

Leaflet distributed at the opening of the 300th anniversary border on Sunday 4 May 2008
The border marks the 300th anniversary of the building of the Porter's Lodge in 1708 and celebrates
the use of herbs in medicine

The Porter in 1708

Ellis Markant from 26 September 1704 to 2 August 1712 (Died)

In 1708 Portsmouth was the largest of the six British Dockyards. A huge investment programme in the 1690s had doubled its size by reclaiming land and building a stone dock opening off a basin to improve efficiency and a sophisticated range of workshops, storehouses, mast and boat ponds. Shipbuilding and repairing was undertaken in the Upper Wet Dock (1691, now covered by the Block Mills (1805), Great Stone Dock (1698), Dry Dock (Old North Dock, 1701), Double Dock (1658), Great Basin (1691, enlarged to its present size in 1801) and one Building Slip.

Dockyard Workforce in 1708

Date	Portsmouth	Chatham	All Dockyards
June 1708	1857	1288	5773
Dec 1708	1840	1268	6038

In 1708 England was fighting in the War of Spanish Succession or Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) over the control of Spain by France (Bourbons) or Austria (Habsburgs). In Europe the Duke of Marlborough dominated army campaigns.

Naval victories included the capture of Port Mahon in Minorca on 18 September 1708 and Cartagena on 28 May 1708. Captured territories in North America and the West Indies, confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), expanded British trade routes and increased colonial possessions.

The Porter's Duty

1. To be constantly attending at the Gate to open & Shut the same for all Comers & Goers into, & out his Maties Yard.
2. To deliver the charge of the Gate at eight a Clock at night, to the Watch appointed for that night....
3. To ring the Bell to call the men to work, & to discharge the men from their works to breakfast, Dinner or at night, keeping the Glass turn'd, & a due proportion of time between each Dismission, and all according to the Custome of the Service, appointment of the Officers, & the Season of the Year both for their Discharge from & calling them to their Labour.
4. To be carefull after the Bell is Rung, & men come to their Labour to keep the Gate shut & lock't & not to suffer any that are born on the works that day to depart out of the Yard, till the Bell rings them from their Labour....

8. He is not to medle w.th the selling any Drink in his own house near the Gate... but if he shall desire to have the vent of any Beer, it must be only in the summertime, & of Six Shillings price....

Sources: Cdr May, Dockyard Officers Lists; J Coad, *The Royal Dockyards 1690-1850* (1989), 176; National Maritime Museum, SER/131, Abstracts of the numbers of workmen weekly employed in His Majesty's Several Yards, 1686-1718; National Archive, ADM7/633, fos 88-91, Duke of York's Instructions, 13 June 1673.

What is a Herb?

1. A plant whose stem does not become woody and persistent (as in a shrub or tree) but remains more or less soft and succulent and dies down to the ground (or entirely) after flowering.

This gives us the origin of herbaceous border and the collective noun of herbage for herbs, vegetation.

2. Plants whose leaves, or stem and leaves, are used for food or medicine, or in some way for their scent or flavour, recorded from the C13.

'And herbes koude I telle eek many oon As Egremoyne Valerian and lunarie And other swiche if that me liste tarie.'

1386 Chaucer, Can. Yeom. Prol. & T.246.

'Those Who want herbs for their wound.'

1633 G Herbert *Temple, Sunday*, vi,

'If the leaves are of chief use to us, we call them herbs: as at sage, thyme, mint.' 1725 Watts *Logic*, 1. iv. 3 (Compact Oxford English Dictionary, 1986)

Many traditional herbs were associated with saints, such as

Herb Mary, St Mary's herb: costmary, alecost

Chrysanthemum (*Pyrethrum*, *Tanacetum Balsamita*), an aromatic hardy perennial plant which has been used since the C16 for washing and scenting clothes; for flavouring, as a spice for preserving and to flavour ale; in medicine as an antiseptic, in ointment for sores and blisters and for dysentery.

