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THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLAND ON THE FIRST ENGLISH
GARDENS IN THE SOUTHERN LOW COUNTRIES AND
THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIÈGE

The English Garden appeared in the Low Countries quite late in the eighteenth century. The geometric model – mainly influenced by the French style diffused by the treatise of Dezallier d'Argenville – was still fashionable in 1760, as seen, for example, at the Garden of Leeuwerghem Castle (1762). The two following decades saw the major development of the new irregular style in the country, influenced not only by the Picturesque garden but also by the naturalistic style discovered by members of the aristocracy through their travels to Great Britain. Also some gardeners were sent there to be trained and to learn how to grow new exotic plants. This paper draws on a significant number of original sources, including images, writings, archives, remains and relics, in order to define the chronology of the English Garden in the Low Countries and to discover the different practices that have been adopted and developed in garden design until the beginning of the nineteenth century. These sources also deliver extensive and accurate information on acclimatization practices and horticultural techniques implemented in private gardens before contributing to the development of scientific institutions and renowned botanical gardens such as Gent, Brussels or Liège.

From the mid-eighteenth century, numerous garden amateurs from the Low Countries travelled to England, attracted and driven by the fame of English gardens and their passion for rare plants. The circulation of artists and their works during the Grand Tour and the diffusion of British literature, thanks to their translated editions, contributed to the discovery of the new layout principles introduced by English designers at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Besides their enthusiasm for the irregular, gardening amateurs discovered the English inclination for beautiful lawns, the introduction of rare plants and the composition of evergreen groves, popularized by the gardener Philip Miller (1691–1771), thanks to his *Gardener's Dictionary*. This work of reference was edited eight times between 1731 and 1768 and its French translation, based on the eighth edition, was published in Brussels in 1785 under the title *Dictionnaire des Jardiniers et des Cultivateurs*.¹ The Belgian dendrologist Eugène-Joseph d'Olmen, Baron de Poederlé (1742–1813), author of the manual *Manuel de l'arboriste et du forestier belgiques* (1772), was one of its subscribers.²

Beyond artistic and cultural aspects, political reasons sustained their enthusiasm for English gardens. As members of the European nobility, these aristocrats enjoyed the principles of freedom that had been defended by the English constitution since Georges I (Hanover elector, 1714–27). Indeed, these Anglophiles nurtured relations with the Whigs. Some of them owned property in England to where they could flee and find refuge during

the revolutionary era. According to the sources, Belgian aristocrats were travelling to England in two major periods: from 1770 to 1789 and in the revolutionary era.³

During the first period, they were essentially interested in William Kent's gardens (Chiswick, Stowe, Rousham, Claremont), frequently labelled 'picturesque' by Continentals,⁴ but also in gardens created by enlightened amateurs in 1750–60, such as Stourhead and Painshill. In the summer of 1771, Duke Charles d'Arenberg stayed in England for two months with his son, Duke Louis-Englebert, under the guidance of Abbot Needham, a London naturalist, and Baron Eugène d'Olmen de Poederlé, considered as the father of Belgian dendrology. During his stay, the dendrologist met renowned nurserymen and nurtured a deep interest in the cultivation of recently acclimatized plants, such as the tulip tree, contributing to its introduction into the Low Countries.

Poederlé came back fully convinced by English garden aesthetics, praising the beauty of its perspective, the variety of its landscapes and the quality of its turf. In his *Manuel*, more than botanical descriptions, he delivered the results of his experiments and cultivations, with valuable advice on the use and association of plants according to mainstream practices in eighteenth-century England, particularly regarding 'evergreen groves' and 'four seasons groves'.⁵ The enthusiasm raised by these planting modes encouraged him to edit a *Supplement* in which he dedicated a significant part to the composition of these new groves largely referring to his contemporaries, the Englishman Miller and the Frenchman Henri Duhamel Dumonceau (1700–82), author of diverse works dealing with land cultivation, agriculture and wood exploitation.⁶

As soon as he came back, Duke d'Arenberg decided to extend his property of Heverlee, near Leuven, and create an English garden of circa five hectares (circa twelve acres) surrounding a new modern residential pavilion settled in a clearing in the forest (Figure 1). On the lawns, he laid out rose beds with plants ordered from England. From 1775, the duke drew a plan for an English garden at the rear of the park of Enghien, next to the ancient manor smallholding (Figure 2). The existing large baroque canal was extended by a long serpentine waterway leading to a green island. In 1777, he built a cottage that became his retreat and where he died on 7 August 1778.⁷ In 1783, his son, Louis-Englebert, ordered a new residence in this pastoral landscape.⁸

After a two-month stay in England, Duke Louis-Englebert decided to send the young botanist gardener Théodore Joseph vanden Branden to England in order to extend and deepen his knowledge. Vanden Branden visited numerous gardens and sent bushes and shrubs, as well as tree seeds, for the new garden at Enghien and Heverlee, and for the Arenberg Hotel in Brussels.⁹ On returning from England, he even proposed to transform the park of Enghien, but this enterprise remained unrealized.¹⁰ In 1794, as he was charged to buy and propagate the estate collection of plants as well as sell the potential surplus, vanden Branden compiled lists of hothouse, summer and winter orangery plants – four hundred and twenty species, all in double samples, following the Duchess d'Arenberg instructions.¹¹ The collection included many exotic species, from East or South Africa, diverse variegated plants and nearly six hundred potted pineapples. Furthermore, it also comprised hardy cultivated exotic plants like *Magnolia* that was still treated as an orangery plant due to its difficult acclimatization. In the late eighteenth century, this collection counted among the richest of the country.

