

*A survey of*

HISTORIC PARKS  
& GARDENS IN  
HEREFORDSHIRE





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& GARDENS IN  
HEREFORDSHIRE**

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Edited by Jane Patton

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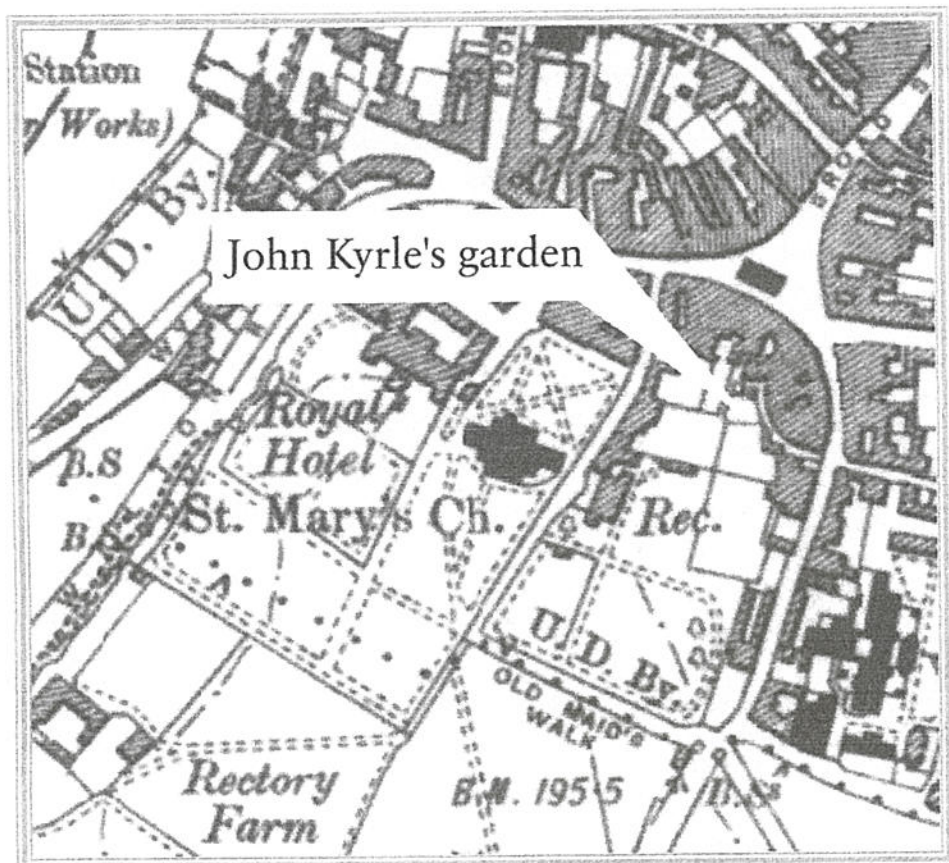




## John Kyrle's Garden

Parish: Ross-on-Wye

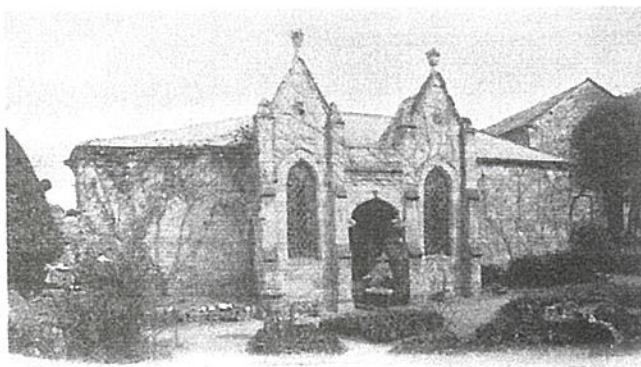
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parterre. This was infilled with flowers and there were many terracotta pots, the stump of a petrified tree and, as a centrepiece, an ancient sundial, similar to the one which stands today on Wilton Bridge and is said to have been erected by Kyrle. This garden and the summer-house can still be found, but the latter has been converted into a private house and is separated from the lower labyrinth garden. The formal upper garden has been restored and

added to, but the lower garden, still attached to Kyrle's residence (now shops) is totally neglected and overgrown. Without care and attention it will disappear.

