

Magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora
The Laurel Tree of Carolina
Catesby's *Natural History*, 1743

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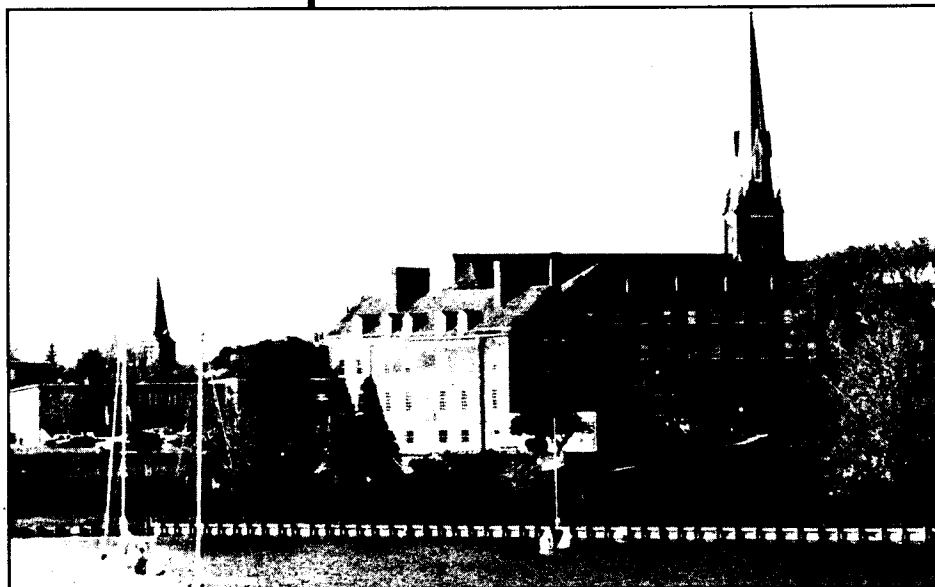
Winter 1993

The Gardens at the Charles Carroll House of Annapolis

by Robert L. Worden, Ph.D.¹, Annapolis, Maryland

Extensive architectural, archaeological, and archival research since 1985 has brought together diverse information about the Carroll House and Gardens. Construction of the oldest part of the house — the birthplace of Charles Carroll of Carrollton (1737-1832), a signer of the Declaration of Independence — was started in 1721/22. A two-story east wing was added in 1772/73, the same

period during which the three acres of terraced gardens were built, and the house and east wing each had an additional story and new roofs added in 1793/94. The west wing was added in 1855/56 and the west porch in 1910. The garden developed in conjunction with each of these periods of construction.



The Charles Carroll House and Gardens on Spa Creek. Courtesy Charles Carroll House.

Design and Interpretation

The garden is a triangle bounded by the street, the waterfront, and the house. Four terraces descend to the water and, except for

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Calendar

March 20th-22nd, 1993: The 25th Annual Tryon Palace Decorative Arts Symposium will have as its theme "Stimulating the Mind's Eye: Design Sources in the Eighteenth-Century British World." Speakers include Wendell Garrett, vice president of Americana for Sotheby's New York and editor at large of *The Magazine Antiques*; Mr. Carl Lounsbury of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; and Mr. Peter Martin of New England College in Surrey England. The Tryon Palace Decorative Arts Symposium is cosponsored by the Continuing Education Division of East Carolina University in Greenville. For registration information, contact the Continuing Education Division, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina 27858-43534 or call (919) 757-6143.



March 22nd-23rd, 1993: A symposium on John Clayton will be held at the James Madison University Arboretum in Harrisonburg, Virginia. An exhibit featuring thirty of Clayton's botanical specimens from London will be displayed, and Dr. Charles Jarvis of London will speak. Contact Julie Stickley at (703) 433-0163 for more information.

April 16th-18th, 1993: SGHS Annual Meeting. (See "Southern Gardens Go West," page 14).

June 19th-24th, 1993: The 1993 Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums Annual Meeting and Conference at the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul will explore the application of a variety of media to the teaching of rural history, including - and beyond - living history.

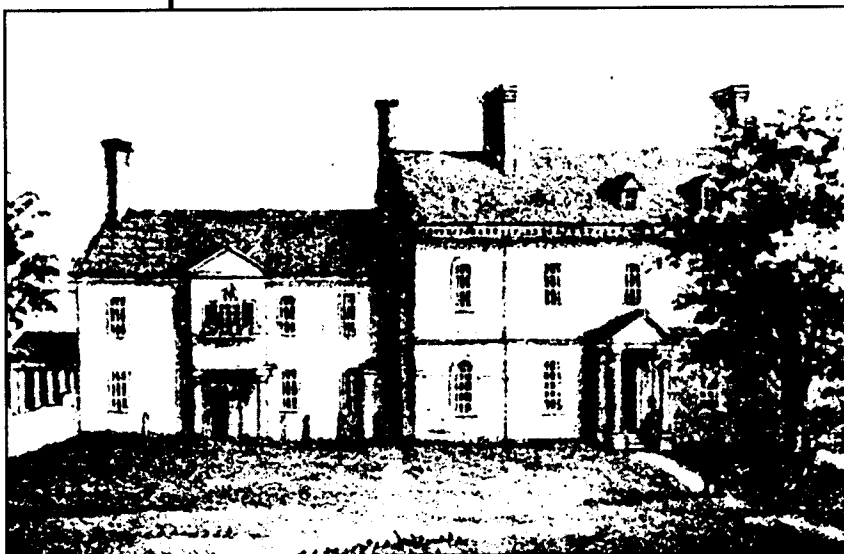
The Gardens at the Charles Carroll House of Annapolis

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the insertion in 1948 of a small cemetery near its east point, the garden to the east and south of the house is largely intact. The garden in front of the house was obliterated with the construction of St. Mary's Church and Rectory in 1858-62. The west end of the garden also was altered with the 1948 construction of an athletic field near the west edge of the garden.

The foremost expert on the Carroll Gardens is Dr. Elizabeth Kryder-Reid whose research provides most of the interpretive data concerning the gardens and their relationship to the Carroll House and its occupants. Dr. Kryder-Reid explains: "The garden was designed as a right triangle in plan view, with sides in 3-4-5 proportions. Its shape stands in contrast with the more common rectangle shape of other [Annapolis] gardens The garden is formed by terraces and falls descending to the creek. The terraces, of varying widths and degrees of preservation are intersected by four turfed ramps spaced at regular 90 foot intervals.

In plan view these terraces and ramps form the outline of smaller 3-4-5 right triangles within the garden." Furthermore, her analysis of the geometry of the garden indicates that Carroll's design was based on the dimensions of his house. "Specifically, the distances between ramps and terraces were based on the 45 foot measurement of the front facade of the core of the brick house.... Carroll's design manipulated lines of sight — literally created illusions — to enhance the vistas of the landscape...." ² One illusion, apparent at the water's edge, is that the house "appear[s] higher, more distant, and therefore



The Carroll House from the north. Detail from Sachse's Bird's Eye View of Annapolis, ca. 1858. Courtesy Maryland State Archives.

more distinguished.” A second illusion of depth is apparent from the top of the garden. The creek seems to be closer than it actually is; exactly the opposite illusion as is seen at the bottom of the garden.³ Nature is brought closer to the viewer. There is a possible third illusion created by the intersection of the terraces at an approximate 84° angle by the ramps. The effect is that with the falls, or downslopes, and terraces not being parallel, the intentionally converging or diverging lines enhance the illusion of distance.⁴ There also is a relationship between the garden wall and the falls. Where each terrace slopes down the brick wall, which meets the end of the slope at roughly a 45° angle, also angles down.

