

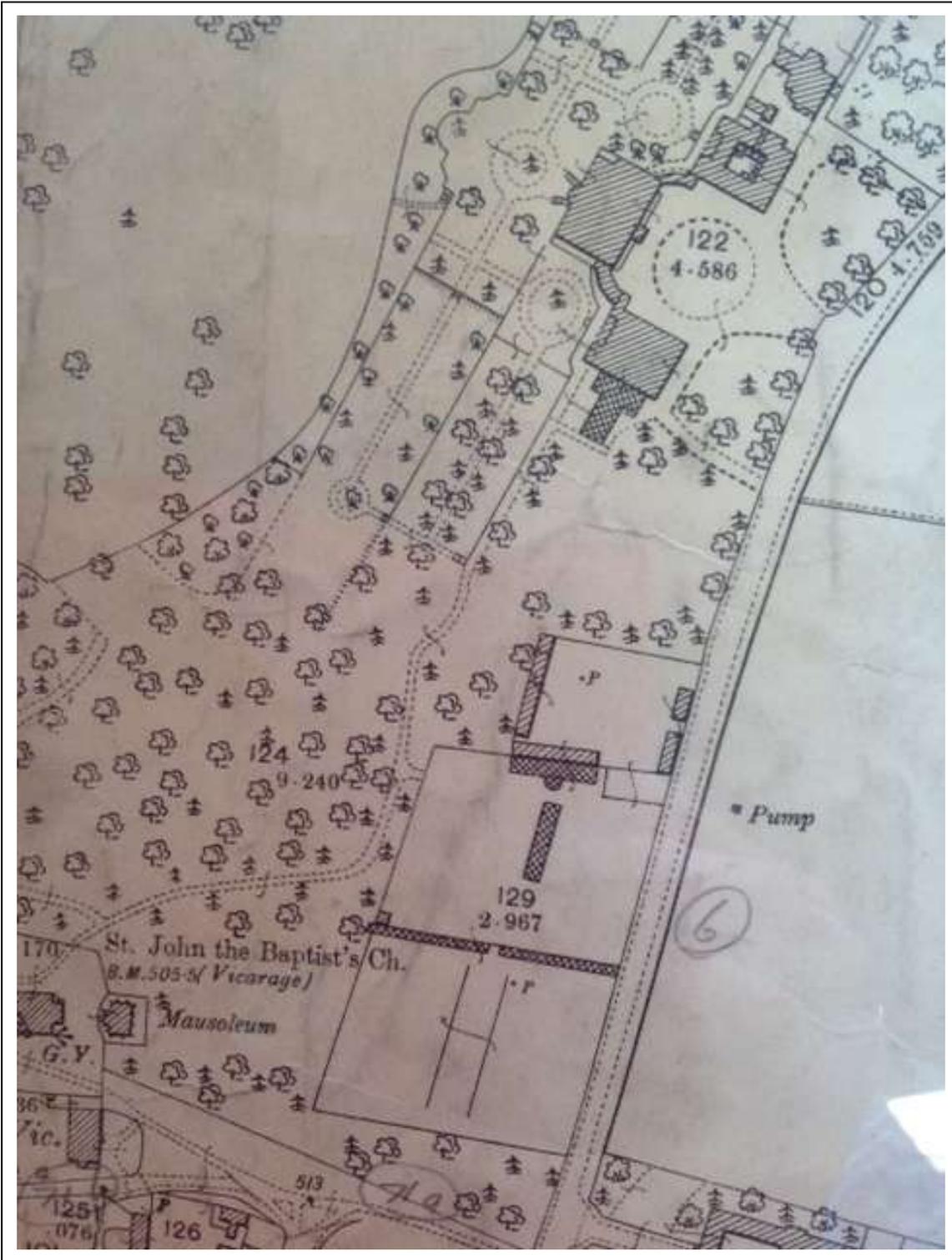
Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust
Walled Kitchen Garden Register