The Kyrle Summer House from *The Wye Valley Illustrated* c.1900



# John Kyrle's Walk

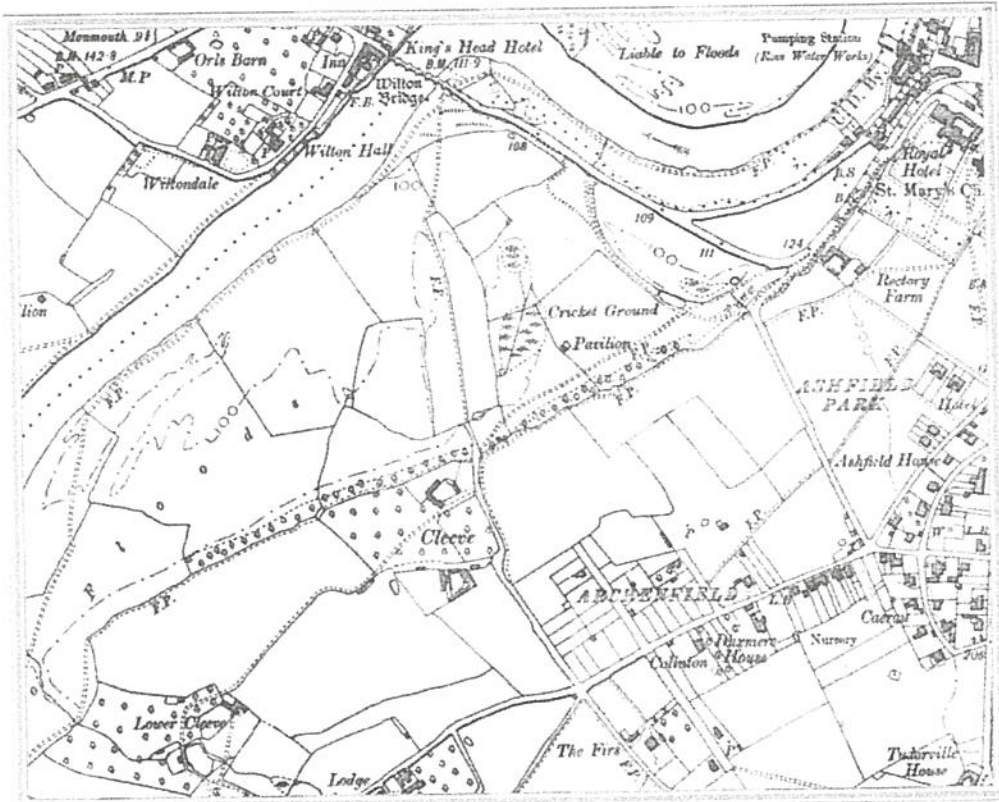
Parish: Ross-on-Wye

SMR No. 31247

Grid Ref: SO 598 240 - 584 234

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905



Isaac Taylor's county map of Herefordshire of 1786 shows Kyrle's trees planted on the 'causey' to Wilton Bridge as well as an avenue accompanying his walk to the summer-house at Lower Cleve, about a mile to the south-west of the Prospect. For the most part the walk was laid out on land that was part of the Cleve estate and in John Kyrle's possession. It hugged the edge of the sandstone river-cliff, which Kyrle had recently planted, no doubt hiding and revealing the view towards the north-west in the picturesque manner. The views to the south-west were equally striking with Penyard Chase rising abruptly from the farmland above Alton Court.

Heath states (*Excursion Down the Wye* (1803), unpaginated) that

'On the south side of the church is laid down, through the estate which belonged to Mr. Kyrle, a neat gravel path, which still retains the name of the person who formed it; and runs parallel with the course of the Wye. Towards the middle of it is carried nearer to the edge of a rocky eminence, partially clothed with under-wood, and shaded with beech and

other timber in a thriving state. The trees planted by Mr. Kyrle, which have grown to a very fine and large size'.

Heath relates this piece of landscaping to the relevant line in Pope's poem: 'Who hung the woods yon mountains sultry brow?' The walk passed through pastoral countryside '(which is very pleasing), white gates conduct the stranger through it, without help or enquiry'. Seats were also provided, presumably at viewpoints. Heath explains how at the 'extremity of the walk is placed a summer house, which affords an agreeable retreat, as well as a pleasing view of the river and country'. Over the door was 'affixed' a landscape painting, placed there by a local surgeon, Mr. Newman, who rented the summer-house. It had a Latin inscription. The building was situated where the ridge began to peter out, and the path dropped down to the Wye meadows. Many visitors to Ross believed that the summer-house had been built by John Kyrle, but one of Heath's informants, Mrs. Clarke of Hill Court, Walford (84 years of age in 1799), informed him that it had been erected by Vandervort Kyrle, John Kyrle's immediate heir.



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He also had the painting placed in the summer-house after selling some woods at Dymock. The painting had a finger emerging from some clouds pointing at the woods opposite and 'the motto (now defaced, which was SI NON TIBI, NON IBI, - 'had it not been for thee (the woods) you (the summer-house) had not been there'.

