

The transformation of Trentham Park in the 18th century

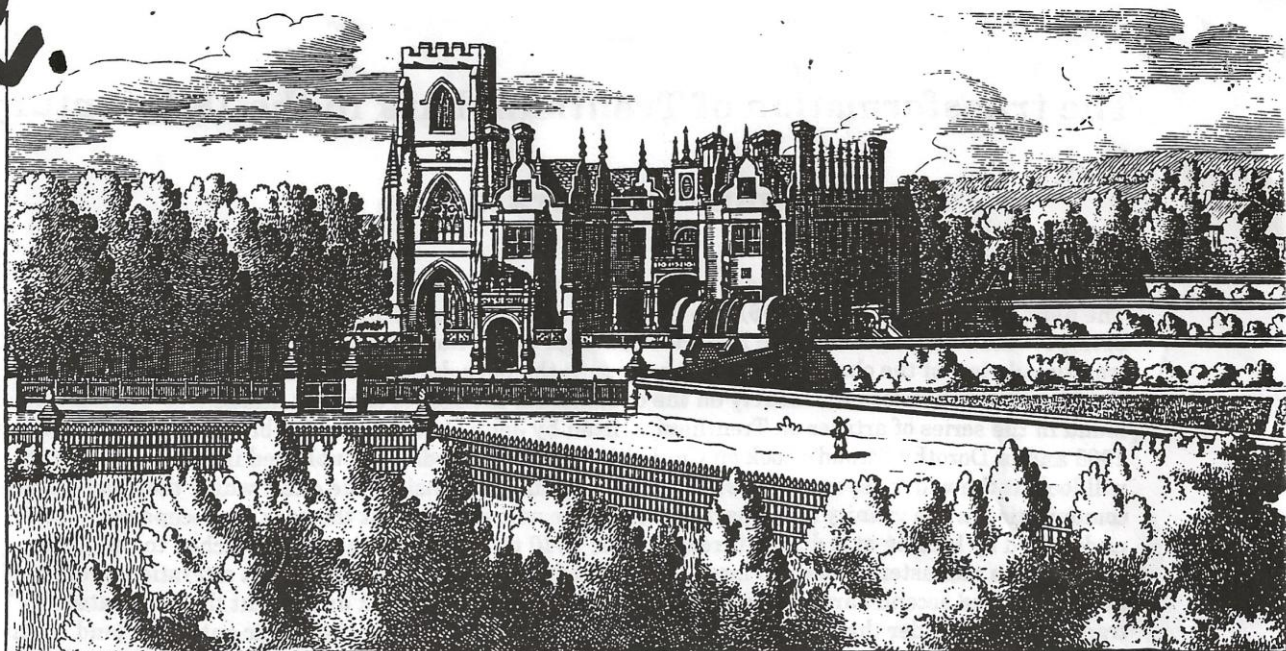
Andrew Dobraszczyk

Trentham Park was the private park of the Leveson-Gower family of Trentham Hall, Staffordshire. The park which exists today (1999) was in the main created in the 18th century. These notes have been produced for a lecture at the Potteries Museum & Art Gallery which will attempt to revise the traditional view of the changes which took place in the park during this period. Discussion of these changes to date has focused entirely on the ornamental changes to the park landscape. They can be found in the series of articles on Trentham written by John Cornforth and published in *Country Life* in 1968 and in Dorothy Stroud's book on Capability Brown (3rd edition) published in 1975. This lecture will look at the wider aspects of those changes and will also consider the effect which they had on the communities in the vicinity of the park. The lecture will suggest that the park landscape can best be understood by looking at it during three periods: 1540 to 1680 when the park attached to the former Augustinian monastery remained largely unaltered; 1680 to 1754 when the first alterations were made by the first and second baron Gower; and 1754 to 1803 when the park underwent its greatest transformation under the second Earl Gower. The result was to clear the public out of the land around the Hall by a huge enlargement of the park. It was only after this process was well under way that Capability Brown was brought in to re-landscape the park in the 3rd quarter of the 18th century.

Before we can understand what happened to the park in the 18th century it is necessary to make some brief reference to its earlier history. Trentham was formerly the property of an Augustinian Priory founded in the middle of the 12th century. The priory, along with other monastic institutions, was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1537 and three years later it was bought by James Leveson, a wool merchant, from Wolverhampton. The first surviving estate map from the end of the 16th century shows that the park originally attached to Trentham Hall was very much smaller than it is today. The map entitled "Parcell of the Mannor of Trentham conteyning LXXXVIII (=538) acres", dated 1599, is in Staffordshire Record Office. It shows a small pool immediately south of "Trentham Manor House" (Trentham Hall). Below this were two fields - Nether Park and Over Park - which totalled sixteen and a half acres. Then the most important feature in the landscape was "Trentham Copy" or "Trentham Wood". The first description of this wood appears in the Domesday Book in the eleventh century: The King holds Trentham.... There is a wood one mile long and half a mile broad. The wood was not called Kings Wood until the middle of the 19th century. In 1599 "Kings Wood" was the name given to a large area of unenclosed land on the west side of Trentham wood. The northern boundary of Trentham wood or "Copy" was formed by a footpath which ran from the bridge over the river Trent behind Trentham Hall south west in the direction of Beech. The southern boundary ran along the border between the parishes of Trentham and Stone. The east side of the wood, the area later occupied by Trentham lake, then contained fields of meadow land on both sides of the river Trent. Altogether the pool, the two park fields and Trentham wood contained about 180 acres. They are shown superimposed on the six inch ordnance survey map on page 3.

Trentham manor house was rebuilt in the seventeenth century by Sir Richard Leveson (1598-1661). The account books kept by John Terricke, his agent, and the engravings published in 1686 in Plot's "Natural History of Staffordshire" provide us with a detailed picture of the rebuilding of the hall. Construction took place over eight years between 1630 and 1638. The total cost was £6165 17s 4d, which covered not only the building of the hall itself, but also stables, barns, the laying out and planting of gardens and orchards, as well as work carried out in Trentham church and Barlaston chapel. Those who are interested in the details of the rebuilding should look at Malcolm Airs's book, *The Tudor and Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (1995). Here it is sufficient to say that the view which appears in Plot's book, and is reproduced on the next page, shows that the new house had a symmetrical west front with a central porch and projecting wings on either side. Curved Dutch gables and pinnacles abounded and were sometimes combined with balustraded parapets. Around the parapet of the walled courtyard at the front was the inscription "CARLO BRITANIAE REGE RICARDUS LEVESON EQVES BALNEI AEDES HASCE HIC FIERI VOLVIT" (In the reign of King Charles Richard Leveson knight willed that this bath house should be constructed here). The overall effect was redolent of an earlier architectural style: Elizabethan in plan and Jacobean in facade, quite unlike the Palladian style of the Banqueting House constructed by Inigo Jones for Charles I in Whitehall. There is no evidence in the estate papers that this building activity was accompanied by any changes to the park. When Sir John's estates were inherited by William (Leveson) Gower, (c.1640-1691), of Stittenham in Yorkshire, in 1667, the size and lay-out of the park appear to have been the same as they had been at the end of the 16th century.

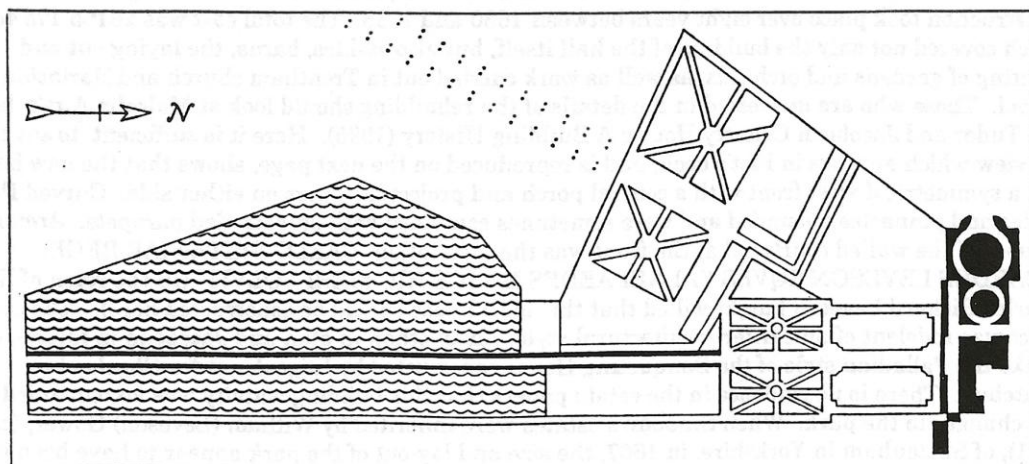
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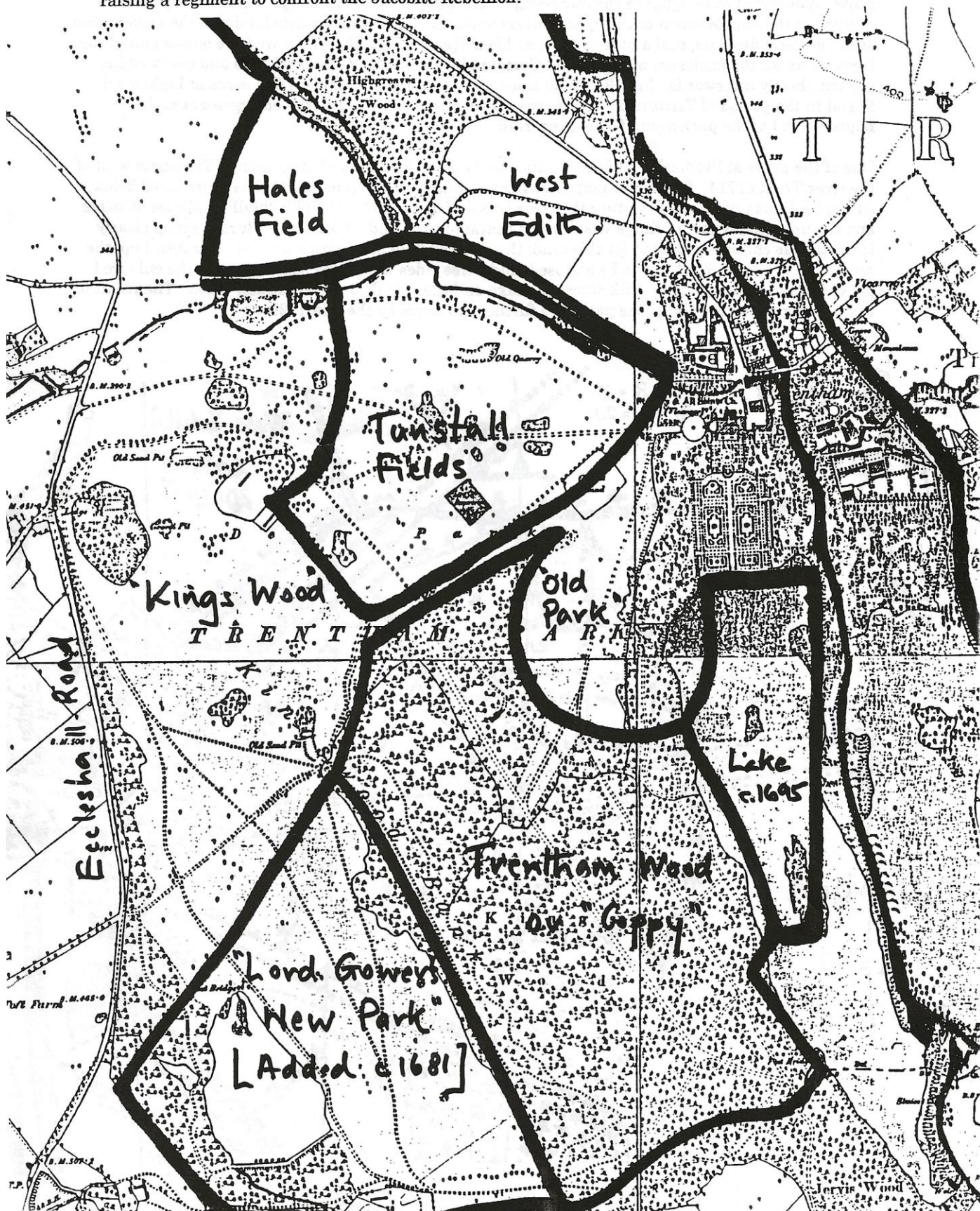
ABOVE: Part of a view of Trentham Hall from the south west produced for Robert Plot's *Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686. In the foreground is part of the "Old Park" between the Hall and Trentham wood enclosed by a park pale.