Name of House:	Buckminster Hall			
Address:	Buckminster, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 5SD			
Ownership:	Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public	Institutional	Other
Grid reference: SK881231	Map No: Explorer Map No. 247			
Date original WKG created:	C 1790			
Other key dates in development: Mid-Late 19 th century: additional wall constructed dividing the walled kitchen garden into two sections				
Size and brief description:	2.967 acres, including the frame-yard area. It is a skewed rectangle, oriented north/south			
Official Designations for garden(e.g. EH listing)	Designation: None	Reference: None	Grade: None	

DESCRIPTION: CURRENT AND PAST	
<p>Currently a small area of the northern part of the walled kitchen garden is used for vegetable growing. The rest is for equestrian use. The southern walled kitchen garden is still an orchard.</p> <p>A modern glasshouse, built on the brickwork of the former vinery remains and still contains grapevines.</p>	
Features: further information and current condition:	
Walls, doors, gates	<p>The brick wall surrounding the walled kitchen garden is late 18th century, with narrow handmade bricks. The condition is good.</p> <p>The dividing wall is mid-late 19th century, with larger machine-made bricks. The condition is good.</p> <p>A Lordship Map dated 1829, held in the Buckminster Archive and supplied to us by the Victoria County History project, shows that the original walled kitchen garden had no dividing wall. (It is numbered on the map as area 28.)</p>

	There is currently a double set of wooden gates into the frameyard from the road. An entrance from the road into the walled kitchen garden has been bricked up.
Glasshouses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Range of glasshouses. Vinery and central conservatory. The brick base of the vinery remains but the glass is modern. The original had continuous opening front and top lights on the lean-to part of the range. The opening top lights of the "lantern" of the conservatory are of an unusual design. See photo below. The manufacturer of the range is not known – it is not by greenhouse manufacturers such as Messengers or Foster and Pearson. 2. Partially sunken span roof forcing house, installed by Messenger and Co. in 1910. The photo below indicates that it was divided into three sections, the first with standard side-wall ventilation holes. All three sections have top light ventilation systems. The forcing house (which no longer exists) was not aligned square on to the range. This might indicate that it was aligned with some original feature. 3. Two peach cases. These were installed on the south-facing side of the dividing wall. Nothing remains, though the wall is still white-washed.
Frames	According to the son of the former head gardener, there were six rows of eight cold frames in the frame yard.
Pits	Not known
Hotwalls/furnaces	None
Heating pipes/boilers etc.	<p>1908: Thomas Messenger No. 56 Quorn boiler and heating to forcing houses.</p> <p>1930: No 45 Quorn boiler to heat peach cases (replacing a saddle boiler) The stokehole for the boiler in the frameyard remains. The position of the boiler on the north side of the dividing wall (to heat the peach case) is visible as the ground dips down.</p>
Backsheds, workrooms, stores	A full range of backsheds, workrooms and stores. See the separate plan for descriptions.
Gardener's house, cottages, bothies	The head gardener's house was one of the estate houses. See photo below. The bothy was in the frame yard area – see the separate plan of the walled kitchen garden and frame yard.
Wells, ponds, tanks, towers	There was a well and pump the frame yard area. Also, according to the OS map, a possible second pump in the south garden.

Planting	For full details of the original planting, see the plans provided by the son of the former head gardener, shown separately.	
Other key features	None	
Any other information:	An interview was carried out in March 2015 with the son of Edward (Ted) Dunkley who was a foreman gardener and then head gardener during the first half of the 20 th century. The transcript of this interview is shown below, as are plans of the walled kitchen garden and frame yard, based on drawings produced by him.	
Date site visited	22 nd January 2015	
References:	OS Maps 25" = 1 mile 1885, 1904, 1930. 1829 Lordship map: Buckminster archives Pevsner, Nicholas "The Buildings of England: Leicestershire and Rutland" 2 nd edition ISBN 0 14 071018 3 Dunkley, Geoff "Tommy being Tommy" ISBN 978 1 78003 801 8 (Memoirs of the World War 1 experiences of Ted Dunkley, former head gardener,) Photographs supplied by Geoff Dunkley	
Researched by:	Sarah Bailey, Sue Blaxland, Karen Gimson	
Record Compiled by:	Sue Blaxland Sarah Bailey	Date: May 2015

