

Garden Diary - 11th June 2020

Walled Garden History

There is something special about working here in Colebrooke Walled Garden and it is hard to put your finger on what exactly it is. The people are definitely part of it, the job itself I really enjoy, but there's something else that adds to everything and that is the history. The garden is nearly 200 years old, and the feeling of that legacy is not forgotten when you spend time here.



The main house was constructed in the 1820's, then in 1837 the walled garden was completed along with the spectacular glasshouse located at the top of the garden. This greenhouse went on to receive the status of being a building of international significance and was given the top listing, even greater than the main house itself. It was built by Richard Turner who also constructed the glasshouses in The Botanic Gardens in Belfast and Dublin, and Kew Gardens famous Palm House but Colebrooke's glasshouse predates all of these. Currently, it is in disrepair, but the dream would be to have it restored.

The Gardens inception was at the time when Victorian kitchen gardens were taking off and all the big houses wanted to have a kitchen garden that was worth speaking about. At Colebrooke they definitely did their best to impress. The garden is located on a southern facing slope to receive the best of the sun throughout the day. It's around 3 acres with a dividing wall in the middle to create 2 south facing walls which act as sun traps. The south and east facing walls are built from red brick which absorb heat, the north and west facing walls are built from stone to save cost.



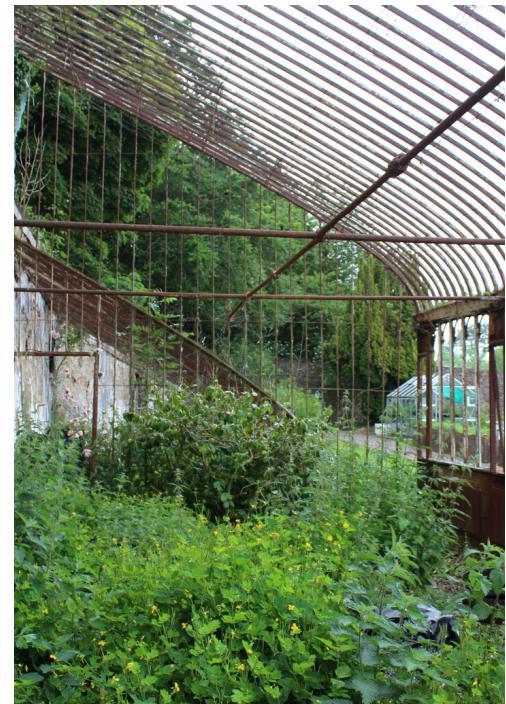
Apparently ten to fifteen gardeners would have worked within the garden and lived together in the bothy house attached to the top wall, a very cramped way to live!

The Head Gardener would have lived in the rather beautiful stone building which is attached to the lower wall. The working conditions would have been hard with the gardeners working all the light hours of the day. With such cramped living conditions and long hours, the job might have sounded unpopular, but in fact it was the opposite and it is said that most workers felt a great pride to work in the walled garden and the ultimate success was to get a job within the glasshouse.

Times have definitely changed! These days, the staff are much fewer and work a lot less! Although I do think the pride is still there for all the people involved and so many years' worth of memories are still felt and talked about today.



*Regards, Dougal Dorman, Head Gardener,
Colebrooke Walled Garden*



BOTTOMLESS POTS

12TH JUNE 2020

Planting
tomatoes using
bottomless pots

This is a great way of planting tomatoes, especially if you don't have a polytunnel and want to grow your tomatoes inside in a sunny room.

The fact you use fresh soil each time has a great benefit for tomatoes as they are susceptible to soil borne diseases.



1 MAKE YOUR POT BOTTOMLESS

Cut the bottom out of an 8- or 10-inch pot and place on a bag of compost or grow bag. Make sure you protect your carpet if growing inside!

2 SIZE YOUR COMPOST BAG

Cut a hole in the bag the size of the bottom of your pot and place the bottomless pot inside the hole. Now inside the empty pot place a length of cord in the bottom, around 7 foot in length. This is for supporting the plant as it grows.

3 PLANT

Place your tomato plant inside the pot, on top of the cord and fill with compost.

4 SUPPORT

Now rap the cord around your tomato plant and tie to something close to the roof. You can just use a bamboo cane as a support if you like. Keep training the plant up the support as it grows and water 2 or 3 times a week.

