

HILL GARDEN—INTERMEDIARY STYLE.

# MUSSER JAPANESE GARDEN

## 2. Books, Magazine Articles and Iowa Newspaper Articles about Japanese Gardens, 1890-1935

SEPTEMBER 1, 2021  
by Beth Cody

This paper is the second in a series of research papers written for the Muscatine Art Center in Summer 2021 by Beth Cody of Kalona, Iowa, through a grant from the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs in conjunction with a planned project for restoring the circa-1930 Japanese-style garden on the Art Center grounds. That garden was built for Laura Musser McColm (1877-1964), whose heirs donated her Muscatine house to the City of Muscatine in 1965 for use as a museum.

This research is intended to place the construction of such a garden into context of the period from roughly 1890 until World War II: How did Japanese-style gardens become popular in the Midwestern United States during that period? What other Japanese-style public and private gardens were constructed during that time, particularly in the Midwest? How did Midwesterners regard such gardens, and how did their feelings change during WWII when the United States was at war with Japan? And what things might have prompted Laura Musser McColm to have such a garden constructed for her around 1930?

Paper 1: Introduction of Japanese-Style Gardens to the Midwest through World's Fairs, 1876-1934

Paper 2: Books, Magazine Articles and Iowa Newspaper Articles about Japanese Gardens, 1890-1935

Paper 3: Pre-WWII Public Japanese-style Gardens

Paper 4: Pre-WWII Private Japanese-style Gardens in the Midwest

Paper 5: Professor P.H. Elwood's 1929 Trip to Japan

Paper 6: Laura Musser McColm's Japanese-style Garden; Possible Designer-Builders

Paper 7: The Muscatine Garden Club

Paper 8: Changing Attitudes to Japan Before and During WWII; Surviving Pre-WWII Japanese-style Gardens in the Midwest

Beth Cody is the author of *Iowa Gardens of the Past: Lost and Historic Gardens of Iowa, 1850-1980* (2020). She is interested in garden history and particularly Midwestern gardens.

She has degrees in Economics, and Asian Languages and Literature (Chinese) from The University of Iowa; a Master's Degree in International Finance and Economics from Brandeis University; and a degree in Music (Flute) Performance from The Cleveland Institute of Music.

Beth owns a small business in Coralville, Iowa, and is a volunteer with Project GREEN, an Iowa City charity that raises money to beautify local public areas. She is an avid amateur gardener on her five-acre rural property south of Iowa City, and can be reached through her website at [Iowagardens.com](http://Iowagardens.com).

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## Introduction: Books, Popular Magazine Articles and Midwestern Newspaper Articles About Japanese-Style Gardens

Surprisingly, it took nearly thirty-five years after the opening of trade with Japan for English-language articles and books about Japanese gardens to be published.

Maine scientist Edward R. Morse (1838-1925) may have been the first to write about and illustrate Japanese gardens in an English-language publication. Morse moved to Japan in 1877 to teach Zoology at the Tokyo Imperial University (bringing Darwin's theory of evolution to Japan). His chief interest was in the mollusks of Japan, but he also made numerous fine sketches of Japanese homes that he visited while there. A colleague pointed out to him that that his sketches and observations of the traditional Japanese architecture and way of life that were quickly disappearing as Japan modernized were of far more value to the world than his mollusk drawings.

In 1886, Morse published *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*, which contained a chapter about Japanese gardens, illustrated by numerous line drawings.

caused to be built stone lanterns to illuminate the roads,—stone being a more enduring material. In a temple built by Prince Shotoko, in the second year of Suiko (594 A. D.), the first *ishi-dōrō* is said to have been erected, and the legend states that it was removed from the region above named to this temple.<sup>1</sup>



FIG. 267. — ISHI-DŌRŌ IN UTSUNOMIYA.

A few sketches are here given illustrating some of the forms of *ishi-dōrō* observed. The one shown in fig. 265 was sketched on the temple grounds of Miyajima, on the inland sea. I was informed by the priest there that this stone lantern was over seven hundred years old. Its base was buried, and the whole affair showed evidences of great age in the worn appearance of its various parts. Figs. 264 and 266 represent forms from Tokio and Shirako, and fig. 267 an elaborately wrought one from Utsunomiya.



FIG. 268. — STONE FOOT-BRIDGE.

The little bridges of stone and wood are extremely good examples of rustic-work, and might be copied with advantage in our country. The ingenious device of displacing the stones laterally (fig. 268), or of combining the bridge with stepping-stones, as seen in some of them, is decidedly unique.

<sup>1</sup> This legend is from a work entitled "Chikusan Teizoden."

Fig. 269 illustrates a stone bridge in one of the large gardens of Tokio. The span of this bridge was ten or twelve feet, and yet the bridge itself was composed of a single slab of stone. Fig. 270 shows a little brook in a private garden in Tokio.



FIG. 269. — STONE FOOT-BRIDGE.

Here the foot-bridge consists of an unwrought slab of rock. The *ishi-dōrō* showing in the same sketch consists of a number of naturally-worn stones, except the lantern portion, which has been cut out.



FIG. 270. — GARDEN BROOK AND FOOT-BRIDGE.

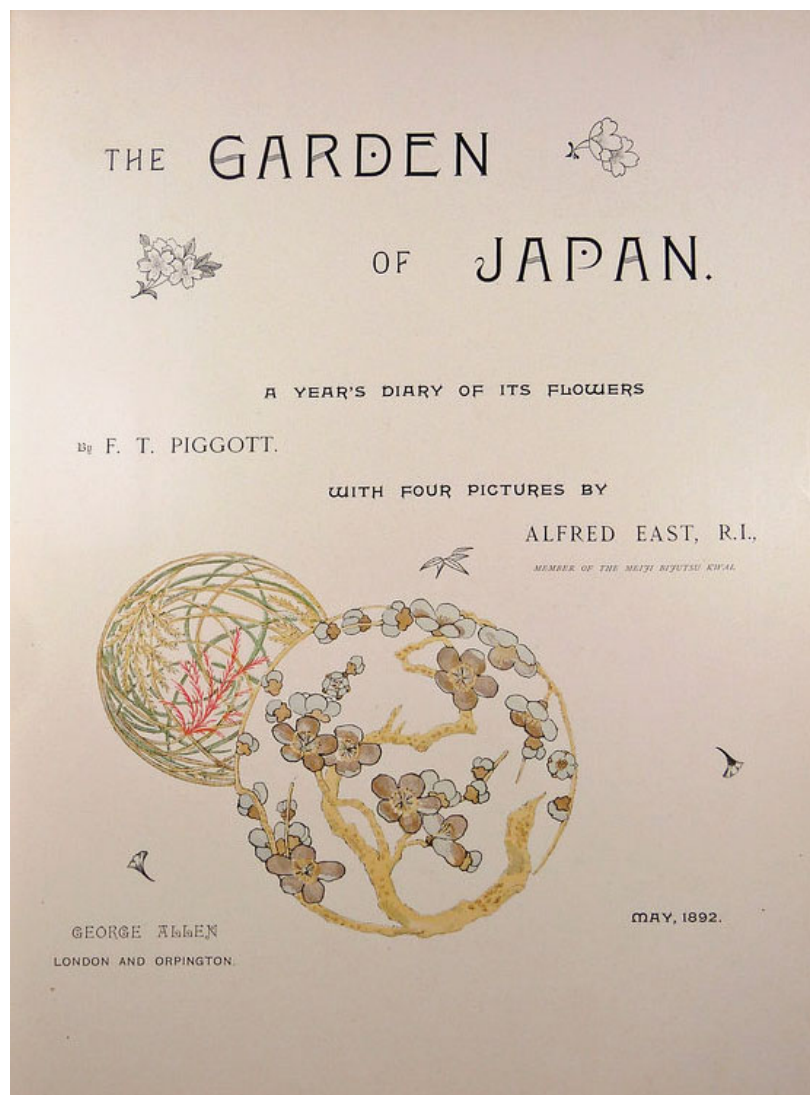
The summer-houses are simple and picturesque; sometimes they have a seat and a *do-ma*, or earth floor; others will have a board or a matted floor. These houses are generally open, the square thatched roof being supported on four corner-posts; others again will have two sides closed by permanent partitions.

Figure 1: Pages from the chapter about Japanese gardens in Edward R. Morse's 1886 book, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*. These were likely the first illustrations of Japanese gardens published in an English-language publication. ([archive.org](https://archive.org))



Josiah Conder (1852-1920) presented the first paper in English on the design of Japanese gardens. Conder was an English architect who moved to Tokyo, Japan in 1876 to teach architecture at the Imperial College of Engineering, married a Japanese woman and spent the rest of his life in Japan. His paper in the May 1886 issue of the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* was a lengthy (55-page), detailed written description of the many elements that comprised Japanese gardens, although it did not contain any illustrations or images. Clearly, that article was the basis for Conder's later 1893 book (see below).

And in 1892, an English jurist stationed for several years in Japan, Francis Taylor Piggott, wrote a lovely diary of the flowers in his garden and other Japanese gardens. *The Garden of Japan. A year's diary of its flowers* is a fanciful collection of descriptions, drawings, poems, Japanese folklore and customs, and several color prints.



**Figure 2: The title page of Francis Taylor Piggott's charming 1892 volume, *The Garden of Japan*. ([Gardenhistory.com](http://Gardenhistory.com))**

## Landscape Gardening in Japan (1893) by Josiah Conder

Josiah Conder published a book, *The Flowers of Japan and The Art of Floral Arrangement*, in 1891. Two years later, in 1893, he expanded his 1886 article about the elements of Japanese garden in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* into a full-length book: *Landscape Gardening in Japan*. This was the first full-length English-language book about Japanese gardens, and was printed in Japan and published by Kelly and Walsh.

*Landscape Gardening in Japan* was a watershed publication, one that gave readers enough information about Japanese garden elements and why they are used in Japanese gardens, to be able to design their own gardens. While the first edition was illustrated only with line drawings, a Volume II was published a few years later that contained black and white photo plates to better show actual gardens in Japan.

Azby Brown, expert on Japanese architecture and design and longtime resident of Japan, wrote in his introduction to a 2002 Kodansha re-publication of *Landscape Gardening in Japan*:

...Conder concentrates on comprehensively cataloguing the types of plants, rocks, lanterns, gates, fences, and other features used in gardens proper, and provides a similarly detailed resume of historical and poetic allusion, and of design principles and theory.

To the original audience, then, Conder's book could serve as a gardening manual. The illustrations dealing with layout... are schematic enough that the compositional principles outlined in the text can be easily grasped. And the depictions of arbors, bridges, fences, lanterns, and other items are clear and detailed enough to serve as the basis for reproduction.... *Landscape Gardening in Japan* contained enough information to enable a garden designer in the West to

create a respectable replica, and undoubtedly it has been used in this fashion time and again.

The present audience, however, is blessed with a greater abundance of sources. ...any number of large format books, beautifully printed in color, can be found. And yet very few books deal with garden design theory the way Conder's does.

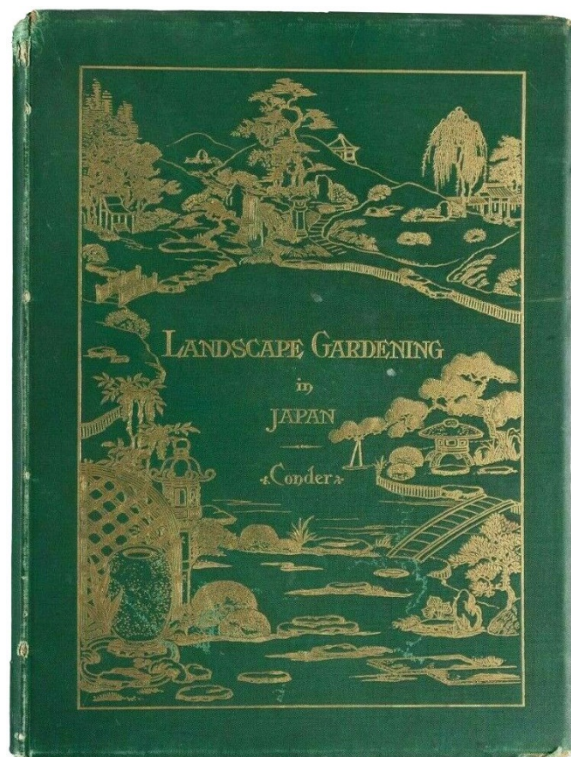


Figure 3: The cover of *Landscape Gardening in Japan* by Josiah Conder. ([abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com))

Conder's Landscape Gardening in Japan still remains one of the best books explaining the design of Japanese gardens, with easy-to-understand line drawings and explanations, and is still in print today (as well as being available online at [archive.org](http://archive.org)).

Conder differentiated five kinds of Japanese gardens: Hill Gardens, Flat Gardens, Tea Gardens, Passage Gardens and Fancy Gardens. And he delineated three grades of each: Finished, Intermediate and Rough, based on the materials and complexity of their design.

And he lists and describes at least 80 different types of rocks, with picturesque names like "Mandarin Duck Stone," View-Completing Stone," and Sleeping Tiger Stone." Additionally (and more interestingly to most westerners), the different styles of stone lanterns are illustrated in detail.

PLATE YJ.

