



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

# Magnolia

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## The Search for the Real George Lindley Taber and the Orchid Azalea

By William C. Miller III, Bethesda, Maryland

In the early 1880s, Florida was a backward agricultural state with poor transportation services to and from the Midwest and North. It is worth noting for a historical perspective that Florida became a state in 1845; the third and final Seminole War concluded in 1858; and the state was better known for malaria and yellow fever than for orange juice, sunny winter vacations, and spring break.

In the absence of today's federal interstate highway system, one suspects that the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area may well have been the end of the line for civilization. Coupled with the fact that Henry Ford did not sell his first Model A until 1903, (the year that Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved the wonder of controlled, powered flight at Kitty Hawk—all twelve seconds and 120 feet), getting from here to there was no simple task. It took the development of railroad service by the Florida railroad barons (Chipley, Plant, and Flagler) to promote tourism, to foster the influx of new people like Taber, and to facilitate the development of new agricultural and livestock interests throughout the state.

An agricultural commodity is neither profitable nor feasible if it has difficulty getting to market. It should be noted that not everyone was in favor of the railroads, and the shipping interests did what they could to frustrate railroad progress.

George Lindley Taber, Sr. was born in Vassalboro, Maine, on October 18, 1854, to George and Esther Bartlett (Pope) Taber. It was the same year that Commodore Perry and nine U.S. warships opened up Japan, and the Light Brigade made its ill-fated charge during the battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War. Franklin Pierce was in the White House, the total U.S. population was well past the twenty-three million mark of the 1850 Census, and the American Civil War was just over the horizon. Taber was educated at Oak Grove

Seminary in Vassalboro, and the Moses Brown Friends School in Providence, Rhode Island. He got a job with the Chicago Board of Trade, the financial venue where a market is made in "forward contracts" or "futures" for commodities. At the age of twenty-seven, his successful career was cut short when his health failed, and he was given an ultimatum by his doctor to seek a milder climate if he wanted to live. He must have listened to his doctor; because, in 1881 he left Chicago and headed South.

When Taber arrived in the Jacksonville/Fernandina/St.

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George Lindley Taber, Sr.

Courtesy Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.

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# CALENDAR

**February 20, 2018. Cherokee Garden Library Lecture and Book Launch, *Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemetery Movement*.**

Author and preservationist Erica Danylchak will discuss her new University of South Carolina Press book co-authored with the late James R. Cothran. More information and tickets: [www.atlantahistorycenter.com/lectures](http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/lectures)

**April 12-14, 2018. Leading with Landscape IV: Transforming North Carolina's Research Triangle,** which includes Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, NC. The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) has curated a summit to draw attention to local and regional work that represents the best planning and design initiatives that strike a balance with natural, historic, cultural, and ecological systems. Speakers include Charles A. Birnbaum (TCLF) and experts from UNC-Chapel Hill, NC State University, City Parks in Raleigh, and Greenway experts. Visit: [tclf.org](http://tclf.org)

**April 13-15, 2018. SGHS 36th Annual Meeting in Jacksonville, FL.** Sites include The Cummer Museum and Gardens, Jacksonville's Historic Parks, Glen Saint Mary Nurseries, and Historic St. Augustine. The headquarters hotel for guests, programs, and tour departures will be the DoubleTree by Hilton, 1201 Riverplace Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32207, (904) 398-8800. Visit: [www.southerngardenhistory.org](http://www.southerngardenhistory.org)

**April 21-28, 2018. Historic Garden Week in Virginia.** More than 250 of Virginia's most beautiful gardens, homes, and historic landmarks take part in the celebration of Historic Garden Week, described as "America's Largest Open House." This tour, organized by the Garden Club of Virginia since 1927, supports restoration projects statewide. Visit: [vagardenweek.org](http://vagardenweek.org)

**April 14-16, 2018. Colonial Williamsburg's 72nd Annual Garden Symposium: "Ordinary to Extraordinary, Creating Landscape Designs that Reflect Beauty and Awe,"** Learn how to create harmonious gardens that sing with creativity, as well as those that reflect personal expression and reverence for design fundamentals. Guest speakers will discuss how to integrate existing elements, effectively combine plants and hardscape materials, and create features of distinctive landscape styles. More information will be available at [www.history.org](http://www.history.org) email: [mmoyer@cwf.org](mailto:mmoyer@cwf.org); (800) 603-0948

**April 25, 2018. Cherokee Garden Library Lecture, Book and Exhibition Launch, *Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia's Historic Gardens*.** Staci L. Catron, Cherokee Garden Library Director, and Mary Ann Eaddy, historic preservationist will discuss their new University of Georgia Press book. More information and tickets: [www.atlantahistorycenter.com/lectures](http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/lectures)

**May 9, 2018. SGHS State Ambassadors Event at Pebble Hill Plantation, Thomasville, Georgia, for Georgia and Florida members.** SGHS will support The Garden Club of Georgia's annual Historic Landscape Preservation fundraiser by featuring past SGHS President Staci Catron and her co-author Mary Ann Eaddy launching their new book *Seeking Eden, A Collection of Georgia's Historic Gardens*, (University of Georgia Press, 2018). The book is an update and expansion to the early twentieth-century publication *Garden History of Georgia 1733-1933*. For registration information, contact Susan Bennett at (478) 476-8228; [waynebennett@bellsouth.net](mailto:waynebennett@bellsouth.net).

