



Capability Brown: Designing the English Landscape

John Phibbs

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In celebration of his 300th year, a definitive survey of Capability Brown's most famous gardens and landscapes in Britain. Widely acknowledged as the most influential landscape designer of his age, Lancelot "Capability" Brown was to England what Frederick Law Olmsted was to America—responsible for shaping the very ideal of the nation's parkland. Brown's ambition was to bring out of a landscape the best of its potential rather than impose his own ideas upon it. His designs are organic, weaving gestures of color and perspective into the features that the country already afforded. So natural are his designs, and so perfectly do they complement the houses within them, that for many a Capability Brown landscape is the epitome of the English estate. His gardens and parklands—as much as the houses themselves—would become icons of British country life. Published to coincide with the tercentenary of his birth, this remarkable book illuminates fifteen of Brown's most celebrated landscapes. To love the great English estates is to love the settings with which Brown surrounded them—from idyllic parklands at Milton and Broadlands to structured landscapes around iconic houses at Blenheim, Burghley, Wakefield, and Chatsworth. With photography commissioned for the book, and including rarely seen archival drawings that shed light on Brown's process, this book serves as a guide to Britain's most beloved landscapes and an exploration of the masterful mind behind their creation.

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