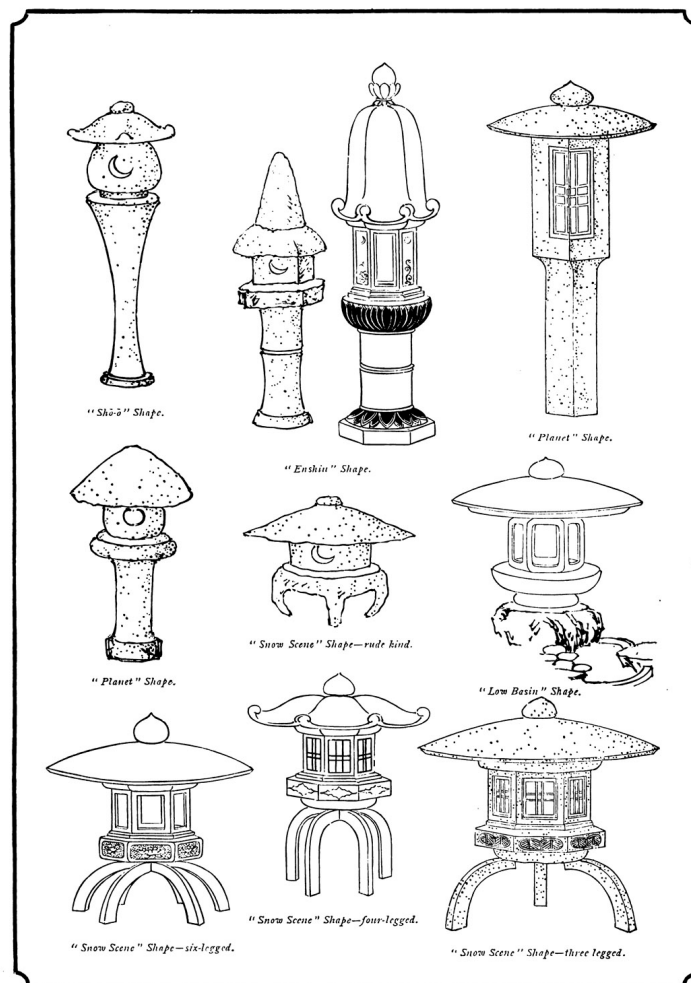


Figure 4: One of the three pages of detailed illustrations of various styles of stone lanterns in Conder's book. (Conder)

GARDEN LANTERNS.

Figure 5 (opposite): Two illustrations showing the differences between the Finished and Rough Styles of Hill Gardens described in Conder's book. The Finished Style was the most ornate and complex in design and materials, while the Intermediate and Rough styles were progressively less complex. (Conder)



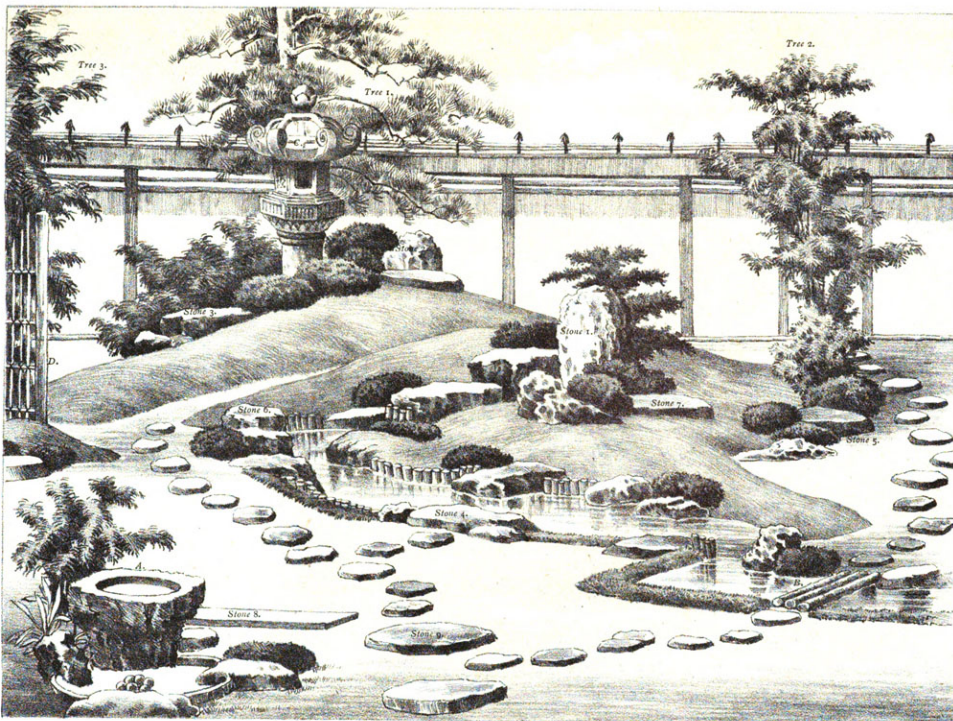
Hill 1.  
Near  
Mountain.  
Hill 2.  
Companion  
Mountain.  
Hill 3.  
Mountain  
Spur.  
Hill 4.  
Near Hill.  
Hill 5.  
Distant  
Peak.  
Stone 1.  
Guardian  
Stone.  
Stone 2.  
Cliff Stone.  
Stone 3.  
Worshipping  
Stone.  
Stone 4.  
Perfect View  
Stone.  
Stone 5.  
Waiting  
Stone.  
Stone 6.  
Moon  
Shadow  
Stone.  
Stone 7.  
Cave,  
or Kwannon  
Stone.  
Stone 8.  
Seat  
of Honor  
Stone.  
Stone 9.  
Pedestal  
Stone.  
Stone 10.  
Idling Stone.



Tree 1.  
Principal  
Tree.  
Tree 2.  
View-  
perfecting  
Tree.  
Tree 3.  
Tree  
of Solitude.  
Tree 4.  
Cascade-  
screening  
Tree.  
Tree 5.  
Tree of  
the Setting  
Sun.  
Tree 6.  
Distanting  
Pine.  
Tree 7.  
Stretching  
Pine.  
A.  
Garden Wall.  
B.  
Snow-view  
Lantern.  
C.  
Garden Gate.  
D.  
Boarded  
Bridge.  
E.  
Plank  
Bridge.  
F.  
Stone Bridge.  
G.  
Water Basin.  
H.  
Lantern.  
I.  
Garden  
Shrine.

HILL GARDEN.—FINISHED STYLE.

Stone 1.  
Guardian  
Stone.  
Stone 2.  
Moon  
Shadow  
Stone.  
Stone 3.  
Hill Stone.  
Stone 4.  
Worshipping  
Stone.  
Stone 5.  
Seat of  
Honor  
Stone.  
Stone 6.  
Waiting  
Stone.  
Stone 7.  
Evening Sun  
Stone.  
Stone 8.  
Label Stone.  
Stone 9.  
Pedestal  
Stone.



Tree 1.  
Principal  
Tree.  
Tree 2.  
Tree of  
Evening Sun.  
Tree 3.  
Tree of  
Solitude.  
A.  
Water  
Basin.  
B.  
Lag Bridge.  
C.  
Stone  
Lantern.  
D.  
Screen  
Fence.

HILL GARDEN.—ROUGH STYLE.



## Lafcadio Hearn

Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) was a Greek-born journalist who emigrated to the United States in 1869 and worked for a number of newspapers in Cincinnati and New Orleans before moving to Japan in 1890. He taught at a school, married a Japanese woman, took a Japanese name and resided in Japan for the remainder of his life.

Hearn was an eccentric and vivid figure who published a number of books about Japan and other subjects written in dreamy prose, including *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* (1894). His work is now treasured by the Japanese public for recording the disappearing Japanese culture in a time of rapid change, and two museums have been established in his former homes.

Newspaper articles about his work and his life in Japan were published across the United States between 1890 and 1904, and these helped introduce the unfamiliar culture of Japan to Americans.



Figure 6: An article about Japanese gardens that appeared in the *Muscatine Journal* in 1892, detailing an article published by Lafcadio Hearn in *The Atlantic*. (*Muscatine Journal*, July 21, 1892)

A JAPANESE TEA GARDEN.



The above cut was made by a Japanese Artist over one hundred years ago. It represents a Tea Garden near Tokohama, and as the poet sings:  
"Behold the lovely plum trees now in bloom,  
Spring drives away the dreary winter's gloom."

Figure 7: This large reproduction of a Japanese print showing a Tea Garden was published in the Cedar Rapids Gazette in 1894. (Cedar Rapids Gazette, February 6, 1894)



In 1901, Wilhelm Miller published a book called *How to Make a Flower Garden*, which consisted of numerous article-chapters written by horticultural experts and garden writers. It was widely publicized in newspapers across the United States and reissued in at least four editions between 1901 and 1905.

One chapter in that book that was particularly commented on was contributed by William Verbeck, who related the story of growing up in Japan and later making a Japanese-style garden around the Japanese-style summer house he built for himself at the Manlius school in Syracuse, New York, where he was employed as headmaster from 1888.

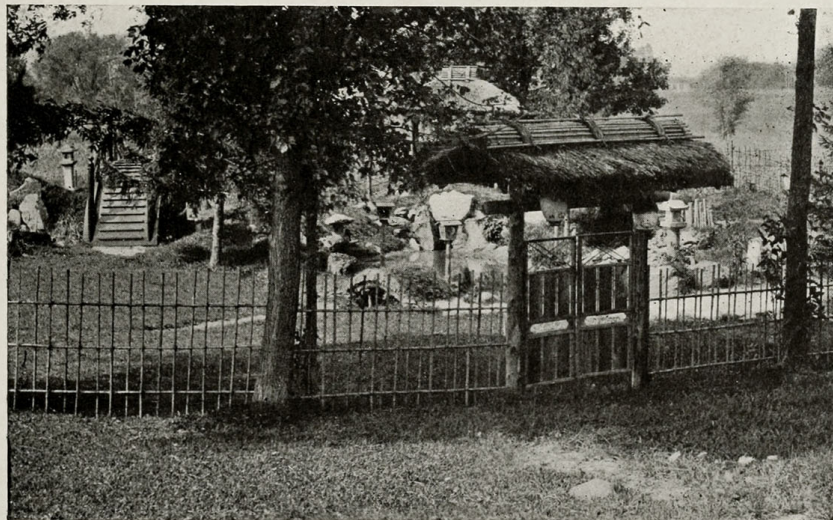
The chapter by Verbeck was followed by a short chapter about the Japanese Tea Garden at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco.

## CHAPTER XVI. JAPANESE GARDENING FOR SMALL AREAS

### I. A JAPANESE GARDEN IN AN AMERICAN YARD

BY WILLIAM VERBECK

**B**ORN and brought up in Japan, my natural playground was the Japanese garden. I was happy when I drowsed away a hot afternoon under a distorted pine, on the shady side of a child mountain, with a book about elves and dwarfs in my hand; and in my imagination I would people the little hills and dells with the wee folk. Later, when the maples were red, a score of my Japanese playmates would join me in mimic war; and, armed with bamboo lances and swords, we attacked and counterattacked, now hiding in mountain fastnesses, now wading through iris ponds. The masking of hill behind hill and the artful vistas of the ancient garden-builder had prepared for us an ideal stage for strategy and battle. As I grew older,



"With rye straw I thatched the gate. My fences were made of bamboo fishing poles tied with rough hemp rope"

Figure 8: The first page of William Verbeck's article-chapter, "A Japanese Garden in an American Yard." (*How to Make a Flower Garden* by Wilhelm Miller, 1905, [archive.org](http://archive.org))



# House & Garden

Vol. II

MARCH, 1902

No. 3

## JAPANESE TEMPLE GARDENS

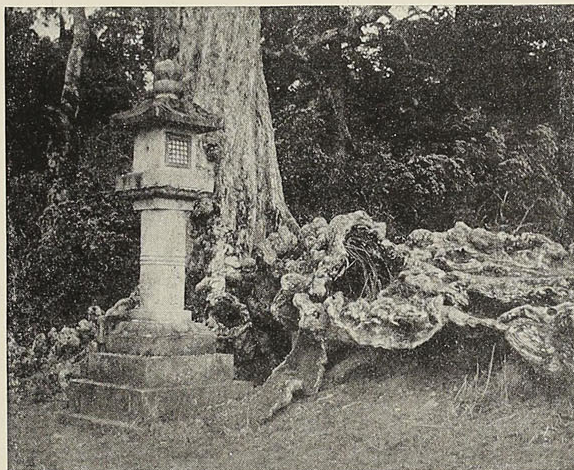
IN the dim gardens of mouldering Buddhist temples, one may still find, as in the temples themselves, hints of the old Japan. The sacred tradition that has preserved the original forms of eighth century architecture through a long sequence of structures, built only to be consumed and again restored, has held as well in the surrounding gardens; and though nothing may remain of the ancient originals, save only the fantastic stones, far-sought and eagerly treasured, the curves of the walks are still the same, the placing of the shrubs and flowers and gnarled dwarf trees unchanged, and even the patterns traced in the silver sand are the patterns of long ago.

They are very fascinating, these temple gardens, and they have a character wonderful in its diversity. Sometimes they are nothing more than the necessary forecourts of minor temples; a terrace, a few steps, a lantern or two, a grinning stone dog, or benignant image of Jizō, "The Helper," and perhaps a crabbed tree or bush of scented box. Then they become solemn and ghostly graveyards, crowded with ranks of gray and moss-covered monuments of strangely beautiful shapes, leaning, all of them, from the jostling of endless earth-

quakes; the newer ones,—yes, and some of those hoary with antiquity,—blurred by the thin smoke of burning incense-sticks and fronted by sections of bamboo holding freshly cut flowers. Again they blossom into the full glory of the stately and hieratic garden, the domain of nature glorified by consummate art,

where rocks and sand and water, lotus, iris, peony, azalea and the royal fuji, box and maple, pine and cherry are all blended into one wonderful setting for the scarlet temple that flames in the midst, against its background of forest or serrated hill.

Yet whatever its estate, the temple garden is less a pleasance than a framework; it is, like every good



IN THE FOREST OF NARA

garden, a modulation from pure nature to pure art. In the old temple of Horenji at Shiogama, you may see how finely everything leads up to the lofty shrine; and the effect must have been finer yet when the temple was still Buddhist, and before the Shinto priests, who now control it, raised the rather clumsy torii at the foot of the dizzy flight of steps. Again at Nara, rocks, box, lotus, palm and pine are all placed just where they will do most honour to the temple itself, and together with this, compose into the picture that is perfect and complete.

