

UC Davis Special Collections

MC036 Vauxhall Gardens Collection

A Narrative Catalogue of the Collection

This [Fox-Hall] is the place where are those called Spring Gardens, laid out in so grand a taste that they are frequented in the three summer months by most of the nobility and gentry then in and near London; and are often honoured with some of the royal family, where are here entertained, with the sweet song of numbers of nightingales, in concert with the best bank of musick in England. Here are fine pavilions, shady groves, and most delightful walks, illuminated by above one thousand lamps, so disposed that they all take fire together, almost as quick as lightening, and dart such a sudden blaze as is perfectly surprising. Here are among others, two curious statues of Apollo the god, and Mr. Handel the master of musick; and in the centre of the area, where the walks terminate, is erected the temple for the musicians, which is encompassed all round with handsome seats, decorated with pleasant paintings, on subjects most happily adapted to the season, place and company.

The enthusiastic writer in England's Gazetteer in 1751 was not describing London's latest excitement but one that had been an important place of recreation for almost one hundred years. The New Spring Garden at Vauxhall ['New' to distinguish it from the Old Spring Garden] was opened about 1661 when the pleasures offered were purely pastoral. It was one of a large number of resorts that sprang up around the periphery of London soon after the Restoration of Charles II. Much more extensive than most, it was slightly unusual in not boasting of a chalybeate or cathartic, spring, vas numbers of which were magically discovered in the late seventeenth century and advertised as rivaling the health-giving waters of Tunbridge Wells. Samuel Pepys was one of the early and enthusiastic visitors to the New Spring Garden, Vauxhall, but the novelty soon wore off and the last thirty years of the seventeenth century saw a decline in popularity. Although Vauxhall Gardens did not become the most popular place of entertainment of its kind in London until Jonathan Tyers' management which began in 1728, Addison has Sir Roger de Coverley fairly satisfied with the facilities in *The Spectator* 20 May 1712 No.383:

We now arrived at Spring Garden, which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of year. When I considered the fragrency of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sung upon the trees. And the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades, I could not but look upon the place as Mahometan Paradise.

In 1728 Jonathan Tyers took a thirty year lease of the Spring Garden [by 1758 he was the owner] and opened the vastly improved gardens of 7 June 1732 with a lavish Ridotto al fresco. The success of the new management was reflected in the fervid building activity in the gardens which covered twelve acres and contained every enticement for gentle vices. The main area of social activity was The Grove, a five acre quadrangle with, after

1758, a large gothic construction for the orchestra in the centre and long rows of supper boxes arranged in semi-circular sweeps along the sides. Cutting down one side of The Grove was the Grand Walk, 900 feet long and parallel to the South Walk which was spanned by three triumphal arches. Temples, transparencies, statues and the like were scattered through the gardens, their plaster and canvas glories particularly designed to be seen by dull artificial light. Indoors there was a large circular Music Room, 70 feet in diameter with a curious ceiling like the inside of an umbrella, a Picture Gallery and a number of pavilions. Throughout its history the landscape of the Vauxhall Gardens was in a constant state of renewal and reorganization. Temporary theatres, hermits' caves and lovers' bowers came and went making it impossible to describe the concourse as an architectural entity. The Music Room and the Picture Gallery remained until the gardens were demolished in 1859 but most of the attractions had a much shorter life-span.

There were a number of rivals to the Vauxhall Gardens such as Cuper's Gardens near the site of the new National Theatre, the Marylebone Gardens, in between Marylebone High Street and Baker Street, and any number of establishments in the King's Cross-Islington area. None of these places approached Vauxhall for the variety of its entertainments and, apart from the Marylebone Gardens for music and fireworks in the 1770s, the only successful competitor was Ranelagh Gardens, opened in 1742 and eventually closed in 1803. Horace Walpole preferred the company at Ranelagh as being more select but there seems to have been a stiffness about the place and Thomas Gray, like most people, preferred the relaxed atmosphere of Vauxhall. In a letter written in July 1745 he voiced his opinion:

I have never been at Ranelagh Gardens since they were opened... They do not succeed: people see it once, or twice, and so they go to Vauxhall. Well, but is it not a very great design, very new, finely lighted? Well, yes, aye, very fine truly, so they yawn and go to Vauxhall and then it's too hot, and then it's too cold, and here's a wind and there's a damp.

