



The rich serenity of the prairie is orchestrated through successional matrix planting punctuated with tall flowering spikes and persistent winter skeletons. An unfolding story begins with the precocious overwinter of early meadowlarks and colanders and climaxes with the late season surge of Asters, Penstemons and Eragrostis. Accents of Valeriana, Verbena, Sanguisorba, Triclorum and Digitalis by their tall transparent silhouettes against the sky.



THE STORY OF LOWTHER
GARDEN-IN-THE-RUINS

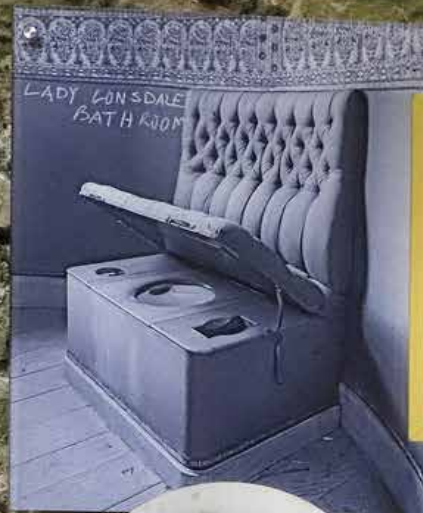
'The interior of the castle provides an iconic setting for a botanical garden of rare beauty. The height, scale and romance of the ruins are an impressive sight.'

'Imposed shelter and shade allow for richly planted microclimates. A palette of vigorous climbers and deciduous multi-stemmed trees mature to create a 360 degree colonisation.'

'The long views out to the North Park and the South Lawns echo the remarkable character of this sanctum.'

'The cache of reclaimed materials, relics and remnants are absolutely of the place and fit perfectly with the ruins. These disparate pieces have Lowther in their soul and the artful re-use of fragmented dressed stone is a prudent and creative strategy.'

Dist. Pearson Studio's Garden Monograph, 2012



Lady Lonsdale had an interesting link with the pictorial past. She was the daughter of the ninth Marquis of Huntly, who as a young man danced a minuet with Marie Antoinette at the Tuileries and as an old man danced a quadrille with Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace. It was an incident Queen Victoria was very fond of recalling.

THE STORY OF LOWTHER
GRACIE, COUNTESS
OF LONSDALE

History on the whole is not kind to women. Successful though they may have been in their own right, it is always hard to discover their stories. Gracie, Countess of Lonsdale is no exception to this. Her husband the 'Yellow Earl', Hugh Lonsdale was known across the globe. Today his name lives on in a type of cigar, a boxing prize, a sporting library and legend. Gracie in that way barely exists.



It is hard to imagine that Gracie enjoyed a happy life. She was an invalid for much of it, had no children and was married to a man who constantly needed the limelight. On the other hand, her marriage lasted for 57 years and she shared with her husband a deep love of dogs and horses.

This turret was Lady Lonsdale's bathroom. It had the notable distinction of housing a too hidden beneath a velvet burton-backed banquette seat.

THE STORY OF LOWTHER
STABLE COURTYARD

The Lowther family has lived here since around the 10th century. The estate itself took root in 1283 when Sir Hugh de Louthre III applied for and was granted 'imparkment' rights. Principal dwellings have come and gone. There was a motte and bailey (fortified wooden castle), there was a pele tower.

In the late 17th century, the main site for the house moved from further down the park and a great Queen Anne mansion took its place where the castle now stands. Lowther Hall, built at vast expense, was the talk of its day – the stables in particular were much admired. Daniel Defoe (author of *Robinson Crusoe*) called them 'the wonder of England'.



In 1922 the first 10 sets of bronze plaques were unveiled by the Jockey Club, Sir James Lowther was one of the original donors. These plaques, these later changed to white as the Lowther gate, tree and mansion here.

SPORTING
 — DRAMATIC —

THE EARL OF LOWTHER
 1811-1871

The Yellow Bull, 2 February 1844. See page 100 (www.english-heritage.org.uk)

This courtyard has served the family and its equestrian interests since the days of Lowther Hall. Hunting, racing and carriage-driving were passions shared across the generations. The Lowthers were responsible for importing some of the founding sires of English racing stock. Viscount Lowther created one of the first foxhunting packs in the country. Sir James Lowther was an original member of the Jockey Club. The first Earl of Lonsdale was a long-time Master of the Cottestmore Hunt. The third Earl owned the winner of the 1831 Derby, a little bay stallion called Spaniel. The fifth Earl was also a distinguished huntsman as well as racehorse owner. (His horse Royal Lancer won the St Leger in 1922)



Today, the equestrian past of the courtyard has stepped aside to make way for a visiting public. But its memories can be found in the stables, in the shop, in the arched windows of the café (the former coach-house) and across the exhibition. The Story of Lowther has horses at its heart.