In July 1782, seduced by the charm of the countryside near Brussels, Archduke Albert de Saxe-Teschen and Marie-Christine of Austria, Governors of the Low Countries (1778–93), decided to build a new palace on Schoonenberg Hill (The Fine Mountain of Laeken), dominating Willebroek Canal (Figure 3). As a consequence, they asked the banker of the court, Jean-Joseph Walckiers de Gammerage (1740–1810), to provide Lancelot Brown (1716–83) with a ground plan of the future park of Schoonenberg so

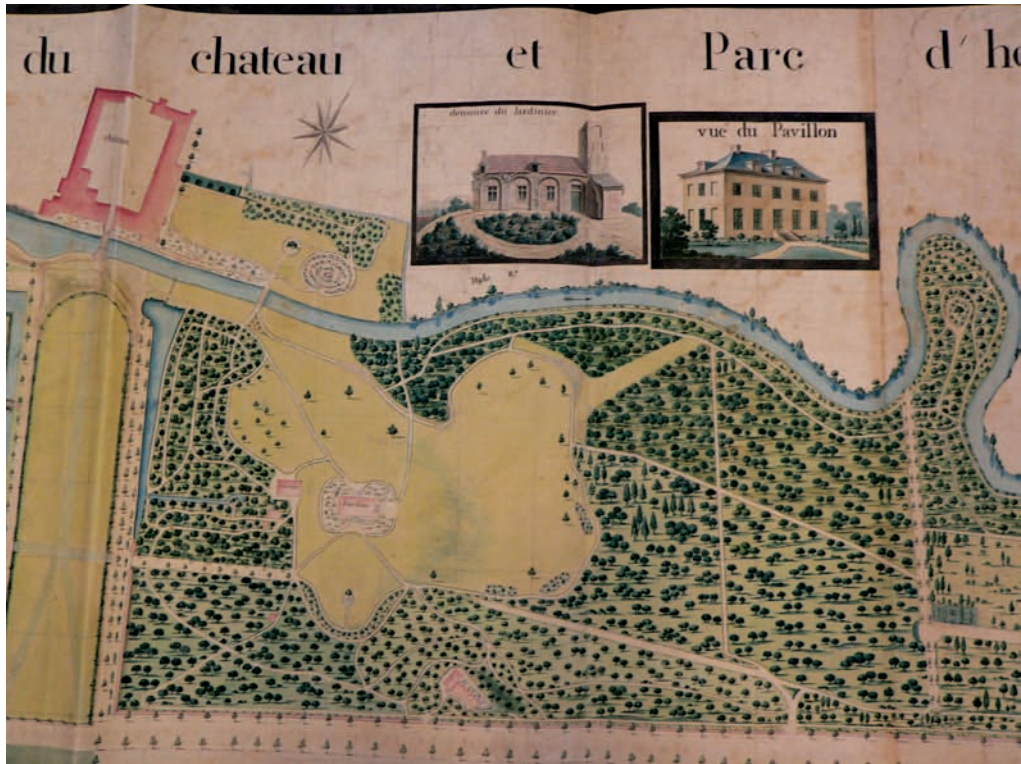


Figure 1. 'Plan du château et de l'enclos du Pavillon d'Heverlé appartenant à S.A.S. Monseigneur le duc d'Arenberg duc d'Aarschot et de Croÿ & & avec cinq vignettes', lithograph in watercolour (c.1818), detail. Courtesy: Brussels, A. G. R., Family d'Arenberg, Maps and plans, no. 575

that Brown could provide technical advice.¹² According to a copy of the original plan conserved in Vienna, Brown's project already included a large lake, a waterfall and a serpentine river (Figure 4).¹³ In July 1782, Brown sent back a plan entitled 'Plan for their Royal and Serene Highnesses Duke Albert de Saxe and Teschen and the Archduchess Marie Christine, made by Lancelot Brown, esquire in England for the seat near Brussels called the Fine Mountain, sent in July 1782' signed 'Lancelot Brown, esquire, 1782'.¹⁴ This project is the only testimony of Brown's intervention in what was to become Belgian territory. Renowned for his technical engineering competence in water management, hydraulic work and their integration into a large-scale landscape project, Brown detailed all the relevant works to tap the springs on the hill, distribute and manage water using the Molenbeek River.¹⁵ He indicated the treatment for the main aquatic features such as the pond, the waterfall with reservoir and a serpentine river communicating with the natural river (Figure 5). The waterfall was operated by a fire machine made of cast-iron elements manufactured in Liège, where a particular expertise in mine-dewatering machines had been developed.¹⁶ Furthermore, Brown also designed several bridges spanning the river and a series of walkways through the wooded areas enclosing the vast southern grassland of the park. The new Schoonenberg residence was inaugurated on 14 July 1785, but numerous embellishments were developed until November 1789 when the archdukes of Austria were constrained to leave Laeken. The end result of the park's programme differed slightly from Brown's project. It owes a lot to the archduke's personality in the choice of materials and their quality as well as their positioning, both in relation to each other and to the palace. As Fried Verschueren and Wim Oers showed,¹⁷ the themes and