Vauxhall Gardens had no shortage of fashionable patrons but it was as a place of popular entertainment that it became famous. The Picture Gallery and the paintings by Hayman, Hogarth and others in the supper-boxes constituted the first public exhibition of contemporary art in England and had an immeasurably important effect on popular taste. The usual admission charge of 1/- was much less than the 2/6 of Ranelagh and compared favorably with the admission prices to other gardens where the entertainment was less profuse and lavish. The main event of the evening was always the concert but until the late eighteenth century the concert programmes were not advertised. Item [1] in this collection consists of a group of six newspaper cuttings, for with early advertised programmes of the evening's concert and the other two with miscellaneous news items relating to Vauxhall Gardens.

- 1. [a] Newspaper cutting advertising the evening concert at Vauxhall Gardens for 4 June 1787, the King's birthday. Includes works by Handel, Haydn and Arne and songs sung by Incedon and Miss Leary.

- [b] Newspaper cutting advertising the evening concert for 18 July which includes works by Abel, Haydn and Bach and singing by Incedon and Miss Bertles. A new scene by Carver is advertised in place of the usual cascade.
- [c] Newspaper cutting advertising the evening concert for 21 August 1787, the birthday of Prince William Henry. Includes works by Fesher, Haydn and Hook and singing by Incedon and Miss Bertles.
- [d] Newspaper cutting advertising the evening concert for 5 June 1790, commemorating the King's birthday. The Duke of York's band to perform in between the acts of the concert which includes works by Handel, Haydn and Barthelemon and singing by Incedon, Page and Miss Leary.

The admission price to all the concerts was...as usual, One Shilling and a sideboard was laid out in the Rotunda for tea and coffee. Concerts [a], [b] and [c] started at 7.30 p.m. and concert [d] at 8.00 p.m.

- [e] Short newspaper cutting of 14 April 1788 giving notice of an approaching gala at Vauxhall Gardens.
- [f] Newspaper cutting of 16 July 1790 describing the robbery of two young men on their way to Vauxhall Gardens...they were rifled...and then stripped naked, bound together to a stake-hedge, and in that situation remained till four o'clock on Sunday morning...

Where required the date has been added, in a contemporary hand using pen and sepia ink, to the cuttings in item [1].

Whilst Jonathan Tyers managed the Gardens (he died in 1767) the evening's concert began at about five thirty and lasted about four hours. An overture on the organ preceded sixteen pieces, songs being interspersed with instrumental and orchestral pieces. We see from item [1] that the concerts at the end of the eighteenth century were both shorter and began later. John Wogan and Thomas Arne were the resident composers in the middle years of the century and Thomas Lowe, the chief male singer, was replaced by Vernon in 1764. Principal female singers during the eighteenth century included Mrs. Arne, Mrs. Baddeley, Mrs. Wrighten, Mrs. Martyr and Mrs. Mountain whilst male singers at the end of the century included Darley, Incedon and Charles Dignum. James Hook became resident composer in 1774, a position he retained until 1820, and then following year catches and glees were introduced into the concerts. This marked a departure from the romantic ballads for which Vauxhall was famous. Item [2] in this collection consists of four newspaper cuttings with the texts of songs popular at Vauxhall in the late eighteenth century.

- 2. [a] Mind Hussey, What You do! Sung by Mrs. Wrighten, written by Hawkins and composed by Hook. Four stanzas of eight lines each. Newspaper cutting of 1784.
- [b] Let no Shepherd sing to me, sung by Mr. Page, written by H.J.Pye and composed by Hayes. Five stanzas of four lines each. Newspaper cutting of 7 August 1790.

- [c] Charming Kitty, sung by Incledon, written by Upton and composed by Davy. Three stanzas of eight lines each. Newspaper cutting of 1790.

The date has been added, in a contemporary hand using pen and sepia ink, to [b], [c] and [d].

