



The Old Texas Rose

Vol 3 No. 2

May 1984



STATE OF THE STATE

The state of the State's system of public education has not occasioned much joy of late and the bosoms of those of us who care about such matters have been more than usually agitated recently by the scandalous declaration of the Board of Education in Austin that text books purchased for use in the State need not mention Charles Darwin, his theory, the process of natural selection, nor the evidence of fossil remains, and all this at the demand of a small but vocal association of religious fundamentalists. Protests have been made but it is not too much to say that this State has been made a laughingstock around the nation and throughout the world as well, primarily by those whose mandate it is to guard the interests of our children. From friends who live abroad, I have received cuttings from foreign newspapers and the editorial comments, I assure you, were far from kind. Some writers seemed aghast, others bewildered, and no wonder. The twain — the Scientists and the Creationists — may never meet, even in the most sanguine dreams of the Scientific Creationists, who have emerged of late years to help those whose facility for reason prevents them from accepting Genesis literally but who are troubled by how far Darwinian thought may take them and about whom the ranks of fundamentalist Christians are now rallying, and so be it. Scientific Creationism is a religious compromise, it has little to do with science, and it has no more place in the curriculum than does the theory and practice of alchemy. In religion, as in other matters, there is no disputing about taste and we all have the right to believe or disbelieve anything at all as long as we agree on a few basic principles: we have no right to thrust our views, however cherished, upon others, who after all have views of their own, and certainly we may not impose them; dogma, of any persuasion, has no place in our schools and we had all best beware of what Queen Victoria would have called enthusiasm — that is, fanaticism; and what we choose to believe does not necessarily have any basis whatsoever in dull fact.

Only the simple courtesy learned at Mother's knee — and of course the regulations of the Postal Service — stays me from the use of blunter terms.

Meanwhile, as Miss Jekyll said, thank God for lovely June! If only it would rain.

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Roses are beauty, but I never see
Those blood drops from the burning heart of June
Glowing like thought upon the living tree,
Without a pity that they die so soon,
Die into petals, like those roses old,
Those women, who were summer in men's hearts
Before the smile upon the Sphinx was cold,
Or sand had hid the Syrian and his arts.
O myriad dust of beauty that lies thick
Under our feet that not a single grain
But stirred and moved in beauty and was quick
For one brief morn and died nor lived again;
But when the moon rose lay upon the grass
Pasture to living beauty, life that was.

John Masefield.

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The illustrations reproduced in this issue are taken from H.I. Thomas' drawings for Reginald Blomfield's vastly influential The Formal Garden in England. I have chosen them for several reasons: they are exquisite in and of themselves; they delineate gardens very unlike those to which we are accustomed; and the kind of garden represented is the kind planted in this country from the 17th century onward until the end of the 18th, when the Landscape Style arrived. Also, I like them.

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Reginald Blomfield. The Formal Garden in England. Illus. by H.I. Thomas. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1891.

The War of the Styles, which erupted at the end of the last century, was one of the maddest — and funniest — episodes in the history of gardening. In 1883, William Robinson brought out The English Flower Garden, written with the particular aim of extirpating forever from the face of the earth the garish plantings and architectural pomposities of that blight, the fashionable Victorian garden. They were frightful and reformation was long overdue and the volcanic Robinson, to whom a good fight was a necessity of life, was just the ~~lad~~ for the job. Of obscure origins, he started as a gardener's boy on an Irish estate and rose at length to wealth and considerable influence through journalism. Our popular horticultural press is very much his invention. Early on, Robinson conceived a vision of the ideal garden which, simply, should seem to be a natural manifestation within a natural scene: fine trees, wildflowers, sweeping lawns, bulbs in the grass, borders of hardy perennials, choice exotics tactfully used, woodlands richly underplanted and encouraged to flourish. All very alluring — not to say economical and labor saving, comparatively — and Robinson's crusade attracted many converts.