Figure 9: A 1902 photo-illustrated article about Japanese temple gardens by Ralph Adams Cram that appeared in *House and Garden* magazine. (*House and Garden*, March 1902, [archive.org](http://archive.org))



## THE CRAFTSMAN



Tokyo: garden of a nobleman

as it will confuse the garden, and thus take away the beautiful effect of the trees. Trees which grow on a mountain must not be planted beside a lake, as the original place of their growth should be closely considered in transplanting. Except the plum and the cherry, trees of deciduous leafage must not be planted in the front part of a garden. Trees which, by their spreading branches, would cast shadows over the water, should be placed near a bridge, and a lake. Such disposition will serve in hot summer time to give a cool, refreshing look to the scene, and add much charm on moonlight nights. The position of trees in a garden should be carefully guarded, so as not to give them a look of posts standing in a row. The garden-artist must endeavor in planting that each one of the trees be seen plainly and to its best advantage. Some masters, among

them Rikiu, preferred to have the nearest trees the tallest, decreasing in height with the increase of distance; but Oride, for instance, held exactly the contrary opinion.

Stones form the frame of a garden. Even one stone placed incorrectly will mar the whole grace and beauty. The ancients believed in having stones nine in number: four straight and five flat ones, as a charm to drive away the evil spirits. However, that Buddhistic superstition set aside, this form

is to be observed; for, without these nine stones, a garden will not look formal. For stepping-stones those which have a rounded surface, or which are split, should be avoided.

A stone basin of water, beside its use for washing the hands, serves to ornament a garden. In front of a large guest room, an ornamented basin is placed to add to the



Toyko: garden of a famous restaurant

Figure 10: The May 1904 issue of *The Craftsman* contained an article by T. Karasawa, "The Art of Japanese Gardening," (*University of Wisconsin*)



Economy and practicality being the aim of the natural Japanese garden, the interior of the tea-house is used as a poultry shed (see page 493)

## A JAPANESE GARDEN SIX FEET SQUARE

By O. TSUJI

THERE have been Japanese gardens a-plenty written of, but always where the spread of ground was somewhat ample and allowed of a little liberality of treatment. This records the newest idea in Japanese gardens, where it is possible to have the Far East in a back yard that measures six feet\* by six. Twenty-five dollars will nicely cover the total cost of this vest-pocket edition of the Orient.

In the center of the thirty-six square feet dig out the ground for a pond of oblate-spheroid shape the diameter of which is three and one-half by two feet, and the depth two feet. Cement the bottom and sides and introduce a brace of gold-fish. With the excavated earth build a mountain to the left of the pond, a mountain two feet high of irregular sloping sides, and cover with grass sods. Again to the right of the pond, build a companion mountain of soil to the height of three feet. Between these twin heights let a waterfall lead to the pond—a waterfall of earth and stones, with no water.

One of the purposes of this toy scene is to conquer the back-yard fence and the horrors of the alley. So to the rearward of our mountains and on the hither side of the back fence let us plant four pines two feet high, worth half a dollar apiece. Between the right-hand mountain and the house plant three maples, two close to the mountain and one nearer the house. These maples will vary in height from two to three feet, and will cost half a dollar a maple.

On the left-hand west fence suspend a bronze lantern,

which will give a dim garden light for \$3.00. From the pond to the house three stepping-stones lead—round flat rocks, obtainable in a vacant lot or on a sea-beach. On the left-hand side of the garden two more maples should be set, one up against the mountain and the second in a direct line nearer the house.

For the work of cementing the pond, molding the mountains, and transplanting the trees, the labor of two men for three days, charging \$3.00 a day, will be required.

We shall then have a vista, a pigmy perspective, instead of slats and ash-heaps.

If, however, one has such wealth of land as 25 x 25 feet represent, a Japanese garden can be built for \$150. The general lines of make-up will be the same as that of the 6 x 6 achievement. Our pond may well be shaped like the map of Italy, with a length of thirteen feet and a width at the toe of nine feet. Two twelve-inch planks meeting on three piles, mid-stream, will lead over its tapering end. The mountains will tower three and a half feet and four feet, respectively. Four Norway maples, seven feet high, will rise skyward behind the mountains and will blot out the back fence.

Between the mountains a stone lantern rises three feet high. It is built of five pieces of stone, and culminates in a flat cap; \$25 will buy it, and yukimi is the name of its shape. On page 528 further details for the construction will be found, together with the choice of trees.

(495)

Figure 11: The March 1905 issue of *Country Life in America* contained a three-page article about Japanese gardens, including a description written by a woman who visited Japan and made a Japanese-style garden in her backyard with the help of her father and a Japanese servant. ([Hathitrust.org](http://Hathitrust.org))





Lotus and water-lilies in a Japanese garden on a 95 x 205 village lot in Pennsylvania

## A JAPANESE GARDEN ON A VILLAGE LOT

By MATTHIAS HOMER

Photographs by HENRY TROTH

THE first suggestion of a Japanese garden came to me from visits to the Japanese Tea Garden at Atlantic City. To many the mention of that quaint garden, with its high-arched bridge across the lagoon, its tea house, its dwelling house, its cascades, its islands and its stone and porcelain lanterns, will recall pleasant memories, but the attractions of the garden were too Oriental to appeal to sufficient numbers in that popular resort, and American attractions were added, which no doubt caused its downfall. Financial difficulties overtook it and I found to my regret that the garden was about to pass out of existence. The material used in construction was being sold at such low prices that I determined to have a Japanese garden of my own.

I consulted two of the Japanese artists who participated in the construction of the Atlantic City Garden, S. Furukawa and A. Kimura, and, gaining their confidence, I induced them to undertake the task of construction. Between S. Furukawa, familiarly known as "Joe," and myself there grew up a strong attachment, so much so that he often referred to me as his "American father."

Once possessed of the idea of having a Japanese garden, the matter of the dwelling which I was erecting at the time became almost a secondary consideration. On a village lot 95 x 205 feet I have a dwelling, a small greenhouse, a vegetable patch, an old-fashioned flower garden and a Japanese garden. Yet the place is not crowded.

Before I began the garden, I had heard that no American could construct a Japanese garden with proper fidelity to detail, and before I was through I knew it. I well remember

the sensations that possessed me when, on the important day of beginning, I found myself acting as "boss" of a Japanese artist, an Italian and an Irishman. I doubt if the boss of the masonry work on the Tower of Babel had a harder job. Joe knew that I did not understand the work, and, with a delicate Japanese tact that never failed, managed to have his own way to the end.

After the excavations for the lake had been made by the Irishman and the Italian, the next important move was to procure suitable time-worn rocks, which we found in a neighboring woods, and which were obtained for the hauling. They were sandstone rocks that had stood the storms and sunshine of a century or more, and water-worn rocks from the shores of Darby Creek. The soil removed from the excavation was used to form the "mountain" and "hills."

Then everything went on smoothly, but with that utter disregard for the lapse of time that makes the Japanese workman so thorough in his work. Whenever it became necessary to place a large stone in position, he would stand with folded arms for ten or fifteen minutes at a time deliberating where to place it.

Reynolds and Donato toiling at the rougher, heavier parts of the work eyed him with envy. Said Reynolds, one hot day, "Faith, an' its a beautiful aisy job that Joe has, ain't it Dan?"

But when the rock was once placed it was there for good.

The Japanese workmen used what appeared to us to be the crudest of tools with remarkable accuracy. They would trim a post or piece of timber with a clumsy looking adze,

Figure 12: This March 1906 *Country Life in America* article had pictures and descriptions of the Japanese garden built for Matthias Homer in Pennsylvania, after he purchased many of the plants and structures from the Atlantic City Japanese Tea Garden in 1901. Two of the gardeners who worked on the Atlantic City garden, S. Furukawa and A. Kimura, built this garden for Mr. Homer. ([Hathitrust.org](http://Hathitrust.org))

UNIV  
OF CALIF



"IN THE PONDS . . . GLOW WITH MANY SHADES OF PINK TO BLUE-  
PURPLE, BLUE TO GREY, AND MAUVE TO PUREST WHITE,  
THE MESSENGERS BETWEEN THE GODS AND MEN."

#### JAPANESE GARDENS OLD & NEW 203

less flowers they bear are regarded as being symbolical of that delicate refinement of sentiment and blamelessness of life which have always distinguished courtliness and true knighthood. There is an old Japanese saying, "Just as the cherry-blossom is the purest and most lovely of flowers, so should the warrior be the best and noblest amongst men."

Scarcely less beautiful, and coming a full month earlier, is the plum blossom; red, pink and white, and pure silver-white flowers. Loved almost as much as those of the cherry-trees, because they are harbingers of spring. As is the case of the cherry-blossom, the flowering of the *umenoki* (plum-trees) is made the occasion for a public festival and holiday. And in January (or a little later, according to the mildness or severity of the season) Tōkyō crowds throng the Tō-kai-dō, bound in happy groups for Mme-yashiki (the plum gardens) at Kamata to view the plum blossoming, and visit the Mme-yashiki at Kameido to see the famous "sleeping dragon plums."

But the charm of a Japanese garden is not merely in its cherry and plum blossoms, though these are so much more written of than the less well-known flowers, which do so much month by month to keep the interest of the garden and gardener ever fresh. Along many an *engawa* hang fruit-like bunches of wistaria bloom, the pale lilac of which contrasts with the brown and weathered woodwork of the eaves and beams. The peony, iris, "morning glory," also play their part in the exquisite adornment of the gardens, both public and private.

In peony time districts such as Izumo and the tiny island of Daikonshima, where it especially flourishes, are ablaze with flame-coloured blossoms. To enjoy the beautiful spectacle the people take a holiday and the schools release their scholars that they may go and view the peony, as they do also the cherry-blossom and plum in their season.

Figure 13: In 1907, an illustrated book, *Old and New Japan* by Clive Holland, was published, and contained a chapter about Japanese gardens. ([archive.org](http://archive.org))





## Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Women's Books and Articles About Japanese Gardens

Many of the earliest books and articles about Japanese gardens were written by men who were interested in art and/or architecture. However, around 1905, the first of a series of articles and books about Japanese flowers and gardens that were authored by women and intended to appeal to women readers, began to be published.

The books were not technical manuals about how to make Japanese-style gardens, as Conder's 1893 book was still acknowledged to be unsurpassable in that vein. In fact, the prefaces in both of the books shown in this section contained direct apologies from the authors for writing *yet another* book about Japanese gardens, after such a perfect guide had already been published.

Rather, these books were written to sell the idea of the beauty of Japanese gardens to women. They avoided too much technical discussion, and when details such as the different sorts of rocks in a Japanese garden were presented, often by quoting directly from Conder, they were prefaced with explanations for why such seemingly ridiculous details needed to be discussed.

These books focused on the *sentiments* that Japanese-style gardens could evoke, and were accompanied by occasional color plates showing beautiful scenes in Japanese gardens, often including demure, kimono-clad Japanese women carrying Japanese parasols. Copious folklore, poetry and romantic stories about Japanese gardens and culture were related in the text along with the details of what was important in making Japanese-style gardens.

Figure 16: *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan* by Florence and Ella Du Cane is a beautiful book, filled with lovely illustrations and descriptions of romantic Japanese garden scenes. Two of the book's color plates are shown on the next page. (*The Flowers and Gardens of Japan* by Florence and Ella Du Cane, 1908, [archive.org](http://archive.org))

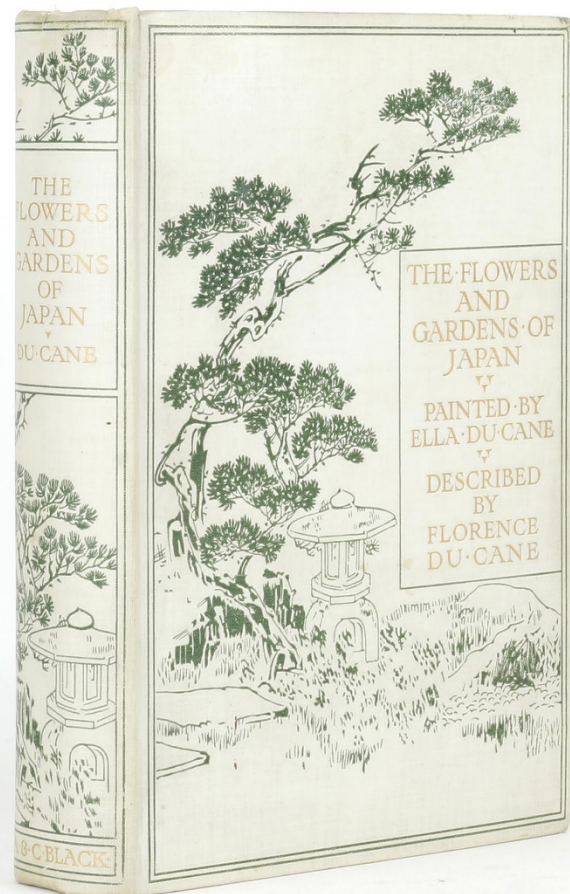






Figure 17: Two of the color plates from *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan* by Florence and Ella Du Cane, 1908, ([archive.org](http://archive.org))







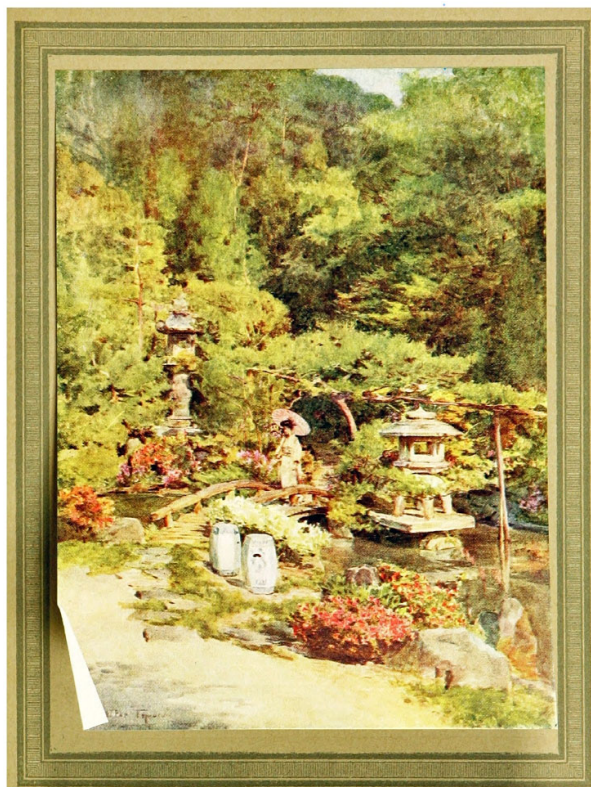
# JAPANESE GARDENS

BY  
MRS. BASIL TAYLOR  
(HARRIET OSGOOD)

WITH TWENTY-EIGHT PICTURES IN COLOUR BY  
WALTER TYNDALE, R.I.

