

The creation of the garden

The work of transforming this abandoned chalk quarry was begun sometime after the building of the Plantation House in 1856. The garden was created by Henry Trevor, a successful Norwich businessman. Over a period of forty years, until his death in 1897, the Plantation Garden evolved into an outstanding nineteenth-century showpiece.

Surrounded by steep slopes of natural woodland, he planned a creation in the style of the great Italian Renaissance gardens. Elaborate terraces with wide flights of steps were constructed and ornamental flower beds were set into the lawns. At its centre he built a magnificent fountain.

Henry Trevor employed full time gardeners to maintain the glasshouses, flower beds and paths. For the first time, exotic plants were being shipped to Britain from distant lands and, to survive the English climate, they were tended in conservatories and palm houses. At the Plantation were eight glasshouses of various sizes. Some would have been used as propagating houses for summer bedding, but a few probably held the more exotic varieties which could be planted out in early summer as features in the ornamental flower beds.

Rockeries were also very fashionable, and in the shadier parts could be found water features and ruins. In the wilder wooded areas ivy spread its mantle and was encouraged to cling to the ornamental wall surfaces.

Local building materials were used for many of the garden structures. Moulded bricks, mostly spars and wasters from local brickworks, were pieced together to create imaginative forms. Industrial waste and lime-kiln lining were used in many of the architectural features. Flint was used extensively. It is a silica found in chalk and has been extracted in vast quantities from the chalk seams under Norwich for many centuries. A few rare giant nodules can be seen in the three buttresses of the fountain.

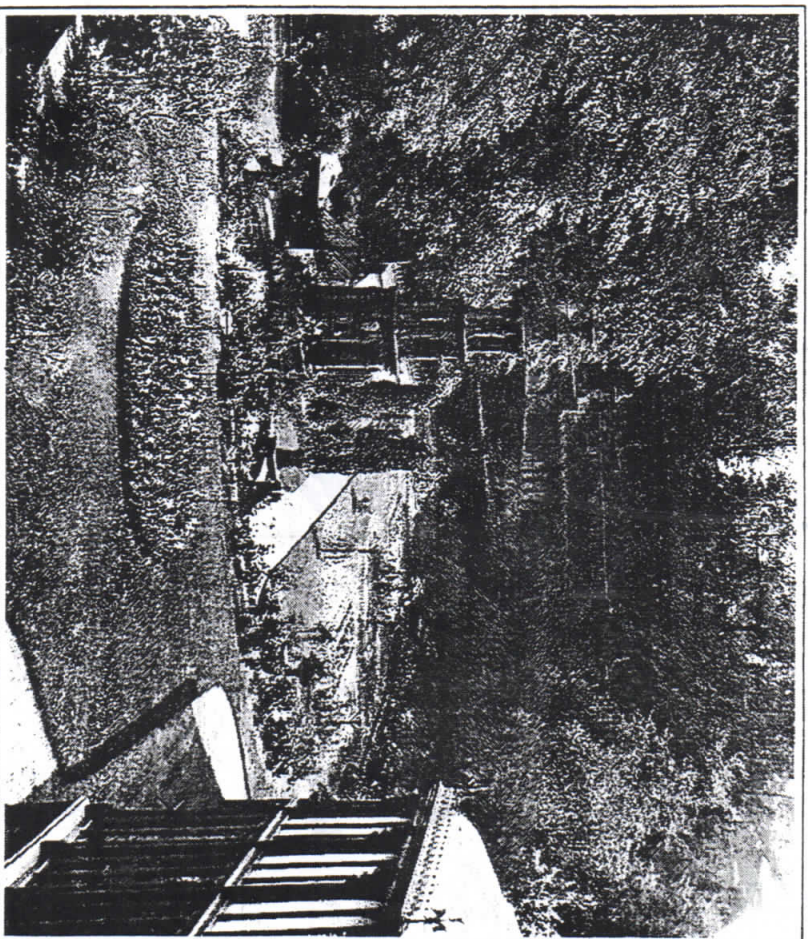
The end of an era

After Henry Trevor's death in 1897, the whole property was sold. Upkeep became expensive and horticultural fashions changed. By 1912 the palm house had been dismantled and the parterre and path covered over by a tennis lawn. In the 1930s the house became a nursing home and during the Second World War the site of the tennis lawn became a vegetable garden. By 1980 the garden was totally overgrown.

