



MUSSER JAPANESE GARDEN

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

SEPTEMBER 1, 2021
by Beth Cody

This paper is the fifth 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 or events 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

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Introduction

Landscape architect Philip H. Elwood was hired in 1923 by Iowa State College (as ISU was called from 1898 to 1958) and became the head of the new Department of Landscape Architecture in the late 1920s.

Prof. P.H. Elwood's trip to Asia with landscape architecture students and faculty occurred just at the time that Mrs. McColm was deciding to have a Japanese-style garden made for her. Because his trip was publicized in Iowa newspapers and he lectured to Iowa groups about Japanese gardens following that trip, it's possible that his trip may have had some influence on that decision.

As such, it's worth investigating what effect his trip might have had on the perception of Japanese gardens in Iowa. (And his trip is so incredibly interesting just on its own merits, that we should know more about this fascinating episode in Iowa history).

1. P.H. Elwood and ISC Dept. of Landscape Architecture

Philip Homer Elwood was born on December 7, 1884 in Fort Plain, New York, and attended Cornell University, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Landscape Architecture in 1910. He worked for several years for the firm of Charles W. Leavett in New York City, and for the Agricultural Extension of Massachusetts State College at Amherst from 1913 to 1915.

He then moved into academic work, during a period when landscape architecture was first being recognized as a distinct profession, and colleges and universities were setting up departments and majors. He was first hired by Ohio State University to head their Department of Landscape Architecture, a position he held from 1915 to 1923.

From August 1918 to July 1919, Elwood served as a field artillery captain in the First World War, and worked as Chief Landscape Engineer for the project of the Argonne Cemetery in Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, France in 1919.

Upon his return to the U.S., he started a partnership in Ohio, Elwood & Frye, which lasted from 1920 to 1923, during which he worked on his book of photographic documentation of notable landscape work done across the United States, *American Landscape Architecture*, published in 1924 (following page).

But Elwood must have felt the need for another change, or perhaps to be able to put his imprint on a newer LA department, because he accepted an offer from Iowa State College to join their faculty in 1923.



**Figure 1: Philip H. Elwood
pictured in the 1940s.
(iastate.edu)**

Iowa State College Department of Landscape Architecture

The period from 1900 to 1930 was a time when landscape architecture was becoming recognized as a specialized profession, and universities began developing specific coursework for it, eventually establishing separate academic departments.

In Ames, the Iowa Agricultural College had been established in 1858, enrolling its first students in 1869. Courses in landscape gardening were taught by the first president of the college, Adonijah S. Welch, as early as 1871. (Welch was responsible for laying out the original grounds of the college in 1869, according to his paper in the Iowa State Horticultural Society proceedings of 1886.)

By 1914, a four-year curriculum in landscape gardening was offered to students within the horticulture department, and by the early 1920s, there were several students enrolled each year (including Kenneth F. Jones, whose studies and career will be detailed in Part III).

College administrators knew at this point that they needed a dedicated professor of landscape architecture to encourage higher enrolment and to shape the direction of the subject at the college, and hired Elwood for this in 1923.

Professor Elwood hit the ground running in his new position: the number of students studying LA doubled within two years, and Elwood also began speaking about city and home beautification to public groups around the state: In April 1924, he made a statewide radio broadcast about “Achieving Beauty in our Surroundings,” and a luncheon talk illustrated with slides to the Iowa City Chamber of Commerce about “Planning Iowa City Beautiful,” and spoke to women’s groups and garden clubs during the late 1920s and 1930s.

Prof. Elwood also led travel study groups for students: In 1924, 1925 and 1926, he led small groups of students from ISC and other LA programs on tours of European gardens, park and museums, visiting Portugal, Spain, Italy, France and England. These tours were followed by lectures to garden clubs about various aspects of “old world gardens.”

In 1927, Elwood led a group of college men on a walking tour of America’s national parks, after which he wrote a series of ten weekly articles about the parks for the *Des Moines Register* in autumn 1927, and lectured about the national parks to various groups.

In 1930, he took students to Europe, along with Egypt, Palestine, Greece and Turkey; and in 1931 it was the southeastern United States.

Elwood had long planned a trip with students to Asia – it was mentioned in an October 31, 1926 *Des Moines Register* article about his 1927 walking tour – and perhaps he had hoped to do the Asia trip in 1928, but the preparations were likely too complex to work out for that year. However, by autumn 1928 his Asia plans were taking shape for Summer 1929.

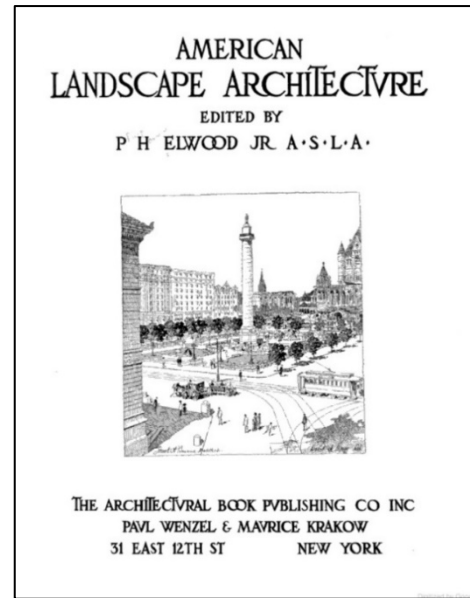


Figure 2: The title page of Elwood’s 1924 book. (Google Books)

2. Elwood's travel with landscape architecture students to Japan (1929)

“Who has not dreamed of the mysteries, the beauty of color and the picturesque life of the Orient?”

So begins the January 1929 brochure tempting the reader to join Professor Elwood on his three-month tour of Japan, China, Korea, Manila, Hong Kong, Macao, and Honolulu (shown following). Elwood had worked out how he could lead a group of students to Asia – not a simple undertaking in pre-WWII days: He joined a larger tour led by a noted Asia journalist and author, Upton Close.