James Wathen of Hereford painted a view of the summer-house from close to the river (Whitehead & Shoesmith (1994), unpaginated) in c.1800. It was a typical multi-faceted structure under a conic roof and already in Heath's time it was 'going to decay, and is not open to public inspection'. Moreover, he adds that some of the woods Kyrle had planted along the walk had been cut down and only one seat remained on the walk 'the rest have been willfully destroyed by loose and idle people in passing through the grounds'. At about the same time the rector of Ross had walled-up the south gate on the Prospect, presumably to deter visitors from taking a short cut across his pasture towards the walk. The walk is recorded on the 1" O.S. plan of 1831 and Bryant's plan of 1835. The tithe map of 1840 notices the Summer House Meadow and Summer House Field at the termination of the walk whilst a detailed survey attached to some sale particulars for the

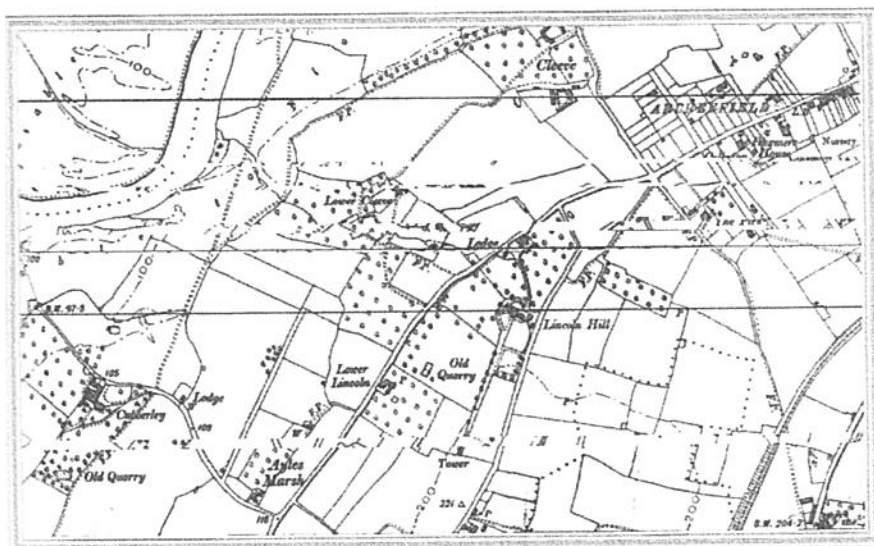
Lower Cleeve estate in 1865 (HRO, E59/SP/37) provides the exact route of the walk and the 'site of the summer house'.

John Kyrle's walk is one of the earliest surviving public walks in Britain, which during the 18th century were to be found in the vicinity of nearly every town - large or small (P. Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance* (1989), appendix 6, pp. 350-54). Today the walk can still be followed and notwithstanding the suburban growth of Ross and the popularity of potatoes as a crop by local farmers, it is still immensely enjoyable. This is especially so in the vicinity of Cleeve where there are traditional farm buildings, ancient orchards and an air of rustic decay (2000). The views to the south-east are still good but on 'yon sultry brow' the woods have become impenetrable and new view-points are necessary, cut under the mature trees, to pick up something of the north-west view, even with the A40 close-by. The climax of the walk today is the Ross sewage works at Lower Cleeve, close to the site of the summer-house. It has been camouflaged very half-heartedly and should be lost within a series of shelter-belts or disguised as a folly-castle and, most importantly, provided with a new smell - 'Old Dungeons', perhaps?



# Lincoln Hill House

Parish: Ross-on-Wye



SMR No. 24528

Grid Ref: SO 588229

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905

Lincoln Hill House lies  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from Ross, on the road to Walford. It is a suburban villa, originally set in seventeen acres of land and described as 'elegant and newly erected' in 1834 when it was occupied by James Love Esq. (HCL, Davies Collection f.122). On the 1st edition of the 1" O.S. plan the grounds lie between the upper and lower road to Walford and are marked as parkland. The sale catalogue of 1834 describes the 'productive walled gardens' and the house 'by a lawn, tastefully and ornamentally planted with shrubs and evergreens'. A sketch plan does indeed show the house surrounded by shrubberies, approached by a curving drive and overlooking a lawn dotted with emblematic deciduous trees. The tithe map of 1840 simply marks the pleasure grounds as 'lawns' but also calls a rectangular plot further up the hill 'Garden Meadow'. There is a further sale catalogue of 1883 (HRO, M5/28/17), which again, describes the 'walled-in kitchen garden containing an excellent assortment of choice fruit trees'. But adds: 'A short distance from the house, passing through the pleasure gardens and lawn along an avenue of conifers and other trees, is a castellated summer house, approached by a battlemented terrace, the views from which are varied and delightful and include the picturesque scenery of the Wye vale'. Today the dense evergreen shrubberies, which hide Lincoln Hill House from the public road, mark it out as a typical piece of 19th century development.