**June 17-22, 2018. 22nd Annual Historic Landscape Institute: "Preserving Jefferson's Gardens and Landscapes."** This one-week course uses Monticello's gardens and landscapes and the University of Virginia as outdoor classrooms to study historic landscape preservation. Lectures, workshops, field trips, and practical working experiences provide an introduction to the fields of landscape history, garden restoration, and historical horticulture. Visit: [www.monticello.org/hli](http://www.monticello.org/hli)

**September 21-22, 2018. 12th Annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello,** Charlottesville, VA. Celebrate the revolutionary legacy of Thomas Jefferson workshops, lectures, and tomato tastings and family friendly activities. Featured speakers include Peter Hatch, Michael Twitty, Ira Wallace, David Shields, Craig LeHoullier, and many more. Visit: [www.heritageharvestfestival.com](http://www.heritageharvestfestival.com)

**October 19-20, 2018. 30th Annual Southern Garden Symposium and Workshops:** "The Changing Nature of Gardening," in St. Francisville, Louisiana. Featured speakers include celebrated authors Andrea Wulf, Rick Darke, and Doug Tallamy. More information will be available at: [www.southerngardensymposium.com](http://www.southerngardensymposium.com)

# The Search for the Real George..... (continued from page 1)

Augustine area of Florida, he talked to the locals, surveyed the existing farms, and settled on a twenty-acre tract of abandoned cotton fields near the Saint Marys River, thirty miles west of Jacksonville. In 1882, he entered in a short-lived partnership with Thomas P. Beath and established the Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.

Taber (Sr.) described his newly acquired land as "slightly rolling, enough so to provide good drainage, but not hilly enough to cause the land to wash. The soil is a sandy loam under laid, at about two feet, with a stratum of clay, fifteen to twenty feet in depth. This is an ideal soil for nursery purposes. In it seeds and cuttings grow rapidly and produce a root system unsurpassed by any character of land in existence." With land available for fifty cents per acre, Taber acquired more property to facilitate expansion.

In 1883 Taber married a Connecticut woman, and after she passed away in 1903 he returned North to wed Mildred ("Maude") Willey in Boston. Discontinuing her medical studies, she returned with her new husband to Glen Saint Mary and "Linwood," the Taber home. With the arrival of "Miss Millie," Linwood soon became the center of Baker County society. On December 27, 1906, she gave birth to George Lindley Taber, Jr.

Taber (1854-1929) was a charter member of the Florida State Horticultural Society and served in increasingly responsible positions beginning with secretary (1888-1891), vice president (1892-1896), and finally president (1897-1904). He was awarded Honorary Membership in 1914. Taber also was active with the American Pomological Society. Through these professional associations, he became a principal factor in the development of the citrus industry throughout the Southeast, which is how he met H. Harold Hume, whom he later convinced to join him in his nursery business. In 1906, H.H. Hume joined the nursery staff as secretary and manager.

In 1907, Taber incorporated the nursery, which by that time had grown to eight hundred acres, under the name Glen Saint Mary Nurseries Company. He had

developed an infrastructure and attracted a talented staff. Branch offices were later established at Winter Haven in the South and at Chipley in the West, and a version of the catalog was published in Spanish, which reflected the significant international market.

Taber's success in part was due to his philosophy. He stressed that a quality product was paramount and that pleasing customers with both stock and service were the surest way to gain new customers and to keep them. The mailing list was many thousands of names long; and sales in all parts of the South had steadily grown to include a significant foreign component: Cuba, Mexico, Central and South America, China, India, Iran, and Spain. Many State Experiment Stations and the U.S. Department of Agriculture were repeat customers. For many years, the nursery had annual federal contracts for growing, testing, and distributing citrus hybrids. Taber served as president and treasurer of the corporation from 1907 to 1920, when he stepped down and Hardrada Harold (H. H.) Hume (1876-1965) assumed the position of president. With the acquisition of the Buckeye Nursery in 1924, the nursery's leadership position as the largest producer of citrus nursery stock was further solidified. In the acquisition, the rights to the very popular 'Temple' orange were acquired.

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George L. Taber, Sr. and his son planting a citrus tree.

Courtesy Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.



Early Glen Saint Mary Nurseries catalog with seven azaleas in color.

Courtesy Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.



## *The Search for the Real George..... (continued from page 3)*

In 1927, Taber resumed active management of the corporation as president until his death on May 10, 1929, at the age of 75.

The first Glen Saint Mary Nurseries catalog was issued in 1883. The nursery prospered and grew rapidly despite a number of catastrophic events of near biblical proportions that befell the region: the freezes of 1894 and 1895, and two plagues — yellow fever in 1888 and the citrus canker in 1913. Then, of course, the story would be incomplete without mention of the hurricanes and tropical storms for which Florida is well known.

The freezes were devastating, and the damage was reminiscent of the great freeze in 1835. A temperature of 26°F for three hours is sufficient to make an orange unmarketable, and this was in the days before processing into frozen orange juice concentrate was an option. On December 29, 1894, temperatures fell to 14° F in Jacksonville. Again, on February 7, 1895, Jacksonville experienced a drop to 14°F. While the fresh fruit crop was destroyed in December, most of the trees that survived were killed in February. Many farmers and nurserymen were ruined and gave up, banks went under, the citrus industry in northern and central Florida was significantly set back, and Florida, in general, became a very different place overnight.

From Jacksonville newspaper accounts, the 1888 yellow fever epidemic, which began on July 28th and concluded on November 25th, was particularly devastating. During the four-month period, 5,000 people contracted yellow fever, and more than four hundred people died. The epidemic ended precipitously when the temperature fell to 32°F, thus killing the mosquitoes that carried the disease. It would be another twelve years before Major Walter Reed, a U.S. Army physician, would confirm that yellow fever was transmitted by mosquitoes.

