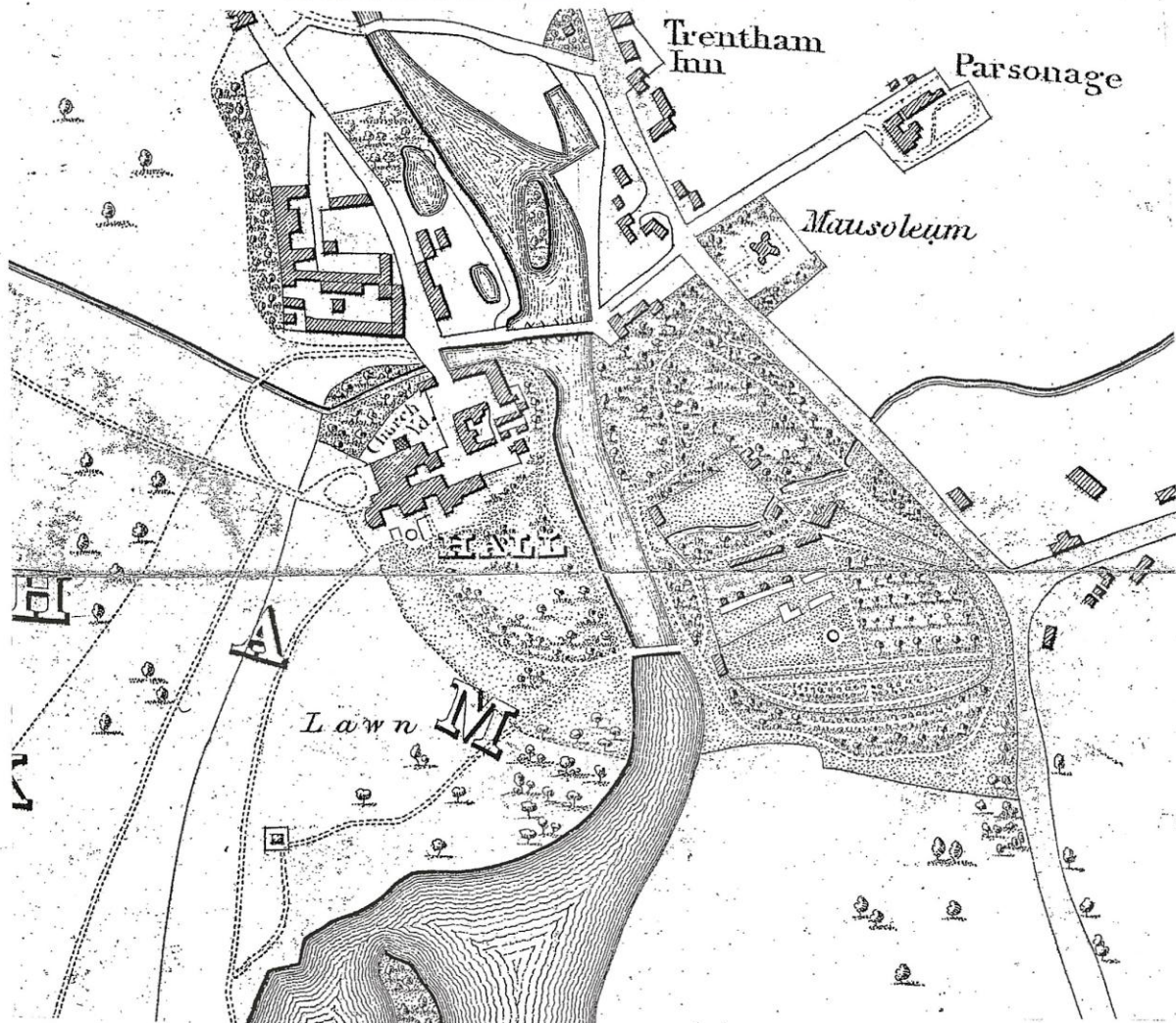


# SOCIAL HISTORY WALKS 2012

## Andrew Dobraszczyk

### Trentham Gardens



These notes have been produced for a history walk around Trentham Gardens. The walk will, in the main, focus on the gardens in the Victorian period – after the rebuilding of Trentham Hall by the architect, Charles Barry. Consideration will also be given to changes made in the gardens after they were opened to the public in 1906. This is a social history walk so reference will be made not only the architectural features and design of the gardens but also to what their organisation and management tell us about Victorian society.

The map above, an extract from Thomas Hargreaves' Map of the Staffordshire Potteries and Newcastle-under-Lyme, shows us the gardens and surroundings in 1832. Then, the river Trent ran through the lake. There was a small garden on the south side of the Hall but most of the area between the Hall, the lake and the ha ha (a sunk deer fence shown by a black line on the map) was occupied by a lawn. Running alongside the ha ha was the London Drive which ran down through Kings Wood to the entrance lodge on Stone Road at Tittensor. The dotted line shown running from the park entrance south west across the map was the public footpath across the park. Trentham Hall, was open to view by pedestrians along the footpath and by visitors to the park. The kitchen garden on the other side of the Trent, most of which had been laid out in the eighteenth century, was connected to the Hall by a narrow bridge designed by Thomas Pritchard – the second oldest cast iron bridge in the country.



2.

Between 1834 and 1845, the architect, Charles Barry, rebuilt Trentham Hall in the Italianate style, for the second Duke of Sutherland, at a cost, then, of about a quarter of a million pounds. Part of that cost included major alterations on the west side of the new Hall.

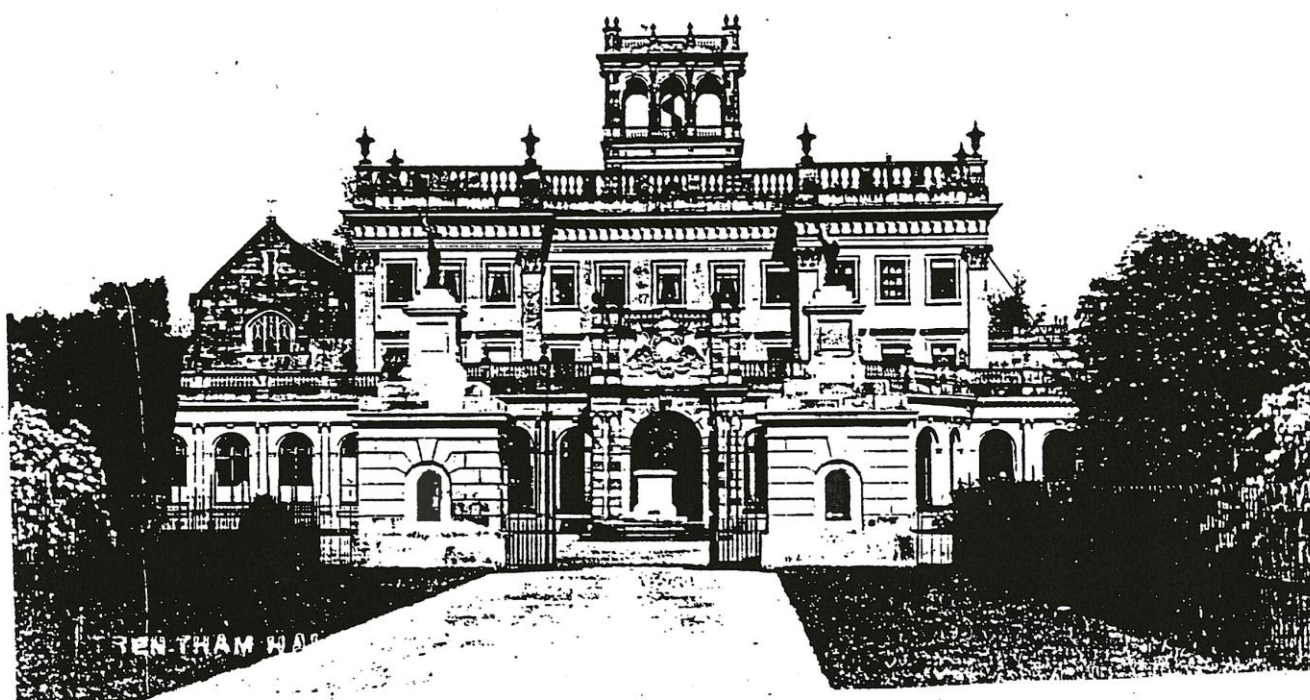
In the early nineteenth century the ha ha ran quite close to the west side of Trentham Hall. The drive to the west front of the house crossed the ha ha by a stone bridge which had been constructed in the eighteenth century. In the late 1830s the whole of the northern section of the ha ha was filled in and the boundary to the Hall and gardens moved further west. The stone bridge over the ha ha was moved to a new site over the Hargreaves brook where it still stands today. Within the enlarged area on the west side of the house Charles Barry constructed a single story, semi-circular structure fronted by a porte-couchere, still standing today, with the family coat of arms prominently displayed over each arch. In front of this was a large circular drive with a statue of Diana in the centre. (See photograph below) The ground between the house and the gardens was raised with heaps of soil and planted with trees, bushes and shrubs. The new Hall and gardens were now largely hidden from view.

The public was kept out of this new private landscape by a cast iron fence embedded in a low stone wall which ran from the park entrance on Park Drive around to the ha ha half way down the gardens. The ha ha ran down to Kings Wood where it terminated at a fence which marked the boundary between the open parkland and the wood closed to the public. These features are shown on the extract from a Plan of Trentham by Liddle Elliot, produced in 1859.

