

## **'Without Rival in our Metropolitan County' - The History of Luttrellstown Demesne, Co. Dublin**

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Luttrellstown demesne, which occupies around 600 acres within its walls, has long been recognised as the finest eighteenth century landscape in County Dublin and one of the best in Ireland. Except for the unfortunate incorporation of a golf course into the eastern portion of its historic parkland, the designed landscape has otherwise survived largely unchanged for over two centuries.

With its subtle inter-relationship of tree belts and woodlands, its open spaces and disbursement of individual tree specimens, together with its expansive lake, diverse buildings and its tree-clad glen, the demesne, known as 'Woodlands' in the 19th century, was long the subject of lavish praise and admiration from tourists and travellers. As a writer in the *Irish Penny Journal* remarked in October 1840:

‘considered in connection with its beautiful demesne, [Luttrellstown] may justly rank as the finest aristocratic residence in the immediate vicinity of our metropolis.. in its natural beauties, the richness of its plantations and other artificial improvements, is without rival in our metropolitan county, and indeed is characterised by some features of such exquisite beauty as are rarely found in park scenery anywhere, and which are nowhere to be surpassed’.<sup>1</sup>



Fig 1. 'View on approaching Luttrellstown Park', drawn & aquatinted by Jonathan Fisher; published as plate 6 in *Scenery of Ireland illustrated in a series of prints of select Views, Castles and Abbies* (1796)

Arthur Young in 1776 waxed lyrical about this ‘exceedingly beautiful’ park,<sup>2</sup> while in 1831 the famous German traveller Prince Pückler Muskan devoted consideration attention to the demesne, remarking that it was ‘the most delightful in its kind that can be imagined’ noting that ‘scenery, by nature most beautiful, is improved by art to the highest degree of its capacity, and, without destroying its free and wild character, a variety and richness of vegetation is produced which enchants the eye’.<sup>3</sup> Such comments are echoed repeatedly by other authors. For example, the Quaker James Gough, when writing his *Irish Tour* in 1816 was typically fulsome in his praise:

‘The demesne is much the largest and most beautiful in the County of Dublin, or within the same distance from the city on any side. It is truly magnificent and....added to its fine situation and great extent, gives it a decided superiority. Nature has thrown the ground into the most delightful and undulating variety of surfaces; the views of the River Liffey are caught in her most enchanting points; the foreground to which nature has been so lavish, is broken in the most picturesque manner by the charming plantations...and the distant prospect closed in the happiest manner by the mountains of Wicklow’.<sup>4</sup>

Francis Elrington Ball in his well known *History of County Dublin* summed it all up:

‘The demesne excites universal admiration. Besides the natural advantages of its proximity to the Liffey and its possession of a fine sheet of water and of old timber, it exhibits all that art can accomplish and its beauty led to its being visited by Queen Victoria on more than one occasion’.<sup>5</sup>

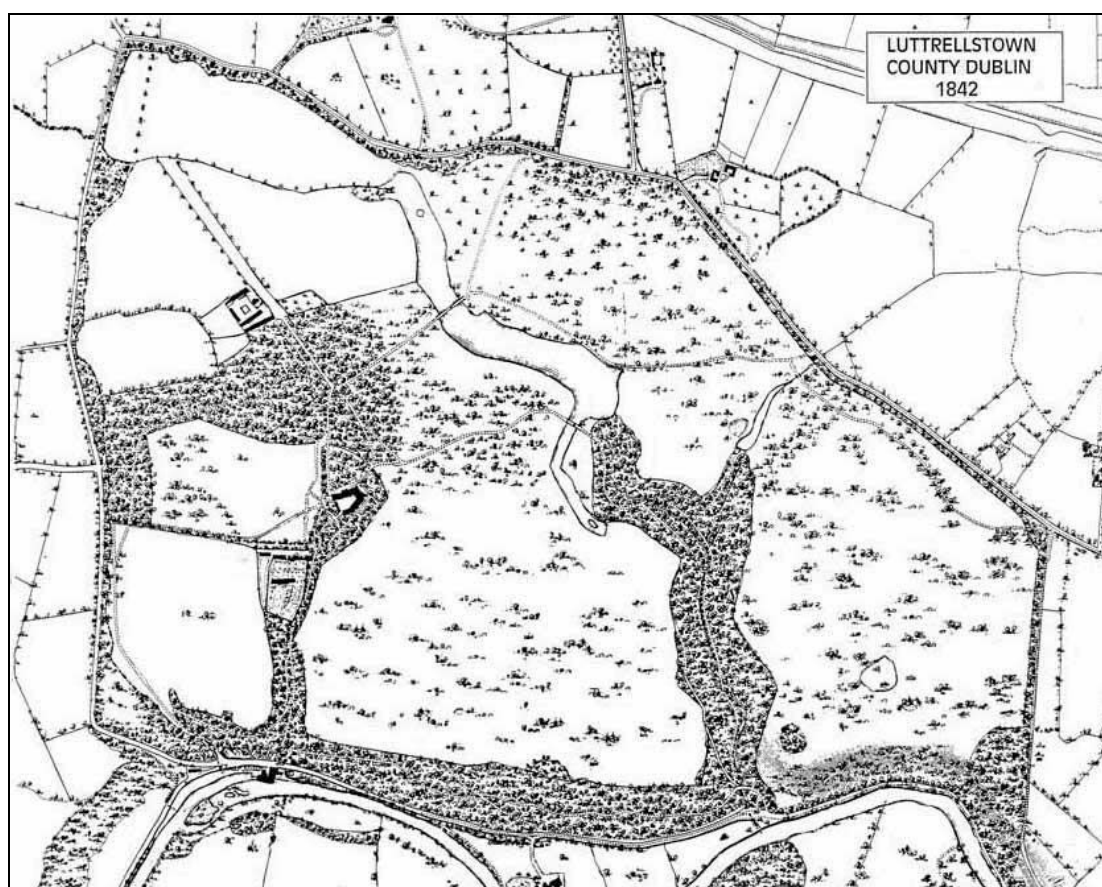


Fig 2. First edition Ordnance Survey map (Co. Dublin, sheets 13 & 17) dated 1842 for the Woodlands (Luttrellstown) Demesne. The boundaries and disposition of the woodlands mostly remain unchanged. The meandering course of the River Liffey lies at the bottom of the map on the south side of the park.



Fig.3. Aerial view of Luttrellstown castle in its parkland setting looking north

## The Demesne Parkland

The walled demesne parkland, around 600 acres extant, occupies a gently undulating plateau, which stretches along the north or left bank of the Liffey. In several places the high river banks, which form the southern boundary of the demesne, are broken by narrow rocky channels, mostly notably the Glen, which takes the form of a romantic precipitous ravine cutting through the centre of the parkland. North of the glen lies a twenty acre serpentine lake, created in 1737-44 to the east of the Great Lawn, the latter being a large expanse of open parkscape that constitutes the core zone of the designed landscape. Further open parkland areas or ‘cells’, all dotted with isolated trees in Reptonian-style landscaping, were created on the west, north east and east sides of the demesne.

The environment of the demesne is a delicate balance founded on the planting, lake, buildings and open spaces. The focal point of the landscape is the house, which lies on the north-west side of the Great Lawn commanding fine views of the parkland with distant prospects of the city and mountains beyond. With medieval origins, this attractive castellated building largely belongs to the period 1787-94 (see below). Typically, the siting and design of the house, as with the other buildings of the park, is integral to the designed landscape, so that one without the other become divest of meaning. Other buildings of note include the cold bath ‘temple’ c.1740 overlooking the lake, the Rustic Arch c.1765 which spans the Glen and the Crazy Gates at the north-east entrance to the park. There are three other main entrances to the demesne, all with gate lodges. The walled garden and American Ground lies secluded on the south-west sides, while to the north-west of the house, carefully screened by woodlands, lies the late 18th century stable and farm yard complex.

The woodlands, belts and screens, for which Luttrellstown has long been famous, play a critical role in the unified nature of the planned landscape. The planting controls the vistas, creates a sense of scale and defines space within the demesne. A



great deal of original planting remains and has been well managed over the years. In all about a quarter of the demesne is under woodland, with the main blocks being located on the southern perimeter of the park, along the Glen and in the areas south-west and west of the house. The whole of the demesne parkland's perimeter, in classic late 18th century fashion, is bounded by screens and belts of woodland. The old planting is predominately oak, beech, ash and lime, while chestnuts have been extensively used in the open parkscape.

The eastern 'cell' of the demesne is presently occupied by a golf course first constructed during the 1980s, extended and remodelled in 2005-06. While being an unfortunate intrusion on the parkland that has otherwise remained largely unchanged for two centuries, this development is largely screened from view away from the Great Lawn. Its creation in the 1980s did not involve any tree felling, nor much earth moving, but unfortunately, subsequent remodelling in more recent years has involved both; however, the damage is limited and the landscape could still be reverted back to its original late 18th century condition in the future.



Fig. 4. Aerial view of the demesne at Luttrellstown as it was around 1999. A few years later a controversial plan was put place to re-model the remaining parts of the demesne into golf courses, with a large associated hotel and housing units. Fortunately this never happened and the historic landscape has survived, save for an extension of the existing golf course into the area west of the main approach drive. Ownership of the property changed in 2006.

## Early Luttrellstown (1204-1650)

Historical continuity is a striking characteristic of many important Irish demesnes, no less so at Luttrellstown, where residual traces of successive landscape developments from the medieval period are incorporated into the matrix of the park. Full understanding of these evolutionary developments is essential to appreciate the quality and context of the designed landscape as it exists today.

The origin of the manor or castle of Luttrellstown is usually accredited to Sir Jeffrey Luttrell, a long time follower of the Earl of Morton, later King John. Although a room in the castle has long been associated with King John, the hard evidence for this early Norman foundation appears lacking. It is certainly true however, that in 1204 Sir Jeffrey Luttrell, was appointed by King John to a commission to settle disputes between the Irish justiciary and magnates and later in 1210 accompanied the King on his tour of Ireland. He died in 1215 leaving his English estate at Dunster in Somerset to his only son. What became of his Irish holdings has not been established.

The earliest documented link between the family and the manor of Luttrellstown comes in the mid-fifteenth century with one Robert Luttrell, who was a wealthy man employed by the Crown as a collector of the subsidy in north Dublin. His grandson Thomas Luttrell, who married a daughter of the powerful Bellew family, became Sheriff of County Dublin in 1486. There is an interesting reference to the marriage of one of his daughters at Luttrellstown, where we are told more than forty archers attended in support of the bridegroom. The family's fortunes rose rapidly with Thomas's grandson, Sir Thomas Luttrell, who became in 1534 the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, one of most powerful posts in Ireland. On one occasion he was presented with a rare and much prized goshawk by Henry VIII's minister, Thomas Cromwell, and must outwardly have adopted the reformed faith. He accumulated considerable estates, including profits from the suppression of the monasteries, and by all accounts entertained lavishly at Luttrellstown. When he died in 1554 he entailed the future owners of Luttrellstown certain property specifically for the maintenance of hospitality there, together with among other things, a gold chain of twenty links.

