Green Retreats

*Green Retreats* presents a lively and beautifully illustrated account of eighteenth-century women in their gardens, in the context of the larger history of their retirement from the world – whether willed or enforced – and of their engagement with the literature of gardening. Beginning with a survey of cultural representations of the woman in the garden, Stephen Bending goes on to tell the stories, through their letters, diaries and journals, of some extraordinary eighteenth-century women, including Elizabeth Montagu and the Bluestocking circle, the gardening neighbours Lady Caroline Holland and Lady Mary Coke, and Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough, renowned for her scandalous withdrawal from the social world. The emphasis on how gardens were used, as well as designed, allows the reader to rethink the place of women in the eighteenth century, and understand what was at stake for those who stepped beyond the flower garden and created their own landscapes.

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Green Retreats

Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture

STEPHEN BENDING
This book is for my parents – two quite different gardeners; and in memory of Kevin Sharpe – a great friend, and a great loss.
Contents

List of illustrations [page viii]
Acknowledgements [x]

Introduction [1]

PART I
1 ‘Gladly I leave the town’: retirement [43]
2 ‘No way qualified for retirement’: disgrace [92]

PART II
3 Bluestocking gardens: Elizabeth Montagu at Sandleford [135]
4 Neighbours in retreat: Lady Mary Coke and the Hollands [173]
5 ‘Can you not forgive?: Henrietta Knight at Barrells Hall [204]
6 ‘Though very retired, I am very happy’ [242]

Notes [247]
Bibliography [278]
Index [294]
Illustrations

1 ‘Palemon and Lavinia’, 1780 (engraved by John Raphael Smith; painting by William Lawrenson). © The Trustees of the British Museum (2010,7081.2227) [page 2]

2 Badminton, Gloucestershire, from Britannia Illustrata (1708/9) [10]

3 View across the lake to the Pantheon, Stourhead, Wiltshire [11]

4 The Flower Garden, Osterley Park, Middlesex [13]

5 The Warrells, Wotton, Buckinghamshire [18]

6 ‘The Flower Garden’ (engraved by Matthew and Mary Darly) 1777. Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University [26]

7 The Temple of Venus, West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire [28]

8 The Elysian Fields, Stowe, Buckinghamshire [29]

9 The Temple of Venus, Stowe [30]

2.1 South Lodge, Enfield (engraved by Charles Warren) c. 1800 [129]

3.1 Portrait of Elizabeth Montagu (engraved by Charles Townley; portrait by Frances Reynolds) 1784 [137]

3.2 Sandleford Priory, Berkshire [142]

3.3 A Survey of the Estate at Sandleford in the County of Berkshire belonging to Mrs Montagu 1781. Courtesy of Berkshire Record Office (BRO: D/ELM T19/2/13) [161]

3.4 Sandleford from the western fields [163]

3.5 Sandleford, Brown’s Lake [164]

4.1 Portrait of Lady Mary Coke (engraving by James McArdell; portrait by Allan Ramsay). © The Trustees of the British Museum (1863,0110.165) [174]

4.2 Lady Caroline Holland (by William Hoare of Bath) c. 1745. Courtesy of The Trustees of the Goodwood Collection / The Bridgeman Art Library [175]

4.3 Holland House c. 1800. © The British Library Board (Ktop XXVIII, image 10r) [177]

4.4 Richard Bentley, Sketch for a three-sided Chinese House at Holland Park. Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University [179]
List of illustrations

4.5 An Accurate Survey of the Park Pleasure ground & Inclosures adjoining to Holland House in the County of Middlesex the Seat of the Right Honorable Lord Holland Survey’d July A.D. 1770 By J[ohn] Haynes. ©The Trustees of the British Museum (1880,1113.5568) [180]

4.6 View in watercolour of Kingsgate Bay on the Isle of Thanet in Kent (1800). ©The British Library Board (Ktop vol. 18 image 30b) [185]


4.8 Notting Hill, view from the south, 1817. Courtesy of Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Family & Children’s Service [193]

4.9 North Front of Notting Hill House, 1817. Courtesy of Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Family & Children’s Service [202]

5.1 Portrait of Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough (attributed to Maria Verelst). ©Lydiard House and Park [205]
Acknowledgements

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