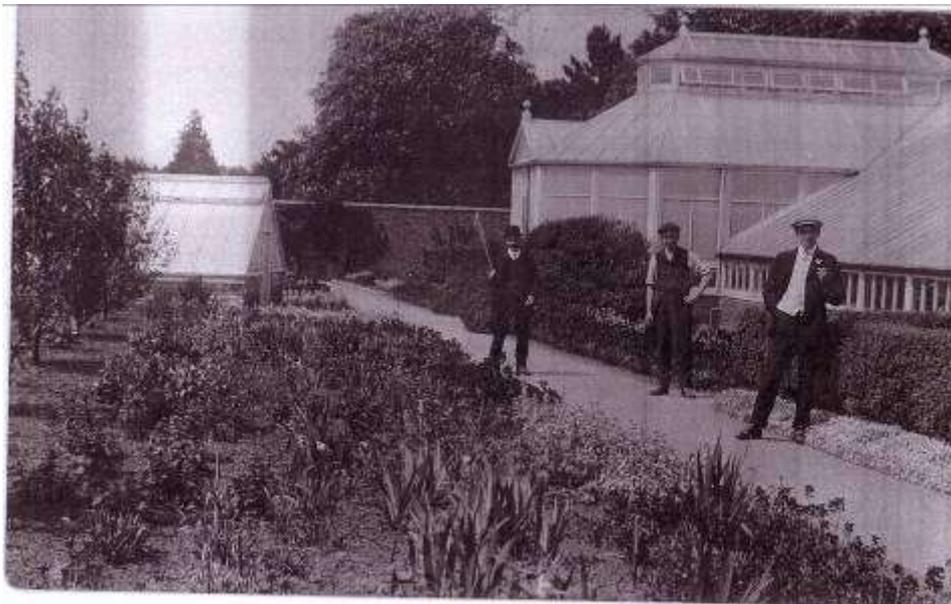


OS Map 1904 showing location of walled kitchen garden

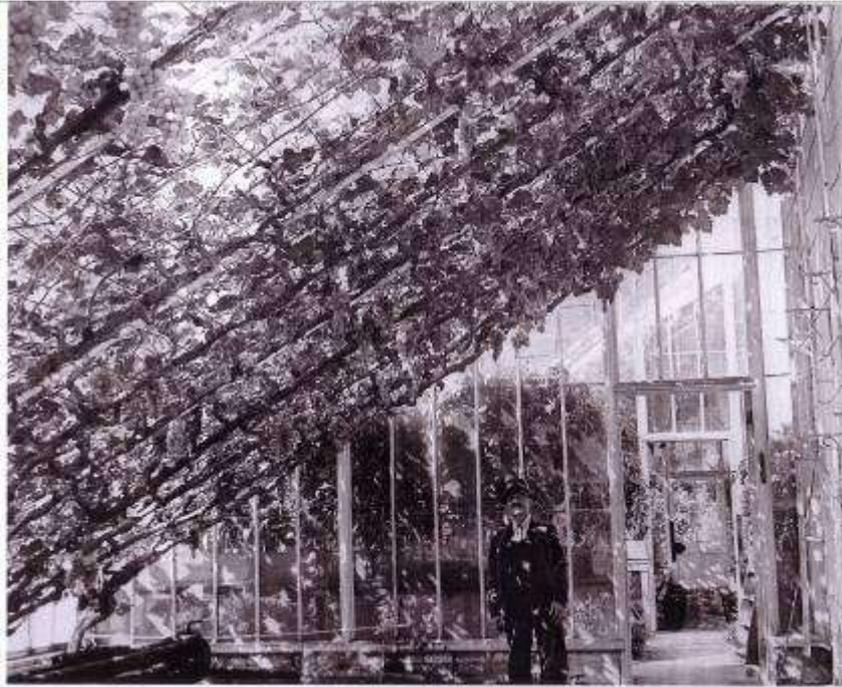


Ted Dunkley as foreman gardener in front of the entrance to the Forcing House. C. 1912