In 1934 a detached house was built higher up Lincoln Hill on the corner of the field called Garden Meadow - part of the original seventeen acres noticed in 1834. It was named after the neighbouring farm, Arbour Hill House. At the bottom of the garden, which slopes westwards, there is a remarkable folly. Built of well-coursed sandstone, it is circular in shape and stands about 25 feet high. On the

ground, facing the house is a gothic entrance and opposite, in the wall facing west, is an unglazed, oak-framed window, also gothic. This has a brick voussoir outside and brickwork is also visible in the form of patching near the top of the tower. Half-way up is a string course and the walls at the top are capped with stone - there is no sign of crenellation. The tower never seems to have had a staircase or floors, and the roof is now concrete. Attached to the tower on the north-east is a most novel feature - a stone ramp (the 'battlemented terrace?'), which is perhaps, 100 feet long. This rises slowly, with steps and slopes to the top of the tower. The steps are ashlar and there are wooden posts and a chain to act as a handrail. On the side of the ramp are several slots, which are apparently designed to embellish the stonework and give the impression of arrow-slits. From the top of the tower there would be excellent views in all directions although impeded today by many mature trees.

Leading up to the tower from Lincoln Hill House is a track planted on either side with shrubs, both deciduous and evergreen - like the shrubberies around the house but also, now, including many mature trees. The track now commences in a pretty glade - clearly part of the emparking of the house. The plan attached to the 1883 sale catalogue, however, clearly shows this feature, coming directly from the house. The folly, it is claimed (*Hereford Times* 30 April 1998), was built for an invalid Admiral, living at Lincoln Hill House just after the Crimean War (1854-6). He employed veterans returning from the war to build it and the ramp was to facilitate access using an invalid chair. In the late 1850s Lincoln Hill House belonged to Ferdinand Beeston Esq. (Cassy (1858), p. 288; Slater (1859), p. 55; Morris (1862), p. 48).



## Merrivale House

Parish: Ross-on-Wye



SMR No. 31248

Grid Ref: SO 602 234

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905

There are many Merrivales in England and the place-name, from the Old French *myrig-val*, means what it says - 'a pleasant valley'. So Merrivale in Ross, below the Ashfield ridge was appreciated in the Middle Ages for its rural charms. It also had an additional asset in the presence of a large fishpond (See Alton Court) in the valley bottom. A sale catalogue of 1920 (HRO, M5/28/12) illustrates a substantial Georgian/Victorian house with stepped gables overlooking this feature. Taylor marks the place on his county map of 1786 but the 1" O.S. plan of 1831 is not very helpful. The tithe map of 1840 ignores the pool and refers to the surrounding land as 'The Moors', suggesting perhaps, that it had simply become an area of marshland, and the pool needed reinstating. In the late 19th century the property belonged to Joseph Turnock who tried to exploit the water source by erecting a pumping station to supply Ross (P. Hughes & H. Hurley, *The Story of Ross* (1999), pp. 122, 129). Apparently, he disguised the waterworks building with castellated walls but the undertaking proved unsuccessful and his competitor Thomas Blake of Alton Court purchased Merrivale in 1891. He provided Ross with a regular supply of water but was probably also aware of the aesthetic aspects of water

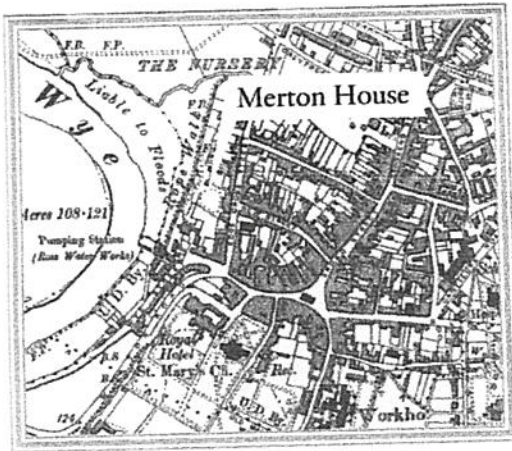
supply with its attractive lagoons, springs, channels etc. Picturesque enhancement of London's water supply is apparent all the way down the Lea Valley in Hertfordshire and, nearer to home, the mid-Victorian waterworks at Broomy Hill, Hereford were laid out for public enjoyment. Did Ross also appreciate its waterworks? Merrivale appears to have been tenanted until it was sold, along with Alton Court, by Mrs. Blake in 1920. The illustrations in the catalogue depict some fine Edwardian show gardens. The pool - now made two - has been integrated into the garden. The raised causeway between the upper and lower pond is now planted and accompanied by a pergola. The house sits high on a double terrace (17th century?) against a backdrop of mature planting. To the north is an old orchard. A second view up the side of the house shows neat borders, a rustic rosary and in the background, a greenhouse. Altogether the gardens, other 'ornamental grounds' and pond comes to five acres. In recent years, the orchard and some of the garden has been lost to new housing and there are plans to build more dwellings on the site of the waterworks building (2001). The greater part of the central garden area, including the ponds and causeway are shown to be retained.