The *Ames Daily Tribune* of January 26, 1929 ran this article showing that several students and professors had committed to the tour by that date:

Prof. P.H. Elwood To Conduct Study Garden Art of China An Asiatic tour, which will have for its principal aim the study of the Landscape Design of the garden art of China and Japan will be conducted this summer by P. H. Elwood, head of the landscape architecture department at Iowa State college. The tour will be the first of its kind to offer university credit to American students. It is open to instructors and students of landscape architecture and others but accommodations are limited, and being rapidly filled. Mr. Elwood states.

The party will leave Seattle June 29 on the President Jefferson of the Dollar line, and will be met at Tokio by the president of the Japanese Society of Landscape Architects. The members will be given permission to visit several of the sacred imperial gardens. Mr. Elwood will speak at the landscape architecture school of Tokio university on “American Landscape Design.”

Visits will be made to Kyoto, and the world-famous temple at Nikko. Several excursions will be made into the lake regions, and to Fujiyama, which is about 70 miles from Tokio.

A Chinese student at Iowa State college, who will make the tour, will act as guide in China. Here works of ancient and modern garden art will be studied as the original source of modern garden design. Informal design was introduced in Japan by Buddhist priests in the sixth century.

Several days will be spent in Shanghai and the vicinity, and trips will be made to Soochow and Nanking. Sue Hin Pan, a graduate of the civil engineering department of Iowa State college, will meet the party at Hong Kong.

Macao and Canton will be the next objectives, and excursions will be taken to resorts at Manila. On the return trip thru the picturesque inland sea, stops will be made at Kobe and other points of interest. The party will land in San Francisco, Sept. 19.

Among those who will take the trip are Walter D. Popham, assistant professor in landscape architecture at Iowa State; Bethane Carpenter, junior student in the department; John Nolen of Cambridge, Mass., widely known city planner; Helen I. Davis, instructor in botany at Wellesley college; Miss Florence Robinson of the landscape architecture department at the University of Illinois; and Mrs. Ana Breeze of 525 Welch avenue.

Further information may be obtained from the department of landscape architecture at Iowa State college.

IN ORIENTAL GARDENS

A Landscape Study Tour Through
Japan and China



Direction of
PROFESSOR P. H. ELWOOD, JR.
Department of Landscape Architecture
Iowa State College, Ames

Cooperating with
Mr. Upton Close (Professor J. Washington Hall)
of New York in his great "Student Adventure" to the Orient

A Study Tour---Summer 1929

WHO has not dreamed of the mysteries, the beauty of color and the picturesque life of the Orient? How many of us fully appreciate the rich, incalculable heritage of art to be found today in China and Japan? Your dreams may come true next summer as the following itinerary was planned for the garden enthusiast and the lover of beauty.



Students and historians realize that much modern work is derived from and inspired by the work of great Oriental artists two to three thousand years ago. We owe much to those ancient designers and builders of a great civilization in many ways far superior to our own.

To see is to feel, and travel transforms theory into reality.

The fundamental purpose of this jaunt is to study under very favorable auspices the treasures of Oriental gardens and landscape art as well as the historic architecture and scenic beauties of those countries, and to glimpse the alluring Philippines and Hawaiian Islands. Contrary to popular thought, the informal and naturalistic style or school of landscape art did not originate either in England or Continental Europe, but in China. In fact, the early informal work in England and France was called Anglo-Chinese. Remnants of ancient forerunners of the comparatively recent informal gardens will be seen in all the beauty and picturesqueness of their native settings. Considerable interest and attention will be given to the native crafts, including the unmatched cloisonne, damascene, satsuma, jade, porcelain, brocade and ivory work. The world has no finer examples of beautiful and infinitely painstaking handiwork. The following itinerary will be followed, though slight changes may be made to increase the enjoyment and enrich the experience of this small group of earnest students.

Final Itinerary

- | | | | |
|----------|--|-------------|--|
| June 24. | Sail Seattle. | July 18. | Beppu, famous hot springs resort. |
| July 6. | Arrive Yokohama. Motor to Imperial Hotel, Tokyo. | July 19. | Cross straits to Korea (Chosen). |
| July 7. | Official reception and inspection of important shrines and gardens under guidance of Dr. Uychara, President, Japanese Society of Landscape Architects. | July 20. | Seoul (Keijo). Official reception. |
| July 8. | | July 21. | Mukden, Manchu Tombs, Palaces and Gardens. |
| July 9. | In Nikko. Some of Japan's most beautiful temples and shrines will be visited | July 23-24. | Dairen, Port Arthur. |
| July 10. | with motor excursions to picturesque Lake Chuzenji, Kegon Falls, and the famous Cryptomeria Avenue. | July 25. | To Peking (Peiping). |
| July 11. | Nagoya. Ancient castle, porcelain and cloisonne making. | July 27. | In Peking (Peiping). The capital of |
| July 12. | Kyoto. Garden centre of Japan. The capital of the Empire for over 1,000 | to | China and the world's greatest centre |
| July 15. | years. A veritable dreamland of old Japan, the shopper's paradise. Many famous gardens will be visited and excursion made to Lake Biwa. | Aug. 4. | of Oriental art, covering an area of twenty-five square miles including the "Outer" or Chinese City, and the "Inner" or Tartar |
| July 16. | Old Japan. Nara. First permanent capital of Japan. Visit parks and gardens, Great Bell, Huge Buddha. | | City, the town being separated by a wall pierced by three great gateways. An excursion by automobile to see the great wall and the Ming Tombs. Also a half day trip to the Winter Palace, Yen Chin University, Hall of Confucius, and many other places of interest will be visited by rickshaw including the temple, Altar of Heaven, Altar of Agriculture, Forbidden City, State Museum, and Central Park. An excursion by motor will be taken to the Summer Palace including a boat ride on the lake visiting the Jade Fountain, Sleeping Buddha Temple, Pi Yuen Sen tomb, Grand Hotel de Peking. |
| July 17. | Kobe, the great port, parks, etc. | | |