Citrus canker, which is still a serious problem today, is caused by *Xanthomonas axonopodis*, a rod-shaped, gram-negative bacterium with polar flagella. There is no cure. It causes lesions on the leaves, stems, and fruit; defoliation; reduced vigor; and dieback. Originally misidentified as a form of citrus scab in the fall of 1912, subsequent laboratory investigations of specimens collected in spring 1913 from the Miami area determined this disease to be something new. Posing no threat to humans or other animals, it was found to be highly contagious to most citrus crops and could be spread easily by insects, birds, human contact, air currents, overhead irrigation, rainy weather, and the transport of infected materials. The first steps to deal with the problem were to prohibit the importation of infected citrus stock into Florida and to quarantine the affected areas to limit the transmission to other areas. Upon further study, it was concluded that

the usual strategies (such as fungicides and phytosanitary practices) would not be sufficient and that eradication was the appropriate response for the short and long term.

In those days, an eradication program meant close inspections of all citrus groves and nurseries by trained crews wearing white coveralls followed by a tanker truck designed to deliver a flaming mixture of kerosene and crude oil under pressure. Picture something on the order of a very large military flamethrower. There is no indication that Taber's nursery was ever put to the torch despite its proximity to Monticello, one of the original citrus canker sites in northern Florida.

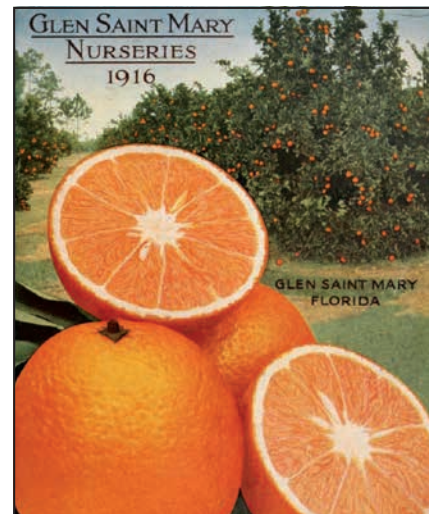
While the nursery always welcomed visitors, they were not careless—as demonstrated when Frank N. Meyer, the famous plant explorer, visited on November 25, 1915. He was given a tour of the nursery by Hume but not permitted to approach the citrus groves since he had just come from Alvin, Texas, and Avery Island, Louisiana, which were two citrus canker problem areas.

In a 2004 interview, Lin Taber (George Lindley Taber III) attributed their success to being sensitive to trends in the industry and "learning to change direction every 20 to 30 years." A visit to the Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection at the National Agricultural Library in Beltsville, Maryland, afforded the author an opportunity to review many old Glen Saint Mary Nurseries catalogs to gauge the growth and development of the nursery over time. The oldest catalog examined was from 1895. A tree and plant nursery, offerings included peaches, plums, prunes, apples, pears, khaki (Japanese persimmons), apricots, figs, quinces, pomegranates, mulberries, loquats, olives, grapes, pecans, chestnuts,



Sorting satsumas in packing shed.

Courtesy Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.



Glen Saint Mary Nurseries Catalog Oranges 1916.

Courtesy Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.

almonds, walnuts, many kinds of oranges, pomelos, lemons, and kinkan (kumquat), and a lengthy list of ornamentals, which included an extensive selection of roses but no azaleas.

It is likely that the citrus canker situation was influential in hastening the transition of the nursery from a major citrus stock producer to one with a greater emphasis on producing ornamentals—a diversification which was well underway by 1930. In addition to the 2,400 acres at Glen Saint Mary, branch nurseries (1,000 acres) and offices were established at Winter Haven and Dundee, Florida, and (500 acres) at Chipley, Florida; and display and sales facilities were established at Riverside Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida. The reality has not always been expansion. Mindful of the trends in the early 1960s, the pressure of competition, and the high transportation cost of balled-and-burlapped and larger container-grown plants, many larger items were simply discontinued, as a practical matter, in favor of bare-root specimens that could be shipped more economically.

Azaleas did not appear in the nursery catalog until 1917 when they offered *Azalea lutea* (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*), *A. nudiflora* (*R. periclymenoides*), and *A. indica* (different color forms of unnamed Indian azaleas). In 1920, *A. austrina* (*R. austrinum*) replaced *nudiflora*. Azaleas were not a major item (on the order of citrus or roses) until much later. The 1928 catalog listed “Kurume

Azaleas” in many delicate shades of pink, salmon, red, and lavender but with no suggestion of cultivar names. By 1939, azalea offerings were organized by color and cultivar name and included nearly fifty Southern Indian hybrids and twenty-three Kurume hybrids.

Any list of accomplishments would have to include the establishment of a highly successful business that continues today. Taber was a leading citizen and a major employer in the local community. He was recognized and respected by the agricultural community and played an active role in the American Pomological Society and the Florida State Horticultural Society. He collaborated with professionals like H. H. Hume and the research scientists at the University of Florida in the development of cold-hardy varieties so that the Florida citrus industry would be less vulnerable to freezes. His pioneering research was recognized in H. H. Hume's 1904 definitive work entitled “Citrus Fruits and Their Culture.” In fact, the book was dedicated to Taber.

The Glen Saint Mary Nurseries is famous for its introductions and for having brought other cultivated varieties to prominence including peaches (‘Gibbons’, ‘October’, ‘Imperial’, ‘Jewel’, ‘Powers’, ‘September’, ‘Taber’, and ‘Triana’), plums (‘Excelsior’ and ‘Terrell’) oranges (‘Lue Gim Gong’ and ‘Owari’ Satsuma), grapefruit (‘Duncan’), persimmons (‘Gailey’), kumquats, calamondin, and limequats. Finally, there is the matter of the azalea cultivar that bears his name, a posthumous honor.



