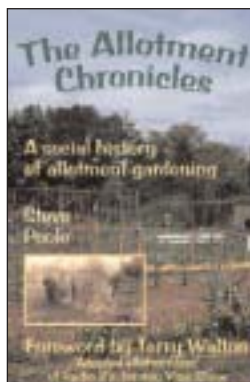


# The Allotment Chronicles

## A social history of allotment gardening Steve Poole

Foreword by Terry Walton

'Adopted allotmenteer' of Radio 2's Jeremy Vine Show



'When the labourer has his little plot of ground, from which he feels he shall not be ejected as long as he conducts himself with propriety, he has an object on which his heart is fixed; he has something at stake in society...'

(Christian Observer, 1832)

'There's nothing like a sunny Saturday afternoon on the plot, fresh air and a bit of exercise. Beats going to the football match any day... Then of course one has an end product, wonderful fresh veg that is better than the stuff from the greengrocers. I can pick my own parsnips Sunday morning and they can be on my dinner plate at lunchtime - can't get any fresher than that!'

(Allotment-holder, 1967)

Throughout history the humble allotment garden has played its part in the wellbeing and survival of the British people. For more than 250 years countless tenants have found economic benefit, comfort, relaxation and salvation while tending their little plots of earth, and the social history of allotments forms a rich part of the nation's cultural heritage. In short, there is no other feature of the British landscape quite like the allotment garden, and here is the full story of its evolution from the land enclosures of the mid-18th century through two World Wars to the present day.

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**Front cover:** A contemporary allotment at Farnborough, Kent, in 2000. **Inset:** Plot 114 at Shakespeare Street Gardens, Coventry, circa 1916 (courtesy of Ted Clarkson of Shakespeare Street Gardens Ltd).

**Back cover:** The author's grandfather and his first wife 'Digging for Victory' in Derbyshire, circa 1945.

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