

Points of interest

1 Endsleigh Cottage

The Grade I listed house was designed in the cottage orné style by Wyattville in the early 19th Century and forms the centrepiece of the ‘Picturesque’ composition of Endsleigh. The plan comprises two blocks – the main house and the children’s wing – linked by a curved parterre.

2 The Stable Buildings

The Grade I listed stable buildings form an enclosed courtyard containing a spring water trough with an inscription recording the laying of the foundation stone by Georgina’s four step-sons.

3 The Rockery

The rockery and grotto are Grade I listed. The rockery provides the setting for a central pond and fountain and contains a network of paths notable for their patterned pebble work. The paths lead downwards to a hidden grotto which in turn connects to the Dairy Dell. Water flows from the rock garden and issues out from the top of a crag of rock below the grotto to form another of the cascades proposed by Repton.

4 Greenhouse & Brewery

Adjacent to the rockery is the base of what was once a singularly unusual greenhouse which had been extended in height to accommodate the growth of a Norfolk Island Pine planted within. To the east are the remains of the boiler room that heated the greenhouse. To the west are the ruins of the Brewhouse, where the Estate’s beer was once brewed.

The Inspiration

The inspiration behind the creation of Endsleigh was Georgina, Duchess to the sixth Duke of Bedford and is the result of a collaboration between architect Sir Jeffry Wyattville and landscape designer Humphry Repton. Wyattville designed the house, stables and several other buildings whilst Repton made proposals for the new gardens and the wider estate. The grounds contain 13 listed buildings and structures, seven of which are Grade I. The gardens are listed Grade I in English Heritage’s Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

An inscribed stone tablet in the stable courtyard records: *‘Endsleigh Cottage was built and a residence created in this sequestered valley by John, Duke of Bedford, the spot having previously been chosen for the natural and picturesque beauties which surround it by Georgina, Duchess of Bedford. The first stone of the building was laid by her four eldest sons, Wriothesely, Edward, Charles Fox and Francis John, Sept 7 1810’.*

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5 Waterfall

The recently uncovered waterfall at the top of the dell is something of a mystery. It is not part of the Repton landscape and first appears in maps around 1920.

6 The Crag & Cascade

The crag was one of the natural outcrops of rock which Repton sought to reveal for picturesque effect. Below is one of the dramatic cascades he devised by diverting the water from the leat; it drops 120 feet.

7 Repton’s Waterfall

Another of Repton’s suggestions was the waterfall below the rockery as ‘there be no feature in landscape more interesting than water in rapid motion’. The rock was exposed and trees planted clinging to the edge to accentuate the picturesque effect.

8 The Dairy

The Hotel has the keys to the Dairy. The 6th Duchess used to bring down a Jersey cow during her annual visits as she considered the milk of the Devon breeds not rich enough for her children!

9 The Parterre

This was designed by Wyattville with children in mind, hence the small scale of the parterre and the playful use of water. In common with all the water features in the garden it is entirely gravity fed. A Repton watercolour of the terrace shows children sailing boats in the channel.

10 The Grass Terrace

This feature was conceived by Wyattville but altered by Repton during construction, as part of his Red Book proposals which include a before and after view of the terrace. The scheme involved reducing the scale of the bastion wall and building a pierced retaining wall at the foot of the long border.

The Architect

Sir Jeffry Wyattville (1766-1840) was a prominent Regency architect with a reputation for undertaking period restorations and making additions to historic mansions. He came from a family that is reputed to have produced 25 architects, 11 surveyors, eight builders, five sculptors and three painters.

He was the nephew of James and Samuel Wyatt – two of the leading English architects of the time. His masterpiece was the romantic remodelling of Windsor Castle for George IV, earning him the distinctive suffix ‘ville’ and a knighthood in 1828.

During the height of the Picturesque period he was one of the leading proponents of the style. The principle was followed that architecture should be conceived as part of its landscape setting, drawing attention to the values of irregular grouping, broken skylines and enrichment of surface and surrounding.