NEW YORK  
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY  
LONDON: METHUEN & CO. LTD.  
1912

Figure 18: Frontispiece and title page (above) and two color plates (below) from Harriet Osgood Taylor's *Japanese Gardens* (1912). ([archive.org](http://archive.org))





After the initial interest in Japanese-style gardens during the first decade of the twentieth century, there seems to have been a pause in the publication of magazine articles about them, perhaps due to the initial novelty wearing off.

Additionally, landscape architects began to warn against the indiscriminate building of Japanese-style gardens in inappropriate locations, where they might appear out of context with the setting or architecture. For instance, an article was published in the July 1907 issue of *The Garden*, “True and False Originality” by Wilhelm Miller (editor of *How to Make a Flower Garden*, 1905, shown earlier in this section). In it, Miller asserts that “No genius can ever harmonize a Japanese garden with an American landscape. It should always be an isolated feature. False originality creates a very large Japanese garden, or puts it where all the world may see it. True originality devises new ways of secluding it, so that one’s friends come upon it suddenly, as a pleasant surprise.”



4. Appropriate to the Pacific coast because of its connection with Japan (Golden Gate Park, San Francisco)

5. Appropriate to a small city lot, if secluded, because it is a miniature form of gardening

6. Appropriate for Americans who have lived long in Japan. The late Admiral Bartlett's tea garden

#### THREE JAPANESE GARDENS THAT HAVE SOME JUSTIFICATION IN FITNESS

**Figure 19: Three photos of Japanese-style gardens that illustrated Wilhelm Miller’s article in the July 1907 issue of *The Garden*, “True and False Originality,” showing Japanese-style gardens that he viewed as *not* being inappropriate to their setting or for their garden owners (including the one featured in the March 1905 issue of *Country Life in America* shown earlier in this section). (*Hathitrust*)**

Interest in building Japanese-style gardens was rekindled after the end of the First World War and peaked during the 1920s and early 1930s. The twenties were the era of “anything goes,” and this seems to have applied to gardens as well as other ideas.

Whereas the first wave in interest in Japanese-style gardens originated with artists and wealthy people who had traveled to Japan, the second wave was a more popular, middle-class enthusiasm. The 1920s and ‘30s were a period of great gardening enthusiasm in general – many garden clubs were established during this time, and garden books and magazines like *Better Homes & Gardens* enjoyed widespread appeal. Even those Midwestern gardeners not adventurous enough to build one themselves still thought Japanese-style gardens were interesting and beautiful, and enjoyed reading magazine articles about them.



## THE JAPANESE GARDEN IN AMERICA

THE TRUE AND INCONGRUOUS IN OUR ADAPTATIONS  
OF EASTERN ART IN GARDENING—WITH ILLUS-  
TRATIONS FROM THE JAPANESE GARDEN OF MR.  
JOHN S. BRADSTREET, AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

By HENRY H. SAYLOR

Photographs by the author



A GENTLEMAN informed me a few days ago that hundreds of country dwellers are eagerly awaiting practical information regarding the principles involved in Japanese gardening. As soon as these people are told how to proceed there is every reason to believe that the market value of stone lanterns, bronzes, and dwarf pines will reach new high-water marks. With this sword of Damocles hanging over our heads I am impelled to use every effort to strengthen its suspending cord with an emphatic warning, rather than to sever it with encouraging words as to the ease with which we can have so-called Japanese gardens of our own.

To begin with, why should you, in particular, design your garden in the manner of another and far-distant people? Their country, their climate, their mode of living—all are utterly different from yours. Have you any reason to believe that in Japanese gardening you can express something of your own personality to better advantage and with greater emphasis than in the manner and with the means that belong to you through inheritance and your present environment?

Unless you have a real claim on Japan—a tie of intimate knowledge, of descent, or of close association, think well before you make up your mind to build you a Japanese garden. Though it be never so accurate to type, never so well

founded upon the thousand and one curious and, to us, meaningless laws of Japanese gardening, it will be an exotic, a vain thing, at best a beautiful sentence in a language with which you are utterly unfamiliar.

I wonder if we realize how ludicrously incongruous our poor imitation of Japanese manners must seem to them. Not long ago I attended a fancy-dress ball where everyone appeared in Japanese garments. There were two Japanese gentlemen with me who were enjoying the display with polite interest. Suddenly, however, they were convulsed with merriment over the entrance of a newcomer—a very dignified old gentleman wearing with evident pride a garment differing from all the others. After the most profuse apologies for their apparent lack of respect, the Japanese explained that the dress was one such as is worn only by a Japanese bride at her wedding. If we err easily in one of the simplest of Japanese arts, how can we hope to become proficient in that deeper Eastern art of gardening, with its intricate maze of symbolism, that has been growing for a thousand years? It may be argued that such knowledge and understanding is unnecessary for our American adaptations, and that we can obtain at least an interesting and picturesque effect without it. Yes, and we can obtain such an effect by writing a lot of meaningless Japanese characters on a sheet of paper;



A view of one end of the garden from under the "Resting Shed." All the paths are of gravel bordered with the inevitable garden stones



Looking toward the "Resting Shed" across the "lake." The bottom is of cement, its edge carefully hidden by the gravel and stones

Figure 20: An article about the Japanese-style gardens of John Bradstreet in Minneapolis (shown in Paper Number 4 in this series). (*Country Life in America*, Vol. 15, No. 5, March 1909)



## AN ADJUSTABLE TYPE OF GARDEN

MARTHA HASKELL CLARK

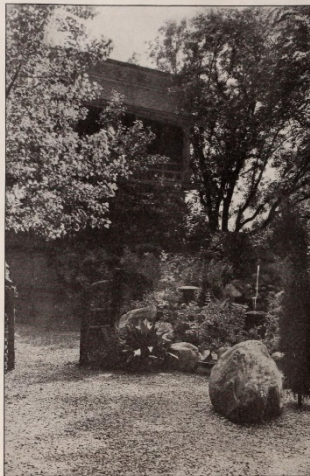
Developed with Special Reference to Areas of Miniature Size, the Japanese Style of Garden Design Admirably Adapts Itself to City Conditions

**M**ORE and more are the city dwellers endeavoring to secure for themselves a modicum at least of the pleasures of the garden. And though many of the commonest things of the ordinary garden are denied them—such as the long vista over a park-like expanse of sward, or the trim perennial border, or the broad pathways and general air of spaciousness of the country—the particular type of garden with which we are here concerned, which has been carried to such perfection by our friends the Japanese, is eminently suitable and perfectly possible.

None in this country save a Japanese himself can hope to have a veritable Japanese garden; and none should for a moment aspire to have. For the true Japanese garden is a natural outgrowth of race sentiment, tradition, and not infrequently religion, and requires years of unbelievably careful planning and minute attention to details before it reaches completion. Moreover, when it is at last complete the most admirable example of the Japanese garden might seem very bare and flowerless and unlike a real garden to our untrained hence perhaps unseeing, western eyes.

It is simply the Japanese garden type, so often wrongly called a "Japanese Garden," that offers so many invaluable suggestions to the owner of a city lot or a small suburban place. For it allows of narrow winding paths that make the most of the tiniest area's dimensions in an astonishing way, of sharp turns and twists that afford delightful opportunities of surprise and garden interest, of vistas in miniature, of tiny cascades and water-gardens, in short, of full and artistic use of every available foot of space. Such a garden can be admirably developed within a plot of ground from twenty-five feet square up.

The two designs given on the opposite page are based on the assumption of a larger area, these having been prepared for a space fifty by fifty feet in size. But there are suggestions in them that will apply to almost any size plot; they may themselves indeed be elongated one way or the other to fit a narrow space, and the planting reduced until it likewise conforms.



DEEPENING SHADOWS FULL OF MYSTERY

A true Japanese garden, an expression of tradition, sentiment and often religion, is not a practical possibility for Americans but the method may be adopted as here where the diminutive scale brings a sense of a greater expanse on a confined area.

lantern with vines: 4 and 7. White Lilac: 1 and 6. Purple Lilac: 8. Persian Lilac: A-1, A-2, A-3. Pink, white and scarlet Mallow: B-1, B-2, B-3. Arabas in flame and orange, pink and white, and white and pale yellow: C-1, C-2, C-3. Aster lavon, nova-belgae flore plena, puniceus and novae-anglae: E. Oriental Poppy: F. White Day-lily: G. Pyrethrum double and single in white and shades of pink. 1-1, Flag Iris in lavender, white and yellow: 1-2, Japanese Iris: 1-3, Siberian Iris in dark blue and white.

As a final warning (the idea of a Japanese garden is so insidious that warnings are continually needed!) let me again say that here is a type of gardening distinctly national, speaking a language, we may say, of which the most of us are ignorant—if not altogether unaware. Let us adopt its suggestions therefore, but never undertake to copy a Japanese garden—unless the entire area can be wholly and completely hidden.

Planting keys for each accompany them, garden number one having been planned for both garden display and cut flowers for the house, garden number two for garden display primarily.

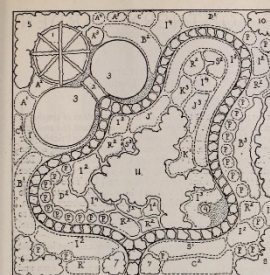
Key to Design I—1, Arbor or trellis with annual and perennial vines; 2, Rustic bridge; 3, Water-garden with Water-lilies and Nymphaeas; 4, Stone lantern with vines; 5, Japanese Cherry; 6, White Lilac; 7, Forsythia; 8, Persian Lilac; 9, Mock-orange; 10, Japanese Quince; 11, Hybrid Rhododendrons mixed; A-1, Bamboo Metake; A-2, Fraxinus Ravennae; A-3, Miscanthus (Eulalia) japonica variegata; B-1, B-2, B-3, Hemocallis lutea, aurantica and Thunbergiana; C-1, C-2, C-3, Japanese Maples var: japonicum aureum, polymorphum dissectum, atropurpureum, and rubrum; D-1, Azalea in yellow and flame color; D-2, Azalea in pink and white; 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, Iris var. Siberian, Flag, Japanese, and Oriental; 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, Japanese Anemone, Whitebird, Queen Charlotte, and Prince Heinrich; K-1, K-2, K-3, Oriental Poppy, Goldfish, Pinks, Lilies, and Silberblick; L, Japanese Pinks in mixed single and double; S, Shasta Daisy; R-1, Rugosa Rose, single pink and white varieties; B-2, Hybrid Tea Rose, Irish Star, Irish Fireball, etc.

Key to Design II—1, Rustic thatched arbor or trellis with vines; 2, Water-garden with water plants; 3, Stone lantern with vines; 4, 5, 6, Purple Lilac; 8, Persian Lilac; A-1, A-2, A-3, Pink, white and scarlet Mallow; B-1, B-2, B-3, Arabas in flame and orange, pink and white, and white and pale yellow; C-1, C-2, C-3, Aster lavon, nova-belgae flore plena, puniceus and novae-anglae; E, Oriental Poppy; F, White Day-lily; G, Pyrethrum double and single in white and shades of pink; 1-1, Flag Iris in lavender, white and yellow; 1-2, Japanese Iris; 1-3, Siberian Iris in dark blue and white.

**Figure 21: The August 1920 issue of *The Garden* magazine contained a two-page article about Japanese-style gardens for smaller city yards. Although not identified, the photograph on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the article and left-hand plan are of the Japanese-style garden of John Bradstreet in Minneapolis. (archive.org)**

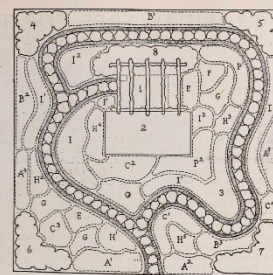
The Garden Magazine, August, 1920

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DESIGN I

(above)  
With a view to utility as well as effect on abundance of flowers for cutting for indoor use may be had from the Lilac, Arabas, Iris in rich variety, Oriental Poppy, Pinks, Roses, and Japanese Anemones. And every bit of space is brought into use with the minor effect of water to give greater expansion.



DESIGN II

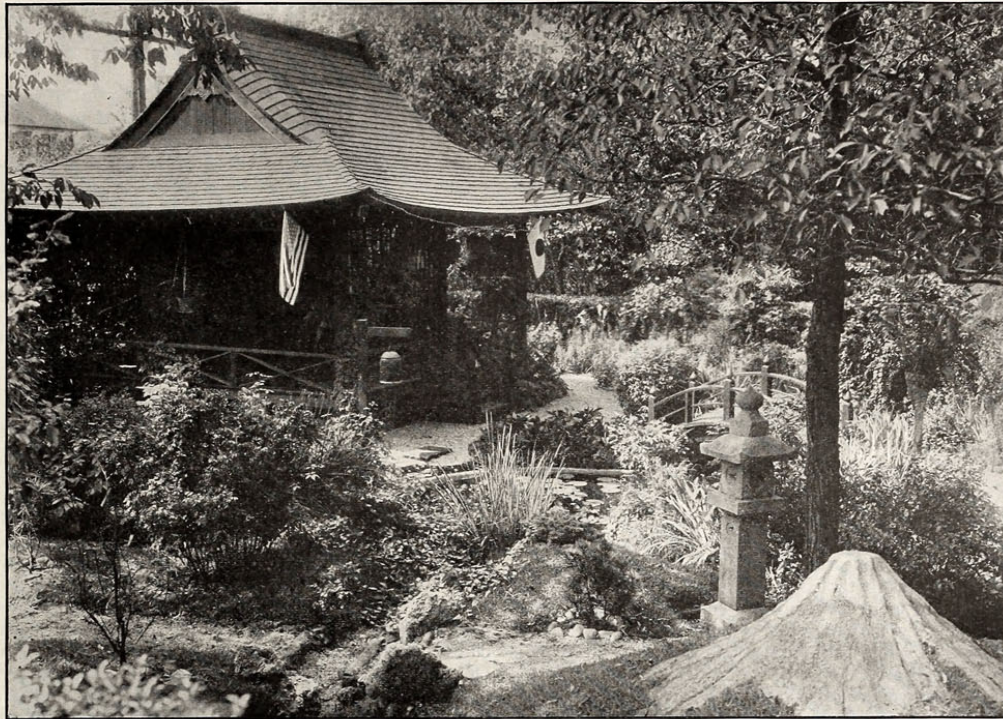
(above)  
Here we have a garden planned on a more picturesque scheme with a rustic shelter secluded in one corner, the central space filled with evergreen shrubs. This is a garden to be entered into for an open-sided. The Japanese arrangement is further emphasized by the placing of two stone lanterns guarding the way to the rustic summer house.



