



# MAGNOLIA

Bulletin of the  
Southern Garden  
History Society

*The Laurel Tree of Carolina  
from Mark Catesby 1731  
(Magnolia Grandiflora)*

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## THE SPLENDOR OF OLD FELICIANA BECKONS SGHS MEMBERS

by Ann Benham Koerner

Feliciania - there is a lyrical, magical quality about the name. What does it mean? In its most literal historical sense, it refers to a tract of land wrested from the British in 1779 by the governor of Spanish Louisiana, Bernardo de Galvez, who named these lands after his bride, Felice de la Maxent d'Estrehan. At that time the region was a strip extending from the Perdido River, at the western boundary of present-day Florida, to the Mississippi River. This area, having attracted many Tories from the eastern seaboard during the American Revolution, was by then predominantly Anglo-Saxon in flavor, though it retained the influence of early Spanish and French settlers who left their mark in place names, architectural styles, and family names. Since earliest times, the area seems to have been especially favored, from the early Houmas and Tunica Indian tribes to the French and Spanish explorers who traded with them, and continuing on with English aristocrats and entrepreneurs who made vast fortunes in agriculture and other business ventures there. But it was the English who gave Feliciania its enduring character, bringing a proud heritage and independence to the region which remains today.

Residents of Feliciania resisted Spanish rule following Galvez' conquest - once in an abortive attempt in 1804 and again in the West Florida Rebellion of 1810, when

--continued on page 3



Parlange Plantation

## CALENDAR

March 13th-15th, 1991: The Southern Landscape Symposium presents "Landscapes of the South" which will include a talk by SGHS board member Suzanne Turner, "Old South Gardens: Myth and Reality." Contact Louise Keith Claussen at the Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, GA. (404) 724-0851, ext. 233.

April 6th, 1991: Historic Wilmington Foundation will sponsor a plant sale in the deRosset Garden at 209 Dock St. from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is \$2 and for more information, contact the Foundation at (919) 762-2511.

April 7th-10th, 1991: The Forty-Fifth Williamsburg Garden Symposium, which includes a talk by SGHS Board member Jane Campbell Symmes, will be held in Colonial Williamsburg. Write: Registrar, Garden Symposium, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Post Office Box C, Williamsburg, VA, 23187-9983 or call (804) 220-7255 for further information.

April 12th-14th, 1991: **SGHS 1991 Annual Meeting** in St. Francisville, LA will be held at the St. Francis Hotel (1-800-826-9931). The meeting is for members only and on a first come first served basis as registration must be limited to 125 participants. Reservations should

be sent as soon as possible to Mrs. Robert L. Pettit, Jr., #7 Garden Lane, New Orleans, LA 70124 (504) 486-1188.

May 17th-19th, 1991: The Heritage Rose Foundation will hold its annual meeting in Santa Rosa, California. Contact Charles Walker, 1512 Gorman St., Raleigh, NC 27606.

August 15th-17th, 1991: The American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta will hold its Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting in the William Paca Gardens in Annapolis, MD. The theme will be "Conserving Our Garden Heritage: Natural and Historic" and topics for presentation on this theme are currently being sought. For more information, contact Scott Frederickson, Garden Superintendent, William Paca Garden, 1 Martin St, Annapolis, MD 21401.

October 3-5, 1991: The Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes fall conference on "The Southern Vernacular Landscape" will be held at Old Salem in Winston-Salem, NC. More information will be forthcoming in future issues.

March 20-22, 1992: SGHS 1992 Annual Meeting in Charleston, SC. Members may wish to start gathering up slides and prints of past meetings for the 10th anniversary retrospective display.

### Schedule Change for Dues Billing

The SGHS board has decided to change the membership billing to correspond with the society's year, May 1st to April 30th, based on the term of office for board members. To make the transition notice for 1990-1991, dues were mailed out in November rather than January and notices for 1991-1992 will be mailed in May. Dues notices will be sent each May hereafter. Anyone joining the society after the first of the year is credited for the coming year, beginning in May. Therefore, new members who joined after January 1st will not be billed in May. The board also decided to send annual meeting brochures only to current society members. Therefore, non-members need to join first by paying dues to the society headquarters before they will be sent annual meeting materials. In the past, non-members were allowed to join the society when they registered for the meeting, a method which was not only confusing but also a burden on annual meeting committees.

The society now has five hundred members throughout the fourteen Southern states, plus a number of members in England, Germany, France and Australia.

OLD FELICIANA, continued from page 1.

Spanish rule was overthrown at Baton Rouge. The resulting independent province, with St. Francisville as its capital, was short lived, however, lasting just 74 days. In 1810 the region was made part of the United States. Since then old Feliciana has been parcelled out, and in 1824, what remained as Feliciana proper was divided into West and East Feliciana, whose boundaries have survived to the present day.