Of course, a counterblast was bound to come and come it did in Blomfield's The Formal Garden in England. The conflict was joined — noisily. To catch the flavor, imagine the likes of Norman Mailer, Philip Johnson, Susan Sontag, Mrs. Paul Mellon, Truman Capote, William F. Buckley, Jr., and any Burpee wrangling in public print about (of all things!) garden design. Secure and happy days, or so it seems from this side of the abyss. Blomfield, who not-so-incidentally introduced himself on the title page as Master of Arts, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and Architect, presented with feline civility a simple thesis: that the house and the garden be designed together in relation to each other; that the garden be treated as an enclosed space to be laid out as the designer thought best; that no attempt be made to conceal the design, all lines — walls, parterres, pieces of water — be shown frankly for what they are. Not very like the great parks of the Georgian era, Blomfield's pet detestation, you will note, nor much like Robinson's idyllic wilderness. After savaging Pope, the Landscape School's leading propagandist, and Kent, his dupe, Blomfield, as a panther to its prey, turns to "Capability" Brown: "...who began as a kitchen gardener, but took the judicious line that knowledge hampered originality. He accordingly dispensed with any training in design, and rapidly rose to eminence." Testy, that.

Robinson — his rages were legendary — lashed back; to be fair, he suffered agonies from syphilis, which can make anyone cross. Gertrude Jekyll, being sane, poured oil upon the waters; she perceived good and bad in both points of view and anyway, she laughed. Willie had a garden all squares and Reggie a garden on a cliff with not a straight line in it! Too true — Robinson had actually made a parterre and of hot-house plants at that. It all must have been very confusing to the generality. In time, Miss Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens evolved a synthesis: her inspired plantsmanship, his superb geometry. Their work may be seen in Jane Brown's poignant Gardens of a Golden Afternoon, the story of their long partnership, and of course we can visit Sissinghurst, Hidcote, and Great Dixter, each planted in the Jekyll manner and meticulously maintained.

Why, finally, read Blomfield at all? For one thing, he wrote an interesting book, historically, but especially so to anyone interested in pre-18th century gardens and the plants that furnished them. Too, Thomas' drawings are perfect, deliciously atmospheric. And do you realize that Blomfield brought the term "Formal" relating to gardens into the general vocabulary for the first time? And that it stuck?

Miss Brown's book was published in 1982 to great and well-deserved acclaim. Mea Allan's new biography of William Robinson has been published in England and I can recommend it without reservation. In the course of a long and not always happy life, Robinson wrote quantities, railing with all the facility of his great contemporary, George Bernard Shaw — yet another Irish Protestant, and protestant. Of all his books, the most epochal were The English Flower Garden, which remained in print until the middle 1930s, and The Wild Garden, first published in 1870 while the author was touring the United States and reissued in 1977 by the Scolar Press. For gardens on lime, above all, it is wonderfully suggestive. Gravetye Manor, which Robinson bought with the profits of The English Flower Garden and, of course, the site of the notorious parterre, is now an hotel; the garden is being restored, I read, and The English Flower Garden is to be revised and reprinted.

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NOTES FROM THE HONORABLE EDITRIX

As some of our members have recently expressed an interest in identification, I propose a round robin like the Heritage Roses Group has got. I will be dispatcher and would like to have as many sign up as can "fly." We would send snapshots of any unknowns or even verbal descriptions, and I would do whatever research I could at A&M. I know Margaret Sharpe, "Sis" Raymund, Pat Sellers, Tom Adams, Linda Wheat, and Maxine McFall are among our collectors — who else? Come on, join up. Aunt Rosie needs you!...Welcome to new members: Mr. Tim Adams, Olympia WA; Mrs. Nancy Akus, Houston; Mrs. Erna Card, Crosby; Mrs. Anne G. Cushing, Santa Barbara CA; Mrs. Walter T. Colquitt, Shreveport LA; Mr. R.J. Luna, Houston; Mr. Gene G. Maddox, Cypress; Mrs. Effie Mullinax, Houston; Mrs. W.E. Sellers, Silsbee; Miss Shirlireed Walker, Bryan; Mrs. Marie Workman, Friendswood; Mrs. Delores Wolff, Manchester MI; Mr. Jay Williams, Oakland CA...Our very own member, Mr. Mike Schoppe of Independence, will be opening the Antique Rose Emporium there in June, to take mail orders for fall. These plants will also be available at retail garden centers in some areas. (I will be reporting where these will be.) His propagator, Mr. Tom Adams, has collected upwards of twenty unknowns, some of which will be available under their study names. All OTR members will receive their catalogues in June. Our Honorary Chaplain, Pat Harrison, will also be beginning his operation in Canton, Mississippi, and will also automatically send catalogues to our members. Mr. Ernest J. Vash of Historical Roses, 1657 West Jackson, Painesville, Ohio 44077, sent his listing — send 50¢. His older Hybrid Perpetuals are great! I'm proud to see he has Géant des Batailles — one of Mrs. Keays' favorites — and General Jack. One I had never heard of was the white Bourbon, Coquette des Alpes. Marissa Fishman has already sent her impressive catalogue of antique rose and fruit varieties. It's Greenmantle, Ettersburg Star Route, Garberville CA 95440, price \$1. A listing of roses only is 25¢. Joyce Demits of Heritage Rose Gardens reports that they are sold out "to the walls" and will not have any further stock until fall. But of course we can order now, at 16831 Mitchell Creek Cr. Dr., Fort Bragg CA 95437. Her list is \$1.

