

room at no. 14 was built in 1837 by the Craces, the famous decorating firm who had moved there in 1827, soon after this acquiring no. 13 as well. The Wigmore Hall was built here in 1900. It is somehow easier to picture gardens behind these houses than in Oxford Street.

As stated earlier, paintings and even drawings of town gardens are rare but two drawings do survive of the garden of the former no. 14 Wigmore Street, again by Jean-Claude Nattes. They date from 1810 when Admiral Nugent was living there. One of the drawings looks away from the house towards the mews house behind it, and the other looks back at the house from the garden.⁷ (figs. 5 & 6) Both drawings show the considerable effect that could be achieved within the relatively limited space of a town garden, trees as well as shrubs and plants flourishing successfully here.

In 1889 the Portland Estate passed to the Howard de Walden family. Today the Howard de Walden Estate still extends from Marylebone High Street east to Hallam Street, although it includes only part of the areas beyond Hallam Street and south of Wigmore Street and Mortimer Street that were once part of this estate. However, the series of block plans, ground plans and terms of contract cover the entire area of the original estate. One effect of the chronological arrangement of the ground plans and terms of contract series should perhaps be mentioned: since most of Harley Street, for example, was only developed after 1760, its original 99-year leases did not need to be renewed until the second half of the nineteenth century. As a result there are only a handful of ground plans for Harley Street dating from before 1850 – some of the earliest, as it happens, showing the artist J M W Turner building a large private gallery onto his house in Queen Anne Street and thereby removing most of the garden of no. 35 Harley Street, the house next to his.

Despite this limitation, the earlier volumes of plans uncover sizeable town gardens in all sorts of unexpected places, such as John Princes Street, Great Titchfield Street and Margaret Street. A partial index to these records already exists and a more comprehensive one is being compiled at the moment.

Here and there traces of these town gar-

dens remain. Hidden between Wimpole Street and Wigmore Place is a small group of gardens, almost but not quite engulfed by the buildings that surround them and supporting two magnificent plane trees. These are practically lone survivors now, though another fine specimen – which is said to have been part of Marylebone Gardens – is still flourishing between Upper Wimpole Street and Devonshire Mews South. No. 13 Devonshire Place is a remarkable example of a town garden which has been little altered since 1790 when the house was built.⁸ (figs. 7 & 8) Unusually, this house is still in private hands, which is probably the reason why the garden has survived so well. The general effect is extraordinarily similar to the Jean-Claude Nattes drawing of no. 14 Wigmore Street reproduced above. The mews house of no. 13 Devonshire Place was rebuilt in 1904 and the central part of the garden may have been paved over then – originally it would have been lawn or gravel, but the brick surround with its decorative plants can hardly have changed at all.

It is a tragedy that planning regulations arrived too late to protect so many of these town gardens; without them, an integral part of the original Georgian design is missing. This is particularly noticeable in the more residential streets, and it is to be welcomed that trees are now beginning to be planted on some of these streets, to some extent compensating for this loss and restoring some of London's missing greenery.

THE BROAD WALK, ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW By Hazel Conway

In recent years, the Broad Walk has been a rather unsatisfactory feature of Kew's landscape. As its name implies, it is wide, but it was designed to be flanked by mature trees which constrained the width and gave definition to the Walk. As a result of pollution, disease, and particularly the Great Storm of 1987 few mature trees remained. So the Broad Walk has seemed wider than ever, with the space leaking out on either side into the adjacent landscape. Now the first steps have been taken to redress this situation and restore the