Constructing a Garden

During his schooling in England, Charles Carroll of Carrollton studied surveying and bought a theodolite, which he believed with “a little more practice will make me quite master of the business” of surveying that would be necessary in laying out his garden.⁵ His interest in gardens developed soon after he returned from abroad, and once married and settled into his father’s Annapolis home, he began making improvements, some of which were based on information gleaned from Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus*, or *The British Architect*, which he owned. He also had access to his father’s books on gardening such as *New Improvement on Planting and Gardening* (1719-20) by Richard Bradley, *The Gardener’s Dictionary: Containing the Methods of Cultivating and Improving the Kitchen, Fruit and Flower Garden* by Philip Miller (1731), and *The Vineyard* (1732) by “A Gentlemen in His Travels.”⁶ Work on the garden had begun in earnest in 1770 with the construction of a stone seawall that extended 400 feet along the waterfront.⁷ Carroll built his wall approximately fifty feet into the creek thus significantly enlarging his property. He also built a stone-topped brick wall around his garden to gain privacy from the street to the north and the domestic work areas on his property west of the house.⁸ Work on the seawall was slow and was finally completed in 1775.⁹

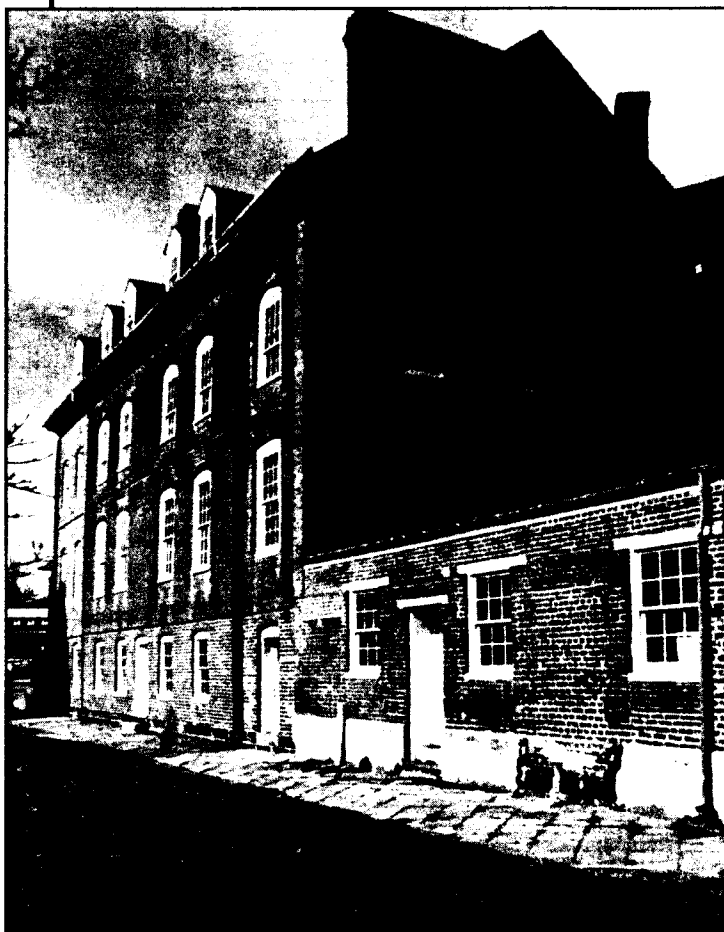
While building the garden itself, great concern was paid to terracing the land and controlling rainwater runoff. Carroll’s father admonished him in 1772 that, “If you make a continuous slope



from the gate to the wash house, I apprehend the quantity of water in great rains the way may prove very inconvenient. I think you should make as much of the Road’s as you can with a fall to the Street.”¹⁰

In 1775 landscaping in the north or front yard was still an issue as it was noted that earth had to be removed; it probably was reused to fill in the new terraces and behind the seawall.

With the seawall and garden largely complete, Carroll turned his attention in 1776 to erecting two brick pavilions on either end.¹² The pavilions were finished in 1778, but there is little extant



Southwest view of the Charles Carroll House. Courtesy Charles Carroll House.

information about them. The best description was given by the well-known painter Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) who was visiting his hometown in 1804: “at each end of the wall is an octagon Building projecting beyond it, one is a Summer House & probably the other is a Temple, it is locked up, at the first sight they might thought to be intended for such purposes but on finding that one has no holes, People are naturally led to

believe that the internal structure is similar, since the outsides are perfectly so.”¹³

By 1832 the east pavilion was in danger of falling down¹⁴, and by 1850 only the west pavilion was extant.¹⁵ By 1864, the date of the earliest photograph of the Carroll House, there was no trace of either pavilion. Archaeology has provided some evidence of their locations.

Gardeners

By 1772 there were at least two gardeners at the Carroll House, one of whom belonged to Mrs. Mary (Molly Darnall) Carroll (1749-82), the other a young indentured servant bought in 1772 who “understands a Kitchen garden pretty well.”¹⁶ The indentured gardener worked in the pleasure



“Examine the Gardener strictly viz How long He served, in what place, in what Places & Gardens He has worked since He was out of his apprenticeship, in what Branch He has been chiefly employed, the Kitchen or flower

Garden or Nursery, whether He understands Grafting, Innoculating & Trimming, whether He ever layed out a garden, whether He is expert at Levelling, making grass Plots & Bowling Greens slope & turfing them well &c. &c.”¹⁹ The new gardener, however, needed careful supervision. Carroll wrote that he “understands as little of his business & seems to be of lazy disposition.

However under my direction, I believe he will be able to lay out my garden & work it agreeable to my desires.”²⁰ In 1778, Carroll directed his

business manager “to engage the gardener at £60 per annum wages. He is a sober & industrious fellow & considering the little value of the month & the dearness of cloathes, I do not think that sum much out of the way.”²¹ A slave gardener, Jack, aged twenty-four, was noted as working at the Carroll House in 1781-82.²²

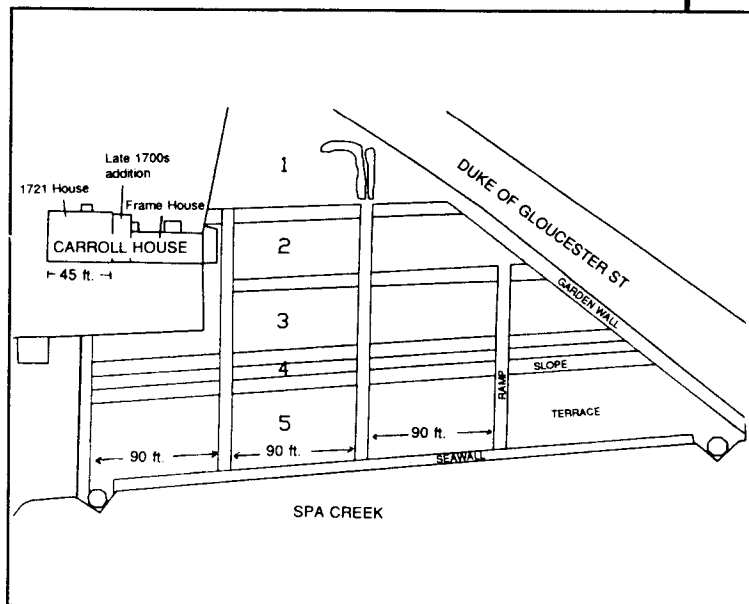
Celebration and Change

The completed gardens were the location of a major celebration of peace in April 1783. “Tomorrow we celebrate Peace,” wrote Annapolitan Mary Dulany. “I hear there is to be a grand dinner on Squire Carroll’s Point, a whole ox to be roasted &c. I can’t tell how many sheep & calves besides a world of other things. Liquor in proportion. The whole to conclude with illuminations & squibs &c.”²³

Mrs. Dulany’s report was confirmed in the *Maryland Gazette* which gave a long report on “the day of public Rejoicings.”