22. SEASONED AND SAFE ROSES. If I were a genuine, sincere and rabid Rosarian (and could afford to satisfy my whims) I would order Rose nurserymen to send me every new hybrid that comes their way. And what an utter fool I'd be! There is no easier method of becoming disillusioned about Roses and no simpler way of parting with your hard-earned shekels. Rose enthusiasm has waxed to that point where the subtlest variation will throw catalogue writers into ecstasies and rob their pens of adjectives. Having been many times burned by these, I am thrice shy. I have reached the same determination about Roses that I have about investments: I want them seasoned and safe. I'm not interested in a Rose unless it has been on the market five years. In fact, the very next Rose order that leaves this house has a "story" on it at 1900 and some of the items go back to the 1500's. Let others toy with the subtleties, idiosyncrasies and delicacies of the latest hybrid teas, we shall devote our Rose space to Damask and Gallica, Provence and Moss Roses. And, incidentally, we will have fragrance.

Richardson Wright, The Gardener's Bed-Book, 1929.

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Who loves old roses loves herbalism and old wives' tales, too, usually, and in that spirit Mrs. Wilson offers the following review.

M.F.K. Fisher. A Cordiall Water. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1961.

"To Make a Cordiall Water good against any Infections, as ye Plague, Poxe, Measles, burning feaver, & to remove any offensive or Venemouse Matter from ye Hart or Stomach, or to be used after surfetts or in Passion of ye Mother or for Children in fitts of Convulsions, & generally Good to Comfort or Strengthen Nature." In other words, a magical cure-all, good for what ails you, an elixer that encompasses the Smith Brothers and transcends Lydia E. Pinkham. Here are the ways we have sought relief from illness and ailments along with the philosopher's stone, the noxious messes trustingly swallowed, the charms, pills, and purges we have sworn by and foisted upon others whether we are medical doctor or granny-woman. The habits of various animals we have adopted (however inappropriately) as our own in a never-ending search for health and well-being.

Best known for her gastronomical writings and an appreciation of food that approaches worship, Mrs. Fisher clipped articles and eavesdropped over many years across two continents collecting this material. Family secrets confided to her non-judgemental ear include the use of bacon grease for nose-bleeds, human urine as a complexion aid, and live toads to restore circulation to the extremities. One can see the logic in packing a nose-bleed although how an amphibian could warm anyone's feet unless it was first put in an oven one cannot imagine. However, the other day there was an article on skin care in the Houston Post in which a specialist solemnly recommended a "urea lotion" for the most serious cases of parched skin. Urea comes from -- well. Other remedies are more palatable, including whisky, hot lemonade, and a gargle made from lemon juice, honey, and raspberry leaves. Cassis, a black current liquor, is highly recommended for coughs. These small fruits must have an astrigent quality because I can remember my European grandmother dosing me with blackberry wine for the cramps and miseries of food poisoning. My collywobbles abated due to the wine, or perhaps the paragoric. Good things to eat also claim healing qualities. Two recipes for onion soup, one delicate, one robust, are advised for chest congestion. There is also a French remedy for general use short of morbidity, "A little slice of ham." Boiled ham. With pickles on the side. And for mothers (and cows) after giving birth: "To strengthen and Comfort a Cow after Calving, Give her a loaf of fresh bread soaked in a liter of good wine." Given the ravenous appetites of post-partum females, that should hit the spot.