THE CHARM OF WATER

Be it ever so tiny and humble the Japanese motif seems to demand the introduction of water. It not only lends a certain air of life but it is forced in setting the scale for the whole arrangement, and in reflecting the changing shadows of the hours it becomes the central feature of interest.





## A JAPANESE GARDEN Under a Chicago Sky

Robert H. Moulton

A NOTABLE example of what can be accomplished in the way of landscape art on a small plot of ground is found in this little garden of Mr. Frederick Bryan which measures only eighty feet square. So perfectly is everything proportioned and so artistically have the various features been laid out by the Japanese landscape architect that the garden seems in fact much larger. The high surrounding hedge gives it exclusiveness and, once inside, the visitor feels that he has stumbled into a corner of Japan itself.

Formerly a bit of unbroken green lawn, the garden of to-day is channeled by a winding stream and decked with all the variety characteristic of the perfectly Japanese. An ingeniously constructed little lake now teems with higo (golden carp of the Japanese variety); flowers, shrubs, plants, and trees are Japanese; and across the stream leading from the little lake is a Japanese bridge of quaint design.

The teahouse itself, measuring about sixteen feet square, was constructed by Japanese carpenters without nails. Lanterns are strung under the overhanging eaves, and many metal lanterns adorn different parts of the garden, while one of the most effective touches of all is a miniature of Fujiyama, the sacred mountain of Japan.

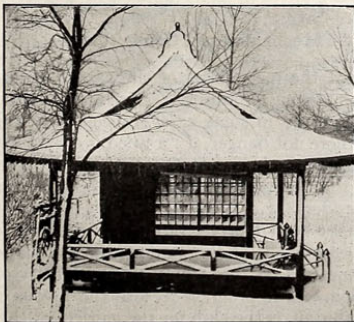
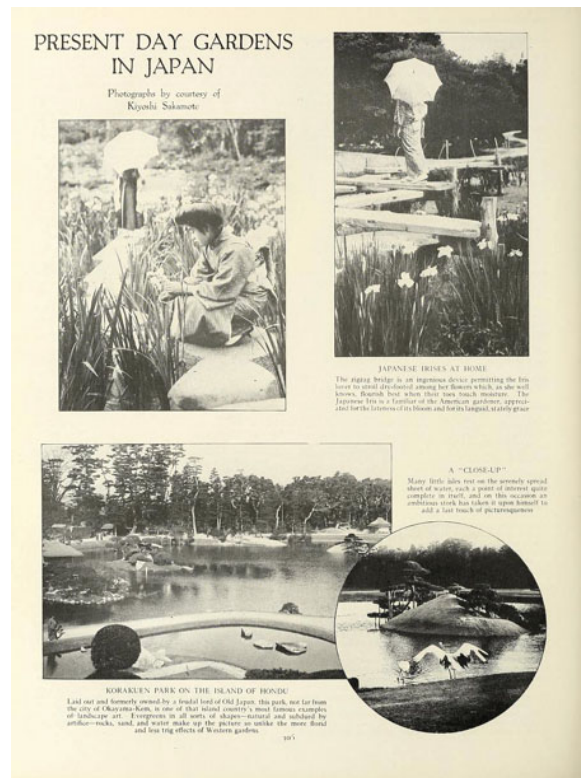
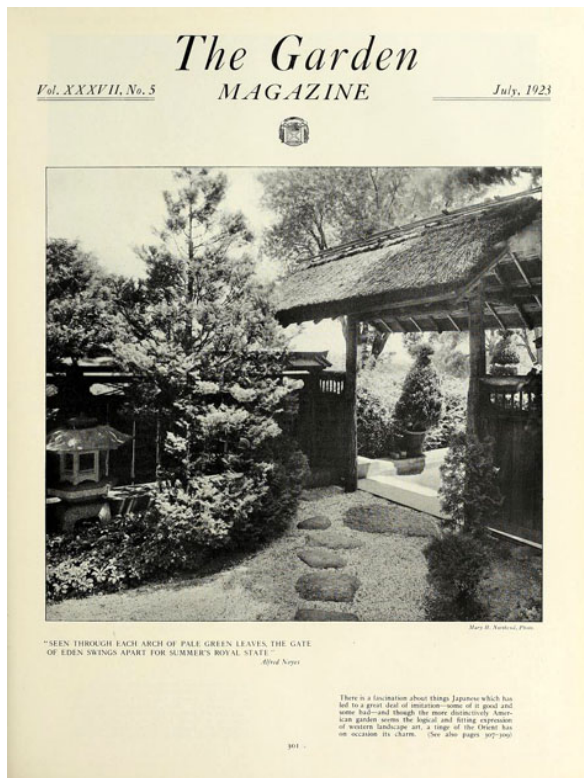


Figure 22: The June 1922 issue of *The Garden* magazine contained this one-page photo-article about the Chicago garden of Frederick Bryan, a local horticultural enthusiast (he died in 1917, so he was not living when this article was published). (*Archive.org*)



Figure 23 (below): The July 1923 issue of *The Garden* magazine contained four articles about Japanese gardens, including one (lower left) loosely about the Fabyan Garden in Geneva, Illinois. (*Archive.org*)







THE GENERAL VIEW OF THE GARDEN FROM THE TEAHOUSE

## A JAPANESE GARDEN

*Designed and Built in America in the Traditional Manner*

BY HENRIETTA MARQUIS POPE

THERE are many gardens in America that purport to be Japanese because they contain, perhaps, a stone lantern, a pagoda, a basin, or some other feature borrowed from Japan, but a real Japanese garden in this country is rare. At Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, however, on the estate of Dr. and Mrs. Homer Gage, is a notable example of the landscape art of the Mikado's kingdom. This garden, designed and built by a Japanese named Kiota, covers about a quarter of an acre of ground. The illustrations give a faint idea of its perfection of detail, but to appreciate

its value we must study the rules which govern this more complicated art of gardening, which is an ancient one in Japan.

If we are to enjoy his garden we must first of all try to understand the customs of the Japanese; a difficult beginning, for many of his habits are the reverse of ours. He backs his horse into the stall, thus leaving him ready to

come out when needed, and thinks our method very queer indeed. He buries his dead in a sitting posture, considering our way as peculiar as his seems to us. In the garden he prunes his trees and shrubs by cutting away all the young vigorous growth, encouraging the old, gnarled, crooked branches. He works to dwarf the plant, the shape of the branch and direction of growth being far more interesting to his mind than its bloom. He, cruelly, to our thinking, prunes his azalea. We grow it for its flaming flowers; he grows it for the form of branch and bush, the flowers being only an incident in,



AT THE LEFT IS A MINIATURE PAGODA OF STONE AND ABOVE THE WHO-GOES-THERE LANTERN SHOWN IN DETAIL AT THE RIGHT



Figure 24: The October 1925 issue of *House Beautiful* magazine had an article about the Homer Gage Japanese garden in Pennsylvania (Gage bought the Atlantic City Japanese Tea Garden fixtures out of which he had this garden constructed around 1902). (*University of Iowa*)



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## Blooms from Japanese Gardens

ANDERSON McCULLY



THE Japanese garden ideal is a difficult ideal for the occidental mind. Flowers in a Japanese garden are a matter of accident, for with rare exceptions they happen because the tree or the shrub that bears them has a desired form of limb and branch. Conceive of stripping blossoms of peach that the shape of the limbs might be better exposed; of clipping gorgeous azalea flowers that the shrub may not lose the perfect roundness of its outline!

We associate chrysanthemums with Japanese gardens, but the chrysanthemum is not in reality a flower of the gardens of Japan.

The chrysanthemum is the crest of the Emperor and figures much in Imperial ceremony. It is rather a specimen flower of the wealthy nobles, who do spend vast sums upon the cultivation of the potted plants.

In the real design of the Japanese garden only the iris, wistaria, and lotus are used. The peony, morning glory, and chrysanthemum, while introduced, seem never to be an integral part of this outline. Tho the lily is widely cultivated for export purposes, they reject it with the rose as being entirely too obvious. The flowering trees rank far higher in the estimation of the Japanese—cherry, plum, peach, magnolia,

and then the azaleas and camellias. They draw no line of demarcation between the pink cloud of peach bloom and the flaming glory of autumn tinted maple. They are both form and color to their users.

But more prized than any flower, or any blooming tree, are their dwarfed and gnarled and twisted pines. They are placed in pairs at the gates, *Pinus thunbergia* in the place of honor at the left as befits the one ascribed to the male; *Pinus densiflora* modestly to the right in woman's accepted sphere. And the *Pinus parviflora* too is stunted, dwarfed, and trimmed. No stone lantern seems quite complete without the long pine arm thrown above it, no water but reflects these gnarled and twisted branches.

The greatest glory of bloom comes from the three fruit trees, plum, cherry, and peach. Tho these are fruit trees, they are grown primarily for their form of outline and blossom, as even those fruits that are edible are very poor. The plum is the first to bloom, beginning in January and extending into March. It is one of the four "Floral Gentlemen" of Japan. While its earliest variety, the no-ume, is a rather insignificant white, the later ones are truly glorious—pink, red, lemon yellow, or pure white. They are worthy of the flower-viewing festival of March when great crowds tramp thru scurrying gusts of snow to make holiday in hours of quiet gazing upon these revered blossoms. The plum feasts are not so gay as the later cherry festivals. Endless tea and sake taken over braziers of charcoal do not seem to pierce the natives' reverent reserve for this emblem of purity. Tho the plum stands first with the intellectuals, the cherry is the popular favorite.



An American garden after the  
manner of the Japanese

BETTER HOMES and GARDENS, July, 1927

5

Figure 25: This article about Japanese gardens appeared in the July 1927 issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine (published in Des Moines, Iowa and widely read by Iowa residents). ([bhg.com](http://bhg.com))



## The Gardens of Japan by Jiro Harada (1928)

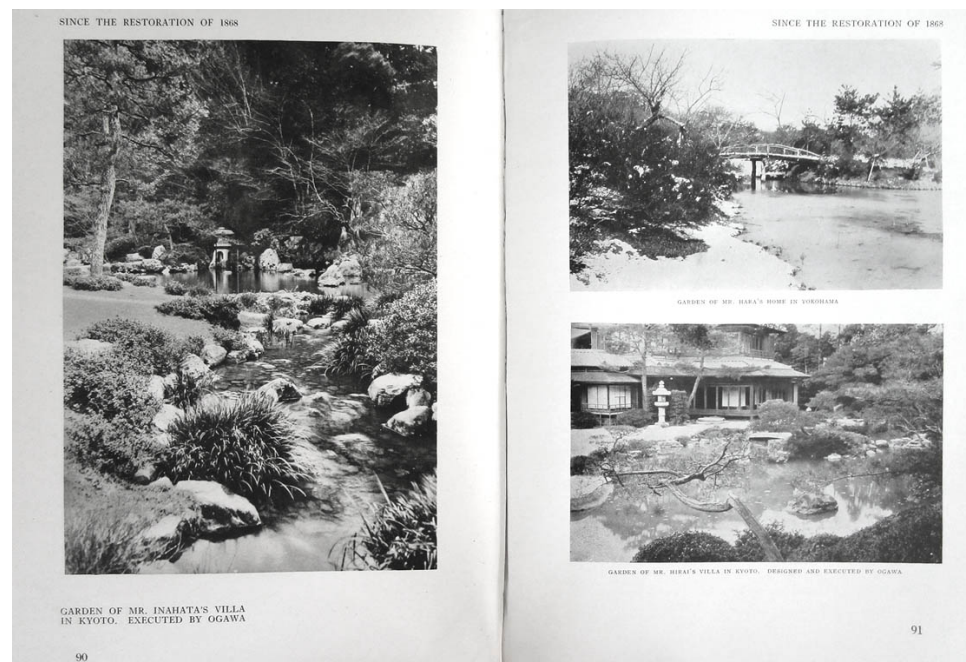
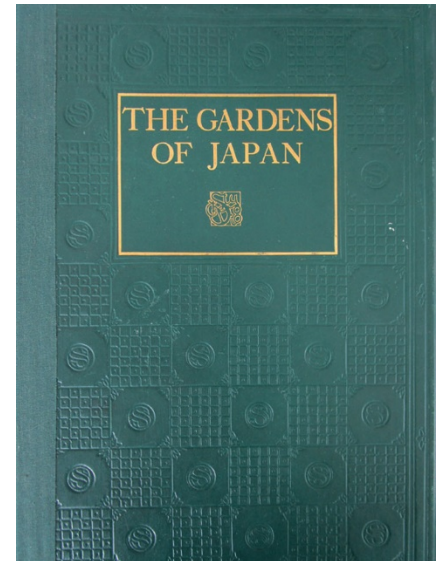
Jiro Harada, of the Imperial Household Museum in Tokyo, published his English-language book, *The Gardens of Japan*, through a London publisher, The Studio Limited, and his book was clearly intended to appeal to British and American readers.

The volume begins with a short history of Japanese garden development; continues through an overview of the different main styles of gardens in Japan; and then includes a section briefly describing the features and elements common to Japanese gardens. These three introductory sections of written material accompanied by line drawing illustrations comprise the first forty pages of the book.