“A convenient, extensive, and occasional Building, was erected on Carroll’s Green, sufficient for the Accommodation of many Hundreds. Thirteen Pieces of Artillery were planted opposite, and an elegant and plentiful Dinner provided.”²⁴

By 1853, after the property had been sold to a Catholic congregation of priests and brothers, the Redemptorists, for use as a seminary, it was reported that “The garden, terraces, grove, and paths were overgrown with weeds and brushwood Work was at once begun to reclaim house and land from the hand of devastation The terraces were restored, the gardens bloomed once more, and the surroundings, in general, soon presented a new appearance.”²⁵ Additional



A reconstructed plan of Charles Carroll's 1770s garden. Courtesy: Elizabeth Kryder-Reid.

garden under construction and at the supply plantation, Annapolis Quarter, outside of town, where he trimmed trees. He was sent at least once to Whitehall, the estate of former Maryland governor Horatio Sharpe outside Annapolis, where he was directed “to spare 100 to 150 Plumb suckers for stocks to graft on.”¹⁷

Still other gardeners were mentioned in succeeding years. A slave gardener, Harry, “who work[ed] in the garden with Turnbull” as of December 1773, was punished in 1774 for neglecting his work. Complained Carroll, “he has been exceedingly idle; never was a garden in worse shape than mine....”¹⁸ A new indentured-servant gardener was mentioned in 1775 when Carroll of Annapolis instructed his son to:

renovation of the garden was forthcoming and by 1857, it was said by a saintly novice master that the property was: "... truly one of the most beautiful places that can be imagined not only on account of the situation of the garden that descends in terraces to the Bay.... in the fruitfulness of the garden, the lilies are especially present in such grandeur and luxuriance, as I have never before seen."²⁶

During the early years of Redemptorist occupation and up to the early part of the twentieth century, Carroll's pleasure garden and adjacent parcels were turned into a working farm with livestock and vineyards. By 1910, after those agricultural uses had ceased, the rector ordered the property to be cleaned up and the land restored to a garden setting.

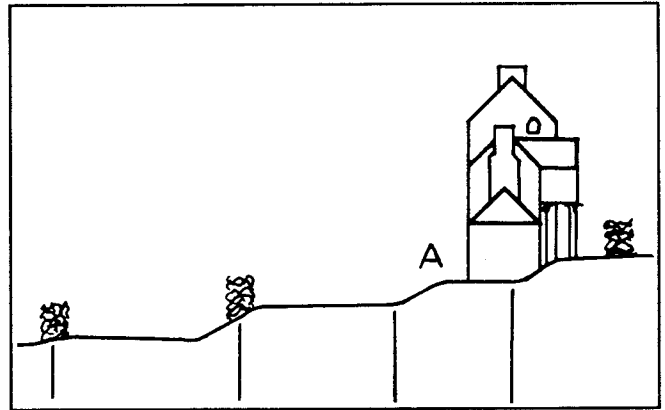
Plantings

The modern Carroll Gardens have an eclectic collection of plantings. Long boxwood hedges line the edge of each terrace, but only those on the upper terrace are thought to date from the eighteenth century. The Anne Arundel County 1992 championship American holly tree (and seventh in Maryland) also is located on the upper terrace northeast of the house and may date to Carroll's days.²⁷ The holly is not far from where a large English walnut tree — known as the "Washington Tree," because under it George Washington is said to have frequently taken tea



their real glory. The box hedges, however, retain their pristine glory."²⁹ The same visitor offered this observation: "They are far and away the best remaining samples of the many box hedges originally in Annapolis. Here this old walnut tree has still remained, a beautiful box hedge, the most gargantuan in Annapolis, and by far the most beautiful. It is certainly nine feet high...."³⁰

A Maryland White Oak raised from a Wye Oak

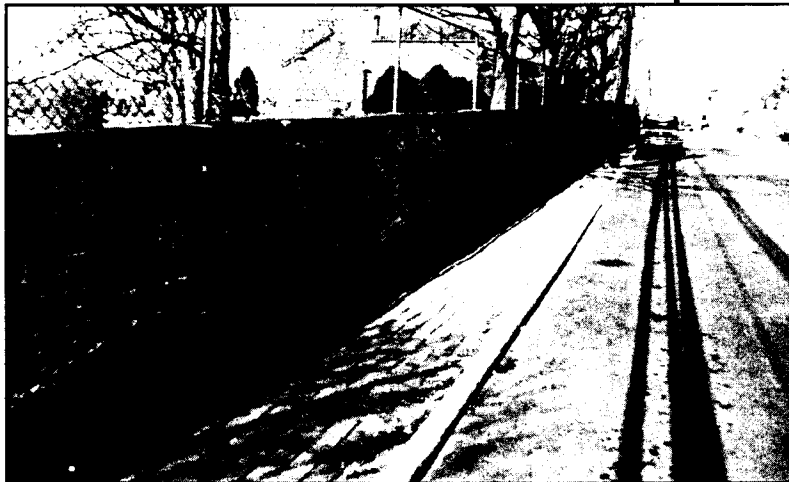


Cross section of the Carroll garden looking west. Courtesy of Carroll of Carrollton 250th Anniversary Committee.

seedling was planted in 1987 by the Four Rivers Garden Club, of Anne Arundel County, on the west side of the garden. Other plantings in the garden, including most of the boxwood and some twenty-five other species, date from throughout the twentieth century.

Eighteenth-century plantings are known only through archival sources. They included catalpa and poplar (1770); camomile flowers (ordered in 1771); unidentified flowers from "Gardenseeds" (ordered in 1773); privet planted in quincunxes along the bottom of a hedge and not exceeding 12 inches in width (1777); white clover and English grass for the front yard and tuberose roots (1777); French beans (1779); more unspecified flowers from "Garden Seeds" (ordered in 1784); "Rooted plants of the medoe, Black Morillen and Auvernat Vines 6 of each sort... Grafted Pears" (also ordered in 1784); and plants from seeds of unknown

kind and beans "Bearing a red flower" (1792). In 1804 Peale observed that Carroll's garden "contain[ed] a variety of excellent fruit and the flats are a kitchen Garden."³²



The garden wall showing the pattern of brick where it is intersected by the down slope of a terrace. Courtesy Charles Carroll House.

with Charles Carroll of Carrollton his host — once was located.²⁸ The "Washington Tree" was noted as still existing around 1908 when a visitor to the gardens proclaimed them "undoubtedly the finest remaining in Annapolis, though they show little of

Restoration

Most attention and funding in recent years has gone toward the restoration of the Carroll House itself. With the research done to date on the gardens, including an inventory conducted in 1991 of all plantings, restoration planning is scheduled to get underway in 1993. Interested persons may contact the author or Ms. Sandria Ross, Administrator, Charles Carroll House, 109 Duke of Gloucester St., Annapolis, MD 21401 or call 410/263-2969 ♦

Sources:

¹ Dr. Worden is the president and resident historian of the nonprofit Charles Carroll House of Annapolis, Inc.

² Elizabeth Bradner Kryder-Reid, "Landscape as Myth: The Contextual Archaeology of an Annapolis Landscape." Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, May 1991, 172. Also see Elizabeth Reid, "Preliminary Report: St. Mary's Site (18AP45), 1987 Excavation Season" (draft), December 18, 1987. Copies of both are on file at the Carroll House.

³ Mark Leone, Elizabeth Reid, Parker B. Potter, and Barbara J. Little, untitled tour script for Carroll Gardens, July 1987, copy on file at the Charles Carroll House.

⁴ Kryder-Reid, "Landscape at Myth," 85.

⁵ Charles Carroll of Carrollton (hereinafter CCC), London, to Charles Carroll of Annapolis (hereinafter CCA), July 2, 1763; M1492-296; CCC, London, March 21, 1764; M-1492-324. The Charles Carroll of Carrollton Family Papers, Microfilm Edition, 1989.

