

NEWARK PARK GARDEN  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
By Michael Claydon

Newark Park was laid out around an older house, which was remodelled at the same time, during the 1790s. The core of the landscape dates from this time, including the lake, summerhouse, park wall, lodges and drives. Later during the tenancy of Mrs King and her daughters (after 1898) a rustic wilderness garden was created on the steep slopes below the house (evidence suggests that Gertrude Jekyll may have advised). The garden fell into complete neglect during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; Robert Parsons (NT tenant 1970-2000) and Michael Claydon rescued the garden and resurrected the house.

The landscape may be divided into three areas. The first of these comprises the lawns and formal garden east of the house and the parkland between the Lion and Reform lodges. This is relatively flat and incorporates work of all the periods of development of the garden. The second is the much more dramatic terrace along the south front of the house, with the Mrs Kings wilderness garden below it, and at the bottom of the hill, the small 18<sup>th</sup> century lake, summerhouse and forcing wall. The third area comprises the drives laid out in the 1790s from Lower Lodge to the house through the south deer park. These, although almost devoid of architectural incident, afford dramatic views of the house and surrounding landscape.

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Sir Richard Berkeley gave part of his estate, including land at Ozleworth, to the Abbey of Kingswood. The Abbey retained this property until the Dissolution, when the Crown granted Ozleworth to Sir Nicholas Poyntz. Poyntz used stone from the Abbey to build a hunting lodge C1550. The lodge was originally a rectangular; four-storey building with banqueting hall, reception rooms and bedchambers, the roof was flat and probably used for viewing and al fresco dining. The estate was subsequently sold; new owners enlarged the house with the addition of a west range and joining stairway.

In 1769 the Clutterbuck family bought the estate and during the 1790s carried out an extensive program of improvements. The house, which is substantially still a 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century building, was given a new south front by James Wyatt. Wyatt may also have been responsible for the concept of the dramatic approach drives from the bottom of the valley. A landscapist would also have been employed around this time to work on shaping the landscape. A new park wall was built in 1792 and the Reform Lodge was built 1798, stylistic similarities of this lodge to the summerhouse make it certain that both were completed around the same time. Lower Lodge and Lion Lodge may be early 19<sup>th</sup> century embellishments to the estate together with the sham castle at the western end of the garden.

From 1898 until 1949 the King family were resident tenants at Newark, Miss King was a keen plants woman and the rockwork paths, wilderness garden and cliff walk were her creation.

After the Second World War, Mrs Clutterbuck gave Newark to the National Trust and the house was let for the next twenty years as a nursing home. Lack of funds and of interest saw the house and garden fall into neglect. In 1970 the Trust sought to find a tenant with resources who would rehabilitate the house and garden. Robert Parsons came to the rescue, joined in 1984 by Michael Claydon.