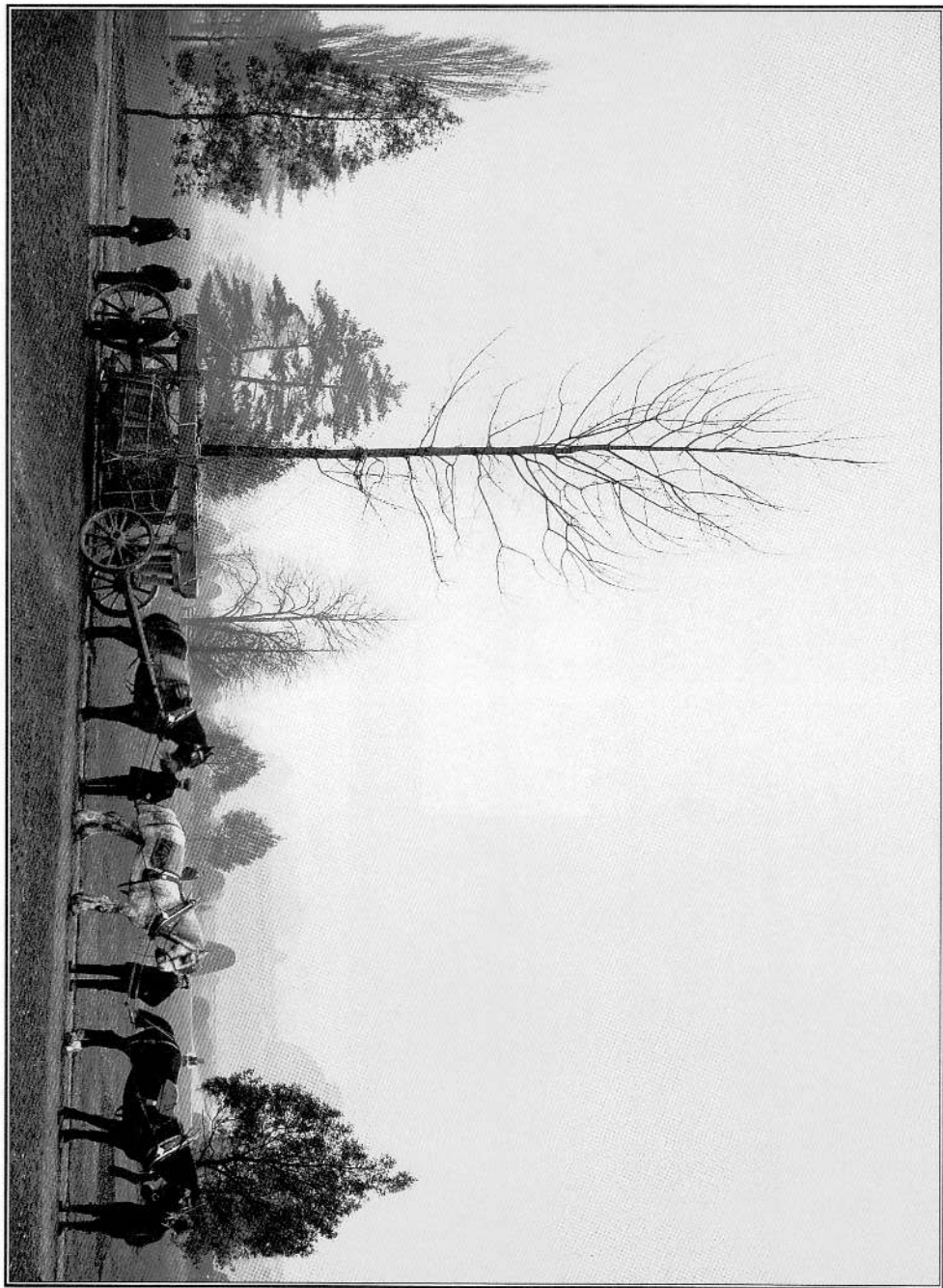
7. Both drawings are from a Jean-Claude Nattes sketchbook dated 29 May – 14 July 1810 in the British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings, press mark 198* A.4.

8. Particular thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Brace, the present owners, for kindly allowing access to this garden.



7. The garden of no. 13 Devonshire Place, W1, February 2001
(PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD BOWDEN)

8. The garden of no. 13 Devonshire Place, W1, February 2001
(PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD BOWDEN)



9. Barron's tree planter in use at Kew (c.1908)
(COURTESY ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW)

planting to the design by William Andrews Nesfield.