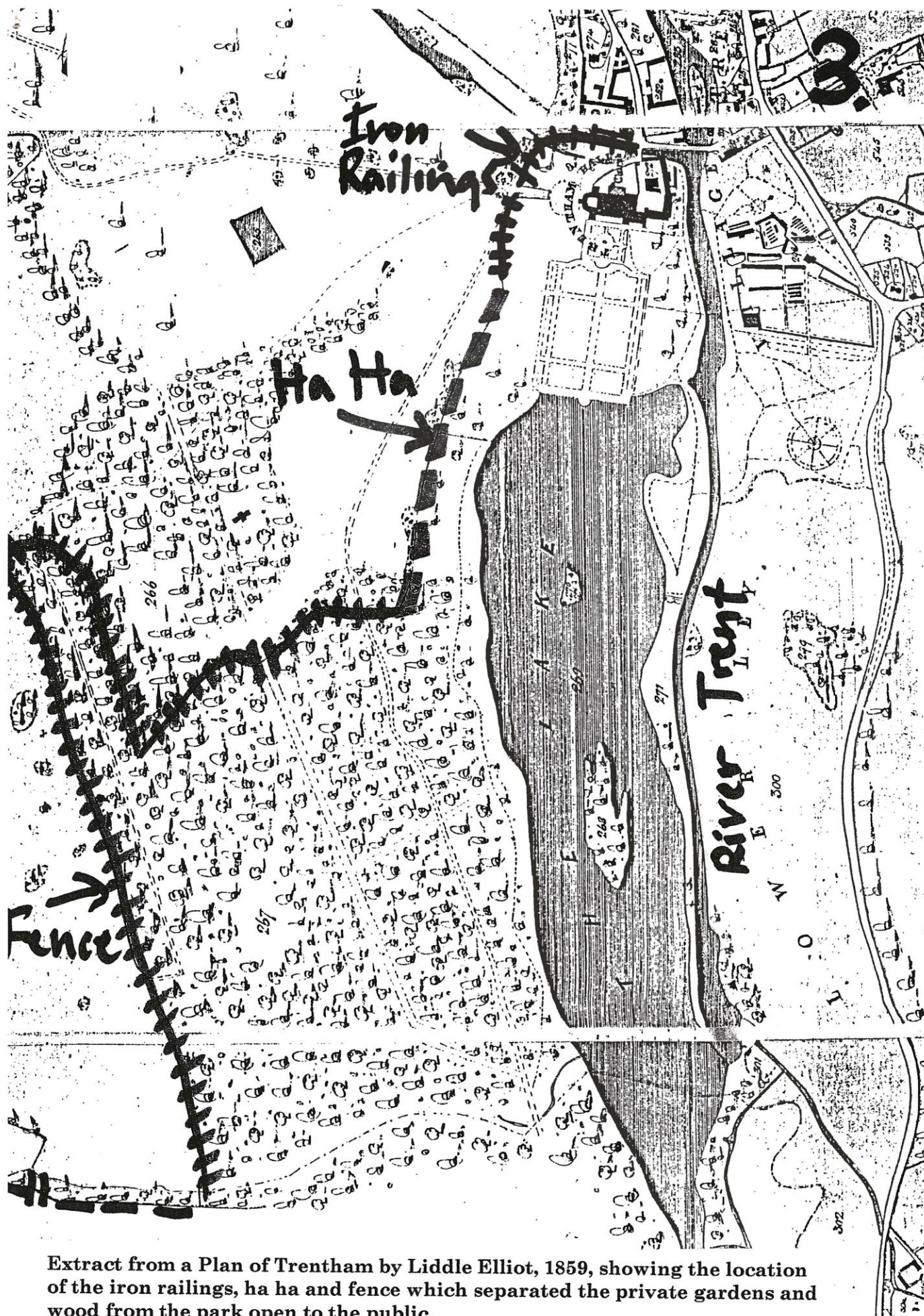
By the beginning of 1843 Charles Barry had designed a pair of single story entrance lodges and gates for the entrance to the circular drive in front of the house. The lodges were topped by a life size bronze stag and doe. In the 1890s the park entrance lodges were taken down and rebuilt further west at the junction of the carriage drives to the hall. The gates were also widened at the same time (Compare the Ordnance Survey maps on pages 3 and 13.) In the 1930s, shorn of the bronze stage and doe, the lodges were moved for a second time to the Stone Road opposite the mausoleum, where they still stand today.

The photograph below, from the Warrillow Collection in Keele University Library was taken in about 1880 and shows original location of the park lodges and gates on the west side of the Hall.

The extract from the Ordnance Survey map on page 4 shows the result of these changes by 1878. This map and the one on page 3 also show the new line of the river Trent, running in a channel on the east side of Trentham Lake. The course of the river was changed in 1854 in order to reduce the entry of polluted water into the lake carried downstream from the rapidly expanding Potteries and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