Feliciana's contributions to architecture, culture, and business have been truly outstanding. The area along the great River Road from New Orleans to Natchez, of which Feliciana was a part, reputedly produced more than two-thirds of America's known millionaires of the antebellum period. Politically and materially, the region has been as interesting and as remuneratively rewarding as any in the Louisiana Territories, but it possesses other, more intangible, qualities as well. Translated from the Spanish, Feliciana means "Happyland," and it has lived up to the expectations evoked by this translation for both residents and visitors over the years. Its beauty has been legendary. John James Audubon, whose exquisite paintings made famous the region's wildlife, said of it:

"Nature seems to have paused, as she passed over the Earth, and opening her stores, to have strewed with unsparing hand the diversified seeds from which have sprung all the beautiful and splendid forms which I should in vain attempt to describe..."

As participants of the 1991 Spring Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society, we know you will find this little part of Old Feliciana just as wonderful as he did. Just come and see for yourself.

### **THE GARDEN AT LEIGH FARM** Kenneth M. McFarland, Stagville Center

Antebellum Orange County, North Carolina encompassed thousands of plantation acres owned by the Cameron family. Indeed, theirs was one of the largest agricultural complexes of the American South. Orange County, however, also included a number of smaller - and thus more typical - plantation operations. Richard Stanford Leigh (1809-1898) owned one such holding, which in 1860 included nearly 1,000 acres and sixteen slaves. Here Leigh cultivated mainly corn, though he also grew wheat and cotton, and raised livestock as well. Joined by such structures as a smokehouse, a dairy, and a slave cabin, Leigh's circa 1835 home still stands near New Hope Creek in southwestern Durham County. (Durham County was formed in 1881, having been carved largely from eastern Orange.) The campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is only five miles to the west.

A garden, too, was once a prominent feature at Leigh Farm, though only a few traces of it (chiefly narcissus) remain at its location just south of the main house. Fortunately, Ida Leigh (1873-1943), the youngest of Richard Stanford's twenty children, has left us an entrancing picture of this Leigh Farm garden, which Leigh descendants recall as having been approximately one-half acre in size. In an 1893 essay, written while she was a student at the Durham Female Institute, Ida walks us through this garden known to her since her early childhood and which had been maintained under the watchful eye of her grandmother, Nancy Hudgins. (Family history records Nancy's birth in 1795. She is believed to have died during the 1880's.)

Possibly the garden, in some form, may have been contemporary with the Leigh House, itself; dwarf box, apparently planted early in the garden's history, stood at the site until the early 1930's. Nancy Hudgins' connection with it, however, only began at the time of the Civil War. She and her daughter

Leathy (1831-1900) had come to Leigh Farm in 1862 to help the recently widowed Richard Stanford in caring for his children. Two years later Richard and Leathy were married. Nancy, then, continued to reside with her daughter and new son-in-law, and a still-growing family. Her youngest granddaughter's recollections attest to the energy Nancy devoted to the garden which lay but a few feet from the Leigh House front door:

### My Grandmother's Garden

In the time of our grandparents, most people, those in the country especially, took as great pride in the cultivation of flowers in their gardens as they did of vegetables, or at least my grandmother did. And if there is any thing that will live longer in my memory than any thing else, it is the recollection of my grandmother's garden. It was about twice as long as broad with a gate in the northwest corner. The walks were in the form of a capital T with the base at the southern end of the garden and the cross of the T across the middle of the garden. Then, from the western end of the T to the gate was another walk running close to the palings. Near the gate was a rose arbor under which my sisters and I have spent many an hour making crosses, rings, squares, etc of the thorns from the rose vine, each trying to make the prettiest figure. Farther on were beds of white and blue lilies, white, pink, and red pinks and the early blooming hyacinths. Of course, these were not the choice flowers even in those days, but grandmother did not make her selections to please other people, but these had been the favorite flowers in her youth and she preferred them now. 'Twas seldom we were allowed to go into the garden without some one to watch us for we were very fond of pulling the long blades of the hyacinths to hear them "sing" as we called it. And this was not to be tolerated by grandmother. I do not remember anything about the vegetables, but the fruit trees that grew around the edge of the garden I shall never forget. Along the front, or western side, were several prune trees and in each of the southern corners grew a cherry tree and such delicious cherries they bore ! At the end of the long walk, or the base of the T, stood a large gooseberry bush from which I never ate a ripe berry until a few years ago. The pieces through which the palings were woven served as convenient steps to the lower limbs of the mulberry tree that stood at the back of the garden, and the sharp points of the palings were the means of tearing many a dress and apron in our hurry to get down from the tree before we were seen by those who would have "reported us at headquarters."