*The Gardens of Japan* then continues with the major part of the book, around 140 pages of black-and-white garden photos printed on glossy paper. These photos are accompanied only by brief captions identifying the gardens pictured.

The photo section of the book has undoubtedly been an important historical record of documenting more than one hundred of Japan's most well-known gardens – likely particularly important following the devastation of Japan during the Second World War.

This book was almost certainly widely accessed by any American interested in Japanese gardens during the late 1920s and 1930s – certainly including Professor Elwood before his trip to Japan in 1929.



**Figure 26:** The black-and-white photo section that comprised most of *The Gardens of Japan* (1928) was a tremendously useful reference for both Japanese and foreign Japanese garden enthusiasts. (*Harada*)



*The harmony that characterizes the true Japanese garden is well exemplified in this and other views shown here of the garden at Sonnenberg, the home of Emory W. Clark Esq., at Canandaigua, N. Y.*

## The Tranquil Charm of the Japanese Garden

by FORMAN T. McLEAN

*Photographs by George W. Hance*

WHAT is the attraction of Japanese gardens? Is it their grotesque misshapen trees or their odd foreign furnishings? Truly these are interesting curiosities if set in the midst of our usual amusement park landscape. But in a proper Japanese setting they are all true and integral parts of the natural scenery. It is the calm Oriental spirit of the Japanese, pervading all of his art,

that makes his gardening distinctive. His is a feeling and sentiment fostered and matured during the long centuries in his island home of wooded mountains, rushing rocky torrents, and island-dotted lagoons. All of these and more are worked into the scheme of his landscape gardening.

At first glance, the plan and even the details of the Japanese garden seem to be so dominated by rigid rules and supersti-

tious precedent that the whole thing appears hopelessly artificial. But it is really based more on natural models than is any of our Western landscaping. The Japanese, true to his Oriental training, accomplishes his purpose more by suggestion and indirection than by meticulous copying of detail. A single contorted dwarf black pine on a diminutive rocky islet may suggest to him a whole vista of

Figure 27: The August 1928 issue of *Country Life* magazine contained an article about the philosophy and meaning of Japanese gardens. (*University of Iowa*)



## Country Life July 1929 Article by Mrs. Cyrus E. Woods

The July 1929 issue of *Country Life* magazine contained the article on the following pages, which related the experiences in Japan of the author, Mrs. Cyrus E. Woods, wife of the newly appointed (in July 1923) US Ambassador to Japan.

Mrs. Woods and her husband were feared dead following the Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1, 1923 that, along with the following tsunami, conflagration and wave of disease, destroyed most of Tokyo and killed more than 150,000 people. Ambassador Woods led the US relief effort; after this the Woods stayed in Japan less than a year before returning to the US. The earthquake generated widespread sympathy and fund-raising for Red Cross relief efforts across the United States, including in Muscatine.

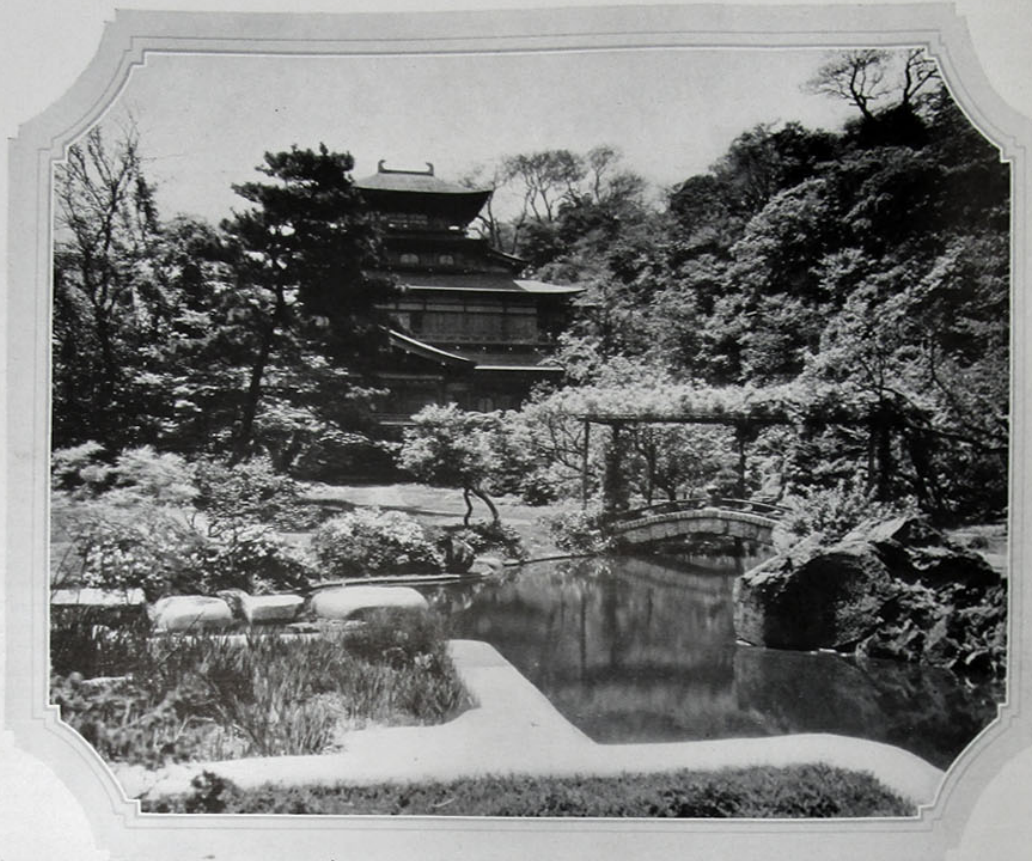
Figure 28: The September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1923 front page of the Muscatine Journal employed a banner headline about the Japanese earthquake, as did the front page of the September 3<sup>rd</sup> issue: "QUAKE DEAD OVER 100,000". Lower on the page a headline reads: "Iowa Legion to Dispatch Relief."



Mrs. Woods' article is filled with lovely and melancholy descriptions of old Tokyo gardens, including the Japanese gardens around the U.S. Embassy:

My last sight of this embassy garden is one of my most cherished memories. It was a very hot night, that of August 31, 1923, and because I could not sleep I went to my window and looked out on a fairyland of flowers and trees and old stone temple lanterns, gleaming in the silvery moonlight, with the peace of centuries upon it. The next night there was not one stone left upon another, not a tree, not anything to mark the site of all this beauty. The earthquake of September 1<sup>st</sup> had wiped it all away.

(continued after article, shown in full)



DE COU, FROM EWING GALLOWAY  
*The ability of the Japanese to contrive wonderful scenic effects in a small area is well exemplified in this beautiful garden belonging to a wealthy merchant in Tokio*

## The Glorious Gardens of Japan

*And some lessons to be learned from them*

by MRS. CYRUS E. WOODS

ALL Japan is a garden, and the gardens of large estates are only copies in miniature of that greater garden, which is Japan. They are not flower gardens of a glowing mass of color, such as we have, but, on a tiny scale, they represent hills and valleys, waterfalls, ponds, and streams, with small islands dotted here and there, and crossed by picturesque little bridges. There will be masses of fantastic-shaped rocks, sometimes hauled from great distances, but placed to appear as if this had been their resting place for centuries. Here and there the flowers will be growing, as though nature alone had sown the seed. Sometimes the flowers will grow in masses. Sometimes only a single perfect specimen will show itself among a few scattered stones.

The Japanese contrive wonderful scenic

illusions in a small area. Hidden among a pile of rocks will be a tiny waterfall, whose silvery trickle delights you all day long with its sweet music, and yet is never seen until some unexpected turn brings you to a fairy dell, with cool moss-grown stones and lovely ferns, and here, you discover, is your waterfall.

Again they will create the illusion of long sweeping vistas, and with only a slight turn you will come upon a tiny tea house nestled in a clump of shrubbery, so hidden that its existence might never be suspected. Another slight turn and you will come upon a small pond with lovely pink lotus sleeping on its still waters, while a small curved bridge invites you to discover new beauties on the other side. All is artificial, but always contrived to be a perfect replica of nature.

Before the earthquake of 1923, our

American Embassy garden was the garden of an old temple, and it was very lovely at all seasons. There were a few old tombstones with queer hieroglyphics, no doubt recounting the glorious deeds of some sainted priest or hero. But these ancient stones did not give a gruesome effect, but rather added charm, for they were all moss grown, with shy little flowers nestled amongst them wherever they could find a foothold.

One of the interesting features of the garden was a wisteria dragon. An old tree had fallen, and its limbs, as they struck the ground, imbedded themselves, and some old priest, no doubt seeing a certain resemblance to a dragon, had pruned and trimmed to make it more so. Then the artist in him sighed to make it beautiful, so he planted a wisteria beside it, and trimmed and pruned some more,

Figure 29: *Country Life*, July 1929. (University of Iowa)



so that when he was through, and the wisteria was in bloom and the winds would rustle the long slender blossoms, a perfect illusion was created, and you could fairly hear the monster growl.

The picture of our garden would be incomplete without mentioning the picturesque little coolie women, with their huge hats, and long blue trousers tightly wrapped around their sturdy ankles, picking and weeding and sweeping the ground all day long. When they were squatting at their work, their big hats almost concealing them, they looked like giant mushrooms gone astray.

I was told that sometimes the gardeners, in digging, would unearth an old skull, but I never saw one, and my last sight of this Embassy garden is one of my most cherished memories. It was a very hot night, that of August 31, 1923, and because I could not sleep I went to my window and looked out on a fairyland of flowers and trees and old stone temple lanterns, gleaming in silvery moonlight, with the peace of centuries upon it. The next night there was not one stone left upon another, nor a tree, nor anything to mark the site of all this beauty. The earthquake of September 1st had wiped it all away.

One of the most interesting experiences



*The Japanese garden at Irithorpe, the home of Dr. and Mrs. Homer Gage at Shrewsbury, Mass., succeeds admirably in capturing the essential atmosphere of its Oriental prototype*

CHARLES DARLING

*The incredibly lovely results of Japanese garden methods are suggested in this glimpse of a Kyoto garden in cherry blossom time*

I had in Japan was my visit to the sacred garden of the wife of the Emperor Meiji, grandmother of the present Emperor.

By reason of the terrible earthquake we were drawn very close to the Japanese people, so that on leaving Japan it was only a natural sequence that a prominent official of the government should call on us to ask us if we wished to pay a farewell visit to the Meiji Shrine and offer a green branch to the spirit of the Emperor.

This Shrine is not the tomb of the Emperor but the resting place, on earth, of his spirit, and therefore much more sacred. His tomb is in Kyoto, but about a year after his death his spirit was brought to Tokio, with all the Shinto religious rites, and installed in this beautiful Shrine. Of course to pay this visit was an honor that we were very glad to accept. Accordingly, on the day appointed we were escorted to the great torii gate, which guards the entrance to the Shrine. Here we were met by Shinto priests, dressed in their long flowing white and blue robes and tall black head-dresses. We were conducted to the great high priest, cousin to that Empress about whose garden I shall tell you presently. According to ancient custom, one of the priests carried

(Continued on page 124)



DE COU, FROM EWING GALLOWAY

## THE GLORIOUS GARDENS OF JAPAN

(Continued from Page 49)

**"It's so cold!"****"It's so STUFFY!"****"It's so dry!"**

ALL winter long, the same exclamations. The same discomfort. The same longing for a house filled with warm, live, fresh air.

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a stick with long streamers, which he waved over us. It was afterward explained that this was to drive away all evil from our minds, so that we could enter into the abode of the spirit of the Emperor with only pure thoughts.

We progressed still further into the sacred place, where we were met by more Shinto priests, who handed my husband and myself each a long wand-like green branch, with bits of flax tied to it. This flax was typical of clothing, which we were to offer to the imperial spirit. We were told that he did not need a house, for he had this beautiful Shrine, so a house would be superfluous. Neither could we offer him food, as the priests supplied him with great plenty; but his clothes would wear out, so we could offer him these, as the flax typified. This we did, going quite alone before the holy altar, where, making three low and reverent bows, we laid our tokens down. We backed away from the altar, still bowing, and joined the high priest, who was waiting for us.

The high priest asked us if we would visit the sacred garden of the Empress, wife of the Emperor Meiji, back of the Shrine, a place so revered by the Japanese that few are permitted to enter. Of course, we were delighted. This Empress was a great nature lover, and as I see her garden, in memory, there were rugged slopes, thickly wooded, with tiny summer houses clinging to the rocks, and in the middle, the dry bed of a stream, winding its sinuous way, until lost in the hazy distance. This stream bed was planted full of the wonderful Japanese iris.

I said to the high priest that I had a little bit of Japanese iris in my garden at home, and thought it was very beautiful. Then, to my surprise, he said: "When this is through blooming I shall send you some roots."

I had been in America only a few months when a letter came and a photograph of the iris blooms which were being sent to me by the high priest, from the sacred garden. Then followed a long period of waiting and finally a letter came from our Secretary of Agriculture, telling me of the arrival of the iris and that, on account of possible plant disease, it would be kept in Washington in quarantine for one year. When the year was up, came another letter from Washington, saying the iris was

in healthy condition, and was awaiting my orders. It finally arrived, and last year it bloomed for the first time. It is most beautiful.

Flower arrangement, as everyone knows, is an art in Japan. Flower masters truly love the flowers, and do not thoughtlessly cut them, to scrap them afterward, but select with care only those they will need to accomplish the artistic arrangement they wish to create.

I had the privilege of having lessons from a most distinguished master. He counted an empress among his pupils. One of the beautiful combinations he showed me was of white iris and purplish-red maple leaves, arranged in a large, low dish. Another combination was of great branches of feathery pine, with peonies clustered at the base, arranged in a very tall vase.

It takes a long time to arrange the flowers properly and you kneel on the floor, on their immaculate matting, and consume several cups of tea as the arrangement progresses.