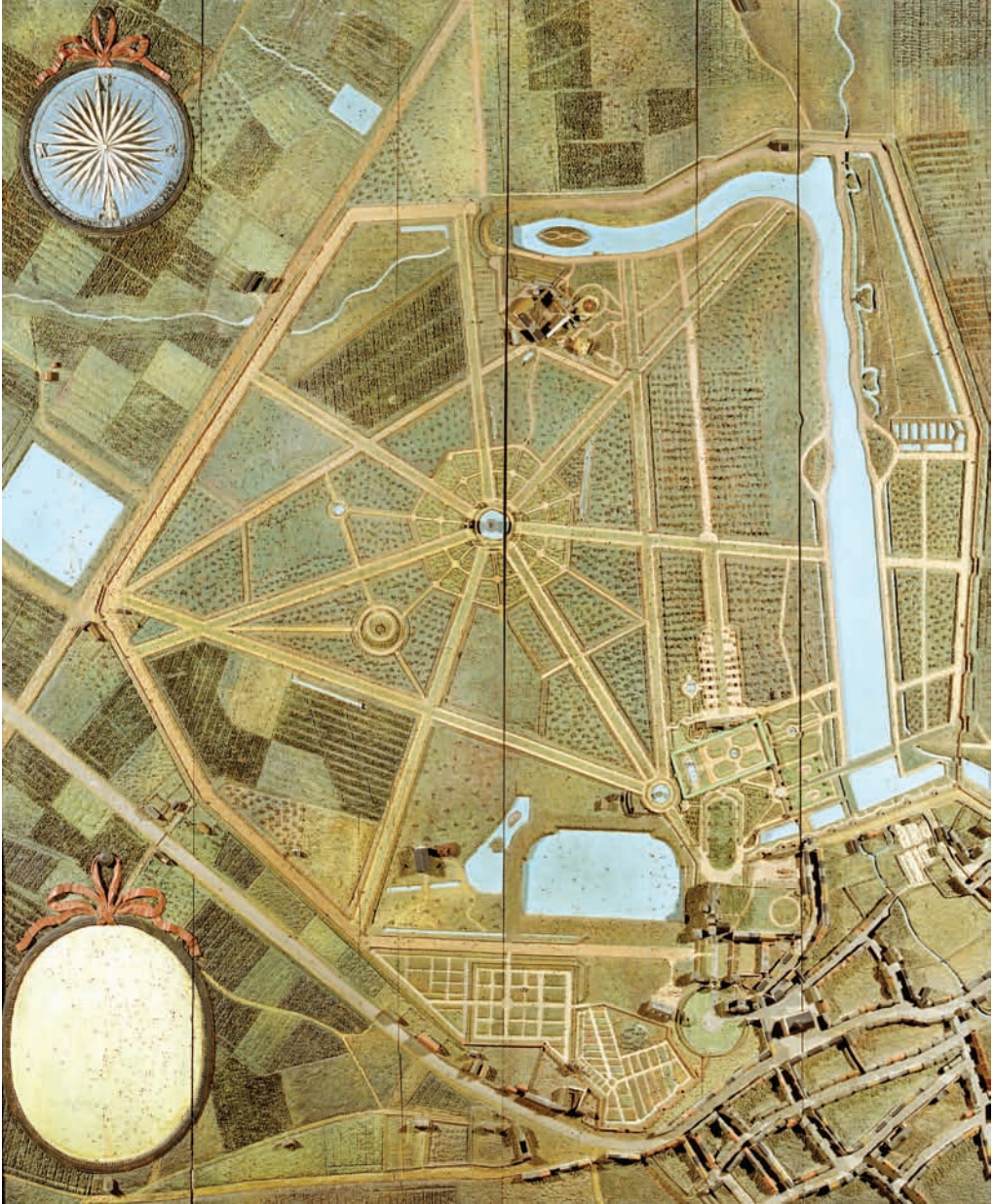


Figure 2. Relief map of the park of Enghien by Martin Schönheydt. Model in polychrome wood (1782). Enghien, Capucins monastery. Courtesy Arenberg Foundation, Enghien

the logical composition of the park revealed highly symbolic intentions based mainly on numbers, and in relation to the Enlightenment aesthetic and philosophy.¹⁸

In the summer of 1788, Duke de Saxe-Teschen sent Baron Alexander of Seckendorff¹⁹ to London and western England, accompanied by the court artist, François Le Febvre,²⁰ and a gardener named de Vienne.²¹ Their mission was to visit and study different gardens, including Chiswick, Kew and Richmond, where the three men gathered ideas, collected rare plants and learnt gardening techniques, describing it as a ‘wide harvest of ideas, gardening techniques and rare plants’.²² In a letter to the Archduke of Austria in June 1788, Seckendorff praised the beauty of the previous generation of English gardens. He argued:



Figure 3. 'Vue de Laeken', quill pen drawing, wash drawing, sepia and lead oxide (c.1820). Collection Archeologic Society of Namur, drawings of the General de Howen, no. 77. Courtesy: Archeologic Society of Namur

If only Monsieur De Walckiers could see the parks of Mount Edgcumbe, Saltram, Mambread and Powdessam Castle, he would mock your hills, trees and bushes ... Moreover, the gardener De Vienne is alone to handle the composition of the different soils species, the best way to manage them, the most effective way of grouping the clumps of trees, by taking the environment's advantages and disadvantages into account.²³

In July 1788, the gardener was then sent to study at Bowood (Wiltshire), a property of the former Prime Minister, William Petty, 2nd Lord of Shelburne and 1st Marquis of Lansdowne. The gardens he found there had been designed and laid out by Brown between 1761 and 1786. There, the gardener discovered the long sinuous lake forming the foreground of the house, as well as several other features, among which an antique-styled temple (1761) and a waterfall reminiscent of the one in the picturesque park of Painshill (Surrey), property of Charles Hamilton (1738–73).

Many authors, including Prince Charles-Joseph de Ligne (1744–1814), reported the eminently picturesque character of Schoonenberg Park. He admired the lawns that followed the boundary of the park:

with well-handled slopes, arriving at a perfectly designed river, supplied by upper waters falling into a beautiful cascade that, unfortunately, can only work for a few hours, as it is the result of a fire machine ... On the right and on the left of the lawn, there are really pleasant promenades through precious shrubs where tall trees sometimes totally hide the surroundings of the Capital.²⁴

He appreciated the quality of the features drawn by the architect Charles De Wailly (1730–98), praising the dominating position of the Temple of Friendship, 'marvellous and high, with a view over the town, the forest up, the meadows down [and] a closed temple [the Pavilion of Sunshine] near the canal, at the bottom of the lawn, with a salon and four cabinets'.²⁵ Finally, he highlighted the pleasant character of the architectural

