English Landscape Gardens

Maiken Vardja and Joel Villem

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- The great gardens of the 17th century were ornate, extravagant, precisely laid out mathematical patterns. The foremost exponents of this "ultra-civilized" style were the Italians and the French, and the foremost gardener was Andre Le Notre, who laid out the gardens at Versailles for Louis XIV.

- In response (or reaction) to this ornate continental style, English critics, led by Richard Addison and Alexander Pope, began to agitate for a change to a more "natural" nature in gardens.

- Another of the prime movers of the landscape garden movement was Lord Burlington. He was fascinated by the classical building style of Andrea Palladio, an Italian Renaissance architect, and the 'picturesque' or romanticized landscape of Italian classical painting. These paintings were chock full of allegory and symbolic meaning in the form of classical temples and statues. He wanted to make the English landscape into one of these paintings. Under his patronage, the Palladian movement in architecture became married to the landscape gardening boom.

- Although the traces could lead us back also to 17th century, it is mainly recognized that the English Landscape Garden found its way into the masses in the 18th century.

- The most influential garden designers at that time were William Kent, Lancelot Brown and Humphrey Repton.
- Some of the best remaining landscape gardens can be seen at Castle Howard, Stowe (most famous of all Landscape Gardens), Stourhead, Painshill (near-perfect example of a garden designed and constructed purely in the landscape style).

CHARACTERISTICS
- Lines are curved and meandering – rolling hills and winding streams.
- There are a series of 'informal' vistas or views punctuated by focal points in the form of classical temples, ruins, and benches.
- The garden is opened up to the surrounding parkland, and the parkland becomes a part of the garden scheme. This is often achieved by using a 'ha-ha', or hidden ditch.
- Ha-Ha - a dry ditch with a retaining wall on the side of the garden to keep grazing animals out. From a distance a ha-ha is almost invisible, creating a vista from the house with no division between the lawn and surrounding meadows. The sheep and cattle could be kept in the meadows without having fences and walls breaking up the landscape. Founded by Charles Bridgeman.
- Lawns come right up to the house, often at the expense of any regular flower garden. Fundamental point was to eliminate distinction between the house and garden.
- Plantings of different height, shape, and colour trees and shrubs were used to construct a balanced view and lines of sight.

1. Rolling hills (Image: http://www.renatolopesblog.com)

2. Winding stream (Image: http://www.redbubble.com)

3. ha-ha (Image: http://www.studiogblog.com)

4. Accent trees and view of sight (Image: http://www.thecultureconcept.com)

William Kent (1685-1748)

- "All gardening is a landscape painting" (William Kent)
- William Kent was born in Bridlington, Yorkshire, in 1685. He trained as a sign painter, and also worked on coaches, before taking up landscape painting.
- For 10 years Kent lived and studied painting in Rome.
- Mostly he is known as an architect, landscape architect and furniture designer.
- Said to be one of the ideologists and founder of English Landscape Garden but historically he is more like user and fitter of those ideas, previously brought out in poetics, philosophies and aesthetics.
- He envisioned the landscape as a classical painting, carefully arranged to maximize the artistic effects of light, shape, and colour. His gardens were dotted with classical temples replete with philosophical associations.
- His landscape gardens were inspired by ancient Greece and Rome, as well as the paintings of Claude Lorraine, Nicolas Poussin and Salvator Rosa.
- Kent's most important gardening creations were at Stowe, Rousham, and Chiswick House