Sir Thomas Luttrell's considerable success in raising the family's status and wealth was put at risk by his grandson, also called Thomas, who inherited Luttrellstown during the 1580s. He reverted back to the old faith and played a major role in the politics of the period, incurring the bitter enmity of Lord Deputy Chichester, who on one occasion cast him into the Fleet Prison for eleven weeks. On his death in 1634, his son Simon continued to support the Roman Catholic cause and joined the Royalists during the Civil War. He died in 1650 and shortly afterwards Luttrellstown was forfeited by Cromwell's Commonwealth.<sup>6</sup>

As little of the early house at Luttrellstown appears to have survived we can only guess at its former appearance. By the time the property was forfeited in 1654, it was the second largest private residence in County Dublin, boasting no less than twelve chimneys, six less than Rathfarnham Castle. In Simon Luttrell's will of 1634 we learn that the house had a great gallery with cupboards and great chests filled with a 'great store of silver and gold' and a dining room furnished with tapestry hangings. Further evidence comes from the 1654 Civil Survey, which records that the 'Great Mansion' had 'several houses of office, one malt house, one barn, two stables all slated valued at £1000'. The mention of a gallery, numerous chimneys and the exceptionally high valuation, would indicate that this house had been largely rebuilt in the late Tudor or Jacobean periods, no doubt partly incorporating earlier buildings on

the site. Its depiction on the 1760 Rocque's map of County Dublin as a U-shaped block, might suggest it resembled the Castle Caulfield in Co. Tyrone, or perhaps Archdeacon William Bulkeley's mansion house at Old Bawn completed in 1635. Undoubtedly it was a tall imposing building in the fashion at that time, with a steep roof, string coursing and numerous windows. Unfortunately, no early illustration or description has yet been discovered to clarify all this, but the house clearly occupied the site of the present house, with a pronounced south-west and north-east axis, with the entrance facing south, flanked by projecting wings.<sup>7</sup>

Such a grand house would have had an equally impressive associated demesne. In the 1654 Civil Survey, we learn that it had 'three orchards, one garden and a grove of trees set for ornament'.<sup>8</sup> These would have been contained within a series of symmetrically arranged walled enclosures, possibly with defensive corner turrets, surrounding the house. Comparative Irish examples of this period would suggest the whole complex could have covered five or six acres or more. The garden, which by the 1630s probably contained knots and embroidered parterres with statuary and topiary, no doubt lay on the south side of the house. The entrance court, which in the manner of the period would have been entered through grand wrought iron gates, probably flanked the north, allowing a short avenue approach from the road, which at that time evidently passed straight through the present demesne.



Fig. 5. Detail of Luttrellstown house and gardens as shown on Rocque's 'An Actual Survey of the county of Dublin', 1760. The grove or 'wilderness' within the large square enclosing the central 'rond', was most likely composed of limes or elms; it would have been planted in regular rows, probably as quincunxes, with long straight boles. The map also shows orchards (to the east of the house) and a series of geometric layouts (bosquets & wildernesses) on both sides of the lake. The original 17th-early 18th century formal layout must have been much more extensive, but by the 1760s the process of 'naturalisation', which included the lake, had already clearly removed many elements.

One of the most interesting references in the 1654 Civil Survey is the 'grove of trees set for ornament'. Typically, such a feature would have been located outside the enclosed courts and have consisted of a wood with regular tree planting, probably elm or ash, dissected by paths aligned upon statues and other decorative objects. Such groves became very popular in the late 17th and early 18th century, when they were usually known as 'Wildernesses'. They were however, rare before the 1660s and normally only found in association with the most important houses in England at that time. In Ireland there are only a few references to such groves during the pre-1660 period, which further underlines the importance of the house and gardens at this time. It is quite likely that some of the regular shaped 'Wildernesses' and orchards shown on Rocque's 1760 map are early-mid-17th century relics.

The demesne beyond the ornamental areas around the house was undoubtedly divided up into neat fields from an early period. In the 1654 Civil Survey it comprised 250 acres of arable, 16 acres of meadow, 44 acres of pasture and 40 acres of woodland. As this is Irish Plantation Measure, this area equates in size to the demesne as it presently exists within the walls. The wooded area, 66 statute acres, clearly occupied the high banks above the river to the south of the house and probably the Glen. It is of note that these woodlands are also mentioned in Simon Luttrell's will of 1585, where he directed that for some years no timber should be cut from the woods 'except as should be required for the building, as well as the expenses of the house'. The great age of these woodlands is confirmed by remarks made by 18th and 19th century visitors to Luttrellstown, who marvelled at the size of some of the demesne's 'venerable timber'. Samuel Hayes for example, in his classic work on 'Planting and Management of Woods and Coppices', published in 1794, believed that Luttrellstown possessed the finest forest trees in Ireland.<sup>9</sup> In 1801 the landscape gardener Hely Dutton was so taken with the massive size of an elm tree near the mill that he had it measured as '14feet 9inches circumference' at four feet from the ground; it later blew down in the storm of January 1802. While Luttrellstown no longer boasts native 'champion' trees of this size, we can be certain that the woodlands here have never been clear felled and that some of the woods have been continuously under trees since at least Tudor times. Such continuity of woodland is unique in County Dublin and exceptional rare anywhere in Ireland.

### **Luttrellstown and the Geometric Period (1660-1740)**

Following forfeiture in 1654, Luttrellstown became the property of the Cromwellian Regicide Colonel Hewson, but after the Restoration it was restored to Thomas, son of Simon Luttrell. On Thomas's death in 1673, the demesne and its estate passed to his son, Colonel Simon Luttrell, who had been exiled to Connaught during the Commonwealth. Although for years a sufferer from paralysis, Simon threw in his lot with James II in 1689 and was appointed Governor of Dublin. Following the Jacobite defeat in 1691 he refused to avail of the amnesty proffered on condition of allegiance to William III, preferring exile in France instead, where he died there seven years later. However, his younger brother Henry, who had betrayed an important post during the siege of Limerick and had changed his allegiance to the Williamites, managed to have all the Luttrell estates settled upon him with the bonus of a state pension of £500.

Henry Luttrell spent much of the period from 1693 to 1702 on the Continent, where he served in the Dutch army. A much disliked figure, his personal life was



variously described as one of 'debauchery and depravity'. He was shot and killed in his hackney sedan chair in Cork Hill on his way to his town house in Stafford Street, November 1717, aged sixty-three. As he only got married very late in life, his two sons were minors at the time. They were subsequently sent off to England for their education, where they remained until 1727, when the eldest son Robert died on a visit to France. In that year Simon, the younger son, returned to Ireland, aged only seventeen, to inherit Luttrellstown and the Luttrell properties.

The formal layout of orchards and tree groves that existed at Luttrellstown in the mid-17th century, were considerably enlarged at some stage prior to Henry Luttrell's death in 1717. In common with other important demesnes of the time, the new layout comprised an extensive geometric layout of avenues, wildernesses, bosquets and other features. This scheme was probably largely carried out by Henry himself from 1702, but it's likely that the process had already been started by his brother prior to the Williamite Wars. The transformation reflected the fashions of the period, when English and Irish landowners, inspired by ideas from abroad, were becoming aware that the landscape around their houses could be 'designed' on a large scale. By reorganising the surrounding fields into regular grid-like patterns and by extending the symmetry of the gardens into the demesne through long perspectives, notably with avenues and vistas, it was now possible for manorial residences to acquire an imposing setting that reflected their owner's power, status and wealth.

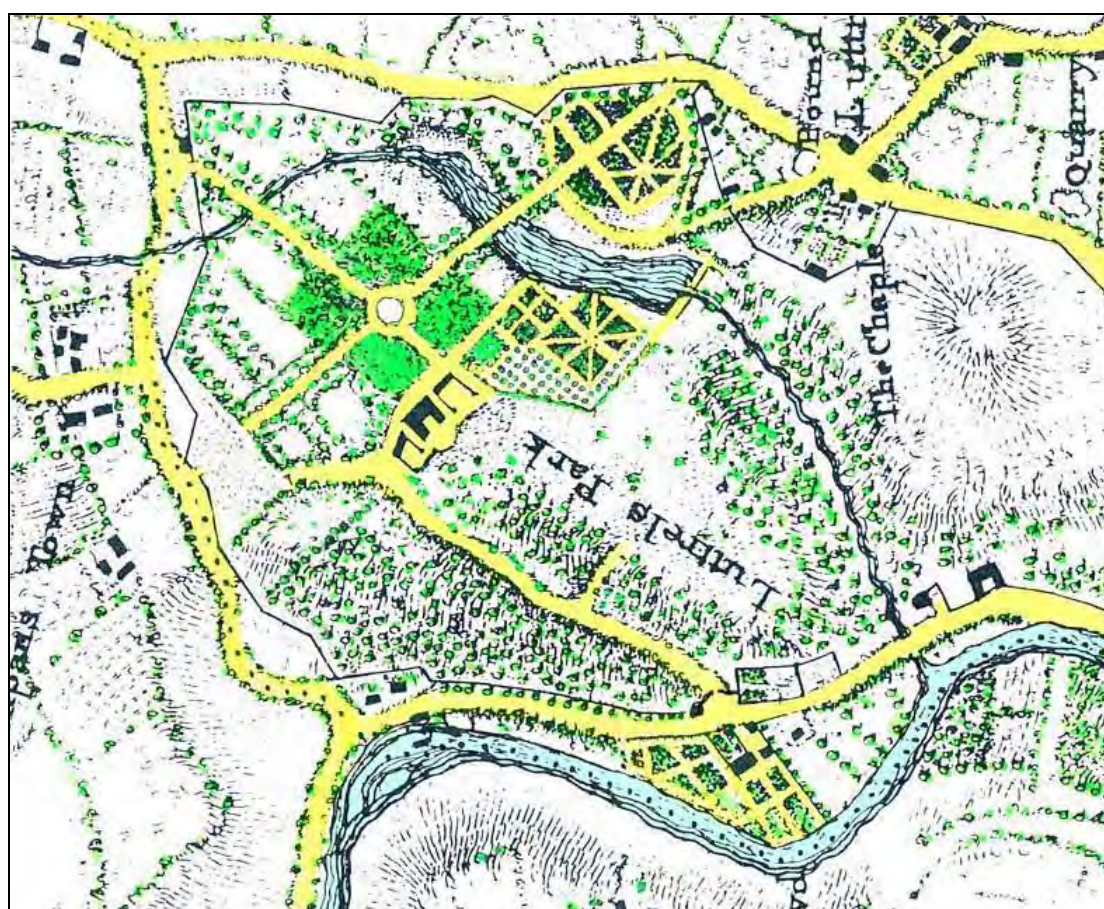


Fig. 6. Luttrellstown as shown on Rocque's 'An Actual Survey of the county of Dublin', 1760. The map is here reversed so the north is at the top of the page and has been coloured for this paper to highlight features. The River Liffey is on the south side flanked by the 'Low Road' as it called at that time.