Admittedly this books is earthy in spots. It is not for the squeamish but neither are bloodmeal and manure tea. And speaking of manure tea — but I won't. Instead let me urge you to read the admitted pet of one of America's most venerable stylists.

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In one of her books, Mrs. Fisher remarks with nostalgia on a peach much grown in Southern California in her youth — fragrant, delicious, too delicate for cooking or shipping, oddly shaped, and possibly of Chinese origin. Now, here is an entry from Gurney's most recent catalogue: "Peento Peach — one of the oddest-looking, best-tasting peaches ever discovered. Donut-shaped fruits — the center is depressed, while the outer edge balloons out with luscious juicy flesh. A sweet flavor, with overtones of almond. White-fleshed, self-pollinating, very vigorous and hardy; especially for home gardens." I have this and so far it's thriving. Is anyone tempted? Gurney's Seed & Nursery Co., Yankton SD 57079. The catalogue is free.

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ANECDOTAGE

In the Middle Ages, a "garden" appears to have meant ... simply an enclosed space — what we should now call a "yard." We were interested in the remark of a Texan lady on a visit to this country who referred to Poinsettias as growing in her "back-yard," meaning the garden at the back of her house. We afterwards found that the word "yard" is in common use in the United States for a garden, as opposed to unenclosed fields and woods. The word itself is derived from Zerd, Garth, or Yard — three nouns from the same Aryan root as the French jardin, and originally signifying an unroofed enclosure containing cultivated vegetation. The idea of a garden which was not enclosed, belongs to a much later date.

Sir Frank Crisp, Bart., LL.B., B.A., F.L.S., Mediaeval Gardens, 1924.

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The Luxembourg is the Queen of Tea-Roses to my mind, much the shape of the Catherine Mermet, but richer, and of finer foliage, and colored beyond all other Roses, not even excepting Gloire de Dijon. The heart was variable but generally creamy pink with yellow suffusions. The outer petals run between deep red bronze and copper-yellow. It was, I think, one of the earliest high-colored Teas perfected. It grew rampantly, and had so much red blood that the leaves and flowers at first unfolding were almost as high-colored as the flowers. It is my Rose of Roses.

Alice Morse Earle, Sun-Dials and Roses of Yesterday, 1902.

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A METHOD OF PROPAGATION

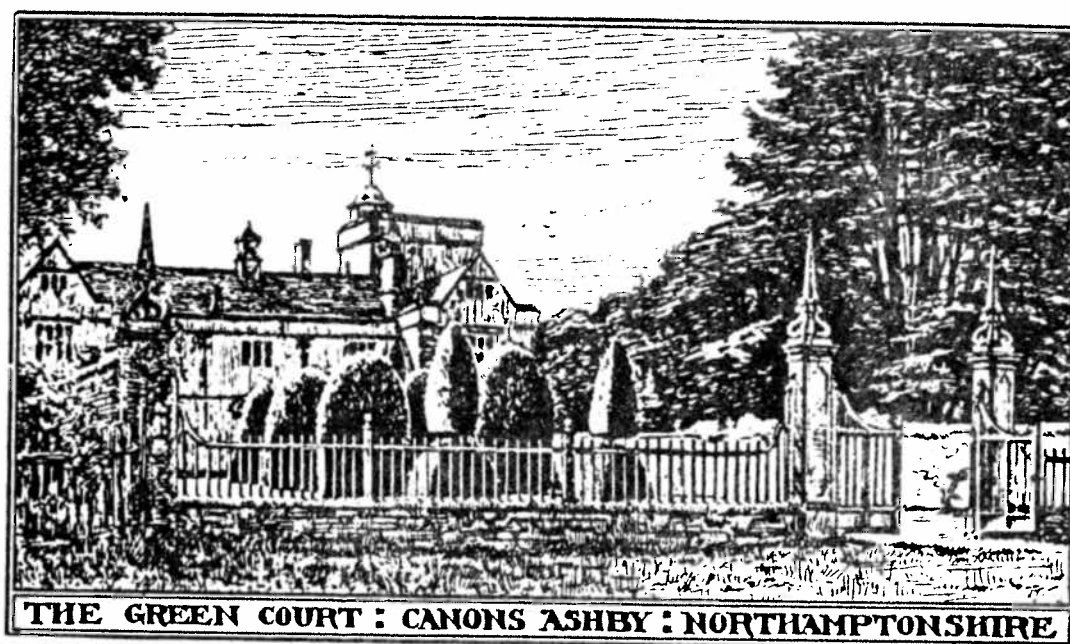
I give the method adopted by the old rosarians, and the following excerpt which I quote was written in the year 1838 by an expert grower of those days. It was the practice to increase the stocks of such roses as the Damasks, Albas, Gallicas, and Moss Roses.

