

# New Owners Spent Lavishly on New Gardens, Landscaping and Altering the House

17<sup>th</sup>  
↓  
19<sup>th</sup>  
Century

## Key Dates in the Park During This Time

**1645**

Christchurch bought by the Devereux family

**1668**

Charles II stays at the Mansion

**1735**

Claude Fonnereau buys the estate

**1851**

Prince Albert visits Christchurch

**1869**

Suffolk Show takes place in the Park

**1895**

Felix Cobbold presents the Mansion to the people of Ipswich

**1895**

Ipswich Corporation buys the Park £28,300 and it opens to the public



## Key Dates in Britain and Around The World

**1607**

English settlers found a permanent home at Jamestown, Virginia, USA

**1662**

Tea drinking becomes fashionable

**1684**

Isaac Newton's theories of gravity

**1710**

St Paul's Cathedral is rebuilt after the Great Fire of London

**1788**

British convicts and settlers arrive at Botany Bay, Australia

**1820**

John Constable paints Flatford Mill

**1883**

One of the worst volcanic eruptions destroys the island of Krakatoa, Indonesia – 36,000 people perish

## The Devereux and the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

The Devereux family, who owned the land here from 1645-1734, had a number of gardens created in roughly square enclosures east and west of the Mansion. This garden style reflected the fashion at that time for elaborate parterres and formal garden design.

Aside from the ponds and formal gardens, the other most significant feature at this time was an avenue of trees starting immediately north of the Mansion that featured on an early map of the time. Many of these trees can still be seen today.

The house built by Edmund Withypoll remained largely unchanged apart from the extension of a west wing, possibly in anticipation of Elizabeth I's visit to Ipswich in 1561.

## The Fonnereau Era (1735-1895)

Claude Fonnereau's purchase of the Christchurch estate in 1735 coincided with an ambitious programme of alterations to the Park and the pleasure grounds from the 10<sup>th</sup> Viscount Hereford. The Fonnereaus remodelled the house, adding a north-east wing and sash windows with pediments. The Westerfield and Soane Street lodges were rebuilt and an underground ice house was dug. The parkland was stocked with deer after repairs were made to the boundary fences. The heavily timbered parkland north of the Mansion appears to have remained largely untouched until the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when the Fonnereaus increasingly exploited the Park's timber resources. The great storms in 1878, 1881 and 1884 also took their toll and collectively over 40 trees were lost, including many fine elms and limes. Gravel extraction also took place within the site of the current Bird Reserve and the modern-day bowling greens.

## Giving Ipswich a Water Supply – and Floods!

Independent research has suggested that the Park's springs supplied the town with water from the medieval period if not before. They were a source for some of the streams which formerly ran through the town from the Holy Trinity wash house and were later a source for part of the town's elaborate medieval water system. The pipeline along Dairy Lane was very shallow and frequently damaged. There are also records to show that water released from the ponds in the Park flooded the streets and houses further down in the town system.