Wyatville’s design for Endsleigh shows how a large country house could be made subordinate to its setting by being treated as a group of traditional buildings. The design was regarded as part of the further development of the Picturesque vernacular for country houses.

On the cover  
General view from the south and east fronts of the cottage at Endsleigh, Devonshire, from the Red Book for Endsleigh.

Repton’s watercolour shows low shrubbery along the southern edge of the terrace and a small temple forming an eye catcher on the lower slopes of the valley. Although the latter was not implemented, Swiss Cottage was built to Wyattville’s design high up on the slope above.



10 & 11

11 The Long Border

The raised border and pierced retaining wall were constructed to Repton’s design, though a covered walkway was replaced with the Rose Walk. It is the longest continuous herbaceous border in England.

12 The Shell House

This hexagonal building was designed by Wyattville as a summer house for a display of geological specimens and superseded Repton’s proposal for the quarry.

13 Quarry & Arbour

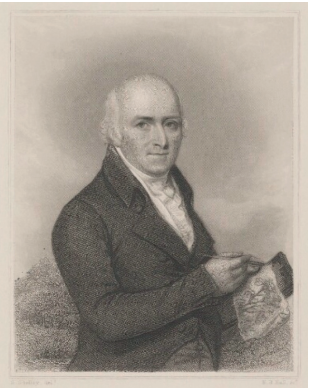
Repton intended that the quarry should serve as a ‘grotto-like receptacle for specimens of the fossils and ores’. This proposal was not acted upon since the Shell House was built instead for this purpose. The layout of the quarry was built in accordance with drawings by Wyattville held at Woburn Abbey.

14 Rose Walk & 15 Yew Walk

This pair of parallel walks are terraced into the slope. They afford an excellent vantage point for viewing the house. Far below is the great meander of the Tamar which Repton regarded as ‘the leading feature of the place’.

The Landscaper

By the time Endsleigh was under consideration, Humphry Repton (1752-1818) had established himself as the leading English landscape designer of the period, taking over this mantle from his great mentor Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown (1716-1783).



Repton’s success was largely due to the persuasive manner in which his proposals were presented to his clients, using his famous Red Books, so called because of the colour of the binding. These took the form of a manuscript text interspersed with drawings, often with moveable flaps showing the grounds before and after improvement.

Repton’s proposals for Endsleigh were drawn up at the end of his celebrated career, throughout which his theory and practice of design was always evolving.

The Regency period saw the revived interest in horticulture in England, and with the changing social climate, it became inevitable that the focus of attention for designers was the immediate vicinity of a residence. With the growth in interest in the Picturesque style, it was a natural progression to the fashionable cottage orné, where the accent was on the interaction of house and garden, with flower filled conservatories and creeper covered veranda columns.

The Dell

This steep sided dingle was an important component of Repton’s design proposals. He sought to take advantage of the copious water supply available from the Edgcombe stream to create an intricate system of water works comprising a sequence of small pools, channels, cascades and trickles. These features were broadly created and survive.

Upper & Lower Georgy

The Georgys are named after Georgina, Duchess to the 6th Duke of Bedford and the inspiration behind the Endsleigh project. The ornamental trees here were amongst the first in the arboretum to be planted and are now some of the oldest and largest trees in the collection and include three National Champions and the ‘Endsleigh Pink’ champion rhododendron.