5. William Kent (Image: Gardenvisit)

6. Claude Lorrain - Landscape with Aeneas at Delos (Image: http://alloilpaint.com/lorrain/)

7. Claude Lorrain - Landscape with Shepherds the Pont Molle (Image: http://www.paintinghere.com)

8. Nicolas Poussin - Landscape with St. John on Patmos (Image: http://www.artic.edu)

9. Nicolas Poussin - Landscape with St. John on Patmos (Image: http://www.canvasreplicas.com)

Rousham Garden

10. Location map (Image: Bing maps)

- Why Rousham Garden? – because it is considered the 'most complete and typical' (C.Hussey, 1967) of William Kent's gardens and is **mostly remained the same until nowadays**.
- It is situated at Rousham in Oxfordshire, England. The house and garden has been in the ownership of one family since it was built.
- The garden design was begun by **Charles Bridgeman**, the royal gardener, in the 1720s. In 1737 William Kent was called in to finish Bridgeman's design and the result is an early example of formal garden mixed with carefully designed natural landscape style.
- "Kent retained the basic plan of the grounds that he inherited, devoting himself to new structures and imagery of striking eloquence." (J.D.Hunt)
- As William Kent was originally an artist, many authors are referring that he tryied to create his gardens from painters point of view. As so in Rousham.
- It is sayd that : "Of all Kent's attempts to create some 'history painting' in English landscapes using the resources of both classical and gothick imagery the most accomplished and pleasing is Rousham…" (J.D.Hunt)
- The main elements of Rousham Garden are: **Bowling Green; Praeneste - the terrace overlooming the river; Vale of Venus; Cold Bath; statues; temples and other smaller architectural elements.**
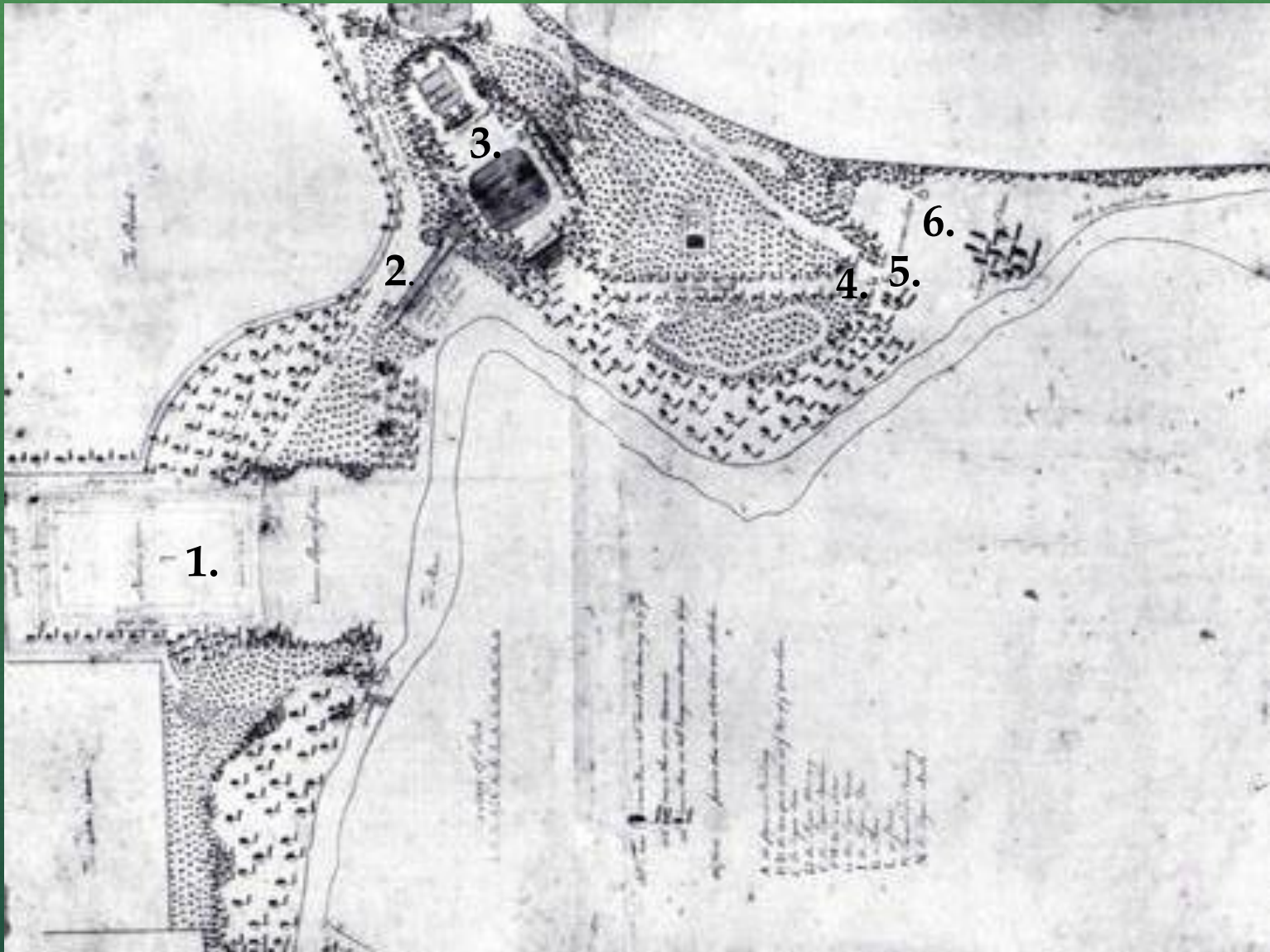
KEY   1.Bowling Green   2.Praeneste   3.Vale of Venus   4.Cold Bath   5.Statue of Apollo   6.Temple of Echo
11. Image: Turnbull, Jr. W. - *The Poetics of Gardens* (1988)