Vauxhall Gardens were managed by the descendants of Jonathan Tyers until his granddaughter's son, George Rogers Barrett, sold the property in 1821 for £30,000 to T. Bish, F. Gye and R. Hughes. When the new management opened on 3 June 1822 the Gardens were called The Royal Gardens Vauxhall with the approval of George IV. Item [3] in the collection consists of a group of Articles of Agreement made between the new management, Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye, and five of the artists who were to appear in their first season. Frederick Gye was the father of the more famous Frederick Gye, one of the most important impresarios of the nineteenth century, who rebuilt Covent Garden theatre after the fire of 1856 and established it as London's Opera House. The younger Frederick Gye received his first training as a theatrical manager whilst still a boy at Vauxhall Gardens.

- 3. [a] Articles of Agreement made between Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye and Catherine Tunstall in which she is to be paid, as a singer, five pounds a week during the season. Printed form with the particular details filled in with ink. A note at the bottom of the Agreement agrees that Miss Tunstall be allowed to take three nights off to perform in Norwich during the Assize Week.
- [b] Memorandum of an Agreement made between Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye and Edward Hopkins in which he is to be paid, as leader and conductor of the military band, four pounds, fourteen shillings and sixpence a week during the season.
Pen and sepia ink on printed form. 248 x 191mm.
- [c] Memorandum of an Agreement made between Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye and Samuel Potter in which his is to be paid, as kettle and bass drum player, one pound, sixteen shillings a week during the season.
Pen and sepia ink on printed form. 284 x 202mm.
- [d] Memorandum of an Agreement made between Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye and J.W.Mapleson in which he is to be paid, as a violinist, two pounds a week, during the season.
Pen and sepia ink on printed form. 275 x 185mm.
- [e] Memorandum of an Agreement made between Thomas Bish and Frederick Gye and Joseph Horton in which he is to be paid, as a small drum player, one pound, one shilling, a week during the season.
Pend and sepia ink on printed form. 274 x 190mm.

All the documents are dated 1 June 1822 and are signed by the artists. They all agree to abide by certain conditions, mostly connected with appearance at rehearsal and performance.

By 1822 the Gardens had taken on quite a different aspect from that of the late eighteenth century. Fireworks, which were popular at Ranelagh, Cuper's Gardens and especially Marylebone Gardens through the eighteenth century, were introduced to Vauxhall as late as 1798 and did not become a permanent feature until 1813. A firework tower was erected at the East end of the Gardens, and firework displays and rope-dancing, for which a special stage was constructed, were often combined to make rather bizarre entertainments, notably the performances of the muscle-bound Mme. Saqui. Jugglers and sword-swallowers were engaged in the early 1820s and mock battles and equine spectacles soon followed. The musical entertainment was sullied, to some extent, by the introduction of the performance of comic songs but the engagement of Braham and Catherine Stephens, both fine singers, as well as the extremely popular Mme. Vestris, in 1826, was the excuse for raising the general admission to 4/- from the 1792 level of 2/-.

- 4. The Vauxhall Companion: Giving a correct list and full Description of the different Amusements of the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, This Evening, under the immediate Patronage of His Majesty. The Gardens will be open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, During the Season. Admission 4s. The Doors will be open at NINE.... Pamphlet 8pp. 222 x 144mm. There is a pencil date of 1833 in the top r.h. corner of the front cover; the pamphlet must date from between 1826, when admission was raised to 4/-, and 1837, when William IV died. The body of the pamphlet consists of the texts of fourteen songs and notice of the music which included Beethoven's Prometheus Overture, but the more spectacular visual delights of the evening are described on the inside front cover. The new views are exhibited in the Long Room, Mad. Lamotte performs on the flying wire and The Three Hunters of the Styrian Mountains perform Austrian National Melodies in the Rotunda. The evening's entertainment was to end with a series of Three Grand Tableaux, in fireworks and waterworks, entitled The Fête of Versailles. Mr. Buckingham was also to perform a dramatic piece in the Rotunda called London Stars in which he would give imitations of well-known performers.

The enormous rise in the admission charge to the Vauxhall Gardens in 1826 does not seem to have made much difference to the receipts as can be seen from item [5] in the collection, the complete accounts for Vauxhall Gardens from 1822 to 1831. In this important document it is possible to see, in practical monetary terms, the inevitable fate of Vauxhall Gardens as a money-making concern. Despite the endless stunts, special evenings and other gimmickry presented by the management the Gardens were losing money. The accounts show that the total loss from 1822 to 1831 was over £13,000.