### The Orchid Azalea

The primary motivation for this article was the personal belief that every azalea has an interesting person or an interesting but untold story behind it. So it is with ‘George Lindley Taber’, often referred to as the Orchid Azalea. Fortunately, the story of the azalea was recorded by Gene Barber in a Baker County Press column published on April 8, 1976.

According to Barber, Ernest Harris, a production assistant at the nursery, noticed a single branch sport in a vast sea of ‘Omurasaki’ azaleas. He reported the finding to John Otis Barton, his immediate supervisor (and father-in-law). Barton, in turn, reported the curiosity to Hume who directed that they prune away the normal tissue and set the plant aside. Recognizing the value of what they had, Hume instructed Barton to put it, now identified as number 21, into propagation.

Several years passed, and in 1929 it was time to do something with the new azalea. The consensus decision was made to include it in the nursery catalog and to name it ‘George Lindley Taber’ in honor of the boss who had passed away earlier in the year. For many years, a beautiful

*(continued on page 6)*



Courtesy of Susan Haltom.

Painting by Susan Haltom of George L Taber azalea next to live flowers.



# The Search for the Real George..... (continued from page 5)

rendition of 'George Lindley Taber' could be found in a place of honor on the inside front cover of the nursery catalog.

At least two "sports" are common on 'George Lindley Taber', a purple self, which should probably be viewed as a reversion to 'Omurasaki', and a white self, 'Mrs. G. G. Gerbing', which was selected in 1935 by Gus Gerbing, named for his wife, and introduced in 1947. Gustav George Gerbing and his wife, Azilda, operated the Gerbing Camellia Nursery in Fernandina, northeast of Jacksonville, Florida. He was better known for his work with camellias.



## Conclusion

'George Lindley Taber' is a beautiful azalea. The search for the real George Lindley Taber was worthwhile, and the author hopes that, as he did, the reader will come away with a greater appreciation for the nursery industry.

[This article was originally published in *The Azalean* Vol 29(4): 87-92, Winter 2007]

- 1 M.C. Bob Leonard, "Florida of the Railroad Barons," The Floridians Text Home Page [www.floridahistory.org/floridians/railroad.htm](http://www.floridahistory.org/floridians/railroad.htm) (12 February 2007). John W. Cowart, "Jacksonville's Railroad History," John Cowart's Web Page: History Philosophy, Meditations & Nonsense, [www.cowart.info/Florida%20History/trains/railroadhis.htm](http://www.cowart.info/Florida%20History/trains/railroadhis.htm) (27 January 2007)
- 2 The Tabers were Quakers. George's, his parents', and an older sister, Elma M. Taber's names appear in the Cook County, Illinois, Quaker Monthly Meeting Minutes. These Quaker Church Records are available online at [www.iltrails.orecook/quakerrecords.z.htm](http://www.iltrails.orecook/quakerrecords.z.htm). Thanks to Katy Dill, part of a younger Taber generation, it was learned that George, in fact, had four older sisters and one younger brother.
- 3 1880 Census figures for Chicago, Illinois, and Jacksonville, Florida, are 503,200 and 7,700 respectively. Jan Lahmeyer, "Historical Demographical Data of the Urban Centers," United States of America: Urban Population, [www.populationstat.info/Americas/usat.htm](http://www.populationstat.info/Americas/usat.htm) (13 February 2007).
- 4 An unattributed pamphlet that reads like a prospectus, "Glen Saint Mary Nurseries," USGenWeb Project, Baker County, Florida, [www.rootsweb.com/~flbaker/GlenNursery.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~flbaker/GlenNursery.html) (26 October 2006). From the context, the pamphlet was published in 1907
- 5 Larry Wiggins, "The Birth of the City of Miami," [www.historical-museum.org/history/foundl.htm](http://www.historical-museum.org/history/foundl.htm) (25 February 2007)
- 6 John W. Cowart, "Yellow Jack in Jacksonville: The 1888 Epidemic," [www.cowart.info/Florida%20History/YellowJack/YellowJack.htm](http://www.cowart.info/Florida%20History/YellowJack/YellowJack.htm) (13 February 2007).

- 7 Jean C. Taylor, "The Citrus Canker," Historical Museum of Southern Florida, [www.historical-museum.org/history/update/u051a.htm](http://www.historical-museum.org/history/update/u051a.htm) (25 February 2007). H. L. Chamberlain, P. D. Roberts, L. W. Timmer, K. Chung, and M. Zelcri, A CROP ALERT: "Citrus Canker Fact Sheet for Homeowners," Plant Pathology Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PP116> (5 March 2007). A. K. Das, "Citrus Canker — A Review," *J. Appl. Hort.*, 5(1):52-60, January-June, 2003. E. W. Berger, H. E. Stevens, and Frank Stirling, "Citrus Canker: II," Bulletin 124, Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Florida, March 1914.
- 8 Frank N. Meyer letter of November 29, 1915, to Dr. David G. Fairchild, his supervisor at the Office of Foreign Plant Introduction, during one of Meyer's periods of domestic travels.
- 9 H. Harold Hume, "Citrus Fruits and Their Culture," The H. & W. B. Drew Company, Jacksonville, Florida, 1904. "Respectfully dedicated to my friend George Lindley Taber whose inspiration has made this volume possible."
- 10 Gene Barber, "Earn Harris and the Discovery of the Taber Azalea," the Baker County Press, April 8, 1976, p2.
- 11 Gerbing Camellia Nursery catalog, Fernandina, Florida, 1946, examined at the Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection at the National Agricultural Library in Beltsville, Maryland.