The Plantation Garden Preservation Trust was formed in 1980 to save and restore the garden.

*The Plantation Garden is a grade II English Heritage registered garden
The Plantation Garden Preservation Trust, registered charity no. 801095*

The Plantation Garden 4 Earham Road, Norwich



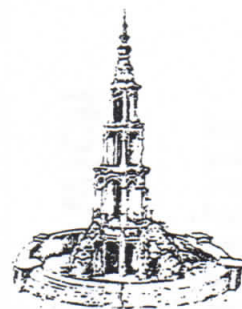
1897

'His beautiful and well kept grounds he put to the most generous uses. For purposes of flower shows, bazaars and charitable gatherings of any kind and another, the Plantation was continually in demand.'

Obituary to Henry Trevor, May 1897

Features of interest

A GUIDE TO THE GARDEN



① **Site of the gardener's cottage** (demolished in the 1960s). Nearby were potting-sheds, greenhouses and the gardener's office.

② **Possible site of an early lime kiln.** The garden was laid out in a former chalk quarry. The chalk was converted to lime in the kiln and used to make building mortar. This is one of two in the garden marked on a map of 1830.

③ **Remains of glasshouses.** The area is now used for propagating beds. Dominating the skyline is the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist, built between 1884 and 1910.

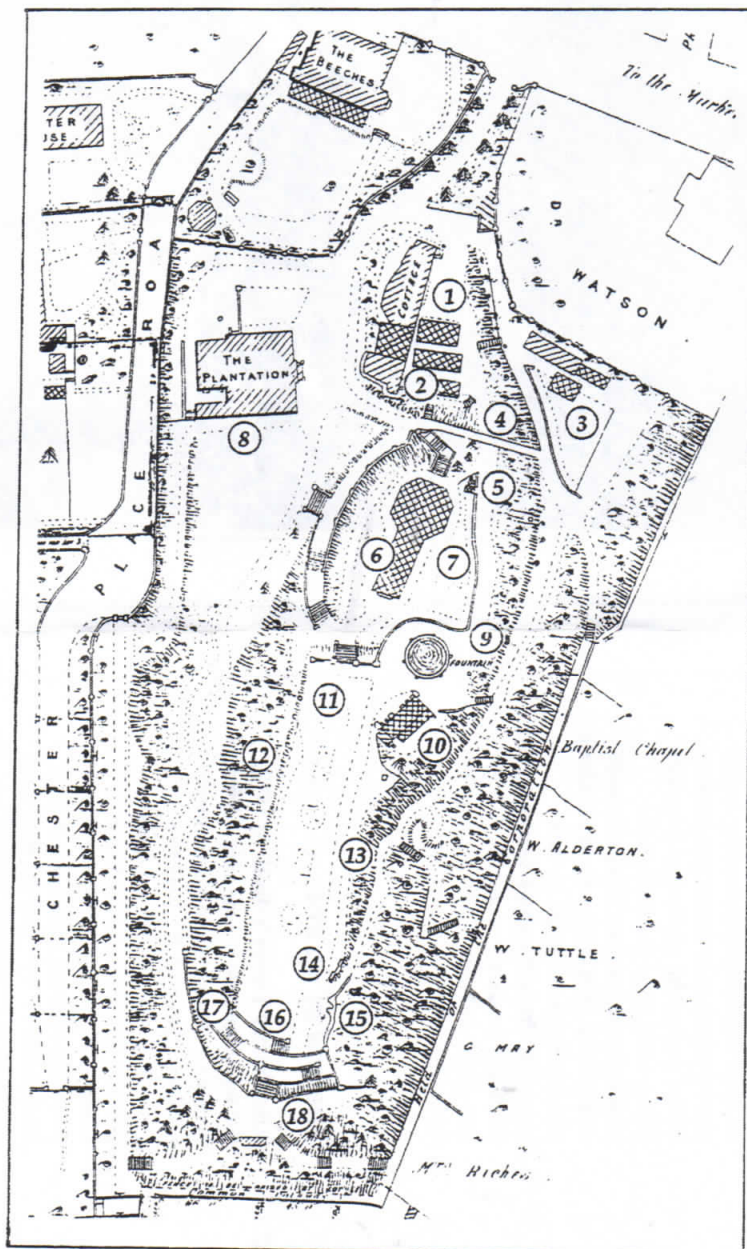
④ **Site of a 57-ft-long rustic bridge.** This was demolished in the 1920s, and was probably to designs by Edward Boardman, who may have been architect of the Plantation House.