Herb Paralyss, Palsywort and Herb Peter (from its resemblance to the keys of St Peter): **cowslip** (from cowpat)

Primula veris

Flowers and leaves were eaten in salads or used to stuff meat; also in wine, jam and tea. They were often found in Elizabethan knot gardens. Medicinally, in

ointment they treated spasms, cramps, rheumatic pain and paralysis; leaves were used to heal wounds; flowers were eaten to strengthen the brain; powdered roots were boiled in ale to treat giddiness and nervous ailments.

Eighteenth Century Domestic Herbs

Herbs the Porter or his wife might have grown in his garden. Gold, green and purple are the dominant colours. Physic gardens were becoming more scientific in cultivating both native and overseas species. Apothecaries were standardising strengths and prescriptions to regularise treatment. Nurseries were refining their stock and marketing to customers. Specialised journals, magazine and newspaper articles widened awareness of horticultural developments.

Plants for the Border

Camomile *Chamaemelum nobile*. White daisy-like flowers with gold centres. *Flore Pleno*, cultivar has creamy double flowers. Soothing, calming, steam inhalant.

Chives *Allium schoenoprasum*, purple flowers. Flavours soups and salads.

Costmary *Tanacetum balsamita*. Balsamic aromatic plant used to preserve and flavour ale; wash and scent clothes; as an antiseptic, ointment and treatment for dysentery.

Cowslip *Primula veris*. Facial wash, tea relieves headaches. Associated with May Day.

Feverfew *Tanacetum parthenium*. White flowers with gold centres. For head pains.

Lady's Mantle *Alchemilla mollis*. Yellow gold flowers. A facial wash and to lighten freckles.

Lavender *Lavendula angustifolia*. Mauve. Antiseptic and analgesic properties, to perfume and uplift the spirits, used for washing and in lavender bags. Attracts bees.

Lemon balm *Melissa officinalis*. Yellow. Once thought of as an elixir of life, with varied properties. A bee plant. Culinary and medicinal use.

Lungwort *Pulmonaria officinalis*. Purple flowers in March/April, spotted leaves on show in May. Used for chest and pulmonary complaints, an expectorant and for easing children's coughs.

Marigold *Tagetes patula*. Orange. Used as a natural herbicide.

Oregano *Origanum vulgare*. Whitish, pinkish Flowers. Antiseptic, for compresses, cleansing wounds; flavouring food. *Origanum vulgare Aureum* Golden Marjoram, has similar medicinal and culinary uses.

Pennyroyal *Mentha pulegium*. Mauve flowers. Deters ants and fleas.

Pot Marigold *Calendula officinalis*. Orange gold flowers. Used to soothe the skin; to colour the hair

yellow and colour butter and soups. A good companion plant for the kitchen garden.

Sage *Salvia officinalis*. Purple. Leaves were rubbed over teeth to clean them, to prevent putrefaction in food, to raise the spirits.

Salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*. For Vitamin C and flavouring.

Sweet Marjoram *Origanum majorana*. For personal hygiene, sweet powders and washing waters, flavouring food.

Thyme *Thymus vulgaris*. Purple flowers. Used to sweeten and purify washing water and rooms and as a tonic, and for cooking.

Barrels & Tubs

Bay *Laurus nobile*. Culinary plant.

Borage *Borago officinalis*. Used as a fruit cup, in salads and as a garnish.

Curryplant *Helichrysum italicum*. Used for potpourri and insect repellent properties.

Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare*. Purple variety. Used as a digestive, breath freshener, skin cleanser and Eyewash.

Rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis*. Used for food flavouring, a powerful antiseptic and fumigant.

Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare*. Yellow button flowers. Culinary, insect repellent and cosmetic uses.

Elsewhere in the Garden

Hop *humulus lupulus*. Flowers in summer, flowers used for flavouring and preserving beer. (ESS)

House leek *sempervum*. Soothes and moisturise skin. (Stone sink)

Holly *ilex aquifolium*. Flowers in the autumn, female plant has berries in winter. Used to make rolling pins, sweep chimneys and mark boundaries. (Square Lawn)

Soapwort *saponaria officinalis* 'Alba Plena'. Pink flowers Aug-Sept, used for washing. (Square Lawn)

Gill Dawe & Ann Coats