I have not written this because I thought it would be interesting to any one else, or prove very beneficial to me, but because I could think of nothing else.  
Spring Term, 1893

Durham, NC

Durham female Institute

(Note: Ida Leigh's essay has been transcribed verbatim, with no changes in punctuation, etc. The only exception occurs in the several instances where she added a word above a line. These words have been dropped into the text.)

Nearly a century has passed since a nineteen year old Ida Leigh wistfully penned her childhood recollections from the 1870s and 80s. Of course, despite the charming candor of her conclusion, we find her essay interesting in ways she did not imagine. First, it offers a succinctly stated, yet remarkable, story of the love (a love manifested in quite different ways) of a woman and her granddaughter for a garden - and of their obvious mutual affection. In addition, Ida's essay reveals a good deal of information about the garden itself. Plans are now under discussion for the restoration of the Leigh Farm complex as a public

site. With the aid of Ida Leigh's writings, along with the related documentary and plant material still in family hands, an opportunity may soon present itself for a fine garden restoration indeed.

(Note: The author wishes to thank Richard Leigh descendants Mr. Curtis Booker and his mother Mrs. John (Elsie) Booker for permission to publish Ida Leigh's essay and for supplying much of the factual information included in this article. In addition, the interested reader is directed to Jean Bradley Anderson's study Durham County, just published by the Duke University Press in association with the Historic Preservation Society of Durham.)

## THE PLANT REPORTER: SEARCHING FOR ROMAN HYACINTHS

Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, NC

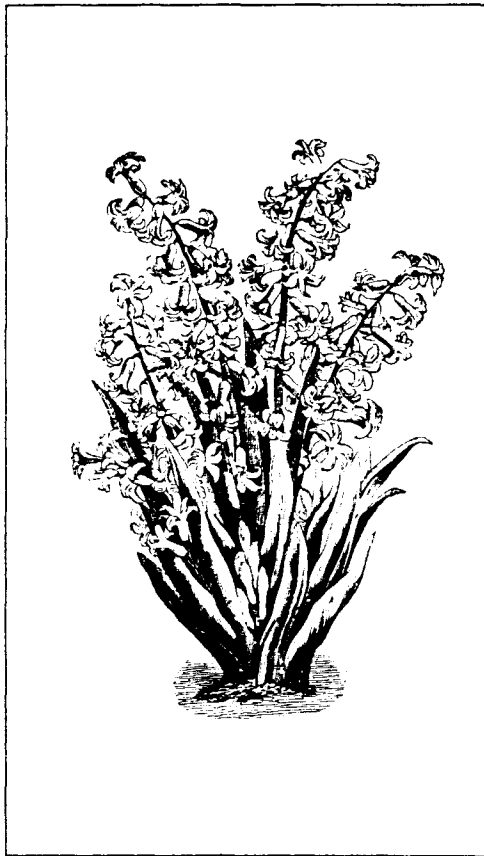
In the 1990 summer issue, vol. VII, no. I, we discussed Roman Hyacinths, the little fragrant hyacinths that bloom early and are so often found in the single blue form in older Southern gardens (*Hyacinthus orientalis* var. *albulus*). We mentioned that the white, once common, seems now to be rarely found in gardens, and the pink, especially the double pink, has almost disappeared. We also said there seemed today to be no commercial source for these little hyacinths.

However, we have since located several sources. Cruickshank's Inc. of Toronto, Canada, offered blue, white and pink Roman hyacinths in its fall 1990 catalogue. Bundles of Bulbs of Maryland also listed French Roman hyacinths (a name used occasionally in the last sixty years) and put "(multiflora)" under the listing. I feel sure the Roman hyacinths sold by Bundles of Bulbs are not Multiflora. The bulbs looked identical to my other Roman hyacinth bulbs, and I have been told by three bulb importers that Multiflora is a very large segmented, treated bulb, decidedly different in appearance from a Roman hyacinth bulb. I ordered some of all of these and planted them in rows in my garden.

Katherine Whiteside called to report that A.J. Skittone in San Francisco, California, listed these hyacinths in his fall 1990 catalogue and offered the bulbs.

Since the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center in New York City had in June told John Fitzpatrick of Monticello that Roman hyacinths were not being commercially produced, the question became-- where are these companies securing these bulbs? Cruickshank's replied that they have carried Roman hyacinths for years and get them from a Dutch grower who obtains them from a grower in France. Mr. Skittone said he buys his bulbs directly from Israel, but can only get white and blue. We also called the manager of the largest bulb importing firm in America-- the firm from which most of our retail bulb catalogue companies obtain their bulbs-- and the manager told us he has for three or four years bought Roman hyacinths from Israel, now one of the major bulb-growing areas. He too could only obtain white and blue. Dutch Gardens, Inc. of New Jersey wrote they will have Roman hyacinths available in the fall. So-- while the Dutch may not be growing Roman hyacinths, they are being produced commercially in France and Israel.