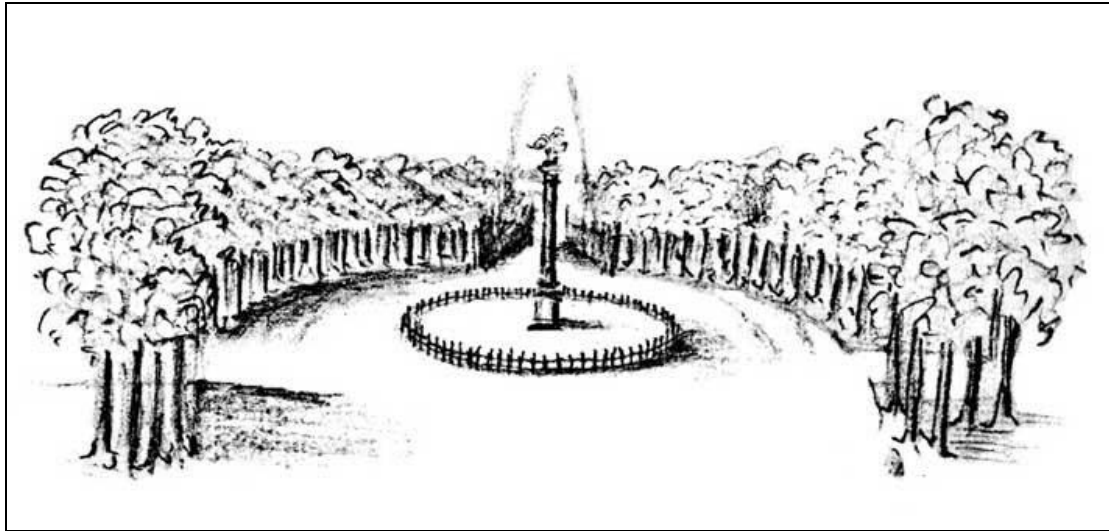


Fig. 7. Thomas Wright's sketch of the 'rond' in the Phoenix Park drawn when he visited Dublin in 1746. A similar feature, without the column, existed within the formal layout of Luttrellstown. Characteristically for formal layouts of this era, the trees are given a regular appearance with straight boles and may also have been pleached.

We get some idea of the old landscape at Luttrellstown from Rocque's 1757 map, where despite 'naturalised' landscaping from the late 1730s (see below), elements of the earlier formal layout are evident. These include two long straight tree-lined avenues, dissecting at right angles with north-west, south-east, north-east and south-west axis. Curiously these avenues are not aligned upon the house, but meet north-east of the house in a central rond. One of these avenues, the one running north-east past the later farm buildings, is still partly extant and is lined with ancient oak trees. The central rond formed by these avenues was enclosed within a large square block of woodland, evidently a large 'Wilderness' which would have been originally dissected by a network of paths aligned upon statues and other objects. Two smaller blocks, possibly bosquets, shown with radiating paths are depicted north-east of the house, while inside the north-eastern gate lay another large geometric tree layout with radiating paths, possibly a wilderness. We can only guess at the former appearance of the formal landscape south and south-west of the house, as this area had been completely re-landscaped between the 1730s and 1750s. However, it is likely that a series of straight tree lined avenues or vistas radiated out from the house here in the fashion of the period.

Demesnes of the 17th and early 18th centuries were much less exclusive in terms of public access than they became from the later 18th century. Many hosted fairs and race meetings and Luttrellstown was no exception; indeed, during the period 1740-60 the annual race meeting at Luttrellstown was one of the largest in the Dublin area. It was usually held over three days in August at the same time as the fair (held at Luttrellstown from the 1670s) and was located in the area east of the lake. The event included 'good sport and an abundance of good entertainment'; there was a £50 plate, which was a large sum at that period, as well as lesser prizes of £5, £10 and £15 and among the attractions was bullock racing and cudgelling.<sup>11</sup> Even after the present landscape park had been created in its present form in the 1760s, some racing continued to be hosted in the park; in 1790 for example, the Earl of Carhampton, held a grand steeplechase for a £500 prize here, attended by the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Westmorland, and the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Clare.

## The Naturalistic Landscape 1735-80

The transformation of Luttrellstown into one of the great landscape parks of Ireland began in the late 1730s and continued apace in a number of stages until the end of the century. The initial work was confined to the south and east sides of the demesne and included planting new woods, creating open meadows, digging the lake, and building the temple cold bath and the Rustic Arch. In the last two decades of the century the house was rebuilt, the walled garden created and the demesne transformed into a fine Reptonian parkscape with large tree-dotted meadows and outer tree belts and screens. The undertaking was carried out during the time of Simon Luttrell, first Earl of Carhampton and his son Henry Lawes Luttrell, second Earl of Carhampton.

The period between 1735 and 1750 witnessed the start of a major change in the history of garden and landscape design in both Great Britain and Ireland, whereby the prevailing geometric style was made more informal or 'naturalistic'. Promoted in England by Pope and Addison and in Ireland by Dean Swift and Mrs Delany among others, this newly emerging 'naturalised' style of landscape saw the creation of serpentine rivers and lakes, irregularly planted trees and new forms of garden buildings, all designed to form a series of framed 'pictures' of an idyllic Arcadian ideal inspired by images of the Italian landscape. The best known example of this early form of 'naturalistic' landscaping is at Painshill in Surrey, which perhaps significantly was later to become the English home of Henry Lawes Luttrell, second Earl of Carhampton. Most early creations in this style however were ephemeral and have not survived, not least in Ireland. One exception is Luttrellstown, where substantial elements of the informal landscape, notably the lake and glen, still exist.

The naturalised landscape at Luttrellstown was begun by Simon Luttrell, son of Henry Luttrell (see above). After Simon Luttrell arrived back in Ireland from his English education in 1727, aged only 17, he embarked upon the life of a duelling rake



Fig. 8. The Cold Bath on the lake at Luttrellstown. Mrs Delany dined 'very agreeably' in the 'antechamber' here in July 1745 and again in June 1750. The plunge bath, a long rectangular pool, occupied the main part of the building. Its facade with its Doric columns, if indeed contemporary with Mrs Delany's visits, looks like an early example of Greek neo-classicism.



Fig. 9. 'The wooden bridge at Hermitage on the River Liffey', drawn and aquatinted by Jonathan Fisher; published as plate 5 in *Scenery of Ireland illustrated in a series of prints of select Views, Castles and Abbies* (1796). It provided access to the Earl of Carhampton's ground on both sides & was 'composed of felled trees put together in a style that perfectly corresponds with the objects around it'.

In Dublin and was a founding member of the Hell Fire Club.<sup>12</sup> In 1737 he married an heiress who brought with her considerable wealth, including property in Jamaica, where her father, Sir Nicholas Lawes, had been Governor. This allowed Simon in 1751 to purchase an English seat, Four Oaks, in Warwickshire, and to devote his time to a parliamentary interest 'not on the basis of his property but by jobbery and corruption and in boroughs which welcomed an outsider'.<sup>13</sup> He was to serve as MP in four different English constituencies consecutively from 1755 to 1780 and became a follower of the Earl of Bute, the Prime Minister in 1762-2.<sup>14</sup> For his devotion to Bute he was raised to the Irish peerage, becoming Lord Irnham in 1768. In 1771 his star rose higher when one of his daughters, Anne, married the notorious and rather asinine Duke of Cumberland, a brother of George III. In the years following he devoted much time to winning an earldom, which he finally achieved in 1785 when he became the first Earl of Carhampton. He then retired to Luttrellstown and died in 1787.

Most of the informal landscaping at Luttrellstown was almost certainly largely undertaken in the years immediately after Simon Luttrell's marriage in 1737. Depicted on Rocque's *Map of County Dublin* (1757), the new 'naturalistic' landscaping was focussed in the south and east sectors of the demesne, while the areas north and north-east of the house largely retained their old formal layout. The land to the south of the house, which previously would have contained straight vistas and avenues, was transformed into an open meadow, dotted with trees and flanked by woodlands, the genesis of the present lawn meadow. To the east a serpentine lake was created sometime around 1740; this still exists today, though it is evident that a small





Fig 10. Simon Luttrell (1713-1787) as he was in the 1730s dressed in fashionable Turkish costume, by Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702-89), now hanging in the Kunstmuseum, Bonn. Simon Luttrell inherited Luttrellstown as a child in 1717 and married the wealthy Judith Maria Lawes in 1737. He lived mostly in England from 1751-66 for political reasons. Raised as Baron Irnham (1768); Viscount Carhampton (1781) and First Earl of Carhampton of Castlehaven (1785). He is remembered as a notorious libertine.

extension on its south-west side was made at a later date, probably in the early 19th century. The lake lies at the head of the glen behind an elaborate dam, which serves as a dramatic cascade, particularly in winter when the lake waters are apt to rise.

Close to the dam a cold bath was built with a cut stone Doric portico facing out onto the lake. Mrs Delany dined 'very agreeably' in the 'antechamber' here in July 1745 and again in June 1750.<sup>15</sup> She also said in her letters at this time that she had previously described Luttrellstown 'in some of my former letters', but sadly these no longer survive. The portico was painted white during the early 1990s, but the cold bath itself is now in a ruined condition. It comprises a long chamber with a pool, a changing area, a small fireplace and pointed windows. Such plunge baths, filled with unheated water, were a popular health-fad in the 18th century and though ungrounded in medical evidence, were often recommended by doctors. They were only used weekly or even monthly, probably after excessive drinking bouts, and were frequently located at some distance from the house, as at Luttrellstown. There is another good

example at Lucan, but very few examples have survived either in England or Ireland.<sup>16</sup>

In the woods behind the cold bath lies an ice house, which was probably built around the mid-18th century. It lies under a mound with a tree on the top. In winter ice would have been collected from the lake and stacked between layers of straw up to the level of the entrance passage. The ice was principally used to make ice cream in summer, but these buildings were often also used to store meat hanging above the ice. Below the dam a series of foot paths were made in the sides of the glen, while



Fig. 11. Watercolour by John James Barralet (1747-1815), depicting the rustic bridge and hermitage in the glen at Luttrellstown. The image (© The Trustees of the British Museum) is undated, but was most likely painted around 1787. The building itself was probably built in the late 1760s following Simon Luttrell's return to Ireland.





Fig 12. The rustic arch and hermitage in the Glen at Luttrellstown in the early 1990s. The arch carried a bridge over the ravine, linked to the main avenue. The hermitage within the body of the structure to the left of the picture was composed of three small rooms, one of which was a service room, but this arrangement was altered internally to facilitate a celebrity wedding here in 1999.

lower down a carriage way, connecting with a drive to the house, was constructed beside the rivulet on the valley floor. Construction of this carriageway was clearly the result of considerable rock moving activity, including the use of gunpowder, to clear a way through the rocky valley sides. At the same time an impressive series of cascades and rapids were built into the rivulet to enhance its picturesque effect.