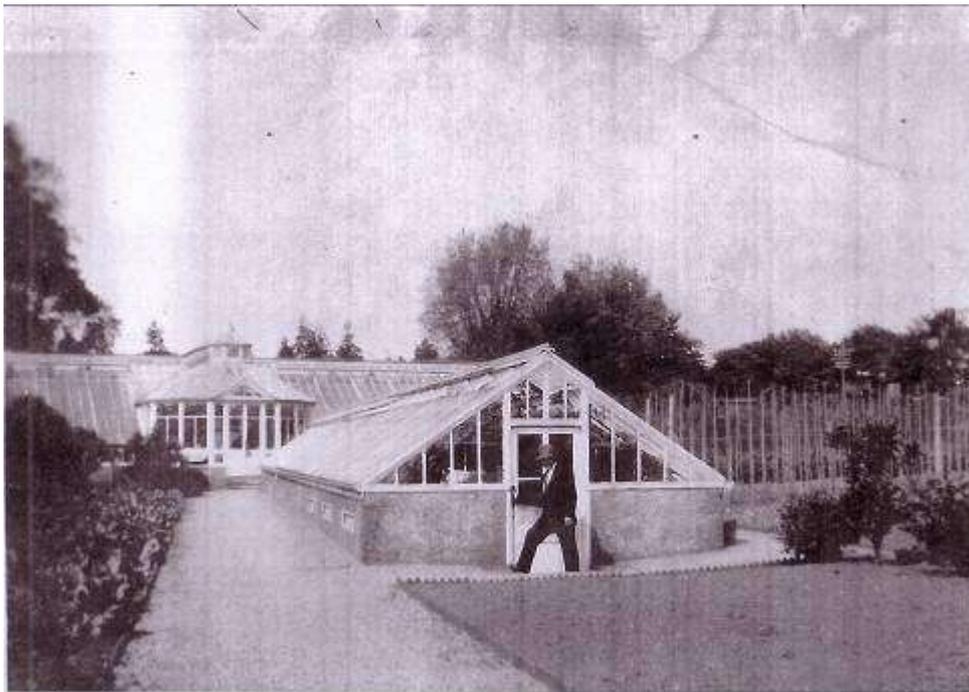
Chrysanthemums in pots behind him.



Range of glasshouses with conservatory in the centre and lean-to vineries to either side. (Shows design of conservatory). Ted Dunkley, head gardener, in the background. Photograph likely to have been taken on a Sunday with the "duty gardener" next to Ted and another gardener in his "Sunday Best" on the right. Date: 1920's



Ted Dunkley in the Vinery – 1940's



Ted Dunkley walking past the entrance to the sunken forcing house.
- 1940's



Head Gardener's Cottage

Buckminster: Notes from Interview with Geoff Dunkley

12 March 2015

Geoff Dunkley's contact details were supplied to us by Richard Tollemache (the present owner of Buckminster Hall). Geoff's father, Edward (Ted) Dunkley had worked at Buckminster as head gardener and we arranged to interview Geoff to talk about his father's career. Geoff Dunkley is now in his mid-80's but his memories of Buckminster are very vivid and extensive.

This is a transcript of the notes that were made at our meeting with him.

Ted Dunkley was one of eight children. The family lived in Market Harborough, where his father had a shop. Geoff described this as a "gardening shop", presumably selling garden tools etc. Ted worked for his father when he left school but then got a job at Broughton Hall in Yorkshire and then at Nidd Hall, also in Yorkshire.

In 1909 Ted applied for the job of Foreman Gardener at Buckminster. He cycled down from Nidd to Buckminster. (This is 106 miles down the A1). He was offered the job, cycled back to Nidd to hand in his notice and then back to Buckminster to start work.