I went to France in August to attend a workshop on landscape restoration held in the Chateau La Napoule on the Riviera. As everything I had read said Roman hyacinths were native to southern France, I thought I would be in the real heartland of these hyacinths. I went loaded with pictures and a card with my questions carefully written out. However, in all the gardens we visited, there was never anyone to give any information at all. If I was lucky, I would find one gardener in the whole place-- who spoke only French, naturally, and I only English. I would show him my pictures, my card with my questions in English, and we would gesture, point and wave at each other-- he in fluent French and I in fluent English! Often as I went through these interchanges, there would be some "helpful" person nearby who spoke-- or thought he spoke-- both languages and would get in on the act, further confusing the issue. On our free weekend off from the workshop, a friend and I drove all the way over to a large botanical garden just inside



Roman Hyacinth  
1910 Platt Co.

the Italian border, and again found only one gardener in the whole place, and again we went through our act of showing cards and pictures, but all we managed to learn was that Roman hyacinths (only the blue) were grown in the garden and bloomed in February.

The only real "pay dirt" I hit in France was when a French landscape architect from Grasse, in the hill country about an hour north of where we were on the Riviera, lectured to the group. Yes, he knew these little hyacinths; yes, they grew naturally around him; and, yes, they are in white, pink, and blue, but he had never seen any double, did not know there was a double. He had seen the blue and pink in the wild, but not the white. The blue is more common and he grows them in his garden where they have just come up naturally. The school children gather the blossoms to sell. No, you cannot buy the bulbs, you just dig them. He had never heard them referred to as "Roman;" he wrote them down for me as "Jacinthes." So I did locate one person who knew the hyacinths in what I had been told was their native habitat, the Var region of southern France, in the hill country, not far from where the Var River flowed into the Mediterranean.

Other than the few references given in the article in the summer Magnolia, I have found no more specific, dated references to Roman hyacinths in early Southern gardens. Larry Gulley, of Sparta, Georgia, called to say that he had once visited an old log cabin in southwest Virginia, with a neighbor of his, and the whole front yard of the old cabin was full of Roman hyacinths in bloom--pink, white, and blue-- very fragrant, and the most beautiful sight, like a baby's blanket. Larry said the white were the most delicate

of all, and more white than cream. Larry remembers that these hyacinths in white, pink, and blue were always on his grandmother's homeplace in Hawkins County, Tennessee, and on the neighboring farm of his great-grandfather, and on a farm across the road. The pink were smaller. He had only seen a very few of the white and pink in Georgia, but said the blue were in most Georgia gardens.

While we have located few dated references for Roman hyacinths in early Southern gardens, there are many, many references to them in American gardening books and catalogues. Thanks primarily to Dr. Arthur Tucker of Delaware State College, Dover, Delaware, we have copies of data on Roman hyacinths from sixteen books, eleven of which are American, four English, and one Dutch. We have copies of data from five old American bulb catalogues. And in addition we have other articles on hyacinths that do not mention Roman hyacinth. We are also grateful to John Fitzpatrick, Scott Kunst of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Florence Griffin of Atlanta, Georgia, all of whom sent material.

The references to Roman hyacinths date from 1881 to 1938. The prime subject of discussion in all these references is the white Roman hyacinth as a forcing bulb. The 1881 book says, "The white Roman hyacinth is largely used for forcing winter flowers by the florists of New York and all large cities. In New York alone upward of five hundred thousand bulbs are used during the winter, and the number is rapidly increasing each year." The 1943 book says "... the white Roman hyacinth is the most popular of winter-blooming plants. Several million of these bulbs are grown annually by the florists of the large cities for winter cut-flowers."

Of the most interest to us is a 1905 catalogue of Jos. W. Vestal & Son of Little Rock, Arkansas. This catalogue is part of the archival collection the SGHS is starting in the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia. This catalogue and Elizabeth Lawrence's books are the only Southern references to Roman hyacinths I have in older garden books and catalogues.

Also, Vestal and the Frank S. Platt Co. catalogue (1910) of New Haven, Connecticut, are the only companies that listed double Roman hyacinths. Platt listed semi-double blush rose and semi-double blue. Vestal listed double light pink and double dark pink. Although, many of the references in the books noted the three colors, white, blue, and rose or pink, only Elizabeth Lawrence in Gardens in Winter (1961) mentions the double pink, found on an old homeplace in Louisiana. And so far, the double pink I have found in the Winston-Salem area is the only double pink-- or double-- I know of today.

When Roman hyacinths were first brought into Southern gardens still remains a mystery. It does not seem likely they were planted in gardens from bulbs that had been used for forcing. First, all the books and catalogues say that the bulbs once forced do not do well in gardens. Second, if forced bulbs were planted in gardens, why did the blue become so common, and not the white, which was most popular for forcing? And third, these hyacinths are found today so often on old farms, old homeplaces-- places where it seems unlikely people would have ordered bulbs from major bulb companies and forced them-- which was more of a big-city activity.