The overall impression of the glen is exceptionally dramatic and must have been even more so in the 18th century when the area beneath the trees would have been under planted with a whole range of exotic shrubs. Prince Pückler Muskan writing in 1831 was very impressed with this glen and remarked upon the:

‘Gay shrubs and wild flowers, the softest turf and giant trees, festooned with creeping plants, fill the narrow glen through which the path winds, by the side of the clear dancing brook, which falling in little cataracts, flows on, sometimes hidden in the thicket, sometimes resting like liquid silver in an emerald cup or rushing under overhanging arches of rock, which nature seems to have hung there as triumphal gates for the beneficent Naiad of the valley to pass through’.<sup>17</sup>

Arthur Young was also impressed with the glen on his Tour of Ireland (1776) remarking on the:

‘very fine glen, by the side of a stream falling over a rocky bed, though the dark woods, with great variety on the sides of steep slopes, at the bottom of which the Liffey is either heard or seen indistinctly; these woods are of great extent and so near the capital, for a retirement exceedingly beautiful’.<sup>18</sup>

Young did not mention the most famous feature of the glen, namely the massive rustic arched bridge built across the ravine. This remarkable feature, most probably built in



the 1760s after Simon Luttrells's return from a spell of living in England, comes as a sensational surprise to travellers in the glen. It takes the form of a sham ruin of rough stone walling containing a tall rounded headed arch bridging the carriageway, flanked by a square turret on one side and a round turret on the other, both at a higher level. On one side of the arch in the body of the structure there is a suite of three rooms with fireplaces, one of which was a service room, presumably for the preparation of food.<sup>19</sup> These rooms have internal brick lining, vaulted ceilings and are lit through pointed windows, which formerly contained lead-camed windows, shown both in old photographs of c1905 in the Irish Architectural Archive (Massy Album) and in a fine watercolour by John James Barralet, probably painted in the 1780s (British Museum, see Fig 11).<sup>20</sup> These rooms no doubt allowed picnics or meals to be served, such as the ones Mrs Delany enjoyed in the nearby temple cold bath in 1745 and 1750. The building's aura of decayed ancient splendour is very much in the style the mid-18th century Rococo and in particular of Thomas Wright (1711-1786), the famous astronomer and architect, who visited Ireland during the 1740s and was responsible for a number of parkland buildings, notably at Tollymore in County Down and Belvedere in County Westmeath. Sadly the building was damaged in 1999, when the then owners made a temporary church for a wedding out of two of the little rooms within the body of the structure.

Also in a similar 'Wrightian' style of architecture to the Rustic Arch are the 'Crazy Gates', being the entrance to the demesne on the north-east side. This entrance was also probably created in the 1760s. It is no longer used, due to its position at a dangerous junction of the road.<sup>21</sup>



Fig. 13. The old west entrance or 'Crazy Gates' into the demesne, no longer used because of its location at a dangerous junction. It is built in the same rustic style as the hermitage bridge in the glen and was probably also built during the 1760s. It is smaller than it looks and as its accommodation is very limited, it is perhaps unlikely it was ever inhabited by a gate porter.



Fig. 14. Portraits of Henry Lawes Luttrell, Second Earl of Carhampton (1743-1821). Left a crayon portrait by Hugh Douglas Hamilton (1739-1808), evidently when he was a young man during the 1760s (© National Gallery of Ireland). The poster image on the right is dated January 1798, not long after he was removed from the post as Commander of the Forces, Ireland, which he had held from 1796-97. The Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Camden, remarked that in the post he did not 'confine himself to the strict rules of law'.



Fig. 15. The north-east facade of Luttrellstown Castle. Lithographic print by Charles Joseph Hullmandel after William Brocas, 1824. The house was re-modelled and enlarged by Henry Lawes Luttrell, the second Earl of Carhampton during the 1790s and cloaked of the newly fashionable gothic style, no doubt to emphasise both the antiquity of the building and the Luttrell family.



## **Luttrellstown in the late 18th Century (1780-1800)**

During the last two decades of the 18th century the house and park at Luttrellstown were remodelled by Henry Lawes Luttrell, the second Earl of Carhampton. The house was built in a gothic castellated style, while the informal or 'natural' landscape park was completed into the present form with its enclosing woodland screens, sweeping meadows, tree clumps and isolated trees.

Work on the new house and park got underway after Henry Lawes Luttrell inherited the Luttrellstown demesne and estate on the death of his father in 1787. Henry Luttrell also inherited from his father and grandfather alike a peculiar ability to be loathed by almost everybody. He was an admirer of George III's minister, the Earl of Bute, and on his behalf stood against the popular Mr. Wilkes in the famous Middlesex by-election of 1769. Through Bute's influence he was duly elected to the seat even though he gained only 296 votes to Wilkes's 1,143 votes. This helped him become the most unpopular man in London and he was the subject of considerable vilification in contemporary pamphlets. Stories of his wretched behaviour abounded; for example it was reported that kidnapped and debauched a child of twelve and then hired witnesses to swear that she was already a prostitute. The diary of Junius did not mince its words when it came to Henry Luttrell and his father:

'There is a certain family in this country in which nature seems to have entailed a hereditary baseness of disposition...the son had regularly improved on the vices of the father and has taken care to transmit then pure and undiluted into the bosom of his successor. In the Senate their abilities have confined them to those humble, sordid services in which the scavengers of the Ministry are usually employed. By the memoirs of private treachery they stand first and unrivalled'.

When his sister Anne married the King's notorious uncle, 'Butcher' Cumberland in 1771, Junius besought the nation to redouble its prayers for the health of the king and the royal offspring 'lest a Luttrell succeed to the throne of England'.

Henry Luttrell returned to Ireland during the late 1770s and immediately quarrelled with his father over possession of Luttrellstown. Henry claimed that his father had settled the house upon him and took the matter to court. He lost the case, but managed to strip the castle of all its furniture and family pictures, so that his father was left with an empty house with not even 'the spit to roast his meat on and was obliged to use a string'. They were still quarrelling over possession of furniture in the family's town house in Merrion Square, when the old Earl died in January 1787.

The absence of the family from Luttrellstown during the 1780s is perhaps evident in the constant advertisements in Dublin papers, particularly *Saunders's News-Letter*, to let out the grazing in the park during this time. These advertisements appeared from August 1783 until 1787 and offered 'grazing with plenty of water' for 'horses at 6d per night; bridles and saddles taken in charge'. By 1787 the price had risen to 6½d per night with the earl giving his address in Cavendish Row, on Rutland Square.<sup>22</sup>

Once Henry succeeded to Luttrellstown, becoming the second Earl of Carhampton, he lost no time in transforming the property. A plan was commissioned to enlarge and remodel the castle and it is likely that the new residence was nearing completion in 1794, for in that year, according to the surveyor Brian Bolger's list of decorative plasterers, one Michael Bryan or O'Bryan was working here on the plasterwork.



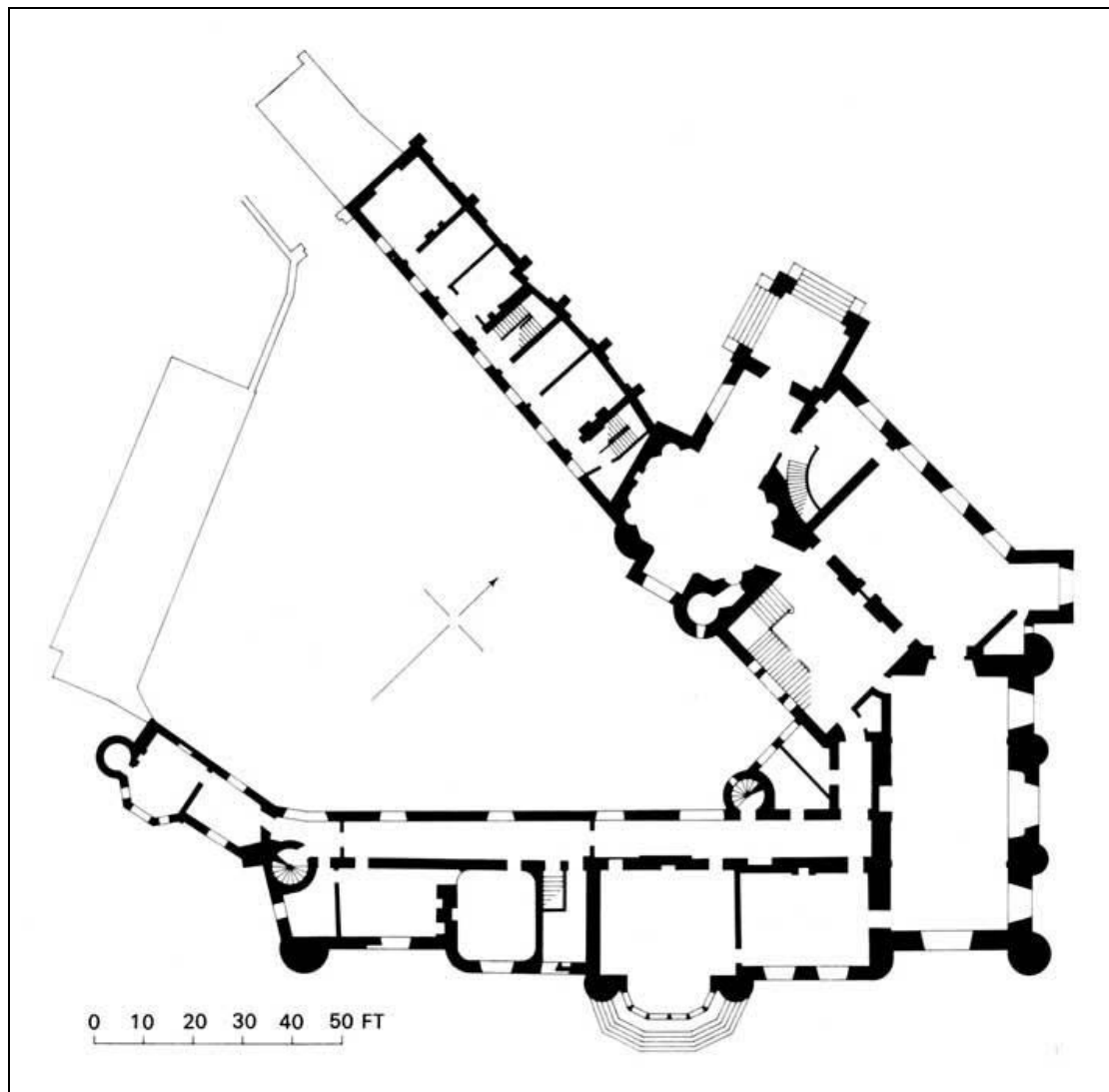


Fig. 16. The ground plan of Luttrellstown Castle as it exists today. The building is much as completed by Carhampton in 1794, save for a few minor additions and the twin-towered entrance with its heavy Tudor porch and tower erected by the second Lord Annaly in the late Victorian era.

The new mansion was a battlemented and turreted Georgian Gothic building, whose plan comprised two principal ranges at acute angles to each other, joined by a shorter range on the east. The northern range, from which projected a single-storey twin-towered entrance porch, occupied the site of the original castle, while the south range, which faces south-east across the parkland, is a symmetrical composition with large square-headed and pointed windows, surmounting battlements and an array of round and polygonal turrets. Internally several of the mansion's rooms were subsequently remodelled and redecorated in both the 19th and 20th centuries, but many 1790s features survive, notably the plasterwork in the ballroom, library, inner hall and staircases. Some of this plasterwork has a distinctly martial overtone, such as the incorporation of lances in the pilasters of the ballroom; no doubt these ornaments were intended to reflect the second Earl of Carhampton's military career and his position at that time as lieutenant-general of the Irish Ordnance.