Both Sir William Leveson-Gower and his son, John (1675-1709), who inherited the estate in 1691, were responsible for alterations and improvements to Trentham Hall. For our purposes the changes which they made to Trentham park were much more significant. In 1681 the estate accounts record the expenditure of £152 on the purchase of part of "Kings Wood". This was a triangular shaped area of land on the south west side of Trentham wood bordered on the north side by the road to Beech and on the south side by the parish boundary (see map on the next page). Some time later it was enclosed by a wooden fence and added to Trentham park. Its incorporation into the park may not have occurred until after 1703 when Sir John Leveson-Gower was elevated to the peerage as Baron Gower because the estate papers of the early 18th century describe the area as "Lord Gower's New Park" to distinguish it from the "Old Park" on the north east side of Trentham wood. During his ownership a new lake was formed next to the old park on the east side of Trentham wood. In 1695 the reverend George Plaxton, who supervised the general management of the family's estates in Staffordshire and Shropshire, wrote to Earl Gower: "As to the pool I assure you it will be the noblest & most profitable thing that ever was at ye house. It will reach from the white Gates up to the Coppy on the hill [Trentham wood], the Dam will be about 460 odd yards in length." The copy of an early 18th century plan taken from Cornforth's article and reproduced below shows the new lake with a long walk running down from the house and across the lake. As a result of these changes the area of the park, including the wood and the lake, had almost doubled in size to about 350 acres by the beginning of the 18th century.

BELOW: A copy of an early 18th century plan showing the lay-out of the new lake and walk. Trentham Hall is at the north end of the long walk on the right hand side of the map.



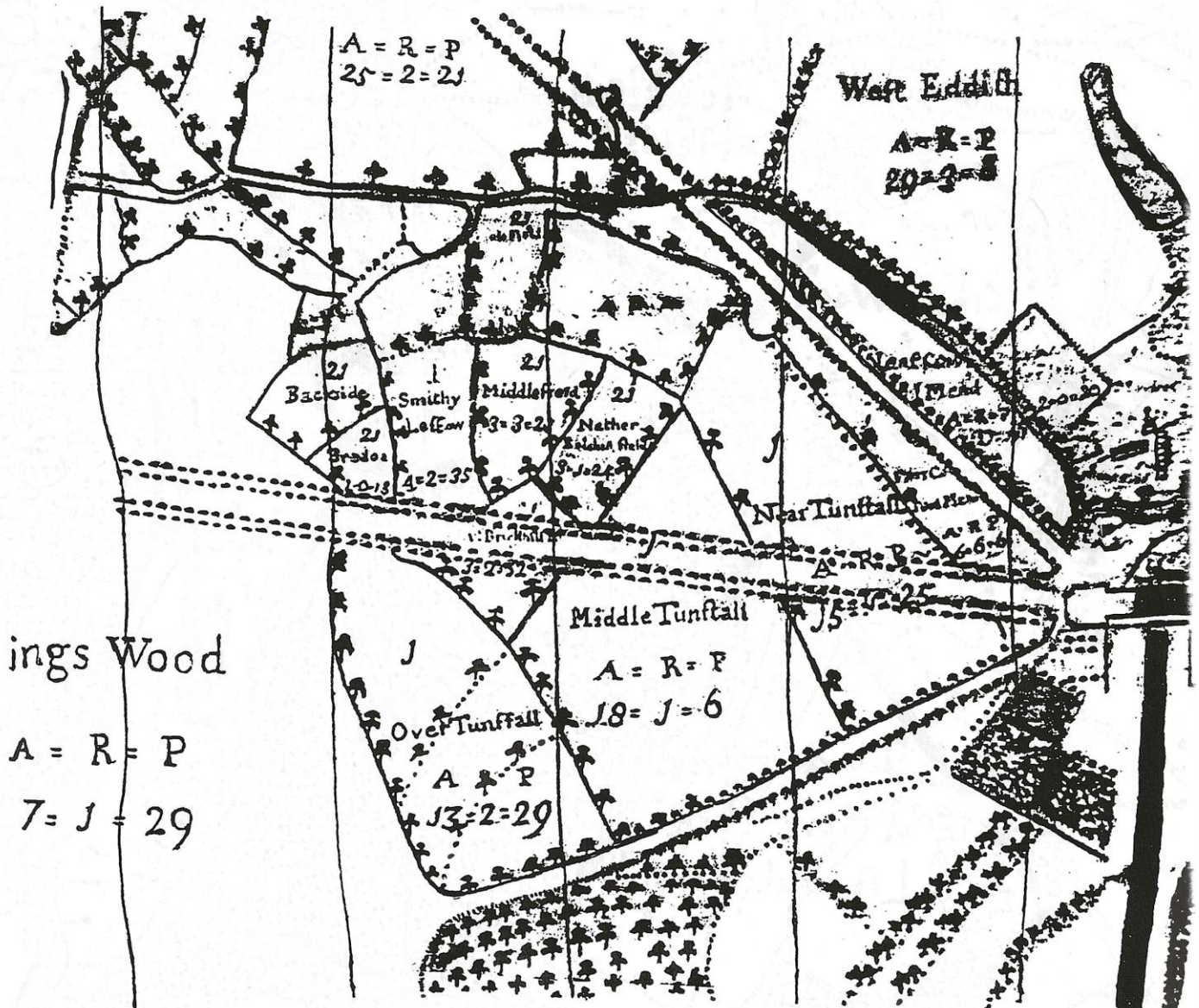
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During the ownership of John Leveson-Gower, the second baron, a number of significant improvements were made to his estate at Trentham. The basis of these improvements was a series of maps produced by Thomas Burton, a surveyor. Between c.1714 and c.1725 he was commissioned to survey and map the whole parish of Trentham, the Royalty of Normacot in the parish of Stone, and part of the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent at Longton in the ownership of the Leveson-Gower family. These surveys were a prelude to the improvement of the agricultural estate, the enclosure of waste land and the exploitation of the mineral deposits, coal and ironstone, at Mear Heath. Lord Gower secured the agreement of the freeholders for the enclosure of Lightwood Common in the parish of Stone in 1725 and enclosed his portion shortly afterwards. In 1734 he obtained an Act for the enclosure of 650 acres at Lightwood Forest in the parish of Trentham. The surveys were also a precursor to the enlargement and improvement of the park around Trentham Hall.

One of the maps at Staffordshire Record Office by Thomas Burton is of the parish of Trentham west of the river Trent c1714. Part of the map showing the land west of Trentham Hall is reproduced below. At the beginning of the 18th century this area was still occupied by 12 fields totalling almost 90 acres and the unenclosed part of Kings Wood which contained 137 and a half acres. Burton's map clearly indicates the changes proposed for this land: the existing field boundaries were to be grubbed up; the remainder of Kings Wood was to be enclosed; and three rides were to be laid out across the enlarged park to complement the long walk across the lake and the ride through Trentham Wood. The result of these changes was to enlarge the park by a further 227 acres by the mid 1720s.



Over a period of about forty years the park boundary had been moved considerably further west from the edge of Trentham wood to the side of the Eccleshall Road. Various estate maps in Staffordshire Record Office also show that by the late 1720s the original park pale had been replaced by a brick wall along the southern boundary and for part of the western boundary along the Eccleshall Road. These changes did not ensure complete privacy for the family because two public footpaths ran across the park from the bridge over the river Trent behind Trentham Hall. The bridge also carried the road which ran west from Trentham to Hanchurch and Butterson. The narrow width of the bridge had been a problem for a considerable period of time and recesses had been provided over the buttresses to allow pedestrians to avoid horses and carriages. One solution would have been to widen the bridge but that would have kept the public highway in close vicinity to the Hall. The estate pursued a different and more expensive option but one which moved the public highway away from the Hall. In the early 1740s they paid Richard Trubshaw to build a new and wider bridge further north across the river Trent. John Boulton provided the stone from Beech quarry and the estate paid the owner, Thomas Fitzherbert Esq., of Swinnerton Hall, for "soil breach". The line of the road to Hanchurch was also altered so that it ran further north along the bottom of Hargreaves Wood. The old bridge was retained but Park Drive was now virtually a private access road to Trentham Hall and Trentham parish church (see map page 13).

The park including the wood and lake now totalled almost 580 acres compared with 180 acres in about 1680. The management of the enlarged park was placed in the hands of the Penson family who had been in the service of the Leveson family since the 1580s. James Penson was the park keeper in the mid 1720s when he was paid £20 a year by the estate. One of his duties was to look after the herd of deer which was culled annually. The estate accounts record the payment of his expenses taking venison to London for the family and their friends.