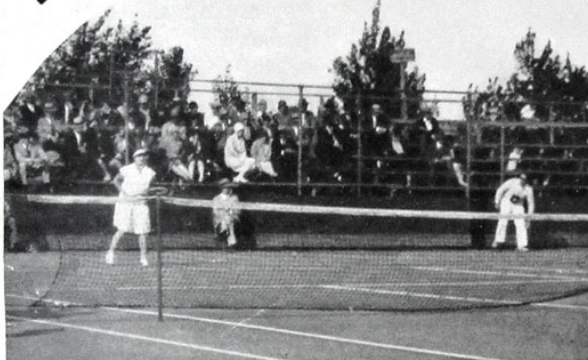
Briefly, few flowers is the rule, usually not more than two varieties combined, and if possible these are selected a trifle in advance of their regular blooming time so that you may thrill in anticipation of the beauty that is coming.

They never bunch the flowers as we do, but have as a foundation to work on, one upright branch, another a little lower to sway to one side, and another yet a little lower, nodding forward. These may be filled in with a few more flowers, always avoiding a crowded effect. They even snip out overlapping leaves, after the arrangement has been completed, so that you can see the beauty of each separate leaf and flower. All must be perfect specimens, and an effect of swaying to the side, as though caused by a gentle wind, is considered very beautiful.

Illustrative of this desire to avoid crowding is the story of a celebrated early flower master. At that time there were few morning glories in Japan, but this master had made a rare collection of them, which he had cultivated with much care. Their fame finally reached the ears of a great lord, who expressed a desire to see them. Accordingly the flower master invited him to a morning tea. On the appointed day the lord arrived, and was exceedingly angry, on walking through the



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garden, to find not a single specimen, but the ground leveled and strewn with fine sand. He sullenly entered the tea house, but there his emotion changed to joy. Every Japanese house has an alcove called the *tokonoma*, where their treasures are displayed. In the *tokonoma* of this tea house the master had placed a rare bronze vase containing a single perfect morning glory, "the queen of the whole garden."

THERE are many different schools of flower arrangement in Japan, but I speak only of the one in which I was taught.

A practical arrangement for growing plants is as follows: pot a rose geranium and, in the four corners, sow a few seeds of the moon flower, marking the place with four tall, slender green sticks. Lace green raffia across these to make a square, and as the seeds sprout and

start to vine, train them on this delicate trellis. The rose geranium conceals all the ragged undergrowth of the moonflower, the pure white bloom and delicate tendrils alone bring visible.

Chrysanthemums in Japan are trained in many wonderful ways. One called the waterfall is accomplished in this way: in the early spring a small blossoming white variety is planted in a tall crock, which is then turned over on its side to grow. Of course the tender little plant curves always upward, seeking the light, and as it grows the Japanese keep turning the crock until it is nearly upside down, and the branches curve completely over one side. When the blooming time comes the crock is righted, and the plant so trained naturally falls in a shower over the side, with its wealth of white blossoms looking like the spray of one of their lovely waterfalls.

In her article, Mrs. Woods also described a visit before she left Japan to the sacred garden of the Empress:

...a place so revered by the Japanese that few are permitted to enter. Of course, we were delighted. ...there were rugged slopes, thickly wooded, with tiny summer houses clinging to the rocks, and in the middle, the dry bed of a stream, winding its sinuous way, until lost in the hazy distance. This stream bed was planted full of the wonderful Japanese iris."

She then went on to describe how, after her remark that she grew some of that type of iris at home and thought that they were very beautiful, the Shinto head priest escorting them insisted that he would send her some after they were done blooming. And after a long transit and year-long quarantine period, the irises from the sacred garden arrived, and after planted, bloomed for the first time during the previous year of 1928. "It is most beautiful."

### Did Mrs. McColm Read This Article?

Mrs. McColm could well have subscribed to *Country Life*, as in 1931 she invited the Muscatine Garden Club members to see her new Japanese-style garden and discuss a March 1931 *Country Life* article about Japanese gardens (which will be shown after the next article).

It is certainly possible that reading this compelling and deeply romantic *Country Life* article during the summer of 1929 could have clinched Mrs. McColm's decision, likely made before

November of that year (when the Twentieth Century Club garden party in her garden was announced in the newspaper for the following June), to have a Japanese-style garden area added to her own property in the following spring 1930.

Early photographs of Mrs. McColm's Japanese-style garden show that irises – discussed vividly in this article – were planted throughout her garden, and newspaper articles demonstrate that they were a specific focus of her garden. A May 8, 1931 *Muscatine Journal* article announced that Garden Club meeting, specifying that:

A discussion of Japanese gardens *with particular reference to the iris* will be held by the Garden club announced for Monday afternoon at the home of Mrs. E.L. McColm.” (emphasis added)

And the May 12, 1931 *Muscatine Journal* article published following that meeting described Mrs. McColm's new Japanese-style garden, and focused particularly on irises, “The garden, started last year, is at its full glory now, with the iris in bloom...”.

It would not be surprising that Mrs. McColm would include numerous irises in her new garden, if she had read this article and been inspired by it.

Such speculation can only remain speculation, though.



# THE JOY OF A JAPANESE GARDEN

*Easily constructed and practical for America*

by **R.W. MADDEN**

TO THOSE of us who have given but a passing thought to the subject, the mention of a Japanese garden calls vaguely to mind visions of a large estate with an expansive lake choked with lotus, dotted with islands, and crossed by high-arched, impractical bridges; a pagoda here and a summer house there; freakish looking trees; and the whole liberally sprinkled with odd-looking things called "stone lanterns"—the outstanding idea being something decidedly oriental looking, garish, and brilliant hued.

The true Japanese garden is an expression of the intense love of nature characteristic of these people, and a satisfaction of their æsthetic taste. The ideal is to arrange beautiful spots which must be of a natural order. The quality of restraint is outstanding, and concealed beauty is emphasized to the end that it may be discovered, giving that thrill of joy to the soul which comes from doing a good deed in stealth to have it found out by accident. It is a tender attempt to accomplish things possible in the impossible thing we know of as life.

The aim of the Japanese garden is to bring man closer to Nature, to create a sylvan solitude conducive to retrospection. In order to attain this aim, all sorts of means have been resorted to; great ingenuity has been displayed. In one garden an open view to the sea was obstructed by planting a grove of trees in such a way that only when the guest stooped to wash his hands and rinse his mouth preparatory to entering the summer house would he catch a glimpse of the shimmering sea through the trees—a glimpse of infinity—thus suddenly revealing the relation of the dipperful of water lifted from the basin to the vast expanse of sea, and of himself to the universe.

In contrast to our gardens, which are usually lawns and flower beds in more or less orderly geometrical designs, the Japanese garden is designed to exhibit in miniature a landscape in whole or in part. It lends itself as well to the small ground space as to the large estate. Indeed, it is expressed in the extreme in the art of the "tray garden," which consists

of building the garden on a tray one or two feet across.

The Japanese garden is first and foremost an arrangement. Simplicity is the keynote. Flowers, because of too great variation in the seasons of the year, are used with scarcity, whereas trees and shrubs, because of the changing colors of their leaves, their delicate blossoms, their colored berries, and the artistic form of their branches, play an important part. Marked attention is given to the selection of stones. Their color, size, shape,

and texture are carefully studied, being determining factors in their placing or grouping. Water is always present, whether actually or implied. In fact it is the center around which the entire garden is built. It may take the form of a spring issuing from the rocks to emerge in a gushing stream, or a cascade or waterfall emptying itself into a pond or lake after its hidden course through miniature hills. When implied, the structure is fundamentally the same, but it takes the form of a dried-up water course.



HEWITT

*The beautiful estate of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., at Pocantico Hills, N. Y., contains a charming example of an authentic Japanese garden, with stone lanterns, rocks, water and islands, and the element of "concealed beauty" so characteristic of the gardens of Japan.*

Figure 30: Another article published in *Country Life*, in the July 1930 issue. (University of Iowa)

## Country Life March 1931 Article by Sarah M. Lockwood

Following is the March 1931 *Country Life* article that the Muscatine Garden Club discussed at the May 1931 meeting in Mrs. McColm's Japanese-style garden.

The author, Sarah M. Lockwood, was an interior designer who published books on several subjects: a 1926 book, *Antiques*, about early American furniture, and *Decoration: Past, Present & Future*, a history of interior design from the ancient Egyptians to the modern period. She also published *New York: Not So Little and Not So Old* (1926), which was an illustrated history of New York City, as well as several historical novels.

According to *Cultural Diplomacy in U.S.-Japanese Relations, 1919–1941* (2007) by Jon Thares Davidann, Lockwood traveled to Japan during a group world tour in 1930, and wrote about her impressions of the country after her return in an article: "Japan – One Face East, One Face West," published in *World's Work* (December 1930).

Lockwood's article is a surprisingly perceptive and clearly written overview of the philosophy and meanings of Japanese gardens. She clearly knew something about gardens before she took her trip; in the first paragraph she counts herself among those "who love gardens and have made a study of them." And she obviously paid close attention the gardens she saw in Japan.

Lockwood likely studied books about Japanese gardens too – almost certainly Jiro Harada's 1928 book, *The Gardens of Japan*, shown earlier in this paper, from which the line drawings illustrating this article were reprinted.

Lockwood's article focuses on what Japanese gardens *mean* to Japanese people: "...somehow the real meaning of the Japanese garden escapes us. It speaks a language we do not understand.... We must erase from our minds what the garden means to us, and try to imagine what his garden means to the Japanese."

For westerners, the garden is a "place set apart... outside of ourselves, something that we possess simply to satisfy our sense of objective decorative beauty." Whereas, "In Japan, the garden springs from a totally different impulse. It is... a picture of his thoughts. And it is planned to re-create or inspire similar thoughts in the beholder."

Lockwood touched on the symbolism that is packed into every Japanese garden: An "example of symbolism is seen in stones laid across a lake... to suggest the flight of a tiger with her three cubs. One can plainly see where one of the little fellows lagged behind! Stones are sometimes laid to represent the flight of wild geese, and so on."

She discussed the Japanese concept of *shibumi*, which she defined as "'a refined taste hidden beneath a commonplace appearance only to be appreciated by the cultured.' Under this influence Japanese art developed a subtlety almost too abstract for the Occidental mind to follow."

Lockwood also illustrated at length that every detail of a Japanese garden is based upon fixed rules, which she included numerous examples of. Yet Japanese garden makers are above all, fixated on emulating nature: "His whole ambition – to which he will cheerfully devote his lifetime – is to capture in his garden as much as he can of her mystery and beauty."

The article was almost certainly as perplexing as it was enlightening to the members of the Muscatine Garden Club who discussed it on that long-ago May afternoon in Mrs. McColm's garden.





*The passionate devotion to Nature in Japanese gardens is everywhere apparent. All gardeners aim to capture as much as possible of her mystery and charm. The garden above nestles at the foot of a miniature Fuji-San*

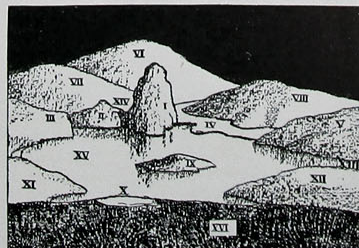
## GARDENS OF JAPAN

*Symbolism the keynote of their design*

*Sketches from "The Gardens of Japan," by Jiro Harada, The Studio, Inc., publishers*

by **SARAH M. LOCKWOOD**

*The essentials for planting the landscape type of Japanese garden are: I. Guardian stone; II. Small hill for cascade; III. Side mountain; IV. Sand-blown beach; V. Near mountain; VI. Distant mountain; VII. Middle mountain; VIII. Mountain spur; IX. Central island; X. Worshipping stone; XI. Master's island; XII. Guest's island; XIII. Lake outlet; XIV. Cascade mouth; XV. Lake; XVI. Broad beach*



ONE of the sad facts about life on this interesting old globe is that there is so much to know and we don't know it. An arresting example of this is what we don't know about Japanese gardens. Even those of us who love gardens and have made a study of them are often hazy when it comes to knowing what the Oriental means by his. We sense a certain intangible perfection, a tantalizing suggestion of mysteries hidden beneath an appearance of casual grace, but somehow the real meaning of the Japanese garden escapes us. It speaks a language we do not understand.

It is not surprising that we should feel this because, as a matter of fact, that is exactly what the Japanese garden does do. It is the expression of a people of ancient culture whose philosophy of life is totally different from our own. Before we can hope to enjoy the Japanese garden we must learn something of the impulses that created it. We must erase from our minds what the garden means to us, and try to imagine what his garden means to the Japanese.

With us the garden is objective. It is a place set apart into which we go to enjoy the variety and abundance of bloom, to be ravished by colors and perfume. We love it dearly. We work like a dog over it. We worry about pests and diseases and soils. In some ways we are more intimate with our garden than the Japanese is with his but, nevertheless, the lovely retreat remains outside of ourselves, something that we possess simply to satisfy our sense of objective decorative beauty.

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**Figure 31: The article about Japanese gardens that was discussed by the Muscatine Garden Club during their May 1931 meeting in Mrs. McCole's new garden. (*Country Life*, March 1931, University of Iowa)**





*The true Japanese garden is an interpretation of the individual; there is not a stepping stone, waterfall, vista, or tree in it but has its symbolism. The "cha-seki" (tea house) in this garden is reached by the "path to self-illumination"*

In Japan the garden springs from a totally different impulse. It is an interpretation of the spirit of the individual, a picture of his thoughts. And it is planned to re-create or inspire similar thoughts or moods in the beholder. Beauty, of course, there must be, but it is an inevitable result and not, as it is with us, the entire objective. With the Japanese not one tiny stepping stone is placed without definite spiritual significance behind it. Every waterfall, every vista, every blooming tree is a natural symbol used to catch the eye of the imagination.