## Acknowledgments

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*William C. Miller III is a recipient of the Azalea Society of America's Distinguished Service Award and the Brookside Gardens Chapter's Frederic P. Lee Commendation. He is a past president of the Brookside Gardens Chapter, a former vice president of the Azalea Society of America (ASA), a past member of the ASA board of directors, past co-chairman of the ASA's membership committee, past chairman of the public information committee, a long-time ASA member, and a frequent contributor to The Azalean.*

# Florida's First Coast: SGHS 2018 Annual Meeting in Jacksonville & St. Augustine

By Marianne Salas, Fernandina Beach, Florida

Florida's First Coast – northeast Florida from Amelia Island South through Jacksonville to St. Augustine – was a battleground for three centuries. Although Florida was the location of the first permanent European settlement in what would become the United States, it was the last U.S. territory on the East Coast to be developed.

In 1564 the French Huguenots established a colony called Fort Caroline on the River May (St. Johns). This was the first settlement of men and women seeking religious freedom in the new world. In 1565, Spaniard Pedro Menendez arrived with a fleet of 1,000 sailors, settlers, and soldiers, claiming Florida as a possession of Spain. After his attack and victory at Ft. Caroline, the fort was renamed San Mateo and the River the San Juan. Founded that same year by Menendez, St. Augustine became the capital of Spanish Florida for the next two centuries.

The Sunday, April 15th Optional Tour will include a private tour of the Lightner Museum (former Alcazar Hotel, built in 1888 by Henry Flagler); a brunch in the Alcazar Café in the deep end of the hotel's former pool, a short walk to the Spanish Military Hospital Museum and Apothecary Garden, and ending with private tours and a garden talk at the historic Ximenez-Fatio House.

During the short British period of 1763-1783, plantations sprang up along the San Juan, now the St. Johns River. During the early plantation period, John and William Bartram traveled through Georgia, South Carolina, and East Florida as far South as Orlando. Already land speculation had begun in La Florida and before the Bartrams returned home in 1766, William

had purchased a five-hundred-acre tract near Fort Picolata (near the St. Johns, West of St. Augustine) where he planned to establish a plantation. For unknown reasons, there is no further mention of the plantation in Bartram's *Travels*.

William returned to the St. Johns River in 1774, visiting Lord Egmont's indigo plantation on Amelia Island, Kingsley Plantation on Ft. George's Island, and stopped at other plantations and trading posts established by the British along the inland waterways. With the exception of Kingsley Plantation, none exist today. Published in 1791, Bartram's *Travels* had an enormous impact – primarily in Europe.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the observations of naturalists such as John and William Bartram, Titian Ramsay Peale, Thomas Say, and John James Audubon, made Florida a destination point for those interested in outdoor recreation – hunting, fishing, and bird watching.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, as transportation improved, natural history remained the focus of appeal, especially for the burgeoning tourist population. At that time Jacksonville's permanent population was 7,500. The annual number of tourists, mainly during the months of October through May, numbered 75,000. In May of 1872, Harriet Beecher Stowe, an early snow bird, describes a trip from her winter home in Mandarin (a neighborhood of Jacksonville) to St. Augustine:

"... on a pleasant morning we embarked on the handsome boat 'Florence,' ... used expressly for a river pleasure-boat, plying every day between Jacksonville and Pilatka [ste]."

(continued on page 8)

## Jacksonville's Historical Affiliations:

Kingdom of France ..	1562-1565
Spanish Empire .....	1565-1763
Great Britain .....	1763-1783
Spanish Empire .....	1783-1821
United States.....	1821-1861
Confederate States ....	1861-1862 of America
United States.....	1862-present



Fort Caroline.

Jacksonville Historical Society.



Harriet Beecher Stowe portrait.



## Florida's First Coast:..... (continued from page 7)

The final leg eastward to St. Augustine was by horse-railroad (horse-drawn carriages over railroad tracks). Over this road, according to Stowe, “all the rank and fashion of our pleasure-seekers, the last winter, have been pouring in unbroken daily streams.”

Six years later American industrialist and founder of Standard Oil, Henry Flagler, made his first visit to Florida, where he consolidated and expanded the local rail system. By 1889 he had established rail service from Jacksonville to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and by 1915 the entire East Coast from Florida to Key West was a single railroad system.

Land speculators, would-be farmers, timber barons, and timber crews were among those rushing to northeast Florida. Not to be forgotten were those seeking to improve their health. In her essay “*Florida for Invalids*” Stowe writes, “Now the persons who would be most benefitted by coming to Florida are not the desperately diseased, the confirmed consumptives, but those of such impaired physical vigor that they are in danger of becoming so.”

In 1881 George Lindley Taber, at the age of twenty-seven, was told by his physician that if he remained in the North he would not live longer than six months. Were he to visit a warmer and milder climate he might survive another year. He left Chicago and, as his health improved, he began to travel Southwest of Jacksonville, taking the inland rail to the end of the line where he purchased an abandoned cotton plantation – the first few acres of land that eventually became Glen Saint Mary Nurseries Co.



**Friday, April 13, 2018.** The meeting begins with a presentation by Dr. Wayne Wood, Jacksonville author and preservationist on the history of Jacksonville. Emily Liska, former Executive Director of the Jacksonville Historical Society, will describe how Harriet Beecher Stowe captured the public imagination with her Florida essays written from her winter home in Mandarin. Dr. David S. Shields, Carolina Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina, will describe citrus growing a century ago in Florida and the role played by Glen Saint Mary Nurseries Co. The evening will end with a tour and barbecue at the Taber residences and nursery.

At the turn of the century, in the more genteel residential area on the St. Johns River closer to the inner city, the Cummer family – parents, two sons, and their wives – who came from a long line of Michigan lumber barons, built their family compound. The Cummer Lumber Company had established a railroad from its pine plantations to the mills in Jacksonville. The great fire of 1901, which virtually destroyed downtown Jacksonville, created a building boom. Both the sons’ wives, Ninah and



Photo by Marianne Salas.