A ground plan of Luttrellstown Castle as it was built by the second Lord Carhampton c.1789-94 exists among the papers of the Emo Court Collection in the Irish Architectural Archive. The plan is unsigned and as yet the architect cannot be



Fig. 17. Luttrellstown Castle south front as depicted in *The Irish Penny Journal* (Saturday, October 31st, 1840). Some of the Regency period shrubberies can be seen in this image around the house; these were replaced in the 1860s with a formal parterre below the south front.

identified. It has been suggested by the Knight of Glin that the house was the work of the architect Richard Morrison – a proposition that is based on a similarity with some of Morrison's work, notably Thomastown Castle in Co. Tipperary, c.1812. However, Morrison's first known commissions date only from 1791 and until the year 1800 he only had a local practice based in Clonmel. In the opinion of the present writer, a possible candidate is the English architect and artist, Thomas Sandby (1721-1798), elder brother of Paul Sandby, the famous watercolourist. As first Professor of Architecture of the Royal Academy, Thomas Sandby was an accomplished architect, whose works included the castellated 'Luttrell's Tower' at Eaglehurst in Hampshire, designed c.1780 for the Earl of Carhampton's brother, Temple Simon Luttrell. Sandby was also a long time associate of the Duke of Cumberland, the Earl of Carhampton's brother-in-law, so there is little doubt that Carhampton would have been very familiar with his work. Both the Sandby brothers were in Ireland on many occasions and were great friends of James Gandon, Ireland's foremost architect of the time. No doubt it was through Gandon that Thomas Sandby became involved in the work at Emo Court, County Leix, designing a proposed gate lodge for the Earl of Portarlington c.1790. The presence of a floor plan of Luttrellstown in the Emo Court Collection, however, can also be explained through the marriage of Carhampton's niece Eliza to Hon. Henry Dawson, father of the third Earl of Portarlington.<sup>23</sup>

At the same time as the new castle was erected, the demesne at Luttrellstown was enlarged and re-designed. Work must have been already underway by 1787 for in that year it was reported that Lord Carhampton had 'upwards of 100 industrious labouring men' employed in the undertaking. The parkland, as it appears on the 1842 Ordnance Survey map (see Fig 18) was designed in the Reptonian manner of the





Fig 18. First edition Ordnance Survey map (Co. Dublin, sheets 13 & 17) dated 1842 for the Woodlands (Luttrellstown) Demesne. Hermitage house and landscape park, which Carhampton also owned, lies on the south-east side, south of the River Liffey.

'picturesque', with the large open meadows dotted with judiciously placed clumps and numerous scattered isolated trees to provide scenic variety as one travelled around the landscape either on foot or by carriage.

Among the many demesne changes at this time was an expansion of its boundary on the west and south-west side. The old perimeter, as shown on Rocque's 1757 map, followed the present townland boundary (see Fig. 6). This was extended out to the line of the present road, infilled with trees and delimited with the present wall. Other changes involved laying out a network of circuit avenues, carefully designed to impress visitors with the beauty and expanse of the park. This included the main avenue leading up the west bank of the glen, plus the winding approaches from gates in the demesne's north perimeter (see Fig. 18). A wooden bridge was built in 1787 across the Liffey to give access to the Hermitage, which was also Lord Carhampton's property at this time. This bridge, having been swept away by floods in the same year (1787), was later rebuilt and depicted by Fisher in 1792 (see Fig. 9).

One of the features of the new 'picturesque' landscape design emerging in the later 18th century was the popularity of shrubberies adjacent to the house, whereas previously in the 'Brownian' concept of parkland design, the parkland turf swept right up the house windows. The 1834 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 18) shows shrubberies flanking the south and east sides of the building (misleadingly shrubberies were often shown as woodland on these maps). These usually comprised scythed or mowed lawns dotted with irregular beds of ornamental shrubs below the house windows and normally separated from the park meadows by a ha-ha or sunken wall. At Luttrellstown an area of about nine acres was enclosed in the 1790s by such a ha-ha



on the north, east and south sides of the mansion. In the 1860s the line of this ha-ha on the south side of the building was re-aligned to facilitate the newly designed pleasure grounds of that time.

Except for shrubberies near the house, most gardening activity of the period was confined to the walled garden, screened from view of the park with trees. At Luttrellstown the walled garden was built a short distance south-west of the house and takes the form of a long rectangular enclosure with north-south axis, then subdivided into two units and covering about 3½-acres. There was a slip or frame yard on the west side and on the 1842 map had a large south-facing glasshouse in the centre. In the mid-19th century the walled garden was enlarged to the north (see below). Although the principal function of such walled gardens was for the growing of kitchen stuff for the family and staff, they were also designed as areas for pleasure and promenade. Flower borders typically lined the paths and the vegetables were screened from view by espalier fruit trees. Manure for the garden came from the farm yard complex, another 1790s addition to the park, located to the north-west of the house and carefully screened from view with trees.

As events turned out the Earl of Carhampton only enjoyed his house and park at Luttrellstown for little over a decade. During this time he evidently entertained lavishly. In June 1796 we have an account of a ball held in the castle attended by around 250 people.<sup>24</sup> By this time however, Carhampton had been made commander of the army in Ireland and was gaining a rather ruthless reputation. He had directed a merciless suppression of dissent in Connaught in 1795, impressing over 1000 suspected Defenders for naval service. At least one attempt was made to assassinate him even before the 1798 Rebellion, where his excessive actions incurred fresh hostility. It was because of his general unpopularity, so we are told by a few contemporary commentators, that the Earl decided to clear out of Ireland and sell his property. This might have contributed to his decision, but the real reasons most likely came with the passing of the Act of Union when the source of political power passed from Dublin to London. Carhampton had already, like his father before him, spent a great deal of his life in England, where he had a seat at Cobham Park in Surrey. As he had no children, he may well have decided that there is little to keep him in Ireland and instead continue with his parliamentary involvement in London, representing the English constituency of Ludgershall until his death.

The sale of Luttrellstown to Luke White took place in June 1799. A letter from the Earl of Shannon at the time states that White bought it 'at 20 years purchase, the estate about £3000 a year, he is supposed to pay £90,000'. In a second letter that month, the Earl of Shannon related that:

'I saw Carhampton at Council; we walked on the flags after it. He tells me that he gets one hundred and five thousand pounds for the park and estate of Luttrellstown, and that he has £1,000 [a year] after in Ireland'.<sup>25</sup>

The Earl of Carhampton subsequently retired to his seat at Cobham Park in Surrey, which he had acquired in 1782, and lived there until 1805 when he purchased nearby Painshill, a place renowned today as one of Europe's finest landscape parks.<sup>26</sup> His death was pre-maturely announced by the *Dublin Post* in 1811, but after Carhampton demanded a retraction, the newspaper famously did so under the title 'Public Disappointment'.<sup>27</sup> He actually died in 1821 aged seventy-eight at his town residence in Bruton Street, London. His titles passed to his younger brother John Luttrell-Olmus, (1739-1829) and on his death these family titles all became extinct.

## Luke White and Woodlands (1799-1824)

Few individuals in Ireland's history have matched the astonishing rags to riches story of Luke White (1740-1824), the purchaser of Luttrellstown in 1799. It is generally accepted that he 'realised the largest fortune ever made by trade in Ireland', though for political and social reasons, his story was often the subject of much disinformation, with one common tale that he 'won the lottery'.<sup>28</sup> A summary of his success as a businessman was published on his death in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

'He rose by degree from being the poorest to be the richest man in Ireland. He commenced business as an itinerant bookseller at Belfast and was in the practice of selling by auction his pamphlets and imperfect volumes in the public streets of Belfast. The knowledge he thus acquired of public sales, procured him the situation of clerk to an auctioneer in Dublin. There he opened a small book-shop and became eminent in that line, sold lottery-tickets and by his speculation in the funds and contracting for government loans acquired his enormous wealth'.<sup>29</sup>

Much of his serious money derived from loans, especially those he gave to the Irish Government itself; in one case he lent them one million pounds at £65 per £100 share at 5%. Having made his money he became politically active as an outspoken Whig politician representing Leitrim in parliament (where he had acquired the Lanesborough estate). He was a strongly liberal and pro-catholic advocate in the union parliament (1818-24), a 'decided reformer', as Daniel O'Connell once described him, and made a habit of opposing government.<sup>30</sup>

On a social level he was the subject of much prejudice. Lady Hardwicke, the wife the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1801-06) and herself filled with an exaggerated respect for her own high social station, remarked that 'great wealth does not get a man forward here as in London' and that many 'aristocrats' took 'great offence' that this man of humble background, had acquired one of Ireland's premier seats. Out of curiosity, she and her husband invited themselves to visit Luke White at Luttrellstown. She wrote of the occasion in as typically condescending way:

'Mr. White is a very well-looking man of fifty, and has a very fine countenance, sensible and penetrating ... Mrs. White is a very well-behaved little woman, without fuss or bustle. His manners I thought particularly good. There were about sixty people, with a magnificent breakfast, and the party afterwards walked or drove about the grounds, which are most extremely beautiful. We then returned to the house and found ices, etc., and after a little very good music we departed, much pleased with our day on our own account, and far more for our hosts, for it would have been very uncomfortable had there been any mishap or awkwardness that could have raised a smile on the saucy faces of Dublin'.<sup>31</sup>

Luke White was actually sixty-three at the time and his wife, Arabella Fortescue, was from a prominent Anglo-Irish family, and no doubt would not have much appreciated being called 'a well behaved little woman'.<sup>32</sup> She did make one observation that was probably true, that the name of Luttrellstown was changed to 'Woodlands' possibly at 'the desire of Lord Carhampton' himself, who she said had sold the property because he 'had become disgusted with Ireland after the Rebellion'. It is often assumed that Luke White changed the name to eradicate the memory of the previous owner and while this makes a good story, it is rather more probable that Carhampton himself requested the change as he found the idea of a man of such low birth acquiring his ancient family seat so abhorrent.

Having acquired Luttrellstown, Luke White appears to have lost no time in carrying out further improvements to the property. When Hely Dutton visited in 1801 he observed that upwards of seventy people were employed through the year:

‘annually adding to the plantations, and improving the soil; for this purpose the fine lake near the castle was laid dry in the summer of 1800, and upwards of 60,000 loads of choice manure raised from the bottom, which, after having been mixed with a large proportion of lime, was laid on the land’.

It is likely that an extension to the lake’s south-west side was probably undertaken at this time, while Luke White was also probably responsible for beginning the pleasure grounds, later known as the ‘American Garden’ to the south of the walled garden. A ‘pavilion rustique’, a form of ornamental wooded shell house, now long vanished, was formerly located at the south end of these grounds. It was probably added during the early decades of the 19th century and was described in 1831 by the famous travel writer Prince Pückler-Muskau as comprising a:

‘hexagonal, three sides solid, and fashioned of pieces of rough branches of trees very prettily arranged in various patterns; the other three consist of two windows and a door. The floor is covered with a mosaic of little pebbles from the brook, the ceiling with shells, and the roof is thatched with wheat straw on which the full ears have been left’.<sup>33</sup>

Luke White died on 25th February 1824 at Park Street, Mayfair, and Woodlands (Luttrellstown) was inherited by his eldest son, Colonel Thomas White (1783-1847). Not much is known what changes, if any, that he effected during his twenty-three years of occupation of Luttrellstown.<sup>34</sup> On his death in 1847 the property fell to his younger brother and father's favourite, Henry White MP (1789-1873), who was to be raised as the 1st Baron Annaly of Annaly and Rathcline in 1863.