# Merton House

Parish: Ross-on-Wye



SMR No. 31249

Grid Ref: SO 597 244

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905

In the summer of 1802 a curious *ménage à trois* - Horatio Nelson, and Lord and Lady Hamilton - visited Ross and decided to embark upon a Wye tour (E. Gill, *Nelson and the Hamiltons on Tour* (1987), p. 21). On their way down to the river, the tourists were encouraged to view the gardens of Walter Hill behind Merton House in Ede Cross Street. An important incident in the gardens was a crenellated summer-house (now demolished), said to be a smaller version of the Gazebo Tower at the Royal Hotel. A similar tower still exists in the garden of Tower House, further along Ede Cross Street. Merton House was rebuilt in the early 19th century by William Hooper, a lawyer, but the gardens are clearly depicted on the 25" O.S.

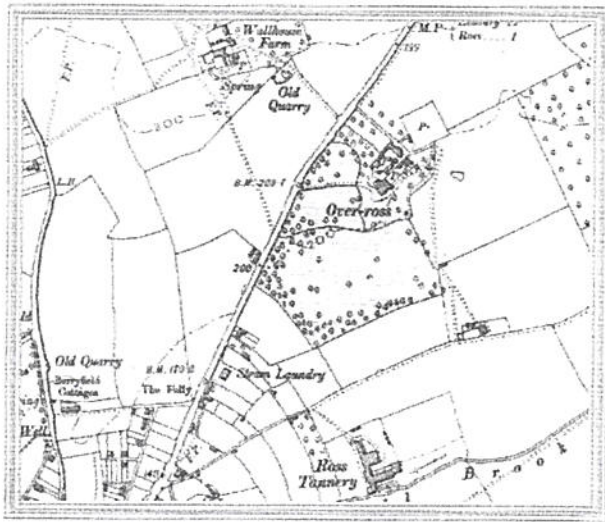
plan for 1887 (P. Hughes & H. Hurley, *The Story of Ross* (1999), pp. 118, 129, 140). Immediately behind the house was a broad open lawn. The tower appears to be sited in the northern corner of the garden, above a serpentine water feature which terminates beneath a glass house. The steep banks down to Rope Walk and the river flood meadows are planted with deciduous and coniferous trees, through which a path takes a long and easy route to the bottom. The gardens extend behind the properties stretching down the street. Clearly these gardens were designed in response to the picturesque interest in Ross in the 18th century as the embarkation point for the Wye tour.





# Over-Ross

Parish: Ross-on-Wye



SMR No. 31242

Grid Ref: SO 608 253

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905

Over-Ross, on the Ledbury Road leading north from Ross, is an ancient settlement and had become a gentleman's seat by the mid-17th century (Robinson (1872), p. 244). In the hearth tax for 1664 John Vaughan, gent. was assessed for eleven hearths - the highest for both Ross 'borough' and 'foreign' (Faraday (1972), p. 65). Bowen (1775) and Taylor (1786) both mark Over-Ross as a discrete settlement on their county maps but it is not until the 1" O.S. plan of 1831 that the house is shown with a small park and walled (?) garden, adjoining it to the north. The house depicted in the late 19th century sale catalogues looks as if it was built in c.1830 - it is stuccoed and under a low-pitched roof. The tithe map refers to 'The Lawn' (575) south of the mansion and the 'Plantation' to the north. The latter is absent from the 6" O.S. plan of c.1886 but this shows a compact park (The Lawn), well planted on its fringes with a few scattered trees across the centre. A view of the house and its park in 1898 (HRO, M5/28/13), shows a venerable ivy-covered oak in the foreground (enhanced with a tree seat) and several other mature trees close-by. The trees in the park appear to be fairly juvenile. It is grazed by sheep and separated from the pleasure grounds by an iron fence. There are island beds on the lawn in the foreground. The 6" plan of c.1886 shows a straight drive to the house and mature shrubberies with mixed planting enclosed by a serpentine perimeter fence running all round the house. The sale catalogue shows the house in a mature setting with climbers on the wall and a lean-to conservatory on the south-wall. In 1898 the estate

is said to comprise

'a commodious residence... with pleasure grounds and stabling occupying a most charming position in picturesque park-like grounds... near the high road, but well-screened therefrom by ornamental timber of noble growth and well-matured shrubberies. In the garden adjoining the lawn is a double vinery, 40 feet in length, smaller vinery, together with potting and open sheds in yard adjoining, and there is also a large walled kitchen garden well stocked with fruit trees and having a pump in the centre. Over-Ross is approached by a carriage drive, the grounds on each side of which and those surrounding the house, being undulating and embellished with some magnificent Timber including elms of noble dimensions, cedars etc. The house, lawns and grounds command most extensive views of beautiful scenery for which the district is famed, and a prominent object in the landscape is the elegant spire of the parish church at Ross'.

The kitchen garden standing beyond the stables to the north of the house has spacious proportions and is approached through an orchard. In the late 19th century the property belonged to Mrs. Bernard and subsequently owned by her daughter. The house was for sale again in 1927 but few changes can be detected on the sale plan (HRO, M5/28/14). The modern site has been greatly changed by housing development.