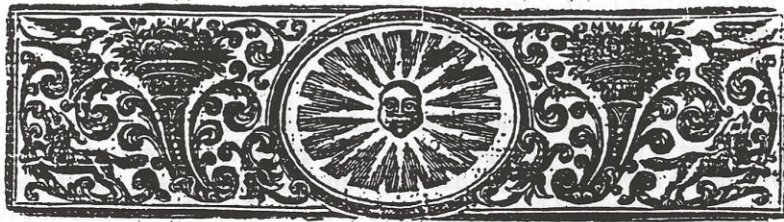
The engraving below shows Trentham, "the seat of Earl Gower", in 1750 looking west from the land now occupied by Trentham Golf Course. In the distance on the right is Trentham Hall. This had been substantially rebuilt and altered by work carried out for Sir William Leveson-Gower and his two successors in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The lake too was altered in the late 1740s when the accounts record the removal of the long walk. Dominating the view on the left is the "Coppie" or Trentham Wood. The land in the immediate foreground was then occupied by fields which lay between Trentham wood and the Stone Road. That view was to change quite radically in the second half of the 18th century when the estate came into the possession of Granville Leveson-Gower.



6.

Earl Gower was succeeded in 1754 by his third son, Granville (1721-1803), probably the most able and important of the Leveson-Gowers. Elected Member of Parliament for Westminster in 1747 he was at the centre of national and local political affairs for over forty years. In 1755 he was made Lord Privy Seal and later became President of the Council. He was made a Knight of the Garter in 1771 and created Marquess of Stafford in 1786. The second Earl was a notable patron of architecture and employed Sir William Chambers to build Gower House at Whitehall in London. Over a period of twenty five years he was responsible for substantial alterations to Trentham Hall, the park, and the surrounding landscape. The result of his actions was to considerably restrict public access to the land around Trentham Hall in the second half of the 18th century.

One of his first actions on inheriting the estate was to begin the process of enclosing the waste land in the vicinity of Trentham Park. In the middle of the 18th century there were three areas of waste land around the park in the parish of Trentham - Northwood, Hanchurch Heath and Toft Green - which totalled 364 acres. In 1755 and 1756 Earl Gower secured the agreement of the other owners of the area for the enclosure of the waste land. He obtained an Act of Parliament (30 Geo II c 8) in 1757 the first page of which is reproduced below.



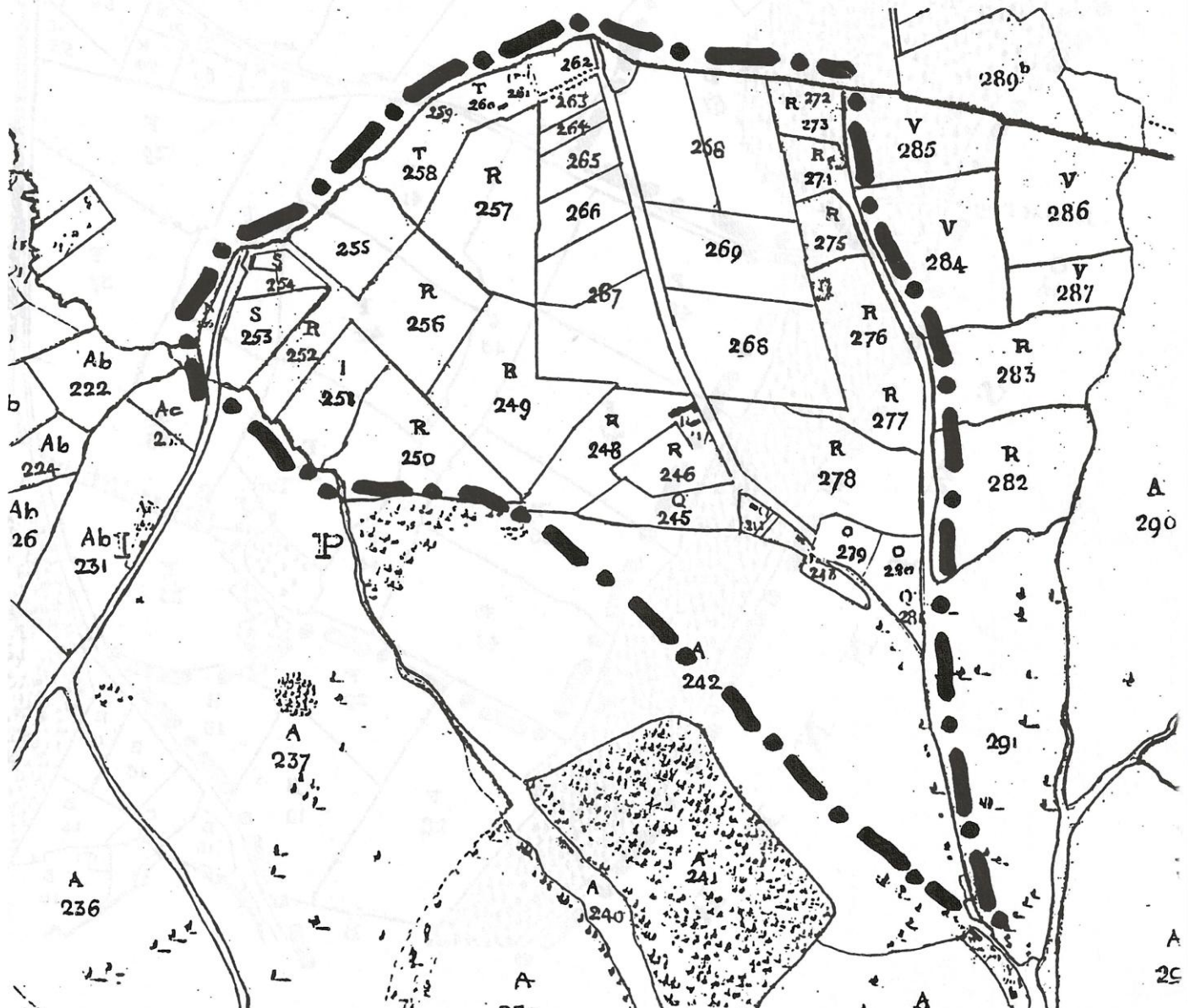
*An ACT for Confirming and Establishing Two
several Articles of Agreement for Inclosing
and Dividing Northwood, Hanchurch Heath
and Toft Green, in the Manor and Parish of
Trentham, in the County of Stafford.*



Decreas by Articles of Agreement, indented, bearing Date the Twelfth Day of December One thousand Seven hundred and Fifty-five, and made between the Right Honourable Granville Earl Gower, Lord of the Manor of Trentham, in the County of Stafford, and Owner and Proprietor of all the Tythes, both great and small, arising within the said Manor and Parish of Trentham, of the one Part; the Right Honourable Mary Countess Dowager Gower, the Honourable Baptist Leveson Gower, and Robert Barbor of Sumerford, in the said County of Stafford, Esquire, Executors and Devises named in the last Will and Testament of the Right Honourable John Earl Gower, deceased, John Fenton of Newcastle under Line, in the County of Stafford, Esquire, the Reverend Samuel Lea of Newport, in the County of Salop, Clerk, Clayton Lea of Liverpool, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, Gentleman, John Lovatt of Clayton, in the Parish of Trentham, in the said County of Stafford, Thomas Unett and Simpson Stevenson of the same Place, Gentlemen, William Hill of the Grove, in the said County of Stafford, Gentleman, Stephen Grosvenor of Droitwich, in the County of Worcester, Gentleman, John Slancy of Penkull, in the said County of Stafford, Yeoman, Richard Walker of Hanchurch, in the Parish of Trentham, and Joseph Hall of the same Place, Yeoman, Joseph Knight of Darlaston, in the said County of Stafford, and Richard Ball of Trentham aforesaid, Yeoman, John Collier of Hanchurch aforesaid, and Thomas Kniveton of Butterson, in the Parish of Trentham aforesaid, Yeoman, of the other Part; reciting, That there is a

The Act stated that the "said common or waste land, by reason of the same lying open, commonable, and uninclosed, produced very little Profit to the respective Owners and Proprietors of Messuages, Farms, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, who had a right of Common thereupon, and was incapable of being improved, until the same should be inclosed and divided; and that the inclosing the same would not only be beneficial to the Parties interested therein, but of publick utility;" In fact the main beneficiary of the enclosure was Earl Gower. As lord of the manor of Trentham and the largest property owner in the area he received the lion's share of the enclosure award. At Hanchurch Heath and Toft Green, he was awarded 149 acres out of the 192 acres of land available for distribution. The other five freeholders received 43 acres between them. Similarly at Northwood he was awarded 86 out of 125 acres of land. Earl Gower was also given all the cottages and incroachments which had been made on the waste land.

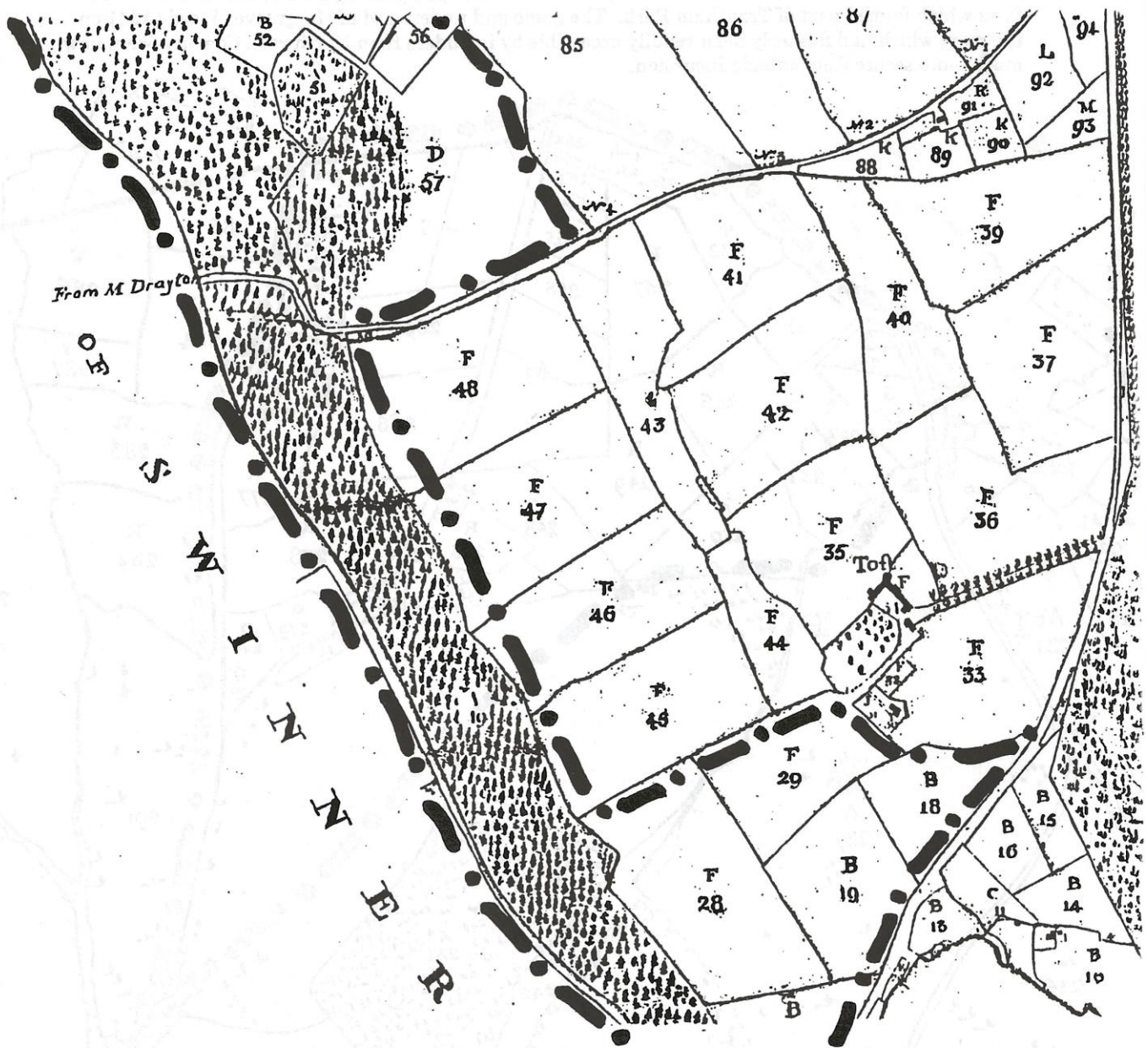
The map below, an extract from Samuel Botham's Map of the Trentham Estate of the Marquess of Stafford, shows what happened to the area of the former Northwood Common on the north side of Trentham Park. The road on the left is the Eccleshall Road. Northwood Lane runs down the centre of the map. The dotted line marks the boundary of the former common. By the time the map was produced in 1809 the whole of the former common was in the ownership of the Leveson-Gower family. The northern part of the common was divided by straight new field boundaries which were typical of land enclosed by Act of Parliament. Most of the new fields were let to the tenant of Northwood Farm. The southern part of the common was incorporated into the open grazing land attached to the home farm which formed part of Trentham Park. The game and underwood of Hargreaves Wood (A241 on the map) which had formerly been readily accessible by intruders from Northwood Common were now much more secure from outside incursion.