Fig. 19. Aerial view of Luttrellstown Castle looking south-east across the park meadow to the glen.



## Luttrellstown in the Victorian Age

Luke White's eldest son, Colonel Thomas White, who inherited Luttrellstown in 1824, was out of favour with his father when he died. This was partly because Thomas had refused to stand as MP for County Dublin as a supporter for Catholic relief; instead, Luke's youngest son Henry, a strong supporter of Catholic emancipation, served for the seat from 1823-32. Luke rewarded Henry by leaving him with an income nearly twice that of Thomas and when Thomas died without an heir in 1847, it was Henry who inherited his father's property at Luttrellstown.

Henry had joined the army in 1811 with 14th Light Dragoons and served in Wellington's army in the Peninsula War. He was present at the Siege of Badajoz (1812) and the Battle of Salamanca (1812) and was decorated with a medal with clasps. His experiences in the war may have contributed to his strong pro-catholic position (as with Wellington); he was later MP for Co. Leitrim (1837-47) and again for Co. Dublin (1857-61). Eventually he was raised to the peerage as the first Baron Annaly in August 1863, the title's name deriving from Rathcline House near Lanesborough and the very extensive estates in Annaly, County Longford, which he had inherited on the death of his next elder brother, Luke William White, in 1854.

The ennoblement of Henry as the first Baron Annaly of Annaly and Rathcline was marked with festivities at Luttrellstown in 1863 and again during the following year. These included a series of entertainments, theatrical and social, which extended over two weeks. A theatre was specially built for dramatic performances and a grand ball was held in the house.<sup>35</sup>



Fig 20. First revision Ordnance Survey map (Co. Dublin, sheets 13 & 17) for Woodland dated 1872, just before the death of Henry White, the first Baron Annaly.



Fig 21. Detail of the first revision Ordnance Survey map (Co. Dublin, sheets 13 & 17) dated 1872 for the Woodlands (Luttrellstown) Demesne. It shows the area around the house, with the lake and part of the glen; the rustic bridge is labelled 'Hermitage'. The walled garden had been enlarged by the first Lord Annaly in the 1860s to its north; a conservatory had been built in the pleasure grounds on route to the walled garden and an arboretum had been started, mainly to the south of the walled garden.

The demesne of Woodlands (Luttrellstown) was open to the public during Henry's ownership, as it was during his brother and father's time. The four main gates were left permanently open and both horses and carriages allowed freely to pass through and around the park. One of the visitors was the Queen and the Prince Consort, who came here on April 12th 1849 on their way to Carton, the seat of the Duke of Leinster. An account at the time records that a 'handsome triumphal arch was erected across the avenue' and large crowds were assembled who 'loudly and enthusiastically cheered'.<sup>36</sup>

Unlike Henry's brother Samuel White, who undertook major garden changes at his residence, Killakee, in south County Dublin,<sup>37</sup> Henry himself made only limited garden changes to Woodlands (Luttrellstown). The most dramatic addition was the creation of a straight avenue planted with lime trees between the lake and the Clonsilla gate in the 1860s, no doubt to allow quicker access to the railway station at Clonsilla; this replaced an avenue that had formerly existed on this line in the early 18th century (see Fig. 6), but had been removed with the naturalisation of the park in the 1770s. The present Clonsilla gates and lodge were also built at this time, as was the gate lodge by the main gates on the Liffey Road.

The walled garden was expanded in the 1860s with the addition of another walled unit to the north, 0.6 acre extent, designed as a flower garden and a free standing

conservatory was built on the route from the house to the walled garden. It is probable that the extensive rockery which flanks this path into the walled garden was also added at this time. That part of the pleasure grounds to the south of the walled garden, known by this time as the 'American Ground', became the focus of exotic tree and shrub planting from at least the 1860s onwards, as was the area immediately to the north of the castle. The size of some of the trees that survive there today bear testimony to its origins at this time; these include a Giant sequoia (*Wellingtonia*) *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, 6.55 x 50m, measured by laser in 2004 and stated then to be the second tallest of its kind in Ireland; a cucumber tree *Magnolia acuminata*, 2.56 x 21.6m, the Irish height champion and second greatest girthed example of its kind in Ireland; a mountain ash or Rowan tree, *Sorbus aucuparia*, 2.35 @ 1.4 x 16.6m, the second greatest girthed of its kind in Ireland; a yew, *Taxus baccata*, 2.91 x 26m the tallest common yew in Ireland and a European larch, *Larix decidua*, 2.8 x 37.8m, the Irish height champion.<sup>38</sup>

Henry, the first Lord Annaly died in September 1873 at Sunbury Park, Sunbury-on-Thames, an enormous house (now demolished) that he rented from R.E. Arden.<sup>39</sup> He was succeeded by his eldest son, Luke White, second Baron Annaly (1829-1888), who like his father had served in the army, achieving the rank of Captain in the 13th Light Dragoons and Lieutenant-Colonel in the Longford Rifles. He was MP for Co. Clare (1859-60), Co. Longford (1861-62) and Kildermister (1862-65), serving in the Liberal Government of Lord Palmerston as Junior Lord of the Treasury (1862-66) and State Stewart to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1868-73). For his services he was made a Knight of the Order of St. Patrick (1885).

From the early 1860s he lived at Titness Park, Sunningdale, Berkshire - a late Regency gothic revival mansion where he regularly hosted the Prince of Wales during



Fig. 22. The Tudor-style entrance tower on the north front of Woodlands (Luttrellstown) Castle, added by the second Baron Annaly in the late 1870s. Photograph from Ball (1906).



Ascot week.<sup>40</sup> After he inherited Woodlands (Luttrellstown) Castle he decided to upgrade the mansion, most notably, replacing the original twin-towered entrance with a rather out-of-scale heavy Tudor porch and tower. Possibly inspired by Titness Park, the dining room was also remodelled in a rather gloomy Tudor baronial style. Much of the stone for the new building work evidently came from a small quarry opened up in the woods in the south-west corner of the park.

Remodelling of the castle was accompanied by the addition of a winter garden parterre on the south front. It comprised an intricate knot-pattern of clipped box-hedging enclosing an armillary sphere sundial just below the house terrace, with large box-edged flower beds enclosing urns on the far outside. The garden was populated with a variety of different shaped clipped evergreen standards, mostly yew, but also hardy Portuguese laurels (*Prunus lusitanica*); the latter were very popular in the 1870s for their winter-warming mixture of evergreen leaves and rhubarb-red stems. According to Knowldin writing in 1912, the winter garden was designed by the well-known liberal politician, Lord Otto Fitzgerald (1827-1882), the third son of Augustus FitzGerald, third Duke of Leinster. However, a reference to the fact that he also designed the baroque style organ case in the Saloon at Carton, Co. Kildare, would indicate that Knowldin had confused two brothers, for the organ case at Carton was in fact designed by Otto's elder brother, Lord Gerald FitzGerald (1821-1886), who was both an artist and musician.<sup>41</sup>



Fig. 23 Aerial view of Luttrellstown Castle in 1931 showing the relics of winter garden as it still survived at that time. The garden had been created in the later 1870s by the second Baron Annaly to a design by Lord FitzGerald. When this picture was taken, the elaborate knot-pattern of clipped box had been removed, as had most of the yew and laurel topiary, but the original path layout has survived. The parterre flanking the east facade had by this stage been replaced by a tennis court.



Fig. 24. The winter garden parterre on the south front of Luttrellstown Castle around 1905. It was created in the late 1870s to a design by Lord Fitzgerald. Note the clipped standards of *Prunus lusitanica*, much favoured by gardeners in the 1860s and 1870s.



Fig. 25. The winter garden parterre on the south front of Luttrellstown Castle showing the armillary sphere sundial surrounded within an elaborate parterre layout of box-hedging.



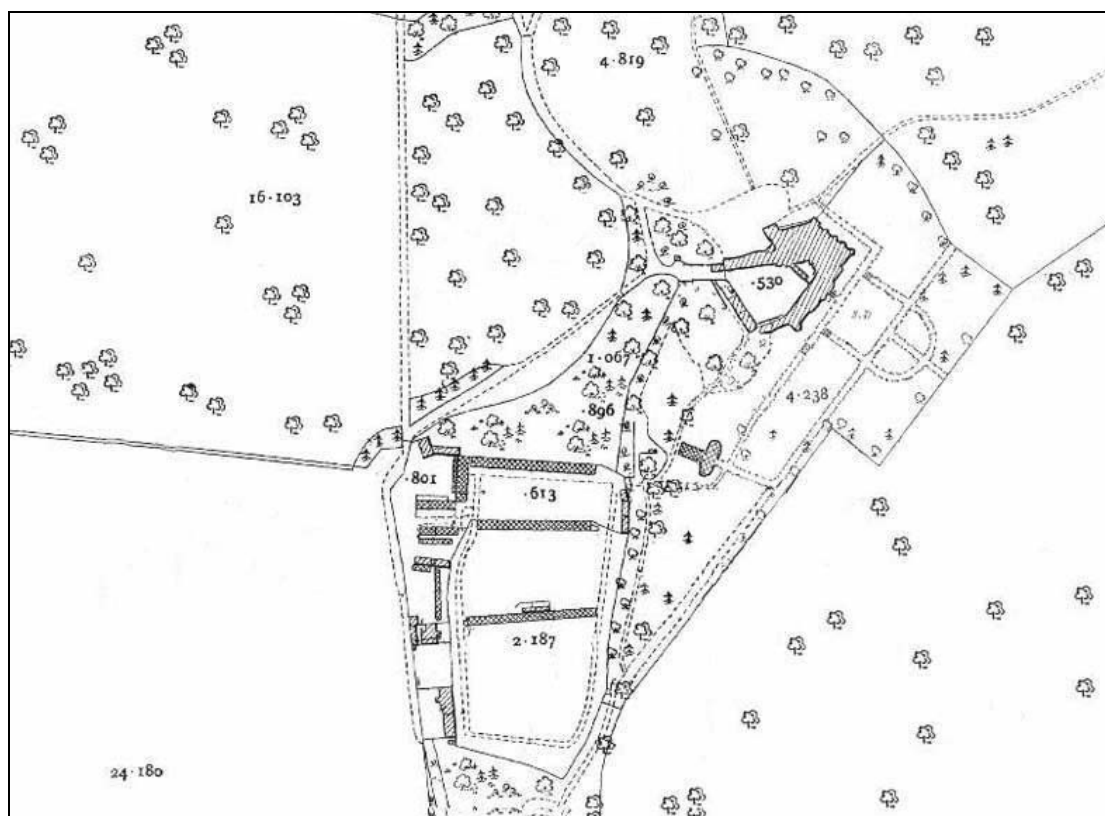


Fig. 26. Map of Luttrellstown Castle as depicted on the 1907 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map. This shows the walled garden and frame yards with their extensive glasshouse ranges. The head gardener's house lies at the south-west end of the walled garden. At this time the garden was especially well known for its peaches.