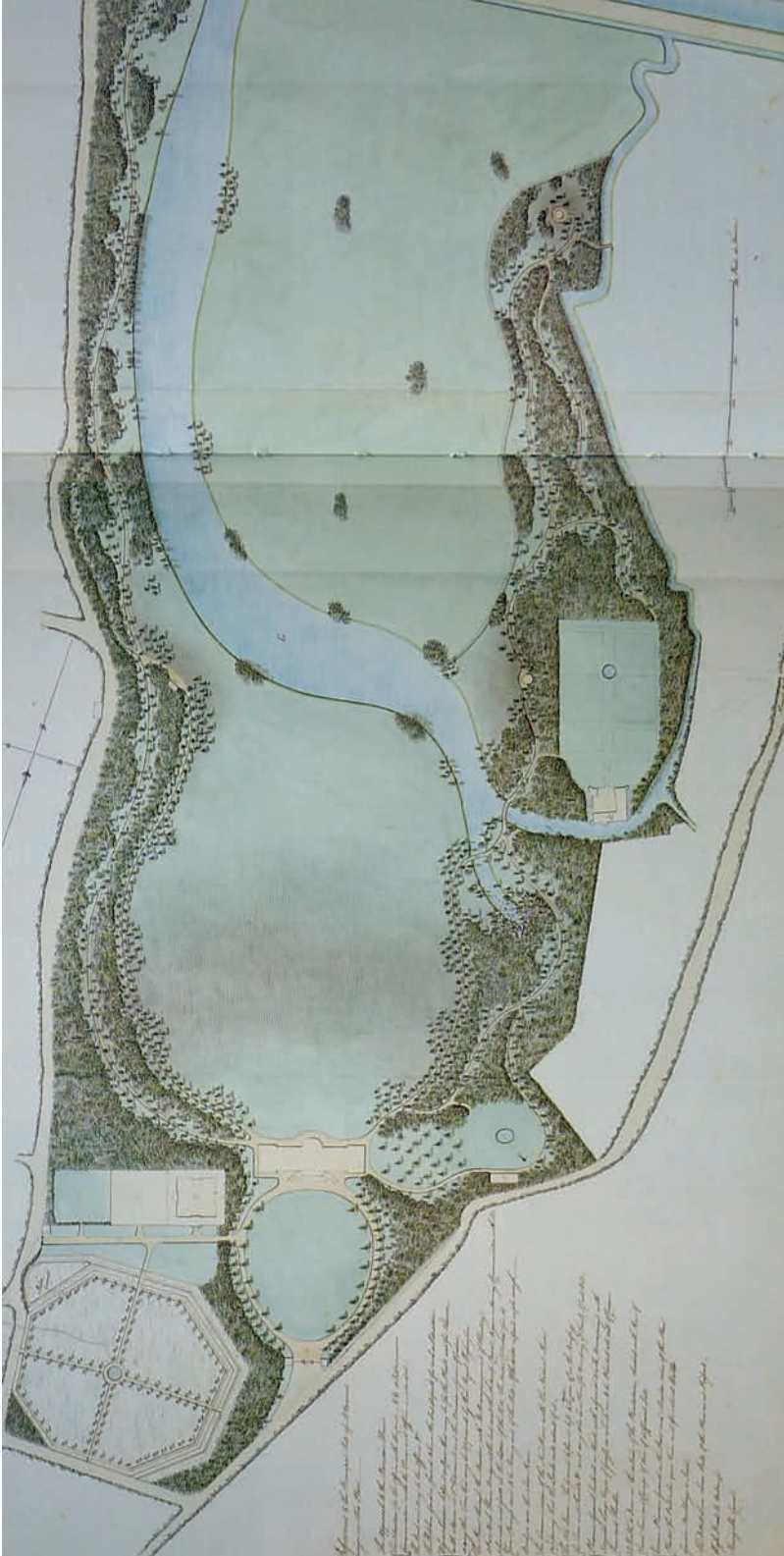


Figure 4. Plan for the park of Schoonenberg. Ink and watercolour drawing signed 'Lancelot Brown , esquire, 1782'. Vienna, Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek; repr. in A. van Ypersele de Strihou and P. van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken, un château de l'Europe des Lumières* (Leuven, Duculot, 1991), pp. 130-1, fig. 141



Figure 5. Cave and water tank view. Watercolour painting by the Duke Albert de Saxe-Teschen signed 'P(rince) A[lbert] delineavit, 1782'. Vienna, Albertina; repr. in A. van Ypersele de Strihou and P. van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken, un château de l'Europe des Lumières* (Leuven, Duculot, 1991), p. 145, fig. 154

features, with the 'wonderful Chinese pagoda, the orangery, and other promenade assets, serious or pleasant assuring and supplying the variety of highbrow details and deeply interesting viewpoints' (Figure 6).²⁶ However, Ligne regretted that the river did not meet the canal below, now describing it as 'too large for so little length' ('à présent trop large, pour si peu d'étendue de longueur') (Figure 7).

An anonymous work, entitled *Description des principaux parcs et jardins de l'Europe avec des remarques sur le jardinage et les plantations* and edited in Germany, in 1812, reported a laudatory description of the park.²⁷ The Austrian origins of their prestigious partners explained the interest and the importance given to Schoonenberg Park in this significant compilation dedicated to the irregular and picturesque gardens of Europe. Two other properties located in the Low Countries were part of it: the estates of Beloeil and Baudour, both belonging to Prince Charles-Joseph de Ligne.

The author described a long path following the movement of water, turning a stream into a waterfall or a cataract operated by a hydraulic pump, or transforming a river into a lake, not to mention the canal edging the domain in the south (Figure 8). Thanks to its shaping, water gave a sensation of unity and permanently livened up this brilliantly composed landscape, described as one of the 'plus heureuses compositions que nous présentent les jardins modernes'.²⁸ A succession of composed scenes offered changing sceneries including spectacular effects (a temple and pavilion, waterfalls, cataracts, a Chinese tower), intimate atmosphere (clearings, shady walkways), and agrarian (vast open grasslands) and picturesque (Island of Love) scenery.