In Decimus Burton's original plan, the Broad Walk, then known as the *Victoria Walk*, was the grand processional route from the Main Gate on Kew Green, via a right angle turn, south to the pond. In the first plans its south end was to be terminated by the Palm House, positioned on the north side of the pond. Subsequently, the Palm House was located on the west side of the pond, so the Campanile on the opposite side of the pond in effect terminated the vista from the south end of the Broad Walk.

In 1844 William Andrews Nesfield was commissioned as landscape gardener to design the new Arboretum which had been acquired by Kew in 1843, the planting alongside the Broad Walk, and the setting for the Palm House. Nesfield was born in Co. Durham in 1794 and was successful in three careers. First as a soldier in the Peninsular War and in Canada; then as an artist - he was taught by Thomas Paul Sandby and his friends included Edwin Landseer; in the 1830s he embarked on his third career as a landscape architect working with his brother-in-law, the architect Anthony Salvin. It was Salvin who suggested that Nesfield design formal gardens to accompany the Gothic revival houses that he was building or recasting. Nesfield's reputation grew quickly, reaching the pages of Loudon's *The Gardener's Magazine* in 1836, and expanding thereafter until his death in 1881. For over three decades he was the most sought-after landscape architect in the country, yet today few of his designs survive and few people have heard of him. Among the most important of his surviving designs are the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and Witley Court in Gloucestershire.¹

A sketch map of 1845 shows the planting of the Broad Walk suggested by Nesfield.² Eight pairs of cedars flank the length of the Walk with kidney-shaped beds between each tree on either side. In front of each of these kidney-shaped beds were small flower-beds in groups of four.³ The cedars chosen by Nesfield were seed-raised deodars (*Cedrus deodara*).

However, in the polluted atmosphere of the latter half of the nineteenth century, they did not thrive. In 1913 they were replaced by seed-raised Atlas cedars (*Cedrus atlantica*) which in turn suffered from pollution and today only three cedars survive. In the 1930s, tulip trees (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) were planted to replace the missing cedars. These suffered in the storm of 1987 and until recently only two pairs survived at the north and south ends of the Broad Walk. Without the mature trees that offered shade, the rhododendrons in the kidney-shaped beds have suffered.⁴

Such was the state of the Broad Walk when the decision was taken in 2000 by the new Director of Kew, Professor Peter Crane, to replant it using funding from donors and from the Friends of Kew. In September, staff from the Arboretum visited nurseries in Italy to see specimens of Atlas cedar. These were chosen rather than deodars as they do better in the hot dry summers which have been the pattern in recent years in London. It was decided to plant the green variety not the blue (*C. atlantica* 'Glaucua') as they would be nearer in colour to the cedars originally planted by Nesfield. Eight matched pairs were brought to Kew with their rootballs wrapped in hessian and chicken wire. The trees were nearly three metres high and each had an EC passport and number. On a sunny day at the beginning of November 2000, a crowd of people gathered at the north end of the Broad Walk for the tree planting ceremony. This was no ordinary tree planting and there was no ceremonial silver spade. Instead we were awaiting the arrival of the Barron tree planter and the team of staff from the Living Collections Department (LDC) who would be using it for some of planting. The Barron tree planter was designed by William Barron to enable the transplantation and movement of large trees, with their rootball intact, over substantial distances.⁵ The Royal Botanic Gardens acquired their tree planter from William Barron in 1866 and fig. 9 shows a view of it in use at Kew c.1908. The faint outline of the Palm House is visible in the background to the right. When the origi-

