape of enclosure following the plague in the middle of the 14th century provided a more lucrative opportunity than the woodland-pastures of deer parks.¹⁹ Beginning about this time, the real and symbolic nature of deer parks came to be associated with great houses. Over time, as they surrounded and extended the aesthetics of the elite, parks switched from the dense, dark to the more designed.²⁰ The construction date of the original medieval manor house is unknown though it may have dated about the time the park was created as early as 1485 or during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, especially before her visit to Charlecote in 1572. In the middle of the nearly hundred-year gap, the Dissolution of the Monasteries led to the nodal confluence of power and ownership. Within the park, exclusion, hierarchy, and separation took on new meaning.

Following the legal and ecclesiastical separation of the Church of England from papal authority, Henry VIII and his advisors, in order to increase the assets and income of the crown, disbanded over six hundred monastic communities in a series of reforms in the five years between 1536 and 1541. Assets were seized, lands, structures, and resources forfeited, and authority centralized. Contemporary to the Protestant Reformation in the continent, only remnants of monastic orders remained thereafter. The sudden availability of vast quantities of land enabled merchant families to join the aristocracy. In 1538, Thelsford priory was surrendered to an agent of the king. The small church, in a state of disrepair, was not advantageous enough for royal coffers, and, early the following year, was handed to William Lucy.²¹ The priory and its resources were absorbed into the growing wealth of the Lucy family. Twenty-seven years later, Thomas Lucy, William Lucy's son, would be knighted in the new great house completed about 1558. The previous house and landscape was described by William Lucy's Puritan tutor as “deserted on every side, shut off by hills and thickets,” flooded annually by a “nearly stagnant” Avon.²² A gardener was retained and, presumably, significant formal alterations to the grounds were made, some perhaps in preparation for the reception of Queen Elizabeth.

Landscape history, as with history in general, is as much about continuity as disruption. In 1642,

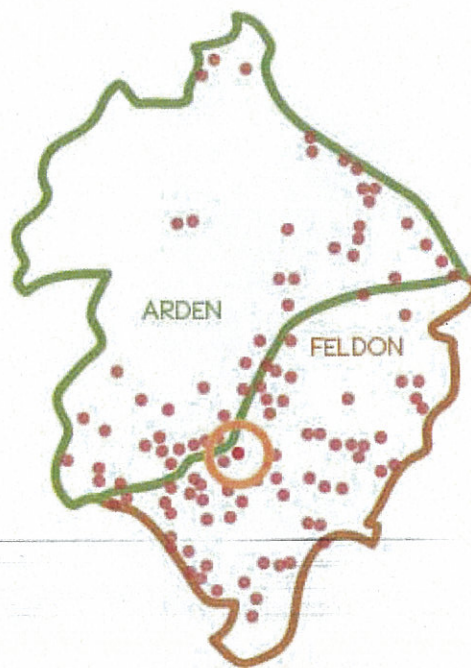


Figure 4

seventy years after the royal visit, the English Civil War broke out. The return of the monarchy in 1660, following the lingering troubles of war and the earlier, though on going, enclosure process, found a general scarcity of deer, even in royal grounds. This, however, was not the case at Charlecote; while Fulbrooke was turned into farms, Charlecote thrived. During the reign of Charles II, Charlecote Park was sized at 200 acres and contained 200 deer,²³ about the same as today. The establishment of the deer park, and its uninterrupted function, coincides with the general retreat of the forest.

In medieval Europe, the forest was a liminal space, beyond regular law and habit. "Outside law and society," writes Robert Pogue Harrison in *Forests: the Shadow of Civilization*, "one was in the forest."²⁴ Yet undominated by the few, it was a space open to the voices of the other. From the external perspective, the forest was a competing vision to the hierarchal feudal system of the open fields and pastures. As one dissolved, so too did its mirror image. The transformation of the use and function of fields through the process of enclosure was part of a broader expansion of commerce and the growth of urban centres, both of which required more and more material, especially timber. Continental trade, war, and, especially, the gradual development of the navy led to the felling of forests across England and Europe. Over time, the Arden, and the marginalized world it contained, retreated away from Charlecote.

As the forest receded, more cleared land was made available for agricultural production, with a sizeable proportion of income flowing to the accounts of landed families. Hierarchy, divisions, and separation appear in the ornamented fashions in the elite world of formality. Costumes were ritualized with expensive and, in the contemporary view, excessive layers of cloth and lace; materials that showed a dominant position in the processes, from the wool trade to spinning guilds, that

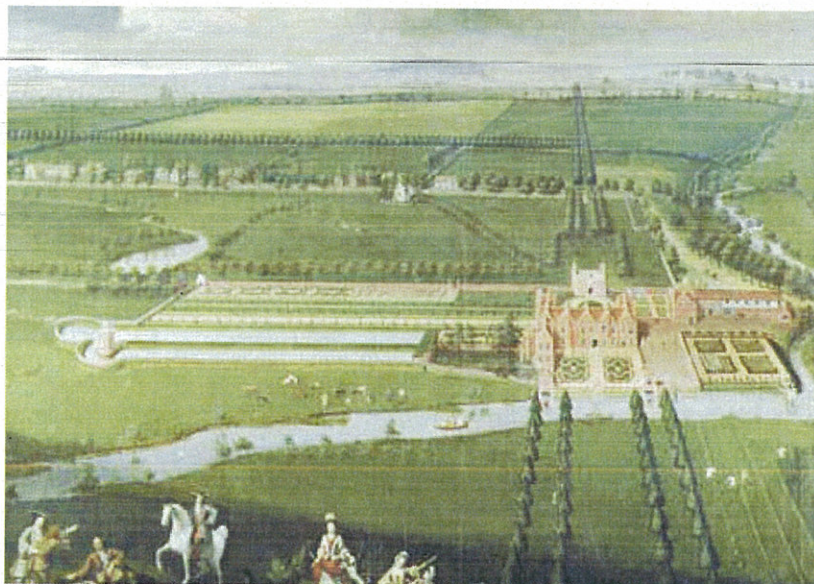


Figure 5

transformed the medieval commons into a landscape of necessitated enclosure, or separation. In design and function of space, ritualized hierarchy became processional linearity. At Charlecote, both dress and landscape fashion, by this point evolved from earlier iterations, can be seen in the 1696 painting (Figure 5) by an unknown artist that hangs in the great hall.

The Lucy family, dressed in their finest regalia, occupy an imaginary highpoint in the foreground. The park and water gardens, which may have recycled elements from earlier Tudor and Jacobean periods,²⁵ can be seen behind them. Functionally, pleasure and production are spatially, if not socially, proximate. Fishing occurred in the formal, rectilinear ponds. A bowling green is located not far from the walled-off kitchen gardens and the controlled, ornamental space of the riverside parterres is adjacent to the sounds and smells of the pigpen. A public road to Stratford-upon-Avon passes by the stables where it crosses the Dene. For family members, agricultural labour was frequently within sight though, through the use of both structural and social boundaries, not necessarily within reach.

The importance, and private sphere, of art and patronage is seen in linearly organized elements within the walls that separated the park and the internal landscape of leisure it surrounded. A circular pool with a statue in the centre, seen in the 1730 edition of William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (Figure 6), existed in the formal entrance between gatehouse and home. Parterres, colourful carpets of interweaving natural fabric, extended the inside out, and vice versa as manicured bushes and trees lined linear footpaths. Surrounded

by walls and gates, this internal zone represents a second layer of separation in an enclosed park punctured by the public road. Field boundaries of trees and hedges still bordered the various fields, by this time interrupted by the avenues to the front and back of the house. If the planting of the central avenues may have had something to with the royal visit is worth exploring. The Lime avenue and oak palings may also date from the Elizabethan period, though the fashionable Dutch water garden and parterres, styles imported from Europe, were

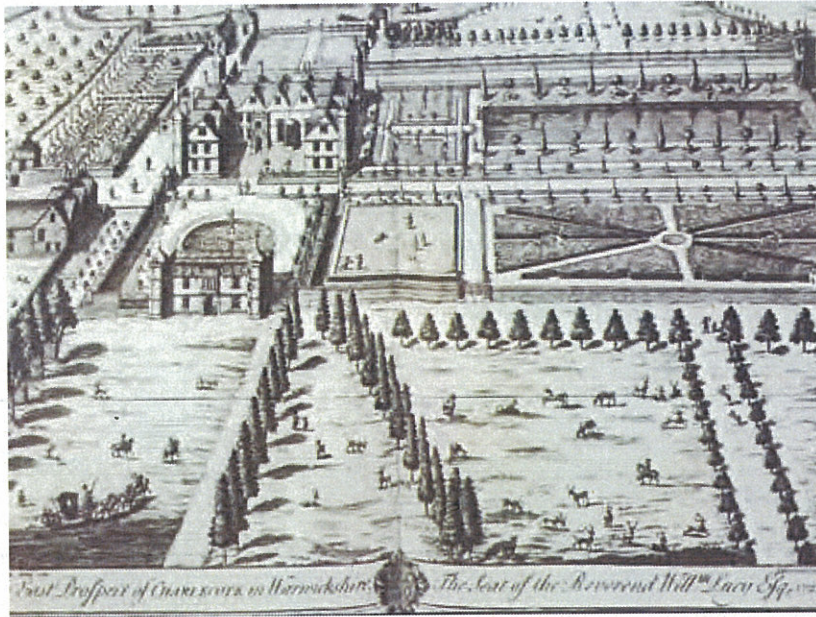


Figure 6

planned later around the 1670s, begun under Captain Thomas Lucy and finished under his cousin Colonel George Lucy.²⁶ Only one Dutch water garden survives in England- Westbury Court Garden in Gloucestershire.