8.

Hanchurch Heath and Toft Green were given a different treatment. The map below, another extract from Samuel Botham's map of 1809, shows part of the area of the former waste land on the west side of Trentham Park. The road on the right hand side is the Eccleshall Road which here formed the western boundary of Trentham Park. As at Northwood the whole of the former waste land (shown by a dotted line) was in the ownership of the Leveson-Gower family by the end of the 18th century. The lower land at Toft Green was enclosed and the fields added to Toft Farm (No 28-29) and Knowl Wall Farm (No 18-20).

Hanchurch Heath on the higher land which rises to a height of 712 feet above sea level was a prominent feature in the local landscape. The top of the ridge was also the boundary between the parishes of Swynnerton and Trentham and the estates of the Fitzherbert family of Swinnerton Hall and the Leveson-Gower family of Trentham Hall. Here the land was enclosed and the former heath land densely planted with trees on the Trentham side. There are numerous entries in the estate accounts for the 1760s and 1770s of expenditure for hedging, ditching, and planting of trees and holly sets on Hanchurch Hills including the payment of the "womens bill for seting acorns upon Hanchurch Hills" in January 1761. The result was to create a new scenic backdrop to the lanscape on the west side of the park which the family would have passed through each time they went along the Drayton Road to their estate at Lilleshall in Shropshire. Tree planting as opposed to pasture or cultivation was also a more productive way to use an area of poor quality upland soil.



Securing the northern and western boundaries of Trentham Park was relatively easy. These lay within the parish and manor of Trentham where the Levison-Gower family were lords of the manor and the owners of most of the land. Securing the southern boundary of the park was a much more difficult and long drawn out process. At the beginning of the 18th century the southern boundary of Trentham wood and park coincided with the parish boundary between Trentham and Stone. This was also the boundary between Trentham and Tittensor Manors. The land immediately adjacent to the boundary on the Stone side was occupied by part of Tittensor Heath (see map page 13). The inhabitants of Tittensor living in the cottages in the vicinity of what is now Monument Lane came to this heath to collect water from a spring near the park boundary. Cottagers from Tittensor and elsewhere in this part of the parish of Stone also came into Trentham wood to collect underwood and to poach game. In the early 18th century the estate attempted to restrict entry from this direction by replacing the park pale with a brick wall. That apparently had little effect. The estate accounts record expenses paid at Stone in the pursuit of deer stealers in January 1742/3. In 1752 boards were put up by the park wall warning people about trespass in the park. This too had little or no effect for three years later the accounts record the payment of expenses for taking people from Tittensor before the magistrates for "taking wood in ye coppice". It was not easy for the park keeper and gamekeeper to apprehend poachers and wood collectors because the public had a right of entry into Trentham wood by the footpath which ran from Tittensor Common through the park to the bridge over the river behind Trentham Hall. Moreover, the estate had no other means of control over the people living on the south side of the park because the manor of Tittensor belonged to the Jervis family and property in this area was subdivided among a relatively large number of owners. The Leveson-Gower family would have been reminded about the problem every time they went south from Trentham Hall for the "London Drive" took the same route through the park as the public right of way - through Trentham Wood, across Tittensor Common and past the cottages in what is now Monument Lane to join the Stone Road.

In the middle of the 18th century the family began the long process of effectively securing the southern park boundary and improving their own access from the London drive. The first stage in this process took over a quarter of a century to accomplish. The Trentham Hall collection in Staffordshire Record Office contains a map of Tittensor Common and the names of the property owners in the immediate vicinity of the park wall dated 1749. This was probably prepared with the long term intention of enclosing the common and buying out the adjacent landowners. In the following year the Trentham Hall estate agent met the freeholders at Tittensor but nothing came of this. However the family did manage to persuade John Jervis Esq. to sell land on the south east side of Trentham wood by the river Trent. This area, later known as Jervis Wood, was the site of the dam built for the enlargement of Trentham lake in the 1760s. In 1763 after two years of negotiations Earl Gower finally secured the agreement of the freeholders for the enclosure of part of Tittensor Common adjacent to the park wall and to Jervis Wood. This was a very small piece of land, only 4 acres and 3 roods, and he had to pay £57 to buy out the freeholders' interest in the land. However it was worth the trouble and expense because this was the point of entry from the Tittensor drive into Trentham wood. The land was subsequently enclosed, incorporated into the park, and planted with trees. That still did not solve the problem because one of the conditions imposed on the Earl by the other freeholders was that he should continue to allow cottagers from Tittensor access to the spring on this land for their water supply "or from some other part of Earl Gower's Estate equally convenient for them and find and provide a convenient footpath to and from the same for the carrying of such water". The public of course still had the right of access across this extension by the footpath through Trentham park. Earl Gower had to wait another ten years before a change in legislation finally enabled him to solve this problem.

BELOW: A trespass notice from the Trentham Hall collection in Staffordshire Record Office printed by James Smith, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, c.1774.

ALL PERSONS FOUND
TRESPASSING
In these Grounds,
Will be prosecuted as the
Law directs.

10.

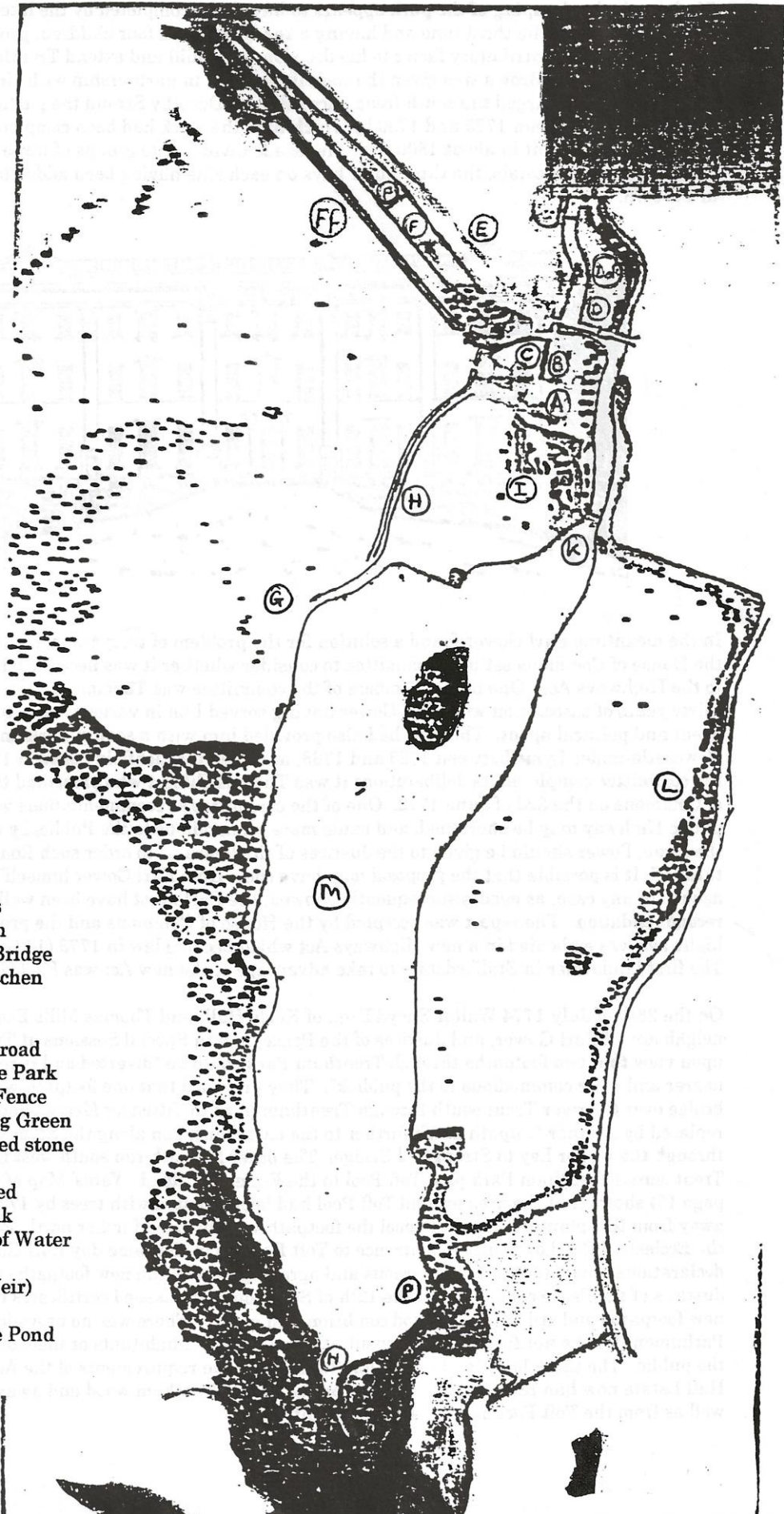
Capability Brown, the landscape gardener, was brought in to remodel the park only after the estate had begun the process of enclosure of waste land around the park and taken the first steps to secure the southern boundary. His "Plan for the intended alterations at Trentham" in Staffordshire Record Office is dated 1759. Emphasis has been laid by Dorothy Stroud and others on two aspects of this plan (see page 11). The first aspect was the removal of the formal tree-lined drives radiating out from the Hall and their replacement by a new 'natural' landscape. There was to be an uninterrupted view across this new landscape with the deer and other animals kept away from the Hall by means of a ha ha or sunk fence. The second and most striking aspect was of course the substantial enlargement of the lake which was to cover an area of 75 acres. What has been ignored is the effect which the new lake had on the security of the wood and park. Once the extension to the lake was completed there was a substantial body of water which stretched from Jervis Wood in the south almost as far as Trentham Hall in the north and which formed a substantial barrier to anyone approaching the park from the east. It must have shown up the deficiencies of the park boundaries elsewhere. Between 1765 and 1767 John Ansley was paid over £150 to provide 300,000 bricks and Edward and John Shaw were paid over £200 to take down and rebuild the park wall to a height of six feet topped by stone coping along the southern and western park boundaries.

