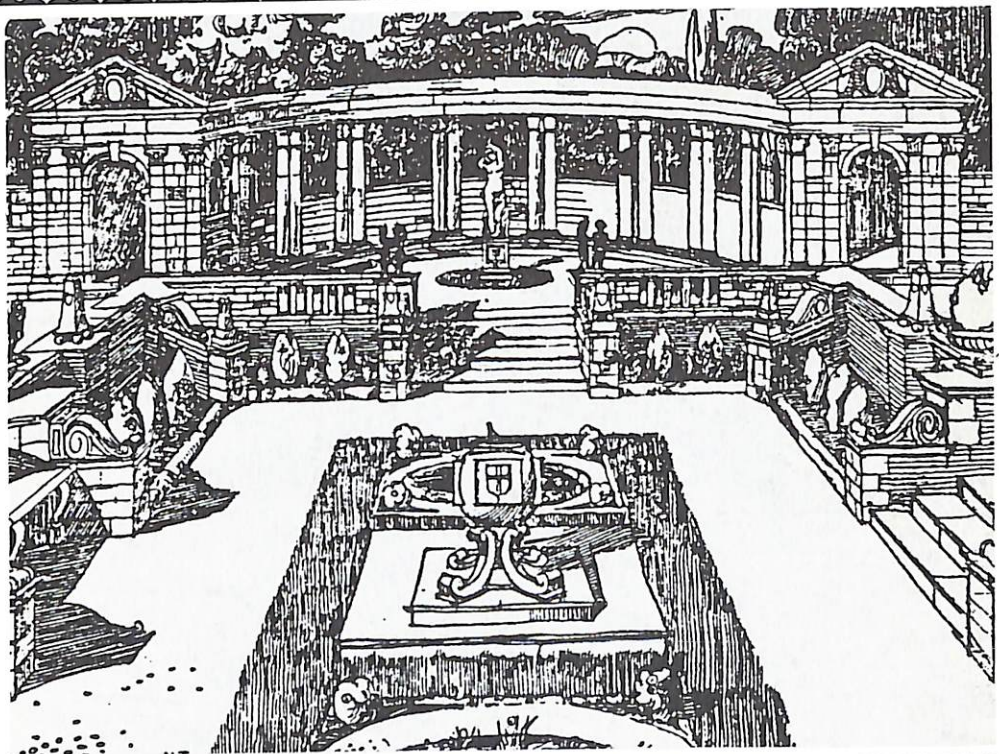


**“Art out-of-doors”**  
**American Gardens**  
**1890-1930**



**A Selected Bibliography**

**“Art out-of-doors”  
American Gardens 1890-1930  
A Selected Bibliography**

**Produced for a Conference  
on 10 March 1979 at  
The Winterthur Museum  
and Gardens**

**Organized in cooperation with  
The Hunt Botanical Library**



**The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation  
Carnegie-Mellon University  
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1979**

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1979

## Foreword

Of all the arts, that of landscape and garden design is the most ephemeral, particularly in the United States where few major examples have survived the uncertainties of family, municipal, and national life for more than a generation or two. Even many of the great gardens, and the landscaped designs of parks, boulevards, and cemeteries, created between 1890 and 1930 have disappeared or been sadly altered by neglect and urban change.

Toward the end of the last century, Americans everywhere were weary from a century of extraordinary progress; of wars, financial crises, scientific and technological growth and, most especially, the restlessness of a fluid society. Many were weary too of the ornate and overstuffed houses, and the overstuffed and often gaudy gardens which seemed to symbolize the character of the times. Thoughts turned to an earlier America whose houses and gardens suggested serenity in taste and manners. Many sought to recapture that mood by building "colonial" houses or restoring old ones, along with creating "old fashioned" American gardens, as the British were preserving and recreating theirs. But early American gardens and houses had no cachet in international society in which many American families of great new wealth now sought entry, and for this, and a variety of other reasons, they chose the grandeur of the Old World for their new homes. On their great estates, manicured grounds and lavish gardens provided settings for their pseudo-Jacobean, French, Spanish, or Italian houses. Often these gardens were very beautiful, although some seemed imitative and impersonal, lacking the qualities of those old ones created by their owners to reflect their own cultivated tastes and horticultural interests, or which generations of care had mellowed. The initial theories of a Downing or an Olmsted, describing landscape designs appropriate for this still young nation, became muted. Landscape architects found few clients who encouraged wholly innovative approaches to design. Nor were there champions in the gardening press to urge unrestricted creativity. Instead, writers dutifully reported the fashion on both sides of the Atlantic and the acceptance of this taste was widespread.