Sixty years later, the finished elements and the surrounding landscape are visible in the 1736 estate plan

(Figure 7), which will be studied in relation to later maps in the next chapter. While this landscape was soon to be greatly altered, some aspects are still visible in the elongated curved terrain of the filled in rectangular pools to the north of the house, especially clear through the use of LIDAR technology²⁷. It was this version of Charlecote, perhaps much disintegrated, that George Lucy inherited in 1744 and which Capability Brown would help transform.



Figure 7

2 :: TRANSITIONS

Within a year following George Lucy's inheritance of Charlecote in 1744, significant additions and alterations to the landscape and the labour force began to occur, a process that continued for at least the next twenty years. The gazebo, perhaps derelict and old-fashioned, was replaced by a new summer-house.²⁸ Deer may have been added from Umberslade Parkin 1745,²⁹ when the park was newly paled,³⁰ and from Alscot estate in 1747.³¹ New skilled labourers were hired, though who, if anyone, they replaced, is unknown. James Momford, a friend of housekeeper Ms. Hayes', became the park keeper in early 1747. William Watterman started work as the gamekeeper in 1750, and Thomas Steaks and John Lawrence came to the garden in 1750 and 1751, respectively.³² Family seems to have played a role in the later hiring process. In April 1769, Edward Cherry became a gardener and, six months later, a male relation, possibly a brother or son, became a groom. There were certainly many others whose names are unrecorded who laboured to maintain or alter the grounds, especially on short-term or seasonal employment schedules. An exploration of these individuals, their lives and routines, is a compelling research opportunity.

The planting of trees became an important and on going characteristic of a changing system within, and beyond, the park. In 1748, oak trees were planted in the park, as noted in Ms. Hayes' memorandum book.³³ The mention of oak connotes economic and patriotic associations³⁴ that have a broad relevancy to contemporary geo-political situations. Timber from oak trees was used to construct ships of war that were used to expand, control, and defend a growing empire and a vast system of trade routes. In 1694, George Saville, Marquess of Halifax, wrote, "The first article in an English-man's Political Creed must be, That he believeth in the Sea..."³⁵ As competing empires grew, powered by fleets of ships constructed of oak, division lines were drawn disregarding existing communal and lingual boundaries, a lasting legacy that has transitioned from imperial conquest to contemporary conflict.

A few years thereafter, in 1754, there is record of a new 'plantation of firrs upon a hill'.³⁶ In March 10th, 1755, Ms. Hayes notes the planting of Beech and Chestnuts³⁷ and, two weeks later, the arrival and planting of trees from Oxfordshire,³⁸ though it is not certain which trees the latter is referring too. Gerry Barnes and Tom Williamson highlight that the planting of trees for aesthetic purposes and their retention into old age became a status symbol of the wealthy elite and the spaces they inhabited.³⁹ Timber would come to be regularly processed largely outside of the estate boundaries and was used to substantial economic benefit, as seen by a later George Lucy, almost eighty years later, using timber to pay off his father's debt.⁴⁰ The import of trees and the general, though far from complete, overtaking of economic purpose by aesthetic considerations reveals the expanding separation between the landscapes of work and leisure. Such a separation could be seen earlier in the shaded, axial avenues that penetrated and bifurcated zones of active agricultural production, as well as in other formal elements. With the transition to the landscape park and associated societal developments, adjacencies to labour and public access were externalized, removed to other locations, frequently outside of the park, and screened.

One of the major developments that presaged and enabled the shift to the landscape park style was the improvement of infrastructural quantity and quality, specifically roads and canals. Around the mid-eighteenth century, travel became a craze as the upper classes sought to see not only the British Isles but also international locations, especially classical sites in Italy. Wayfarer rests and site-seeing destinations sprang up in formerly peripheral places as new roads replaced muddy paths. Visits between neighbours, friends, and family increased and the social call, so popular and well established by Victorian times, took root. Transitional spaces between private and public space became exaggerated. In 1755, George Lucy received permission to divert the public road leading to Stratford-upon-Avon to the edge of the park boundary. A new bridge was built at the site of a former ford at Hunts Mill, replacing the crossing point at the 'Slaughter Bridge' over Wellesburn Brook (now the Dene) adjacent to the stables.⁴¹ David Hiorn, whose brother would work on improvements within the

house, designed the bridge while a certain Newman arrived in late March 1755 to direct the construction of hovels for the workmen.⁴² Material for the bridge may have come from a rough stone quarry near Walton. The diversion reveals a society in which the boundary between exclusion and inclusion was shifting.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, appreciation for formal axial patterns in architecture and landscape design dissipated as 'polite society' took greater meaning from conversation, wit, and wisdom rather than classical education and hierarchy. The trend rearranged linear, formal sequences in favour of the circular and less prescribed.⁴³ Within the house, the functional importance of reception rooms was heightened as visitations became, in part due to the technological development of a lightweight chase, a regular practice. Formerly processional series of spaces became inversed; what were previously largely ceremonial, straight and flat became circuitous and off-centre in the house and gently sloped and meandering in the landscape.

Boggy ground unsuitable for leisurely riding was drained and the entirety of the park became accessible. Fields of regimented routines, gardens of dominated, controlled nature, bounded by walls that became hedges in the surrounding fields evolved, or rather, were swept away by a developing openness to unregimented situations. The comfort with informal encounters, however, was extended largely to the landed gentry; great and small houses alike seemed to find common ground, at the continued, if not, as seen through the road diversion, growing separation from the working lives of labourers and the expanding middle class.

While physical walls, and the impediments and directives they represented, became unfashionable, less visible, though by no means less powerful, boundaries of class distinction marked who and what belonged within and outside of the park.⁴⁴ The designers of what came to be called landscape parks did not hesitate to move entire settlements and hide elements that did not fit into the new order. At Stowe, Charles Bridgeman, an early progenitor of the style, removed an entire village when it got in the way of improvements.⁴⁵ Even the village where the soon to be sought after Lancelot 'Capability' Brown was born was not spared from the improvers plan,⁴⁶ perhaps even through the direct influence of Brown himself. As the labour-intensive, and thus costly formal parterre gardens were removed, the labourers that maintained them became obsolete. Indeed, the removal of parterres could be seen as a financial benefit.⁴⁷ If, where, and how the gardeners were reemployed deserves further research. As with the moving of inhabited villages, the concern for social disruption and hardship seems to have been limited.⁴⁸

Productive spaces of kitchen gardens and ploughed fields separated by hedgerows, and those that worked there, were swept out of view, screened off and replaced by sloping lawns, curvilinear lakes, and clumps of trees of various material and height. The veiling of the aesthetics of work did not mean that the nascent landscape park was of purely ornamental character. Visual changes, according to Roger Turner, author of *Capability Brown and the Eighteenth Century English Landscape*, were of secondary importance to economic and practical improvements.⁴⁹ Lawns, where once there were fields, were planted with rich turf that produced better straw and hay and grazed by 'improved,' larger and more productive breeds of cows and sheep. The focus on turf may show, as Turner explains, that "most of the great landlords had more sense than to devote a vast number of acres to a purely aesthetic purpose."⁵⁰ Writing in 1776, Arthur Young, in *Tours in England and Wales*, selected from the Annals of Agriculture, notes that, in Warwickshire, each cow needed about an acre and a half of land, producing 9 or 10 pounds of butter per week. The focus on better turf may have led to increased production and is an opportunity for further investigation. Lakes and ponds, removed from formal pools, were stocked with fish, which could in turn be sold at market.