He lived in the bothy, where, according to notes written by Geoff, the bothy boys were looked after by a Miss Grice, who came in from the village to cook and clean. Geoff said that there were 14 gardeners before the First World War. Geoff supplied us with a photo of his father, taken c 1912, standing outside the forcing house – you can see prize chrysanthemums in pots behind him. (This photo is shown on the website data entry form)

At the outbreak of the 1st World War, he and his two pals, Humphrey Rudkin and Tom Armstrong (a groom), enlisted in the Lincolnshire Regiment. They fought on the Somme and both Humphrey and Tom were killed during the war, with Ted as the only survivor. (See the photo of them below, standing in front of one of the back sheds). Geoff has published his father's 1st World War memoirs – the book is called "Tommy being Tommy"

Ted returned to Buckminster and was made up to head gardener in 1927. He married Geoff's mother, Margaret Annie Rayson, who was in service at the Hall. At this point, he earned £2 10s 0d per week with the head gardener's house, free coal, free electricity and free fruit and vegetables supplied.

The estate was then owned by William Tollemache, 9th Earl of Dysart. Lily ponds and a new terrace were created at this time but were subsequently demolished. The family lived at Buckminster for six months of the year, the winter months, for hunting and shooting, as one might expect.

Geoff was born at Buckminster in 1929, in the head gardener's house, which was one of the estate cottages – the first house on the left on the Sproxton Road. .

In 1935, Lord Dysart died and the estate was crippled with death duties. The walled kitchen garden was used (as far as we could gather) as a market garden, with the "frame yard" having plants and shrubs standing out for sale. Fruit, such as grapes, peaches, nectarines and plums was sold to a wholesaler in Covent Garden called T.J. Poupart (who still exist). In season, 10 boxes a day were collected by a man with a lorry, driven to Grantham station and sent to London by train. Geoff has marked on the plan of the walled kitchen garden the area that was used for packing the fruit.

By this time, the number of gardeners was significantly reduced. The bothies were no longer used as most of the younger gardeners had to finish.

During the 2nd World War, there were only two older men working in the gardens: an ex-convict (called Swinghurst) and "Old Bob", who had learning difficulties. Geoff, as a teenager, used to work in the gardens during the summer holidays.

He told a story that his father had instructed him and Bob to pick fruit in the orchard area of the walled kitchen garden. Geoff decided that the quickest way for them to do this was for him to climb the trees and shake the fruit down! Bob would pick the fallen fruit. Needless to say, Ted was not pleased to discover this and dismissed them both (but he reinstated them the next day!).

Geoff recalled that, during the second summer, he got a job on a farm at 5/- a week more than his father was paying. So the Estate Office increased his pay to 10/- a week in order to keep him.

The Hall was visited by an official from the Ministry of Food who instructed that all the exotic flowers in the conservatory had to be removed and replaced with tomatoes, for local sale. Ted was allowed to keep his grape vines but was ordered to remove the peaches and nectarines. He was very reluctant to do this, as they had taken years to train and grow, so he ignored the instruction. A second Ministry of Food official visited in due course and said that they could be kept, provided that he was supplied with a hamper of fruit when he visited! Geoff said that he saw this happen. So the peaches and nectarines survived the War.

The Hall itself was used as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers and the produce was used for the patients.

The glasshouses were removed in the 1950's and the area was used for equestrian purposes, as it is today.

Geoff said that his father loved his work and got on very well with the Dysarts and the Tollemaches.

By the time of his death in 1952, at the age of 66, he was still working, with a young girl aged about 19 and "Old Bob" to help him. Old Bob lived in one of

the bothies, but became elderly and infirm and moved to live with his sister in Leicester. He died in the Leicester Workhouse (which, by then, was used as an old people's home)

There were several other pieces of information and anecdotes that Geoff told us:

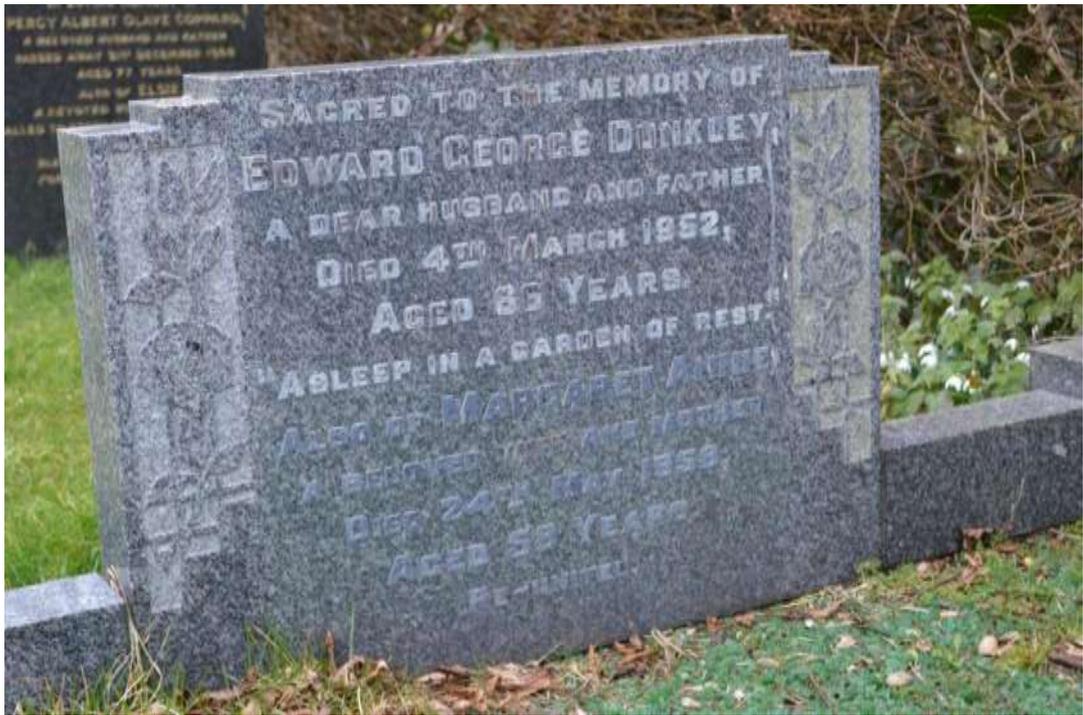
The area outside the walled kitchen garden (where the snowdrops now grow) was known as the Elysian Fields. He mentioned that there was a 40 foot deep well in this area, which had not been capped off. There was also a well in the area near the bothies. There were no ponds.

After the War, his father had a problem with fruit being stolen. He discovered that Swinghurst, the ex-convict, was the culprit. Swinghurst's wife came into the garden during Ted's lunchbreak and together they were stripping the trees and vines. Ted suspected what might be happening and asked Geoff to hang around and watch out. They were caught red-handed and Swinghurst was dismissed.

His father was responsible for growing flowers to decorate the Hall and the church, at Christmas.



Ted Dunkley, Humphrey Rudkin and Tom Armstrong



Ted Dunkley's grave in the churchyard at Buckminster

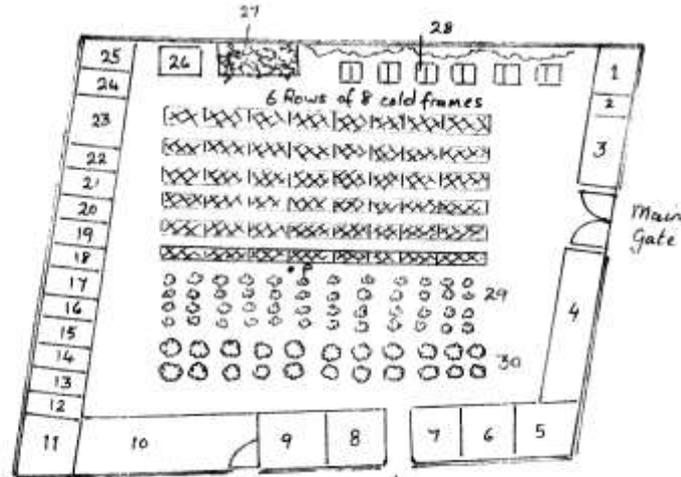
Plans of Walled Kitchen Garden and Frame Yard at Buckminster Hall, based on drawings by Geoff Dunkley, son of former Head Gardener