⁶ See list of CCA's English books filed with CCA, Annapolis, to CCC, London, June 26, 1759; M-1491-161.

⁷ CCA, Doughoregan Manor, to CCC, Annapolis, August 12, 1770.

⁸ CCA, Doughoregan Manor, to CCC, Annapolis, August 17, 1770; M4193-434.

⁹ CCC to CCA, September 29-30, 1774; M4193-599; and CCC to CCA, October 26, 1774; M4193-435.

¹⁰ CCA to CCC, September 17, 1772; M4193-527.

¹¹ CCA to CCC, May 17, 1775; M4194-633.

¹² CCC, Philadelphia, to CCA, March 8-9, 1776; M4194-666.

¹³ Charles Wilson Peale, "A Journal to Washington, D.C., and Return Including Baltimore and Annapolis, Maryland, May 29-June 21, 1804," Diary 20, Part 1, June 12, 1804 in Lillian B. Miller (ed.), *The Selected Papers of Charles Wilson Peale and His Family* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 704. Charles Wallace was a friend of Peale's who accompanied him on his perambulation around Annapolis.

¹⁴ John Randall, Annapolis, to CCC, Baltimore, May 25, 1832; M4205-2878.

¹⁵ Baltimore City Superior Court, Plat AA, 1850, Maryland Hall of Record 199959-249-2.

¹⁶ CCC to CCA, May 27, 1772; M4193-507. Also see Barbara Wells Sarudy, "Eighteenth-Century Gardens of the Chesapeake," *Journal of Garden History*, 9, No. 3, July-September 1989, 103-59.

¹⁷ CCA to CCC, November 19, 1772; M4193-535.



¹⁸ CCA's and CCC's Ledger X (1715-1823), M4216-4383; and CCC to CCA, September 29-30, 1774; M4193-599.

¹⁹ CCA to CCC, April 10, 1775 with April 12, 1775 P.S.; <4194-628.

²⁰ CCC to CCA, August 18, 1775; M4194-648.

²¹ CCC, York, to CCA, Doughoregan Manor, May 24, 1778; M4195-843.

²² Ledger X (1715-1823), M4216-4383.

²³ M. [Mary Grafton] Dulany, Annapolis, to My dear Wat [Captain Walter Dulany], New York, April 23, 1783, as quoted in Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, *One Hundred Years Ago or the Life and Times of Rev. Walter Dulany Addition, 1769-1848* (Philadelphia: Geo. W. Jacobs & Co., 1895), pp. 67-68.

²⁴ *Maryland Gazette*, May 1, 1783, pp. 2-3. Quoted nearly verbatim in David Ridgely, *Annals of Annapolis, Comprising Sundry Notices of that Old City from the period of the First Settlements in its Vicinity in the Year 1649: Until the War of 1812* (Baltimore: Cushing & Brother, 1841), pp. 204-6. Edward Papenfuse and Jane McWilliams, *Annapolis Lot Histories and Maps*, vol. 2, p. 549 Appendix F of NEH Grant No. H69-0-178, 1971, expresses the opinion that the event was held on "Carroll's Green" - "probably on this section," a reference to Lot 10 of James Stoddert's Plan for Annapolis, 1718, property own in 1783 by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, now the area known as St. Mary's Parish "Lower Parking Lot," south of St. Mary's High School and east of St. Mary's Convent, on the north side of Shipwright Street.

²⁵ Henry Borgmann, C.Ss.R., *History of The Redemptorist at Annapolis, Md., from 1853 to 1903* (Ilchester, Md.: College Press, 1904), 19-20.

²⁶ Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R., Annapolis, to his sister, n.d. 1857; cited in Rev. Peter Zimmer, *Leben und Wirten des Hochwürdigem P. Franz Xaver Seelos aus der Congregation des Allerheil* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1887), 123-24.

²⁷ Letter of Robert S. Prenger, Jr., Maryland State Regional Urban Forester, Bel Air, Maryland, to Robert L. Worden, Carroll House, Annapolis, February 20, 1992.

²⁸ George Forbes, *Notes for Slide Lectures*, "Annapolis in Colonial and Revolutionary Days," delivered January 12, 1908 - August 31, 1937. Maryland State Archives, G182 (3). Slide 529 shows tall boxwood hedges. A copy is on file at the Carroll House. Slide 424 shows the "Washington Tree" behind a telegraph pole. See "Illustrated Lecture on 'Ancient Annapolis'" delivered January 19, 1909-March 30, 1937, Baltimore and Annapolis.

²⁹ Forbes, *Notes for Slide Lectures*.

³⁰ Forbes, "Illustrated Lecture on 'Ancient Annapolis'" Slide 717, which shows boxwood hedges.

³¹ CCA to CCC, November 30, 1770; M4193-454; William Deards, for CCC, Annapolis, to West & Hobson, London, November 16, 1771, CCC Letter Book, Arents Collection, New York Public Library; CCC, Annapolis, to Joshua Johnson, London, October 21, 1773, Arents Collection; CCA to CCC, March 27, 1777, M4194-736; CCA, Doughoregan Manor, to CCC, Annapolis, to Wallace, Johnson, & Muir, London, November 18, 1784, Arents Collection; CCC, Annapolis, to Thomas Ridout, November 24, 1784, Arents Collection; and CCC, Philadelphia, to Mary Carroll Caton, Annapolis, April 12, 1792; M4196-1164.

³² Peale, "A Journey to Washington, D.C. . . ."

Duke Acquires a Treasure: The Origins of The Sarah P. Duke Gardens



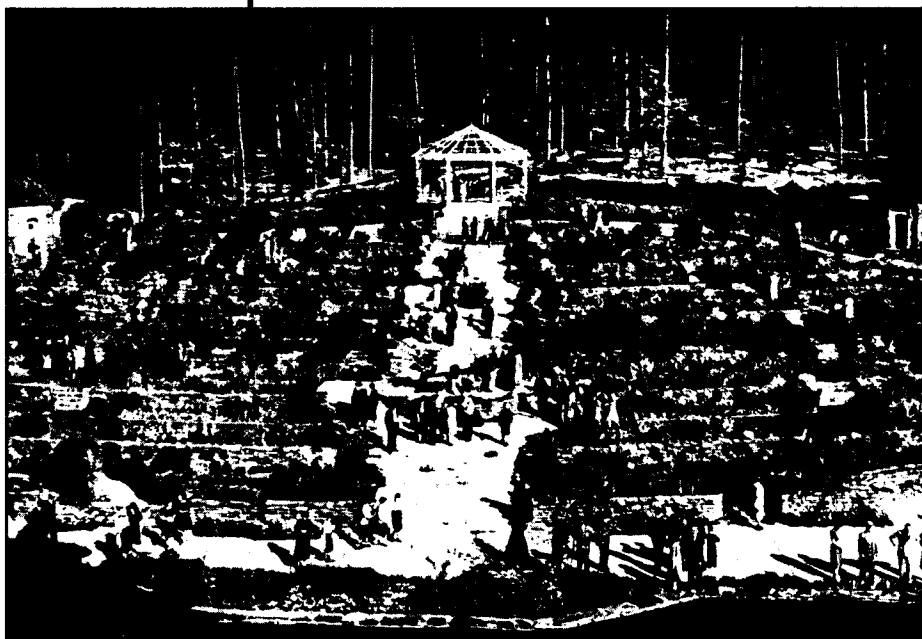
(Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the Spring 1991 issue of *Flora*, the Friends of Duke Gardens newsletter published at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. The editors wish to thank its author, Dr. Robert F. Durden. The article is, in turn, an outgrowth of a larger work being undertaken by Dr. Durden entitled *The Launching of Duke University, 1924-1949*. The editors would like also to express their appreciation to Dr. William L. Culberson, Director of the Sarah P. Duke Gardens, and to Dr. William E. King, University Archivist at Duke.