⑤ **Remains of an underground boiler-house.** It contained two Boulton and Paul saddle-boilers. They probably were fired by coal which was stored in the cellar (left). The hot water was then circulated in pipes around the interior of the palm house which stood nearby. The heat protected exotic plants during the winter months.

⑥ **The site of the palm house.** This was a grand 35-ft-long glasshouse by the Norwich firm of Boulton and Paul. The octagonal section (see map) was 29 ft in diameter. Inside were hot-water pipes, slate sheaving, Doulton's edging and a fountain. It was dismantled in about 1912 and its whereabouts are unknown. It is now marked out by flower beds.

⑦ **The palm house terrace.** It is an artificial construction of about 1870 and after the style of Paxton's great stove at Chatsworth. Underneath the circular flower bed is a brick chamber where water for the saddle-boilers may have been stored.

⑭ **The gothic alcove.** The ruins of a three-bay structure. Sections from a fourteenth-century window from the Norwich church of St Giles were found nearby.



A plan of the garden drawn in 1897 and based on the Ordnance Survey map of 1884.

⑧ **The Plantation House.** To the north of the palm house terrace can be seen Henry Trevor's imposing house, built for him in 1856 to designs believed to be by the eminent Norwich architect, Edward Boardman.

⑨ **The gothic fountain.** This is a combination of moulded brick with flint buttresses. The gothic element of the pinnacle has ecclesiastical overtones (the designs can be seen in Victorian churches and chapels around Norwich). The fleur-de-lis were cast at Gunton's brickworks near Norwich and the same pattern can be seen in the chimneys of the Queen's residence at Sandringham in North Norfolk.

⑩ **The site of the propagating house.** An early photograph shows this as a glasshouse with a boiler house at one end. A contemporary observer described it as screened by 'ornamental architectural dressings' and topped by stone eagles. Fragments of one of the eagles have been found. The piers and arcading were covered in ivy, giving the effect from the house of looking down onto a picturesque ruin.

⑪ **The parterre.** This was described in Henry Trevor's time as the Italian garden. In the early 1900s a tennis lawn was laid out covering the central beds and path. These have been accurately reinstated using the evidence from nineteenth-century photographs and maps.

⑫ **Traces of an apple orchard.** This was planted in about 1904 on the north bank to catch the southern light and warmth, and replaced Henry Trevor's planting.

⑬ **The rockery.** This massive construction is resting on substantial brick foundations. Two water cascades of limestone tufa and three large brick-lined planting basins are built into it. It may date from around 1891.

⑮ **The water feature.** A water basin is believed to have stood at the central point of this elaborate arcading. Recent excavations have revealed drains leading to a large brick-lined sump.

⑯ **The Italian Terrace.** This fine piece of engineering is derived from the garden terraces of Renaissance Italy. It is constructed from moulded bricks and flints, imaginatively arranged into blank arcades.

⑰ **Terracotta crests.** These are 'wasters' and almost certainly from Gunton's brickworks at Costessey just outside Norwich. They incorporate the arms of the Wallace and Amhurst families with an unidentified crest.

⑱ **Moulded brick shields.** These were made at Gunton's brickworks. Similar examples were used by Henry Bedingfield and his wife at Oxburgh Hall in the second part of the nineteenth century.