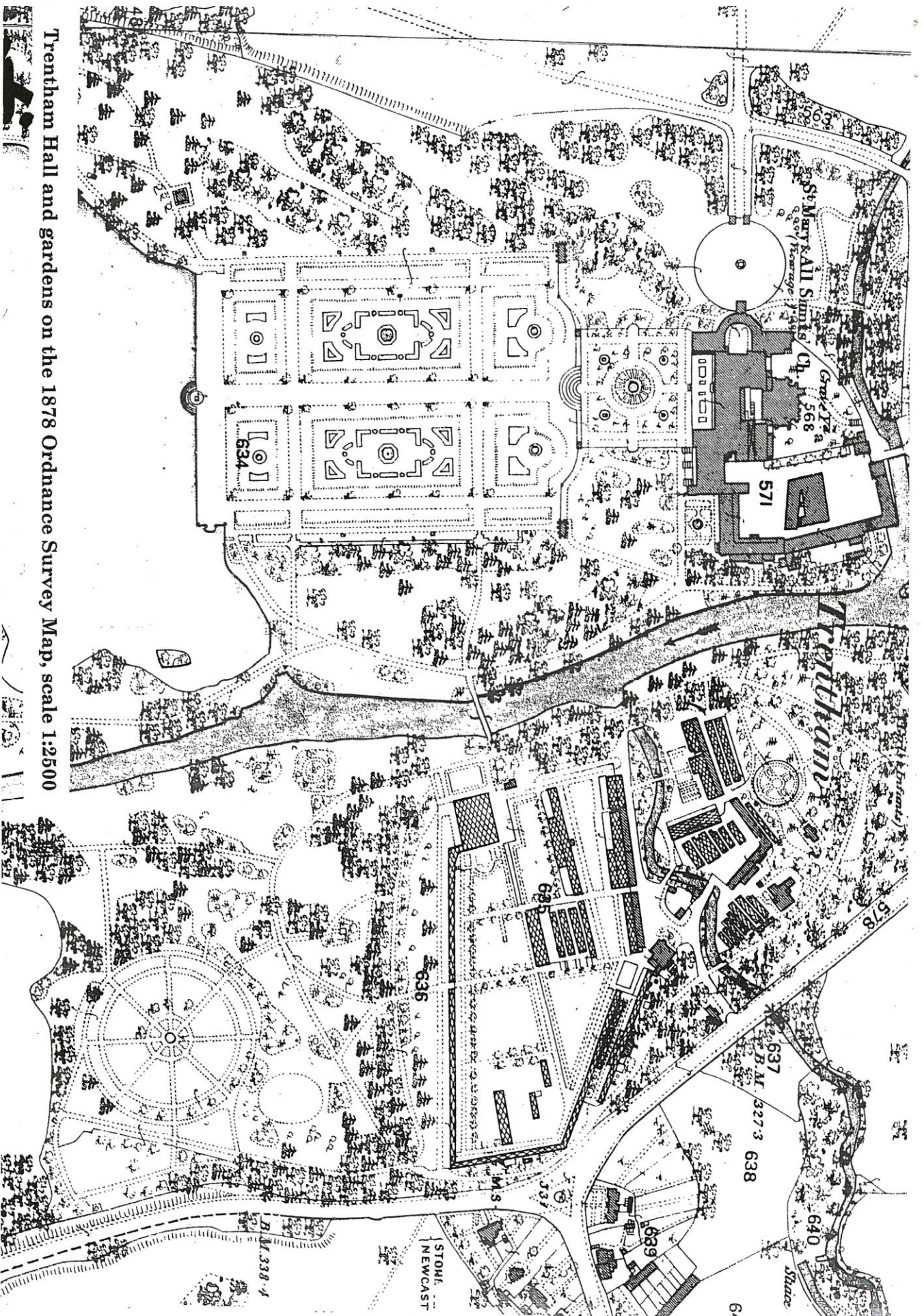






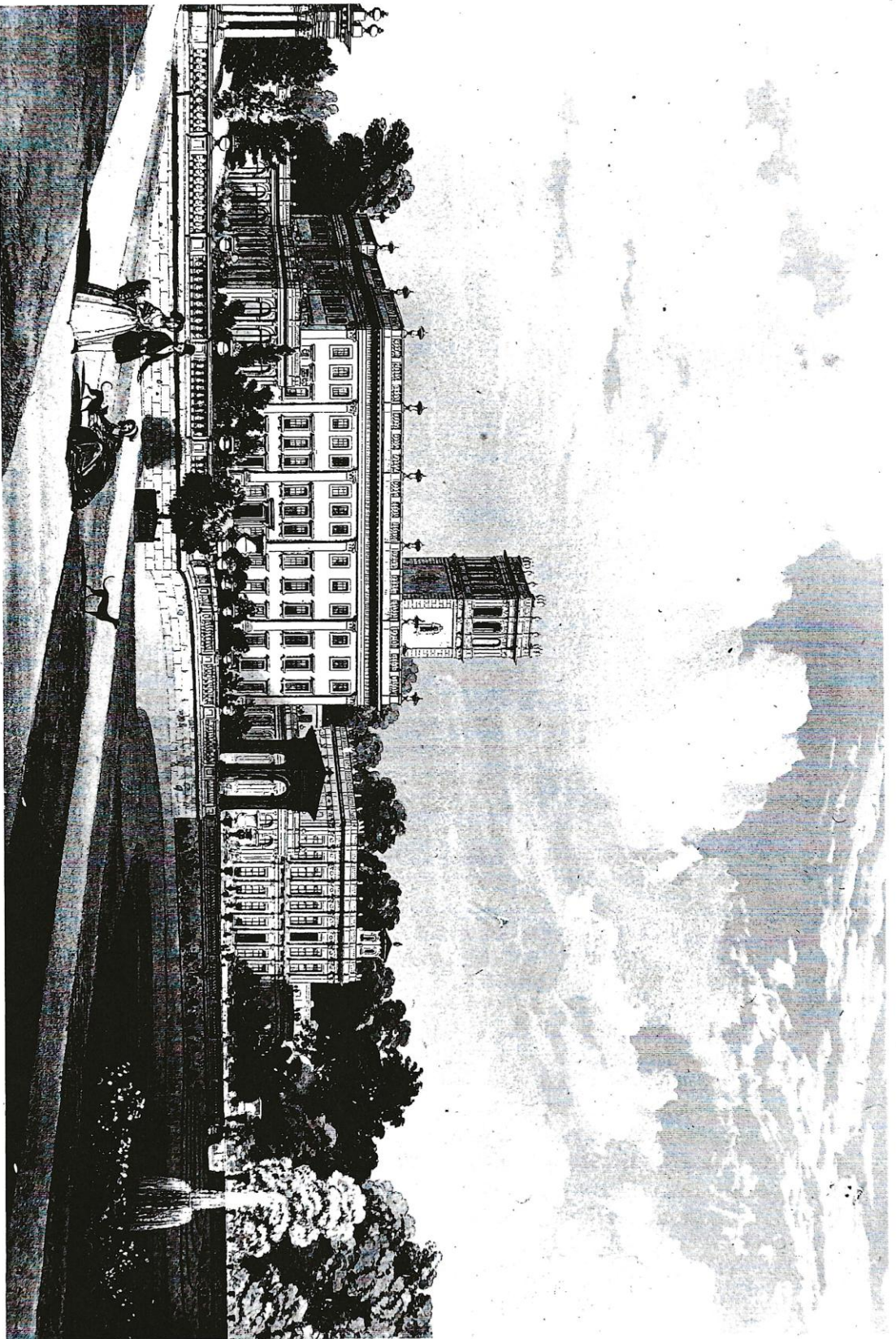
Extract from a Plan of Trentham by Liddle Elliot, 1859, showing the location of the iron railings, ha ha and fence which separated the private gardens and wood from the park open to the public.





Trentham Hall and gardens on the 1878 Ordnance Survey Map, scale 1:2500

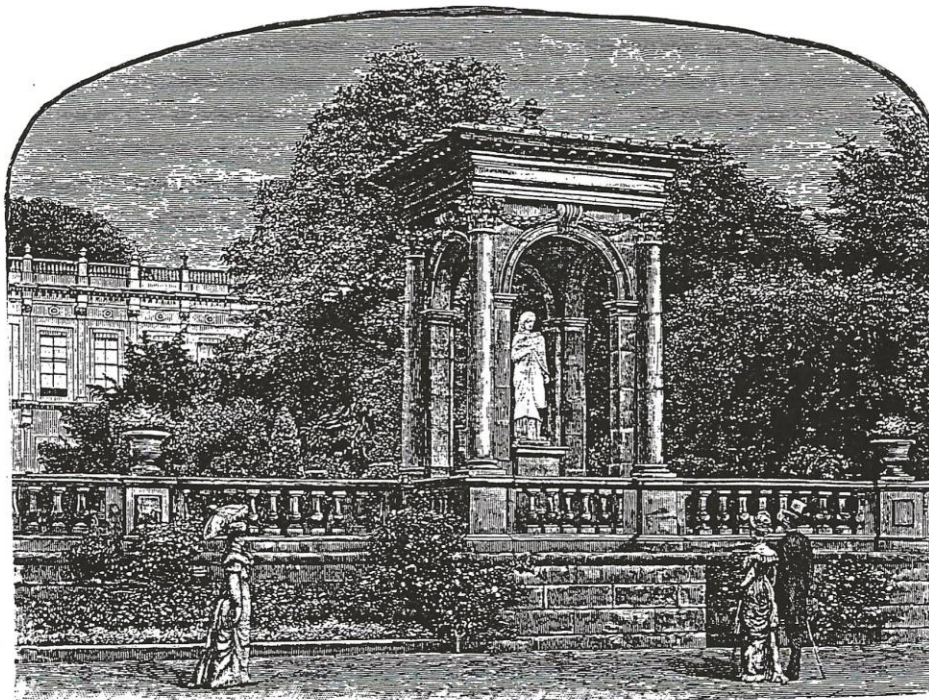




Trentham Hall, Staffordshire. A lithotint by Frederick William Hulme, published by Chapman & Hall, London, September 1846



6.



## THE ITALIAN GARDENS

The new Hall designed by Charles Barry is shown in the illustration by Frederick William Hulme on the previous page. This is the first published view of the new house from the gardens issued in September 1846, which subsequently appeared in *The Baronial Halls and ancient Picturesque Edifices of England*, printed by Chapman & Hall, of London, in 1848. The lithotint also shows part of the new gardens created on the south side of Trentham Hall.

The low-lying site presented a huge problem for the architect. Between 1839 and 1840 this area was raised and enlarged with several beds of wrought stone on which were laid out a series of terraces to accommodate the gardens. The area nearest the south front of the house was laid out with a few ornamental garden beds, recently recreated by the garden staff. Below this is the upper terrace which terminates in a balustrade. A pavilion was erected at each lower corner which contained a statue. One of these is illustrated above. Steps led down to the much larger lower terrace. Here, two triple-arch loggias were sited at the upper end of each corner. Only one of these, on the west side, is still extant. The other was removed to Lilleshall in 1919. The two smaller pavilions were removed at the same time.

Barry was responsible for the design of the general lay-out of the Italian gardens as well as all the architectural features – the balustrades, steps, pavilions, loggias, stone seats and fountains. The Duke of Sutherland was apparently responsible for the decision to erect a statue of Perseus and Medusa copied by permission of the Duke of Tuscany from the one by Benvenuto Cellini in Florence sculpted in 1550. This was erected in 1840 on a prominent site at the end of the main avenue leading down to the lake. All of these features can be located on the Ordnance Survey map on page 4. What the maps do not show are the numerous other statues, urns and stone vases which were such a striking feature of the Italian gardens. Most of these architectural ornaments were removed in the twentieth century.

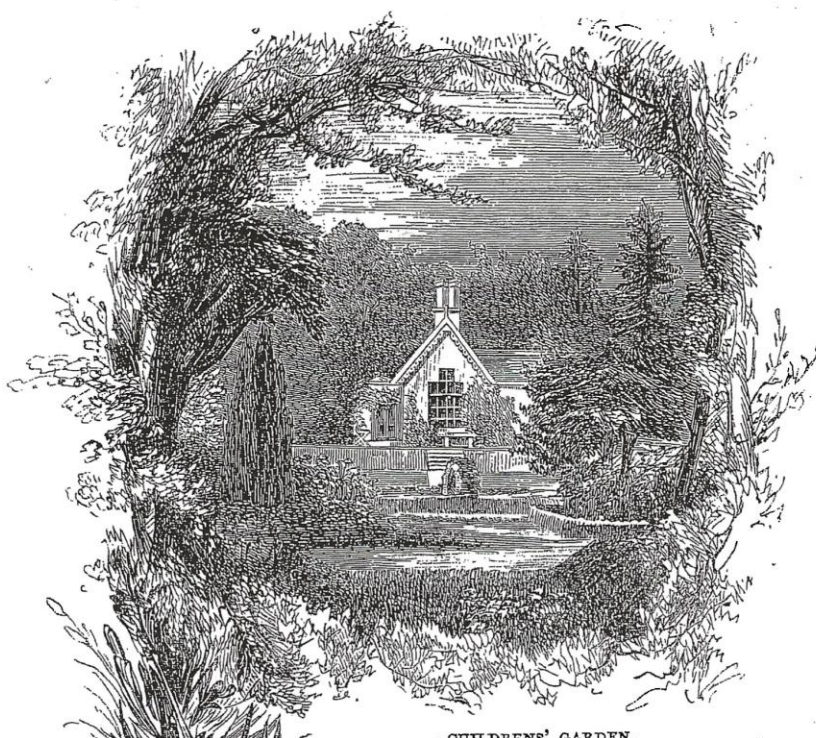
Barry also designed the private conservatory located on the south west side of the main block. The illustration on the next page shows the conservatory full of ferns and rare tropical plants with a statue of Venus at bath in the centre. This building is still standing, in a very dilapidated condition, though it has lost its original glazed roof.