Plan of the Frame Yard
at Buckminster Hall

from a sketch plan drawn
by Geoff Dunkley (son of
Ted Dunkley, Head Gardener:
1923-1952

Key

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Coke Heap | 15 | Booth Kitchen |
| 2 | W.c. | 16 | Dining Room |
| 3 | Potato Store | 17 | Common Room |
| 4 | Fruit Packing Shed | 18 | Bathroom |
| 5 | Wood Shed | 19 | Bedrooms |
| 6 | Barrow Shed | 20 | |
| 7 | Apple Store | 21 | |
| 8 | Mushroom House | 22 | |
| 9 | Stoke Hole | 23 | Plant Pot Store |
| 10 | Potting Shed | 24 | Mower Store |
| 11 | Foreman's Bedroom | 25 | Tool Room |
| 12 | Misc. store | 26 | Paraffin Tank |
| 13 | Head Gardener's Office | 27 | Marrow Bed |
| 14 | Store Room | 28 | Bee Hives |
| | | 29 | 4 Rows of Pot Plants |
| | | 30 | 2 Rows of Shrubs |
| | | | P: Pump |



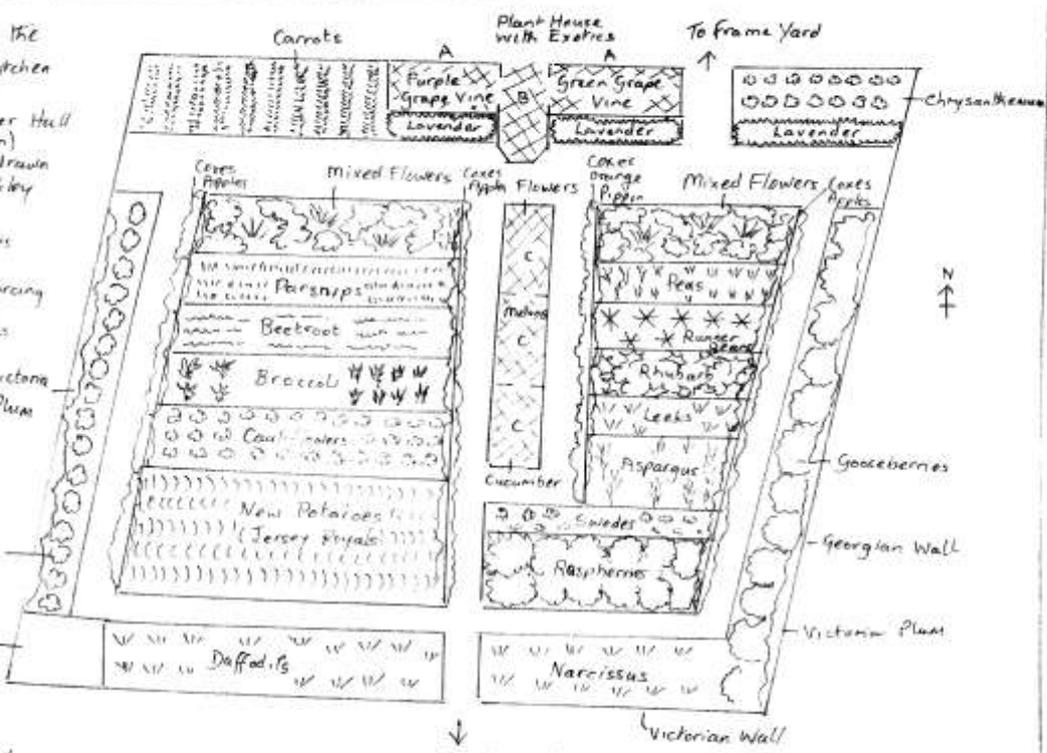
Not to Scale

Sue Blackland
2015

Plan of the
Walled Kitchen
Garden at
Buckminster Hall
(North section)
from a sketch drawn
by Geoff Dunkley