The water scenes are described in detail alongside the stream 'running amidst dense alders' ('qui coule sous des aulnes touffus'), the red bed sandstone rock which fosters a small reservoir of water, to the river 'rushing to the rock ravines at the bottom of



Figure 6. Topographical map of Brussels and surroundings by Guillaume de Wautier, Artillery Captain. Coloured black ink drawing (c.1800). Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium, Maps and plans. Courtesy: Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels



Figure 7. View of Schoonenberg from the River. Watercolour painting by François Lefebvre (undated, c.1785). Vienna, Albertina; repr. in A. van Ypersele de Strihou and P. van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken, un château de l'Europe des Lumières* (Leuven, Duculot, 1991), p. 138, fig. 145

the cascade ('se précipitent dans les ravins du roc qui sont au pied de la cascade'). The surroundings 'present a green groundcover embellished with willows, elms, alders, birch trees, poplars, all grouped differently; some pieces of the land following the river form a garden composed with a collection of almost all the plants growing naturally in Belgium'.²⁹ Tracing back up the grasslands along the river, the visitor could reach the astonishing imposing cataract that 'seems so natural that it can impress the experts themselves'.³⁰ The description perfectly reported the eminently picturesque character of the site and the violence of water movement on its unshaped rocks, making it sublime. Its summit was reached by a sinuous irregular path, 'built to follow the grand river, with its surface embellished with gondolas, barques, yachts, and numerous of the rarest aquatic birds'.³¹ From there, one could see the Island of Love, 'adorned by the most sought-after shrubs and their edges flowering from spring to autumn ... into trees and flowers to which different orangery plants can be added in summer, with several exotic plants'.³²

Diversified plants contributed to give contrast to the scenes: natural (alders, willows, poplars, elms), elegant (planes and beeches), mysterious (firs, larches and softwood) or light-hearted (flowering bushes and shrubs). The quality of the grass, ornamented by flowers, the clumps or the groves brightened up the numerous features. Approaching the Island of Love, the edges of the large river were planted with trees and shrubs flowering in spring and fall. In summer, the plants were supplemented by a collection of orangery plants compiled by the archduchess, who was passionate about botany.

After 1789, during the large landowning reorganization period, emigrants discovered the gardens designed by Brown. At this time, the taste for picturesque had already evolved significantly in England. Banishing any display that would be too ornamental or utilitarian, Brown created a new aesthetic of landscapes based on



Figure 8. 'Vue générale du parc de Schoonenberg', in *Description des principaux parcs et jardins de l'Europe* (1812), t. 3. Engraving enhanced with colours. University of Namur, Plantin Moretus Library, Fund Eric Speeckaert for the study of the Prince Charles-Joseph de Ligne selected works

two major principles: the composition of coherent ensembles and the development of elegant landscapes. In parallel, the Enclosure Acts contributed to a reorganization of the English countryside, following an ideal of Nature that was both beautiful and productive. This typical English vision that sees landscape and gardens as a common good led European aristocrats who came back from exile to adopt more natural forms of management while introducing new agricultural practices. The dereliction of many Belgian gardens provided further incentive to change management strategies (e.g., lawns were turned into meadows, pastures or leas), the adaptation of pathways to the circulation of new machines, the simplification of horticultural practices (abandonment of pruning, development of forestry management), or the large-scale felling and massive (re)planting of trees. In 1802, in Seneffe, Joseph Depestre (1757–1823) transformed the large landscape to the rear of the Castle of Seneffe's park into a large florid meadow surrounded by groves. The property remained in this state until it was sold in 1837. Confiscated in 1798 by the French Republic, the estate had been severely degraded, although a domestic gardener and a professor in natural history, who had to take care of the orangery's plant collection, had been permanently present.³³

In the same year, Count Emmanuel d'Hane Steenhuyse (1751–97) returned from England and decided to increase the area of the 'English woodland' that his father, Count Pierre-Emmanuel d'Hane (1726–86) initiated in 1785 on the family's estate of Leeuwergem, near Gent (Figure 9). This picturesque wood covered the whole southern area of the property. Thanks to its meandering streams and its wisely implemented features, this 'English wood' contrasted with existing classical gardens, arranged in relation to the palace facade.