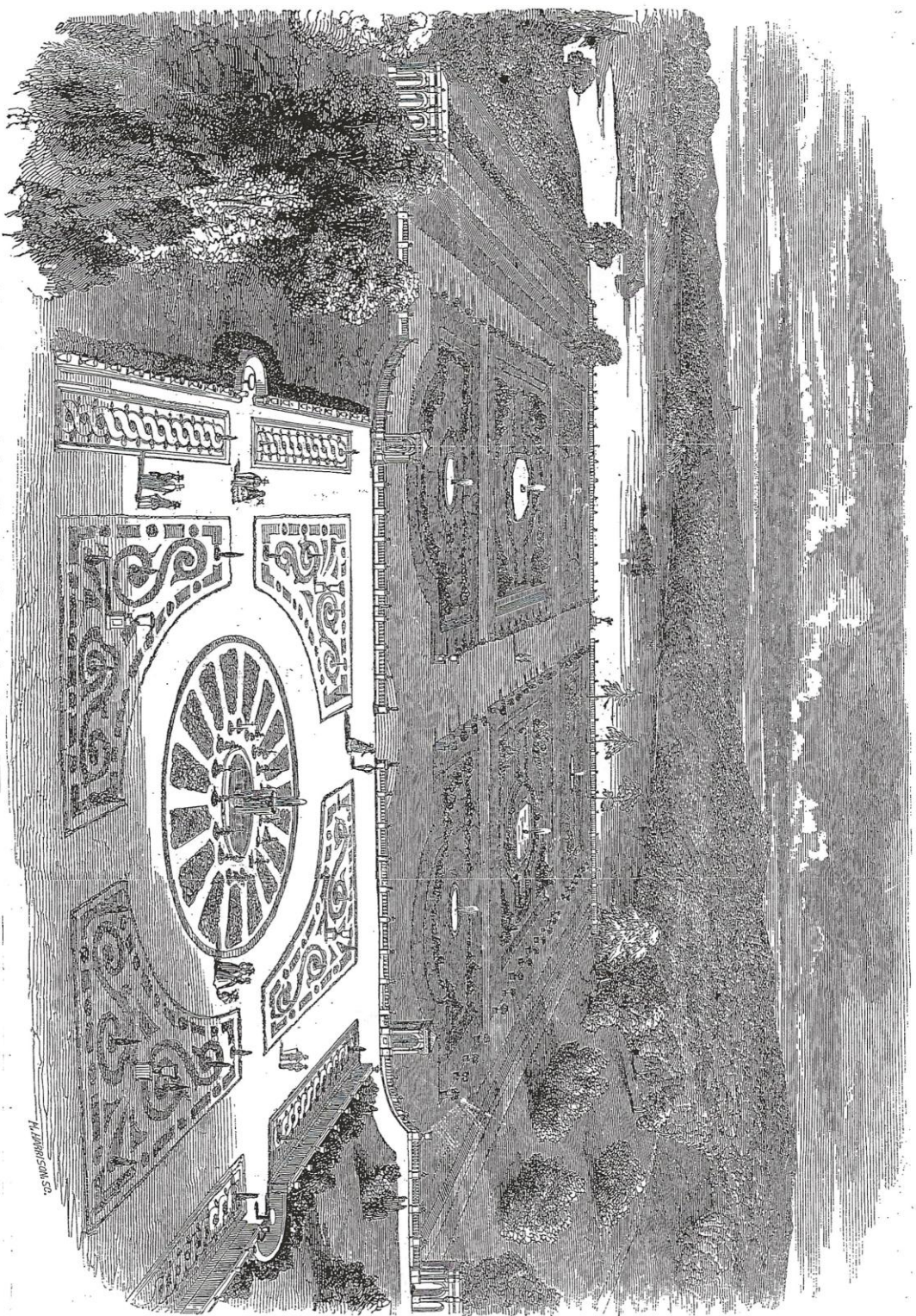
*The Private Conservatory.*

One of the first designs produced by Charles Barry for the Duke of Sutherland in 1834 was for the Children's Cottage. This was built on the east side of the river Trent. The illustration below, from William Molyneux, *Trentham Hall and its Gardens*, shows the cottage and ornamental garden in 1857. The cottage is still standing at the back of the garden centre, though it has lost the adjacent garden. Initially, access to this cottage was by the cast-iron bridge erected in the eighteenth century. By the 1890s a new bridge in the form of a boat attached to two cables stretched across the river Trent had been constructed further north providing a more direct access from the Hall to the Cottage. (See Ordnance Survey Map on page 13.)



CHILDRENS' GARDEN.





This picture of Trentham Gardens appeared in the Illustrated London News on 16 October 1847, as part of a report of the marriage of the Marquis of Kildare to Lady Caroline Leveson-Gower, daughter of the Duke of Sutherland, at Trentham.



## GEORGE FLEMING (1810-1876), HEAD GARDENER AT TRENTHAM

9.

Charles Barry was responsible for the overall design of the Italian gardens and their architectural features but the flower beds and the overall planting scheme were very much the work of George Fleming, head gardener at Trentham.

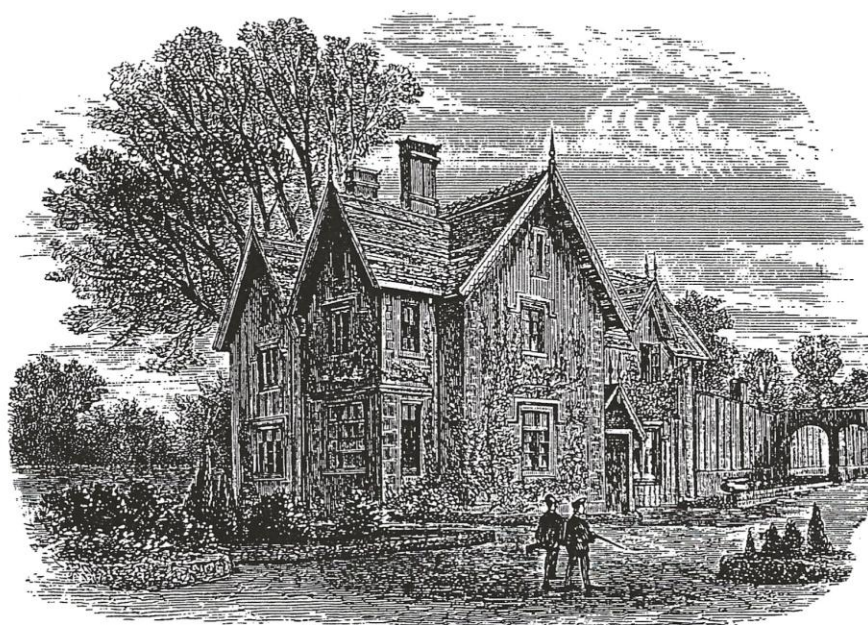
George Fleming was born in Scotland in 1810. He moved to England, where he trained as a gardener under Andrew Chapman, head gardener at Trentham. He then worked in London, and subsequently obtained the position of head gardener at Lilleshall Abbey, the Duke of Sutherland's house in Shropshire. In 1841 he married Mary Tomlinson, in Lilleshall, Shropshire, and he and his wife were recorded at *Lilleshall Abbey* in the census in April. However he did not stay there for long. By the summer of 1841 it was obvious that Andrew Chapman, who was still head gardener at Trentham, was not up to the task of laying out and planting the new gardens at Trentham and he was replaced by George Fleming who had impressed the Duke of Sutherland by his management of the gardens at Lilleshall.

Fleming in consultation with Charles Barry was responsible for the laying-out of the flower beds on the upper terrace which incorporated the S of Sutherland in the design, illustrated on the previous page. The illustration also shows that the trellis walk had not been built by October 1847 and it was George Fleming who planned its construction and planting. He developed the system of bedding out plants on a large scale which was such a feature of the gardens at Trentham. His system was dependent on the construction of new conservatories.

Fleming's other major contribution was to plan and oversee the transformation of the eighteenth century vegetable gardens and conservatories on the east side of the river Trent. Here, within a new arched boundary wall, he organised the building of an extensive range of greenhouses, peach houses, vineries and hot houses. He wrote regularly to the principal nurseries in London and actively sought out the newest exotic imported trees, shrubs and plants which were nurtured in the new conservatories for planting out in the gardens.

Fleming was provided with a substantial house, designed by Charles Barry, illustrated below, commensurate with the importance of the position he occupied in the Trentham establishment. It was located on a crucial site – by the main entrance to the conservatories but also next to the cartway which ran from the Stone Road into the gardens so that he could observe the movement of people and vehicles to and from the gardens. Here, George Fleming's household was recorded in the 1851 census as follows, under *Trentham Gardens*:

|                      |       |         |    |          |                  |
|----------------------|-------|---------|----|----------|------------------|
| George Fleming       | Head  | Married | 41 | Gardener | Place of birth:  |
| Mary Fleming         | Wife  | Married | 31 |          | Scotland         |
| Evelyn Fleming       | Dau   | Single  | 7  | Scholar  | Staffs, Trentham |
| George Do            | Son   | Single  | 6  | Scholar  | Staffs, Trentham |
| Mary Harriet Fleming | Dau   | Single  | 3  | At Home  | Staffs, Trentham |
| Susan James          | Srvnt | Married | 47 | Servant  | Staffs, Trentham |



*The Gardener's Cottage.*



Fruit grown in the conservatories was not only provided for the table at Trentham Hall and for Stafford House in London, it was also entered for competitions organised by the principal horticultural societies in London and the provinces. The Staffordshire Advertiser reported on 5 July 1851:

We are glad to observe that Mr Fleming, gardener to the Duke of Sutherland at Trentham, obtained the first prize, (a large silver gilt medal,) for the miscellaneous collection of fruit at the Exhibition of the Royal Botanic Society, Regent's Park, held last Tuesday, thus carrying the principal prizes for fruit at each of the four great horticultural shows of the season. Besides those noticed in the Staffordshire Advertiser in May, Mr Fleming gained the gold medal for a large collection at the Horticultural Society, on Tuesday June 7<sup>th</sup>, and at the Royal Botanic Society on June 11<sup>th</sup>; two first prizes (silver gilt medals) for the best Providence Pine apples, and the best black grapes, besides five other smaller prizes.

Articles in specialist horticultural and gardening journals and magazines described the system of gardening at Trentham and as a result there was a steady stream of head gardeners from other country houses who came to see the gardens at Trentham.

None of this would have been possible without a substantial labour force. In October 1847 George Fleming had 58 people working under his direction – 43 gardeners, 5 labourers, 3 artisans and 7 plantation labourers, with a monthly wage bill of £211 19s 2d.