Cummer Italian Garden.

Clara Cummer, masterminded the gardens surrounding their homes. Of the two, Ninah Cummer had a more public nature. In 1910 she commissioned Thomas Meehan and Sons to create an English-style garden, dubbed “The English Garden,” on the estate. She founded and was the first president of the Garden Club of Jacksonville, and she regularly conferred with Harold H. Hume on plantings for her gardens and for her civic projects, including the Olmsted-firm designed Memorial Park. For her Italian garden, she sought the services of Ellen Shipman. Clara commissioned the Olmsted firm for the design of her garden. Today the site of the former Cummer residences and preserved gardens are the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. The lower gardens, and indeed many private residences along the St. Johns, are susceptible to storm surge and were particularly hard hit by Hurricane Irma in 2017.



**Saturday, April 14, 2018.** Saturday’s presentations will focus on the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. Judith Tankard will speak on restoring Shipman’s gardens, including the Cummer Italian Garden, and provide highlights from the research for her new publication, *Ellen Shipman and the American Garden*. Bill Noble, who has advised the Cummer on their garden restoration, will make a presentation with horticulturist Amy Graham on the restoration of Longue Vue Gardens in New Orleans, Louisiana. Bart Brechter, Curator of Gardens at Bayou Bend, will speak on historic azaleas and garden restoration at the gardens in Houston, Texas.

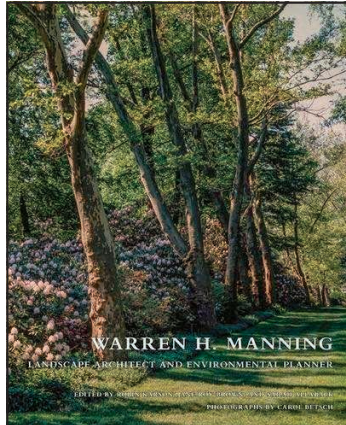
Attendees will visit four private gardens, a tour arranged in collaboration with the Cummer Garden Conservancy Day, and enjoy a formal dinner in the Cummer Terry Gallery. Judith Tankard’s new book will be available for purchase and for a book signing.



# Book Review

**Warren H. Manning: Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner**, by Robin Karson, Jane Roy Brown, and Sarah Allaback, editors | Library of American Landscape History and University of Georgia Press | cloth, 416 pages | April 2017 | ISBN-10: 0820350664; ISBN-13: 978-0820350660 | List price \$39.95

I must disclose, at the beginning of this review rather than in a note at its end, that I have long admired the work of Warren H. Manning (1860-1938), a landscape architect who worked in the Brookline office of Frederick Law Olmsted from 1888 to 1896 and enjoyed an important, prolific practice as a landscape architect and civic planner through the opening decades of the twentieth century. As a reviewer, one should



be dispassionate; however the pleasure experienced in the surviving gardens and grounds of Manning's best works, as in those of Frederick Law Olmsted, influences one's views.

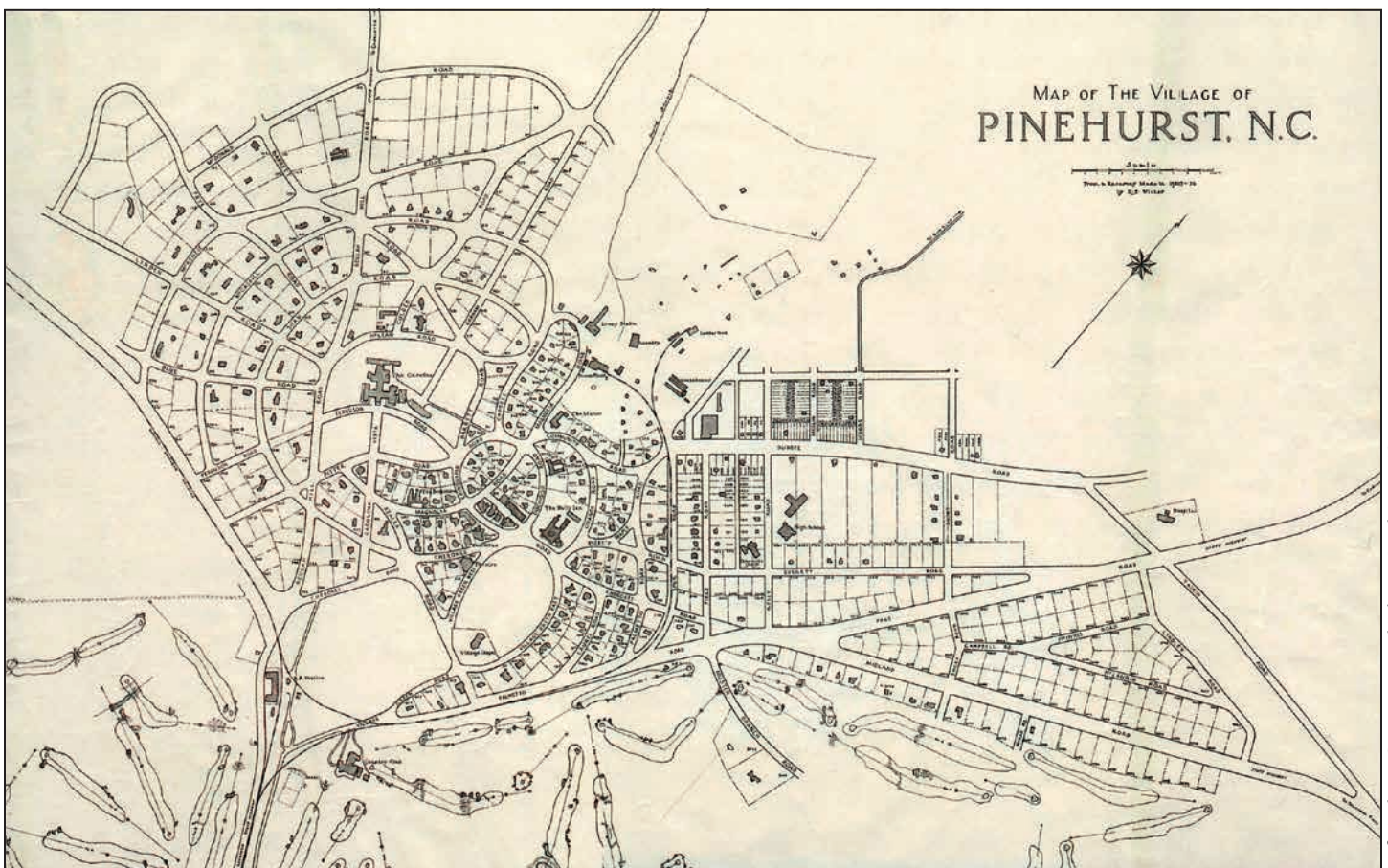
The onset of this admiration dates to the 1970s, when I came to know the work of Charles Freeman Gillette (1886-1969), who entered Manning's office in 1909 and in 1911 was dispatched to Richmond to oversee the implementation of Warren Manning's design of a new suburban campus for Richmond College (now the University of Richmond). In 1912 Mr. Gillette left his mentor's employ and launched his own separate practice in Richmond. For a near half-century, he enjoyed a prominence and renown in Virginia, where the greatest