The role of sport alongside economic necessities as a continuous thread in the transition between formal and landscape park shows that while aesthetics may have changed, certain functionalities remained. At Packington, for example, Lord Guernsey, later the 3rd Earl of Ayelsford, wanted 'sport and profit.'⁵¹ The extent to which lawn bowling, as shown in the 1696 estate plan (**Figure 5**, page 5), remained in the landscape park deserves more attention. Hunting, a long-held privilege of the landowner within the enclosed deer park, certainly continued, and may have even found new challenges. The landscape park brought the obstructions of

tree cover from far-off deer park reserves closer to the home; both hunter and deer could use tree clumps for cover. In draining wet and boggy earth, deer had more space to 'roam free and wild.' Duck decoys could also be placed on new, curvilinear lakes.

Privilege, perhaps more so than before, blanketed the homes and gardens of the aristocracy, like those at Packington and Charlecote, as great houses acted as gravitational nodes of power, prestige, influence, and patronage.⁵² Within them, a complex of lifestyles, with various, and perhaps increasingly refined, roles took shape. These roles were structured by a social and economic order. The period leading to the development and mass acceptance of the landscape park was concomitant with the global flow and easy availability of money while land, the traditional enabler of wealth, came to be seen as a genteel status symbol. The importance of money, the development of a law-based banking system, and stark differences in income between owners and labourers should not be underplayed.

Around the middle of the sixteenth century, the act of lending was clothed in the tension between religious minorities and the ecclesiastical establishment. In the first version of *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, dated 1656, William Dugdale records that William de Lucy (d. 1551) was given loans to pay English Jews, except for those in Hereford and Oxford, so that money would only be owed to those 'signed with the cross.' Earlier, Peter Montfort, one of the seven magnates who revolted against Henry III in the Second Baron's War, and presided over Parliament in 1258 in a role that would become the Speaker of the House of Commons, received a special mandate to seize the estates of members of the Jewish community in London until his family's debts were absolved without payment.⁵³

In the eighteenth century, the upkeep of a great house, including an apartment in London for the season, patronage, and, beginning around the middle of the century, landscape and livestock 'improvement', was a capital-intensive process. Approximately five to six thousand pounds per year or, more comfortably, ten thousand, was required. In the 1760s, assuming a six-day a week year without interruptions, though there almost certainly have been gaps in employment, the labourers who worked for Capability Brown at Castle Ashby would have made slightly more than 10 pounds a year,⁵⁴ or one-one thousandth of an estate owner living at a 'comfortable' income. As much of the wealth of the gentry was tied to land and not easily exchangeable, internal improvements and international endeavours were funded by the newly accountable English banking system.⁵⁵ 'Capability' Brown, the most prolific landscape gardener of the eighteenth century, began banking with Drummonds, the fifth oldest bank in England, in 1753, thirty-six years after the institution's founding.⁵⁶

With changes to access to capital, infrastructure, and taste, the new fashion spread quickly. By 1790 in Norfolk, hardly any mansions of any significance were not surrounded by a landscape park.⁵⁷ Beyond the United Kingdom, the landscape park became a recognizable cultural export, consumed and adapted throughout Europe.⁵⁸ Capability Brown, the individual most associated with the landscape park, would come to consult on over 250 projects.

After beginning his career under the patronage of Sir William Loraine at Kirkharle Hall following an uncharacteristically long period of education, Brown left Northumberland at the age of 23 to work under Lord Cobham at Stowe. In 1741, within two years of leaving Kirkharle, he became the head gardener at the most famous garden in England, though much of his work at Stowe appears to have been under the heavy influence of Lord Cobham. In 1749, Cobham died and Brown soon began to grow an independent practice, with early projects at Packington, Warwick Castle, Newham Paddox, and Croome Court. In 1750, a year before he departed from employment at Stowe, Brown visited Sanderson Miller, who already had a regional architectural and garden practice, and who would later propel Brown's career through his rich social network, at his own estate at Radway and nearby Farnbrough, where he had been laying out the grounds for several years. At Radway, Miller designed an informal landscape, pocketed with lakes and surrounded by belts of indigenous trees to merge and soften edges. According to Jennifer M. Meir, Miller, especially in the approach to the surrounding landscape, can be seen as Brown's immediate predecessor.⁵⁹ His influence on Brown's style,

especially in the early years of his independent practice, is an opportunity for further research.

In the same year he visited Miller, 'Capability' Brown drew a sketch plan for Packington and added a second more detailed plan a year after. At the back of the initial sketch is a drawing of Charlecote Park (Figure 8), seemingly a copy of the

1696 plan (Figure 5, page 5), which may have been hanging in the Great Hall at the time. This is the very first connection between Charlecote and Brown. No other direct evidence appears for another seven years. While it may point to a potential early visit, his first recorded appearance does not materialize until 1757. On September 29th,

Ms. Hayes notes in her Memorandum Book, "Brown began alterations upon Wellesburn Brook (under the direction of Horsbrough)."⁶⁰

While it is certainly feasible that Brown had conversations

or lost correspondences regarding the grounds at Charlecote prior to 1757, any supposition that he directed and was therefor the originator of any changes made up to this point is simply conjecture.

In September of the following year, the formal 'new canal' was drawn with twenty of the forty-eight brace of carp put into, as Ms. Hayes writes, the 'New Serpentine River.' This is the first mention of Wellesburn brook being named 'Serpentine,' which may be an association with the Serpentine designed by Charles Bridgeman beginning in 1726 for Queen Caroline at Kensington Gardens. The description shows significant alterations to the brook had taken place by the fall of 1758. Beginning three weeks later, and lasting nearly a year, a new kitchen wall was started and the ground 'was made fit for use.'⁶¹ This may mean the moving of the kitchen garden to a new location.

Nearly a year later, Francis Greville of Warwick Castle, in a letter to George Lucy, notes his expectation of Brown's arrival.⁶² This short mention shines light on the operation, promotion, and growth of Brown's business specifically, and the landscape park style in general. The project at Warwick Castle, as with the smaller one at Charlecote, took years, during which Brown may have repeatedly visited to supervise ongoing or new construction and planting schemes. Using his employment and, thereby, approval by a local landowner, he could gain entry into a close-knit circle of peers who frequently wrote to and visited each other. As with mowed lawns in the American suburb, the growth of the landscape park style may have as much to do with class expectations and neighbour envy as with any other development.

On the 2nd of February 1760, Ms. Hayes writes to George Lucy of her hope that the alterations to Charlecote are being made in preparation for his wedding.⁶³ At the time, redolent with changing styles and tastes, modifications, or 'improvements' to estates would often be made prior to or just after a new marriage. Further research could be useful on the influence of the requirements and precedents of marriage on the development of the landscape park style.

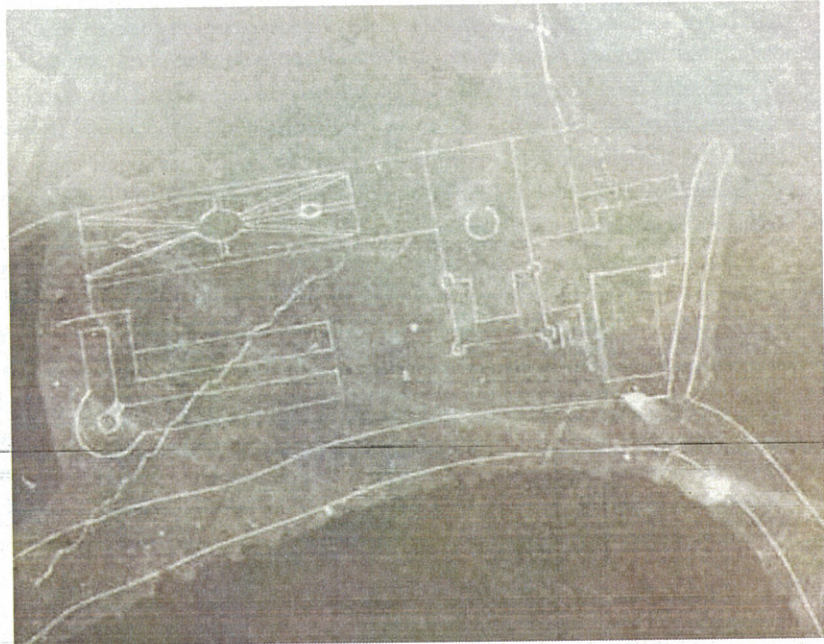


Figure 8

On the 3rd of May of the same year, Ms. Hayes records that “Mr. Brown began to make the ground within the stable gates, under the direction of Midgeley.”⁶⁴ Midgeley would also later work alongside, or, as Christopher Gallagher suggests, under Brown at Castle Ashby, Blenheim, Wynnstay and Ashburnham.⁶⁵ At this time, the new canal, drawn, or emptied, two years prior was destroyed. For two years then, it may be safe to assume that pits formerly filled with water and fish extended out from the northern side of the house. These pits would have to be filled and the dirt would need to come from somewhere. Often, given the long delays and difficulties of transit, materials from both house and landscape would be reused. The earth that was used to fill the pits would likely have come from onsite deposits, perhaps from the widening of the Avon or the sinking of a fosse, or ha-ha, as required by the first two articles of the contract between Brown and George Lucy.