There was a hierarchy in the garden establishment. At the top was George Fleming. Working immediately under him were the assistant gardeners who came to Trentham from all over the country to be trained in all aspects of the management and operation of a country house garden. They were housed in a separate building in Trentham Gardens described in the 1851 census as the "Gardeners' Room" or in later census returns as the "Bothy". There were ten of these gardeners at Trentham in 1851:

|                     |        |    |          | Place of Birth:       |
|---------------------|--------|----|----------|-----------------------|
| James McLachlan     | Single | 30 | Gardener | Scotland              |
| John Stewart        | Single | 23 | Gardener | Scotland              |
| John Royle          | Single | 21 | Gardener | Cheshire, Aston       |
| George Edwards      | Single | 20 | Gardener | Sussex, Woolbeding    |
| Charles Thomas Wren | Single | 17 | Gardener | Essex, Walthamstow    |
| James Pringle       | Single | 17 | Gardener | Yorkshire, Etholt     |
| Robert Millar       | Single | 19 | Gardener | Hampshire, Warchfield |
| Charles Webb        | Single | 17 | Gardener | Shropshire, Newport   |
| John Ralph Ball     | Single | 17 | Gardener | Staffs, Trentham      |
| William Morgan      | Single | 16 | Gardener | Staffs, Cheddleton    |

Provided they made the grade, they could expect, after 3 or 4 years' training, armed with a reference from George Fleming, to obtain the position of assistant head gardener in a large country house, or even head gardener at a smaller establishment. Only two of the ten assistant gardeners were born in Staffordshire. The situation was quite different for the other garden employees. The vast majority of the other gardeners, garden labourers and apprentice gardeners recorded in the 1851 census returns in Trentham, Hanchurch or Tittensor were born in Staffordshire. Most of them continued to work as gardeners or garden labourers at Trentham or elsewhere for the rest of their lives.

However, even here there were a few exceptions. One local nurseryman, Robert Miller, of Hartshill, sent his two sons to work at Trentham in the 1840s. The eldest son, Robert Miller jr., then worked for Ralph Sneyd at Keele Hall; the youngest, James Miller, for William Davenport at Maer Hall. More importantly they subsequently worked in their father's business and were responsible for laying-out many of the villa gardens in Newcastle and the Potteries in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. One other family of gardeners the Salters, also trained at Trentham, worked for John Ayshford Wise at Clayton Hall, built in the mid 1840s in the Italianate style in emulation of Trentham Hall. Their activities will be described in a talk at Clayton Hall School on Tuesday 3 July, 2012, 7 30 pm. (Tickets available on the walks or by phone on 07914508239, or by email at [socialhistorywalks@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:socialhistorywalks@yahoo.co.uk))

In 1859 George Fleming was appointed agent at Trentham and moved into the agent's house on Park Drive. He subsequently rented Groundslow Farm, which comprised almost 500 acres, at Tittensor from the Duke of Sutherland, where he died in 1876.



## JOHN MCBETH, (1804-52) PIPER TO THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND

11.

John Macbeth was born in 1804 in Farr, Sutherland, Scotland. He became piper to the Duke of Sutherland at Dunrobin Castle and was a member of Highland Society in London where he performed regularly from 1829 onwards, initially on a salary of 8 guineas per annum, rising to £40 in 1837 when he took on the dual function of piper and officer. He won the prize pipe in 1838, but is best remembered, on the testimony of Donald Cameron, as a jig player.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April John Mcbeth married Flora Macbeth in Edinburgh. John and Flora had 4 children - Robert born 1841 in Edinburgh, Margaret born 1843 in Trentham, Charles Forbes born 1845 in Trentham, and Christina born 1847 in Trentham. John is listed as Piper [to the Duke of Sutherland] in the Trentham baptism records. In the wage book for the period 1840-47 at Stafford Record Office the salary of the piper, named as *James Macbeth*, is recorded at £31 10s per year, paid half yearly; in the wage book for the period 1847 to 24 June 1850, the piper is listed as *John Mackbeth*.

One of John Macbeth's duties was not only to play for guests in Trentham Hall but also to serenade them in the gardens and the lake. A special promontory was prepared for this purpose on the east side of Trentham Lake, still extant to-day, where John Macbeth stood playing his bagpipes as prominent visitors went on a boat trip or were driven around the lake.

By July 1850 John Macbeth had moved away from Trentham and in 1851 he had set up as a licensed Victualler at New Bond Street, London. The house hold comprised his wife, two children, his brother Hector, 3 servants, a waiter, and a nurse. It is possible that John Macbeth was already ill then because he died on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1852 of Phthisis Pulmonalis at Canal Street, Newport, Monmouth. He is buried in the old cemetery at Newport with a fine tombstone which bears the following inscription:

To the memory of Mr. JOHN MACBETH late piper to His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, and a native of the Highlands of Scotland : Died April 24th, 1852, Aged 46 years. Far from his native land, beneath this stone, Lies JOHN MACBETH, in prime of manhood gone ; A kinder husband never yet did breathe, A firmer friend ne'er trod on Albyn's heath ; His selfish aims were all in heart and hand, To be an honour to his native land, As real Scotchmen wish to fall or stand. A handsome Gael he was, of splendid form, Fit for a siege, or for the Northern Storm. Sir Walter Scott remarked at Inverness, "How well becomes Macbeth the Highland dress !"

When the Shah of Persia recorded his impressions of a visit to Trentham in the 1850s there is no mention of a piper:

Our train stopped before the gate of the park, where the Duke, with his following, was waiting. We got into a carriage and drove in. There were lawns, avenues, flowers ; and deer of the same kind that we had seen at Windsor were grazing on the lawns. The Duke has erected here and there detached houses for his gardeners, his keepers, and others. He has also built a hotel, and has a small chapel. We arrived and alighted at the door of the Castle, entered the apartments, and went to a private conservatory that was within the house. We there saw varieties of flowers, palm-trees, and the like, which are found in but few places. In the centre was a small round basin of water, with a fountain, over which was the figure, in marble, of a naked woman seated. Beneath this water flowed, extremely clear and pellucid. The perfume of the flowers clung about the place ; especially the odour of a species of large white and variegated lily, of seed from Japan, that was beautiful and fragrant beyond conception.

We sat there awhile and smoked a *galayān* (Persian huqqa, hookah, hubble-bubble, water-pipe), and then went in front of the façade of the building, where is a large garden, but of which the trees are small shrubs of cypress, larch, and others like orange-trees, grown in pots, placed out in the flower-beds, and clipped round into globular heads. The flower-beds were very extensive and beautiful, full of bloom, and with all sorts of evergreens permanently planted out. There were

avenues, lawns like velvet, numerous fountains playing ; and beyond these beds and gardens a natural lake, long, crooked, and tortuous, in which were several small islands full of copses, flower-beds, and walks, to which access was had by boats. Around this lake, again, is a rising ridge covered with green and smiling verdure ; and beyond all are avenues covered in with trees, flowers, and grapevines, for which they have set up trellises of iron wire ; and external to these trellises and avenues are the Duke's hothouses ; which are extremely neat and handsome, being stocked with all sorts of flowers, and plants of variegated foliage, from the New World and elsewhere.

The banana was seen there, which is a pretty-looking edible thing, like a small, long, fresh pumpkin ; it has a yellow skin, and when ripe has the flavour of a muskmelon, is soft, and in like manner can be taken with the fingers and eaten, though it is somewhat nauseating ; it is called *mūz* in Persian or in Hindūstānī, and is produced largely in that part of Balūchistān which is held by Persia, and in Makrān. There were also nectarines, peaches, white and black grapes, figs, plums, strawberries, cucumbers, and other things. The whole of these fruits are found in these hothouses in the various stages of unripeness, half-ripeness, and maturity. With the assistance of apparatus and screws which they have applied, the gardener has only to turn these, and he can open the windows and rooflights, or close them, as required.



# 2.

## VISITORS TO TRENTHAM GARDENS

The Shah of Persia, the Prince of Wales, and members of the British aristocracy and landed gentry came visit or stay at Trentham Hall. Head gardeners and other horticultural specialists were admitted to the gardens to see the conservatories and flower beds. Other members of the public were excluded. When William Molyneux produced his *Guide to Trentham and its Gardens* in 1857 he warned his readers: "To prevent misconceptions, the Author begs to remark that the work is not offered as a guide to the several places described, which term might lead to the supposition that the whole is thrown open to the Public. By kind permission of his Grace unrestricted access to the Park is permitted, but to view the Hall and Gardens is an especial favour."

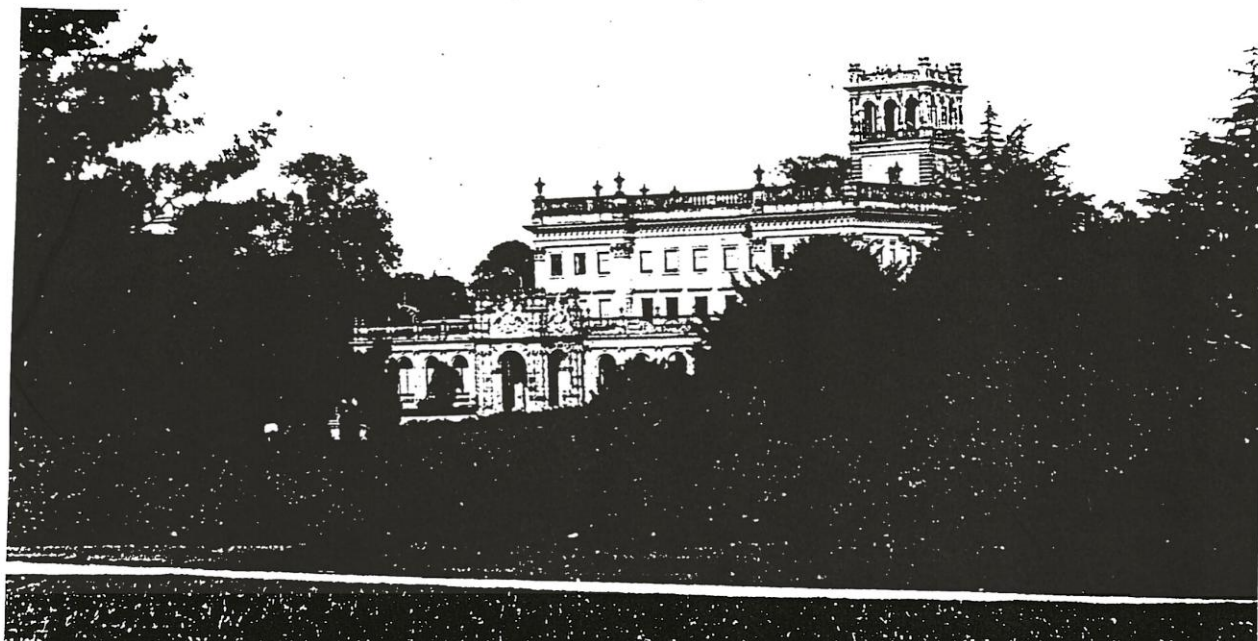
That did not stop the submission of written requests for entry to the gardens. When John Ridgway, mayor of Hanley, wrote asking for the admission of a party from the Potteries the Duke made his views known in a letter he wrote to George Fleming in about 1858:

*Fleming*

*You had better state to Mr Ridgway the Fact that it is hardly possible to admit crowds in Parties into the Garden - but the Park is open to them - & you can consider whether at appointed times you can let them walk in the broad walk & the three walks between the terrace balustrade and the water balustrade. This ought to satisfy them. Only gardeners or those really interested in Gardens can require more.*

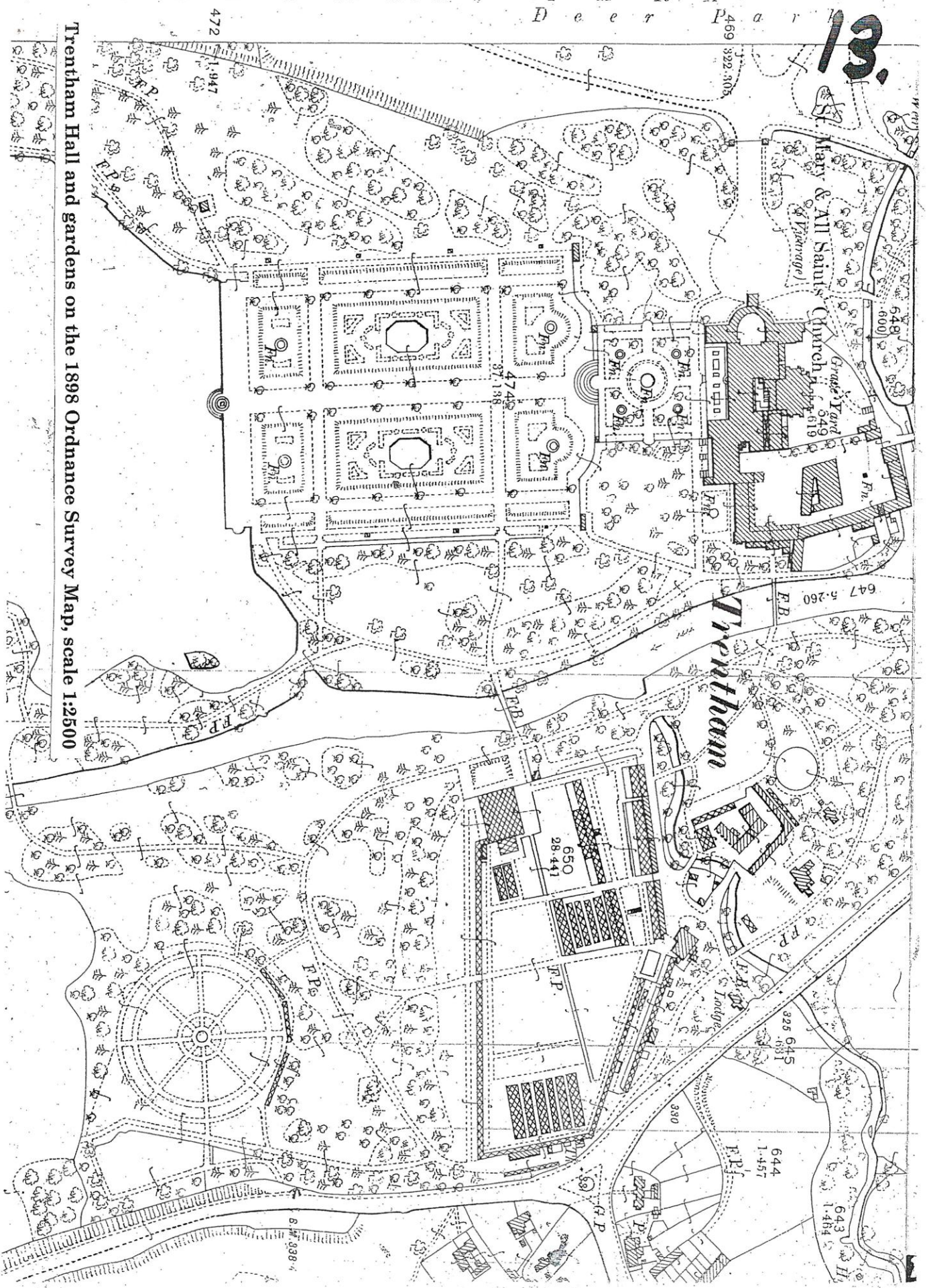
Only a small number of artists who wanted to painted the hall and gardens were allowed to enter the gardens. Henry Lark Pratt, a pottery artist, was refused admission, but Frederick William Hulme, armed with a recommendation from Chapman & Hall, a prominent firm of London publishers, was allowed in. The other favoured group were the foreign artists who worked for Mintons in Stoke, including William Mussill, who was commissioned to paint several pictures of Trentham by the third Duke of Sutherland. One of his paintings and others can be seen at the exhibition in Newcastle Museum & Art Gallery, entitled *Painting Trentham Hall and Gardens, 1835-1935*, which will run from 12 May to 8 July 2012. However, many of these paintings, including the one by Hulme reproduced on page 5, are misleading, because they include what appear to be members of the public. What should be remembered is that for most of the time this private landscape created at enormous expense, was empty, apart from the army of gardeners employed to maintain it.

After the death of the second Duke of Sutherland in 1861 access to the gardens was made easier because the third Duke was more interested in hunting, shooting and racing than he was in gardening. Nevertheless, this did not mean that the general public were admitted - only that more requests were granted for the admission of groups to the gardens on special occasions. The general public had to be content with admission to the park. The photograph below, shows the view which they had from the park in the late nineteenth century - the Hall rising above the trees and shrubs and the gardens entirely hidden from view.





Trentham Hall and gardens on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map, scale 1:2500





4.

## TRENTHAM GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

In 1905 the Duke of Sutherland abandoned Trentham Hall "owing to the pestilential odour of the neighbouring river Trent, which is made noxious by pollutions in its passage through the Pottery towns." (Masefield, *Staffordshire*, 1910, p.236) The Hall was offered first to Staffordshire County Council in 1908 which responded by offering to convert the house into a training college for women teachers. This use was not acceptable to the Duke and he offered to give the house and gardens (but not the lake and the park) to the newly federated county borough of Stoke-on-Trent in 1910. When they turned him down, Trentham Hall was demolished in 1911-12. In the meantime, apparently on the initiative of the Duchess of Sutherland, Trentham Gardens were opened to the public. Initially, apart from the gardens themselves, there were very few other facilities. However, the decision by the North Staffordshire Railway Company in 1909 to begin the construction of the Trentham branch line, authorised by Act of Parliament on 21 August 1907, prompted the Trentham agent to propose the construction of new facilities for members of the public in Trentham Gardens. His proposals were approved by the Duke and work began in the autumn of 1909. Trentham Park Station was opened by the railway company in 1 April 1910. The new facilities at Trentham, now marketed as *Trentham Gardens and Pleasure Grounds*, (see advertisement page 17 and the OS map on page 20) were opened to the public on Thursday, 9 June 1910. The report below and on the next page, under the headline "The New Trentham" appeared in the *Staffordshire Sentinel* on 28 May 1910, and the following report, of the opening day, on 10 June 1910. Advertisements for Trentham Gardens & Pleasure Grounds were placed in a large number of newspapers in the Midlands and also appeared every year in the *Staffordshire Sentinel* Summer Number. (See page 17) Initially, most of the new facilities for the public were not open on Sundays. This was soon altered in order to increase the number of visitors at the week-end, and the *handsome margin of profit*.

### THE NEW TRENTHAM

Ducal Gardens to be Re-opened Next Month

### NOVEL ATTRACTIONS

Rural Pleasure Resort for Potteries Visitors

North Staffordshire folk, and Potteries people in particular, will hear with genuine delight that Trentham Gardens are shortly to be opened as a pleasure resort, where various healthful pastimes may be indulged in at a nominal cost. Hitherto the public have had access to the gardens at a small charge, but in the matter of recreative pursuits within these 25 acres of landscape only the angler has been catered for. To many people the gardens are, of themselves, of sufficient attraction, but a scheme is about to be inaugurated which will commend Trentham as something more than a picturesque resort. Without losing any of its natural and horticultural beauty, that place will shortly become a recreative centre. It will appeal not only to those who have an eye for beauty, but to tennis and croquet players, bowlers, and those who favour the pastime of rowing.

Since the Duke of Sutherland left Trentham some few years ago, it has always been his desire that the public should have some facilities for enjoying the beauties of the gardens. A scheme for increasing those facilities has engaged his attention for some time, and towards its fulfilment the landscape gardeners have, for some time past, been engaged in the preparation of several tennis courts, a croquet lawn, and a bowling green.

These playing areas are now practically completed, and a fortnight hence they will be fully equipped. It is proposed to inaugurate the summer season on Thursday. There will be no opening ceremony or formality of that kind. On that day everything will be in readiness for indulgence in the several pastimes mentioned above, and doubtless a large number of people will, during the summer season, avail themselves of the opportunities thus placed before them for indulgence in healthful pastimes amid most delightful surroundings.

### TENNIS, TEA, AND MUSIC

There will, of course, be the usual charge for admission to the gardens, and participants in the various pastimes will have to pay a nominal charge. The continuance and development of the present idea may depend to some extent upon the measure of public support accorded the scheme. It is hardly necessary for us to mention that this is not a ducal money-making idea. The upkeep of the courts and greens, and other outlays in connection therewith, will involve an



expenditure that will leave very little, if any, margin of profit from the proceeds obtained from those who indulge in the pastimes.