*(continued on page 10)*



Warren H. Manning. Undated photograph, courtesy Warren H. Manning Collections.

Center for Lowell History,  
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Tuft Archives Given Memorial Library, Pinehurst, NC.

"Map of The Village of Pinehurst, N.C." 1925-26, by Rassie E. Wicker. Manning echoed the Olmsted firm's original 1895 plan, with curvilinear streets enframing the Holly Inn and Village Green (lower center) in his first expansion for The Carolina Hotel (left center) and later development to the West. Both provided lots on which members of the winter colony built cottages for which Manning also designed plans for gardens and grounds on commission.



## Book Review.....(continued from page 9)

number of his clients resided and their commissions were executed. In time his practice expanded into the South and other states, most notably North Carolina, where the second largest number of clients engaged him for public and private work. He would also see the opportunity represented by the garden recreations in Colonial Williamsburg and a competitive challenge in the emerging roles of their designers Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870-1957) and Alden Hopkins (1905-1960).

In the practices of Charles F. Gillette, Bryant Fleming, Fletcher Steele, Albert Davis Taylor, and Dan Kiley, among others, all of whom were employed in Manning's office, we see the influence of Warren Henry Manning, himself a protégé of Frederick Law Olmsted and an admirer of Charles Eliot, extended through time and place. But, in fact, as we know from Lance Neckar's overview of Manning's career published in *Landscape Journal* 8 in 1989 and in Robin Karson's *The Muses of Gwinn* . . . (1995), her biographical sketch of Manning in *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (2000), and now her joint editorship of *Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner* with Jane Roy Brown and Sarah Allaback, Warren H. Manning long enjoyed commissions beyond the Northeast, in much of the South, and the eastern United States. His is a critical practice in the history of American landscape architecture.

This is something I also know from experience. In 1895, while in the employ of Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, Warren H. Manning began an association with the Tufts family and their resort at Pinehurst, North Carolina, that continued up to his death in 1938. That professional engagement, arguably the longest with a client at one site in his career, was addressed in the National Historic Landmark Designation Report for Pinehurst that I co-authored with Laura A. W. Phillips in 1993-1996. In Manning's obituary published in the *Pinehurst Outlook* on 19 February 1938, the editor of the resort weekly noted "...many of those features which make Pinehurst distinctive will long stand as a monument to one whose association with the village has been so close, so constant and of such long establishment." Martha Lyon wrote the account of Pinehurst in this new book. (I later came into contact with Manning again, also in his role as an employee of the Olmsted firm, when I prepared a new National Historic Landmark Designation Report for the Biltmore Estate.)

Many members of the Southern Garden History Society know Manning's work. Those who attended the Southern Garden History Society annual meeting in Tallahassee in 1997 will easily recall our visit to Mill Pond



Photo by Staci Catron, April 2014

Mill Pond's largest garden, The Palm Garden, was bordered by "perfumed walks" edged with fragrant shrubs, camellias, and palms.

Plantation, the winter estate of Jephtha H. Wade II (1857-1926), a wealthy Cleveland businessman, at Thomasville, Georgia. Having remained in the ownership of Mr. Wade's descendants since its creation in 1903-1905, Mill Pond is one of the finest surviving examples of Manning's country house/estate work, an honor it shares with Stan Hywet, the Seiberling estate at Akron, which is also featured in these pages. Staci L. Catron prepared the account of Mill Pond for this book and has included its gardens and grounds in the forthcoming *Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia's Historic Gardens*.

Marjorie Longenecker White, also a SGHS member, contributed essays on Manning's 1916 Birmingham District Plan and the elegant, nature-honoring plan for Mountain Brook Estates in suburban Birmingham that he completed in 1929. These accounts and those for the Athens City Plan (1925), Fairyland Estates on Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga (1925), campus planning at the University of Virginia (1913) and at the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College at Greensboro (today's UNC-G), where consultations occurred from 1901 to 1921 with interruptions, and his design of the grounds for Jamestown Exposition of 1907 at Hampton Roads, Norfolk, are Southern examples of the range of his expertise and practice. They constitute nine of the sixty-two projects represented in this monograph.