The first week in March I took some of the long, thick, and fleshy looking roots of my English and French Roses, and cut them into pieces about three inches long. I then smoothened the surface of a border in front of a peach

wall, upon this I laid the roots flat, at about six inches apart; when the roots were placed, I covered them with fine sifted soil half an inch deep, gently beating it to the cuttings; I then laid four inches more of loamy soil well enriched with rotten cow dung, a year old, giving the whole a good watering, and when dry, smoothed the surface over with the back of a spade. By the middle of May every cutting had sent one, and some two strong shoots, and on examination I found the soil I had covered the cuttings with, to be filled with a mass of fine roots; at this time, July 5th, the shoots are more than a foot high. I have anxiously watered the bed, being in a sunny situation I found it got dry, more especially so, having the bed raised upon the old surface of the border, it would have been better to have sunk it so as finally to have it even with the surrounding soil.

George M. Taylor, The Book of the Rose, 1949.

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Rose G. Kingsley. Roses and Rose Growing. New York: Whittaker & Co., 1908.

For the lover of the teas, chinas, and bourbons, not to mention the old summer blooming types, the hybrid perpetuals and early hybrid teas, and climbers of various persuasions, Miss Kingsley's book is an invaluable source of information. For one thing, she has compiled lists, the entries brief but well-considered and pithy, noting the breeder, the date of introduction, and the color, and that's dandy; but additionally, she has illustrated her book with a superb series of photographs, the subjects taken from her own garden, most in color and a few showing the habit of growth. Some are popular to this day — Perle d'Or, Frau Karl Drushki, White Mamam Cochet — others are considerably more obscure. I have never seen the climbing damask Mrs. O.G. Orpen but G.S. Thomas and I surely would like to. It's described as large and single, in trusses, rosy pink, and it came originally from a Mr. Orpen, who obviously had both tact and taste, of Colchester, in 1906. The photograph suggests that the petals are veined with a rich, somewhat purpleish pink, which contrasts prettily with the pale pink, even unto blush, of the petals. Has anyone seen this around?

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Then there's Irish Elegance, "buds bronzy orange-scarlet, opening to apricot," which doesn't sound too shabby, and Jersey Beauty and Gustave Piganeau and — well, as you can tell, I was impressed. The lady is knowledgeable and her book, very much a labor of love, is intended for enthusiastic amateur with a small property who tends his roses without professional help, which is most of us, I expect.

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... the traditional southern cemetery is adorned with a variety of flowers, plants, and trees, most of which bear an ancient, pagan symbolism. The Mediterranean mother goddess is represented by several such symbols, perhaps most notably the rosebush The link of the rose to the mother goddess is well known, for this flower appears in many surviving depictions of her. Demeter or Isis are often shown riding on a rose-wheeled cart, while in Rome the Magna Mater's attendants were garlanded with roses. We still associate roses with motherhood, particularly on Mother's Day, when offspring wear them to church. The Virgin Mary inherited the rose symbol from her prototype and is herself the Rose of Sharon. Often in paintings the Madonna is shown in conjunction with roses. Not surprisingly, then, the rosebush became a typical European cemetery plant, particularly in the provinces once ruled by Rome, including England In the face of such diverse symbolic evidence, it is difficult to deny that the Magna Mater occupies a prominent, if forgotten, place in the southern folk cemetery. Her cult was the last to give way to Christianity in Rome, and her worship was particularly strong among the common folk. The early church fathers renounced the Magna Mater, forcing her to hide, to fashion disguises, to adopt aliases. They thought they were done with her, but popular, millennia-old deities do not die so easily. All these centuries she remained among us, and our cemeteries provided one of her secret refuges.