The contract, agreed to in 1760, was worth a sum of 525 pounds, approximately 70,000 pounds today. While this may not seem an extraordinary figure, especially when considering that work was to be done over years and income shared with subcontractors and their workers, comparatively, the sum is greater than the cumulative total a day labourer would make in a lifetime. Who these labourers were and where they came from is currently unknown. What is known is that the tools of garden reconstruction were largely primitive. At Stowe, between 1746 and 1747, two years before the death of Lord Cabham and three before Capability Brown’s departure, 24,000 cubic yards of dirt was dug up with spades and removed in carts to create the Grecian Valley.⁶⁶ Lakes, a key feature of the landscape park, were lined with puddled-clay, an effective though labour-intensive process also used in the construction of the expanding canal network.⁶⁷

The three-year gap between Brown’s first record at Charlecote and the signing of the contract, perhaps attributed to George Lucy’s grand tour, does not seem to have been an unusual event. At Sandbeck Park in South Yorkshire a contract was signed eight years after Brown was first invited.⁶⁸

The agreement lays out parameters of work to be done, or that may have already started, in five articles.⁶⁹ The first article considers the widening of the Avon and the laying of its banks with a “natural and easy level” at the same height on both sides of the river. The second deals with the sinking of a fosse, a sunken fence to bound grazing animals- more popularly known as a ha-ha, around the meadow deep enough so that it would not be visible. The third article involves the filling in of the ponds, or fish pools, to the north of the house at a corresponding ground level. The last two articles concern the ‘preparation of the ground,’ allocation of trees, the sowing of grass and Dutch clover over areas of disturbed earth, and the responsibility of replanting what does not survive. Marcus Roberts, in his study of the history and evolution of the orchards at Charlecote, places the period of implementation between c. 1761 and 1783, though certainly construction occurred prior to 1760 and it is unknown how the completion date was estimated.⁷⁰

In a letter dated March, 1761, George Lucy updates Ms. Hayes that the cascade has been completed, adding, however, that there was a lack of water.⁷¹ The cascade has been the subject of much inaccuracy in prior research. The current cascade where the Dene meets the Avon has been previously attributed to Capability Brown. A 2012 report concludes, “Brown was responsible for the cascade on the Wellesburn brook.”⁷² Admitting that many of Capability Brown’s cascades have been altered, Roger Turner, in his excellent study of the landscapes of Capability Brown and the societal circumstances that envelop them, searches for a definable stylistic pattern.⁷³ He writes that a later cascade at Blenheim, completed in 1768, “is a romantic creation, natural-looking and quite different from Brown’s earlier cascade at Charlecote, which is architectural and controlled...”⁷⁴ They are ‘quite different’ because, contradictory to prior research, the existing cascade is not a remnant of Brown’s plan but is rather a Victorian element. A marking through Dene south-west of the stables just prior to a bend in the brook in the 1791 plan corresponds with other, clearer markings in the 1831 Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 13**, page 14) and, later, the 1849 Tithe Map⁷⁵ (**Figure 14**, page 17). This curve, and, especially, the location of the Dene’s outflow into the Avon, was unmistakably altered in the latter half of the twentieth century. This discrepancy and discovery will be explained in the next chapter.

The next month, George Lucy describes meeting Brown for five minutes in Bath and, in a peculiar

incident, the transaction of a 100 pounds as a second payment.⁷⁶ It unknown when the payments began and when or how they concluded. Further research into finding the date of the last payment might shine light on the date of completion, alluded to by Marcus Roberts. In a letter dated the 17th of April, 1762, Capability Brown, after mentioning Lord Aylesford of Packington Hall, informs George Lucy of an order to “plant additional trees which were wanted and to correct everything that was wrong,” assuring him that “everything shall be put to right.” What exactly was wrong and where and which trees ‘were wanted’ is unknown. If the lack of water flowing out of the cascade was still an issue, the problem would have been a year old. The mention of Lord Aylesford, twelve years after Capability Brown’s first sketch of Packington, may be indicative of long-term oversight. Similarly, corresponding landscape changes may have occurred at other, peripheral properties owned by the nobility. In 1758, the ‘new canal’ was emptied and all the fish taken out. Six years later, a pool at nearby Hatton was similarly drawn.⁷⁷ Maps are particularly important to see how, and where, changes occurred.

Compelling visual records fill in the residual gaps that textual evidence leaves behind. A 1736 plan of Charlecote⁷⁸ (Figure 7, page 6) is the last aerial perspective prior to George Lucy’s tenure and Capability Brown’s influence. The next is the 1791 estate plan by John Clarke⁷⁹ (Figure 9), followed by the 1813 Ordinance Survey map⁸⁰ (Figure 12, page 14). When the plans are layered together, the extent of alterations is revealed.⁸¹



Figure 9

Before studying the differences, cartographic irregularities, seemingly most acute in the latter maps, should be accounted for. For instance, as the Avon stretches westwards beyond the house, there is a significant gap between the river’s southerly dip in the 1736 plan, which is almost exact to the current extent of the Avon, and the smoother flow shown in 1791 and 1813.

Unless the river was reoriented and moved back exactly to where it was, the latter maps are imprecise. Scaling and differences in projection may also account for skewed spatial relationships. Even with such inconsistencies, a layered comparison shows significant changes prior to and after the period of Brown’s influence.

Between 1736 and 1791, the Dene was widened throughout and it’s eastern half straightened (Figure 10).



Figure 10

A shallow paddock that existed in Hoppy Meadow on the Dene to the east of the stables was removed, perhaps with the nearby cottage. Now seen as fragile and ecologically critical, shallow wetlands, indecorous to changing tastes, were frequently removed for equestrian accessibility and to fit with an expanded garden ethos. Such spaces attract mosquitoes, insects and throb with the sounds of frogs and grasshoppers. It is worth exploring the evolving soundscape preferences

and, especially, if, and if so, how, considerations of health and wellbeing underlined the transition to the landscape park. The kitchen garden was moved from next to the house to beyond the diverted Stratford road, bordering the new bridge designed by David Hiorn and across from the main entrance to the house. A new entrance and drive to the north side of the house came down from the road to Hampton Lucy. The axial water garden pools were drawn and filled in. The bason, a circular pool behind the gatehouse, seems to have also disappeared though and a mark in the court in front of the house may indicate some formal element. A series of three curvilinear lakes appears where an earlier lake, seen in the 1696 painting of the estate, existed. While previous research has focused primarily on the Dene, the extent of alterations to the lake over time has not been sufficiently explored. The latter seems to have been a curving strip of water that is barely legible on the 1736 plan of Charlecote. In all likelihood, water level changes occurred seasonally and the lake shifted in size and shape, along with the Avon, through dry and wet seasons. The importance of cyclical variations is critical to evoking the sense of landscape as gradually, and sometimes, suddenly, changing. Even during periods of comparative minimal human impact, landscape is never the same and landscape history can never be exact.

A stream that flowed into the Avon from the lakes formerly divided the fields of Little Meadow and Place Meadow. The former was incorporated into the park by 1791, along with Hoppy Meadow, Wellesburn New Close, Old Town, Barrywood Meadow⁸², and Cherry Orchard. The boundary of Barrywood Meadow, previously a straight line, was made into a semi-sphere bounding the western side of the Avon across from the back of the house. Field boundaries, as seen outside of the newly extended park, and throughout the Midlands, were, and largely remain, lines of trees that serve as wildlife corridors and, frequently, as local paths. The boundaries between the incorporated fields were uprooted and the new park became open, at the cost of genetic diversity and rights of way. At the same time, the large geometric parterres to the north of the house were uprooted as maintenance hours, if not maintenance crews, were cut.

The oak avenue leading to the medieval church, visible in 1736, was removed by 1790. While it is unknown if Capability Brown suggested the removal of the avenue, it is fitting into the broader landscape style and suggestive of other projects where he cut sections into existing avenues to extend prospects from various locations. The uprooting of the avenue opened the view of the park to the edges. Clumps of trees now grew at the southern corners of the park, along both sides of the Avon as it exited the park, and between the old fields of Wellesborn New Close and Old Town, perhaps intended to hide a view of Kingsmead Farm.