Space limitations allow for the inclusion of only a portion of the second part of the original article as published in *Flora*. This nonetheless relates not only to the work at the Duke Gardens which is still largely visible today, but it also recounts the contributions of Ellen Shipman, a landscape architect whose work is receiving attention from garden historians. Southern Garden History Society members, for example, will recall her work in this region ranging from the Ralph Hanes garden in Winston-Salem to Longue Vue in New Orleans.)

[Part I of this article in the Fall 1990 issue described how Dr. Frederick M. Hanes, a leading figure in Duke's Medical Center, persuaded Sarah P. Duke, widow of Ben Duke, to join him in paying for the creation of a garden that prominently featured irises. Located in a forested area quite near the center of Duke's West Campus, the garden, which was begun in 1934, suffered various unforeseen problems, particularly a disease common to iris and the frequent flooding of a stream that ran through the site.]

Having decided to more or less start over with his cherished garden project, Hanes acted soon after the death of Sarah P. Duke in September, 1936. When he sought to interest her daughter, Mrs. Mary Duke Biddle, in doing something for the garden that was named for her mother, he was armed with an intriguing plan. He had asked a prominent woman landscape architect, Ellen Shipman, to design a formal garden that would be quite different from the one which existed. Mary Duke Biddle, a Trinity alumna who faithfully honored her family's tradition of supporting the institution, liked Shipman's plan and agreed to pay for it as a more fitting memorial to her mother.

Born into a prominent Philadelphia family in



The newly designed Terraces in the Sarah P. Duke Gardens, ca. 1939. Courtesy Duke University Archives.

1870, Shipman graduated from Radcliffe College but acquired her extensive knowledge about plants and horticulture largely on her own. With the major university programs in landscape architecture not open to women at that time and despite her family's opposition to her choice of a career, Shipman stuck to her guns in her determination to break into what was largely a male-dominated profession. She found encouragement from Charles A. Platt, whose book *Italian Gardens* (1894) introduced to American architecture and landscape architecture the concept of the house and garden designed, in the style of the Italian villa, as a whole. One of the leading designers of country houses and gardens

for wealthy Americans in the early decades of the twentieth century, Platt became both mentor of and collaborator with Ellen Shipman.

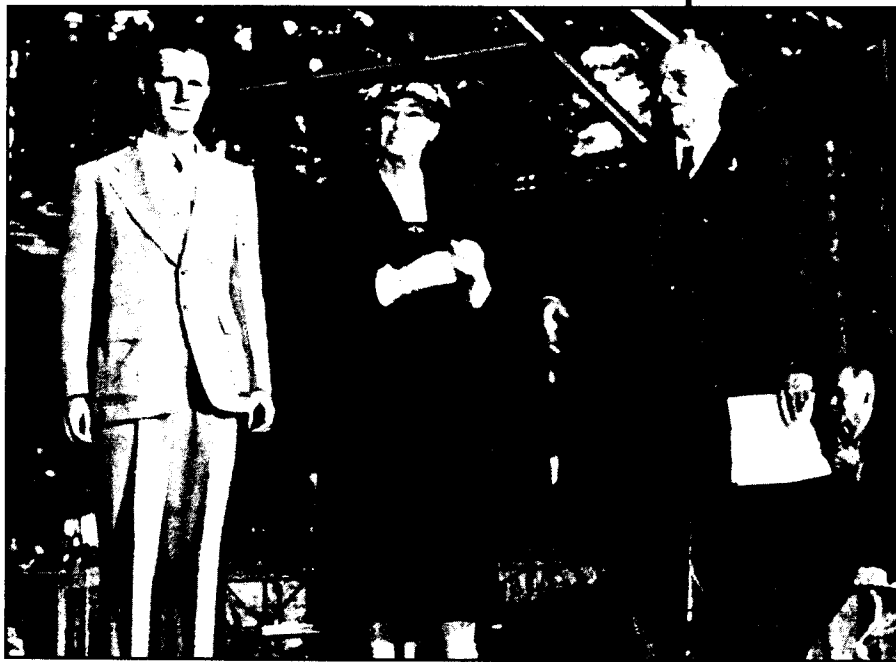
Teaching for many years in a school of landscape architecture and horticulture for women, Shipman made it a practice to employ women



students and visitors," Few noted, "and a fitting memorial to your mother."

President Few may have been pleased by the prospect but Norfleet Webb, the superintendent of the garden, certainly was not. Disappointed at the prospective downplaying of his beloved irises, he sadly reported to a friend and fellow iris-fancier that "Mrs. Shipman has pushed her plans through" and a "formal garden" loomed on the horizon. "I have been sick over the thing," Webb added, "but am about to stop worrying over it as there is nothing that I can do about it." Whether the friend should send any more irises, he did not know, for with "that woman" nobody knew what was going to happen. Webb no doubt gradually overcame his initial hostility to the new plan, for he remained on as superintendent until 1945 and lovingly tended his own iris beds at his home in nearby Hillsborough.

Shipman, probably accustomed to a lack of enthusiasm on the part of some of her male co-workers, proceeded undaunted. The twenty acres that Hanes and she chose for the new garden were just to the



Sarah P. Duke Garden dedication April 21, 1939. Standing left to right: Norfleet Webb (director), Ellen Shipman (architect), R. L. Flowers (Vice President Duke University); and John F. Bruton (chair, Board of Trustees). Photo courtesy Duke University Archives.

landscape architects and draftswomen in her offices in New York and Cornish, New Hampshire. Since women landscape architects obtained few public commissions in that era, Shipman did much of her best work on the estates of wealthy families in the vicinity of New York as well as in various other parts of the nation. Whether Mary Duke Biddle, who shared the Duke family's strong predilection for flowers and gardens, had ever seen one of Shipman's gardens is not known. But in selecting her to design what would become the oldest and best-known feature of the Duke Gardens, Hanes and Mary Duke Biddle made a splendid choice.

As Shipman set about her task in Durham in the summer of 1937, William F. Few, president of Duke University, reported to Mrs. Biddle that the landscape architect had spent a day going over her plans on the ground. While the plans were still incomplete, Few added, he thought they looked good and that a beautiful garden would soon take shape. "It will be of great interest and value to the

north of the first one. Surrounded by tall pines on all sides, the Italianate garden she envisioned would make extensive use of stone from Duke's quarry in low containing walls for a series of terraces that would descend from a large ironwork pergola or summer house at the top of the slope (a pergola that would soon become covered with fast-growing and fragrant Chinese wisteria) to a small pond at the bottom. Two small round buildings made of the Duke stone would stand on the right and left of the pergola at either end of the first terrace and would serve as an office, toolhouse, and restrooms. Bisecting the terraces, a rose-colored flagstone walk would lead downward from pergola to pond and would feature on two different levels small, raised, circular pools with cherubic fountains in the middle of them. On both sides of the terraces, curved walkways would lead downwards from the first, grass-planted terrace; it would have boxwood hedges flanking the pergola and would eventually become the scene of countless weddings. On the northern and southern

rim of the terraced garden, Shipman called for a planting of one of the South's greatest natural glories, the southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), which with its fast-growing habit and glossy, evergreen foliage—sprinkled with large, fragrant white blossoms in late spring and early summer — would quickly give the terraces the appearance of having long been in such a graciously enclosed spot.

The verticality of the surrounding pines would be echoed by planting two or three sets of upright evergreens on either side of the flagstone walk in the terraced beds, and both pines and evergreens would play against the clean horizontal lines of the stone retaining walls. The circular shape of the pergola, the two small houses, and the two pools would add further geometrical intricacy or richness to the design. Finally, the terraced beds themselves would be filled with flowers. The pattern that would eventually be followed would provide abundant flowers in all but the coldest months of the year: there would be three replacements of plantings a year — tulips and pansies in the spring, brightly-colored bedding annuals in the summer, and chrysanthemums in the fall — filling the terraced beds with color.