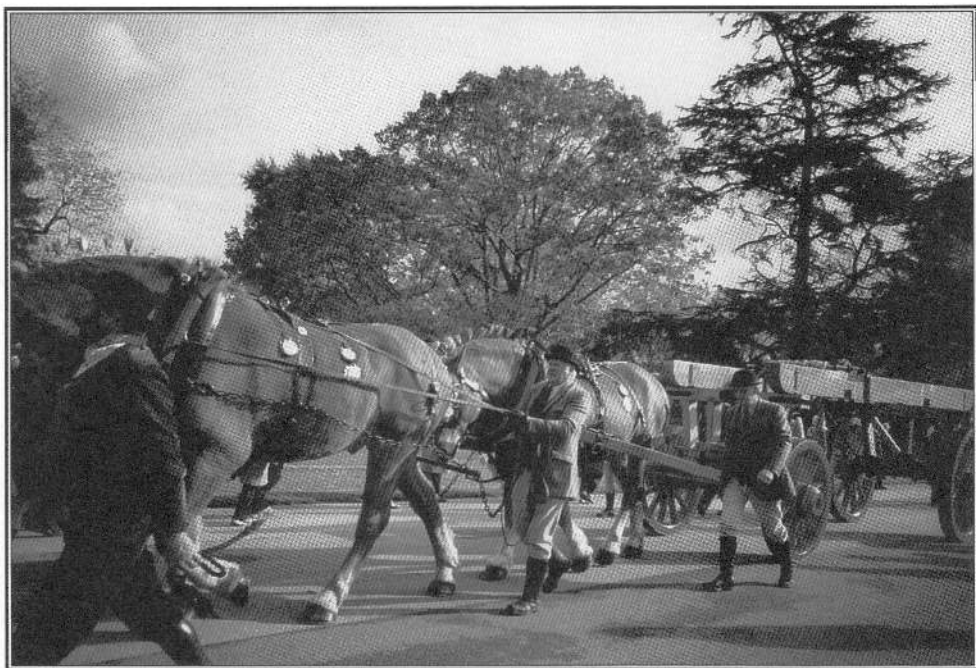
1. C. Ridgway, ed., *William Andrews Nesfield* (Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, York, 1996).

2. May 1845, Kew Library.

3. R. Desmond, *Kew, The History of the Royal Botanic Gardens* (London, 1995), pp. 176-8.

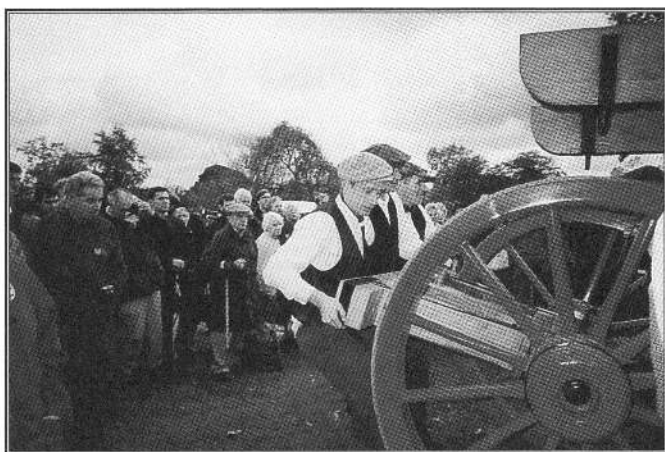
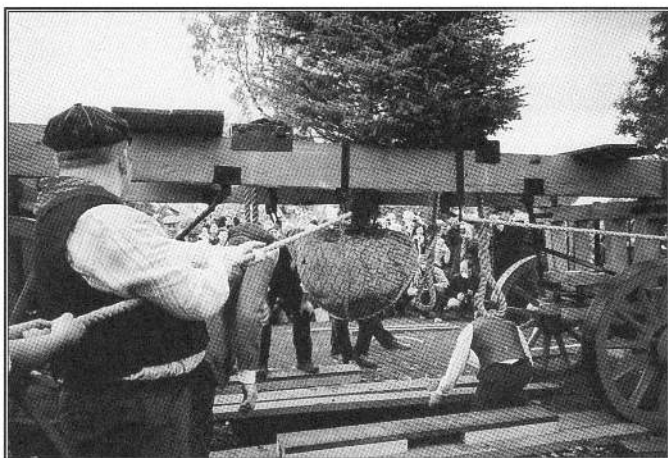
4. The final blow to the tulip trees at the north end came with another storm in November 1999, thirteen years and thirteen days after the Great Storm of 1987.

5. William Barron was Head Gardener at Elvaston Castle from 1830 to 1865 where he established himself as a landscape gardener and nurseryman. His reputation for transplanting mature trees successfully was unrivalled.



