



Repton and Blaise Castle

In 1795 **John Scandrett Harford** asked renowned landscape designer **Humphry Repton** to advise on ways to improve the park around the house he was planning to build on his **Blaise Castle** estate.

In 1796 **Repton** presented his proposed changes in one of his famous **Red Books**, a portfolio of ideas and drawings with 'before and after' watercolour paintings where you could lift the flaps to see the changes.

He designed the approach drive to the house from **Henbury Hill**, with a pretty lodge. He said of this:

"At Blaise Castle... I have lately finished one of the finest approaches in the kingdom: altho' for many hundred yards the sides of the hills were so steep, that I had to be let down by ropes to mark the line of the road".



ABOVE: *The Blaise Red Book* showing a view of the Castle when **Repton** visited.

BELOW: *The Blaise Red Book* showing how **Repton** suggested the view could be improved.



Red Book illustrations courtesy of Bristol Culture, Blaise Museum.



Repton also designed pleasure grounds with interesting terraced walks and views between the House and Blaise Hill. At the top of the hill is **Blaise Castle**, an ornamental tower which had been designed by architect **Robert Mylne** in 1766 to give views of ships in the **Severn** and **Avon** rivers below.

In 1926, the estate was purchased from the **Harford** family by what is now **Bristol City Council**, who run it as a public park, and the House as a museum.

BLAISE CASTLE &
HUMPHRY REPTON