In every Japanese garden of any size there is a tiny tea house called the "cha-seki," hidden in a secluded spot and reached by following the "path to self-illumination." It is in this little house that the sacred tea ceremony takes place, and the greatest honor that can be shown a guest is to invite him to it. In one ancient garden in Japan the view on the way to the cha-seki has been obstructed by a grove of trees. It is only when the guest, sensible of the honor that has been bestowed upon him, stoops to wash his hands and rinse his mouth at the stone water basin before entering the cha-seki that he is arrested by an unexpected glimpse of the illimitable sea, "a glimpse of Infinity, thus suddenly revealing the relation of the dipperful of water lifted from the basin to the vast expanse of the sea—and of himself to the Universe." Another less subtle example of symbolism is seen in stones laid across a lake between an island and the main land to suggest the flight of a tiger with her three

cubs. One can plainly see where one of the little fellows lagged behind! Stones are sometimes laid to represent the flight of wild geese, and so on.

It is obvious, from even these brief examples, that there is literally no end to the significance that can be packed into a Japanese garden when natural materials—rocks, water, the shape of the land, trees, shrubs, and sand—are imbued with inner meaning, and where inspiration for their use may be drawn from an ancient culture rich in tradition. It is the subtlety of these arrangements, not their resulting beauty, that is the concern of the gardener and the test of his ability.

Gardening in Japan is definitely an art and has been for centuries. Most of the gardens of to-day are developed according to certain schools or theories laid down by the old masters, usually philosophers or priests, who sought, through the medium of garden symbolism, to mold religious thought. These influences varied through the centuries and the gardens varied with them, but it was the Zen sect of Buddhism, beginning in the fourteenth century and most profoundly affecting all branches of art, whose influence to-day still largely determines the character of the Japanese garden.

The sect expressed itself through "cha-no-yu, a cult founded on the admiration of the beautiful in the every-day facts of life." It infused into everything a "shibumi," meaning "a refined taste hidden beneath a commonplace appearance only to be appreciated by the cultured." Under this influence Japanese art developed a subtlety almost too abstract for the Occidental mind to follow and it is nowhere better illustrated than in the garden. This preoccupation with shibumi explains the almost too-careful appearance of natural grace; it is the reason why there are no forced masses of bloom in a Japanese garden, no arbitrary planting merely to please the eye. The effort is always toward a natural landscape so arranged that its beauty unfolds with the changing seasons. It is planned to be lovely as Nature is lovely, and to bring with it the same commonplace but profoundly significant suggestions.

The natural effect of the Japanese garden is not left to Nature, however. There

*Another type of Japanese art is the flat garden. Use: I. Guardian stone; II. Hill stone; III. Moon shadow stone; IV. Worshipping stone; V. Cave stone; VI. Garden well; VII. Solitude stone; VIII. Pedestal stone; IX. Label stones; X. Stone of two deities; XI. Stone of honor*





is nothing haphazard about it. Superficially, it is the most artificial of gardens, for every detail is the result of cold scientific study based upon fixed rules. Just as the stunted tree is forced by scientific artfulness to grow into the perfect replica of some giant of the forest, so the landscape garden is cajoled into a perfect likeness of mountains and rushing torrents. To this end certain principles as to perspective, mass, relative height, and so on, are employed with mathematical exactness. There are, for instance, at least ten recognized ways to make a waterfall, which include glide falling, in which the water glides over a smooth rock; thread falling, in tiny streams; linen falling, in a thin transparent sheet; uneven falling, more to one side than the other; detached falling, leaping free of the surface; repeated falling, from varying heights; all of them not only beautiful but deliberately calculated to stimulate a definite train of thought. The same careful study is given to the shapes of the lakes and hills and islands. One of the many rules is that from no point in the garden should the whole of the lake be seen, else nothing would be left to the imagination.

Trees and shrubs come in for the same deep consideration. A beautifully shaped pine, symbol of longevity, is often used to centralize the whole garden. Another tree, a maple perhaps, is placed in front of the waterfall to catch the spray; at the back of a pool for its reflection in the water; to partially conceal a bridge; or before a stone lantern so that the light may be seen through the branches. A tree in bloom is more suggestive when seen at a distance against a green background. Big leafed trees, placed near the house, will bring the music of pattering drops to listening ears. Certain trees are chosen for their delicate blossoms, others for the tint of the leaves in autumn or the tiny berries when the leaves are gone. Some trees are loveliest in winter when their branches are bare against the snow. All of these values are carefully balanced against each other for continuous effect, not only upon the eye but upon the spirit.

The shapes of the bridges, the course of the paths, the size and grouping of the stepping stones, the very variation of the



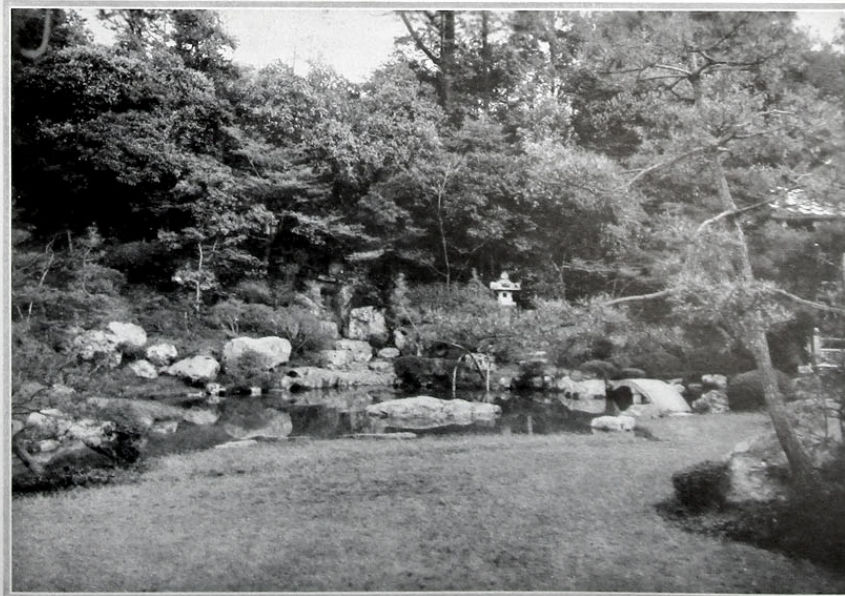
To make a successful hill garden use: I. Guardian stone; II. Cliff stone; III., IV. Cascade stones; V. Water tray stones; VI. A low rounded hill; VII. Bridge-edge stone; VIII. Seat of honor stone; IX. Perfect view stone; X. Worshipping stone; XI. Cave stone; XII. Moon shadow stone; XIII, XIV. Stone lanterns; XV. Waiting stone

markings upon sand with a rake, all contribute to the symbolism that the gardener is endeavoring to create. And yet the effect must be natural, apparently spontaneous. There are no artificial color contrasts or arbitrary straight lines or geometrical plots, such as so often mar our own gardens. Nature is the guide to whose counsel the Japanese gardener listens with reverence and eagerness. He is obedient to her laws and whims. His whole ambition—to which he will cheerfully devote his lifetime—is to capture in his garden as much as he can of her mystery and beauty.

This passionate devotion to Nature is apparent everywhere in Japan, not only in the great gardens but in the lesser ones—even in those delicious tiny green spots no more than nine feet square that are found tucked away around shops or restaurants or humble homes. We will see the "dancing pine," the "worshipping stone," the "pool to catch the moonbeams," the moss-covered stone lantern with the cherry branch above it. Sometimes the effect of natural landscape in such restricted corners is extraordinary. No matter how humble the little garden may be, its message to the spirit is always there.

The Japanese lives for and in his garden. His house is always wide open to it. It is as much a part of his dwelling as the walls themselves. And when at night he is forced to close the paper screens of his house upon its mystic charm, he still hears its fingers tapping on his roof.

Deep consideration is given in Japanese gardens to the size, shape, and foliage of trees and shrubs; to the placing of bridges, paths, and stepping stones—everything must contribute to the symbolism that the artist aims to create





# A GARDEN PATH THROUGH JAPAN

by SARAH M. LOCKWOOD

In collaboration with TOSHI HORINOUCI



DRAWN BY L. W. DEVEREUX

EVERY gardener knows that, to get the best results from his seeds, he must prepare the ground long in advance of the actual planting. Something of the same precaution is necessary in preparing our minds for a visit to the Oriental gardens of Japan. All of our customary ideas about gardens, their making, and their meaning must be turned under, and our thoughts prepared for a new crop of ideas that, if we keep the mental soil well loosened up around them, will greatly enrich our knowledge of gardening.

After all, visits to gardens in the Western world merely emphasize what we already know; what we really see is our own little English or Italian or French garden developed in perfection and scale. Such visits are an inspiring experience, but the fundamental idea is only an immense bloom of the humble one we had at home.

In Japan we must be prepared for a new point of view. The gardens there are not planned as our gardens are planned. With us the garden is a prepared spot, restricted and set apart as a place in which to grow flowers. It is laid out in plots and paths and borders, in masses of bloom artificially composed for color effect, with tall-growing flowers at the back and shorter ones in front, and it is often surrounded by a wall or hedge. We go into it and enjoy it, and, when we have enjoyed it, we leave it again. Japanese gardens are not remotely like that, either in arrangement or in the fundamental inspiration behind them.

In the first place, all Japan is a garden. It is a little country, not as large as our state of California; it is a mass of tumbled peaks thrust up out of the sea, with mirrored lakes

and rushing waterfalls, with ancient forests of immense trees, with an incredible pageantry of floral display that marches in continual procession, like an army with banners, across the landscape. For centuries every inch of space, every crevice, has been cultivated, with the result that Japan, the Flowery Kingdom, is a single garden, with incomparable Fuji as its serene focal point.

So one does not have to seek out gardens to visit in Japan. To visit the country is to visit a garden. Nevertheless, there are, of course, many places of exceptional beauty, particularly those spots that were selected long ago, because of their seclusion, as the proper settings for shrines and temples. These retreats are not gardens, as we are accustomed to think of them; they are gardens in the sense that Eden was a garden. All that is most typical and beautiful in the Japanese art of landscaping is found to perfection in these enchanting places. The public parks and gardens, too, with their famous displays of cherry blossoms, wistaria, iris, azalea, and chrysanthemum, tell the story as completely as the most carefully protected private garden, and they should not be overlooked as public gardens often are on Western tours.

As for individual gardens, such as we have in mind, the only difficulties are those of choice and time to see them. There are innumerable private gardens, many of them dating from feudal times and noted for their charming pavilions. The Japanese are extremely courteous in showing their gardens to Western visitors, and the formalities for viewing the more important ones are easily arranged through the Embassy.

It is upon these gardens that we must look with new eyes.

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Figure 32: Another article by Sarah M. Lockwood, published in the August 1933 issue of *Country Life*. (University of Iowa)



The dominant characteristic of the Japanese people—inherent, no doubt, because of the physical beauty of their country—is their love of Nature. They are a people who have chosen not the eagle or the lion as their national symbol, but the chrysanthemum. They close their shops and throng the streets to make a holiday of cherry-blossom time. It is necessary to emphasize the constant and sensitive concern of the Japanese in the manifestations of Nature, for without this key to their character we could not understand their gardens.

The Japanese garden is invariably an endeavor to reproduce

sense of the word, are the most formal in the world in that infinite attention is given to every minute detail—to the shape, the character, and the setting of every tree and shrub, to the contour of the earth, to the vistas from every direction, to the placing of every stone—but the result of this care is always one of natural and casual grace. The more natural and spontaneous is the effect, the more skillfully, it is considered, the garden has been planned.

The same artful effort to disguise the hand of man is made in the use and placing of ornaments and accessories. There

THE CHARMING GARDENS OF THE JAPANESE ARE INVARIABLY REPRODUCTIONS, AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE, OF NATURAL LANDSCAPES—HILLS, LAKES, RIVERS, AND ISLANDS—IN MINIATURE. THERE ARE NO ARBITRARY MASSES OF COLOR, NO STRAIGHT PATHS WITH BORDERS, NO FORCED GROWTHS; AND THE MOST IMAGINATIVE USE IS MADE OF WOOD AND STONES FOR NECESSARY BRIDGES AND PATHS. THE MORE NATURAL AND SPONTANEOUS THE EFFECT, AND THE MORE ARTFULLY THE HAND OF MAN IS DISGUISED, THE MORE SKILLFUL THE GARDENER



are no statues or urns or fountains at points of accent. One may glimpse, perhaps, an ancient moss-covered stone lantern settled into the earth behind a half-concealing branch, or a boulder scooped out to catch the drip from a spring, with a bamboo dipper hanging beside it. The most imaginative use is made of natural wood or stones for necessary bridges and paths. We find the "waiting stone" and the "distancing tree" and the "moon rising stone"—all the fascinating details that, to Western eyes, make these Oriental gardens so different and so glamorous.

Anyone who loves gardens will be enchanted by a visit to those in Japan. There is nothing in the floral world quite like them, and while they are not suitable in their entirety to our way of

or to enhance a natural landscape—hills, lakes, rivers, and islands—in miniature. These charming scenes are often in imitation of some favorite or famous beauty spot, and usually there is a little Fuji in the picture somewhere. The flowers and shrubs appear to spring up naturally among the rocks and along the streams. There are no arbitrary masses of color, no straight paths with borders, no forced growths, no jetting fountains. And there are no definite confines to such a garden. The low, unpainted, lightly built residence sets into it as a part of it, a shelter in its midst just as a summer house is with us in our gardens.

There is great repose and intimacy in these gardens. They are Nature taken unaware, and gently and skillfully encouraged to show her grace in leaping waterfalls and limpid pools, in wandering secluded paths, in the lovely shapes of trees against the sky, in lacy fronds, and the continual display of blossoms in their natural order. Japanese gardens, in one

living and are seldom reproduced successfully here, they nevertheless stimulate the imagination with a multitude of practical ideas and details that may be easily transplanted to our own gardens to enhance their beauty.

It is important to remember the difference between the detached, semi-public character of our Western show garden and the intimate character of those in Japan, where they are a part of the homes—outdoor sitting rooms. Permission should be obtained by writing, the owner then informed in advance of the hour of arrival, and the visit made with the same degree of formality as a call upon the house. No fees or gratuities should be given. Admission to the Imperial gardens is had by card obtained through the Embassy. Motor roads are perfect, and excellent European-style hotels are found in the larger cities and scenic resorts. The distances given in the list of gardens on page 79 are from one stop to the next, and most of them are comparatively short. (Continued on page 79)

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