

Kings Garden

King James I



First laid 6th Dec 1616, James I made Robert Vernon Keeper of his newly laid out garden at his hunting lodge in Newmarket. Sir Robert Vernon (1577 – 1625) was an English landowner, courtier and politician who sat in the House of Commons from 1621 to 1622.

In letters patent James I declared 'where as of late (1614-15) we have caused of a garden to be encased, planted and joined to our said house at Newmarket, making it necessary to appoint a keeper to 'our garden now belonging to our said house' Vernon was granted 18 pounds 5 shillings for this.

The works accounts (maintenance) for 1614-15 mention the garden being enclosed with a new brick wall.

In 1620-21 a new well was sunk in the garden to serve the Kings and Princes kitchen. This was quote 5 fathoms (9.11 metres) and draw on springs that feed the water course.

The Jacobean Garden; Quote 'chief mansion' Jacobean and royal enclosed had a small garden to same belonging of the south side' enclosed with a wall containing 1 rood (1/4 Arce) of ground in good reparations. 1st Feb 1650 (measured by Newmarket Courthouse).



King Charles I

In June 1647 when Charles I was held prisoner at his house in Newmarket, a contemporary tract or pamphlet contains this reference to the house and garden 'it is a very spacious house with a fine garden and excellent good air'

Caroline Holmes a modern garden historian interprets the remark that 'the early Stuart garden at Newmarket, was not noted for its grandeur, no wilderness. no such grand features, they would have been inappropriate for such a miniature royal garden. Its prime function was to be a healthy area, notable for its excellent good air, the visual pleasure for this small garden would have lain in its flowers and herbs such as Columbine, Daffodils, Gillyflowers, Rosemary, Lavender, and Hyssop flowers, these would have been arranged in a series of compartments (4) with gravel pathways running all along the outside of the garden area, with a T shape path in the centre. In the centre would have been a fountain or bowl feature.



Our walled garden features a Brick inserted during repair work during Charles I rein, brick is dated 1635.

In June 1660 Sir Robert Ford, the caretaker of what remained of James I's hunting lodge, informed Charles II that while few of its buildings survived the destruction wrought by the notorious regicide Colonel John Okey during the 1650s 'the garden was still intact' and 'not much altered'.

Historian: John Sutton.