# The Chase Hotel

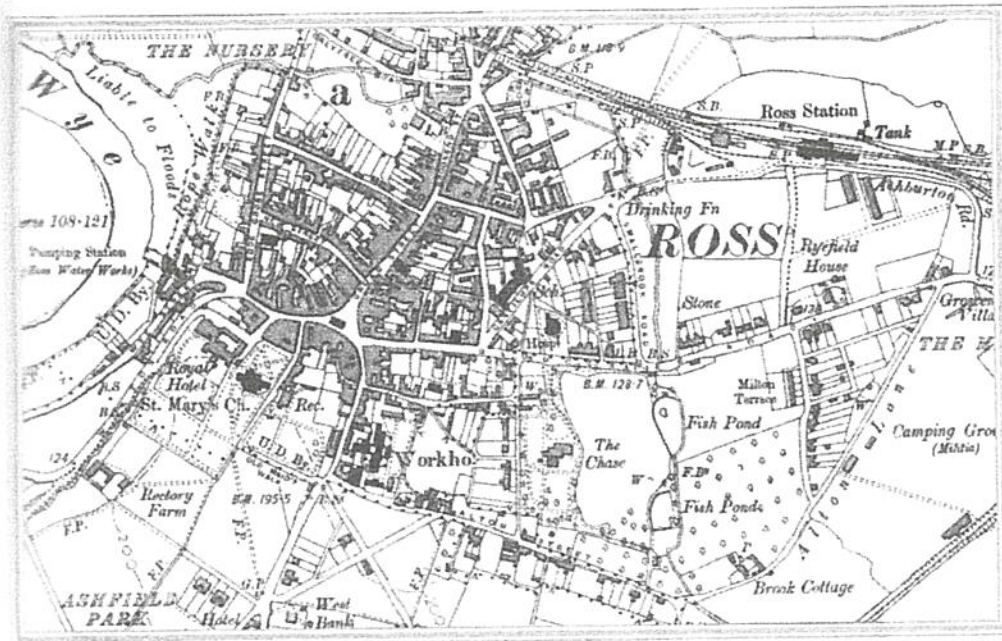
Parish: Ross-on-Wye

SMR No. 31244

Grid Ref: SO 604 239

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905



separated by the 'Chase Lawn' from the 'Chase Mill homestead' with its millponds. The mansion - a swish low profile, neo-classical composition - had also benefited from the re-routing of the Gloucester road out of Ross in c.1825, which enabled a shrubbery to be planted on the site of the old road, screening the house from the busy new turnpike. By 1886 all signs of the mill

According to Robinson (1872), p. 244 The Chase was the modern seat of George Strong M.D. and was built by his father in law, John Cooke upon land which had formerly formed part of the Episcopal hunting ground'. One can guess that the ownership of an estate, hunted over by medieval bishops, added substantially to the kudos of possession. Sadly, this pride was misplaced and the 19th century owners fell for one of the commonest pitfalls of place-name studies - the obvious interpretation is frequently the wrong interpretation. In the late 17th century the stream and fishponds - the 'orchards, waters, watercourses, wares (weirs?), backs, stanks, dams, millponds, floodgates and streams of water' - a veritable Constable painting of watery assets - belonged to 'Chest's Mill' - presumably a personal name. By the late 18th century this had become 'Chace Mill' and soon after in 1813, when it was disused - the 'Old Chase' (P. Hughes & H. Hurley, *The Story of Ross* (1999), pp. 24-5, 90, 109, 133). Taylor marks the 'Chace Mill' on his county map of 1786 and a complex of buildings adjoining the ponds are there on the 1" O.S. plan of 1831. By the 1840 tithe map the 'Chase mansion, gardens and offices' are represented,

buildings had disappeared and the Small Brook with its two ponds had been integrated into the grounds of the house. The lower pond had been provided with an ornamental island and there was a footbridge across the stream between the upper and lower pond where there were also signs of ornamental planting. The pleasure grounds, i.e. the ornamental lawns and shrubberies, lay to the north and south of the mansion. The 1886 plan shows a regular pattern of paths, including a circuit walk, terminating at the stables to the north-west of the house where there also appears to be a small walled garden.