Terry G. Jordan, Texas Graveyards: A Cultural Legacy, 1982.

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The haunt, so to speak, of any rose rustler worth his salt is the nearest or farthest cemetery. One of my favorites is the old Hillendahl plot in Spring Branch, near Houston, in which are planted several roses which appear to be of the Cécile Brunner perplex. That strain, as Mrs. Bell has told us, is capable of significant mutation, and these shrubs I think are of the company. They are healthy, even strapping, laden with bloom in season and the blossoms are most charmingly presented, and the color is richer than we usually see here in the three variations of Cécile Brunner, that is, the spray form, the climbing form, and the small, rather scruffy shrub form. Not very attractive, the last. I've been meaning to speak to the Hillendahls — a German pioneer family hereabouts, by the way — about their little graveyard and its roses and one of these days, no doubt, I will. Another intriguing little mystery: I've been told that the low-growing, shrubby Cécile Brunner may be the original Blush Noisette. Any comments?

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ALARUMS AND DIVERSIONS

Miles Hadfield, Robert Harling, and Leonie Highton. British Gardeners: A Biographical Dictionary. London: A. Zwemmer Ltd. in association with Conde Nast Publications Ltd., 1980. Everything you ever wanted to know about everybody (almost) in the history of British gardening, with many illustrations and color plates. A breath-taking piece of scholarship.

William Lanier Hunt. Southern Gardens, Southern Gardening. With a Preface by Elizabeth Lawrence. Durham: Duke University Press, 1982. A treasure of information

conveyed in a relaxed and amiable manner. The Press, however, has not done itself or the author proud.

Irving Penn. Flowers. New York: Harmony Books, 1980. Portraits of poppies, tulips, roses, lilies, peonies, orchids, and begonias in the most sumptuous color on the finest white stock. One might wish that Mr. Penn did not prefer his subjects in the process of decay quite so much.

Neil Sperry. Complete Guide to Texas Gardening. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1982. The author has attempted to encompass gardening conditions in the entire State in a single volume. It was not a good idea.

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I have tried, as a preliminary to writing this book, to discover the sources of an interest and pleasure in gardening which has been in my life a better way than most of enabling one to ignore the human condition and justify God's ways to man

Edward Hyams, An Englishman's Garden, 1967.

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NANCY LANCASTER ON GARDENS AND GARDENING

Being born and bred a Virginian when Virginia was a poor state, I am partial to gardens of my childhood, which meant the survival of the fittest. Old Virginia gardens were never of the English landscape school, but based on seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century gardens, where boxwood was greatly valued, herbaceous borders unknown and flowers and vegetables intermingled. Light and shade and bone structure are the things I value most in a garden. I am not a horticulturalist and delight in a hollyhock in the front and a violet in the back! I like common plants best. Abundance is all important as this hides mistakes. It is the ambience that I look for in a garden with a touch of sadness and nostalgia. I certainly have that now.

The Englishwoman's Garden, 1980.

I like gardens to have an architectural feel and formality, a definite design on the grandest possible scale. Then I throw that away; hide it with roses, vines, even ivy; let it run wild; let flowers take charge.

A garden, I feel, should have a tight corset, but the plants should be allowed to burst out and overflow.

Architectural Digest, 1980.

And, finally, an excerpt from a description of Mrs. Lancaster's garden at Haseley Court, where the Stars and Bars always flew, by Valentine Lawford and published in Vogue, 1965:

At the far end of a straight path, neat as an indoor passage with a wallpaper of mock orange and white roses, a stone urn is silhouetted against an arch of clouds and sky. Laburnum hedges, beech hedges, alleys of hornbeams flanked by apple trees, lead to the walled garden that is Haseley's second glory: a vast enclosure of lawn and flowers, vegetables, and fruit where roses, lilies, and delphiniums are interspersed with raspberries and strawberries, red currants and weeping mulberries, chives, lettuce, artichokes, and beets. The flower smells are indescribable. A combination of Canterbury bells, rosa mundi, and buddleia, shot through with lavender and pinks.

