

## Notes from 'Gardening through History' talk by Lindsay Berry on 19 October 2016 at EHS meeting

Lindsay Berry from Ordsall Hall talked about a fusion of different gardening periods from Mediaeval to early Early Tudor which influence the garden style and planting at Ordsall.

### Garden Styles

Many early gardens were divided into different areas by panels of woven wood.

Tudor gardens in particular were arranged or separated by purpose and not as much by planting.

Tudor styles of garden design included – The Privy Garden, The Great Garden and the Knot Garden

### Crops and Plants

Two early vegetable crops grown at Ordsall are –

1. Colewort – an 'ancestor' of cabbage
2. Skirret – a perennial root crop which is dug around to pull or cut off some of its multiple roots as required

Particular occupations required specific planting in their gardens –

- Sacristo – bay, Christmas yew, hazel, red roses, sweet woodruff, lilies
- Almoner – Colewort, mulberry
- Cellarer – meadow sweet (for strewing), hay (for latrines)
- Tussy Mussy (Posy) garden – germander, lavender, hyssop, roses, pinks, borage, santolina

Plant introductions – new plants to Tudor or late times were –

- Sunflower (1596)
- Sweet Pea Matucana (1670)
- Laburnum (1560)
- Hyssop was used a lot in all Tudor gardens as a culinary and medicinal herb

### Tools

A number of tools were used in mediaeval gardens. Two of particular note and tried out at Ordsall Hall were:

Weeding sticks – two twigs, one with a short fork at the end, used to pull up weeds without stooping

Thumb Waterer – a ceramic pot with a spray of holes in its base and a narrow neck at the top. When immersed in a container of water and lifted out whilst blocking the neck with a thumb it is used to water individual plants by briefly lifting the thumb to allow a spray of water through the bottom. Available on the web or from the shop at Ordsall Hall.

### Box Blight

Blight can be encouraged by overclipping, so clip once in July. Lindsay talked about how Ordsall Hall is dealing with it.

At Ordsall they have been spraying box with a mixture of diluted milk to prevent blight spreading (this has fungicidal properties): – 1 litre of full fat milk to 6 or 7 litres of water. Possibly the addition of garlic might help.