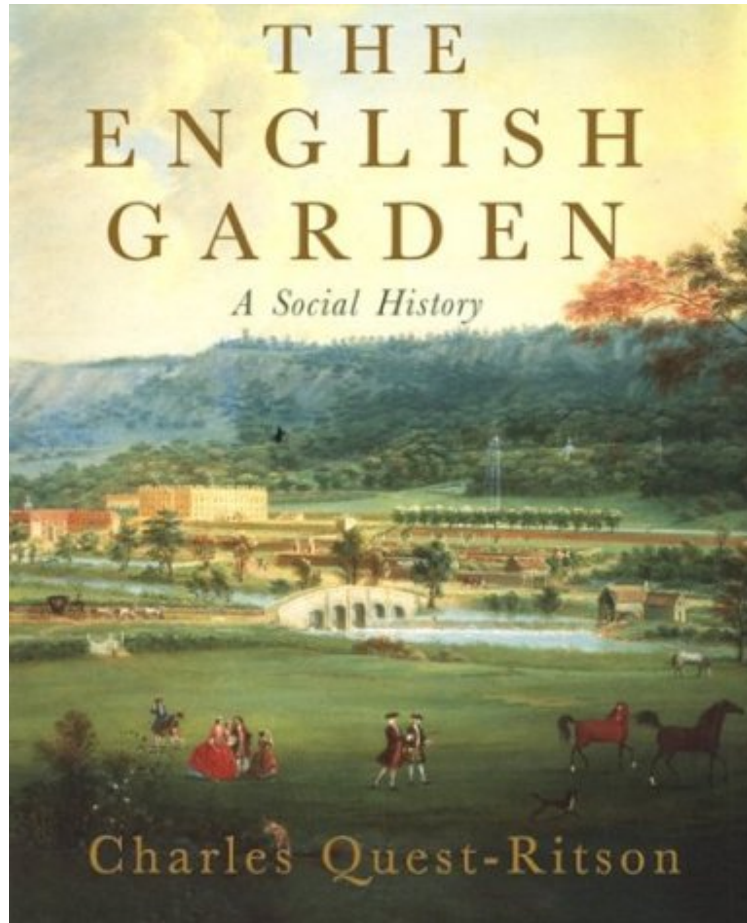


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The English Garden: A Social History

Charles Quest-Ritson

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Gardening is not only about plants; it is also about lifestyles, money, and class. Among the rich, gardens are symbols of social and economic success; among the poor, they are an aid to survival. Most historians have concentrated on the development of garden styles and fashions, but the whole story cannot be told without reference to social and

economic conditions. Charles Quest-Ritson sets out to put gardening in its context. He shows how gardens have been altered through the generations in direct response to changes in English society itself, and he explains the social and financial reasons why gardening evolved as it did. Chapter by chapter, from 1500 to the present day, he asks what owners sought from their gardens. Why did people garden? What did they get out of it? Were gardens for food, flowers, or recreation? What was fashionable, and why? What was the impact of science and technological innovation? How were plants acquired, propagated, and distributed? Who were the gardening experts? What did it all cost? What were gardens for? Accompanied by beautiful four-color illustrations throughout, Quest-Ritson's engaging narrative is an essential guide for anyone interested in the history of gardens and how they matched the changing needs and inspiration of garden owners, rich and poor.

An iceberg of a book. What we see on the page is supported by a great body of research underneath. This is what gives the book its sweeping style and confidence. . . . Written with verve, dash, wit, and style. --Anna Pavord, *Independent* An evocation of those happy garden-lovers who had the wealth to live out their dreams in gardens they made in sunny places. . . . Exceptionally well-written and deeply researched . . . a tale of romance and horticultural obsession. --Fred Whitsey, *Daily Telegraph* About the Author Charles Quest-Ritson has traveled the world in pursuit of the rose and has 20 years experience as a grower, lecturer, judge, and author. His books include DK's *Garden Finder* and *A Social History of Gardening*.