- 5. Receipts, Charges and General Statement on Vauxhall Gardens from 1822 to 1831. Pen and sepia ink on ledger paper. 289 x 699mm. The document is signed by Richard Hughes, one of the three lessees of 1821 and is divided into four sections. The charges and receipts are detailed in

separate columns, eight for charges and six for receipts, the final totals of each for each year then being shown in a separate section. This shows a profit over the years 1822 to 1827, starting at less than eighty pounds and rising to almost £5,800 in 1824 before falling back to £363 in 1827. In 1828 the profit becomes a loss of £2,835 and this rises to over £4,000 in the three ensuing years. The fourth section is a more general statement of expenses and income with the conclusion that the total loss to the end of 1831 adds up to £13,096 17s. 4d.

On 19 August 1833 C.H. Simpson, the Master of Ceremonies at Vauxhall Gardens for over thirty-six years, was given a farewell benefit night. He wore old-fashioned clothes, carried a silver-headed cane with a tassel, took off his hat to everyone who visited the Gardens and was one of the sights of Vauxhall. After his retirement he was exhibited in effigy in a construction of colored lights, forty-five feet high, and busts of him were sold at the Gardens. Item [6] consist of two letters written by Simpson, one, of 1833 to W.E. Walmisley, directly connected with his benefit night and the other, of 1824 to W. Clements, offering a concert seat for a reviewer. They are both fine examples of Simpson's famous abject and slightly illiterate humility.

- 6. [a] Letter from C.H. Simpson to W. Clements Esq. dated Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, 6 July, 1824.
Pen and sepia ink. 203 x 160mm. Written on one side only. Slight tear at a fold without any loss of text. Simpson announces that a new pantomime which has been in preparation all the Winter is to be performed on the night of 7 July and offers to provide a seat for one of Clement's gentlemen if he will review the performance and engages that he shall be treated like a gentleman.
- [b] Letter from C.H. Simpson to W.E. Walmisley Esq. dated 31, Millwall Street, Millbank, Westminster, 29 Sept. 1833.
Pen and sepia ink. 252 x 203mm. Double sheet with a blank sheet. Written on one side only. Slight tear top 1. Simpson thanks Walmisley for the loan of a list of the members of the Houses of Lords and Commons and for the interest and support given at the recent benefit night. He regrets, however, that he is unable to give Walmisley a free admission ticket to Vauxhall Gardens for the current season but will endeavor to procure one for him for the following season.

In 1836 Vauxhall Gardens were opened during the day for the first time and a number of balloon ascents were advertised. The Gye and Hughes management came to an end in 1839 and the following May and July there were two sales of moveable articles. The catalogues of these two sales make up item [7] of this collection and some of the lots, in the first sale especially, make interesting reading, Lot 206 consisted of Two old figures of hermits, 11 wooden shields, 2 stone slabs, and a quantity of firewood, and Lot 217 was A very large figure of Britannia, framed and canvassed and a stage bracket.

- 7. [a] Royal Gardens, Vauxhall. A Catalogue of the first portion of the Various Moveable Articles, consisting of numerous Benches and Seats, Illuminated Boards and Lamps, Large Lamplighters, & Other Stages and Ladders, Trucks, a Van, Two Carts, Strong Bay Cart Horse, Harness, Garden Tools, Cucumber Frames, Garden Seats, Large Iron Rollers, Green House Plants, A large quantity of useful iron, and other Effects; Which will be Sold by Auction by Mr. Hoggart On the Premises, Vauxhall Gardens, on Tuesday, the 26th of May 1840, And Two following Days, at 11 O'clock each day.
Pamphlet. 460 items. On 28pp. 230 x 145mm.
- [b] Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, A Catalogue of the Household Furniture, Valuable Library of Books, China, Glass, Linen, Handsome India Cabinet Table and Tea Chests, A Few Prints, A Spring Cart, and Numerous Items; which will be sold by Auction by Mr. Hoggart, on the Premises in Kennington Lane, On Tuesday, the 28th of July, 1840, And following day, at Eleven o'clock. By order of the Assigness of Messrs Gye & Hughes. Unbound sheets of paper bound with a ribbon. 248 items on 16pp. 223 x 136mm.