There is another aspect which needs to be emphasised. The estate also had problems with poachers who fished in the lake. Enlarging the lake would make it much more difficult to detect such activity at the south end of the lake. However Brown's plan also involved the transformation of the landscape between the new lake and the Stone Road. The fields which formerly occupied this area were to be removed and replaced by a new open landscape of pasture land which was later called "Lower Ley" to distinguish it from the "Upper Ley" which was formed by a similar process on the other side of the Stone Road. Capability Brown proposed to lay out a gravel walk from the gardens south of Trentham Hall across the river Trent by a new stone bridge then south along the edge of the ley by the Stone Road crossing over the end of the lake by a "rotunda" and up the other side to Trentham Hall. This enlarged private landscape was to be screened from the turnpike road by a plantation of trees and shrubs. The result was to enlarge the park on the east side and to increase the privacy of the new lake. Not all of this plan was put into effect. It is unlikely that the rotunda was ever built but most of the other proposals were put into effect in the third quarter of the 18th century.

The view below dated 1783 shows Trentham Hall between clumps of trees set in the new rolling landscape created by Capability Brown. Below the Hall is the upper part of the new lake. Cows graze in the park land. What is also noticeable is the absence of people. Eighty years earlier part of the area in the foreground was covered in fields under cultivation by labourers. The rest of the area was part of Kings Wood where rights of common to graze sheep and other animals would have been exercised by the neighbouring farmers. All of these people had been cleared out of the landscape west of the Hall. The plan produced by Capability Brown completed this process by removing them from the landscape south east of Trentham Hall by the enlargement of the lake and the formation of the new ley.



- A The House
- B The Offices
- C The Church
- D The Pond Bridge
- E The old Kitchen Garden
- F Paddocks
- G The Coach road through the Park
- H The Sunk Fence
- I The Bowling Green
- K The Intended stone Bridge
- L The Intended Gravel Walk
- M The Piece of Water
- N A Ford
- O A Ware (Weir)
- P A Rotunda
- Dd The Bridge Pond
- Ff Canals



Work on the landscaping of the park appears to have been completed by the late 1760s. In 1768 Earl Gower married for the third time and having already fathered four children, produced four more. This may have been a contributory factor to his decision to rebuild and extend Trentham Hall in the mid 1770s. Once again Brown was given the commission and in partnership with Henry Holland remodelled and enlarged the south front. According to Dorothy Stroud the partnership was paid almost £7,000 between 1775 and 1780 by which time the work had been completed. The view below shows the south front in about 1800 with the facade divided into groups of three by giant Corinthian pilasters set on pedestals, the three outer bays on each side having been added by Brown and Holland in 1776-78.

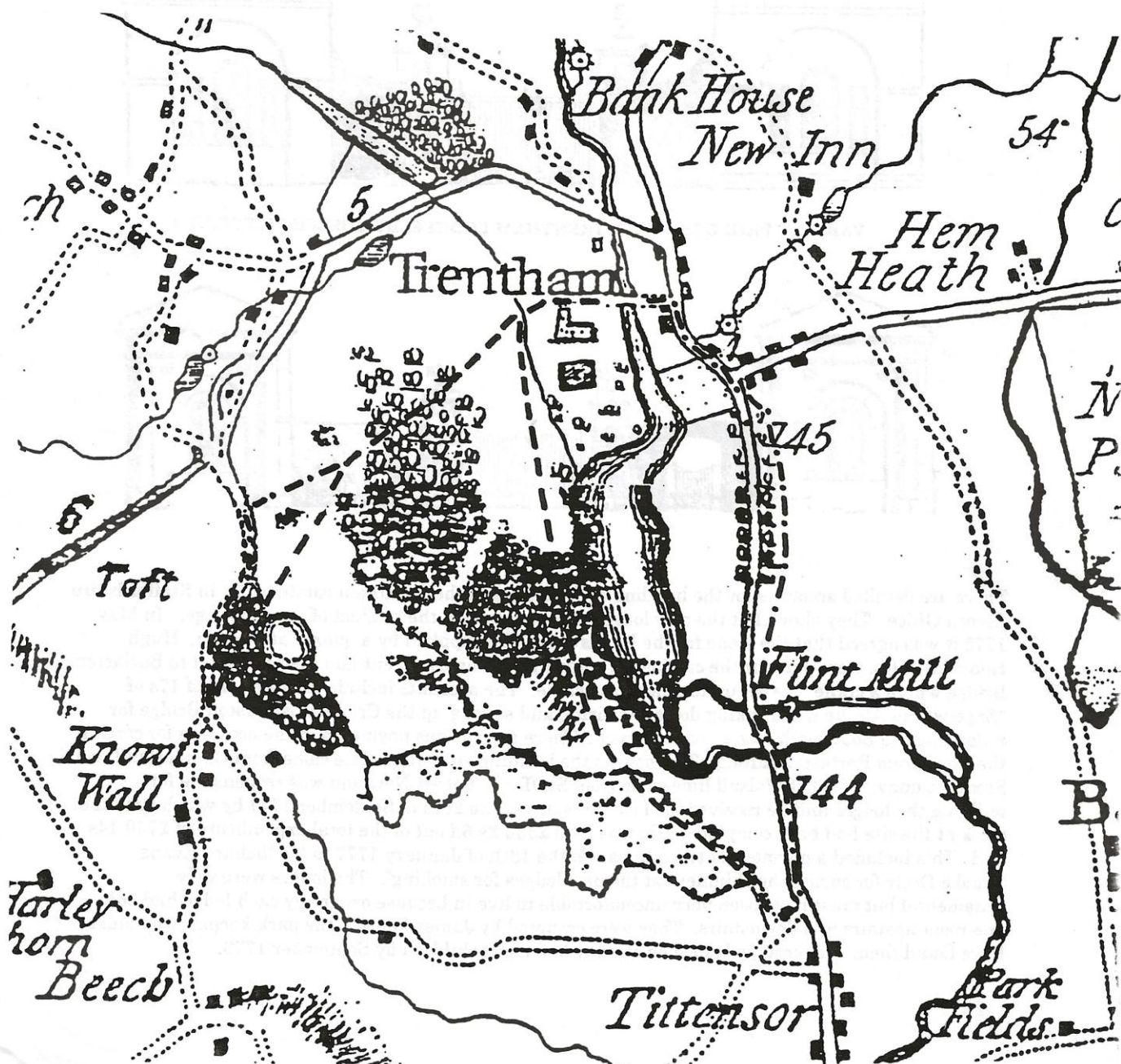


In the meantime Earl Gower found a solution for the problem of trespass in Trentham park. In 1772 the House of Commons set up a committee to consider whether it was necessary to make any revisions to the Highways Act. One of the members of the committee was Thomas Gilbert, who by then had had thirty years of association with Earl Gower having served him in various capacities including land agent and political agent. The Earl had also provided him with a seat in Parliament, first for Newcastle-under-Lyme between 1763 and 1768, and then for Lichfield between 1768 and 1795. When the committee completed its deliberations it was Thomas Gilbert who presented the report to the House of Commons on the 3rd of June 1772. One of the committee's recommendations was that "where any public Highway may be shortened, and made more commodious to the Public, by diverting and turning the same, Power should be given to the Justices of the Peace..... to order such Road to be diverted and turned." It is possible that the proposal may have come from Earl Gower himself or at least from his agent. In any case, as events subsequently showed, the Earl must have been well informed about the recommendation. The report was accepted by the House of Commons and the proposal for diverting highways was embodied in a new Highways Act which became law in 1773 (13 Geo III c.78, clause 19). The first landowner in Staffordshire to take advantage of the new Act was Earl Gower.

On the 28th of July 1774 Walter Sneyd Esq., of Keele Hall, and Thomas Mills Esq., of Barlaston Hall, neighbours of Earl Gower, and Justices of the Peace, met in Special Sessions at Trentham and found upon view that two footpaths through Trentham Park could be "diverted and turned to make the same nearer and more commodious to the publick". They proposed that one footpath which ran from the bridge over the river Trent south through Trentham park to Tittensor Heath should be closed and replaced by another footpath much further to the east which ran along the Stone Road and down through the Upper Ley to Strongford Bridge. The other footpath ran south west from bridge over the Trent across Trentham Park past Toft Pool to the Eccleshall Road. Yates' Map of Staffordshire (see page 13) shows that the area around Toft Pool had been planted with trees by 1775. To keep the public away from this plantation and the pool the footpath was diverted further north so that it came out on the Eccleshall Road opposite the entrance to Toft Farm. On the same day Earl Gower signed two declarations consenting to the diversions and agreeing to keep the new footpaths in repair. The two Justices of the Peace came back on the 12th of September and issued certificates declaring that the new footpaths and stiles were in good condition and repair. There was no provision in the Act of Parliament for the notification of or consultation with local inhabitants or indeed any other members of the public. The three local landowners had fulfilled all the requirements of the Act. The Trentham Hall Estate now had the power to keep the public out of Trentham wood and away from the lake as well as from the Toft Pool and the adjacent plantation.

The two orders for the closure and diversion of the public footpaths through Trentham Park were enrolled at Staffordshire Quarter Sessions and are in Staffordshire Record Office. Originally there were plans attached to the orders which showed the route of the old and new footpaths. The plans have not survived. However from the written descriptions contained within the orders it is possible to reconstruct the line of the old and new footpaths. The extract from Yates' Map of Staffordshire below shows the area around Trentham Hall in 1775 shortly after the diversion orders were made. The enlarged lake at Trentham is clearly shown on the map. One of the rides through Trentham wood survived the remodelling of the landscape by Capability Brown. The stippled area shown south of Trentham wood and lake was part of Tittensor Common. The common was not finally enclosed until the mid 19th century by which time the Leveson-Gower family owned the whole township of Tittensor.