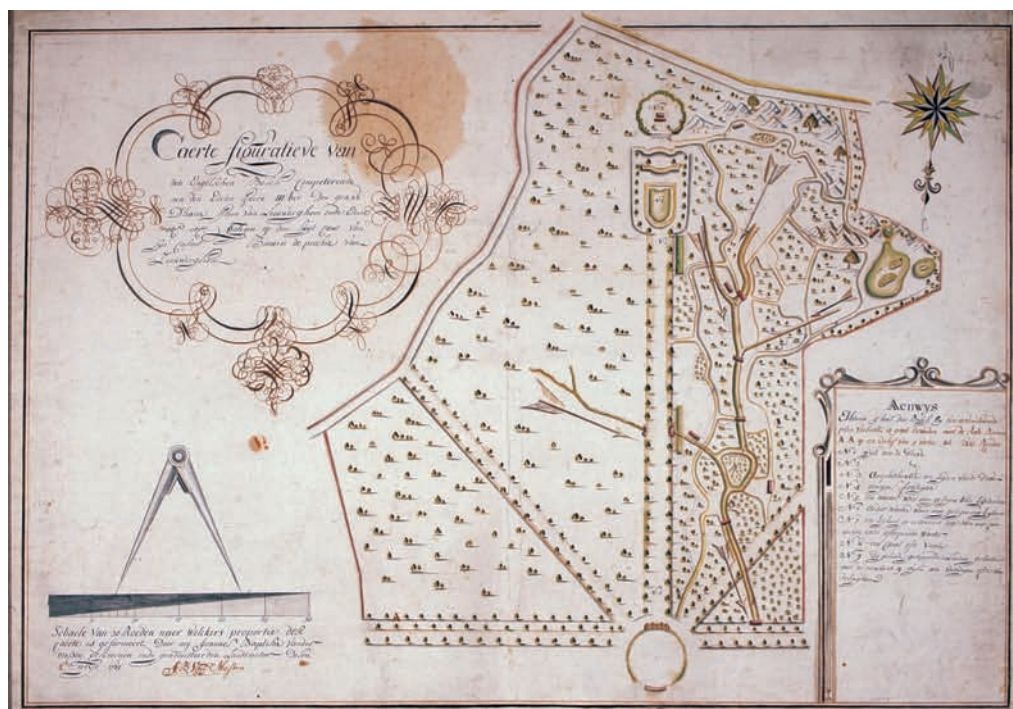


Figure 9. 'Carte figurative du bois anglais appartenant au noble seigneur Monsieur le comte d'Hane, seigneur de Leeuwergem et d'Elene, & & &.' Ink drawing by Jean-Baptiste Vander Massen (1785). Archives of the Castle of Leeuwergem. Courtesy: Flemish Heritage Institute, Brussels

THE ENGLISH GROVES

The use of evergreen groves had been developed by Philip Miller (1691–1771), a Scottish botanist, who succeeded his father as head gardener of the Chelsea Physic Garden (London) in 1721. According to Miller, the composition of evergreen groves is based on appropriate green tree planting: 'if one appreciates green trees in groves, they have to be strictly composed of these trees species'.³⁴ Later, other authors proposed to diversify the varieties, so that these groves became essential elements of new gardens. Baron de Poederlé (1742–1813) integrated evergreen trees and shrubs like box (*Buxus*), yews (*Taxus bacata*) and different varieties of laurels (bay laurel, cherry-laurel, Portuguese laurel or *Laurustinus*). According to him, these groves were:

modelled on the Forests and Woods left to nature, both in the composition of the clumps with trees of all species, as well as in the sinuous paths & the way they intersperse & communicate: Art only appears in the choice of the Trees & Shrubs they are made of.³⁵

The groves were often placed along grass beds and had a happy surprising effect thanks to the plants diversity as well as the quality of its turf and other lawns cut by narrow gravel, sand or clay paths.

The Scottish Thomas Blaikie (1750–1838) advised the introduction of flower varieties with coloured or variegated foliage to enlighten the sides of the walk.³⁶ In addition to the plants cited earlier, he suggested planting holm oak (*Quercus ilex*), different varieties of variegated holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), and green, silver, golden or white variegated buckthorn (*Rhamnus alaternus*). As an alternative to laurel, he preferred rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) and Cape heather (from South Africa), as well as magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) from North Carolina (United States),

whose plants resist European winters but the fleshy flowers cannot tolerate late frosts.³⁷ These groves, composed of permanent and variegated greenery mixed with early flowering shrubs (in spring) are sometimes considered as winter groves.³⁸

During his travels to Belgium, in 1795, the French botanist André Thouin (1747–1824) was surprised to discover the oak-flowered variegated honeysuckle: ‘I have learnt that Liège is the place where one can seek all kinds of variegation with passion. It does not honour local garden agriculture.’³⁹ He was also amazed to find the thickness of the dogwood (*Cornus mas*) grove fence that ‘was not more than four inches thick, was perfectly garnished and could easily take hard pruning’.⁴⁰ This taste for coloured and variegated foliage plants influenced the composition of certain groves, as in the area of the Castle of Hex (Belgian Limbourg) gardens called the ‘Motte panachée’, where one hundred and five taxons of variegated foliage plants from eighty species were planted. Nearly a third of the plants came from the Mediterranean region or South Africa, such as the Cape pelargonium, and, to a lesser extent, from the Azores and Canary Islands, China, India and Louisiana. The list established in 1791 on Count Claude-Romain of Marchant and Ansembourg’s authority, confirmed a penchant for decorative variegated ligneous plants, very fashionable in the region of Liège where different holly and buckthorn varieties could be found.⁴¹ Poederlé, who had travelled to England since 1771, saw these preferences as the direct influence of the English taste stimulated by the discovery of exotic plants of which the shapes and strong autumnal colours ideally contrasted with evergreen groves.

CONCLUSIONS

These developments show that the primary source of admiration for Belgian amateur gardeners was the picturesque gardens created in England during the first part of the eighteenth century. The travel diaries and travellers’ stories reveal less admiration for later gardens. This attitude can be interpreted as a form of rejection of Brown’s style, hardly known outside England.⁴² It was not until the Revolution that the gardens of the emigrant aristocrats of England were seen and then Belgian garden amateurs also felt drawn to the art of composing more naturally. As a consequence, this evolution of taste followed a double influence: style and botany. On the one hand, the deformatization of drawings of gardens and, on the other hand, the adoption of new principles of association for recently introduced rare and exotic plants. Praised in dictionaries and science manuals, these new composition and plantation modes raised enthusiasm for the collections of exotic plants and the extraordinary development of horticultural practices that would lead to the creation of the first scientific institutions and botanical gardens of the country, notably in Gent (1796), Liège (1816) and Brussels (1826). In the early nineteenth century, all these gardens were supplied with vast complexes of hot and cold houses for the acclimatization and the culture of exotic plants.

If the direct influence of Brown on Low Countries’ gardens remains difficult to demonstrate, his compositions made some contribution to the evolution of the irregular model. Indeed, by awakening the most enlightened garden amateurs’ interest in the art of more natural gardening, he managed to introduce a new landscape aesthetic that integrated both gardens and art. Admired by many celebrated visitors, the Schoonenberg Palace Park might have been considered worth emulation by Brown’s contemporaries, such as Charles-Joseph de Ligne (1744–1814), designer of a natural garden at Beloeil and author of the famous *Coup d’oeil sur Beloeil*, in which he explicitly described the intimate union between art and nature.⁴³ This new genre quickly led to the landscape style whose first projects appeared *c.*1815 in the Low Countries as in most parts of Europe.