*Warren H. Manning: Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner*, a volume in the Critical Perspectives in the History of Environmental Design series, is a joint publication of the University of Georgia Press and the Library of American Landscape History. The monograph also represents Robin Karson's long commitment to documenting Manning's work,



comprising over 1,600 known projects, and gaining deserved recognition for its quality, extent, and influence. In this, his role as one of the founders in 1899 of the American Society of Landscape Architects, his published writings, and the number of men and women who worked in his office and went on to establish important practices of their own, enhance our understanding of his significance. “Employees Listed in Manning’s Financial Records” and “Published Writings of Warren H. Manning” are two of the book’s three appendices. Robin Karson’s role in the long genesis of this book was both personal and professional, exercised through her position as executive director of the Library of American Landscape History and as the guiding spirit of an effort that gained status as the Warren H. Manning Research Project. She was thus the ideal, best-placed scholar to provide an overview of Warren H. Manning’s career, and she did so in these pages with intelligence and a sure feeling for the man, his time, and his place in history. Her essay precedes the contributions of individual accounts of sixty-two projects contributed by twenty-five writers, including herself and Jane Roy Brown, who enjoy professional associations with their subjects or related fields of interest.

This book, its value, and its appeal to readers also benefit from the contributions of two others, both photographers, one living and one dead. In 1927 and 1928 Warren H. Manning commissioned photographs of several projects from Arthur Grenville Eldredge (1880-1972). His black and white images of estate gardens and public parks capture both in their prime with a sensitivity Pamela Hartford described as that of a “Poet behind the Lens” in a 2010 article. Carol Betsch’s work is well known. In 2007 her photographs were an especially valuable part of *A Genius For Place: American Landscapes of the Country Place Era*, also a collaboration with Robin Karson, its author. Here in the pages of *Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner*, her photographs convey a rare insight into Manning’s intent and his achievements, images that confirm their significance and capture a remarkable beauty, particularly those of Stan Hywet, where the birch allée is one of the great moments in American landscape architecture.

Davyd Foard Hood  
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Vale, North Carolina

## *SGHS Board Announces the William Lanier Hunt Award*

Open to professionals and accomplished amateurs, this award recognizes any individual or organization that has made an exceptional contribution to fields closely aligned with the goals of the Society. Recipients of this award will have an unquestionable legacy of accomplishment in the field equivalent to a lifetime achievement award.

Preference shall be given to candidates whose body of work includes significant volunteerism or demonstrates

extraordinary achievements. Areas of interest include: land conservation, garden preservation, landscape and garden scholarship/education, landscape archeology, horticultural heritage, and other areas closely tied to the SGHS mission.

Potential award recipients may be nominated by any SGHS member through a letter of recommendation sent to the president by August 15. Please see the website for more information: [www.southerngardenhistory.org](http://www.southerngardenhistory.org)

## *Members in the News*

**Justin Stelter**, SGHS board member from Nashville, Tennessee, is now President of the Board of the Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc., which was established in 1905.

SGHS board member **Jeff Abt** has retired after twenty-three years as contributing weekly garden columnist for the *Daily Sentinel* newspaper in Nacogdoches, Texas. He encouraged gardeners in East Texas as he networked with horticulturists and visited gardens around the world.

**Gail Griffin**, long-time SGHS board member

and treasurer (since 2007), has retired as Dumbarton Oak’s Director of Gardens and Grounds, a position she has held since 1997. Gail received the Harvard Heroes Award from the Trustees of Harvard University in 2013 and the Flora Ann Bynum Medal in 2014.

Another long-time board member and secretary (since 2008) of SGHS, **Mollie Ridout**, recently retired as Director of Horticulture for Historic Annapolis Foundation, Inc., a position she has held since 2003. Mollie coordinated the SGHS annual meeting in Annapolis in 2007.



Southern Garden History Society

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## Awards and Scholarships

The **Flora Ann Bynum Medal** is awarded to recipients who have rendered outstanding service to the Society. Nominations may be made at any time by any member.

The **William Lanier Hunt Award** recognizes members, non-members, and/or organizations that have made an exceptional contribution to the fields closely aligned with the goals of the Society. Nominations may be made by any member.

The title **Honorary Director** (Board of Directors) may be bestowed on individuals who have rendered exceptional service and made significant contributions to the Society.

The **Certificate of Merit** is presented to a member or non-member whose work has advanced the mission and goals of the Society.

Society **Scholarships** assist students in attending the Society's annual meeting and are awarded to bona fide students enrolled in college and university majors relevant to the mission and goals of the Society and to new professionals in the field.

*Details, requirements, and directions for submitting applications are posted on the SGHS website: [www.southerngardenhistory.org](http://www.southerngardenhistory.org). For those without internet access, a copy of this document can be mailed. Contact Virginia Hart, SGHS Administrator.*

## Annual Membership Dues

The society's membership year is from **August 1—July 31**.  
Membership categories:

<b>Benefactor</b>	<b>\$500 and above*</b>
<b>Patron</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>\$125</b>
<b>Institution or Business</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Joint</b>	<b>\$60</b>
<i>(two individuals living in the same household)</i>	
<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$15</b>

**\*Contact the membership coordinator if you would like to pay more than \$500 via credit card.**

For more membership information, contact:

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Phone (336) 770-6723

Email: [membership@southerngardenhistory.org](mailto:membership@southerngardenhistory.org)

**Memberships can now be made electronically on our website!**

[www.southerngardenhistory.org](http://www.southerngardenhistory.org)

*Deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of Magnolia is March 31, 2018.*

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