Perhaps in time, something more appropriate for the American setting and the qualities of American life might have evolved from this international style, but whatever potential existed was shattered by events beginning in 1930. Now, looking back to those great gardens which evoked aristocratic European traditions, one asks what was their legacy. Their influence upon the grounds and gardens of middle American homes was slight, for the foundation planting of the typical homes of the period, and their borders of flowers and shrubs, possessed strong ties to earlier traditions. Nor do the landscape designs since 1930, with their reliance on a sometimes stereotyped commercial work rather than great domestic designs, provide answers. But in every period there have been examples of "art out-of-doors" created apart from major influences of the times. These can be seen in some small gardens developed by their owners out of their love for plants and their sensitivity to form and color, as well as in such great gardens as those at Winterthur. There the owner-artist-horticulturist, and a lifetime of devoted interest, produced an individual and personal garden, subtly combined with its American landscape.

*Charles van Ravenswaay* Director Emeritus, The Winterthur Museum and Gardens

## Preface

### Winterthur Museum and Gardens

"Art out-of-doors" represents the second conference sponsored by the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum's Research Fellowship Program. The Program began modestly in 1977-1978 with one fellowship made possible by funds granted by the National Endowment for the Humanities. As part of the Research Fellowship Program, the Winterthur Museum determined that Fellows would have the opportunity to organize a one-day conference on a topic related to their research interest. Dr. John Zukowsky, now Architectural Archivist for the Art Institute of Chicago, came to Winterthur to study Edwin Whitefield's unpublished sketchbooks of Hudson River architecture and to explore the broader theme of the Hudson as the American version of the Rhine River. Dr. Zukowsky's symposium, "Hudson River Architecture: Its Study and Preservation," called attention to the fact that many of the architectural monuments of the Hudson had been destroyed since the mid-nineteenth century but that preservation activities were alive and well in the Hudson River Valley.

Due to an increase in National Endowment for the Humanities funding during 1978-1979, Winterthur was able to award two Research Fellowships, one of which was granted to Julia F. Davis for her work on garden iconography. Differentiation of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century pictorial evidence for garden types valuable in American preservation projects has been the main focus of this research.

During her months at Winterthur, Julia contributed generously of her time for the benefit of Winterthur students and staff. With the conference "Art out-of-doors" on 10 March 1979 and this complementary bibliography, scholarly information about American gardens from 1890-1930 is reaching the general public. Winterthur is proud to have a part in facilitating these efforts. Special thanks must be extended to the Delaware Humanities Forum for funding the conference, to The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie-Mellon University for its support of the bibliography project, and to the individual contributors of papers and bibliographic entries.

Dr. Scott T. Swank Head, Education Division

### Hunt Botanical Library, Hunt Institute

A private book collection often tends to lose its personal identity when integrated into a research library. Happily this is not the case at the Hunt Botanical Library, where the horticultural collection, including landscape architecture and garden design, assembled by Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt remains an identifiable unit. Since the Hunt Institute concentrates on the history of botany as a systematic science and on the literature of eighteenth and nineteenth century plant taxonomy, only residual collecting is now done in historical and practical horticulture. Other subject strengths, largely due to Mrs. Hunt's collecting, include botanical illustration, herbals, early agriculture, and accounts of travel, particularly those involving plant exploration and introduction. One finds at the Hunt Institute the collections of an astute early twentieth century gardener surrounded by book, manuscript and illustrative information on the history, nature and names of plants.

For the garden maker interested in recreating an historical garden, well-documented garden designs, with specific information on plans, architectural elements and plant materials are necessary. The Hunt Botanical Library is rich in such pictorial records, particularly of English, French and Italian gardens from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Today's garden researcher may thus view the changing fashion of garden design through contemporary eyes, unobscured by centuries of interpretation.

However, use of older materials, many with misleading or inconsistent nomenclature, requires substantial holdings of monographic and floristic literature to allow the researcher to arrive at the true identities and accepted names of the plants encountered there. Thus, in our case, the research institute and the private collection together provide an unusually complete resource for the garden historian.