On the steep slope behind the pool, opposite the terraces, Shipman envisioned a rock garden, which would contrast pleasantly with the formality of the terraces. She contracted with Frederic P. Leubuscher, a leading designer of rock gardens, to undertake the task. Importing fifty tons of weathered and highly stratified limestone from northern New Jersey, Leubuscher declared that it was "the finest stone with which I have ever worked." He embedded them so skillfully in the hillside that they seemed to be natural outcroppings and would eventually become the inspiration for a rich collection of dwarf conifers, whose varying shades of green and different textures would stand out dramatically against the gray stone. (With the addition of the rock garden, the Garden became the Gardens.)

Closed for construction in much of 1938, the Sarah P. Duke Gardens opened formally in the spring of 1939 with a ceremony that was part of a series of events that celebrated the one-hundredth



birthday of Trinity-Duke. A visitor, who toured the two campuses and saw the new gardens before they were formally dedicated, wrote to Few that he considered the magnificent Chapel, the beautiful quadrangles, the fine Woman's College, and Wallace Wade's Rose Bowl-bound football team all to be outstanding achievements. He believed, however, that none of them really set Duke apart because other colleges and universities had those things in a greater or lesser degree. "In my opinion," the visitor concluded, "the thing that will make Duke University unique will be the Duke Gardens."

Few, Flowers [Robert L. Flowers, vice president and treasurer of Duke University], and others at Duke came to share that viewpoint, at least in part, for the Gardens quickly became popular not only with many students and faculty-



Duke Gardens, 1992. Photo by Kenneth McFarland.

staff members but with a steady stream of visitors from near and far. Open without charge every day of the year, such a garden was a rarity in the South and not nearly as common in the rest of the country as in Britain and various other nations.

Unendowed, the Gardens became an annual charge upon the University's general funds. Yet even Flowers, who admitted that he had originally believed that too much University money had to go into the project, confessed in 1944 that he had changed his mind. Thousands of soldiers encamped near Durham and elsewhere in the state poured into the Gardens during the weekends. "I think now that no money spent has

yielded a greater dividend," Flowers avowed. "The garden has given pleasure to thousands of people, and I think it has had a splendid influence on the students."

Many years later when Duke's perennial nemesis loomed again on the horizon — the attempt, with limited resources, to do well too many things — a courageous chancellor, A. Kenneth Pye, would lead in a process known as "retrenchment," which was in reality a reallocation of resources. When someone suggested that the



Gardens might well be targeted for cutting or elimination, Pye promptly pointed out the unwisdom, indeed the unthinkability, of such an action. Why? Because, he argued, the Gardens, like the Chapel, played too large a role in making Duke a special place in the minds of too many people. During lean years the Gardens would take their share of belt-tightening along with other components of the university, but they would never be regarded as a mere "frill." ♦

Move Over Michaux: America's Earliest Tea Cultivation Challenged

by Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Where was tea first grown in America? This question has long intrigued me. Records in the Moravian Archives in Winston-Salem note that tea was grown in 1760 in the vegetable garden at Bethabara, the first Moravian settlement now in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and I have wondered if this was the first recorded planting of the true tea, *Camellia sinensis*, in America. When I recently read an article in *Southern Living* (July 1992) which credited the French botanist Andre Michaux with planting "this country's first tea at South Carolina's Middleton Place around 1800," I was inspired to resolve this question.

I called Middleton Place, and staff members said they were aware of the Michaux tradition but had no precise documentation to prove it. When I called the Charleston Tea Plantation in Charleston, Sarah Fleming reported that she had six fat folders containing materials on tea cultivation in America. Many articles cited Michaux as planter of the first tea plants at Middleton Barony near Charleston around 1800. However, none gave the original source of the Michaux tea-planting tradition.

The oldest account is by Dr. Charles U. Sheperd of Summerville, South Carolina, in an 1892 report for the United States Department of Agriculture. He stated: "The first tea plant in this section was set out by the French botanist Michaux in 1804, at Middleton Barony, on the Ashley River, and distant some 15 miles from Charleston; with it was planted out the first representative of its cousin, the *Camelia japonica*. As I saw the former a few years ago, it had grown into a small tree about 15 feet in height, while of the latter there were many specimens fully twice as tall." In 1907 Dr. Sheperd noted that

Middleton's tea plant was "nearly twenty feet in height."

Documents at Middleton Place tell of a ten-foot high tea plant growing there in 1869 (*Rural Carolinian*, November issue). Although the article does not credit Michaux, it does mention, "We have seen it [tea] growing in Georgia and South Carolina in almost every soil and situation, and always thriving as luxurantly as any native shrub."



Camellia sinensis - tea plant.

Tea plants exist at Middleton Place today, but none are believed to be original.

I then contacted Elizabeth J. Savage of Camden, South Carolina, co-author with her husband Henry Savage, Jr., of *André and Francois André Michaux* (1987), the first full-length biography of

the two men, father and son. According to Mrs. Savage, it is a general, widely-accepted belief that André Michaux planted tea at Middleton Place, thus introducing tea to America, but there is no exact date or concrete reference. Michaux came to Charleston in 1786, left for France in 1796, and died in 1802. His son, Francois, was primarily interested in forest trees, not nursery shrubs, and it is unlikely



tea at Middleton Place, America's earliest successful cultivation of tea that we now have record of was in the 1760 vegetable garden of Bethabara. The following excerpt from Moravian records dated 1764 gives additional evidence: "From Maryland or Virginia we have received the necessary seed with the assurance that this would grow to be the actual Chinese tea, if only we prepare it in the right way.

The leaves do resemble that of the authentic tea plant, however, all experiments made so far failed, and were finally given up entirely. Now it is growing wild here and there with nice yellow flowers in fall. The plant itself looks rather like that of the bilberry. The sheep like to nibble of it."

Although it appears that America's first tea plants grew in North Carolina, South Carolina is the undisputed first in commercial cultivation of tea and home of America's only successful tea plantation today. In 1848, Dr. Junius Smith, a retired London physician, started producing tea commercially at his Golden Grove Plantation in Greenville, South Carolina. His daughter had observed the similarity of the climate

and flora of South Carolina with the tea-producing region of British India and convinced her father to undertake this venture. His efforts, though successful, were discontinued after his death in 1853. A few years later, James E. Calhoun took up this enterprise in 1859 at his Millwood Plantation in Piedmont, South Carolina from six plants he received from China. While Millwood did not develop into a successful plantation, tea was grown there for many years.

Just prior to the Civil War, the United States government introduced considerable quantities of tea seed and plants into the southern coastal states, giving rise to many small domestic gardens, later destroyed by the ravages of war (Sheperd, 1907). In the 1870s, the United States Department of Agriculture shipped hundreds of thousands of tea plants across the country in an effort to develop the tea industry. In 1880, the department started a tea experimental station on a part of Newington Plantation, which was owned by Henry Middleton and located about ten miles north of Middleton Place, but it was soon abandoned.

In 1888 Dr. Sheperd, a chemist, established Pinehurst Tea Farm (or Gardens) near Summer-ville on some six hundred acres he had purchased of the Newington Plantation. Until Shepard's



Tea bush in flower. From: The Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture. Vol. III. Editor L.H. Bailey. NY: MacMillan Co., 1935.

he would have been the planter of tea.

To add to the confusion, my file contained another article from *Southern Living* (September, 1979) which stated, "Even though the first tea plants in America were brought to Williamsburg in 1770, the plant has not been used enough in Southern gardens." However, Rollin Woolley of Colonial Williamsburg's landscape department denies that Williamsburg has ever made such a claim and their archives contain no record of early tea cultivation there.