REFERENCES

¹ Philip Miller, *Dictionnaire des jardiniers et des cultivateurs, traduit de l'Anglais sur la VIII^e édition, avec un grand nombre d'additions de différents genres*, 3 vols (Brussels: Benoît Le Francq, 1795).

² Eugène-Joseph d'Olmen (Baron) de Poederlé, *Manuel de l'arboriste et du forestier belgiques* (Brussels: chez J. L. De Boubers, 1772); *ibid.*, *Manuel de l'arboriste et du forestier belgiques. Suppléments* (Brussels: Emmanuel Plon, 1779).

³ This article is part of the author's 2015 PhD thesis entitled 'L'art des jardins dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux et la principauté de Liège (1761–1827). Évolution du goût et passion botanique sous l'influence des Lumières' ('Art of gardens in the Southern Low Countries and the Principality of Liège (1761–1827). Evolution of taste and botanic passion under the influence of the Enlightenment').

⁴ According to Peter Goodchild, William Kent's productions are in a *rococo* style because they tend to develop irregular and asymmetrical effects applied on small scales, and to create fantasist architecture (with a pastoral, gothic, Chinese or Turkish taste), that refer to theatre or romantic popular literature; Peter Goodchild, 'The early years of the naturalistic style in the mid to late 18th century', Lecture 5: People, Landscapes and Cultural Environment of Yorkshire (PLACE), 2014.

⁵ d'Olmen de Poederlé, *Manuel de l'arboriste et du forestier belgiques*. The *Manuel* is an essential reference to trees and shrubs planted in Belgian parks and gardens in the late eighteenth century, as most land and forest owners were both garden amateurs and botany lovers.

⁶ d'Olmen de Poederlé, *Suppléments*.

⁷ Xavier Duquenne, 'Les jardins anglais créés au XVIII^e siècle par le duc d'Arenberg (III)', *Demeures Historiques and Jardins*, 178 (2013), pp. 2–8 (p. 6). Unfortunately, the new residence burned down in 1786, short after completion of the building.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹ Several lists detail the plants sent to Brussels between 1782 and 1783 (Archives d'Arenberg, Enghien).

¹⁰ See the Plan of the Park and Garden of Enghien, watercolour drawing, 25 cm:1000 French feet; A. G. R., Fonds d'Arenberg, C & P, num. 2564 and 1258, variante.

¹¹ The entire list of the plants conserved in hot- and cold-houses are part of the *Inventaire du mobilier du château des ducs d'Arenberg dressé le 16 vendémiaire de l'An VIII* by the district commissioner of Ath (7 October 1794); Archives de la Ville d'Ath, 2^e partie, pp. 159–60.

¹² Walckiers de Gammerage had commissioned a picturesque garden around his own mansion in Trois-Fontaines (Vilvoorde).

¹³ Ink and watercolour plan (Vienna, Oosterreichische Nationalbibliothek); repr. in Anne van Ypersele de Strihou and Paul van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken, un château*

de l'Europe des Lumières (Leuven: Duculot, 1991), p. 128, fig. 138.

¹⁴ Ink and watercolour plan, 64 × 136.5 cm (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Found Albert of Saxe-Teschen); repr. in *ibid.*, pp. 130–1, fig. 141.

¹⁵ Judith Roberts, 'Well temper'd clay: constructing water features in the landscape park', *Garden History*, 29/1 (2001), pp. 12–28.

¹⁶ 'Mémoire des pièces de la machine à feu' (Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume); repr. in van Ypersele de Strihou and van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken*, p. 160, fig. 178.

¹⁷ Fried Verschueren and Wim Oers, 'Axes cachés. La géométrie dans un parc paysager', in *ibid.*, van Ypersele de Strihou and van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken*, pp. 252–4.

¹⁸ de Harlez de Deulin, 'L'art des jardins', in particular 'Thèmes et contenus des jardins sous l'influence des Lumières', pt 3, ch. 2, pp. 465 ff.

¹⁹ Futur Alexander-Friedrich-Willem, Freiherr von Seckendorff-Aberdar (Bamberg 1743–Sügenheim 1814). Close to the Duke of Saxe-Teschen, he enjoyed a private hermitage in Schoonenberg Park.

²⁰ Author of numerous plans and painted views of the Schoonenberg park.

²¹ 'de Vienne' probably indicates that the gardener came from the Court of Vienna, as did the Zinner family.

²² van Ypersele de Strihou and van Ypersele de Strihou, *Laeken*, p. 162 (n. 123). Translated from the French: 'une ample moisson d'idées, de techniques de jardinage et de plantes rares'.

²³ Translated from Seckendorff's letter: 'Si Monsieur De Walckiers pouvait voir les parcs de Mount Edgcombe, Saltram, Mambrad et Powdessam Castle, il rirait fort de vos collines, de vos bouquets d'arbres et de vos buissons ... le jardinier De Vienne est, de plus, seul pour travailler à la composition des différentes espèces de sols, à la meilleure manière de les déposer, à la façon de grouper les bouquets d'arbres avec le maximum d'effet, tenant ainsi compte des avantages et des inconvénients de l'environnement ... En Angleterre comme partout, il y a de mauvais jardins et c'est seulement à sa connaissance des bons et des mauvais que l'on doit de voir les avantages et les inconvénients de uns et des autres ... La génération précédente avait un meilleur goût que l'actuelle car les bons parcs ont été arrangés par les pères et les mauvais sont l'œuvre des fils'; *ibid.*, p. 163 (n. 124). Mount Edgcombe is an important site located at Cremyll, opposite Plymouth. Saltram House is also near Plymouth (National Trust property). Mamhead House and Powderham Castle are near Dawlish, Devon. Many thanks to Peter Goodchild for having located these gardens which are all on or near the south coast of Devon.