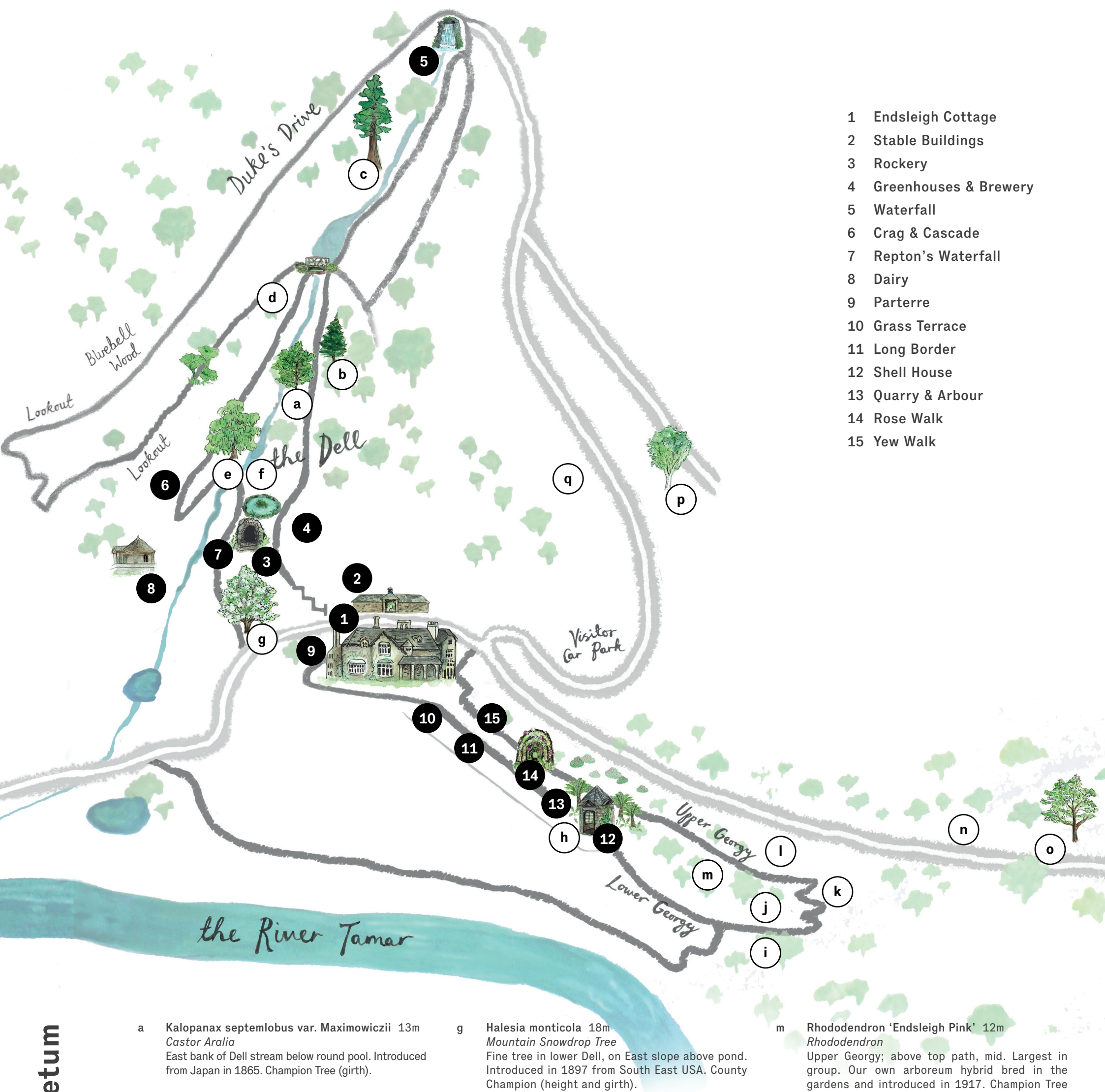
The River Tamar

On the opposite bank of the Tamar is Wareham Wood which forms the backdrop to the great panoramic view south of the house. Repton suggested a modest ford was formed upstream of the house; he also suggested a boatman’s cottage located in the woods on the Cornish side of the Tamar. Although the latter building was not built where Repton intended, his recommendation concerning smoke rising from a chimney for picturesque effect, was maintained up until 1940.