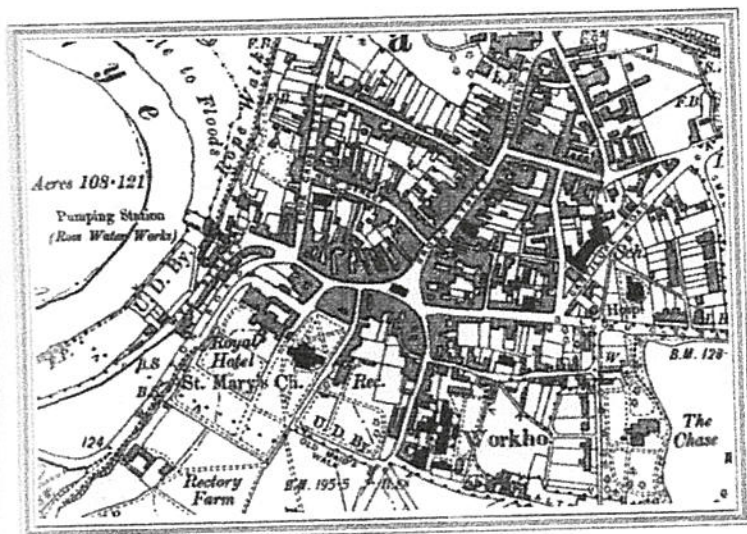
Today, the grounds form an important oasis in modern Ross, celebrated by the Chase Hotel in much of its sales literature. Only the extensive car parks compromise the mature setting.





# The Prospect

Parish: Ross-on-Wye



SMR No. 31254

Grid Ref: SO 598 240

O.S. 6" Map No. 51NE

Date of Map 1905

John Kyrle's greatest gift to Ross was the Prospect - an elevated platform on a sandstone cliff, once the site of the medieval bishop's palace, which provided wide-ranging views over the border countryside. Prospect hunting was a Renaissance pre-occupation; optimistic and head raising. Kyrle seems to have given the spot its name when he leased it from Lord Weymouth, lord of the manor of Ross in 1696. It had previously been referred to as the 'Bishop's Court'. Kyrle's plot included the site of the later Royal Hotel, at this date the Pounds Inn, and the Beast Market adjoining St Mary's Street. In the original lease there were three towers (perhaps remnants of the bishop's palace), which Kyrle had to keep in repair. For those with an antiquarian bent, the place virtually vibrated with ancient history! (PHughes & H. Hurley, *The Story of Ross* (1999), pp. 43, 45).

Kyrle walled-in the site and provided three classical and pedimented gates, placed in the centre of the south, east and north walls. The churchyard gate (east) was the most elaborate and is now in the north-east corner of the enclosure, indicating that half of Kyrle's original garden has been lost. The north gate dropped down to the Pound Inn and the south gate (dated 1700) provided access to the Parsonage Field, from whence Kyrle's walk set off along the ridge to Cleeve. On the west side of the garden, at the viewpoint, a brass dial plate 'handsomely engraved' with Kyrle's arms, initials and a quotation from Horace, was fixed to a pedestal. There was a further embellishment in the north-west corner where another brass plate dated 1700 explained that a walk around the perimeter of the enclosure was 372 yards and therefore, 'Five times about this place, is more than a mile'. Calculations of a similar nature were made to the churches at Weston-under-Penyard and Brampton Abbots. Such playful thoughts no doubt, engaged the curious and also provided a rare insight

into the mind of the great philanthropist (C. Heath, *Excursion down the Wye* (1803), unpaginated; T. D. Fosbroke, *The Wye Tour* (1818), pp. 5-14).

The centrepiece of the garden was a fountain with 'a handsome spouting image', which received water, raised by an 'engine' from the Wye. This was a collaborative effort by Kyrle and other members of the local community, but for which Alexander Pope, in his eulogy of the 'Man of Ross', gave Kyrle the sole responsibility. The pool, which received the water was oval in design and eight feet deep, it supplied other pumps in the town but the wooden pipes carrying the water were faulty, creating informal fountains of an 'amazing height' along its length. It was soon replaced and the empty basin was used by the children of the town as a convenient place to play marbles. Pope liked the idea that Kyrle's fountain was both ornamental and useful:

'.....taste sanctifies Expende,  
For splendour borrows all her Rays from Sense'  
*Moral Essays,*  
*'Epistle to Lord Burlington (1731)'*

Kyrle laid out the walks in a formal manner, paths leading from one gate to another, to the pedestal and around the perimeter. He planted trees, probably elms, which he also planted around the churchyard. William Dobbs, Heath's informant, said that Kyrle was always 'buying and planting young trees, laying out walks and such parts of ornamental gardening'. Wathen's view 'returning from Kyrle's walk Friday 2 clock 24th May 1795' shows the churchyard and the Prospect as a seamless whole, planted with tall tiered elm trees (Whitehead and Shoesmith (1994), unpaginated). The lease Kyrle took out with Lord Weymouth regarded the Prospect as a pleasure ground for the recreation of the inhabitants of Ross and its visitors but in 1699 Kyrle sublet the property to another inhabitant of Ross, William Fisher, reserving the right for himself and his heirs 'to build



### Parish: Ross-on-Wye

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Drawing of the entrance of The Prospect to the churchyard from  
*The Wye Tour* (1896)

plant trees and cut walks for public use Gratis'. Kyrle's heirs never exercised this right and throughout the 18th century the Prospect was used for pasture - 'all description of cattle have been turned on to it' - and a place to whiten and dry linen-cloth (Hughes & Hurley, pp. 45, 74; Heath, *passim*).