In an inset detail to the 1791 plan (**Figure 11**), a bridge can be seen over the Avon to the left extreme of the scene. John Standbridge drew up a plan for such a bridge in c. 1768,⁸³ twenty-two years before its first and only depiction. The bridge may have been used to hide a paled boundary, perhaps connecting the sunken fosse, or ha-ha, mentioned in the second article of the contract between Goerge Lucy and Capability Brown. While it is unknown how much influence Brown had on the construction of the bridge, it is certainly quite fitting with placements of bridges as focal points in other landscapes he laid out. A well-preserved example can be seen in nearby Compton Verney, later to be connected to the Lucy family through marriage. The bridge's construction, if indeed it ever was constructed, would have roughly coincided with the expansion of the park to include Barrywood Meadow, the field across the Avon from



Figure 11

the back of the house. The bridge does not appear on any other illustrations or plans, and may have disappeared due to flooding or storm damage, perhaps before the shrinking of the park to the west of the Avon between the 1813 (Figure 12) and 1831 (Figure 13) Ordnance Survey maps. Some evidence that the bridge once stood exists in the stone pilings that can still be seen east of Old Town in West Park. At about the time the bridge would have stood, the orchard, in correlation with changing spatial relationships and visual appreciations, seems to have disappeared, only to reappear in the Victorian revival of earlier formal tastes.

According to Marcus Roberts in the Charlecote Park Orchard Report, the orchard to the south of the house, still extant in 1736, was gone by 1791.⁸⁴ With the road diversion, Cherry Orchard

was incorporated into the deer park, which may have been when it, and any surrounding walls, were taken down, though an exact date is unknown. Considering the possibility that the orchard remained into the latter half of the nineteenth century, Roberts asks if the retention or planting of the orchard was part of Brown's plan.⁸⁵ While it may not be likely given the removal of other production spaces beyond the view of the house, the relatively small scope of work at Charlecote means that the notion, without proof beyond doubt either way, should be considered a question worth exploring. There appears to be thick vegetation north of the Dene in front



Figure 12



Figure 13

of the house in 1790, though the extent to which this is new planting or a remnant of the previous layout is unknown.

Several other unknowns act as research opportunities that could add or question existing scholarship of Brown and the landscape park. A Research Impact Review compiled by the University of East Anglia's Landscape Group suggests several prospects.⁸⁶ The treatment of the walled kitchen garden, for one, requires further study. Also, an investigation of the weaving of recreational and economic activities – the fuzzy boundary between leisure and production, may reveal how these layered patterns of use helped form spatial and structural relationships. Another gap in research is the role of gender in the use and design of the landscape park, especially in changing roles, expectations, and quotidian experience.

Further, the history of the park and gardens should be stretched to the landscape as a whole, to other grounds associated with the great houses and the nearby villages and agricultural land. While some parts of these gaps have been touched on, much more in depth research should be done. Specifically within Charlecote, the alterations to the garden north of the house in this period, beyond the planting of Cedars of Lebanon, a material frequently used by Capability Brown in other parks, deserves further investigation, especially in the aesthetics, spatial relationships, and species at or below eye-level.

The Victorian era and the arrival of Mary Elizabeth Lucy (nee Williams) to Charlecote in 1824 would bring massive and frequently misinterpreted changes to the park and garden. Misunderstandings of Victorian alterations may stem from a not-so subtle desire to contribute to the legacy of Capability Brown. Prior research has suggested that the presence of Brown's work in the landscape has been self-effacing.⁸⁷ While this may be true in certain sections, much of the former landscape has been effaced by Victorian ambition and self-importance. This, however, should not be seen as an entirely negative aspect. Charlecote Park is rich in unexplored layers and the interpretation of the extant landscape could become fuller, and more inclusive, with a slight shift in perspective.

The next chapter will consider the Victorian period to the present and is followed by an addendum in the form of a framework to guide future considerations of unresolved oversights and unexplored possibilities.

3 :: AMBITIONS

The period from the Georgian to Victorian eras marked a revival of the formal, especially in landscape design. Elaborate gardens and linear avenues returned once again as fashionable status symbols.⁸⁸ In 1824, a formal planting with several large beds and 'old-fashioned' flowers was destroyed and rebuilt to fit with the tastes of the estate's new governess, Mary Elizabeth Lucy. Avenues, including the main entrance bounded by elm, and the smaller, bent oak avenue leading to the twelfth century church and Lucy family crypts were seemingly returned to their original continuity and location. According to Christopher Gallagher, the widths of parts of the Lime Avenue in West Park suggest a planting date of around 1820.⁸⁹ While some limes may date from this period, they would instead have been a replanting of the avenue shown in the 1736 plan that bordered the original road to Stratford-upon-Avon before the 1755 road diversion. Gallagher's approximation of 1820 may be a clue to the treatment of avenues in the landscape park and the return of more formal fashions in the coming Victorian era. The Oak entrance avenue had already matured to great width by Mary Elizabeth's arrival and would stand for another hundred and fifty years until it was felled by disease. The double oak avenue framing the view from the back of the house across the park beyond the Avon, however, seems to have disappeared by 1889, though it was replanted in 1973 with Horse Chestnut.⁹⁰

Increasingly diverse planting schemes, especially in parterres and flowerbeds, spoke to technological advancements in storage and climate control. However, the view of the aristocratic Victorian garden simply as a space of innovation hides undeniable, though overlooked, undertones. Better glass and iron led to improved glasshouses that could nurture plants unaccustomed to the English climate, and expand the availability and seasonality of those that were. The glasshouse, which enabled one of the most famous events in English garden history – the flowering of the *Victoria regia* water lily, is also embedded in fraught social perspectives.

The delicate sensitivity of the gentleman gardener to the study of his specimens belied a dangerous combination of curiosity and greed unconcerned by the destruction of native ecosystems and cultures. As far back as 1817, glasshouses were considered ideal not just for the display of specimen plants but also specimen people, gathered from previously unknown continental interiors. People were exhibited in the same fashion as exotic plants. At about the same time as the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, the Wardian case, an early terrarium that allowed ferns to grow in London's coal smog, also enabled the bourgeois hobby of plant collecting that "extended to the right, even obligation, to control the people native to cultures where coveted exotic plants were found."⁹² The structure of the Amazonian Water Lily (*Victoria amazonica*), following its successful flowering at Chatsworth in 1849, inspired the design of the Crystal Palace, arguably Victorian England's most celebrated structure. As numerous exhibits of the achievements of the industrial revolution filled up the massive exhibition hall, the routes of plant hunters that first brought its inspiration to the empire now carried material, such as rubber from the Amazon, to machines in English factories. People soon followed. Mary Elizabeth, a lady of her time, described the 'bush people' she saw on a visit to London as "little above the monkey tribe."⁹¹

The social views of the maturing polite society, reacting to changing economic systems that would, eventually, lead to the collapse of the old order, are inseparable from the landscapes it inhabited. Morality and aesthetics, especially in the Victorian garden, are indivisible from each other. The sense of taste that informed garden design also informed practices of exclusion. Mary Elizabeth, around whom the interpretation of Charlecote Park had previously centred, wrote about the 'brokers and Jews' who gathered at the auction following the death of her brother in law, Rev. John Lucy; "If the old rector could have seen the dirty rabble in his once beautiful drawing room it would have driven him frantic," adding "he would have not deemed worthy to have looked at them."⁹³

Steven Johnson, channelling the social theorist Walter Benjamin, notes that as Victorian achievements, from worlds fairs, railroads, and exotic gardens, grew in size, extent, and lavishness, so too did waste by-products,⁹⁴ along with disease, distrust, and dissent. The high-society perspective of Jane Austen, and that of

Mary Elizabeth, is no more important than the griminess and struggles of a Dickens novel. The story of the Charlecote landscape is only recently beginning to touch on the latter.

Victorian society was a period of significant transition, both progressive and alienating. The reform bill of 1832 doubled the amount of men able to vote while the Industrial Revolution pressured the rural poor into coal mines, dangerous factories, and overcrowded cities while, at the same time, marking the beginnings of the modern middle-class. "The Victorian age was first and foremost an age of transition," writes Sally Mitchell, author of *Daily Life in Victorian England*, adding, "The England that had once been a feudal and agricultural society was transformed into an industrial democracy."⁹⁵ As progressive drivers, such as worker rights, gender equality, education, and fairer representation began to take shape, traumatic upheavals, like the cholera epidemic of 1854, festered in the underbelly of propriety. The spread of information, including ideas about the aesthetics gardens and the place of the lady within them, mushroomed with the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1855. Daily periodicals that once cost seven pence now sold for a penny and, later, halfpence.⁹⁶ The consequences and dichotomies of the Victorian period is critical to the relevancy of Charlecote Park and represents a profound opportunity to provoke dialogue and expand the visitor experience.