Aug. 5. Tientsin.
 Aug. 7. Sacred Mount Tai Confucian monuments, Shantung with side trip to Tsing-Tao.
 Aug. 9. Nanking, the new capital. Official reception.
 Aug. 10. Lotus Lake, Purple Mountain, Ming Tombs, Mausoleum of Sun-Yat-Sen, etc.
 Aug. 12-13. Yangtse River to Shanghai, stop at Soochow.
 Aug. 14. Sail from Shanghai.
 Aug. 16. Arrive Hongkong. (Trip to Macao).
 Aug. 17. Sail from Hongkong.
 Aug. 19. Arrive Manila. The Pearl of the Orient.
 to Another City of Contrasts, this time old Spain and Modern America side by side.
 Aug. 24. Automobile excursion to Los Banos and Columba Sugar Estates and motor tours through the Walled City, Fort Santiago, Isabella Gate, Santa Cruz Bridge, Ayala Boulevard, Taft Avenue, and other points of interest.
 Aug. 26. Arrive Hongkong. (To Canton if time allows).
 Aug. 27. Leave Hongkong.
 Aug. 29. Arrive Shanghai.
 Aug. 30. Leave Shanghai.
 Sept. 1. Arrive Kobe.
 Sept. 2-3 To Kyoto and Tokyo.
 Sept. 3. Sail Yokohama.
 Sept. 13. Call at Honolulu. A delightful shore excursion visiting the famous Waikiki beach, Round Top, Tantalus and the famous Moanulua gardens, a tropical fairyland.

Sept. 18. Arrive San Francisco.

Those who desire may remain in Shanghai and vicinity sailing for Japan, August 25th, spending

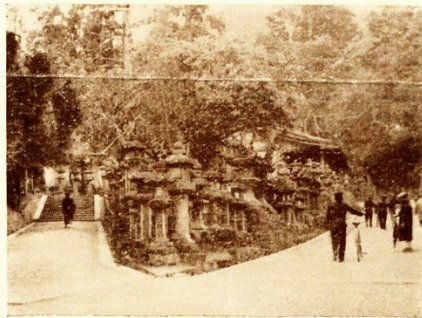


the remainder of the time in Japan instead of going to Hongkong and Manila meeting the party at Kobe, September 1, and continuing with them to the United States.

The above itinerary is subject to slight change.

Special Privileges

From time of arrival in Tokyo throughout Japan, the party will be directed through the parks and private gardens of Japan by the President and



members of the Japanese Society of Landscape Architects. Among the Japanese leaders will be Mr. Paul Tono, a graduate in Landscape Architecture from Cornell University, who will compare and interpret American and Japanese landscape art. A special reception and banquet for the landscape

group will be given at the Tokyo School of Landscape Architecture. This means most unusual opportunities for seeing the very best and most worth while in Japanese garden art.

The outstanding educational feature of the tour is the association with Mr. Upton Close of New York, well known author of works on Oriental civilization and formerly Professor of Asiatic Culture at the University of Washington, who has lived many years in China and Japan. Mr. Close will give daily lectures aboard ship on various phases of Oriental art, customs, and literature. A special library on shipboard will be available to all members. The entire Chinese and Manchurian part of the tour will be under his supervision and many eminent Chinese officials and private citizens will be met and many private homes and gardens visited which are open only to special guests. At Hongkong Dr. Sue Hin Pan, former student in City Planning at Iowa State College will meet the party and conduct them through gardens of that region. Therefore, this is no doubt the most thrilling opportunity ever presented to a group of American students of Oriental gardens and landscape architecture.

INFORMATION

Complete financial, clothing, health, reading, passport and other information will be sent upon enrollment.

CREDIT

Those students desiring credit should state their special interest and arrange with Professor Elwood for report or thesis subject and program. From 3-10 University quarter hours will be allowed.

COST AND OPTIONS

No Oriental tour ever offered so much at such a low figure and with the wide range of options.

1. *First class* tour throughout except the excellent second class rail transportation in Japan. The very finest hotel accommodations available. Total cost from Seattle back to San Francisco \$1,350.

2. *Student Tourist Class* to Yokohama, first

class hotels throughout. Excellent second class railway in Japan and return from Shanghai, Hongkong, Manila, Japan, Honolulu, San Francisco on famous first class Dollar line.

Total cost including all educational and social privileges accorded No. 1 from Seattle to San Francisco, \$1,150.

3. *Same as above*, but *returning* to United States from Shanghai *second class* on N. Y. K. or Canadian Pacific steamer with same privileges and shore program as Nos. 1-2 for total of \$950.

4. *Student Tourist Class* throughout with Oriental food and accommodations on ship and ashore and the special ship and shore educational and social program for the startling sum of \$550.

Above prices include *everything* but food taken outside the regular hotels and the usual personal extras such as laundry, mineral waters, and tips on shipboard.

What can keep you now from the trip of your life to the richest, most unusual and picturesque, lesser known civilization of the Orient.

Write or better still wire professor P. H. Elwood, Department of Landscape Architecture, Ames, Iowa, for a reservation stating by number which option you prefer.



The cost of the tour including everything but meals outside hotels and personal extras ranged from \$550 for student class with Asian food (about \$8,000 in 2020 dollars) to \$1,350 for first class accommodations and western food throughout the trip (about \$20,000 in 2020 dollars).

Some of the details of the itinerary changed between the printing of the January 1929 brochure and the departure date: the group was unable to stay in the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Imperial Hotel in Tokyo (although they visited the courtyard gardens).

Professor Elwood likely read newspaper accounts about or saw advertisements for the Asia tours led by Upton Close in 1927 and 1928, and decided that joining his tour would be the easiest way to travel there.

Elwood probably invited Close to speak about Asia at Iowa State College in spring 1929, because the April 10, 1929 issue of the *Ames Daily Tribune* had this short announcement:

Cosmopolitan Dinner Tuesday for Upton Close

Following the lecture Tuesday afternoon, "China, Japan and America: Parallels and Contrasts," by Upton Close at ag assembly, the lecturer and Mrs. Close were guests of the Cosmopolitan club at The Gables. Dinner was served to 40 members and guests after which Mr. Close gave an interesting talk on the lives of famous eastern leaders. Yanmgato, Ito and Ghandi.