# Arboretum



- 1 Endsleigh Cottage
- 2 Stable Buildings
- 3 Rockery
- 4 Greenhouses & Brewery
- 5 Waterfall
- 6 Crag & Cascade
- 7 Repton's Waterfall
- 8 Dairy
- 9 Parterre
- 10 Grass Terrace
- 11 Long Border
- 12 Shell House
- 13 Quarry & Arbour
- 14 Rose Walk
- 15 Yew Walk

- a **Kalopanax septemlobus** var. **Maximowiczii** 13m  
*Castor Aralia*  
East bank of Dell stream below round pool. Introduced from Japan in 1865. Champion Tree (girth).
- b **Abies nordmaniana** 46.5m  
*Common Silver Fir*  
West bank of Dell, South West of round pool. Introduced in 1836 by Lawson from the Caucasus. County Champion (height and girth).
- c **Sequoiadendron giganteum** 53.5m  
*Giant Sequoia*  
West side of Dell stream above round pool - tallest tree in very vigorous young group. Introduced in 1853 from California.
- d **Acer stachyophyllum** 13m  
*Birch-leaved Maple*  
West bank of Dell stream just below round pool. Very rare maple introduced in 1901 from East Himalaya. English Champion (girth), County Champion (height and girth).
- e **Fagus sylvatica** 'Pendula' 28.5m  
*Weeping Beech*  
Lower Dell by stream. Layers across path. The iconic tree of Endsleigh, this weeping form of the European beech was introduced in c1836. Champion Tree (height and girth).
- f **Magnolia obovata** (syn. **hypoleuca**) 15m  
*Japanese Big-leaved Magnolia*  
East bank of lower Dell - lower tree, opposite Weeping Beech, on dam of pool. Introduced in 1893 from Japan. County Champion (height and girth).

- g **Halesia monticola** 18m  
*Mountain Snowdrop Tree*  
Fine tree in lower Dell, on East slope above pond. Introduced in 1897 from South East USA. County Champion (height and girth).
- h **Tilia platyphyllos** 'Laciniata' 17m  
*Cut-leaved Lime*  
Lawn by Shell House. Cut leaved form of the European native *T. platyphyllos*. Described by John Loudon in 1838.
- i **Cryptomeria japonica** 'Lobbii' 37m  
*Japanese Red Cedar*  
Lower Georgy - West tree of pair by path at East end. This form introduced in 1850 by Thomas Lobb.
- j **Pseudotsuga menziesii** 46.5m  
*Douglas Fir*  
Upper Georgy, by steps next to Hatchery. Hugely impressive bole. Described by Menzies in 1792 and introduced by David Douglas in 1827 from West USA.
- k **Aesculus indica** 30m  
*Indian Horse Chestnut*  
Upper Georgy, above Hatchery and below garden path. Superb tree; trunk covered in moss. Introduced 1851 from North West Himalaya. Champion Tree (height and girth).
- l **Acer oliverianum** 12m  
*Oliver Maple*  
Upper Georgy, mid, below the drive and best viewed from it. Introduced by Ernest 'Chinese' Wilson in 1901 from China. Champion Tree (height and girth).

- m **Rhododendron** 'Endsleigh Pink' 12m  
*Rhododendron*  
Upper Georgy; above top path, mid. Largest in group. Our own arboreum hybrid bred in the gardens and introduced in 1917. Champion Tree (height and girth).
- n **Taxodium distichum** 29m  
*Swamp Cypress*  
Above entrance drive by S bends. Introduced by John Tradescant in 1640 from West USA, County Champion (height).
- o **Davidia involucrata** var. **vilmoriniana** 13m  
*Handkerchief Tree*  
Above entrance drive. First described in 1869 by Pere David, a french missionary and botanist, after whom it is named. Introduced by Abbe Farges in 1897 from China.
- p **Betula utilis** subsp. **utilis** 16m  
*Himalayan Birch*  
Above East end of Edgcombe Drive (above garden visitors' car park). Unusually old example of Himalayan Birch. Introduced in 1849 by Joseph Hooker from the Himalayas. County Champion (height and girth).
- q **Catalpa bungei** 21m  
*Indian Bean Tree*  
On wooded bank West from garden visitors' car park. Introduced 1905 from North China. Champion Tree (height).