

Review of "HERITAGE GARDENS" , George Plumtree.

Very few older gardens remain in their original state. The landscape gardens of the 'Capability' Brown era in the UK are perhaps the only ones in their original state. They have matured and reached the designers' visions for their ultimate perfection. Earlier architects' gardens such as the Generalife Gardens at the Alhambra in Cordoba and the Tivoli Gardens in Italy retain something of the original intent as the hardscape survives the ravages of time to preserve the garden layout concepts. Gardeners' gardens of the type promoted by Gertrude Jekyll and Vita Sackville-West over 100 years ago definitely wear out and fall rapidly into desolation. Well known examples of such gardens are Serre de la Madone on the Riviera as well as Upton Grey in the UK.

Restoration initiatives have brought some of these gardens to life again. Only a few restorations are truly faithful to the original designs and the book tells the story of a range of garden restorations with brilliant illustrations.

This book is an easy read. It's interesting reading. Probably better written than other Plumtree books but readers who are history buffs will get far more out of it than more horticulturally inclined garden enthusiasts.

*Bryan Taylor May 2011*