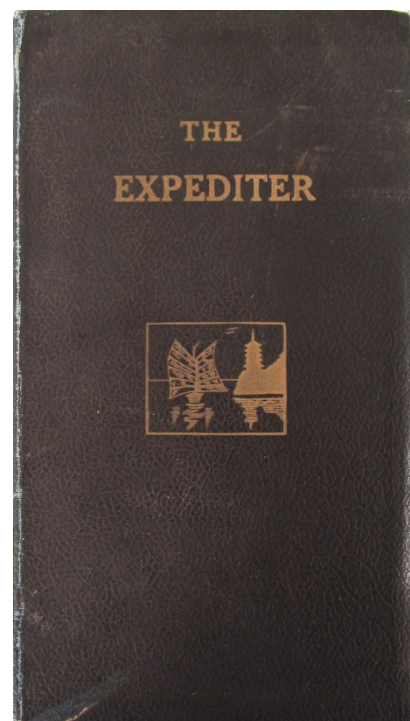
This noon Mr. and Mrs. Close will be the luncheon guests of Fan Chi Kung at the Memorial Union and tonight they will meet members of the party who will accompany them to the orient in Prof. P. H. Elwood's landscape group at the Elwood home, 711 Ash avenue. Mr. Close has chartered the liner Africa and will have charge of a number of groups of students sailing from Seattle June 24.

The Expediter

Upton Close published a pocket-sized guide book for participants in his annual tours to Asia: *The Expediter: Educational Program, Procedure and Guide-Book of the Cultural Expeditions to Pacific Asia*.

Published and printed in Tokyo by the Kaitakusha Publishing Co., the book contained general tourist information and advice including useful phrases in Japanese, Chinese and Korean; overviews of the history of Japan, China and Korea; detailed outlines of the educational lectures given by Close during the ocean voyage and land travel; information about the sites visited on the tour; recommended reading lists; songs and sheet music for singing; and lists of the participants in all four of the tours conducted by Close: in 1927 (only five travelers), 1928 (36 participants), 1929 (the largest group with 116 listed) and 1930 (with 80 travelers).

Figure 3: Upton Close's *The Expediter* guide book from 1930.
(*University of Illinois*)



Upton Close

Upton Close, who arranged the tour of Asia that Professor Elwood and his students joined, was a larger-than-life figure in American journalism, and a tremendously perceptive observer of world affairs.

Born in 1894 in Washington state, Josef Washington Hall became a cub reporter in Washington, D.C in the early 1910s, and traveled to China in 1915.

Hall's intention had been to work on a China-based magazine, but (according to a number of lurid news accounts) he became a 'secret investigator' for the American diplomatic service, keeping an eye on first the Germans and then the Japanese, traveling while disguised in Chinese clothing. He spent time in Shandong during the Japanese invasion of that northern part of China, and it was during this time that a faulty interpretation of his reporting by telegraph that he was "up close" to the action resulted in his journalistic moniker, "Upton Close".

He became a friend and adviser to the Chinese students who initiated the May Fourth Movement in 1919 in protest of Japan being awarded parts of Shandong in the Treaty of Versailles. And he tried to help in relief activities during China's terrible famine of 1920.

Close travelled to a remote part of northern China near Inner Mongolia to report on the Gansu Earthquake of December 1920 (one of the deadliest earthquakes in world history, which killed at least 200,000 people). His reporting from that region appeared in National Geographic Magazine and numerous other publications. However, he contracted cholera on this trip and almost died – recovering only through the "Chinese 'kill or cure' remedy of kerosene oil and opium."

He then worked with General Wu Pei-Fu, a prominent northern warlord during the Chinese civil war. This episode was told in detail in a series of lengthy newspaper articles, illustrated by line drawings of young Upton Close's action-filled exploits. He ultimately contracted typhoid and after two more months of serious illness, returned to the United States.

Close was immediately offered a much safer position as professor of Oriental Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle, and he published several books in the next decade: *The Laughing Buddha* (1922), *The Revolt of Asia* (1927), *Eminent Asians: six great personalities of the new East* (1929), *Challenge: Behind the Face of Japan* (1934). Sympathetic to the independence movements happening throughout Asia, he met and corresponded with Asian leaders including Chiang Kai-Shek, Sun Yat-Sen, Mahatma Gandhi, Leon Trotsky and Mustapha Kamal.

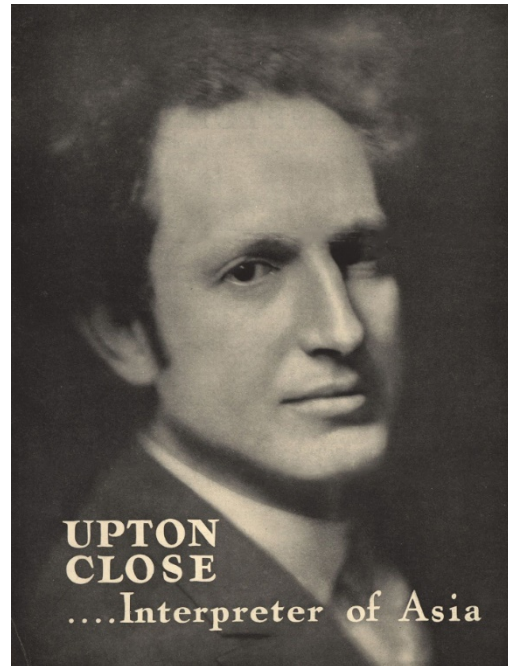


Figure 4: A picture of journalist Upton Close from promotional speaking materials printed around 1930. (University of Iowa Libraries Digital Collections)

Upton Close continued to return to Asia nearly every year, and traveled through Russia in 1927. He organized and led tour groups to Asia in the summers of 1927 through 1933 – including the 1929 trip made by Professor Elwood and his students.