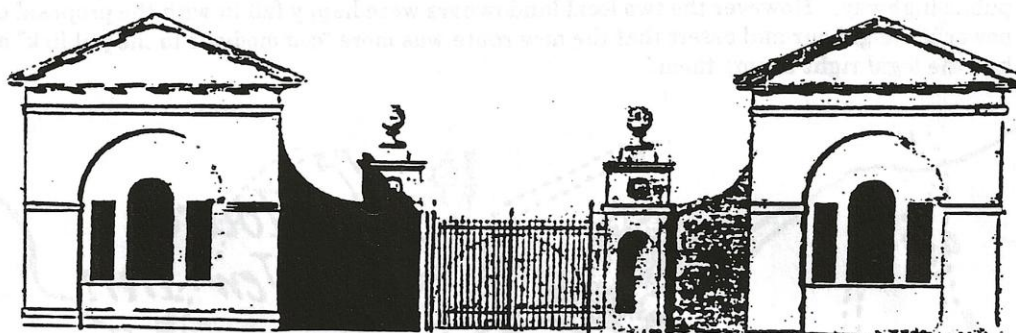
The dotted lines have been added to the map. The dash lines represent the old footpaths; the dot and dash lines their replacements. There is clearly no comparison between the old footpath which went through Trentham park and its replacement which for half of its length ran along side the the main public highway. However the two local landowners were happy fall in with the proposal of their powerful neighbour and assert that the new route was more "commodious to the publick" and no one had the legal right to stop them.



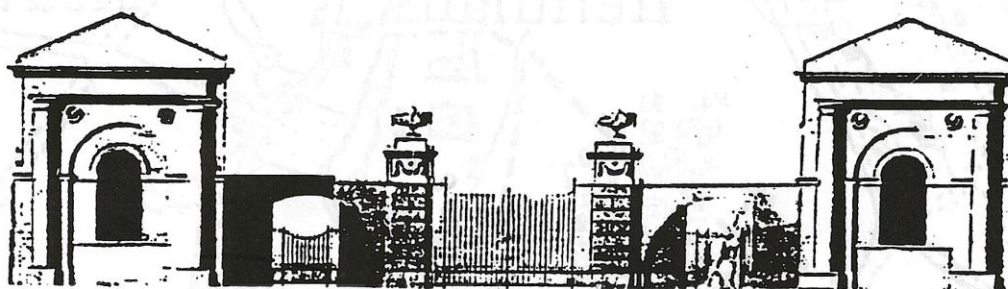
14.

It was one thing to legally close and divert footpaths. It was quite a different matter to get the public to accept that decision. The footpath through Trentham park and wood had been in use for hundreds of years. Its replacement was no substitute so it is quite probable that the public continued to use the old right of way. The only effective way of preventing them from doing so was to construct a pair of lodges to guard the southern entrance to the park from Tittensor Common. There has been some discussion about the choice of architect, Joseph Pickford from Derby, who designed Sandon Hall, Staffordshire, for Lord Archibald Hamilton in about 1770. John Cornforth believes that he probably got the commission through Josiah Wedgwood for whom he had designed both the factory at Etruria and Etruria Hall between 1767 and 1773.

Staffordshire Record Office has two versions of the plans and elevations for the entrance lodges. The elevations are illustrated below. The plans are not dated but they must have been produced late in 1774 or early in 1775 after the process of diverting the footpaths had been completed.



VARIANT PROPOSALS FOR TRENTHAM LODGES, BY JOSEPH PICKFORD

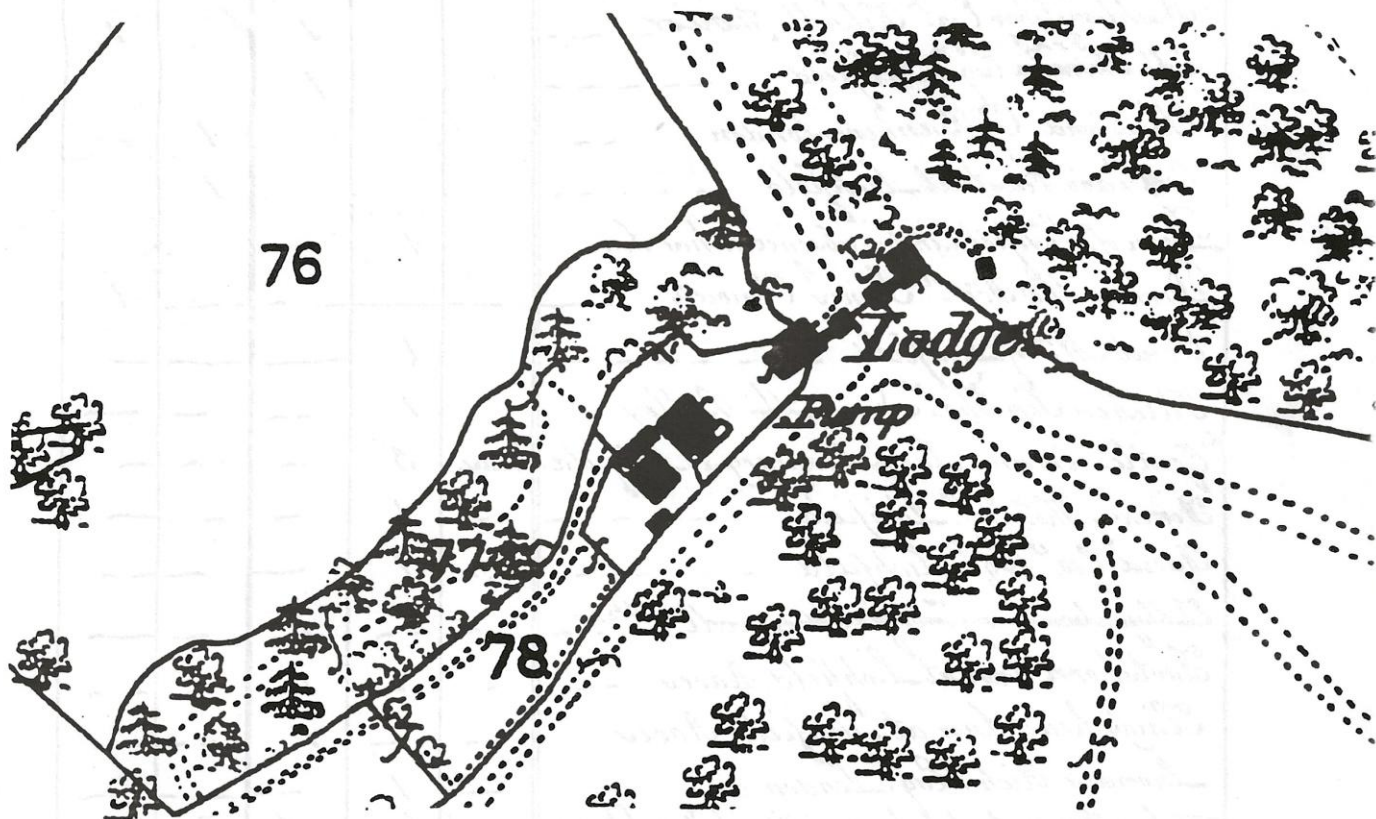


There are detailed accounts for the building of the lodges in the Trentham estate books in Staffordshire Record Office. They show that the new lodges were very much the product of the canal age. In May 1775 it was agreed that the stone for the lodges should be supplied by a quarry at Sandon. Hugh Henshall & Co. were paid for the carriage of stone by boat up the Trent and Mersey Canal to Barlaston Bridge where a crane was set up to unload the stone. The accounts include the payment of 17s of "Expenses in Ale &c when taking down, repairing and setting up the Crane at Barlaston Bridge for unloading the Boats with stone several times". There are various payments in the accounts for carting the stone from Barlaston through Tittensor to the building site. Roof slate came from Cumberland via Stockton quay; a load of Walsall lime came from Stafford. Robert Newman was responsible for building the lodges and he received his last payment on the 20th of September 1777 by which time the work at the site had been completed. He was paid £336 2s 6d out of the total expenditure of £740 14s 10d. This included a payment of two guineas on the 18th of January 1777 to Mr Richard Evans "smoke Doctr for curing the chimneys at the new lodges for smoking". The lodges were very ornamental but must have been very uncomfortable to live in because originally each lodge had only one room upstairs and downstairs. They were occupied by James Penson, the park keeper, who must have found them very cramped since he already had eight children by September 1776.

The extract from the ordnance survey map (enlarged) shows the site of Pickford's lodges in 1877. By then the left hand lodge had been extended by the addition of a kitchen and larder on the ground floor and a second bedroom on the first floor from plans produced by Thomas Robert the estate surveyor in the second half of the 19th century. The buildings standing south-west of the lodges were the hay barn, stable, cow house, dog kennel and pig sty constructed in 1775. James Penson was also renting fourteen and a half acres of land in the vicinity of the lodges from the Trentham Hall estate.

Building the lodges did not of itself keep people out. But it made it much easier to apprend people who came into the park from the south to poach game or to fish in the lake. It cannot be an accident that from 1775 onwards there are regular entries in the estate accounts relating to action taken against poachers. The first entry appeared on the 5th of January in 1775 when Stokes, the gamekeeper, was paid his expenses for "attending divers Informations and prosecutions of poachers". Payments were regularly made to estate labourers to sit up and watch out for poachers as on the 2nd of October 1781 when "Cotton, Machin & Co" were paid a guinea for watching poachers all night. Similarly on 30th September 1782 Powner and Woolley were paid 5s for staying up to watch the fishponds. When poachers were caught they were locked up at the Trentham Inn until they were taken before the magistrates. For example Ralph Wotton, the landlord, was paid £2 8s 6d on the 5th February 1776 for "provision and lodging John Middleton when taken for poaching and his attendance several days".

One target of the poachers was the deer herd. As the size of the park increased in the 18th century so did the size of the deer herd. The estate accounts regularly record expenditure on the construction and repair of the deer barns and shelters. Payments were also made for the annual cull. In 1770 for example the agent paid Thomas Walklate for assisting James Penson in killing deer for ten days at 10d per day. Venison was supplied to a growing list of recipients. By the end of the century it included prominent local landowners, senior clergymen, the family's bankers in London, and venison supplied for various civic events and social occasions in Staffordshire. The list for 1803 from the estate accounts in Staffordshire Record Office is reproduced on the next two pages.



Trentham hall
Venison given in the Season 1803.