Charlecote, however, is not simply a Victorian landscape. Many layers, from the presence of Old-Town, to the indents associated with the water garden, and the openness and tree clumps of the landscape park, can be found on site. The substantial Victorian alterations, much accredited to Mary Elizabeth Lucy, are often the most visible, though not necessarily the most important.

In 1824, Mary Elizabeth came to Charlecote from Boddlewyddan in Wales after marrying George Lucy, whom her sister Margaret had earlier favoured. Almost immediately, she began to make changes to the grounds. When she first arrived, she found "no beautiful garden in the court – only a few large beds with shrubs and old-fashioned flowers. I soon caused my husband to let me root them all up, and I planned the present one, which is such a pleasure to me."⁹⁷ On the first morning of her arrival, she saw dense growths of nettles in the shade of the Scotch pines and chestnuts in the garden to the north of the house. She would oversee the removal



Figure 14

the proper arrangement of flowerbeds.¹⁰¹

In 1829, five years after her own marriage, her sister married Lord Willoughby of nearby Compton Verney, landscaped by Capability Brown in 1769. According to Alice Fairfax-Lucy, Mary Elizabeth's "unadmitted envy of her sister" and of her new home led to a change of heart regarding Charlecote.¹⁰² That

of the undergrowth and the planting of Solomon's seal, foxgloves, ivy, box and wildflowers⁹⁸ especially briar roses and honeysuckle- her two favourites, at the base of the tree trunks.⁹⁹ She seems to take a managerial role in the garden, watching, for instance, the gardener planting verbenas in the court.¹⁰⁰ As long as she was at her 'dear old Charlecote' she would continue the role. Thirty-five years later, she sat on a stool in the court in front of the house directing a gardener named Peyton on

same year, Thomas Willement was hired to make significant alterations to the main house, including adding rooms, repairing wainscoting, and embellishing stained glass panes with heraldic symbols. The upgrades were estimated to take seven years and the family moved to a nearby tenantless farmers cottage. On the Ordnance Survey maps between 1813 (Figure 12, page 14) and 1831 (Figure 13, page 14) a significant change is visible. The portion of the park beyond the Avon, now part of the much larger Camp Ground, disappears in the later map. It is not certain when and for what reasons the park shrunk in this period though funds for house improvements may have come from the sale of land, further research is required.

During the family's Grand Tour from 1840 to 1842, during which the youngest child died en route, the Lucys visited Pamphili Gardens, a sculpted formal park in Rome. From Pamphili, the family brought back many bunches of violets, a flower, along with roses, that Mary Elizabeth later imagined her children planting on her grave.¹⁰³ In 1845, three years after the family's return, George Lucy would die and his eldest son and heir, Fulke, followed in 1848, one year after the marriage of the youngest daughter. At the time of the wedding, Mary Elizabeth unveiled her plans to "pull down the wretched old church."¹⁰⁴ John Gibson, who had worked previously under Sir Charles Barry on the new houses of Parliament, was retained and let Mary Elizabeth have her way "in every detail." Mary Elizabeth would not stand for any other opinions on the matter of the rebuilding of the church, finding the neighbourhood clergy "very importunate to be told my plans but I would neither show nor tell them anything... and I did not want their opinions or advice."¹⁰⁵ This headstrong nature is evident in the coming expansion



Figure 15

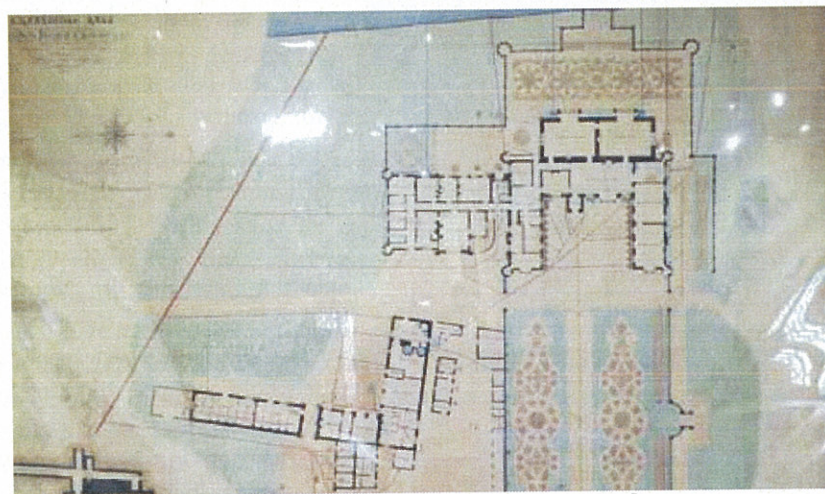


Figure 16

George Lucy, described by Mary Elizabeth as 'frightful,' was rebuilt as the current Orangery. The new building contained exotic plants from the greenhouses, or glasshouses, in the kitchen garden across the road.¹⁰⁷ Around the same time, the small thatched roof country cottage, similar to the eye-catcher elements that began to fade away in the gardens of the prior century, was constructed next to the orangery as a reminder of Mary

of the house and the major changes to the landscape during times of growing financial difficulty. The Saxon church, which was given to the Thelsford priory in 1214,¹⁰⁶ was pulled down in 1849, when it was nearly six hundred fifty years old, and a new one completed in 1853.

The church was not the only element that was to be reconfigured to fit with the tastes of the mistress of Charlecote. By 1857, a summerhouse built for

Elizabeth's childhood memories in Wales. In 1865, West Lodge and the Triumphal archway were constructed at the bend of Stratford Road where it meets the park. When the Dene was repositioned, the orchard, which appears and reappears (like the replanting of avenues) at different periods and throughout the landscape, seems to have been repositioned to the location of the current remnant.¹⁰⁸

Following the death of his brother in 1848, Spencer succeeded at the age of 18 and, heavily influenced by his mother, soon began to remodel the house and grounds. Frequently, before mechanized transport enabled easier movement of heavy material, building fabric, for both house and landscape, was often taken from nearby sites or reused from previous constructions. Oak from the park was used in the new woodwork in the north wing, laid out by Henry Kyte, a carpenter from Hampton Lucy. Earlier, in 1844, a year prior to George Lucy's death, a marble floor that was purchased in Venice during the Continental trip was placed in to the Great Hall, replacing the original stone floor. It seems likely that the replaced stonework throughout the property during extensive renovations over the next thirty years would have been reused on site. Matching material shifts across the landscape deserves further investigation, especially between 1842 and 1872. One possible clue of the reuse of material exists in a stone engraved with a heart (**Figure 15**, previous page) on the current cascade. The stone, dedicated to George Lucy and dated 1844, marks a transitional period before and after the southern shift of the Dene to make room for an expanding house. The date of 1844 on a stone in the current cascade is contradictory and provides an unresolved mystery.

The contradiction stems from the differences seen in the 1849 Tithe map (**Figure 14**, page 17), where the first third of the Dene takes the same shape and enters the Avon in the same place as the 1791 Survey, as well as both 1813 and 1831 Ordnance Survey maps (**Figures 9, 11 and 12**, respectively), and the 1875 Trepass Survey (**Figure 16**, previous page) which currently hangs in the Education Room. Thus, Capability Brown's alterations to the Dene, visible beginning in 1791, seem to continue for the entire length of the river until sometime between 1849 and 1875, at which point the bridge that currently spans the Dene would probably have been built. It may be possible, however, to deduce that the last third of the Dene before it enters the Avon was moved southwards in preparation for the new southern wing of the house designed by John Gibson and built between 1852 and 1856, leaving only a few years following 1849 during which the river is likely to have been moved. The movement of the Dene is especially visible when the 1849 Tithe Map and 1875 Trepass Survey are similarly scaled, angled, and overlaid (**Figure 17**). The mark over the Dene that can be seen at the same place in 1791, 1831, and 1849, which may refer to the location of the original cascade, here seen in red, no longer crosses a body of water. Indeed, this portion of the river has now been transformed into a culvert.