Finally, *Agricultural Resources of Georgia*, a pamphlet recently acquired by the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center, contains an "Address before the Cotton Planters Convension of Georgia at Macon, December 13, 1860" with a 1736 description of the Trustees' Garden in Savannah which includes the following: "There is a plant of Bamboo Cane brought from the East Indies and sent over by Mr. Towers, which thrives well. There were also some Tea-seeds, which came from the same place; but the latter, though great care was taken, did not grow." This description, attributed to "A voyage to Georgia begun in the year 1735, &c., by Francis Moore — London 1744," indicates an even earlier, though unsuccessful attempt to cultivate tea.

In any case, whether or not Michaux planted

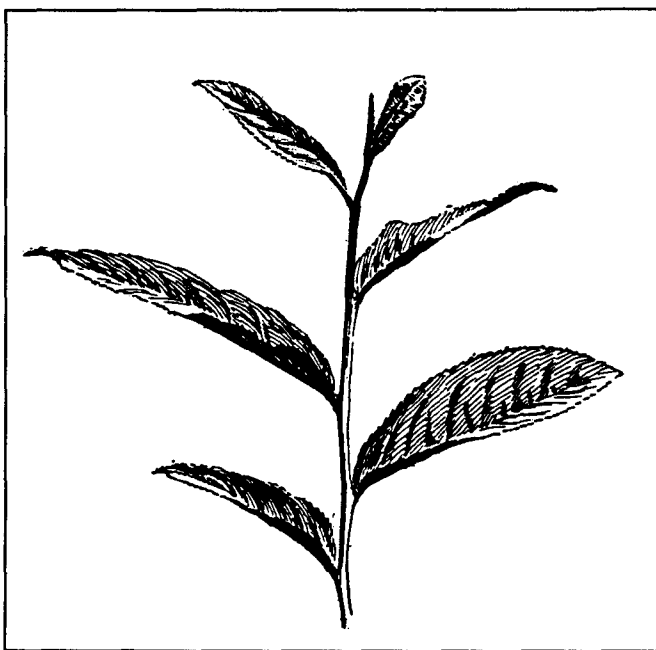
death in 1915, his tea farm successfully produced tea that was sold throughout the country. Pinehurst's oolong tea won first prize at the 1905 World's Fair in St. Louis. His heirs sold the plantation, and it was subdivided for homesites. Some of the shrubs were retained as ornamental plantings and others naturalized in the area. Even today, horticulturists



all tea came from the indigenous stock of Assam, a state of India, and that special characteristics have developed in other countries due to changes in climate and cultivation. He stated that all varieties except

those from tropical climates will flourish in the southern seaboard states. The tea that has acclimated in South Carolina is called 'Assam-hybrid.' 'Darjieling', from the slopes of the Himalayan mountains, is an example of tea from another area. Tea plants can be very long-lived; Dr. Sheperd mentioned one Japanese tea garden where the same plants had yielded high-grade leaves for two-hundred years.

Today the leading tea-producing country is India, followed by Sri Lanka (Ceylon), China, Japan, Russia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Taiwan. Too numerous to mention here are the Chinese legends of its early history and the various accounts of tea's coming to the Western World +



Pinehurst tea-shoot from the vigorous and productive type know as 'Assam-hybrid'.

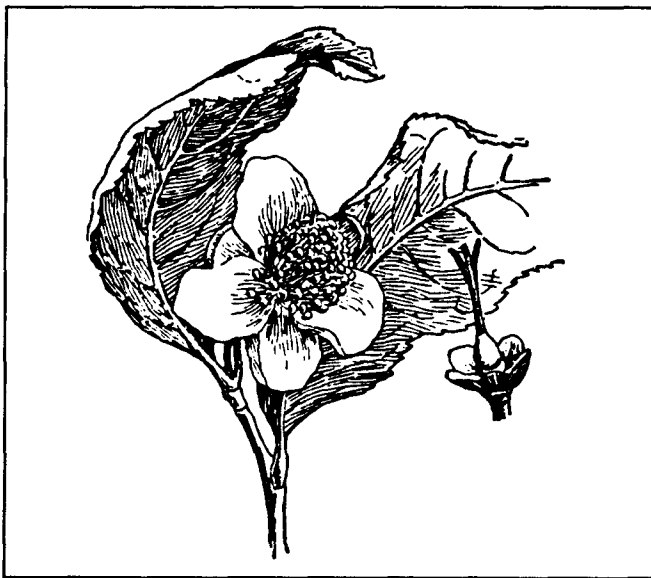
gather seeds and seedlings from the semi-wild bushes in Summerville (*Carolina Gardener*, April 1990).

No other commercial plantations developed until recently, in spite of the USDA's many early attempts. The key problem was labor costs. Although tea grew successfully here, American farmers could not economically compete with Asia in handpicking the delicate leaves. It was not until 1963 that the story continued, when Thomas J. Lipton Tea Company began an experimental farm on Wadmalaw Island near Charleston with plants from Dr. Sheperd's farm. Lipton and the farm manager, Mack Fleming, designed and built a mechanical harvester that could replace 500 workers and thus solved the labor costs problem. In 1987 Fleming and his partner, William Hall, a third-generation English-trained tea taster, purchased the thirty-acre Lipton farm and started the only tea plantation in America today, Charleston Tea Plantation, producing American Classic Tea.

There are many varieties of the tea plant. According to Dr. Sheperd, some botanists believe

Sources:

Dr. Shepherd's article on tea appears in L. H. Bailey's *Cyclopedia of American Agriculture*, Vol. II, 1907, reprinted in 1912. The information on Millwood Plantation is from *The Material Basis of the Postbellum Tenant Plantation*, Carles E. Orser, Jr., 1988. [In addition to those mentioned in this article, I am extremely grateful to SGHS members Florence Griffin of Atlanta, Mary Helen Ray of Savannah, Dr. David Rembert of Columbia, SC and to Dr. Joseph Ewan of St. Louis, Missouri for their help with my research.]



Tea flower, Thea viridis, [now Camelia sinensis]

Symposium Celebrates Elizabeth Lawrence

by Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

A shared love of southern gardening drew 250 people from throughout the region to a symposium in Raleigh, North Carolina, September 25-27th, sponsored by the North Carolina State University Arboretum. "A Southern Garden: Past-



voice, and her strong sense of plants and their connections with people and history that made her unique. Lacy, who edited the posthumous publication of *Gardening for Love* for Duke University Press in 1987,

traced the story of the book's publication from the time he was first asked to go through a box of Miss Lawrence's papers containing several manuscripts of what she called her "market bulletins book."

Lacy described Elizabeth Lawrence (1904-1985) as "the best garden writer we've ever had." She lived and gardened first in Raleigh and later in Charlotte, North Carolina, and was a garden columnist for the *Charlotte Observer* for fourteen years. She was the only woman in the first

graduating class of landscape architects at North Carolina State University in 1930. In addition to *A Southern Garden*, first published in 1942 and now in its fourth edition, she wrote the *Little Bulbs* (1957), and *Gardening in Winter* (1961). Three other books of her writings have been edited and published since her death, *Gardening for Love* (noted above), *A Rock Garden in the South* (Duke University Press, 1990), and *Through the Garden Gate* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990).



Elizabeth Lawrence Garden at NC State Arboretum. Photo by J.C. Raulston.

Present-Future" commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Elizabeth Lawrence's *A Southern Garden* and celebrated her contributions to gardening and gardening literature. A highlight of the event was the dedication of the arboretum's perennial border to Miss Lawrence by her long-time friend William Lanier Hunt of Chapel Hill, honorary president of SGHS.

The keynote speaker, *New York Times* garden columnist Allen Lacy, concluded the symposium by asking, "Is there any other garden writer who brought people together the way Elizabeth Lawrence did?" It was her sense of story and

The symposium also included garden writers Pamela Harper and Felder Rushing; Nancy Goodwin, owner, and Douglas Ruhren, nursery manager of Montrose Nursery in Hillsborough, North Carolina; and garden designer and writer Edith Eddleman of Durham, who is also co-curator with Douglas Ruhren of the perennial border at the arboretum. J. C. Raulston, director of the arboretum, presented the opening address.