Occasionally the Ross churchwardens took it upon themselves to service the Prospect and protect its embellishments. In 1756 the dial and the steps up into the enclosure were threatened by the grazing horses, so posts were erected to keep the animals away. A new stile over the wall between the churchyard and the Prospect was proposed in 1764 but the decision was reversed in 1765 on the basis that the parish did not own the fence. In 1775-6 the walks were re-laid and rubbish removed whilst in the winter of 1781 snow was cleared. When, in 1802, someone broke the gnomon off the sundial, the culprit was denounced by the town crier. The rector of Ross was less than sympathetic to the visitors who strayed beyond the Prospect and boarded and walled up the south gate to

prevent access to his meadows (HRO, L78/3 & 8).

Heath and Fosbroke, following Pope's eulogy also claim that Kyrle raised the causeway to Wilton Bridge - planting trees and providing seats - and embellishing the bridge with sundials. It is also claimed that he restored the church spire and repaired the local almshouses in a decent fashion. Thus, Kyrle's energy and creativity was harnessed for his local community, creating a well-tempered environment where beauty and utility were combined. He was, for Fosbroke, a 'true Silurian' - a genuine man of Herefordshire (p. 7).

A visit to the Prospect was *de rigueur* for Wye tourists who came in increasing numbers after 1750 and regarded John Kyrle as the unofficial patron of the picturesque. In July 1787 the Hon. John Byng 'much admired the prospect walk', which he viewed before dinner at the Swan and Falcon (C. Bruyn-Andrews, ed., *The Torrington Diaries I* (1934), pp. 264-5). However, later tourists, glutted on a rich diet of rugged scenery, familiar from literature or prints, were likely to be unimpressed with the 'small field'



### Parish: Ross-on-Wye

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(HCL, Joseph Farrington's *Wye Tour*, 1803). Rubbish deposited in the defunct fountain also, no doubt, offended their sensibilities. They probably brought with them William Gilpin's *Wye Tour* (1782) who dismissed the Prospect as 'very amusing' and found the view too extensive - 'it was not picturesque' (p. 6). Subsequent tourists liked to get into their landscapes, to view scenery from a low perspective, on the Wye, preferably from a boat. Renaissance enthusiasm for distant vistas of landscape had given way to a preference for Romantic engagement. Not surprisingly, the owner of William Fisher's lease viewed the Prospect in 1833 as a 'very desirable spot for the erection of villas' but feared the implementation of Kyrle's covenant enabling his legal successor, Mr. Nathaniel Morgan, to plant trees and maintain public access. The advice of counsel was sought from R. Harrison of the Temple who found for the inhabitants of Ross, stating that they could not be deprived of 'any benefit they had enjoyed constantly'. Building was out of the question without an Act of Parliament (HRO, BA31/173). But this did not deter John Barrett, a local innkeeper, who had bought the lease, not only of the Prospect but also the Old Pounds Inn and the adjoining 'Beast Market'. By 1838 he had built the Royal Hotel on the site of the Pounds Inn and turned his attention to the Prospect, which he clearly regarded as an essential adjunct to his hotel, serving the bourgeois end of the tourist trade. The walks were restored and ornamental beds introduced, responding to the new Victorian interest in floristry (H. Hurley, 'Barrett's Royal Hotel' in *Ross Civic Society Newsletter* 26 (1985), pp. 3-4; Hughes & Hurley, pp. 117, 131). Tourists now need 'intricacy and variety'

(Price), they were no longer happy with a viewing platform with a few architectural conceits. They also demanded privacy and half the Prospect was annexed as the hotel garden and separated from the public half by a thick hedge. The north gate disappeared at this time. Local resentment was slow to develop but in December 1839 the matter was debated in the columns of the *Hereford Times* and in 1848 the first of the 'Prospect Riots' took place. Of course, the rights of ordinary people to enjoy the benefits of landed society was a burning issue in this decade of Chartism. In Ross, the crowd, headed by several 'respectable individuals', exercised their right to walk in Mr. Barrett's lower garden, despite the threatening presence of the innkeeper's 'servants'. Further protests occurred in 1863 and 1869, when, on the latter occasion, the hotel vegetable garden was trashed and, led by a band, the mob marched through the garden and retired to church. In 1876 the 'Prospect affair' was finally settled. A local benefactor bought the public part of the property and vested future ownership in the Town Council but the lower garden remained in the hands of the hotel and was enclosed (*Ibid*, pp. 131-2). The Prospect remains Ross's greatest asset. The planting, with trees on high mounds, probably dates from Barrett's improvements, although early 19th century prints always depict the site with burgeoning plantations. Contemporary views of landscape aesthetics have not diminished its charms and even the distant roar of the traffic on the A40 would no doubt be classified by 18th century tourists as a sublime experience and would augment their enjoyment of the beautiful view and the picturesque setting.