12. A winding path with a water channel leading to a pool (Images: http://www.britainexpress.com)

13. Rich colours in a small garden area beside the house (Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

14. A lovely garden pool. (Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

15. Garden path with clipped hedges (Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

16. Paths open onto glades with classical architectural elements providing a focal point
(Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

17. Rustic temple in the gardens
(Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

18. Classical statuary in the garden (Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

19. Rustic bridge at the bottom of a pool. There is a touching memorial to a family dog on the bridge (Image: http://www.britainexpress.com)

Lancelot "Capability" Brown (1716-1783)

- Was an English landscape architect
- He was William Kent's apprentice at first
- "Capability" - he always studied the estate thoroughly, finding it's potential.
- He is extraordinary because was recognized already at his lifetime.
- Brown's works were characterized by their natural, unplanned appearance.
- A garden must be laid out with the feelings of a poet and the eyes of a painter.
- English topography is often so gentle, Brown made just enough changes to bring out the real nature of a site, but left people admiring the work of nature, rather than the efforts of the designer.
- His style: smooth wavy grass, which run straight to the house; clumps, belts and scattering of trees; serpentine lakes (his trademark).
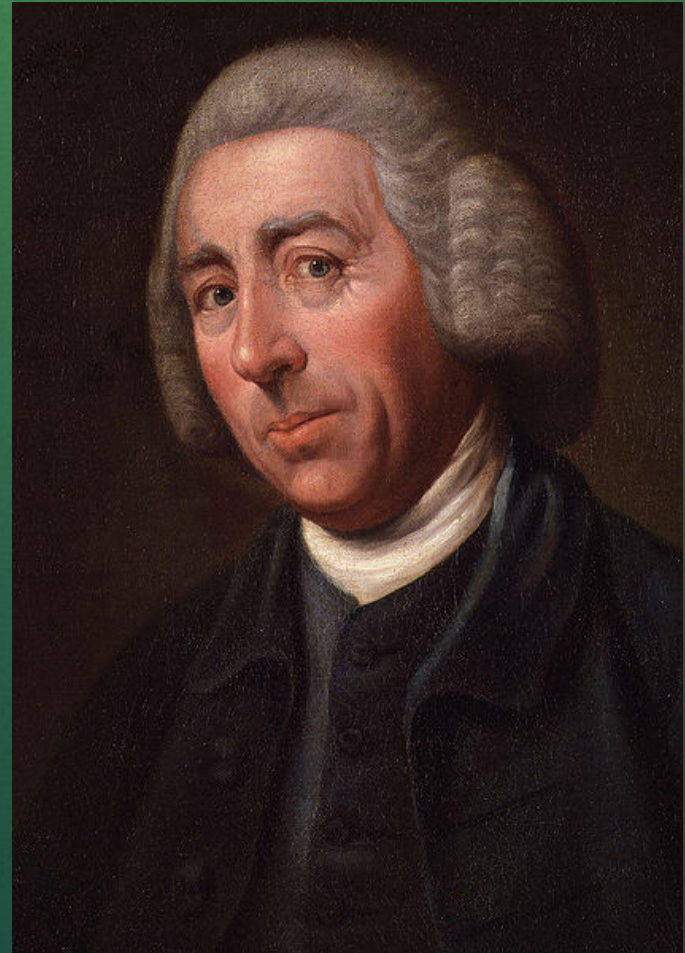
20. Lancelot Brown (Image: Wikipedia)

- Design ideas were pastoral, monotonous, even little bit dull.
- Brown planted greenery thinking about next generations (oaks, beech trees, chestnut trees).
- His main aim in projects was to repair rustic appearance of nature, to hide all imperfections and preserve all elements that made landscape seem beautiful.
- Gardens that he designed rather made people feel solidly calm then excited.
- Brown's popularity declined rapidly after his death, because his work was seen as a feeble imitation of wild nature. Also his clumsy imitators brought bad reputation to his design principles.