Luke White, second Baron Annaly died on 16th March 1888, aged fifty-eight, in Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal, where he appears to have gone to recuperate his health. He was succeeded by his son Luke White (1857-1922), the third Baron Annaly, a soldier who had served in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, winning a medal, clasp and bronze star. Like his father and grandfather, he was a liberal politician (though Unionist); he held the office of Lord of the Bedchamber to HRH The Prince of Wales between 1908 and 1910 and was the Permanent Lord-in-Waiting to HM King George V between 1910 and 1921.

His biggest change to the property was probably changing the name of Woodlands back to its original Luttrellstown. However, like his father and grandfather, he appears to have spent much of the year in England. This was particularly the case after 1905, when he inherited the great Elizabethan house of Holdenby in Northamptonshire through his marriage to the daughter of Viscount Clifton of Gowran in 1884.<sup>42</sup>

Nonetheless the property remained very well maintained. There is a story that Baron Annaly, becoming aggravated at the worn state of the grass verges along the many walks of the demesne, placed pegs and wire traps to catch the culprit, only to be caught himself when hurrying home one evening in the dusk. When Knowldin visited in 1912 he too admired the miles of 'well-kept avenues' which at the time:

'have always been the pride of those responsible for their keeping and well we recollect a predecessor of Mr. Dent's [the head gardener] being complimented by the late Canon Sadleir with "B...[Buggins] the avenues are a credit to you" to which he modestly replied "Well, sir, we never know when the Lord (Lord Annaly) will come, so we like to be prepared"'.





Fig. 27. The lake at Luttrellstown with what appears to be a hockey match in progress on the winter ice. This view is looking north-west. The lake is present on Rocque's 1760 map and was probably created during the early 1740s; as such it must be one of the earliest artificial 'natural' lakes (as opposed to formal geometric basins and canals) in Ireland. The most likely date of this image is the winter of 1894-94, known subsequently as the winter of the 'twelve week frost'.

Luttrellstown at this time was noted for its peaches, grown in the extensive glasshouses ranges in the walled garden. Knowldin in 1912 considered that the American Ground contained 'some of the finest specimen coniferae in the county Dublin' noting that it contained 'two superb *Libocedrus decurrens*, with various pines and firs of the spruce and silver tribes'.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately, finding himself spending less and less time in Ireland, the third Baron Annaly, having first leased the house, finally sold Luttrellstown in 1919.<sup>44</sup>

One notable event took place at Luttrellstown during the final decades of the third Baron Annaly's ownership, namely a second visit by the Queen to the demesne. This took place on April 19th 1900, when the Queen was staying at the Viceregal Lodge. She came with Princess Christian and Prince Henry of Battenberg in a carriage and pair with their equerry in attendance. They entered by the Clonsilla gate, drove down the lime avenue and across to the lake where they stopped for some time to admire the landscape, which the *London Times* reporter at the time described as being 'more than common beauty'. Without alighting from her carriage she took tea, prepared by her turbaned Indian attendants, who had been sent half an hour in advance. To commemorate the event Lord Annaly erected a small obelisk, eight feet high composed of six blocks of granite from the Dublin Mountains. This stands at the head of glen, near the cold bath, and bears the following inscription:

'Victoria R et I., 1819-1901, in commemoration of Her Majesty's visits to Luttrellstown, 1849-1900'.

## Luttrellstown After 1919

In 1919 the house and demesne of Luttrellstown was sold by the third Baron Annaly to Major E.C. Hamilton. He resided at Newbridge and died in 1922, never apparently having occupied the house. It may have been at this time that a small brickworks with kiln was opened in the south-east corner of the demesne. The bricks were stamped 'Clonsilla' and the resultant quarry is now a small and very attractive lake, known as the blue pond, hidden in the woods.

After some years sorting out legal difficulties, Major Hamilton's wife sold Luttrellstown in 1927 to Hon. Ernest Guinness, younger brother of Rupert, the second Earl of Iveagh. Later the same year Ernest gave the property to his daughter Aileen Sibell Mary Guinness (1904-1999), on the occasion of her marriage to the Hon. Brinsley Sheridan Bushe Plunket, known as 'Brinny', younger brother of the sixth Lord Plunket. During the early years of their marriage they entertained much at Luttrellstown, but from 1933, when Aileen had an affair with the actor Douglas Fairbanks Senior, the marriage ran into trouble. They divorced in 1940 and the following year Brinsley Plunket was killed in combat as an RAF flight-lieutenant in aerial combat over Sudan.

While the gardens and park were maintained during these years, there were no major changes to the grounds, though the Hon Brinsley Plunkett did commission the English landscape architect, Percy Cane (1881-1976), to design a formal garden and an arcaded porch to the garden front of the castle.<sup>45</sup> During the war years Aileen lived in the United States and the castle was leased out to the Italian ambassador and his staff, who later moved to Lucan House.

Aileen Plunket returned to Luttrellstown after the war and embarked upon an expensive remodelling of the castle's interiors.<sup>46</sup> One of London's top interior designers of the period, Felix Harbord, was contracted to undertake the work, which continued until the early 1960s.<sup>47</sup> He transformed the staircase hall, created the Grisaille Room and remodelled the Annaly's Tudor banqueting hall into a 'Kentian' dining room with Aubusson tapestries. Numerous other alterations also took place, notably the installation of many fine chimneypieces. Changes to the park during this time were minimal, save only for the creation of a herbaceous border below the south front of the castle and the building of a swimming pool to the south-west of the mansion.

Entertaining in the grand manner continued during the 1950s and many famous personalities of the day passed through the door, including the Aga Khan, Prince and Princess Rainier, the Maharaja of Jaipur and film stars Ursula Andrews and Jean-Paul Belmondo. In 1955 the scenic woods and open parkland were used as the setting for a film *The Knights of the Round Table* with Rex Taylor and Mel Ferrer.

In 1956 Aileen Plunket met and married in New York an interior decorator, the Yugoslavian born Valerian Stux-Rybar. This marriage lasted until 1963 after which she continued to live alone at Luttrellstown, but still living a lavish lifestyle. Although she was a Guinness, her finances were under increasing pressure by the late 1970s and the trustees of the Iveagh fortune were getting restless, urging her to sell the property. In the early 1980s Dublin County Council, who recognised the considerable national importance of the park at Luttrellstown, sought to bring it into public ownership, so that it could be freely enjoyed by the citizens of Dublin. The council made two offers for the house and park, but unfortunately both offers fell just short of what Mrs Plunket was prepared to accept. In 1983 the house's contents were sold through Christies and Mrs Plunket moved out.

The purchaser of Luttrellstown was Mr. Didier Primat (1944-2008), a Swiss-based French billionaire, the heir to the Schlumberger fortune.<sup>48</sup> At the time he was seeking a high quality European estate, which he could use for holidays and weekends with his family and where he could indulge his great passion for breeding pure bred Limousin cattle. He chose Luttrellstown principally because the property prices on the continent were high and comparatively low in Ireland at that time.

Although Luttrellstown was originally purchased in 1983 as private retreat for Mr. Primat, the actual ownership of the demesne was in the name of one of his companies, Primwest Holdings, a Swiss Company registered at Curaçao in the Netherlands Antilles. Under the management of Nick and Heather Bielenburg, the castle was extensively re-decorated and furnished for Mr. Primat's personal use. Once complete, it became evident that Mr. Primat would only occasionally use the house, it was decided that the building could be rented out either for upmarket venues or as a place for the rich and famous to stay. It was subsequently been used almost entirely for these purposes and played host to many celebrities, notably President Regan, Prince Rainier and Princess Grace of Monaco, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg and the King and Queen of Denmark.

Herds of pure breed Limousin cattle were introduced to the open parkland after 1984, while a programme of tree planting was undertaken and demesne paths and carriageways, many long overgrown, were restored. A less positive development during this decade was the creation of an 18-hole golf course in the eastern sector of the parkland. Inevitably this damaged the 18th century parkscape, though fortunately the golf course was sensitively designed, so that its impact was limited. Except for the clubhouse, no buildings were introduced, while the course itself did not involve



Fig. 28. Aerial view of Luttrellstown Castle in 1999. At the time this image was widely used for publicity purposes. Some of the late Didier Primat's Limousin cattle can be seen in the foreground.



much earthmoving, nor did it result in the removal of any trees. In addition it was confined to the eastern demesne sector and did not impinge on the parkland core. The clubhouse, built close to the northern demesne wall, was designed by Duncan Stewart and was of log construction.

In 1996 the Bielenburg's left Luttrellstown. It was around this time that Primwest Holdings, which itself was re-organised, took more direct control over the management of Luttrellstown. The company under the management of Mr. I. M. Dalziel in Switzerland subsequently proceeded to draw up plans with Savills International Property Consultants to commercially develop the property, by building a hotel, housing estates and another golf course. Fortunately these proposals, which would have resulted in very considerable and irreversible damage to the fabric of this important historic landscape, was never actually carried out, though in 2005-06 the golf course was extended into the north-west part of the demesne.

In 2006 the demesne was sold to Mr. J.P. McManus and Mr. John Magnier. The castle remains one of Ireland's most prestigious venues to be rented to private groups and parties, weddings or corporate occasions.

### Acknowledgements

This paper is an updated and redrafted version of an unpublished report produced for An Taisce in 2001 in order to highlight the historic importance of the Luttrellstown demesne ahead of a major planning application for a new hotel, houses and additional golf course on the property. fig 11 is copyright The Trustees of the British Museum (no 1886,0624.1); fig. 23 is from the albums of the late Aileen Plunket; fig 27 is from the photographic collection of the late Dick Shackleton, Anna Liffey House; figs 24 & 25 are from the collection of Lady Crofton: Album of the Hon. Edith Dillon (who married Sir William Mahon in 1905).