During the 1930s and 1940s, he traveled widely in the US, lectured on current foreign affairs in many US cities, and had a syndicated radio show during the early 1940s. But Upton Close's later career was marred by controversy: his strong belief that the United States should stay out of international wars (like WWII), harsh criticism of F.D.R.'s policies, and deeply held anti-communist views after WWII based on the atrocities he had seen in Russia and Asia – all these made him a controversial speaker and writer. He retired in the 1950s to Mexico (perhaps to escape the alimony payments demanded by his four ex-wives), and died in Guadalajara in an automobile accident in 1960.

The June 4, 1929 *Ames Daily Tribune* had this article:

A group of teachers and students of landscape architecture, and others interested in the subject will leave Ames Wednesday for a summer tour of Japan, China, and other countries of eastern Asia. The local party will be under the direction of P. H. Elwood Jr., head of the department of landscape architecture at Iowa State college, and will be a part of a large party directed by Upton Close, noted student of countries of Asia.

The local group will include Mrs. Anna D. Breeze of Ames, who will act as chaperone; Walter D. Popham, assistant professor in the landscape architecture department; Miss Bethane L. Carpenter of Coon Rapids; Norman A. Morris, of Sioux City; Max Bird of Clear Lake; and John Merton Hall, of Centerville, all four students in the department; and Miss Florence Robinson, of the landscape architecture department of the University of Illinois.

Taking ship from Seattle June 24, the group will land at Tokio, and will take a motor trip thru Japan under the direction of Dr. Uychara, president of the Japanese Society of Landscape Architects.

At Hong Kong the travelers will be the guests of Dr. Sue Hin Pan, a former student at Iowa State. They will also visit Korea and Port Arthur, spend a week in Peking, a week in Manila and the Philippines, and the men of the party, under Mr. Close, plan to a tribe of head hunters in of Formosa.

Professor Elwood will be presented with a Japanese tea house and garden by Japanese landscape architects. It will be transported to the United States by Mr. Close. The house will be folded up and packed with shrubs, bulbs, stones and pebbles from the garden, and the entire house and garden will be set up on the Iowa State campus.

Iowa State students will be allowed 10 hours of credit in landscape architecture for the tour. The party will arrive in Ames late in September, returning by way of San Francisco.

The gift of the Japanese tea house likely never happened. Instead, newspaper articles published following the trip mention the gift of an ancient stone lantern. But there is no record of that reaching Iowa either.

The *Ames Daily Tribune* of Friday, June 7, 1929 had this announcement:

Professor P. H. Elwood and Mrs. Elwood's mother, Mrs. Buck, accompanied by the group who with Professor Elwood will make a tour of the Orient with Upton Close, left Thursday by automobile for the west coast. They will stop at Carmel by-the-Sea in California where Mrs. Buck will remain with Mrs. Elwood, who is already at the Elwood summer home there, and then go to Seattle, from where they will sail.

The *Statesman Journal* of Salem, Oregon of June 23, 1929, had this announcement of the participation of four local men on the trip:

Typhoid inoculations, smallpox vaccinations, packed bags, good-byes and other incidentals have been virtually completed by four Salem men who will sail Monday evening on the Africa Maru from Seattle for an 11 weeks' tour through China and Japan. The local men, Rev. Norman Kendall Tully of the Presbyterian church, Prof. Roy A. Lockenour and Dean Roy R. Hewitt of the Willamette law school, and Hewitt's son, Ronald, who finished high school here last month, will travel with the Upton Close Oriental expedition, a floating and traveling school, for which 125 persons have signed.

The local men will join the rest of the party in Seattle today.... The group will attend a reception at the Olympic Hotel in Seattle this evening, purpose of this get-together being to outline tentative cabin mates for the 13-day voyage to Yokohama.

Side Excursions Are Planned By Some: While the trip schedule has been planned by Upton Close, outstanding authority on oriental affairs, to include all the principal cities in the two nations, there will be some lee-way for individuals to make one or two days excursions "on their own." Dr. Tully, who has been teaching about missions in these countries the past 15 years, says he intends to see if he has been telling the truth, and will make several side trips to the mission fields and to visit missionaries....

Formosa Gardening: Some members will detach themselves from the group to spend some time in Formosa where gardening will be studied. Another group of 14 persons will lengthen its travels, making the trip around the world and coming home by way of Siberia....

Departure

The group of nearly 120 travelers, mostly students, set sail from the Port of Seattle aboard the *Africa Maru* on Monday, September 24, 1929. They sailed up the west coast to Victoria, British Columbia, where they set off on the two-week voyage from Victoria Harbor to Yokohama, Japan.