Another mystery, never discussed in the many books is the origin of the name "Roman." Why are they called that? "French Roman" perhaps because, as we noted in the earlier article, they are Roman hyacinths that come from France-- and the French Roman designation seems to be used mostly from the 1920s on. But why Roman, if they are native to France? After seeing all the Roman ruins in the South of France, I wondered if the Romans brought these hyacinths into this area. But if so, where did the Romans bring them from? No writer mentions any location to which they are native but southern France. Were they once elsewhere, in the days of the Roman Empire, and are they now gone from the original site? Another mystery!

Ed Shull, SGHS board member from Maryland, brought me five bulbs of pink Roman hyacinths, from a clump that must have been part of the original garden of his 1910 house. I have all the hyacinths I acquired in the fall rowed out in my garden and now eagerly watch them. The ten small bulbs of the double pink, which I obtained from an older woman at our local farmer's market, were up the end of January, as were Ed's bulbs and the blue ones that have always been in my garden. The bulbs from Cruickshank's and Bundles of Bulbs had not yet put in an appearance.

A friend on a very old homeplace near Winston-Salem tells me that the blue, white, and double pink are there, so I am anxiously waiting for them to bloom. Ken McFarland, site manager of the Stagville Center, Durham, N.C. and associate editor of Magnolia, recently told me of the Leigh Farm near Chapel Hill, where the old homeplace, now gone, was built in 1835. A Stagville employee has collected bulbs of little single hyacinths-- small and purple, with about five blooms per stem. Ken promises to check these out and get bulbs. I have also put an advertisement in the "plants wanted" section of the North Carolina agricultural market bulletin, à la Elizabeth Lawrence.

Now is the time for all good Southern Garden History Society members to come to the aid of the Roman hyacinth search, as all over the South they are now blooming. Please report on white and pink ones; watch especially for the elusive double pink, or unusual colors of blue-- such as very deep blue or purplish. Please take pictures and notes. Watch for early references to the hyacinths in diaries, letters and other garden accounts. As the hyacinths are too tender to grow in the North, they are a distinct "preservation" of Southern Gardens-- but a mystery as to their history still remains!

## SOURCES FOR ROMAN HYACINTH BULBS

Bundles of Bulbs, 112 Greenspring Valley Rd., Owings Mill, MD. 21117. White, rose, blue in 1990 fall catalogue.  
Cruickshank's Inc., 1015 Mount Pleasant Rd., Toronto, Ont., M4P 2M1, Canada. White, pink, blue in 1990 fall catalogue.

Dutch Gardens, P.O. Box 200, Adelphia, N.J., 07710. Will have Roman hyacinths available fall 1991.

A.J. Skittone Collection, Green Lady Gardens, 1415 Eucalyptus Dr., San Francisco, Calif., 94132. White and blue.

White Flower Farm, Litchfield, Ct. 06759-0050. Listed white in Christmas 1990 catalogue.

## ELISABETH WOODBURN ROBERTSON

Elisabeth Woodburn Robertson died suddenly at home on November 18th, 1990, in Hopewell, New Jersey. Elisabeth, a renowned specialist in horticulture for over forty years, had a passion for gardening, books, and all living things, which was reflected in her personal and professional life. Her devotion to the history and preservation of United States horticulture led her to develop many of the great American private and public horticultural book collections. Books of the past and present were her daily companions, as reflected in her stock of over 14,000 volumes in the areas of general horticulture, landscape gardening, herbs, wildflowers, fruits, and vegetables. Professionally Elisabeth was active in many organizations and her publications include a number of essays and articles as well as the scholarly 175-page Addendum to the 1988 reprint edition of U.P. Hedrick's A History of Horticulture in America to 1860. The following piece by SGHS Board member Ann Carr cites Ms. Woodburn's special contribution to the preservation of Southern garden history.

## A TRIBUTE TO ELISABETH WOODBURN

In 1976, to commemorate the bicentennial of our country, the Cherokee Garden Club of Atlanta founded the Cherokee Garden Library, to be housed in the Atlanta Historical Society. In 1977, we had an extraordinary opportunity to acquire a rare collection of important early horticultural books. These books, known as "The Elisabeth Woodburn Collection of Historical American Horticultural Books," numbered 200 volumes. Mrs. Woodburn, America's most noted antiquarian garden book authority and dealer, spent ten years patiently putting together this collection, selecting only the most important and widely read authors. They were published in this country from 1634 to 1900 and offer a rare insight into the unique lifestyle of our forebears. The authors were scholars as well as practical gardeners, writing for the instruction of early colonists and later settlers. Included are such rare first American books as: Arbustum Americanum, 1785, on trees, by Humphrey Marshall; The Rose Manual, 1844, by Robert Buist; on herbs, The American Herbal, by Samuel Stearns; The Gardener's Kalendar, the first "how to" garden book by Martha Logan of Charleston in 1779.

