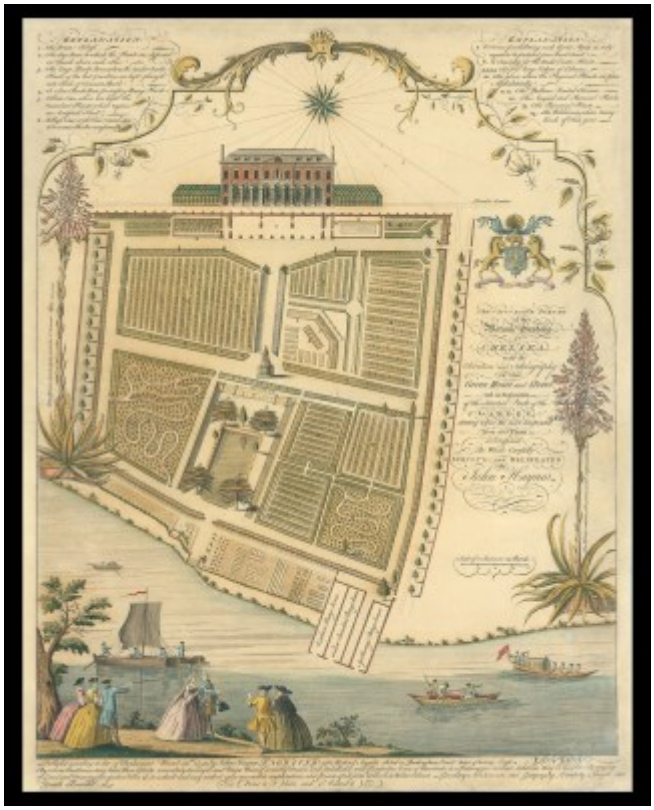

Engraved plan with original hand-colour, upper and side expertly remargined.

CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDENS

An Accurate Survey of the Botanic Gardens at Chelsea with the Elevation and Ichnography of the Green House and Stoves, and an Explanation of the Several Parts of the Garden, shewing where the most conspicuous Trees and Plants are Disposed, the Whole Carefully Survey'd and Delineated by John Haynes.

Author
HAYNES, John

Publication date
March 30th, 1753.

Publisher
John Haynes, at Michael Angelo's Head in Buckingham Court, near Charing Cross,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Engraved plan with original hand-colour, upper and side expertly remargined.

Dimensions
610 by 480mm. (24 by 19 inches).

Notes
Fine separately published plan of Chelsea Physic Gardens, during its Georgian heyday.

The Chelsea Physic Garden was established by the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in 1673. It is the second oldest botanical garden in England, after that of the University of Oxford. Its primary purpose was in the cultivation of plants for medicinal and scientific purposes. This mission was reinforced when the Royal Society in the 1720s – under the direction of Hans Sloane, whose statue sits at the centre of the plan – expanded the grounds by leasing some four acres to the Society of Apothecaries, with a stipulation that the garden would provide at least 50 plant specimens a year to the Society.

The gardens soon became the most richly stocked in the world, helped in no small part by the pioneering speed exchange programme. First initiated in the 1680s, when an exchange was set up with the Botanic Gardens in Leiden, the programme continues to this day, with 368 Botanic Gardens and universities in 37 countries now participating.

The plan is richly decorated with a scene of Georgian ladies and gentlemen taking a stroll along the banks of the Thames, with river boats on the water. Above the plan is an elevation of the main building, with the work flanked by depictions of 'Aloe africana humilis' (Hedgehog Aloe). The exotic aloe, succulents native to the African Cape, were highly prized for their many medicinal properties.

The plan provides a fascinating insight of not only the layout, but also the technologies for plant growing that were in use at the Garden in the 1750s.

1. The Green House.
2. The dry Stove in which are disposed on Stands above each other.
3. The large Bark Stove where the tender Exotic Plants of the hot Countries are kept plung'd into Beds of Tanner Bark.
4. Is a low Bark Stove for raising Young Plants.
5. A Glass Case where are kept the Succulent Plants which require no Artificial Heat.
6. A Glass Case with Flue round it to warm the Air occasionally.
7. A Frame for Sheltering such Exotic Plants as only require to be protected from hard Frost.
8. A Seminary for the tender Exotic Plants.
9. The four large Cedars of Libanus.
10. The place where the Physical Plants are place Alphabetically.
11. The Bulbous Rooted Flowers.
12. The Annual and Biennial Plants.
13. The Perennial Plants.
14. The Wilderness where many kinds of Trees grow.

The imprint and advertisement at the bottom of the plan reads:

"Publish'd according to Act of Parliament March 30st 1753, by John Haynes Engraver at Michael Angelo's Head in Buckingham Court near Charing-Cross. London. By whom Gentlemen may have their Estates accurately Survey'd, and Maps thereof correctly Drawn and Imbellish'd with Perspective Views of their Seats in a picturesque manner. Likewise may be taught Surveying of Land and Drawing Perspective Views &c. in a short and easy method upon reasonable considerations also Prints of all sorts Colour'd in Water Colours – Geometry, Architecture, and Geography, Carefully Taught, and Youth Boarded. (Price 2 – 6 plain, and 5s. Colour'd)".

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 22732