²⁴ Charles-Joseph de Ligne, 'Coup d'oeil sur Beloeil et sur une grande partie des jardins de L'Europe', in Charles-Joseph de

Ligne, *Mélanges militaires, littéraires et sentimentales* (Vienna and Dresden: Les Frères Walther, 1795), bks 8, 9, pp. 97–8. Quotation translated from the French: ‘par des pentes bien prises, jusqu’à une rivière parfaitement bien dessinée, fournie par des eaux supérieures qui y tombent par une fort belle cascade qui, malheureusement, ne peut aller que quelques heures, étant le résultat d’une machine à feu ... A droite et à gauche de la pelouse, il y a des promenades fort agréables, dans les plants d’arbustes précieux, où de grands arbres cachent quelquefois tout-à-fait les environs ornés de la Capitale’.

²⁵ Translated from the French: ‘situé à merveille sur une hauteur, d’où l’on découvre la ville, la forêt qui est au-dessus, les prairies qui sont au-dessous [et] un temple fermé [Pavilion of Sunshine] près du canal, au bout de la pelouse, avec un salon, et quatre cabinets’.

²⁶ Translated from the French: ‘superbe pagode chinoise, l’orangerie, et d’autres objets de promenade, sérieux ou agréables assurant de la variété et fournissant des détails savants et des points de vue remplis d’intérêt’.

²⁷ [Karl Robert Schindelmayer], *Description des principaux parcs et jardins de l’Europe avec des remarques sur le jardinage et les plantations*, 3 vols (Germany: Schrämbl, 1812), I, pp. 69–78, 2 illus. Bilingual edition (French–German).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74. Translated from the French: ‘présentent un tapis de verdure orné de saules, d’ormes, d’aunes [aulnes], de bouleaux, de peupliers, tous groupés différemment; quelques pièces du terrain, qui longent la rivière, forment un jardin composé d’une collection de presque toutes les plantes qui croissent naturellement dans la Belgique’.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76. Translated from the French: ‘toute sa forme parait si naturelle, qu’elle en impose même au connoisseur’.

³¹ *Ibid.* Translated from the French, ‘un sentier tortueux construit très irrégulièrement pour longer la grande rivière dont la surface est ornée de gondoles, de barques, de yachts, et d’un grand nombre d’oiseaux aquatiques des plus rares’.

³² Translated from the French: ‘embellie d’arbustes les plus recherchés [dont] les bords fleurissent du printemps à l’automne ... en arbres et en fleurs, auxquels on ajoute pendant l’été différentes plantes d’orangerie, parmi lesquelles se trouvent plusieurs plantes exotiques’.

³³ Xavier Duquenne, *Le château de Seneffe* (Brussels, 1978), pp. 231, 242.

³⁴ Miller, *Dictionnaire des jardiniers*, I, p. 542. Quotation translated from the French: ‘si on aime avoir des arbres verts dans les bosquets, il faut les composer exclusivement de ces espèces d’arbres’.

³⁵ de Poederlé, *Manuel de l’arboriste et du forestier belgiques*, pp. 387–91. Translated from the French: ‘modélés sur les Forêts et les Bois abandonnés à la nature, tant par la

composition de leurs massifs, formés d’arbres de toutes espèces, que par l’ensemble de petits sentiers tortueux, & par la manière dont ils se coupent & se communiquent: l’art ne se montre que dans le choix des Arbres & des Arbustes qui les forment’.

³⁶ For more about Blaikie, see Janine Barrier, *Thomas Blaikie. Sur les terres d’un jardinier. Journal de voyage 1775–1792* (Besançon: de l’Imprimeur, 1997); Patricia Taylor, ‘Les plantations du parc’, in Martine Constans (ed.), *Bagatelle dans ses jardins* (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1997), pp. 190–8; and *idem*, *Thomas Blaikie 1751–1838, the Capability Brown of France* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002).

³⁷ Linné had already described twelve species of South African heather in his *Species Plantarum* (1753). This Swedish botanist’s major work is considered the official reference for the whole modern botanical taxonomy.

³⁸ Schindelmayer, *Description des principaux parcs*, II, p. 49.

³⁹ André Thouin, *Voyage dans la Belgique, la Hollande et l’Italie, 1795* (Paris: Baron Trouvé, 1841), p. 18. Translated from the French: ‘J’ai appris qu’à Liège on recherche avec passion tout ce qui est panaché. Cela ne fait pas grand honneur à l’agriculture des jardins du pays.’

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Translated from the French: ‘n’avaient pas plus de quatre pouces d’épaisseur, étaient parfaitement garnies et se prêtaient avec facilité à la tonture la plus sévère’.

⁴¹ François-Charles de Velbruck, nephew and heir of Prince Bishop of Liège, died in Hex in 1784. This enlightened prince had commissioned the residence and created the first English garden around it in 1779. The 1791 original copy of *Inventaire des arbres, arbustes, arbrisseaux, plantes vivaces et herbacées du jardin anglais du château de Hex* (Archives du château de Hex) has disappeared, but a late transcription has been conserved. The plants are listed according to the binary botanical nomenclature (genre and variety) with their Latin and French names. This remarkable work was compiled by Paul Van den Brempt, ‘Een interessante plantenlijst uit 1791 van de Engelse tuinen van Kasteel Hex (Heers, Heks, prov. Limburg): een historisch-botanische en cultuurhistorische analyse’, in Sonia Vanblaere (ed.), *Relicta* (Brussels: Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed, 2009), pp. 143–287 (Archeologie, Monumenten en Landschapsonderzoek in Vlaanderen, 5).

⁴² John Harris has already highlighted that French people visiting England after 1763 were unable to appreciate Brown’s style: John Harris, ‘L’idole du temple: the first French gardener in the Brownian style’, *Garden History*, 29/1 (2001), pp. 36–47.

⁴³ de Ligne, *Coup d’œil sur Beloeil, 1795. Coup d’œil sur les plus beaux sites et sur les jardins naturels* and *Coup d’œil sur les jardins de l’art* constitute the third and the fourth parts of the third edition.