The changes to the Dene are particularly visible in the 1889 Ordnance Survey (**Figure 18**, next page), which is much more accurate than any previous OS maps. The house and outbuildings have moved

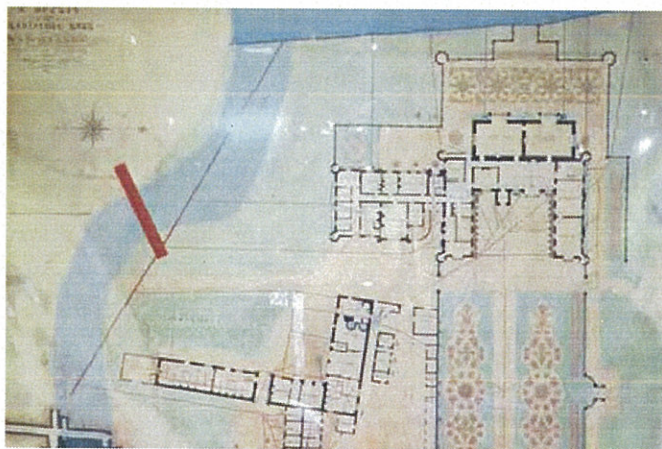


Figure 17

further south and, for the first time, a waterfall appears where the Dene now enters the Avon. The architectural nature of the new cascade may be in keeping with the seemingly compass measured, half-oval shape of the newer section of the Dene. When the 1849 Tithe Map and 1889 Ordnance Survey maps are overlaid (**Figure 19**, next page), they create a persuasive case that the section of the Dene immediately south of house and outbuildings is now curved down and enters the Avon slightly further down. Within a year, Charlecote, following the death of

Mary Elizabeth and, six months later, Henry Spencer Lucy, was let for several years. The leaving of the family was seen as an act of betrayal by the servants that would now have to find employment elsewhere. Before leaving, Tina, Henry Spencer's widow, who had lived in the shadow of a controlling mother-in-law, requested the agent to set a bonfire of house records and accounts spanning four hundred years.¹⁰⁹ What was lost may never

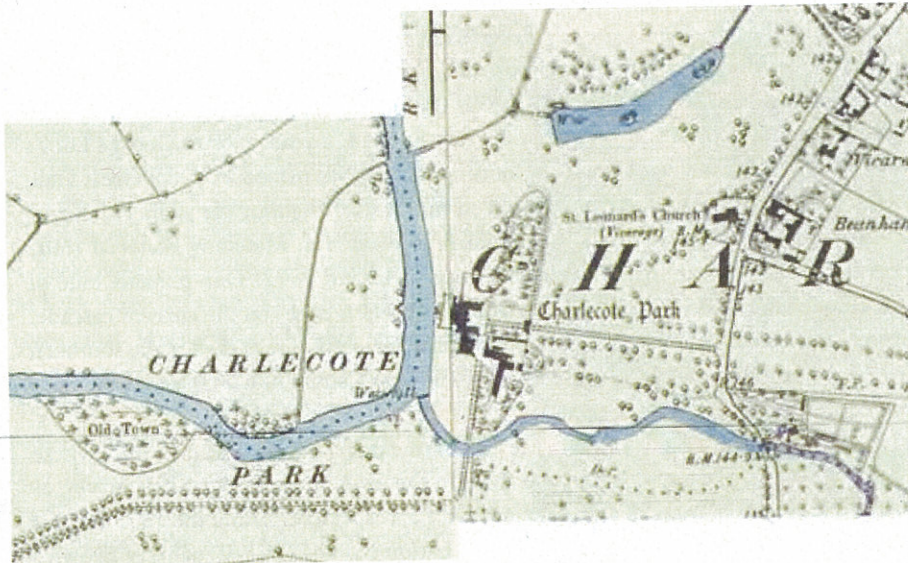


Figure 18

be known. In 1892, five years before Mary Elizabeth's granddaughter Ada returned with her new husband, the park, surrounded by a rent oak fence, contained Elms, Limes, Beech, Chestnuts, and Oaks in 253 acres, and held 250 fallow and 50 red deer.¹¹⁰

For the next fifty years, a new order, the nation-state, would strenuously emerge. Social unrest, fed by calls for equality, better pay, anarchist bombings, and hysterias, was coupled with pan-European tribal nationalism, total war, and revolution in Eastern Europe. The exclusive veneer of land as the status and path to wealth, accessible only to a select few, was stripped and battered in the storm. Social and economic hierarchy, unquestionable before, shrunk with the return of millions of soldiers, and millions more that did not. Electricity lit up the night sky and the humdrum of automobiles and planes replaced the neighing of horses. At Charlecote, what was once on the horizon was now on the front steps.

In 1941, the park, comprised of eight acres for mowing and 64 acres for grazing, and managed by one full time and two part-time employees, contained 15 cattle, 46 sheep, three pigs, 73 poultry, and 2 horses.

Considered a hobby farm by the farm survey of 1942, the park was given a second-rate grade due to a personal failing for a "lack of knowledge" of the 'gentleman farmer,' Sir Henry Fairfax-Lucy,¹¹¹ Ada's husband, who would pass away in 1944. The next year, after the end of the second world war and about fifty years after the return of the Lucy family, Montgomerie Fairfax-Lucy presented Charlecote Park to the National Trust. In the

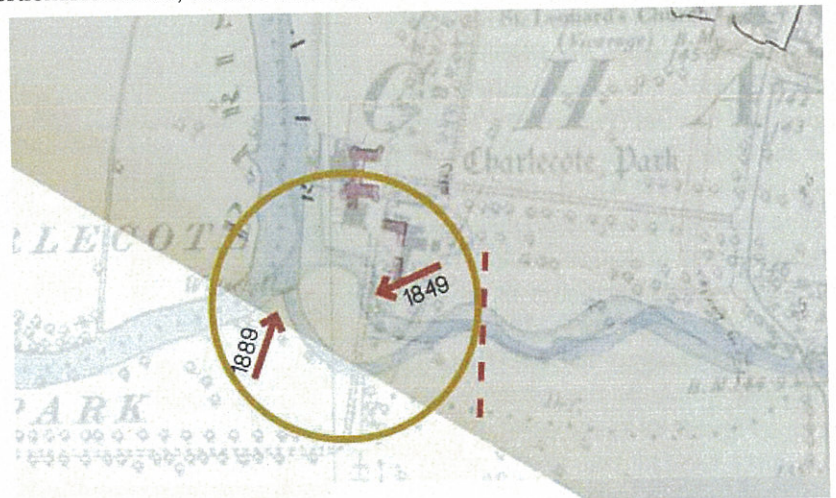


Figure 19

hand over ceremony the following year, his brother, Brian Fairfax-Lucy, proclaimed Charlecote a memorial not only to his own ancestors, but also to “uncounted generations of servants.”¹¹² With these words, the National Trust inherited a shared space of commonality, not just socially and economically, but also historically.

By the 1950s, the formal parterres had been turned to lawn by the National Trust, perhaps due to the difficulty of maintenance. Replacement trees, Copper Beech, Red Horse Chestnut and London Plane were



planted in the park to the east of the house and south of the lake. Other species planted throughout the park include Red Oak, Red Horse Chestnut, Norway Maple, and Walnut.¹¹³ In 1995, the parterre in the back of the house was restored to plans shown in 1940s aerial photography. Today, the site attracts over a 165,000 visitors a year, growing on average by 10,000 per year. When a recent 2013 aerial image is overlaid with the 1889 Ordnance Survey map

Figure 20

(Figure 20), the vast majority of the park, outside of the reappearance of the avenue to the back of the house and the disappearance of certain trees to the south of the Lime avenue, may seem unchanged. While the surface may be interpreted as Victorian in character, Charlecote Park is a layered landscape, belonging to all of history, and to every visitor that has ever been and has yet to visit.

Landscape, rooted as much in the desire of what is to come as what has already been, is transient and ever changing. Garden restoration, as Monique Mosser suggests, is a balancing act between “ambition and modesty, patience and passion,”¹¹⁴ baffling predictions of what tastes or perspectives may follow. The future of Charlecote Park, as it has always been, is uncertain.

The following addendum is a framework for further research.

ADDENDUM

The pursuit of landscape history is also the pursuit of an inclusive and expansive story that moves beyond individual objects or sites. The process to get to such a story, and its interpretation, comes from the collection of known facts through informed research.

Research has the capacity to be heavily influenced by prior interpretation, often leading to associations that are not necessarily present. Provocative research leads to provocative stories; especially of unexplored periods, people, and experiences, and how they may connect with or have influenced the contemporary world. The aim of research is to challenge history as something distant and former.

Interpretation is complex and variable and should be recognized as an evolving, ongoing process. External perspectives are formative in locating, considering, and developing the unique and unexpected.

The resulting story should note the unknown, the mysteries, and gaps, as they appear. What is not known is just as important as what is. Facts should, in general, be kept separate from conjecture and hypothesis. The following suggestions may lead to an informed and evolving cycle of research, story, and interpretation.

The cross-departmental research initiative that is currently beginning is meant to create a process that continues far into the future. Small groups should be established that explore a provocative question or gap in a focused, directed manner, with findings and lines of inquiry that are well recorded, traceable, and accessible to other groups. Smaller projects of unique, short-term collaborations between other institutions, universities, scholars, and artists, may result. An in-house director of research could be of substantial benefit.