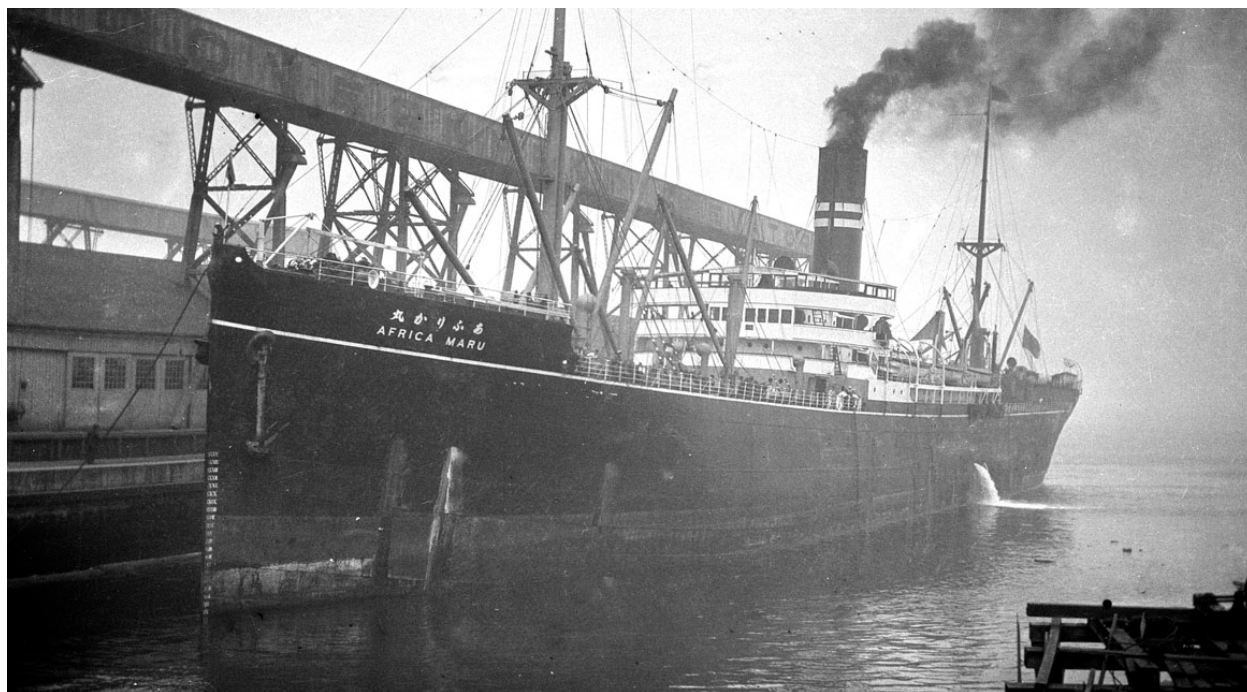


Figure 5: A photo of the SS *Africa Maru*, which was the home of Elwood's group for a month (two weeks to Japan, and two weeks' return trip). The *Africa Maru* was built in Japan, launched in 1918, and according to the Vancouver Maritime Museum, carried many Japanese immigrants to the Pacific Northwest. She was requisitioned in 1941 as a Japanese troop transport, and was torpedoed and sunk by the US submarine *Finback* off the coast of Formosa in October 1942. (Wikipedia)

The Dr. Norman Kendall Tally, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Salem, Oregon made the trip with Upton Close & company, and he wrote several letters home during the journey that were published in newspapers. The *Statesman Journal* (Salem) of June 29, 1929, had this letter:

C. A. Kells, Y. M. C. A. secretary, has received the following letter from Dr. Tully, written June 26 from the African Mara as the party neared Victoria: "We are off to a good start. Our ship has an Oriental aroma about it; can do 18 knots an hour, and is very good. I am with 18 boys. Our party has 125 in it from colleges all over the United States. One man is from Berlin, Germany, studying education; another has a British passport; another an Italian. I don't think we have many goats.

"We shall have a very profitable trip. The Japanese appear to be very capable seamen. I liked the way they put the deck in order after we started. The sky is overcast so that we cannot see the

Olympics (*mountains*). However, they were out a little yesterday. I am interested in some crates of pigeons on board, being shipped alive from Melrose, Mass. They are going on a long journey and standing up well.

"The ship wobbles a little because of the swell rolling in from the Fuca strait, but all are brave so far. By nightfall the last land will be out of sight behind."

The Mason City *Globe-Gazette* of July 30, 1929, included this letter from an Iowan, written before disembarking in Japan:

An interesting account of the first lap of the "student adventure" which has taken several Iowans to Japan, Manchuria, China and the Philippines for the summer was contained in a letter from Robert Clack of Alma, Mich., to his parents, Dr. and Mrs. W. R. Clack of Clear Lake, mailed from Japan.

Mr. Clack is dean of men and health adviser for the party of a hundred or more and has special charge of the younger boys, 18 of them, ranging from 15 to 22 years. Included in this group is Max Bird of Clear Lake, who is a student of landscaping at Iowa State college, Ames. Upton Close, famed newspaper correspondent, author and professor of political science at the University of Washington, is sponsor of the "adventure."

Fine Bunch of Boys. "We all have one big cabin with 20 berths in it and boys in my group are a fine bunch of youngsters," said Dean Clack in his letter. "I have given three lectures on the Chinese language and have prepared another on the 'Four Books.' And I have to see that the sick folks get proper attention. Fortunately we have a trained nurse aboard who gets her chief enjoyment in doing things for folks...."

Have Boat to Themselves. "Altogether we have 117 in our party and except for half a dozen people have the boat entirely to ourselves. The officers are all Japanese but have been specially picked and are a fine lot. We have 65 women in the crowd, ranging from 18 to 66, and 52 men ranging from 15 to 65. Most of the women are school teachers but a large share of the men are college students, tho there are six ministers and a number of young college professors. They are a very congenial bunch and are having a good time. Enough young people are aboard to keep things pretty well stirred up.

"The sea has been very smooth, the smoothest any trip I have been across. We had a few cases of sea sickness, the first day or so, but since then everybody, has been all right. We have had a lot of fog and it has been quite cold but that is to be expected up so far north. For two or three nights we were near enough the Arctic Circle, that we had twilight all night, it being just after June 21. I think some of the people were quite awed by it, as they keep coming to me for an explanation.

Their Days Are Full. "We have had a very full program. A lecture of things oriental (mostly by Upton Close) every morning and another in the evening and once in a while one in the afternoon. The crowd has put on three plays...."

"I don't know whether I told you who are the staff of the party. Besides Upton and Alice Close, there is Rachel Nelson, Upton's sister, and her husband. Axel Nelson. They are perfectly delightful. She has charge of the younger girls and he has the older women. As he has been a high school principal for ten years, he is well fitted for the job.

Two Youths on Staff. "Our treasurer is Roger Smith, who is 19 and looks 15, but is exceedingly efficient in business affairs. The assistant manager is MacCracken Fisher, a former student of Michigan State college, who is 23. He is really the general manager of the trip, having gone last year also as Upton's assistant....

Professor Elwood of Ames has charge of the dozen who are to study landscape gardening.... Well, my paper has run out, and I can't seem to find more. With love, Bob."

Elwood Travel Films

Wonderfully, Elwood filmed many of his trips and Iowa State University has the footage of several of his trips taken with students, much of which has been digitized and is available on Youtube.