The board of the library voted unanimously to purchase the collection. A prominent institution also wanted to buy it, but Mrs. Woodburn graciously held the books for us until we could raise the money, as she felt that these books belonged in the South where gardening had long been a way of life. Also, she pointed out, there was no such collection in our area, and, therefore, the unique books would be widely read, which was very important to her. Charles Van Ravenswaay, former director of Winterthur, praised her at the American Agricultural's Bicentennial, held in Philadelphia in 1976, "... she has personally handled and read every garden book of importance ...." The Cherokee Garden Library not only brought Elisabeth Woodburn's collection of rare garden books to the South, it brought forward her expertise and knowledge. In 1978, when the collection arrived, Mrs. Woodburn spoke to a large audience at the Atlanta



Historical Society on our horticultural heritage. She has tirelessly advised and guided us for the past thirteen years, and searched out rare books or seed catalogues important to round out our collection. She has educated us; insisted that we join The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries; and, most important of all, to become affiliated with The Southern Garden History Society. We shall sorely miss her and continue to be grateful to her farsighted confidence in the goals of The Cherokee Garden Library.

--Ann Carr, SGHS Board member

## BOOK REVIEW

Earth Patterns: Essays in Landscape Archaeology, Edited by William M. Kelso and Rachel Most (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1990. Preface, Prologue, Illustrations, epilogue, index, list of contributors, Pp. xiv, 319, \$ 30.00)

The contributors to this volume provide substantial new insight on the gardens of the past in particular, and the historic cultural landscape as a whole. (In his prologue the well-known archaeologist James Deetz defines cultural landscape as "that part of the terrain which is modified according to a set of cultural plans" as opposed to landscape in general which means the "total terrestrial context in which archaeological study is pursued...") The work consists chiefly of eighteen essays, many of which examine Southern sites, these being mainly located in Virginia and Maryland. The editors have grouped these essays into sections focused on rural sites, urban locations, and the landscape and gardens of the ancient Italian peninsula. In addition three chapters examine various aspects of "Landscape Science." The book concludes with a concise, but insightful, epilogue by historian Thad Tate and a well-prepared index.

Just as Earth Patterns covers several site types and historical periods, so also do its chapters reflect different methods of examining the cultural landscape. Not surprisingly, a number of essays offer synopses of specific archaeological projects, together with the conclusions researchers have reached to date. Thus we are treated to assessments of work at such familiar locations, to name but several, as Monticello and Bacon's Castle, as well as Williamsburg and Annapolis. William Kelso shows us, for instance, how Jefferson sought to square the realities of a Virginia plantation setting - and the weight of regional culture -

with the latest European landscape theories; we learn from Anne Yentsch how Maryland's Calvert family used an orangery as a vehicle for expressing power and status. These pieces include relevant photographs, maps, and drawings, and each ends with a helpful bibliography.

Other Earth Pattern contributions aim at a more holistic understanding of the complex, and everchanging, relationship of the cultural landscape to all people who shaped, and in turn were shaped by, their environs. Contributors such as Dell Upton and Carter Hudgins, for example, discuss the Virginia gentry's manipulation of important components of the landscape - such as courthouses, churches, houses, and gardens - to achieve and maintain social dominance. We get insight, as well, on the areas of landscape, such as quarters and forests, which were under the de facto control of the slave community.

Essays relating to the South alone recommend this book to Society members. There is no segment of Earth Patterns, however, which does not provide valuable background for those who would expand their understanding of the historic landscape. Moreover, ranging through such topics as the use of plane geometry in Maryland garden design; to the techniques used to examine the gardens of Pompeii; and on to its technical discussions of pollen and plant opal phytolith analysis, this work obviously guides the way to further investigations. We hope that such endeavors will lead to another conference like that of 1986 and to a second collection of essays such as Earth Patterns. With regard to projects in the South, it is also to be hoped that sufficient resources will be available to allow scholars to probe more fully the vernacular landscapes of slaves, ordinary planters, and small farmers. Only then can we begin to assemble a complete picture of an historic landscape which in innumerable ways affects our lives yet today.