- A-A: Lean-to Vineries
- B: Conservatory
- C: Span, sunken forcing house, divided into three sections

Victoria Plum
"Elysian Fields"
Spring Cabbage
Disused Stake Hole

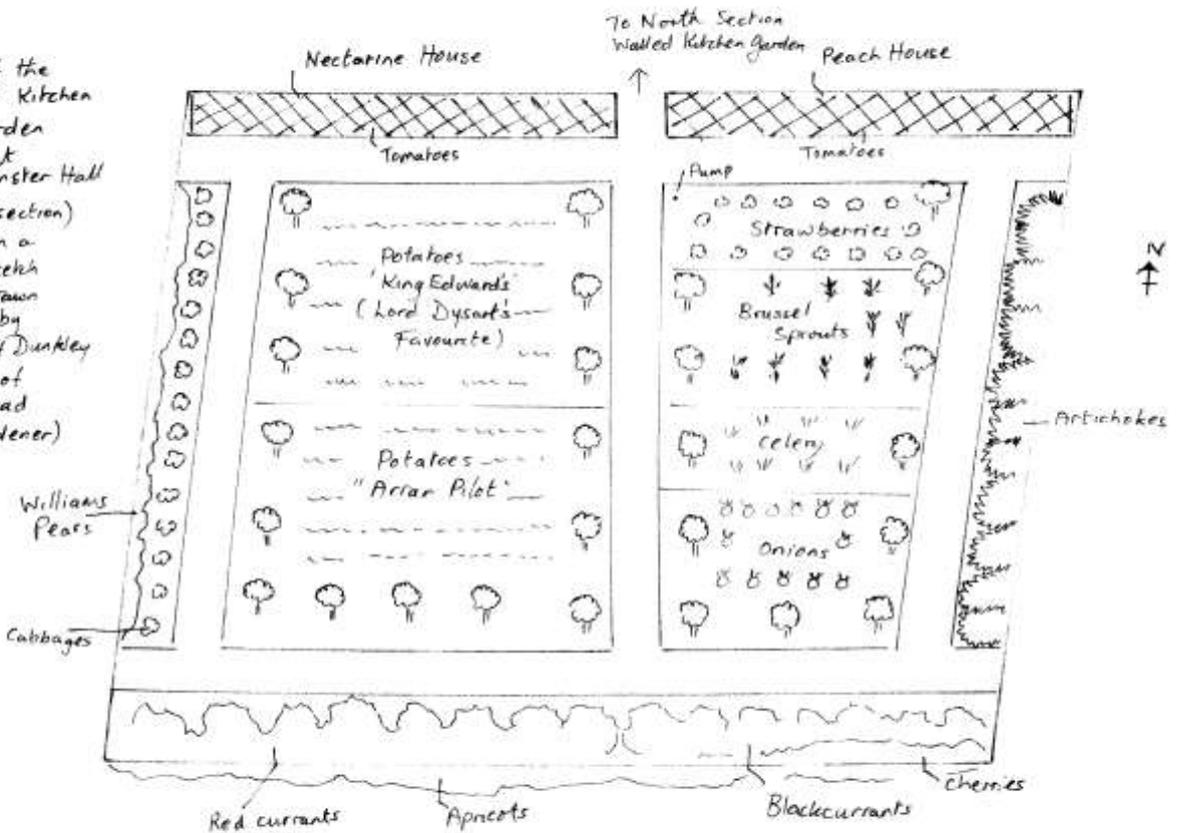


Not to scale

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To South Section
Walled Kitchen
Garden

Sue Blaxland
2015

Plan of the
Walled Kitchen
Garden
at
Buckminster Hall
(south section)
from a
sketch
drawn
by
Geoff Dunkley
(son of
Head
Gardener)



Not to
Scale

Sue Blaxland
2015