Bernadette G. Callery Librarian

## Introduction

Each entry selected for this bibliography compiled to accompany lectures for "Art out-of-doors": American Gardens 1890-1930 is based upon frequency. These titles appeared regularly on the shelves of garden-makers responsible for the kind of layout that conformed to the precepts of that era. In some cases the books convey suggestions for plans and planting practices; in others they simply record pictorially gardens already established in the current taste. They represent, on the whole, the shared ideas of the Anglo-American school of garden and landscape construction in the early twentieth century. Landscape gardeners or the emerging young landscape architects often undertook the execution of these works. But in many cases it was the *general* literature of the field that governed the degree of acceptability to the client as well as the extent of his own influence and selectivity exercised in the final work on the ground.

During this period, the American Society of Landscape Architects was formed (1899) and avid gardeners organized their groups into the Garden Club of America (1913). A number of new plant societies also formed. This activity confirmed new strengths, both in design and in plantsmanship, that in turn gave rise to a type of garden at once unique in its effects, yet containing features bearing historical implications. Resurgence of a formal, often Italianate, architectural unity between house and garden site was softened by textural and color nuance gained through horticultural development culminating at this time. On both sides of the Atlantic, artistic and technical input, coupled with romantic nostalgia for visible manifestations of country life and the 'old-fashioned' virtues of productive land, predicated what Norman Newton has termed the "Country Place Era" in North America.

It will be seen that a limited number of publishers, most of them functioning from both London and New York, accomplished a thorough saturation of the gardening mind with attainable goals and rules calculated to satisfy aesthetic yearnings and the collecting instincts. Along with this came a substantial commitment to preservation of "historical" values, as defined within the context of the new designs. Gertrude Jekyll, Mrs. Francis King, and editors like E.T. Cook or Wilhelm Miller maintained an interlocking dominance over this milieu. The photographic image, combined with the post-impressionist palette used in rendering garden scenes, both employed for reasons of art, exercised a decided influence upon gardeners' expectations. It is by no means coincidental that many of these texts were heavily illustrated. The available range of varieties of popular plant groups: roses, irises, peonies, rhododendrons, alpine, was huge and readily filled the type-units within these gardens.

These books identified on the shelves of gardeners' libraries are drawn from the larger group of publications on plants and gardening. They represent a readable history of gardening intent for the period. The "Country Life Library" series or the "Little Garden" series are recognizable entities within this literature; gardening books agreeably able to stimulate a popular response are vital to its completeness. The lecturers have contributed some specific titles of importance to the topics under discussion. These are marked in the selected list by the initials of the speaker in question. Further annotations have been added by the compiler and the Hunt Botanical Library

staff. Such titles serve as an introduction to the works of the authors, or they may be a key to topical material. This enumerative selection is not intended as a complete bibliographic history of these items.

These volumes exist in many older public libraries, and they may be found *en suite* in the private libraries of accomplished gardeners of the period. These personal collections often are absorbed in the larger context of research facilities like the Winterthur Libraries or the Hunt Botanical Library. As specific materials of this nature become more essential to our understanding of the social and design history of the early twentieth century, the value of such individual selections enhances perceptions of the collecting instincts of dedicated gardening enthusiasts in the years between 1890 and 1930.

Julia Finette Davis Compiler, Winterthur-NEH Research Fellow

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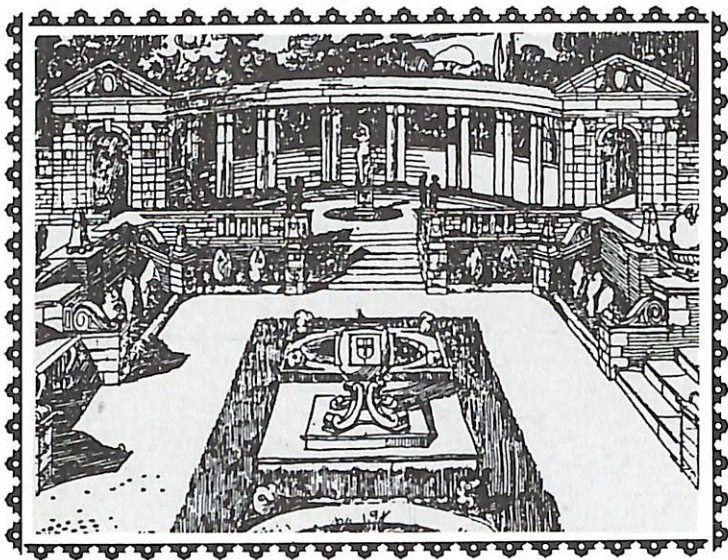
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# **"Art out-of-doors"** **American Gardens** **1890-1930**



## **A Selected Bibliography**

The cover picture is from Walter Shaw Sparrow: *Our Homes and How to Make the Best of Them* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 24.

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