21. Croome Court and its surroundings (Image: Wikipedia)

22. The Doric temple in Bowood garden (Image: Wikipedia)

THE SERPENTINE STYLE

- In Continental Europe writers, including Goethe and Rousseau, admired the serpentine style.
- They saw it as the Garden of the Enlightenment. It was regarded as more 'natural' than anything which had gone before. One must look with an educated eye to appreciate the qualities of the serpentine style.
- The classic features of this style were a lawn sweeping to the house front, circular clumps, a serpentine lake, an encircling tree belt and a perimeter carriage drive.
- The name Serpentine Style is used to draw attention to the use of free-flowing curves.
- In the middle years of the eighteenth century, Lancelot Brown developed a personal style. It made less use of garden buildings and more use of serpentine lines in the layout of woods and water.
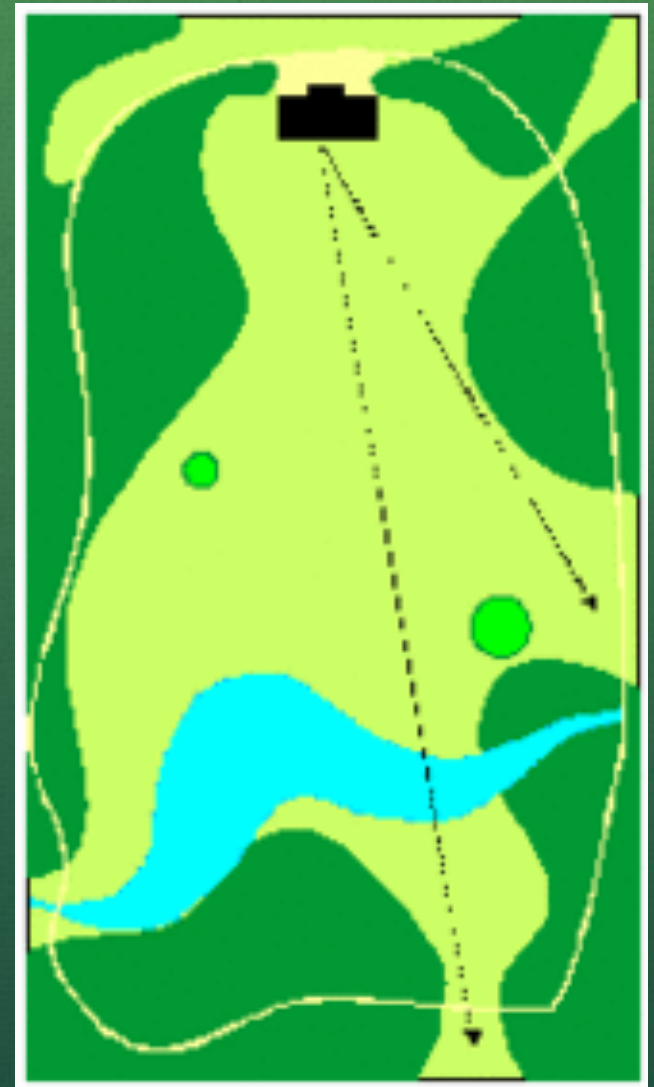