In few other places are the public so well favoured in being afforded opportunities for indulgence in popular pastimes and amid such surroundings. It is expected that large numbers will, especially on Thursday and Saturday afternoons, take advantage of the facilities thus offered. On those afternoons tea will be provided, and for this purpose the interior of one of the large conservatories in close proximity to the playing areas has just been dismantled and is being fitted-up as a tea-room.

The system of catering will be suggestive of the garden party and not the Sunday school treat idea. The building will comfortably seat a hundred and fifty, or more, persons, and the small table system will secure to small parties of friends that semi-privacy so conducive to the comfort of little tea-table gatherings. It is intended to engage for Saturday afternoons a local band to play within the precincts of the tea-room.

#### NO GARISH ATTRACTIONS

The inauguration of a scheme of this kind in what may be regarded as a suburb of the Potteries will be warmly welcomed by those who desire to devote some of their hours of leisure to pursuits that are both healthful and pleasureable. The attractions which Trentham Gardens will hold out are not of a garish character.

There will be no "gaffs" or cheap "thrills." The grounds will not appeal to the public by means of flip-flaps, water chutes, helter-skelters and such like forms of entertainment that afford momentary sensation. And there is no intention to apply for a license to dispense alcoholic liquids. The gardens will appeal to those in quest of healthful pastimes and beautiful surroundings; those attractions that are supposed to bring gladness to the heart of the roistering tripper will not be found there.

So near the largely populated Federated Borough as to be approached from the centre – that is the geographical centre – well within half an hour by rail, and yet so far as to be free from the smoke-laden atmosphere, Trentham Gardens in the full beauty of their summer foliage, and with their tennis courts and bowling greens tenanted by active participants, should present a pleasing picture.

#### ON THE LAKE

The surface of the large lake should also lend to the picture animation. It is proposed to launch about a dozen boats on to the lake, and if the boating idea is strongly supported the fleet will be increased according to further requirements. This boating idea need not give rise to any feelings of dismay in the minds of anglers who anticipate plying their art in the waters of Trentham Lake when the coarse season opens next month. The stretch of water is wide enough for the oarsman to indulge his craft without disturbing the placidity of the surface so near the bank's edge as to agitate the fisherman's float. As a matter of fact, under certain circumstances the oarsman may unknowingly contribute to the sport of the angler.

If that angler be after pike – and Trentham Lake has yielded many 'a monster' of this voracious species that has turned the scale at twenty pounds – a disturbed water is often responsible for a "run." Except when it is really hungry and is on the prowl for food the pike is a lethargic kind of fish. Seeking the shelter of a dull patch of weed it will remain in a somnolent sort of state for hours.

Shifted by the disturbance of water caused by the plying of a pair of oars and the passing of a boat, that pike will often cruise around before it again settles in a tranquil state. And, if it chances to light across a stray roach or gudgeon that invites capture the chances are that it will seize that small fish, not because it is hungry but in response to the dictates of a carnivore nature. Quite apart from considerations of this kind, the lake at Trentham is amply big enough to provide sport both for the oarsman and the angler without either interfering with the other's enjoyment.

Then there are many who neither fish nor row, and to whom the delights of tennis, croquet and bowls may still be unknown, but who will yet find ample pleasure in a stroll through that delightful pleasancess in the region of Spring Valley, Trentham, under the new regime, will lose none of its old time charm, but, on the other hand, it is certain that the changes now being made will provide new opportunities for the thousands of people who....



6. Staffordshire Sentinel 10 June 1910

#### TRENTHAM GARDENS.

Opened as a Public Pleasure Resort.

FIFTEEN HUNDRED VISITORS

Some fifteen hundred people from all parts of the district took advantage of the opportunity of visiting Trentham Gardens yesterday (Thursday.) As was announced in these columns a few days ago, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland have decided to afford the public of North Staffordshire an opportunity of visiting the Gardens on week days (Sundays being excepted) under the most pleasant and enjoyable conditions. A few years back, it would never have entered the mind of the wildest dreamer that the day would dawn when the Gardens of Trentham, which have been the pride of many generations of the great family who have resided there, would be thrown open as pleasure grounds for the use of the good people of the Staffordshire Potteries and who ever else thought well to visit them.

Such, however, is now the case, and the gardens were on Thursday opened for the first time under the new conditions. From ten o'clock in the morning, until dusk visitors took pleasure in wandering over the lovely turfs, promenading the walks, enjoyed boating on the lake, or a game of bowls, or tennis.

#### GORGEIOUS SYLVAN SCENE

While it cannot be denied that the broad acres have been shorn of much of their attractiveness through the removal of sculpture from the gardens, the great belts of splendid flowering shrubs, the gorgeous trees, a source of perennial delight because of their magnificence, and just now at their very best and freshest; the rich green sward, over which one walks as on velvet, and the sense of liberty with which one may wander at his own sweet will without let or hindrance, make a visit to this spot an ideal way of spending a few hours. We have spoken of the removal of the garden sculpture. It should not go unobserved that the most important piece of sculpture which at any time adorned these gardens still remains. This is the copy of the famous work of Benvenuto Cellini – Perseus and Medusa – and is, if memory is reliable, the only copy on a similar large scale in existence.

#### AN INFORMAL OPENING

There was no formality in connection with the opening. The gates were simply thrown open, and on the payment of sixpence people were allowed to enter. Having once passed the portal they were at liberty to do very much as they chose. The visitors wandered wherever they wished, and manifestly took a delight in their lovely surroundings.

A friendly bowling match took place on the green between teams captained respectively by Alderman Pearce and Councillor Broadhurst. The contest attracted a good deal of interest, and the game resulted in the victory of Mr Broadhurst's men. A scratch tennis match was also played between members of the Basford Club. About a dozen boats were kept in fairly constant use throughout the time the gardens remained open.

#### TEA IN THE CONSERVATORY

Tea in the large garden conservatory, which has been cleared to allow of a large number of people sitting down at the many small tables was partaken of by most visitors. The weather was everything that could be desired.

Mr Peter Blair is to be complimented upon the fine condition of the gardens. Mr Blair is intent on keeping them up to their present condition in order that the public may be continuously attracted to the gardens. It is a privilege of which many thousands will doubtless avail themselves of during this summer.

The agent reported on the successful outcome of the new venture:

"So far the anticipated prospects for a successful season appear to have been realised. The gross takings to the end of June are £1,617 9s 7d as against £816 for the average takings during the corresponding periods of the previous three years.

It should not be supposed that these increased receipts are being entirely obtained without extra expenditure. A brass band is engaged to give musical recitals during Saturday afternoon, and to play for dancing the same evening. The fee is £8 per week plus the bandsmen's teas. A small ladies' orchestra plays in the Tea Rooms on Sunday and Thursday afternoons. They are paid £1 10s per occasion, plus their tea.

The costs of catering and working are greatly increased [but] there is still a handsome margin of profit obtained .... The crowd is quite an orderly one and easily controlled.



# TRENTHAM GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

## Trentham Park == Golf Links ==

Five Minutes from Trentham Park Station.

|          |        |          |
|----------|--------|----------|
| BOATING. | BOWLS. | TENNIS.  |
| CROQUET. | GOLF.  | FISHING. |

The above Gardens, Pleasure Grounds, and Golf Links are now open to the Public every day (on Sunday the Gardens alone are open to the Public) and contain seven Tennis Courts, a large Bowling Green, Croquet Lawn, Lake, nearly a mile in length, and the Golf Links are an 18 hole course.

### TEA & LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

will be served in the Grounds every day (including Sundays) at reasonable charges.

**ADMISSION** (Entrance at the Porter's Lodge near Park Gates) **6d.**  
TO GROUNDS ONLY.

**SEASON TICKETS** available from April to September (inclusive) 5/-. Reduction for Family Tickets, 3 - 12/6; 4 - 16/-; 5 - £1. Tennis and Croquet Greens, 3d. each player per hour. Bowling Green, 2d. each player per hour. Boating, 6d. each person per hour. Golf, Season Tickets £2 2 0, Weekly Tickets 5/-, Day Tickets (first round) 1/-, 6d. after.

A reduction of 25 per cent will be allowed on Admission Tickets only for Parties exceeding 12. Arrangements may be made for Parties to reserve Tennis Courts, Croquet Lawn, Boats, &c. Apply:—Estate Office, Trentham. Telephone No. 11, Trentham.

### RAILWAY ARRANGEMENTS during the Summer Season.

Cheap Excursion Tickets are issued to Trentham Park Station from the Potteries and Stone each Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. A through train for Trentham Park Station leaves Stoke every day at 2-24 p.m., and on Thursdays and Saturdays a late train leaves that Station at 9 p.m. for the Potteries, with connection for Stone and Stafford. :: :: ::



2.

## TRENTHAM GARDENS IN THE 1930s

The extract from the Evening Sentinel of Thursday 12 May 1938, describes the improvements made to Trentham Gardens in the 1930s. The new *Tea Rooms and Entertainment Hall*, better known as Trentham Ballroom, opened in 1931, was enlarged by the construction of new dining balconies served by new kitchens on the ground floor. Reference is also made to the new swimming baths opened in 1935. The photograph on the next page shows the new bridge over the river Trent to the gardens which replaced the narrow cast iron bridge built in the eighteenth century. This article was reprinted at the expense of Trentham Gardens Ltd and widely distributed over North Staffordshire and South Cheshire. Please note that the first, second and third columns on page 18 continue on page 19.

# GREAT IMPROVEMENTS AT TRENTHAM GARDENS

## *Famous Beauty Spot's Many New Attractions*

**T**RENTHAM GARDENS, pleasure ground of Stoke-on-Trent and garden of happiness for the thousands who flock there weekly from near and far, enter upon the season proper this week-end, and visitors previously acquainted with this renowned beauty spot will discover many new features and improvements.