### Notes

1. Anon ('P') (1840) 'Woodlands, County of Dublin'. *The Irish Penny Journal*, Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> 1840, vol. I, no.18, pp137-8.
2. Young, A. (1780). *A Tour in Ireland; with General Observations on the Present State of that Kingdom: made in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778. And brought down to the end of 1779.* London, T. Cadell & J. Dodsley: 1780 (First edition). First Irish edition: Dublin, Whitestone, Sleator, et al, printed by Bonham (1780), Two vols.
3. Pückler-Muskau, Prince H. (1832) *A Tour in England, Ireland and France in the year 1826, 1827, 1828 and 1829 in a series of letters.* Translated by S. Austin (Two vols, 1832). Another edition was published at Zurich in 1940.
4. Gough, J. (1817) *A Tour in Ireland in 1813 and 1814; with an appendix, written in 1816 on another visit to that Island.* Dublin, R. Napper for M. Gough and Co.
5. Ball, F.E. (1906) *A History of County Dublin.* Dublin, Alexander Thom & Co, vol. 4, chapter 1.
6. For an outline history of the early Luttrell family history, see Luttrell, W. (1895) 'History of a noted Irish family'. *The Shamrock*, p811-2; Bourke, M. J (1921) 'The Luttrells of Luttrellstown'. *Cork Historical and Archaeological Society Journal*, vol. 27(1921), 65-9; Glin, Knight of (1983) *Luttrellstown*. Christies Sales Catalogue, 26-28<sup>th</sup> September (1983).
7. Ferguson, P. (ed.) (1998) *The A to Z of Georgian Dublin.* John Rocques's Maps of the City in 1756 and the County in 1760. Harry Margary, Lympne Castle, Kent with TCD Library, Dublin.
8. Simington R. C (ed.) (1996) *The Civil Survey A.D. 1654-1656.* vol. VII. *County of Dublin.* Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission (1996 reprint): Parish of Clonsillaigh, page 231-2. See also Horner, A. (2012) 'Reconstructing the seventeenth-century landscape of the Pale'. *History Ireland*, vol. 20. no. 6 (November-December), pp18-22.
9. Hayes, S. (1794) *A Practical Thesis on Planting and Management of Woods and Coppices.* Dublin, Sleator.
10. Dutton, H. (1802) *Observations of Mr. Archer's Survey of the County of Dublin*, pp126-127. Therein Hely Dutton remarks that the 'noble elm tree near the old mills, so long the glory of Luttrellstown and the admiration of every person of taste, was unfortunately broken off within about

ten feet of the ground, by the great storm in January 1802' and said that he had 'been favoured with the dimensions of this father of the forest, as taken by the Reverend Gilbert Austin, 4feet from the ground: 14feet 9inches circumference; 15feet from the ground: 4feet 9inches circumference; 79feet from the ground: 1feet 0inches circumference'.

11. *The Dublin Courant*, 1-4th August 1747; 25th-29th August 1747; 16th-20th August 1748; 22-26th August 1749; *The Dublin Journal*, 29th August-1st September 1752; Heber, R. (1753) *An Historical List of Horse-matches run and of Plates and Prizes run for in Great Britain and Ireland, in 1752*. London, vol. 2, p119; Maighréad Ní Mhurchadha (2008) 'Two hundred men at tennis sport in North Dublin 1600-1760'. *Dublin Historical Record*, vol. 61, no. 1 (Spring), pp87-106.

12. Ryan, D. (2012) *Blasphemers and Blackguards. The Irish Hellfire Clubs*. Dublin, Merrion. Luttrell is depicted (sitting on extreme right) on a conversation piece of some club members by the English artist, James Worsdale (1692-1767).

13. He lived much of the time from 1751 to 1766 at his seat at Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham, having also a town house in South Audley Street, London. He lived in England at this time principally to promote his political career and social position.

14. For the political career of Simon Luttrell (1713-87) see Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke (eds) *The History of Parliament: The Commons 1754-1790*, vol. III (1968), pp68-70, see also pp65-66.

15. Llanover, Lady (ed.) *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany 1700-1788* (6 vols, 1861-62); vol. II, p561 (7 July 1745); p567 (June 1750).

16. The best surviving example is at Montalto, Co. Down. Another is at Portavo, Co. Down.

17. Pückler-Muskau, Prince H. (1832) *A Tour in England, Ireland and France in the year 1826, 1827, 1828 and 1829 in a series of letters*. Translated by S. Austin (Two vols, 1832). Another edition was published at Zurich in 1940.

18. Young, Arthur (1780). *A Tour in Ireland; with General Observations on the Present State of that Kingdom: made in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778. And brought down to the end of 1779*. London, T. Cadell & J. Dodsley: 1780 (First edition). First Irish edition: Dublin, Whitestone, Sleator, et al, printed by Bonham (1780), Two vols. Other early descriptions of the glen include those of John Gough: 'The glen is particularly beautiful; it follows the course of a natural rivulet, flowing over a rocky bed, between steep banks well wooded, forming a most agreeable solitude, without gloom and possessing infinite variety', in (1817) *A Tour in Ireland in 1813 and 1814; with an appendix, written in 1816 on another visit to that Island*. Dublin, R. Napper for M. Gough and Co.

19. Planned by James Howley in (1993) *The Follies and Garden Buildings of Ireland*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, pp46-7, figs 68, 69.

20. Copyright The Trustees of the British Museum, no 1886,0624.1. Signed by John James Barralet (1747-1815), but no date (but circa.1787). Watercolour, with pen and grey ink and grey wash.

21. Howley, J. (1993) *The Follies and Garden Buildings of Ireland*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, p80, fig. 127.

22. *Saunders's News-Letter*, 4th August 1783; 9th August 1783; 13th August, 1783; 23rd August 1783; 26th August, 1783; 29th August 1783; 3rd September 1783; 2nd June 1785; 28th April 1787; 8th May 1787; 30th May 1789.

23. In the 2nd Earl of Carhampton's will he left his Jamaica and other properties to his niece Eliza Moriarty (see extract from the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. Will dated 25 April 1820. Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking). Eliza was the daughter of Edmund-Joshua Moriarty and Lady Lucy, daughter of Simon Luttrell, first Earl of Carhampton. Eliza married the Hon. Henry Dawson (1796-1853), younger brother of the 2nd Earl of Portarlington. Henry John Reuben Dawson-Damer, who was Henry and Eliza's son, subsequently became the 3rd Earl of Portarlington. It is therefore quite possible that drawings and other such items formerly belonging to the second Earl of Carhampton could have been inherited by the third Earl of Portarlington.

24. Hamilton papers. Hamwood House. Extract on the ball was quoted in the Knight of Glin (1983).

25. Hewitt, E. (ed.) *Lord Shannon's Letters to his Son*. Belfast, PRONI, p195; 197.

26. In his will Lord Carhampton left Painshill to his wife for the remainder of her life. She died in 1831 and the estate was sold in 1832 to William Henry Cooper. For an excellent account of Painshill's development see Symes, M. (2010) *Mr. Hamilton's Elysium. The Garden of Painshill*. London, Frances Lincoln (for Carhampton's ownership see pp27-8, p152).

27. *Dublin Post*, May 2nd, 1811; *Saunders's News Letter*, 3rd May 1811.

28. For example a story related in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Friday March 13th (1908) that Luke White 'one day found a lottery ticket in the pages of an old second hand book which he had purchased with a job lot at a public sale. Fortunately for himself he failed in his efforts to dispose of the ticket and it was left in his hands, winning the prize of \$100,000 which proved the foundation of his fortune'.

29. Sylvanus, U. (1824) *The Gentleman's Magazine*. London, John Harris & Son, p642.

30. Fisher, D.R. and Farrell, S. (2009) *The History of Parliament*. Entry for Luke White, Cambridge University Press.
31. Hare, A.J.C. (1893) *The Story of Two Noble Lives*. London, George Allen, vol. 1, pp13-17.
32. Luke White married Elizabeth de la Mazière in February 1782, with whom he had four sons and three daughters. He married secondly, Arabella Fortescue, daughter of William Fortescue, in 1800, and with her had one further son.
33. Pückler-Muskau, Prince H. (1832) op cit.
34. His head gardener at Luttrellstown from 1834 was Thomas McMahon, who was a very successful exhibitor at local and national shows. He won first prize for red gooseberries and other prizes at the RHSI Autumn Exhibition of Fruit and Flowers held in the Rotunda, August 1834. Won a prize for apples and other awards at the RHSI September Exhibition held at no.19, Bachelor's Walk, in September 1834. At the Spring RHSI exhibition of April 1835, he won a prize for his white edged auriculas and later at the RHSI June 1835 exhibition in the Rotunda he won a prize for his roses. Won prize for bouquets at the RHSI autumn show in Dublin, September 1841 among many other prizes.
35. 'Festivities at Woodlands in the County of Dublin'. *The Illustrated London News*, vol. XLIV, no. 1242 (January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1864), p78. The plays 'Still Waters Run Deep' and 'Samuel in Search of Himself' were performed, and a ball to which 'most of the principal families of Dublin and the neighbourhood received invitations', concluded the festivities.
36. 'The Queen in Ireland'. *The Times*, August 13th, 1845.
37. Killakee, Co. Dublin. Ninian Niven's work for White is described by William Robinson (1864) 'Notes on garden - no. xxiv. Killakee'. *The Gardeners' Chronicle* (December 10th), pp1179-80. See also A.C. (1870) 'A visit to Killakee'. *The Gardeners' Record*, August 27th, pp417-419.
38. Tree Council of Ireland (2005) *Champion Trees. A Selection of Ireland's Great Trees*. Dublin, Tree Council of Ireland., pp27-8. Survey work was undertaken by Aubrey Fennell.
39. The walled garden survives and it's planting was restored from 1985 by the local Spelthorne Council and is currently open to the public.
40. Titness Park is best known today as where the early flowering hybrid *Rhododendron* 'Titness Park' was first cultivated'. With parentage of *R. barbatum* x *calophytum*, it has a rich pink flower with crimson markings at the base of the throat. The property was sold by 2nd Baron Annaly around 1882.
41. Knowldin, E. (1912) 'Garden and country house notes. Luttrellstown, Co. Dublin'. *Irish Life* (4th October), pp1230-32.
42. Through this marriage he also inherited Gowran Castle, Co. Kilkenny, the seat since the 17th century of the Agar (later Agar-Ellis) family, Viscounts Clifton. It was inherited by Luke White, the fourth Baron Annaly (1885-1970) and sold in 1955.
43. Knowldin, E. (1912) op cit. William Buggins was head gardener during the 1890s and was succeeded by another Englishman, James Dent, who was there at the outbreak of the Great War. Dent was elected a member of the R.H.S.I in 1908, see 'Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland', *Irish Gardening*, vol. 3, no. 31 (September 1908), p143 and Knowldin, E (1909) 'The Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland'. *Irish Gardening*, vol. 4, no. 35 (January), p6. The third Baron Annaly's steward at Luttrellstown, John McLean (born 1852), was himself a gardener in background; in 1898 he sent from the gardens at Luttrellstown, to the RHS Scientific committee a golden yellow tomato 'one of 145 Frogmore (red) selected', see 'Tomato with red and yellow fruit'. *The Gardener's Magazine*, vol. 41, no. 2337 (August 20<sup>th</sup> 1898), p537.
44. Prior to its sale, Luttrellstown had been leased to Sir Thomas James Dixon (1868-1950) and his wife Lady Edith Dixon (1871-1964), a keen gardener. They subsequently bought Cairndhu, Co. Antrim and Wilmont Park, Dunmurry.
45. Irish Architectural Archive, Acc. 2007/128. After the war Cane was also engaged to design gardens at Aughentaine, Co. Tyrone, and Drenagh, Co. Londonderry.
46. O'Higgins, K. (1956) 'Luttrellstown'. *Irish Tatler and Sketch*, October and November 1956; see also Mullally, F. (1981) *The Silver Salver. The Story of the Guinness Family*. London, Granada.
47. For a description of Felix Harbord's work at Luttrellstown see Cornforth, J. (1984) 'Luttrellstown Castle, County Dublin I & II'. *Country Life*, vol. CLXXV, no. 4518 (March 22<sup>nd</sup>), pp762-765 & vol. CLXXV, no. 4519 (March 29<sup>th</sup>), pp822-826.
48. Mr Didier Primat (1944-2008) was a director of the huge multinational company Schlumberger Limited, which deals in global technology services. He was also President of Primwest Holdings, registered in the Netherlands Antilles.

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