23. Serpentine style (Image: Gardenvisit)

Blenheim park, Woodstock
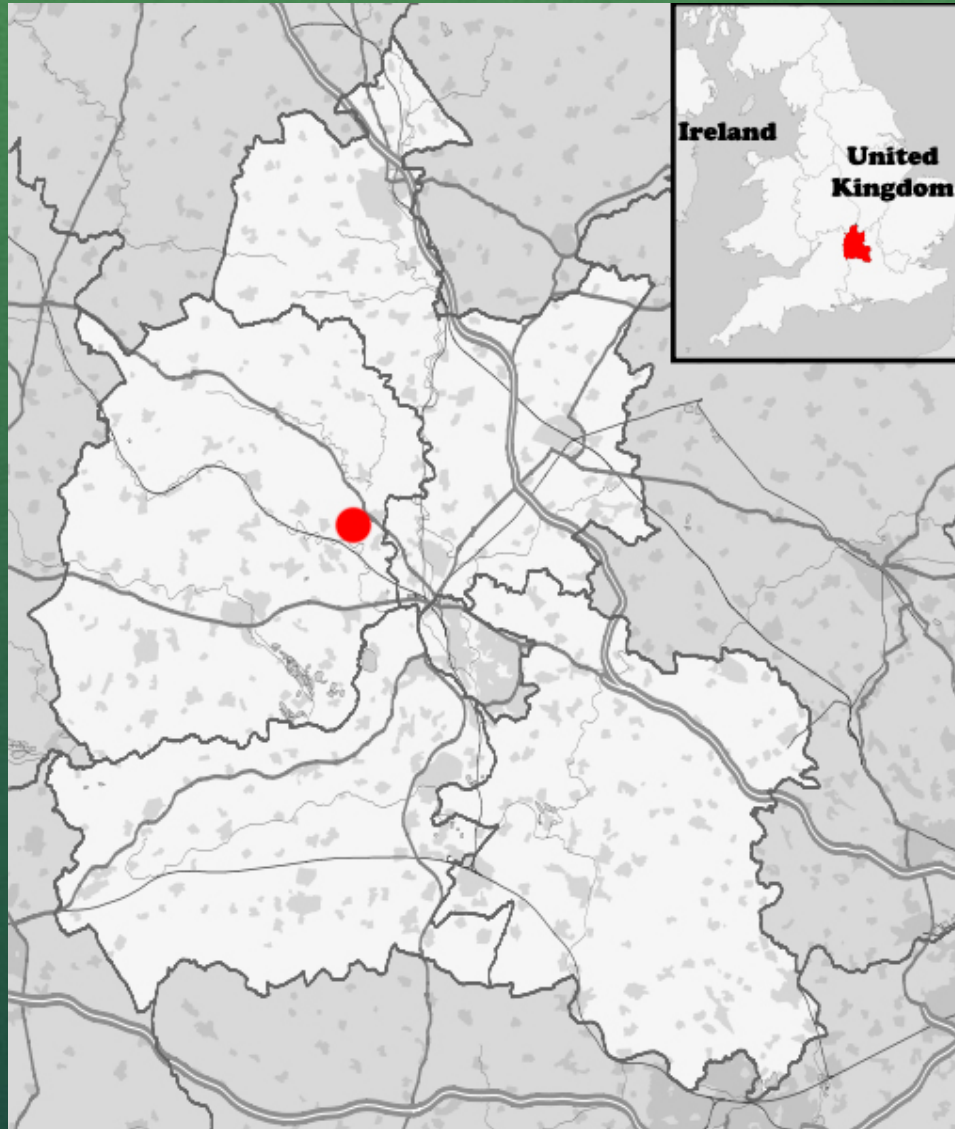
24. Location map (Image: Wikipedia)

- Blenheim Palace is a monumental country house situated in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England, residence of the dukes of Marlborough.
- The Palace was created to celebrate victory over the French during the Wars of the Spanish Succession. It was a gift to the First Duke of Marlborough. He was the military commander who skillfully led the Allied forces into battle on 13th August 1704 at Blenheim.
- It is the only non-royal non-episcopal country house in England to hold the title of palace. The palace, one of England's largest houses, was built between 1705 and 1724.
- UNESCO recognized the palace as a World Heritage Site in 1987.
- It is unique in its combined usage as a family home, mausoleum and national monument.
- The palace is also notable as the birthplace of Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill.
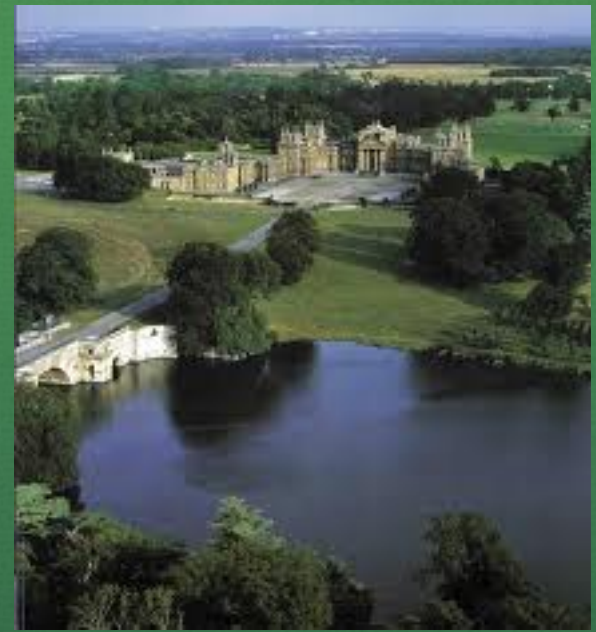
25. Aerial view of Blenheim Palace (Image: Google)