10. A deodar being transported in Barron's tree planter at Kew in November 2000
(PHOTOGRAPH: HAZEL CONWAY)

11. The deodar being transported, Kew (2000)
(PHOTOGRAPH: HAZEL CONWAY)



12. Lowering the deodar's rootball into the pit, Kew (2000)
(PHOTOGRAPH: HAZEL CONWAY)

13. Barron's tree planter in action, Kew (2000)
(PHOTOGRAPH: HAZEL CONWAY)

14. Barron's tree planter in action, Kew (2000)
(PHOTOGRAPH: HAZEL CONWAY)

nal model fell into disrepair, a new model replaced it in 1936. Subsequently this also fell into disrepair. When it was decided to restore the remains of the tree planter, it was important to examine the original drawings. These were eventually tracked down to the Suffolk Punch Society and the restored machine is reputed to be the only one now in existence.

It is not for nothing that the tree planter was known as *The Devil*, for it was not unusual for those using it to break an arm. The tree planting ceremony enabled the onlookers to understand exactly how the machine worked and how labour-intensive the whole operation was. Some historic illustrations of the tree planter in use at Kew show it being drawn by up to five horses. On this occasion it was drawn by two chestnut Suffolk Punches from Rede Hall Farm Park. (*fig. 10*) In charge of the operation was Tony Kirkham, Head of Horticultural Operations Support Section, with a team of LDC staff all dressed in period clothing. The tree, with its rootball encased, rested on planks held by ropes and supported in the centre of the rectangular frame of the transplanter. (*fig. 11*) A square pit had been prepared and the transplanter was reversed so that the tree was directly over the pit. The planks were then removed so that the rootball of the tree could be lowered gently into the pit. (*fig. 12*) The next stage was the trickiest of the manoeuvres as it involved removing the rear axle and wheels, supporting the horizontal bars on either side manually so that the horses could move the machine forward on the two front wheels, leaving the tree in the hole. (*figs. 13 & 14*) The axle and two rear wheels were next moved into position for reassembly while the horizontal beams were supported for the final positioning. Reassembled successfully, the transplanter could then be driven away. The Broad Walk illustrates some of the problems of replanting avenues. The eight pairs of new cedars have been planted on the same line as the original Nesfield planting. However, Nesfield's plans were compromised because of an existing mature Turkey oak; in today's restoration the three existing mature cedars (two deodars and one Atlas cedar) have compromised the replanting.

It is most encouraging that, with the replanting of the Broad Walk, the first steps in the restoration of Nesfield's work at Kew have

been taken; originally the Broad Walk was gravelled but it is now surfaced with tarmac and there is no sign of this being reinstated. Kew is one of the most important, if not the foremost botanic garden in the world. Furthermore it has the distinction of being a major historic landscape (Grade I on the *English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*). This landscape has alas been woefully neglected in recent years and that neglect is becoming more and more evident. A step has been taken, but the Kew landscape is far too important for restoration to be undertaken piecemeal. Many of the eighteenth-century Chambers' buildings are in a poor state of repair: the ruined arch has destructive ivy rampant which is doing untold damage, the pagoda is badly in need of painting. The contrast between the state of the pagoda and the restored Japanese gateway nearby underlines the urgency of the problem. Many of the nineteenth-century buildings are in need of attention, as is the Victorian landscaping: Nesfield's vistas need to be strengthened, particularly the pagoda vista. What is needed urgently is a historic management plan which looks at all aspects of the historic landscape and buildings at Kew and outlines a strategy for restoration. An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to fund such a study should be an urgent priority.

HERBWOMEN in LONDON 1660-1836

By C Paul Christianson

A drawing entitled 'Simplers', created in September 1821 by John Thomas Smith (1766-1833), Keeper of Prints at the British Museum, offers a startling reminder that the gathering and selling of physic, i.e. medicinal herbs - an English enterprise of antique vintage - still offered employment in London well into the nineteenth century. (*fig. 15*) Smith's picture shows three women, each dressed in rags and carrying an empty herb basket, their backs turned to the viewer. In commentary written when the drawing was first printed in *Cries of London* in 1839, note is made that the subjects were sketched from life as they trudged along the Stockwell Road south of the Thames, on their fifteen-mile return from the London herb