Figure 6: Elwood likely used a camera similar to this one being employed by E.B. Thompson in the 1920s, from a collection held by the National Park Service. ([nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov))

Elwood's Japan reels include footage on the vessel *SS Africa Maru* leaving the harbor of Seattle and the passengers' Fourth of July celebration at sea. Tokyo scenes include the New Art Gallery Ueno Park, meeting Matsumoto and the Secretary to Viscount Shubisawa, Imperial Garden of the Detached Palace; meeting the Uyehara family in the Gardens of the Imperial Hotel, footage of the Imperial Hotel (designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and undamaged by the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923).

The Nara segment features the entrance to the Great Park at Nara, private residences, and deer in the park at Nara prior to an approaching storm. Elwood filmed a journey by train between Kamakura and Kyoto showing rice farms, and the sacred island of Miyajima.

In Kyoto, Elwood filmed a street festival, moats and retaining wall of the Nijo Imperial Palace grounds, the Kinkakuji garden pavilion, Daisen-in Garden and Ryuan-ji Garden by Soami, and the entrance to the lodge of the detached palace.

Tokyo

After arriving in Yokohama, the group traveled by train to Tokyo, where they stayed in the Station Hotel (instead of the original plan to stay at the Imperial Hotel, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1922, and famous for having withstood the Great Kanto Earthquake of the following year). They were able to visit that hotel to observe its architecture and gardens, however.



Figure 7: Postcard views of some of the places visited by Elwood's group in Tokyo: the Ueno Park Imperial Museum, the Asakusa entertainment district and the Imperial Hotel (designed by Frank Lloyd Wright). (*Oldtokyo, Ebay, Art Contrarian*)





Figure 8: A photo taken in 1930s of the interior courtyard Japanese garden at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo (Library of Congress)



Figure 9: A still image from Elwood's film footage taken in the Imperial Hotel courtyard Japanese garden. These children might be those of a family named Uyehara. (*ISU Special Collections*)

Nara

The group left Tokyo and spent two days in Nikko, one day in Nagoya, and then traveled on by rail to Nara, where they spent only one day sightseeing by rickshaw.

Figure 10: The entrance to kasuga Shrine in Nara, with its Torii gate. (Ebay)



The *Statesman-Journal* (Salem) of August 7, 1929 published piece with a letter from Pastor Tully, dated July 17:

Interesting impressions of Japan are contained in a letter received by Mrs. Tully from her husband, Dr. N. K. Tully, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, who is traveling in the Orient with the Upton Close party. From Kyoto under date of July 17 Dr. Tully writes as follows:

“I am an optimist now. We left Nara this morning. After an hour's ride on the street car we came to Kyoto. We had a good, clean breakfast in this hotel. We shall stay here until tomorrow afternoon. I have a room to myself with a chair to sit on and a bed to sleep in.

“It is well and good to know the native inns, but five nights in succession are enough to teach me many things. One thing is that, with all their achievements, this wonderful people have not yet attained unto the germ theory of disease. They are great bathers after a fashion, and in all conscience, they need to be.

“The evidences of industrialism are everywhere. Cities like this put the street cars at our disposal free for the length of our stay. The mayor or his representative greets us, and all possible is done to help us. I think the people are greatly to be praised. More and more they will acquire modern sanitation but now millions are virtually alley rats.

“I have read much about noise but I never heard any before. All automobiles sound their horns almost incessantly, street cars toot, bicycles and rickshaws ring their bells. The natural clatter of

vehicles adds to the bedlam. The result is that no one pays any attention to any alarm, everyone is always just on the point of being run over, and no one gets hurt....

"Kyoto is an ancient center of Japanese culture. We shall see some places this afternoon and tomorrow."

Kyoto

The nice hotel that Paster Tully referred to in his letter, above, was the Miyako Hotel in Kyoto, perched on the edge of a hillside with beautiful views, and with a lovely garden outside the dining room. Over three days, the tour group visited a number of shrines, pavilions and gardens.

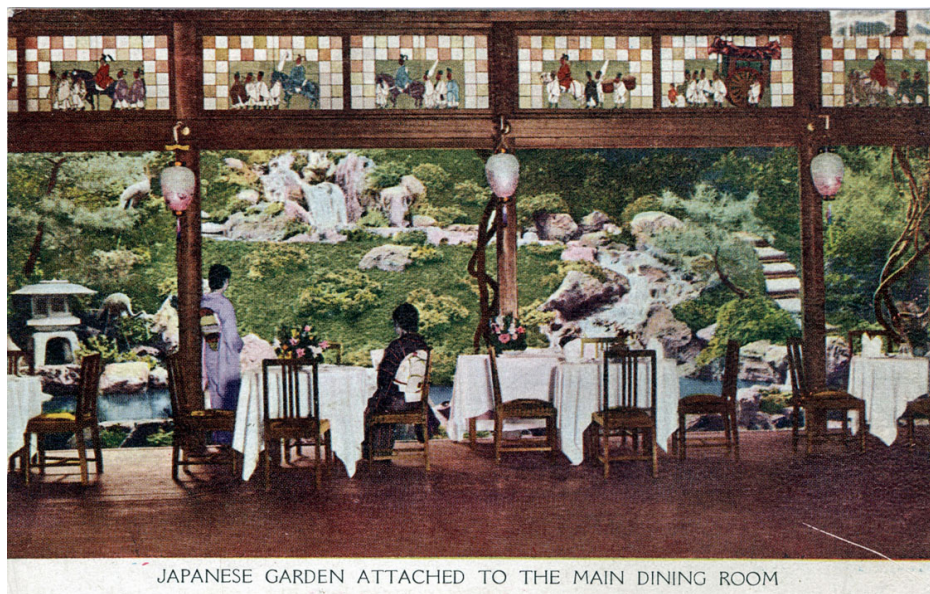


Figure 11: Two postcards of the beautiful views and garden at the Miyako Hotel, where Elwood & company stayed in Kyoto. (*Oldtokyo.com*)



Figure 13: The famous Golden Pavilion and garden in Kyoto was a stop for Elwood's group. (*Ebay*)



Figure 12: Maruyama Park was another stop by the entire group. (*Ebay*)

Elwood and his group of landscape architecture students and faculty made a separate trip to see several gardens in Kyoto, including the Daisen-in Garden and Ryoan-ji Garden, and the garden of a Mr. Hirai in Kyoto, which Elwood almost certainly visited and photographed for the paper he would later publish in *Landscape Architecture Magazine*. That garden was designed by a famous Japanese garden architect of the early 20th century, Ogawa Jihei (1860-1933).