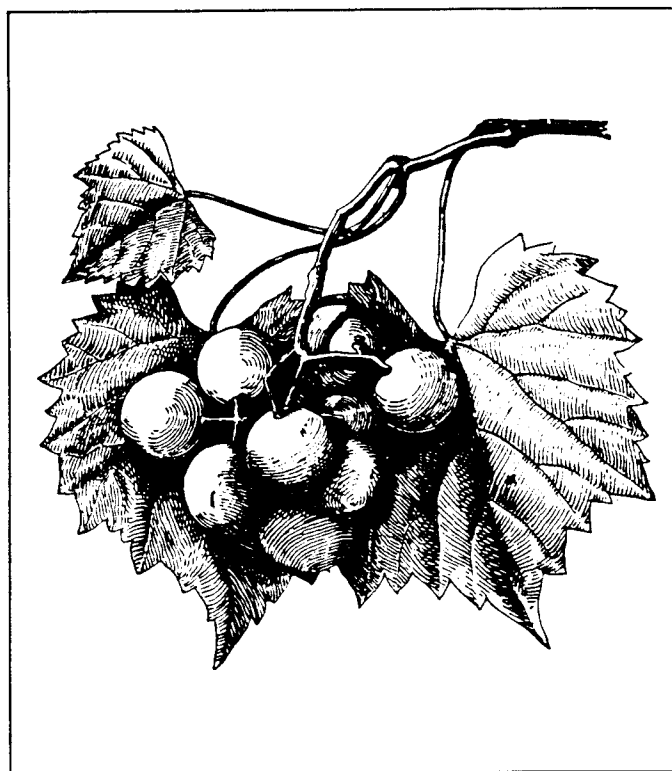
-- Kenneth M. McFarland, Associate Editor.

Pinney, Thomas. A History of Wine in America From the Beginnings to Prohibition. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989. 553 pp., 124 illustrations, appendices, notes.)

I have no illusions about the enduring appeal of grape culture among SGHS members. But even if your interests lie in old roses, boxwood, or herb garden design, you should know about this book. Thomas Pinney's A History of Wine in America, perhaps more appropriately titled "A History of the Grape in America," provides the most complete historical examination of any garden plant yet published in the United States. Pinney's exhaustive study, so gracefully written that every chapter offers some gripping though usually tragic drama, elevates the study of the history of plants in American gardens to an entirely new level. That the evolution of one horticultural genus holds such a treasure of documentary wealth should inspire every garden historian. Pinney's History is still another testament to the buried riches of primary source material.

Before 1820 certain themes defined the American experience with the grape. For the first natural historians of the New World landscape, particularly in eastern North America, no plant - fruit, vegetable, or grain - promised as much as the native vine. Whether the muscadine of the South or the fox grape in the North, the wild grape was a universal image for the natural bounty of the native American forest. This wide-eyed astonishment at the prolific grape flora resulted in the native faith that such an abundant wild product would logically translate into a prosperous wine economy based on the traditional Old World grape, Vitis vinifera. The grape, in all its forms, was the species of utopia. Unfortunately, the unrelenting failure to successfully grow the European species, or to prove that wild vines could produce a drinkable wine, involved 200 years of tragedy, 200 years of alibis justifying the repeated doomed experiments.

While the eighteenth-century natural historians and pioneer viticulturists felt the abundance of indigenous grapes meant that the European vine would grow just as well, ironically, it was the native species' dazzling omnipresence that ultimately subverted American efforts to cultivate Vitis vinifera. Although



*Vitis rotundifolia*,  
"Scuppernong"

a majority of our fruit pests were imported from other continents, the most serious grape diseases and insects were already here, breeding and thriving, but not crippling the wild grapes in the forest. Black rot, downy mildew, phylloxera - all American pests - made it impossible to grow the European grape in the humid east until the development of modern fungicides laid the foundation for the current vinifera revival. The central issue throughout the 200-year struggle to grow grapes was a simple horticultural matter. *However*, it took a long time to realize this.

No study of southern gardens or agriculture is complete without an understanding of the experimental failures to establish a grape growing and wine-making economy. Pinney covers them all: from the well-intentioned plantings of the rather infamous John James Dufour in Kentucky to Washington, D.C.'s John Adlum, "the father of American viticulture"; from General James Oglethorpe's ill-fated trials in Savannah's Trustees Garden to the wide-eyed visions of South Carolina's Louis St. Pierre in 1772; from the beginnings of a scuppernong wine industry in North Carolina to the debacle of the 1817 utopian "Vine and Olive Association" formed by 350 Bonapartists in what is now Alabama.

The history of grape culture in Virginia began with the trials of government sponsored Provencal vignerons at Jamestown in 1622 and continued with promising experiments by the royal families of Virginia history - colonial governors William Berkeley and Alexander Spotswood, Robert Beverley, William Byrd, Charles and Landon Carter, Robert Bolling, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson - and the trials of experienced eighteenth-century European growers like Philip Mazzei in Albemarle County and Andrew Estave in Williamsburg. The salvation of eastern American viticulture was appropriately a Southern grape - the Catawba discovered by John Adlum around 1820. No story (as the title suggests, Pinney's History continues well into the twentieth century) is left out of this massive saga of hope, faith, and struggle.