26. Blenheim Palace and park (Image: Google)

- Blenheim Palace is designed in the rare, and short-lived, English Baroque style.
- The architect selected for the ambitious project was a controversial one.
- The Duchess was known to favour Sir Christopher Wren, the Duke however, hired Sir John Vanbrugh.
- Vanbrugh, a popular dramatist, was an untrained architect, who usually worked in conjunction with the trained and practical Nicholas Hawksmoor.

27. The 1st Duke and Duchess (Image: Wikipedia)

- Blenheim, however, was not to provide Vanbrugh with the architectural plaudits he imagined it would. The fight over funding led to accusations of extravagance and impracticality of design.
- Finally, in the early days of the building the Duke was frequently away on his military campaigns, and it was left to the Duchess to negotiate with Vanbrugh.
- Following their final altercation Vanbrugh was banned from the site. The palace was completed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, his friend and architectural associate.


28. John Vanbrugh (Image: Wikipedia)

- When Vanbrugh first saw the Blenheim palace surroundings in 1704 he immediately had a grandiose plan: through the park trickled the small River Glyme, and Vanbrugh imagined instead this big brook with a bridge over it ("finest bridge in Europe").
- The marsh was channeled into three small canal-like streams and across it rose a bridge of huge proportions. While the bridge was indeed an amazing wonder, in this setting it appeared inappropriate.
- Horace Walpole saw it in 1760, shortly before Capability Brown's improvements: "the bridge, like the beggars at the old duchess's gate, begs for a drop of water and is refused."
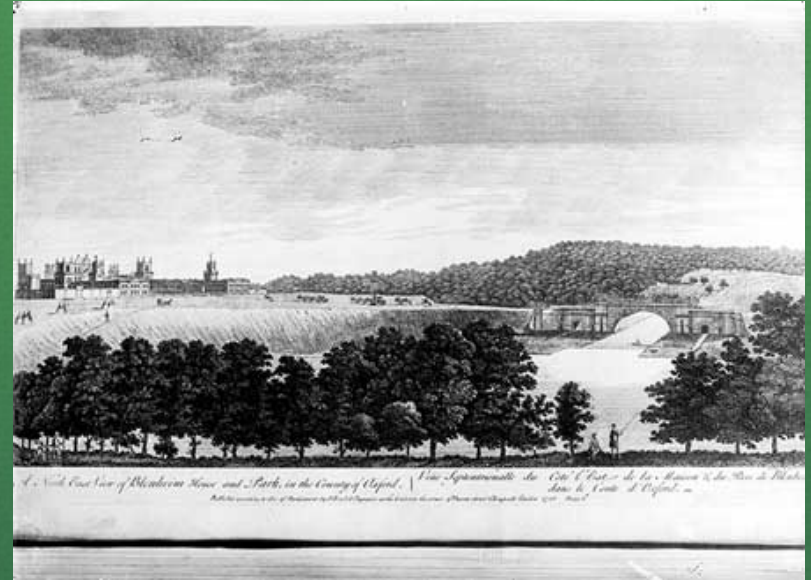
29. Blenheim, showing Vanbrugh's arrangement of the stream (Image: English Heritage)

30. Palladian style bridge designed by Vanbrugh (Image: English Heritage)

- In 1764 the 4th Duke brought Capability Brown and William Chambers to make major changes to Palace Park and Gardens.

- Brown immediately began an English landscape garden scheme to naturalize and enhance the landscape, with tree planting, and man-made undulations.

- The feature with which he is forever associated is the lake, a huge stretch of water created by damming the River Glyme and ornamented by a series of cascades where the river flows in and out.