It would be reasonable to suppose that these two sales had dispersed most of the items necessary for the continuation of business but in July 1841 the Royal Gardens Vauxhall opened again under the stage-management of the famous theatrical impresario, Alfred Bunn. The reprieve was short lived and when the season came to an end on 8 September 1841 it was announced that Vauxhall Gardens would positively close for ever. The property was offered at auction the following day as a single lot but was bought in at £20,000. A month later, on 12 October 1841 the furniture and fittings were sold. The particulars and conditions of the first sale and the catalogue of the second make up item [8] in this collection. The catalogue is particularly important as it includes a priced list of the paintings by Hayman and Hogarth taken from the supper-boxes. As has been previously mentioned these made up the first public exhibition of contemporary art in England and this sale catalogue, probably the auctioneer's own copy as it contains a number of buyers' slips, is of considerable art-historical importance.

- 8. [a] Royal Gardens, Vauxhall. Particulars and Conditions of Sale of that distinguished and highly Important Property The Royal Gardens Vauxhall, Universally known and acknowledged as the most unique and attractive place of Public Amusement in Europe, Comprising about Eleven Acres; Which will be sold by Auction by Mr. Leifchild, At Garraway's Coffee-House. 'Change Alley, Cornhill, On Thursday 9th September 1841, At Twelve for One Precisely, In One Lot.
Six carefully edged and unbound pp. 372 x 227mm.
On the reverse of the front cover are printed thirteen conditions of sale and the remaining four sides give a detailed description of all the buildings on the site of the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall.
- [b] Poster [?] for the auction of the property described in [a].

It adds the information that; The Property is nearly equal to Freehold, Being Copyhold of the Manor of Her Majesty, As Lady of the Manor of Kennington, in right of her Duchy of Cornwall; Subject to a very small Quit Rent or Quit Rents, which are understood to amount to £1, 3s. 7d. a Year, or thereabouts. It comprises about Eleven Acres, A Great Portion of which is Invaluable for Building...

Carefully edged sheet of paper, printed on one side only. 368x224mm.

- [c] Vauxhall Gardens. A Catalogue of the Whole of the Valuable Moveable Property comprising The Temple of Arts; Theatrical Wardrobe; Library of Music; 25 Dozen of Wine; Furniture; Iron Repository; Pedometer; Plate; Linen; 4 Lofty Stages; on Iron Wheels; 2 Organs; &c. Which will be Sold by Auction, by Messrs, Venton & Hughes, on the premises, The Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, On Tuesday, October 12th, 1841, At Eleven O'clock, by Order of the Assignees of Messrs. Gye and Hughes, The Undermentioned Valuable Effects:- A Finely Executed Marble statue of Jupiter, On Plinth; Twenty-Four Original Pictures, by Hogarth and Hayman;... Two Tons of Waste Paper.... And numerous other articles belonging to the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall.

Pamphlet in brown paper wrappers. 234 items on 15pp. 245x155mm. All the items are priced, sometimes with the buyer's name. At the end of the catalogue there is a list, with prices and a total, of the pictures bought by Mr. Stamp, whose agent, Mr. Frazer, was much the most important buyer of the Hogarths and Haymans. Loosely inserted are five buyer's slips and another piece of paper with various names and lot numbers on it. One of the buyer's slips, listing thirteen lots, is for Mr. Stephens, probably a misspelling of the future proprietor of the Gardens.

Despite this apparent dispersal of every available object the Vauxhall Gardens opened yet again in 1842. Warwick Wroth, in his definitive work on London Pleasure Gardens, states that Robert Wardell was the lessee for most of the period up to the final demise in 1859. Item [9] in this collection, an Insurance Policy of September 1844 seems to refute this statement as the policy, paid by George Stevens who was the final lessee in 1859, describes him as Mr. George Stevens of Vauxhall Gardens, Vauxhall, Lambeth.

- 9. Phoenix Assurance Company Policy No. 883630 dated 29 September 1844 in which, for a yearly premium of 5/- George Stevens insures his personal property at Vauxhall Gardens for £250.....The policy is divided into three sections; £50 for pictures and prints, £20 for China, Glass and Looking Glasses and £180 on all other household goods, clothes and books. There is a duty to pay of 7/6 and the policy itself cost 3/6. Sepia ink on printed form with a line engraving at the top showing a statue of Britannia or Athene with a phoenix on her shield in front of two scenes on fire and desolation 592 x 373mm. On the back of the policy George Stevens' five changes of address are noted, in 1859, 1860, 1862 and twice in 1863, and the policy transferred to the property in Stevens' subsequent dwellings.