The two great American horticulturists of the early twentieth century, U.P. Hedrick and L.H. Bailey, have both written extensively on the history of grape culture; yet in comparison to Pinney's History their efforts seem remarkably incomplete - not only historically but even from the point of view of a

horticultural scientist. Incongruously, Pinney is the chairman of the English Department at California's Pomona College and the author of articles on Rudyard Kipling and George Eliot. Not only is his deft prose clear, purposeful, and engagingly descriptive, but his handy horticultural and oenological knowledge is remarkably accurate and probing. But perhaps more impressive is his resurrection of obscure historical sources. This is a book of discovery. Pinney has dug through manuscript collections, unpublished diaries, newspapers - no early American agricultural or garden journal has gone unexamined. Although Pinney's History is exceptional for the tenacity of his scholarship, the clarity of his prose, the drama of the viticultural struggle, it would also be of immense value simply for its footnotes and bibliography alone. Boxwood lovers, take notice of this book ! Until boxwood or roses or herb gardens are documented as fully as Pinney documents grapes, the historical study of plants in Southern gardens will remain on a weaker scholarly footing.

-- Peter Hatch, Director of Gardens and Grounds, Monticello.

## IN PRINT

Jeffrey and Leabeth Abt. "Documents: The Gardening Sentiments of an Early Texas Pioneer," East Texas Historical Journal, vol. 29, no. 1 (1991), pp 63-69. This is the completion of research which was partly published in Magnolia, vol 6, no. 1, Summer 1989.

Seidenberg, Charlotte. The New Orleans Garden. New Orleans: Silkmont & Count, 1990. Includes a 50 pp history of New Orleans gardens and a useful bibliography. Lists the SGHS as an important resource for information as well as thanking several SGHS board members for help in research. Signed copies are available from Charlotte Seidenberg, P.O. Box 15060, New Orleans, LA 70175-5060 for \$ 22.00, tax and shipping included, or 20.50 (out-of-state) with shipping included. Maple Street's Garden District Book Shop, 2727 Prytania St. (in the Rink),

New Orleans, LA 70130 (504) 895-2266 also carries the book.

Lovejoy, Ann, editor. Perennials: Toward Continuous Bloom. New Voices in American Garden Writing Series. Published by Capability's Books, 2379 Highway 46, Deer Park, WI 54007. Paperbound, 304 pp. \$ 15.95. The author of The Year in Bloom and the Border in Bloom has included in this anthology several articles by SGHS members, including *Scott Kunst, Bill Welch, Susan Urshel, and Ryan Gainey*.

Brown, C. Allan. Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest: the mathematics of an ideal villa. A reprint from the Journal of Gardening History (1990), vol.10, no.2, 117-139 is now available from the Monticello Museum Shop, P.O. Box 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902, for \$ 8.95 and \$ 2.95 shipping and handling.

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

*Tovah Martin*, who recently became an SGHS member, has a profile of fellow SGHS member

extraordinaire *Rudy Favretti* in the December 1990 issue of American Horticulturist entitled

"Landscaping's Time Traveler." **Rudy's** thirty-five years of practicing landscape architecture have included restoration or consultation on more than five hundred gardens, including Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, Woodrow Wilson's birthplace in Staunton, James Madison's home in Montpelier, and Wheatland, James Buchanan's home near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He is restoring the country's oldest formal garden at Bacons Castle, Virginia, and has been a consultant for the Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as well as Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, Old Salem in North Carolina, Colonial Williamsburg, and Mystic Seaport.

SGHS President **Harriet Jansma** writes in the "Gleanings" column of the November/December issue of Fine Gardening of her recent discovery of a private market bulletin, Ozark Gardens, which began publication in October 1953. She and Ellen Shipley, Field Archivist for the University of Arkansas

Libraries, were able to locate the original publisher, Edith Bestard of Eureka Springs, and arrange for the donation of all the back issues as well as subscriber lists and other business records to the University of Arkansas Libraries.

The Strawberry Banke Museum in Portsmouth, N.H., will host a landscape plants symposium on "Heritage Plants." Featured will be talks by SGHS members **Peggy Newcomb**, of Monticello and editor of Magnolia, on "Popular Annuals of Eastern North America, 1865-1914," and SGHS member **Dr. Arthur O. Tucker**, Research Professor in the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Delaware State College, entitled "In Search of Antique Plants."

Congratulations to SGHS board member **Bill Welch** whose recent book, Antique Roses for the South, has received enthusiastic reviews in the February 1991 issue of Heritage Roses, the March 1991 issue of Southern Living, and the February 1991 issue of Southern Accents.

### Summer Issue

Please send your articles and announcements to Kenneth McFarland, Stagville Center, P.O. Box 71217, Durham, NC 27711-1217 no later than May 1st.

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