During the winter months important and costly work has been in progress, with the object of enhancing still further the countless amenities of Trentham. The result is that even larger numbers can now be catered for, and that the opportunities for enjoyment are much extended.

### ***The New Features***

The improvement scheme is now completed, and here are its principal features:

*New enclosed balconies and private rooms surrounding the ballroom and overlooking both ballroom and grounds;*

sides of the balconies overlook the artistic ballroom. Each balcony is 200 feet long and access to them is gained by three new staircases, leading from the interior of the ballroom building. The balconies will be used for luncheons, teas and refreshments. They are being tastefully furnished.

At one end of the ballroom, on the same level as the balconies and capable of being opened up to be continuous with them, is a series of private rooms. They can be shut off completely from the remainder of the building, and are ideal for private parties such as wedding receptions and birthday celebrations.

The balconies and private rooms provide additional accommodation for 800 persons. The whole of the ballroom floor can, if necessary, be used for catering, so that it is now possible for 2,800 people to sit down and partake of a meal at any one time.

New kitchens have been provided to serve the balconies, and they have been fully equipped with new, modern fittings and appliances. All manner of labour-saving machines are installed, and increased efficiency of service is assured.

The ballroom, with its polished maple wood floor, holds 1,500 comfortably for dancing. Dances are held every Saturday evening, Sunday afternoon and Sunday

Picturesquely set, with trees on three sides and a lake on the fourth, is the open-air swimming pool—one of the most attractively laid-out in the country. The pool has been so constructed as to take advantage of the crystal clear springs of the famous Spring Valley, and the purity and condition of the water are the more reliable as a result of new filtration and chlorination plants now installed.

Both plants are of the latest type, and the result of their installation is that the water is now changed every six hours and, at the same time, is maintained in even better condition than formerly. Entirely fresh water, therefore, flows through the bath twice daily, and it is amply aerated so as to provide plenty of sparkle. The temperature is maintained at about 70 degrees.

### ***Leivers at the Pool***

The pool is now open, and a point of interest is that Bob Leivers, the Empire Games champion, will be training in the pool at 2.30 on Sunday afternoon.

The bath is equipped with chutes of the latest pattern, spring boards and a standard diving stage 15 feet high. It is provided with underwater lighting, and the surrounds are adequately lighted to provide safe bathing after dark.

There are spacious terraces for sun bathing and commodious dressing rooms. Teas and refreshments are available in the cafe and on the terraces.

One way of reaching the swimming pool is by means of the miniature railway, now provided with a new engine and rolling stock and with much of the track relaid. A trip on the railway is a delightful experience.

The romantic lake provides facilities for boating, fishing and motor-boat trips, and, as the result of the acquisition of a new motor-launch, there are now two of these craft. Teas and refreshments are available at the quaint chalet at the far end of the lake.

### ***For the Children***

The children's playground, paddling pool and sand pit are valuable adjuncts, and several new amusements have been provided since last season. Car parking accommodation near the ballroom has been enlarged.

Altogether, some 5,000 people can be catered for at one time in Trentham Gardens, and already the management is being inundated with bookings.

Stoke-on-Trent is proud to possess such a rural jewel within its boundaries, and North Staffordshire folk as a whole should be ever mindful of the fact that Trentham



One of the new dining balconies.



*New kitchens and cooking equipment;  
Installation of new and modern  
filtration and chlorination plants in the  
swimming pool;*

*Reconstructed bridge over the River  
Trent;*

*New engine and rolling stock for the  
miniature railway;*

*New motor launch; and*

*Additional amusements in the  
Children's Park.*

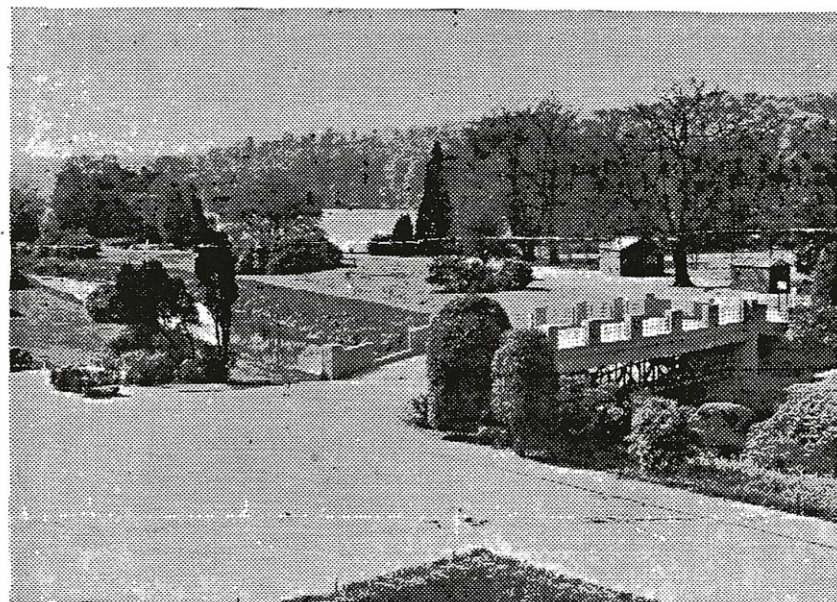
What more evidence is necessary of the management's enterprise? Small wonder that Trentham attracts hosts of trippers from all parts of the country; small wonder that the management, even now, has before it an application from a city many miles distant by a firm wishing to bring 1,800 employees there for a single day's outing.

Trentham is, indeed, the complete day's outing, with its magnificent Italian gardens, rose garden and lawns; its picturesque lake; its spacious ballroom; its beautifully situated open-air swimming pool; its miniature railway—its extensive facilities for fishing, tennis, boating, miniature golf and putting, archery and bowls; and — important factor — its unrivalled catering facilities.

### ***Ballroom Balconies***

The most important part of the improvement scheme is the extension of the ballroom to include two commodious balconies one on either side. Cleverly constructed to the designs of Mr. John S. Beaumont, the Manchester architect, they form an upper storey; and while they can be completely enclosed, the windows can be folded back in such a manner that, in warm weather, the balconies can be transformed into roofed terraces.

Through the windows the beautiful grounds and woods are to be seen stretching away on every hand, while the inner



Charming view from the West balcony.

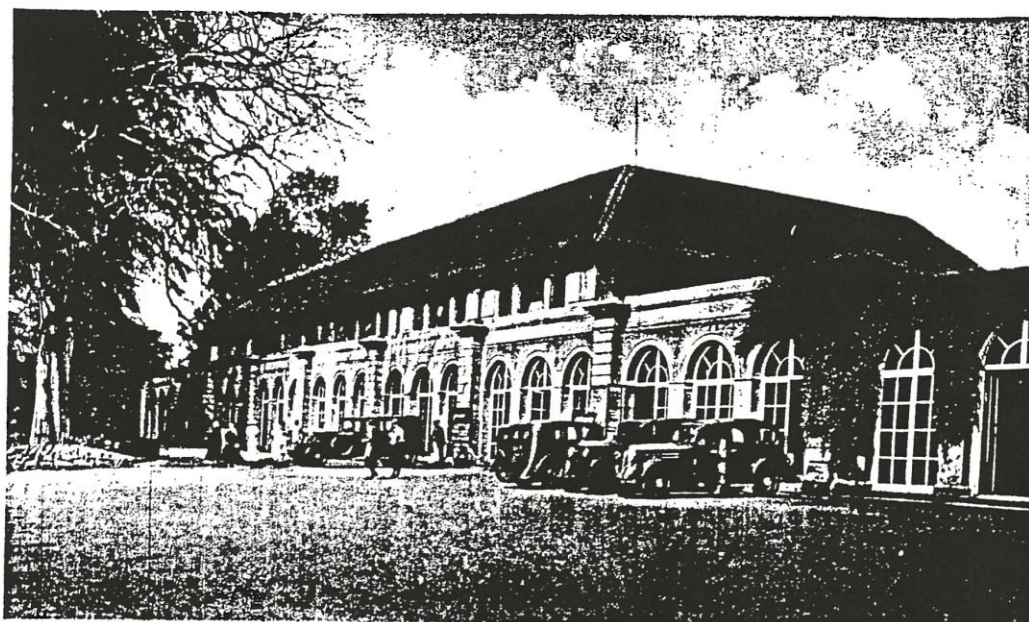
evening, and, in addition to the permanent band, famous broadcasting bands are engaged on special occasions.

Opposite the main entrance to the ballroom building is the bridge spanning the River Trent. The narrow iron bridge has now been demolished and has been replaced by an 18-feet wide bridge of pleasing design, the responsible architect again being Mr. Beaumont. The bridge gives access to all the other parts of the gardens.

is a beauty spot famed throughout the land.

The main contractors for the balcony dining rooms, the service kitchen, tea kiosks in gardens and reconstruction of bridge facing the ballroom are Messrs. R. Carlyle and Co. Ltd., Elsinore-road, Old Trafford, Manchester, 16, the electric installation is by Messrs. Hawley, Ingram and Co., Stoke, plumbing and glazing by Messrs. S. Peake and Son, Ltd., Stoke, tables by Messrs. Boulds, Fenton.

### **VIEW OF THE TEA ROOMS AND ENTERTAINMENT HALL, TRENTHAM GARDENS, c.1938**



TEA ROOMS AND ENTERTAINMENT HALL, TRENTHAM GARDENS.



10.

The extract from the 1924 Ordnance Survey Map, below, shows some of the new facilities provided for members of the public in the grounds of Trentham Hall before the First World War – seven “tennis grounds”, a band stand, a landing stage for the motor boat and rowing boats available for hire, a bowling green (just off the map on the lower right,) and a tea room in the conservatory (not labelled on the map). Dances were also held in the Sculpture Gallery before the construction of Trentham Tea Room and Entertainment Hall (better known as Trentham Ballroom) by Trentham Gardens Ltd in 1931.

EXTRACT FROM THE 1924 ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP