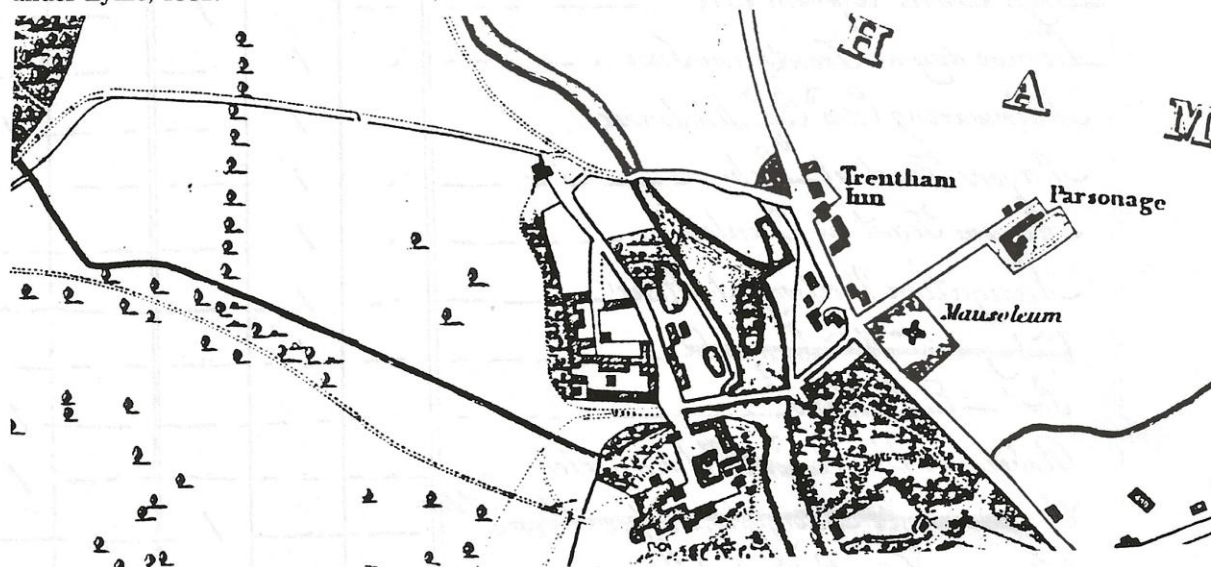
	Buck Venison			Doe Venison	
	Whole	Half	Haunch	Whole	Half
The Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry	1				
The Judges at Stafford Assizes	1				
Newcastle Races	1	1			
The Mayors Feast at Newcastle	1				
Sneyd Colonel	1			1	
Anson Tho. Esq.		1			
Wrottesley Sir John		1		1	
Heathcote Sir John		1			1
Farrowby Lord				1	
Will the Rev. Son of Farley		1			
Bartholomew the Rev. Lichfield (dead)		1			
Dashlow John Esq. Kilwall. Junior			1		1
Cobb Thomas Esq. Lichfield			1		
Child and C. Bankers London				1	
Cecilian Feast at Lichfield				1	
Dean of Lichfield, in his absence to his son		1			
Dormer the Hon. Mr. James Almonck					1
Oral Mr. of Lichfield		1			
Fletcher Sir Tho. Fincham Betley		1			
Gentlemen and Lady's Ordinary at Lichfield Races		3			
Finchley Tho. Esq. Lichfield		1			
Hand Geo. Esq. Lichfield		1			
Adams the Hon. Esq. Tollerhall St.			1		
Hartshorn Inn at Lichfield Races			1		
Kings-head Inn at Lichfield Races			1		
Lowndes Rich. Esq. London		1			
Lord Farrowby has had one Buck & one Doe annually for several years					
but in the last ^{Buck} Season he was not at London					

VENISON GIVEN IN THE SEASON 1803 CONTINUED:

Brought forward.	Duck Venison			Goat Venison	
	Whole	Half	Trunch	Whole	Half
Lloyd Esq. Esq. Gayton hall		1			
Leigh Esq. Esq. Cheadle			1		
License day at Trentham Inn		1			
Mainwaring Esq. Esq. Whitmore		1			1
Mayors Feast at Leek		1			
Mayors Feast at Hanley		1			
Navigation Meeting at Stone		1			
Coke Esq. Esq. Lichfield		1			
Port - Esq. Esq. Slaw					1
Robinson the Acc. Mr. Swinnerlon					1
Robinson the Navigation Office Stone			1		
Sparrow Solin Esq. Esq. Bishlon		1			
Swinnerlon Tho. Esq. Esq. Bullorton		1			
Sneya Esq. Esq. Lichfield			1		
Woodhouse the Rec. Arch Deacon		1			1
The old Crown at Lichfield Races wide					
Total	5	25	0	5	7
Down by S	1			1	

One of the functions for which venison was provided was the "Mayors Feast at Hanley". In 1783 a number of prominent inhabitants in Hanley began the custom of appointing a mock mayor and corporation annually. A similar mock corporation had been held at Cheadle, Staffordshire, between 1699 and 1729. The ceremony formed part of an annual venison feast, the Marquess of Stafford presenting half a buck and the qualification for membership of the Corporation being the ability to drink a yard glass of ale at a draught. The establishment of the mock corporation in the late 18th century symbolised the growing economic importance of the the Potteries. The Leveson-Gower family already had a very substantial commercial involvement with this new industrial conurbation and were to profit very handsomely from its development over the next one and fifty years. However the rapid increase in the number of miners, potters and labourers was also accompanied by an increase in the number of poachers who preyed on the game in Trentham park and elsewhere on the estate. The closure and diversion of the public footpaths and the building of the entrance lodges can also be seen as a response to the threat posed by the new industrial population on the doorstep of the Trentham Hall Estate.

The flourish of building activity at Trentham in the 1770s involved the construction of two other buildings: an ornamental pair of cottages and a new inn. The cottages are still standing at the entrance to Park Drive at what was originally the junction with the road to Hanchurch. They are single storey, built of painted brick in the cottage ornee style. Each cottage has a raised projecting bay separated by a centre bay set back under a roof supported by plain wood columns. Unfortunately there is very little information about their construction in the estate accounts. The earliest plans available date from 1840 when the cottages were converted into a girls' school by Charles Barry. Their location suggests that apart from providing accommodation for estate employees they might have been built to perform a similar function to the entrance lodges constructed at the opposite end of Trentham park: to monitor the movement of people as they entered the estate from the public highway. The cottages can be found in the centre top of the extract from Thomas Hargreaves' Map of the Potteries and Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1832.



Much more important was the construction of the new Trentham Inn between 1777 and 1779. Entries for a public house at Trentham can be found in the rental accounts from the mid 17th century onwards. Various payments for repairs indicate that the public house in the 18th century was built partly of stone and timber and that some its associated buildings were still covered in thatch. The decision to rebuild the inn appears to have been taken in 1776 when the bricklayer who built the inn at Etruria for Josiah Wedgwood was paid 7s 6d for his plans. In the event new plans were produced by Thomas Tittensor. His plan of the front elevation of the new inn is in Staffordshire Record Office and a sketch of the plan (by P Anderton) is reproduced below.



The inn was a three storey building of five bays with a central doorway topped by a pediment. There was a courtyard on each side of the inn with an entrance from the turnpike road. Each courtyard contained a single storey building which housed the stables, coach houses, cowhouses, cart sheds and barns attached to the inn. The result was a simple, but elegant, symmetrical composition with the central block balanced by the two out buildings. Construction began in April 1777 and had been completed by May 1779. Some of the masonry work at the inn which included building the steps, coping, chimney pieces and hearths was done by George Wilkinson a mason/architect from Newcastle-under-Lyme. Thomas Tittensor received £467 14s 2d out of the total cost of £775 16s 2d.

Trentham Inn played an important role in the life of the estate and local community. It was the place where the estate rents were paid and collected; where the Trentham manor court was held; and where local organisations and societies held their meetings. One such society was the Trentham Association for the Prosecution of Felons formed in 1796. However the decision to rebuild the public house had much more to do with the role which the inn played in the wider society of north Staffordshire and elsewhere. In the last quarter of the 18th century the turnpike trust responsible for the repair and maintenance of the Stone Road held its meetings at the inn. After the construction of the new public house the licensing sessions for Pirehill North were moved to the Trentham Inn.

Equally important was the trade generated by visitors to the house and park. The Levson-Gower family went to a great deal of trouble to restrict public rights of access to the park. However having spent a large sum of money rebuilding the house, enlarging and relandscaping the park they were quite happy to allow the public to view the results of their endeavours. The general public were still allowed to visit the park but the estate could now divide the park and wood into two areas: the "open park and wood" through which the remaining public footpath ran and the "closed park and wood" which visitors were not normally permitted to enter. The two areas were separated by a park pale. Other members of the aristocracy and gentry were also allowed to visit Trentham Hall and gardens. The new Trentham Inn was essentially built to provide accommodation for this class of visitor. Under the capable management of Thomas Goodwin who was the landlord between 1780 and 1821 the public house attracted an appreciative clientele. One of its regular visitors was the Rev William Fernyhough, curate at St Peter's church, Stoke. He wrote the following poem describing the delights of the inn which appeared in his book "Poems on several occasions" published in 1814.

LINES

ON

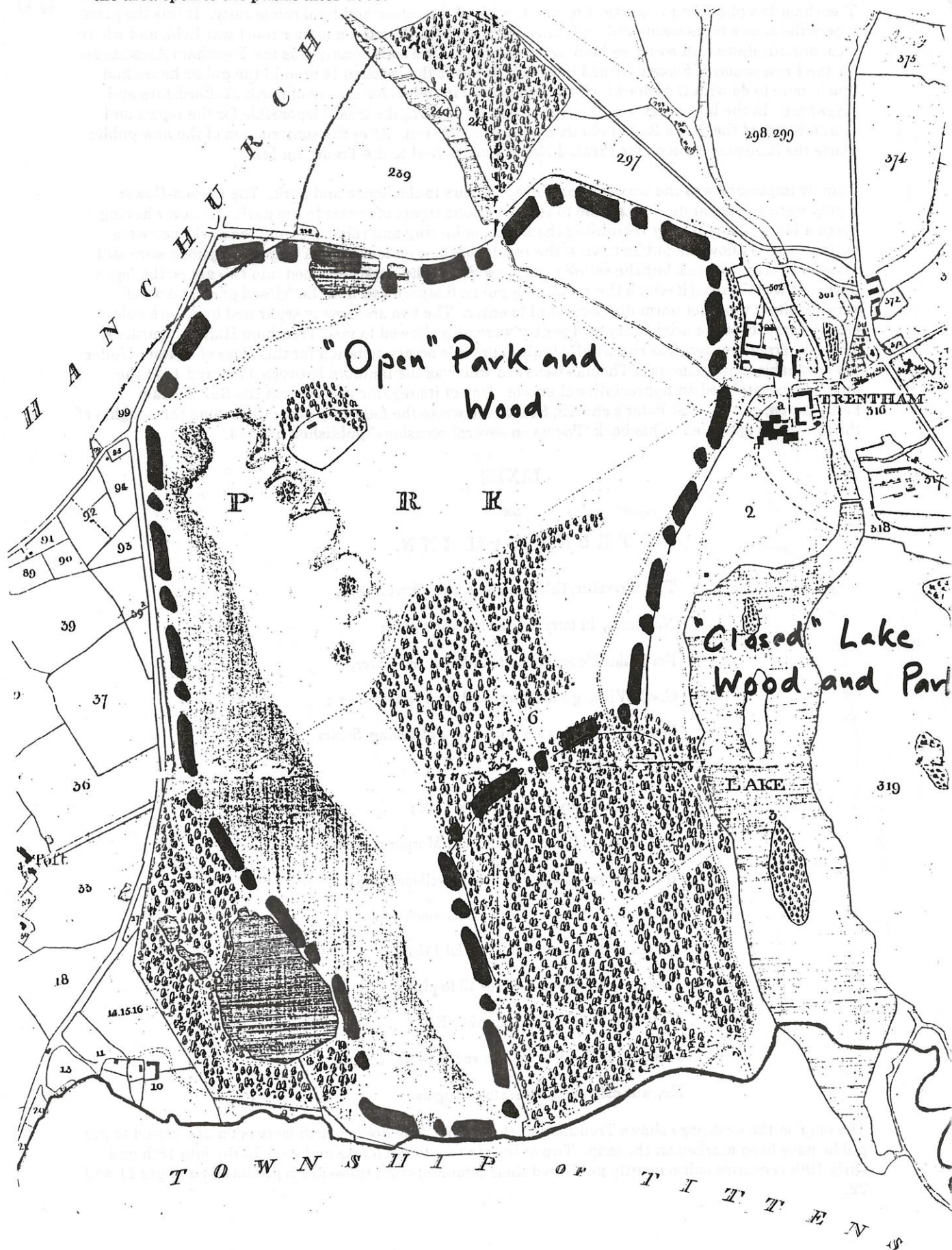
TRENTHAM INN.

THE Traveller, tir'd, can here with pleasure stay,
Nor think, in tarrying, he has lost a Day;
For in this House he meets with choicest Cheer,
Good Wine, good Porter, and most famous Beer :
Whilst TRENTHAM's grand and charming Scenes
supply
A Feast delicious to the Stranger's eye;
And when his Power o'er mortals, Morpheus sheds,
Here are clean Chambers, and as well-air'd beds.
The Landlord, too, truth bids us much commend,
In him we find the pleasant, social Friend:
Gen'rous, obliging, studious all to please,
He fills his Station with becoming Ease;
In short, at TRENTHAM INN such Comforts reign,
He, who calls once, is sure to call again.

The map on the next page shows Trentham park in 1830. The areas which were open and closed to the public have been marked on the map. Two of the visitors to the house and park in the late 18th and early 19th centuries subsequently published their comments and these are reproduced on pages 21 and 22.

20.

Map of Trentham Hall and Park. (Staffordshire Record Office, D593/H/3/352) The dotted line shows the area open to the public after 1775.



VISITING TRENTHAM HALL, PARK AND INN: TWO ACCOUNTS

- 1) The Torrington Diaries, A selection from the tours of the Hon. John Byng (later 5th Viscount Torrington), 1954.

Extract from: A tour to the north: 29th June 1792:

After an hours inspection, hunger hasten'd me away; and I thought the mile to the town of Newcastle-under-Lime, grievously long; but as this was a large town, upon a very high road, I knew I should fare well.

The Roe Buck, the largest inn, is one of the most savage, dirty, ale houses I ever enter'd (*Traveller, beware The Roe Buck in Newcastle*).

The cold meat was not to be touch'd: the bread was oniony, and buttery! I could not stay, and was loth to go; despair forced me to order out my horses; (an hungry, tired man does not do this, without sad provocation): Then came some mutton chops, but not eatable.

I then walk'd away; and was soon overtaken by the horses; and too soon by the rain which hurried me along to Trentham, where into a smart looking inn I enter'd; but the house being full I was sheun into a bed room, and order'd tea: 'Up with my tent', I go no further; no one would warn me against the Newcastle Roe Buck, or tell me of this inn. After tea drinking, in this good bed room, (I should not dislike, in winter, the french custom of supping in a bed room, and slipping, full, and warm, into bed, without changing ground.) I walk'd into Trentham Park. Trentham House has been wonderfully alter'd, from the grand, to the modern. In the park, my old friend Launcelot Brown is to be traced at every turn: he, certainly, was a grand planner, and leveller of ground—and a judicious former of water; (the lake, here, is very fine, but above the house,) but he was too severe upon avenues—now, narrow avenues are charming, shady walks; and if wide, grand things.

But the glory of Trentham is the fronting wood, of age, and magnificence: such a bosom is not to be met with! 'For which your sister Gertrude was so famous'. Thro' this wood, did Jacques, (for I have heard of his character) wander in happy meditation; wanting, only, warmth, and summer thoughts: nor did I return till 9 o'clock; when, over a fire, sitting in my gt. coat, I eat the first peas I have seen this season. Oh! November, you will be quickly upon us with your threats! Why will not an end of June cheer us?

I would have enquir'd many things of my landlord, but he knew little further than his own bar; and enquiry becomes fatigue, and desperation: turn the landlords round by three questions, and they are undone!

A good inn near your park gates is an excellent plan; but the landlord should know that the stabling were good, with wide stalls; for ground is cheap enough in the country. Yet under what disadvantages; do people hazard a invitation; 'Oh, come to us'. 'You will find our rooms warm, and your bed comfortable; and the stabling at the inn is excellent'. Are you sure of that Sir?

June 29th. A dark doubtful morning, much rain had fallen in the night; and the roads are as dirty as at Xmas. This inn is well placed, in good country, and with a good kitchen garden; but, as usual, there are no feathers in the bolster and pillow. (In gentlemanly houses it is often (not better) and down falls your head, till it reaches the wood, the cord, or the ticking! After breakfast, and a complete suit of clean linnen; I walk'd to Trentham Hall; horses to follow; the church and church yard are attach'd to the house; surely when L^d Gower* took down the steeple, he might have removed the church!

A grand housekeeper transferr'd me, for my survey, to a servant maid, (the old front was magnificent; but the present ones are quite ugly, and mean) the inside contains no vestige of antiquity, or of old furniture; and what is very extraordinary, there is not one old family portrait in the house!

'Were there never any, Betty?' 'I believe there might be when the house was alter'd; but they were old shabby things, and were thrown aside'.

There are several portraits of the present Marquis; and one of L^d G. in an old English habit with dress'd and powder'd hair!

The apartments are well sized, and well door'd; but the dining room is neither chair'd, nor carpeted, and the drawing room is too french, and fine for me; the library is dark! This is to make people attend to their studies: (When I build a library in the country it shall open into a flower garden, so that it will be perfumed by the flowers in the summer; and in winter, the surrounding ever-greens will afford a warm, and studious walk. How like you that? Another taste I have, out of taste, of chusing a fountain in the midst of my flower garden, and orange trees—How like you that?)

I would not view the bed rooms; and the kitchen, the maid said was a bad one! That's odd *methinks I*, for I *thoughts as how* that his Ldship understood the *right thing*.

I now mounted, and cross'd the park into the wood; which is ill managed being too thick of trees, and the drives are not verged by pleasant shrubs: however this is a noble building. Passing the lodges, I proceeded into the village of Tittensor, and the high-road, when the rain came on, and forced us into (another) saw pit shed for shelter. Hard this upon the poor tourist? and grievous for the country that wants sun.

- 2) Extract from: A Tour through the northern counties of England and the borders of Scotland by Rev Richard Warner, 1802.

Newcastle, a large town, built upon the declivity of an abrupt hill, holds out no inducement for a lengthened visit; dirty and disagreeable, from the numerous works around it, possessing all the inconvenience of a manufacturing place without its animation. The only branch of business kept up with any spirit is the making of hats. Beautiful after this place was the contrast of Trentham-Hall, the seat of the Marquis of Stafford, where a good inn, a heaven in comparison with the Spanish Venta at Newcastle, conveniently placed near the entrance into the park, received our vehicle, and prepared dinner, whilst we visited the mansion. Situated upon a lawn that slopes down towards the Trent, whose velvet banks are gracefully adorned with trees and shrubs, and edged with a walk that follows the meader of the river, the house commands a view extremely grand and the more interesting to its inhabitants, as the chief features are confined within the limits of the park, superb woods clothing the sides and summits of its swelling hills. The approach to it from the turnpike-road is over the river Trent, by a bridge thrown across it, from which are caught pleasing views of its slowly-stealing wave flowing under an iron bridge to the left, and another stone one to the right. Two grand modern fronts give the mansion a noble air.

The drawing-room is an elegant apartment, with a view of a large piece of water, backed and accompanied to the right by surprisingly fine wooded hills. It contains a portrait of the present Marquis of Stafford, as large as life, by Romney; and a female, a fancy-piece, by Angelica Kauffman.

In the dining-room are, a whole length of Lord Thurlow in his chancellor's robes, very fine - A large family piece; Lady Anne Vernon playing on a tambourine, and four children dancing - the Marchioness of Worcester, Lady Georgina Elliott, Lady Susan Ryder, and Lord Granville by Angelica Kauffman; great expression in the faces, and spirit in the action of the figures.

The library is a neat room, judiciously lighted from above, and well filled with books.

The small dining-room affords an interesting specimen of the elegant accomplishments and industry of this noble family, being fitted up with drawings by different branches of it.

In the dressing-room, over the chimney, is an half-length of the Marquis of Stafford - The late Lord Gore - The late Lady Derby - Lady Carlisle - The Inside of a Church at night, partially illuminated; inscribed "Henricus Van Steinwick 1591, fecit 1624" - Two landscapes, with good masses of trees, in the style of Salvator Rosa, very fine, - Conjugal Love; a girl with two doves, from which an elegant print has been engraved. Its companion, on the other side, is a female figure whose countenance characterizes that remorse which vice produces, and probably represents Conjugal Infidelity.

In the green damask room is an ancient half-length on board, a Man's Head, in a black dress, cap, and ruff, with this inscription: "An. 1588, Aetatis 64; virtute non vi". - The present Marquis's father, half-length - Lady Jane Lewisham Gore, half-length. - A small whole length good portrait of Admiral Keith Stewart. - Small ancient half-length of a boy, A.D. 1576, Aet. 16. - Sir William Lewisham Gore, half-length - The Earl of Gainsborough, ditto, when young, with a parrot.

In the tapestry-room, are the second Duke of Portland, three quarters - A Judge, half-length, with this motto: "Duce Virtute; comite Industria; sorte contentus." - The first Duke of Rutland, half-length, very fine; and the late Lord Dandwich, in a Turkish dress; one of the constant guests at Trentham-Hall, where hilarity and good living gathered together a constant knot of bon vivants, amongst whom the late Dukes of Bedford and Cumberland were frequently seen.

The turnpike to Drayton passing through the park admitted us to a nearer view of the noble woods seen before from the house, as well as the several more distant objects caught from this eminence, as we followed its sandy course.