- The lake was narrowed at the point of Vanbrugh's grand bridge, but the three small canal-like streams trickling underneath it were completely absorbed by one river-like stretch.

31. Plan of the park (Image: English Heritage)

32. Park before Brown's improvements (Image: English Heritage)

- Brown's great achievement at this point was to actually flood and submerge beneath the water level the lower stories and rooms of the bridge itself, thus reducing its incongruous height and achieving what is regarded by many as the epitome of an English landscape.
- Capability Brown changed the course of the river, dug two lakes, and created impressive waterfall.
- His love of harmony: trees are planted together in groves so that from a distance they form a block of color that is balanced by another grove nearby.
- He worked only with the elements that nature gave him.
- The site is significant because of its architectural splendour and landscape setting, as well as it links with the various Dukes of Marlborough.
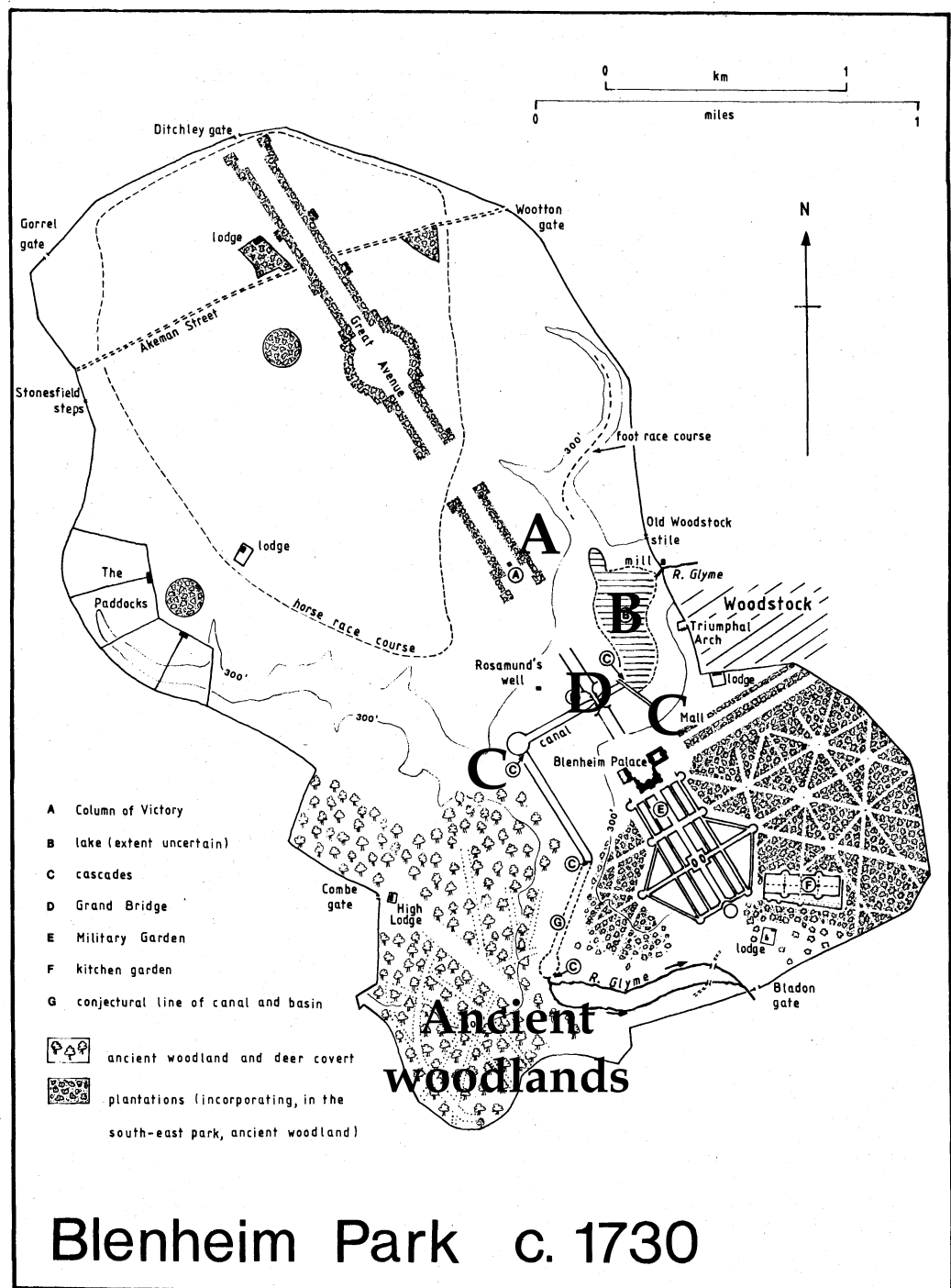