There seems to have been another attempt at a sale in 1845. Item [10] in this collection is a list of particulars and conditions of sale similar to that in [8a] and the sale of the whole property was to be on 24 July 1845. The emphasis is put heavily on the residential value of the property and the Gardens are described as being admirably adapted for a Building Operation on an extensive scale.

- 10. The Justly Celebrated Vauxhall Gardens. Particulars and Conditions of sale of the above Highly Distinguished and Important Property, comprising about Eleven Acres of Land, Close to the Metropolis. Which will be sold by Auction by Messrs. Musgrove and Gadsden At the Auction Mart, opposite the Bank of England, On Thursday, the 24th of July, 1845, At Twelve o'clock, in 3 Lots.

Six carefully edged and unbound pp. 384 x 230mm.

Sale conditions identical to those in [8 a] and the description similar.

Perhaps the property was bought in once more as the next item in the collection shows the Gardens to be in full commercial swing. Item [11] is a detailed account sheet for 1853 of the food and drink consumed at Vauxhall Gardens. Most items seem to be making a reasonable if not handsome profit. The notable exceptions are bread and butter.

- 11. Account sheet of food and drink expenditure and consumption at Vauxhall Gardens during the season of 1853.

Sepia ink on ledger sheet. Inscribed; Mr. Ernest/Season 1853 at bottom, in blue crayon. 351x140mm.

- Seventeen items of food are listed and nineteen items of drink, as well as cigars. The loss made on bread is £10 12s. 11d. and that on butter is £8 2s. 7d. The most outrageous profits are those on brandy [expenditure £172 10s., income £658 5s. 7d.], Guinness [expenditure £173 3s. 7d. income £512 16s 6d.] and Soda Water [expenditure £82 12s., income £255 5s. 2d.]. On the food side Ham is the most profitable, [expenditure £71 16s. 2d., income £168 10 s. 6d.] The average mark-up is 100%.

In 1853 the license for the Vauxhall Gardens was renewed amidst great local opposition, with the condition that the Gardens should close by three in the morning. Perhaps the local complaints grew louder or the management ran out of the new ideas to attract the public but, whatever the cause, George Stevens was obliged to announce a final season in 1859 running for seven nights from Monday 18 July to Monday 25 July. Item [12] consists of three items connected with this final short season; a free invitation, a small poster for the whole season and a large poster in red, green and blue advertising the last night but six with admission down to the mid-eighteenth century level of 1/-.

- 12. [a] Invitation to be put on the Free List for the final season of seven nights, 18 to 25 July 1859.
Printed sheet, blue ink. Attached to blank sheet. 208x129mm.
- [b] Notice announcing the final season.

- Notice, Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, Farewell! The Public is respectfully informed that this celebrated Place of Amusement after a Durance of nearly a Century and a Half, and receiving within its Portals the elite of the World, is Doomed to be Destroyed. On Tuesday, July 26th. Workmen will commence taking down the whole of the buildings, and clearing the Grounds, in order to let it for Building purposes....Particulars will be given in future Bills. Admission One Shilling. For Particulars respecting the Ground for Building, apply at the Office, at the Gardens, from 9 till 6 o'clock, Royal Gardens, Vauxhall July 8th. 1859.
Printed sheet. 356 x 110mm.
- Oversize [c] Farewell to Vauxhall, Monday, July 18th. Last Night but Six....Admission, One Shilling. Children, Sixpence, Doors Open at Eight o'clock.
Large Poster printed in red, green and blue. 759 x 506mm.

The final night of Vauxhall Gardens, 25 July 1859, seems to have been the cause of a cluster of publications. Item [13] includes no less than three differently set programmes for the last evening's entertainment which was given as a benefit for George Stevens. The fourth item is a bill of refreshments for the same evening with all items of food and drink priced. A comparison with a similar bill of 1762 [not in the collection] shows that over nearly one hundred years the price of a battle of champagne had risen only from 8/- to 10/- and claret from 5/- to 6/-. The price of a chicken had risen from 2/6 to 4/- though a dish of Ham had remained at 1/-. Shrewsbury Cakes had remained at 2d. and Cheesecake had gone down from 4d. to 2d.