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When I lived and gardened in California, I did put out snail bait. But I also hand-picked and stepped on any that I saw. In spite of all this I still retain a child's delight in the beauty of these little creatures. Sometimes you find them entwined together, and I never knew whether to feel especially bad about stepping on them in that condition, or if it was a happy death to meet eternity enclasped in rapture.

Bev Dobson's Rose Letter, January/February 1984.

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SALMAGUNDI

From the French, or perhaps the Italian, meaning: a hash; a mixture; a medley; a hodge-podge.

Joe Woodard — our man in Dallas — has sent me a copy of the master plan for the new arboretum and botanical garden and I'm speechless with admiration. Almost. What a marvellous thing for the city. I only hope I live long enough to see it completed, in the year 2000 or thereabouts! The design, by the way, is the work of Jones & Jones, a firm of architects and landscape architects based in Seattle.... Miss Katie Ferguson, the new proprietor of Lowrey's Nursery, spoke in Houston recently on the uses of native flora in our gardens. She's a good looking and a nifty dresser, and is much interested in old garden roses — our kind of girl! She hopes to publish a catalogue soon and a newsletter and to begin a mail order service. Write her at 2323 Sleepy Hollow Road, Conroe 77302.... Senator Lloyd Bentsen plans to introduce legislation to encourage states to plant wildflowers along the side of highways. Mowing costs, he says, could be reduced by 25 percent. In Texas, that would be a saving of eight million dollars a year.... the regents of the University of Texas have agreed on a contract for the production of wine on UT-owned land in Pecos County near Fort Stockton. The venture may eventually earn 1.5 million dollars a year for The University.... the papers — nearly a half-ton of them — of the late British biologist Sir Julian Huxley have arrived at Rice University.... from a California newspaper and I quote: "Architects restoring Texas A&M's vintage-1900 Academy Building plan to use new bricks on the exterior, then spray them with cow manure to age them. The process is an accepted restoration procedure called 'organic