33. View of the lake Brown created by damming the river Glyme (Image: English heritage)
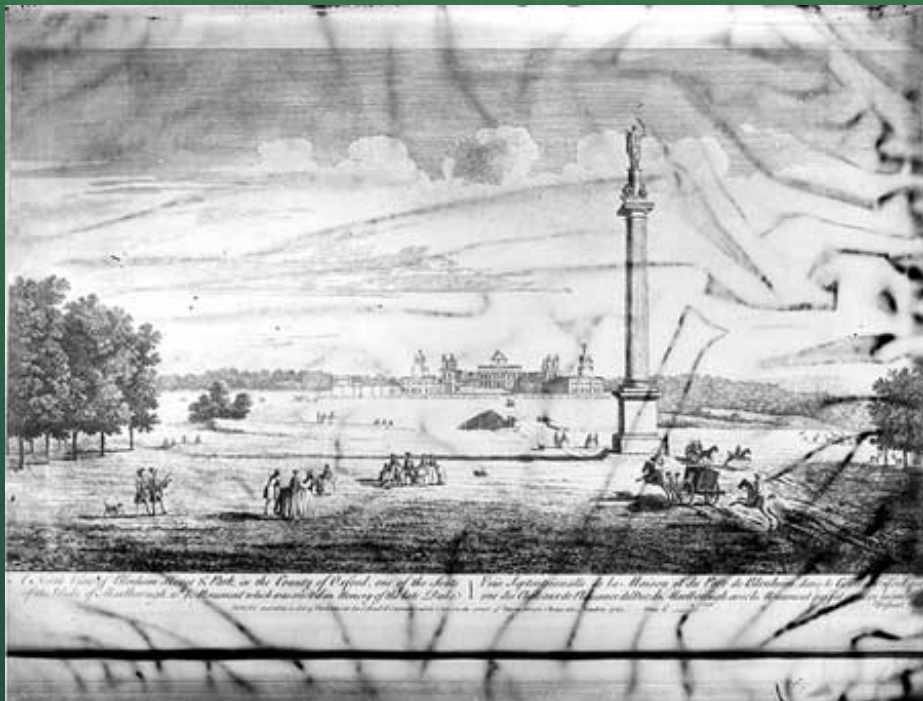

34. Picturesque view of the great lake Brown designed (Image: English heritage)

A- column of victory
B –lake (extent uncertain)
C- cascades
D- grand bridge

Blenheim Park c. 1730

35. Park plan (Image: British history)

The Column of Victory was completed after the 1st Duke's death, It is 41 m high and terminates a great avenue of elms leading to the palace.

36. The Column of Victory (Image: English Heritage)

37. The Column of Victory nowadays (Image: Wikipedia)

38. The Grand Bridge in Blenheim Park was built in the Palladian style by Sir John Vanbrugh in the early 18th century. At that time it crossed the steep valley of the small Glyme stream; the lake was created by Capability Brown 50 years later, drowning the lower portion of the bridge. Blenheim Palace can be seen in the background (Image: English Heritage)

39. View of the lake brown designed (Image: English Heritage)

40. View of the lake that Brown designed (Image: English Heritage)

41. The great lake formed in the parkland of the 18th century palace when Capability Brown dammed the river Glyme (Image: English Heritage)

42. A view of Blenheim Park taken from Woodstock Tower with Vanbrugh's Grand Bridge in the foreground.(Image: English Heritage)

43. This fence leads down from the lawns at Blenheim right into the waters of the lake (Image: BritainExpress)

44. One of the cascades (Image: Wikipedia)

45. One of the cascades Brown planned (Image: IgoUgo)

46. View of the Blenheim park and palace nowadays (Image: Google)

47.Aerial view of Blenheim premises (Image: Google)

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Thank you for your attention!