- 13. [a] Programme of the evening's entertainment at Vauxhall Gardens, for 25 July 1859, Positively the Last Night for ever. Pamphlet. 4pp. Blue ink, pp. 2-4 stained pink. 202x131mm.
- [b] Programme of the evening's entertainments at Vauxhall Gardens for 25 July 1859. Similar to [a] with the additional information on the front cover; under the especial Patronage of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, Prince Albert, and the Royal Family. Pamphlet. 4pp. Traces along fold of having been bound or mounted in a book. 216x142mm.
- Oversize [d] The Last Bill of Refreshments of the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall. Printed sheet, traces of glue on back, damage down l. side and top r.h. corner not affecting text. 444x 164mm. The bill informs that; The Gardens Will Be One Blaze of Splendor For The Benefit of Mr. G. Stevens, and lists sixty-one priced items of food and drink.

The site was quickly let for building purposes and the remaining contents of the Gardens dispersed at two sales on 22 August 1859 and 29 August 1859. Item [14] in this collection consists of the catalogue for the first of these sales and a large poster advertising the second. The catalogue includes a number of the remaining decorative paintings but is most useful for the systematic listings of contents of the public rooms

including the Grape Room, the Chinese Room, the Coffee Room, and the Ballet Theatre etc.

- 14 [a] Royal Gardens, Vauxhall. First Portion of the Sale of the Fixtures, Fittings, Plant and Materials. A Catalogue of the Valuable Fixtures, Fittings and Building Materials, of the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, consisting of Theatre, Orchestra, Dancing Platform, Firework Gallery, Figures of Neptune and Sea Horses, Fountains, Statues, Vases, Grotto work, Fittings of Rotunda... Gasometer and Retorts... Which will be Sold by Auction, By Messrs, Driver, on the Premises On Monday August 22nd. at Eleven for Twelve o'clock precisely.
Pamphlet. 274 items on 16pp sewn together with cotton. 241x184mm. The date, 1859, added in sepia ink at the foot of the cover.
- Oversize [b] Royal Gardens, Vauxhall. Sale of the Second Portion of the Effects. To be sold by auction by Messrs. Driver on the premises on Monday, August 29, 1859, at Eleven for Twelve O'Clock, in Lots, the Second Portion of the Building Materials, Fixtures and Fittings.....belonging to the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall consisting of the Saloon, Octagon Room... Busts of Eminent Men.....a number of Flags, Transparencies, Lustres, Gas and other illuminated Devices, and about 10,000 Variegated Illumination Lamps.
Poster. 754 x 508mm.

Thus, after a number of false alarms, the Vauxhall Gardens were finally closed and the land built over. The nostalgia for the past in general and old buildings in particular was not such a feature of everyday life in Victorian England as it is in the New Elizabethan Era and it was thirty years before London was presented with a Vauxhall Gardens revival. The final item [15] in this collection of Vauxhall Gardens material in the poster for this all too short an event in June 1888 when Vauxhall Gardens rose from the ashes to live again.

- (Oversize) 15. Vauxhall Gardens Revived; For Three Days Only. Kennington Liberal and Radical Association and Women's Liberal Association. A Grand Bazaar... Will Be Held at the "Horns" Assembly Rooms on Thursday, Friday & Saturday June 7th, 8th, & 9th, 1888... Concerts a la Vauxhall... Full Floral Decorations reproducing the leafy arbours of Old Vauxhall. The Old Orchestra revived with the String Band of the Kennington Liberal and Radical Club. Relics of Old Vauxhall, and complete Gallery of Pictures as they appeared in the Old Gardens... a genuine Vauxhall Waiter. Simpson Redivivus... the Amusements and Customs of our Grandfather's Days..... Vivat Regina.
Poster. Glue stains and small holes around edges without any loss of text. 574 x 129mm.

- 16. Included in the collection is a letter from Mario to Mr. Leduc concerning the planning of a theatrical programme and mentioning the names Mr. Damoreau, Mr. Rovrier and Mr. L. Vallet. The significance of the letter, which is in French and is accompanied by an English translation, has escaped the logical and diligent enquiries of our cataloguer.