patination!*" As a person of the UT persuasion, I think it best not to comment on this....Hickory Chairs is replicating old Texas furniture, the prototypes from the collection of Fred Pottinger and Tom Messer, the proprietors of Castroville's Horse of a Different Color....David Adams, who has a large spread near the border, is ranching yucca these days for sale to nurserymen and landscapers. More profitable than cattle, he says....Augusta and Jim Mutchler looked long and hard for just the right house on just the right piece of land and they found it. And then they wrote a book about their interesting (to say the least of it!) experiences: Five Acres and Dementia: How to Restore an Old Texas Farmhouse and Keep SmilingRichard Whitehall wrote Miriam Wilkins who wrote me about the Cottage Garden Society, which is attempting to preserve plants traditionally associated with that style of gardening. The annual contribution is two pounds. Interested members write Mrs. Judi Kay, 3 Halkyn Hall, Pentre Halkyn, Holywell, Clwyd, England CH8 8HSStephen F. Austin. Ben Milam. Sam Houston. Mirabeau B. Lamar. Samuel May Williams? A forgotten hero of the Republic, Williams built a fine house in Galveston which he helped to establish. In 1954, it was purchased by the Galveston Historical Foundation and is now open to the public....Styrax texana, the Texas snowbell, is threatened by extinction and may soon be placed by the Interior Department on its endangered species list. This handsome shrub, which was not recorded until 1940, grows only in Edwards, Real, and Kimble Counties, north-east of the Big Bend; only twenty-five plants are known, all on private property, none of which are seedlings or young plants. The Texas snowbell grows to twelve feet and has smooth brown bark and bright green leaves with a silvery reverse. The flowers are white, showy, and appear in clusters of three to five....On the other hand, the Texas bluebell, Lisianthus russellianus, is, if anything, too much with us. Sakata, a Japanese firm, has developed and refined this rather humble little wildling for that country's cut-flower market and now expects to sell billions of seed worldwide. Demand is so great that Sakata has been forced to reject Disney World's offer to make the Texas bluebell its official flower....In 1832, Prince Maximilian of Wied, a keen if amateur naturalist and ethnologist, set out from the family palace near Koblenz for the American frontier. His companion on the journey was Karl Bodmer, a Swiss landscape painter of some fame. Surviving heat, cold, hunger, scurvy, pesky redskins, and general unpleasantness, Prince Max returned to Europe with quantities of notes and Herr Bodmer with hundreds of sketches and watercolors of the landscape and wildlife of the West. The records of this remarkable voyage were filed and forgotten. Fortunately for us all, they have been exhumed and the collection is on tour. It will be seen in Fort Worth, one of only four cities in this country to see the exhibition....Speaking of newsletters, did you know that Carroll Abbot offers one and has done for eight years now? It's published quarterly and costs \$7.50 per annum. Write Green Horizons, 500 Thompson Drive, Kerrville 78028. Mr. Abbot has been very ill lately but is feeling much better now. To celebrate, he staged at Zilker Park in Austin "The World's Biggest Plant Sale — Probably" on 5 and 6 May. Did any of our members attend? Tell us all about it....Federal purchase of privately owned land in the Big Thicket National Preserve may resume soon following a pause of nearly two years. The acquisition of 86,000 acres, mandated by the Congress, was halted by James Watt....the evening primrose, we hear from the University of Montreal, secretes an oil which is good for high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, eczema, brittle nails, hangovers, schizophrenia, and cancer, which sounds pretty comprehensive to me....a new field guide: Wildflowers of Texas by Geyata Ajilvsgi. The author's name is Cherokee and I haven't a clue as to how it's pronounced, but Miss Ferguson says the book is a fine piece of work. The price, reasonable I think, is \$12.95....the old Henshaw estate has been purchased by the Friends of Bellaire Parks and presented to the city for use as a community center....the southern pine beetle is threatening East Texas forests and the U.S. Forest Service is cutting buffer zones around infested areas to combat the nasty little bugger. It cannot mature if the trees are horizontal because its life cycle requires the trees to be vertical....the Beaumont Art Museum will host the touring exhibition, Flowers of Three Centuries. The drawings and

watercolors of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries are selected from the Broughton Collection of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England.

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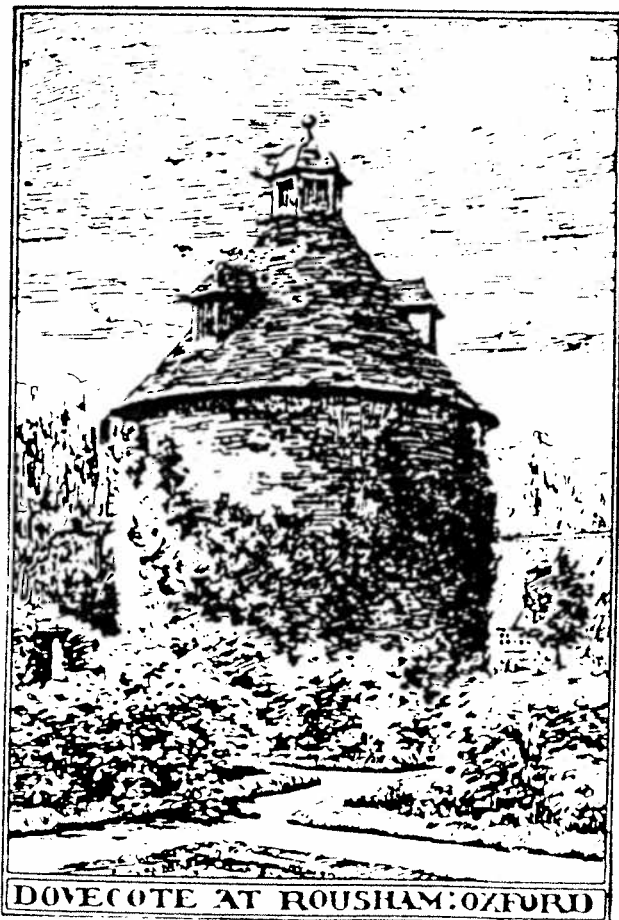
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Agnes Rothery, The Joyful Gardener, 1949.



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