Elizabeth Lawrence's personal library is housed in the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center in Atlanta, Georgia ♦

Southern Gardens Go West

Gardens in Texas have their origin in the minds and memories of settlers that came by boat, covered wagon, or horseback to Texas from the American East Coast, South, and Midwest. Immigrants brought garden images with them from Europe, Spain and Mexico. Members of the Southern Garden History Society will learn about these settlers, their gardens and the plants they chose to create the environment that became home.

The program begins at 1 pm on Friday, April 16th and concludes at 5 pm on Sunday, April 18th. Most of the symposium and tours will be in informal country settings in and near the village of Round Top, Texas (population 81), a beloved setting for restorations by internationally known Texas philanthropists, Ima Hogg and Faith Bybee. The area is also well known for its natural displays of wildflowers which should be at their peak for the meeting.

Symposium topics will focus on German, Spanish, and other cultural influences on Texas gardens, early grape and wine production in Washington and Fayette counties, the architecture of early Texas, and noted horticulturists of the period. Tours will feature "Henkel Square," a recreated German village operated by the Texas Historical Arts Foundation; "Winedale," a restored stagecoach station settlement operated by the University of Texas; Festival Hill Institute, an international center for the study of classical music, and the Antique Rose Emporium, a nationally recognized garden center for historic roses and companion plants. Private country homes and gardens selected for tours date from the mid-1800s to the "turn of the century."

The Preference Inn in Brenham, Texas (about 75 miles northwest of Houston) will serve as conference headquarters, but participants will want to wait to make reservations until the registration packet arrives as it will contain information on the special conference rates. For participants choosing to fly to Texas, Austin and Houston airports are about equal distances from Brenham. Both offer car rental facilities. Allow approximately 1 hour driving time. Registration and detailed information will be sent to the membership in January. Attendance will be limited to 150 members ♦



Garden Restoration Committee Formed At North Carolina's Somerset Place

At the direction of site manager Dorothy Spruill Redford, a committee has been created to undertake the restoration of the mansion house garden at Somerset Place, once the home of the Collins family and one of antebellum North Carolina's largest plantations. Local horticulturist Clay Carter will chair the committee and will be joined in the work by Frances Inglis, Kenneth McFarland and Sylvia Whitford. The committee's first priority will be to undertake an extensive analysis of the site. Their work will also include detailed research in Collins family papers, as well as other horticulturally-related material of the period. Limited archaeological work will probably take place as well.

Somerset Place, a state historic site, has received national attention in recent years for Ms. Redford's highly-successful homecoming's of descendants of the plantation's slave community. As part of her continuing interest in improving this already remarkable property, she envisions a project that will involve the slave quarter as well as the area immediately adjacent to the "big house." Thus, when work is completed, Somerset Place will present to the visitor one of the most complete plantation landscape restorations in the South ♦



View across the garden at Somerset Place. Photo by Ken McFarland.

Members In The News



Ronald Wade Retires

SGHS members **Hugh** and **Mary Palmer Dargan** were featured in the November/December 1992 issue of *Carolina Gardener*. The article, "Southern Garden Restoration: Charleston Style," concerns some of their recent restoration efforts.

Peter Loewer's *The Wild Gardener* (Stackpole 1991) won three awards at the Garden Writers Association of America and his new book, *The Evening Garden*, will be published in February of 1993 by Macmillan. It will be a dual selection of The Garden Book Club and the featured selection of The Rodale Book Club.

The October 25th, 1992 issue of *New York Times* contains an article by Anne Raver on SGHS member **G. Michael Shoup** and his methods of propagating antique varieties of roses.

Last June, **James C. Jordan III** (Jai) became curator of decorative arts for the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, North Carolina. Jai was formerly administrator/curator of Historic Hope Plantation in Windsor, where he had established a Federal period garden. Jai writes that as his first project at the Mint Museum he is developing an exhibit on 18th-century flower containers which will open in June 1993. He is also working with the gardens at Rosedale, a Federal period house in downtown Charlotte.

Barbara Wells Sarudy of Monkton, Maryland, has taken a new job as executive director of the Maryland Humanities Council in Baltimore. *Magnolia* readers will remember that Barbara did an article on South Carolina seed merchants and nurserymen for the Winter, 1992 issue. She was formerly administrative director of the Maryland Historical Society. Barbara is author of "Eighteenth-Century Gardens of the Chesapeake," published as a volume of the *Journal of Garden History* ♦

Ronald Wade, superintendent of gardens and grounds at Stratford Hall, near Montrose, Virginia, will retire this spring after eleven years at the eighteenth-century plantation home and birthsite of Robert E. Lee. Ron, who has contributed to *Magnolia* in the past, is known to many of us for his practical advice and colorful interpretations of historic horticulture. Stratford is actively seeking his replacement at this time ♦

Fall Board Meeting

At its fall meeting October 24th, the SGHS board of directors approved new by-laws. These will be mailed to the membership in the next edition of *Magnolia*, and will be voted on at the annual business meeting of the Society in Texas next April.

Also discussed were potential publications in addition to *Magnolia*. Plans were reviewed for the 11th-annual meeting (see Calendar), the 12th-annual meeting to be held May 5th-8th, 1994 in Williamsburg, Virginia, and the 13th-annual meeting being planned for the spring of 1995 in Mobile, Alabama. A report was given on the Society's archives, now housed in the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center in Atlanta. The board plans to add photographs to its archival collections when possible.

Dr. and Mrs. Edgar G. Givhan were hosts for the meeting which was held at Lime Arm, Dallas County, Alabama ♦

Dues Notice

Second notices for annual dues were mailed in October to those members who did not respond to the notice sent in July. Members who have not paid their current dues will soon be notified that they are being removed from the mailing list, but are invited to rejoin. Members who have questions about their dues status are asked to write the Society Headquarters in Winston-Salem, North Carolina ♦

Dear Magnolia Readership,

This past September, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation announced I would succeed John T. Fitzpatrick as director of the Center for Historic Plants (CHP) at Monticello. I officially assumed my duties as director November 2nd. Although the demands of this transition from my former position as Monticello's assistant director of gardens and grounds has delayed the publication of this issue of Magnolia, I hope to continue as your editor in the future. Concurrently, I am now editor of Twinleaf, the annual newsletter/seedlist of CHP which many Southern Garden History Society members receive. My thanks to all who have offered me support and encouragement in my new role.

*Peggy C. Newcomb,
Editor*

Deadline for submission of articles for the Spring Issue of *Magnolia* is February 1st.



Of Interest

The American Conifer Society

Bulletin is looking for articles, especially on the use of conifers in perennial gardens. Any SGHS member interested should contact Peter Loewer, P.O. Box 5039, Biltmore Station, Asheville, NC 28801.

A study course consisting of six lectures and four field study sessions on **The Art of Garden Design** will be held in Charleston, SC on the following dates: January 28th-31st; March 11th-14th; and June 24th-27th. Garden design ideas pertinent to homeowners, landscape contractors and horticulturists will be discussed. Contact Peggy Ledford, registrar, at (803) 766-8218 ♦

Florence P. Griffin, *President*
Ben G. Page, Jr., *Vice-President*
Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*
William Lanier Hunt, *Honorary President*
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Editor:
Peggy C. Newcomb
Monticello, P.O.B. 316
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(804) 979-5283
Fax (804) 977-7757

Associate Editor:
Kenneth M. McFarland
Stagville Center, P.O.B. 71217
Durham, NC 27722-1217
(919) 620-0120
Fax (919) 620-0422

Southern Garden History Society
Old Salem, Inc.
Drawer F, Salem Station
Winston-Salem, NC 27108