Several initial projects include the transcription of the diaries of Mary Elizabeth Lucy, recorded interviews with Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy, and examination of records kept by the Fairfax-Lucy family. Conclusive answers should not be expected.

ENDNOTES

- 1: Warwickshire Historic Environment Record: MWA1115
- 2: Warwickshire Historic Environment Record: MWA958
- 3: Della Hook, "Changing Landscapes" in *Local Studies Toolkit*, Historic Environment Record, Warwickshire Museum Field Studies, Archeology Section <http://timetrail.warwickshire.gov.uk/toolkitview.aspx?tid=2&page=30> [Accessed 8/12/14]
- 4: Samuel Timmins, *A History of Warwickshire* (London: Elliot Stock, 1889): 1.
- 5: Timmins, 70.
- 6: Hook, "Changing Landscapes"
- 7: J.B. Harley, "Population Trends and Agricultural Developments From the Warwickshire Hundred Rolls of 1279" in *Economic History Review*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (August, 1958), 8-18.
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- 9: Warwickshire Historic Environment Record: MWA5179
- 10: William Page, ed., "Friaries: Trinitarian friars of Thelsford," in *A History of the County of Warwick*, Vol. 2, (London: Victoria County History, 1908) 106-108, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol2/pp106-108> [Accessed 9, 12, 2014]
- 11: John.
- 12: Hook, "Changing Landscapes."
- 13: Christopher Dyer, "Villages in Crisis: Social Dislocation and Desertion: 1370-1520," in *Deserted Villages Revisited*, Christopher Dyer and Richard Jones, eds., (Hatfield, Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2010), 44.
- 14: Dyer, 37.
- 15: Timmins, 250.
- 16: Warwickshire Historic Environment Record: MWA1123
- 17: Warwickshire Historic Environment Record: MWA6270
- 18: Gerry Barnes and Tom Williamson, *Ancient trees in the landscape: Norfolk's arboreal heritage* (Oxford: Windgather Press, 2011), 117.
- 19: Nigel Neil and Ruth Thurnhill, Deer Parks in the Forest of Bowland, report for Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [March 2013], 13.
- 20: Barnes and Williamson, 117.
- 21: Page, ed., "Friaries: Trinitarian friars of Thelsford."
- 22: Charlecote Park Guide, 34.
- 23: Timmins, 250.
- 24: Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: the Shadow of Civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 61.
- 25: Marcus Roberts, Charlecote Park Orchard Report [2012], 14.
- 26: The National Trust, Charlecote Park Guide [2005], 31.
- 27: Further use of scanning may reveal other clues to the changing nature of the park and gardens.
- 28: Charlecote Park Guide, 31.
- 29: Warwick Records Office: L6/1323-4
- 30: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476
- 31: Warwick Records Office: L6/1423
- 32: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476
- 33: Ibid.
- 34: Roger Turner, *Capability Brown and the Eighteenth-century English Landscape* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co. LTD, 1999), 84.
- 35: Walter Raleigh, ed., *The complete works of George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax* (London: Clarendon Press, 1912), xviii.
- 36: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476
- 37: Ibid.
- 38: Warwick Records Office: L6/1374
- 39: Barnes and Williamson, 137.
- 40: Alice Fairfax-Lucy, *Mistress of Charlecote: The Memoirs of Mary Elizabeth Lucy 1803-1889* (London: Orion, 2002), 12.
- 41: Warwick Records Office: L6/1065
- 42: Warwick Records Office: L6/137443: M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House; a social and architectural history* (Yale University Press, London and New Haven, 1978), 191-204, cited in John Gregory, Sarah Spooner, and Tom Williamson, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown: A research Impact Prepared for English Heritage by the Landscape Group, University of East Anglia [Research

Report Series no. 50-2013], 26.

44: The penetrability of such borders deserves further research.

45: Turner, 57.

46: *Ibid.*, 54.

47: *Ibid.*, 43.

48: At Charlecote, Ms. Hayes notes in the 'Fowls received from tenants' section of her Memorandum Book that, in 1765, when much of the alterations would have been complete, a Mr. Wallington, instead of the usual fowls, ducks, and chickens, gave a pack of peas. This may be indicative of hardship caused by a change of functions in the landscape, though other factors may account, if not wholly, then at least partially, for the anomaly.

49: Turner, 16.

50: *Ibid.*, 77.

51: Jane Brown, *Lancelot 'Capability' Brown: The Omnipotent Magician 1716-1783* (London: Pimlico, 2012), 69.

52: Turner, 14.

53: William Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated from records, leiger-books, manuscripts, charters, evidences, tombes, and armes : beautified with maps, prospects, and portraictures* (London: Thomas Warren, 1656), 396-397.

54: Turner, 15.

55: Turner, 16.

56: See: Peter Willis, "Capability Brown's Account Book with Drummonds", *Architectural History* Vol. 27, Design and Practice in British Architecture: Studies in Architectural History Presented to Howard Colvin (1984), 382-391.

57: Barnes and Williamson, 118.

58: See: David Watkin, *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design* (London: John Murray Ltd., 1982), 161-179.

59: Jennifer M. Meir, "Development of a Natural Style in Designed Landscapes between 1730 and 1760: The English Midlands and the Work of Sanderson Miller and Lancelot Brown" *Garden History* Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring, 2002), 24-48.

60: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476

61: *Ibid.*

62: Warwick Records Office: L6/1417

63: Warwick Records Office: L6/1385

64: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476

65: Christopher Gallagher, Charlecote Park: a history of the landscape, with proposals for the future management and replanting of the park [January 2012], 7.

66: Brown, 47.

67: Turner, 83.

68: Watkin, 48.

69: The resource was not located and secondary sources were relied on, including Gallagher, page 8. In further efforts, the document should be seen first hand and any inconsistencies in secondary sources, which have been found throughout the investigation, should be noted.

70: Marcus Roberts, Charlecote Park Orchard Report [2012], 20.

71: Warwick Records Office: L6/1460

72: Gallagher, 7.

73: Turner, 83.

74: *Ibid.*, 95.

75: National Archives: IR30/36/44 *Tithe Map* April 12, 1849

76: Warwick Records Office: L6/1463

77: Warwick Records Office: L6/1476

78: This map, along with the 1696 plan of the estate, is attributed to James Fish. However, given the forty-six year difference between the two, it is suspected that the same individual did not complete both.

79: Warwick Records Office: Z628L

80: Henry Stevens, Warwickshire, Ordnance Survey (Sheet 255), 1813. Available online at: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/w/002osd000000012u00215000.html> (Accessed 14/11/14).

81: The technique of this comparison involves layering, scaling, and directional adjustment, rather than simply placing the maps side-by-side. This technique was not used in prior research and may explain why the extant legacy of Brown's work has been exaggerated.

82: The field name is slightly illegible in the 1736 plan and may also read Barrypond or Barryland Meadow.

83: Warwickshire Records Office: L6/1109. This article, while noted in the directory of stored information in the Warwickshire

Records Office, was not seen first-hand for this report. Seeing the actual material may yield more clues about the dates of construction and materiality of the bridge.

84: Roberts, 15.

85: Ibid., 21.

86: Gregory, Spooner, and Williamson, 32 and 38, respectively.

87: Gallagher, 2.

88: Barnes and Williamson, 128.

89: Gallagher, 15.

90: Ibid.

91: Fairfax-Lucy, 79.

92: Margaret Flanders Darby, "Joseph Paxton's Water Lily" in *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Encounters in Garden Art, 1550-1850*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002).

93: Fairfax-Lucy, 144.

94: Steven Johnson, "The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic – and How it Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World" (London: Penguin, 2008), p. 8.

95: Sally Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), xiv.

96: Ibid., 32.

97: Fairfax-Lucy, 33.

98: Charlecote Park Guide, 32.

99: Fairfax-Lucy, 47.

100: Ibid., 54.

101: Ibid., 129.

102: Ibid., 50.

103: Ibid., 102.

104: Ibid., 81.

105: Ibid.

106: L. F. Salzman, ed. "Parishes: Charlecote," in *A History of the County of Warwick Volume 5: Kington hundred*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 34-38. Located at British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57034> (Accessed 3/12/14).

107: Charlecote Park Guide, 33.

108: Roberts, 20.

109: Fairfax-Lucy, 175.

110: Joseph Whitaker, *A Descriptive List of the Deer-Parks and Paddocks of England* (London: Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., 1892).

111: Farm Survey, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 14/10/1942 (National Archives, MAF32/958part1/259)

112: Charlecote Park Guide, 47.

113: Gallagher, 15.

114: Monique Mosser, "The Impossible Quest for the Past: Thought on the Restoration of Gardens," in Monique Mosser and Georges Teyssot eds., *The History of Garden Design: The Western Tradition from the Renaissance to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 528.