Figure 14: “Mr. Hirai’s villa garden” in Kyoto, which impressed Elwood greatly: he used photos of only this Japanese garden in his paper about Chinese and Japanese gardens that he published after his return to the United States. (*The Gardens of Japan* by Jiro Harada, 1928)

Figure 15: The Buddhist temple gardens at Ryoan-ji and Daisen-in, both well-known gardens among landscape architects, were special stops by Elwood's group. (*The Gardens of Japan* by Jiro Harada, 1928)



GARDEN OF RYOANJI, TEMPLE IN SUBURB OF KYOTO. GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO SO-AMI

Leaving Japan: The Remainder of the Asia Trip

Around July 20, the entire group left Japan for Korea, followed by Peking; Shanghai; Soochow; Hangchow; Hong Kong; Formosa; Manila; and a return to Kobe, Japan in order to depart for the return trip to Victoria, Canada. They finally arrived back in Seattle on Sunday, September 29, 1919.

Since this paper focuses on Japan, no details will be given about the remainder of the trip after leaving Japan for Korea – with the exception of the following letters, which give a flavor of the rest of the trip:

The *Statesman-Journal* of August 15, 1929 published another letter from Paster Tully, dated July 21:

“Here we are in the capital city of Korea, hot and dirty as usual, but in a good hotel for the day. We are now on the continent of Asia. The smell thickens as we progress. If there are others in the party as filthy-feeling as I am, they are a mess.

“Yesterday morning we came by rail from Beppu to Moji. We took a short ferry across the Shimonoseki strait to the city of that name. After breakfast we took a fine fast ship for Fusan, Korea. After lunch we sat on the floor in the second-class cabin to listen to Close spout. I more nearly got sick than on the Africa Maru. I sat around by myself and felt better by the time we landed.

“Fusan was a dirty place, full of sights and sounds and smells unpleasant. Beggars with insistence appeared. We walked around town and felt glad we did not have to live there.

“Our train north left at 9:20 p.m. The sleeping coaches were good but the sticky heat attended me all night. There is never any relief. The missionaries are all away. Consequently, I can see few of them. The dining car service was bad at night but better this morning. At 7:30 tonight we shall board the same car and go on to Mukden.

“I have just come in from church. Most of the party went to an art museum. This afternoon they will go somewhere else.”

The Fresno Bee of September 13, 1929 provided this interesting information about the trip:

Fresnans Meet Notables in Orient:As members of the Upton Close Expedition which sailed from Seattle on June 25th, the Fresno girls met and were officially entertained by many notables. In China they were banqueted by Marshal Chang Hseuh-liang the Mukden dictator, entertained by the commissioner of education of Peiping for a day, addressed by General Commissioner of Railroads Dr Sun Fo, son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen; James Yen leader of the mass education movement who spoke in California last Winter, and other Chinese officials. The Minister of Education, Dr. Chiang Mon Lin, received them at the capital city Nanking. They were also guests of the National Exposition at Hangchow for two days.

On August 28th the group divided, half going on to India, and the others sailing from Yokohama, Japan on the Arabia Maru for Seattle, where they landed on September 9th.

That warfare in the Orient has not yet assumed a serious aspect was evidenced by the fact that the visitors not only saw no fighting but also failed to hear any mention of war except in letters from home. However, during their passage from Hankow to Peiping, the train doors were carefully locked as this vicinity is frequently traversed by bandits, the visitors learned.

The *Times-Colonist* of Victoria of September 10, 1929 had this lengthy piece describing the tour and the arrival:

STUDENTS ARE THRILLED WITH ORIENTAL TOUR

Thrilled beyond all expectations with their three months' visit to China and Japan, 100 members of an education tour party, passed through Victoria late yesterday afternoon aboard the Japanese liner Arabia Maru on their return from the Far East. They sailed from Victoria early in June aboard the same liner and since that time visited many places of interest in the Orient.

The party went on to Seattle aboard the liner and this morning separated to entrain for their homes in all parts of the United States. Ranging in age from fifteen to sixty-one, the members of the party included students from colleges and universities, teachers and professors, social workers, doctors, young lawyers, secretaries, journalists, ministers, artists, musicians, architects, nurses, a landscape architect and an economic analyst. Fourteen states of the Union were represented....

DECK CLASSES: The party composed mostly of young people in their twenties, had an educational as well as a glorious pleasure tour in the Orient. During the trans-pacific voyage, they held class meets on regularly every day and several times made interesting trips to the bridge, where the captain and officers pointed out the methods of navigations. The steamship company fitted out special tourist accommodation in the steerage quarters. Concerts and impromptu dances were held aboard and the four weeks spent at sea outbound and inbound, were restful and pleasant. When the ship docked here yesterday all the members of the party were eagerly waiting to leave the ship for a tour of Victoria, as thrilled at being back in North America, as they were when they first set foot in old Japan.

INDIA TRIP: When the party left Victoria in June it numbered 117. Several of these, however, in charge of Professor and Mrs. Upton Close, under whose auspices the tour was arranged, left the main body and proceeded to India, intending to return to the United States by way of Europe and the Atlantic. On account of conditions in Siberia the party was advised to omit traveling through this country.

The rest of the party, those who arrived here yesterday, visited Kamakura, Tokio, Nikko, Yokohama, Nagaya, Nara, Kobe, Mukden and Peking, several of them proceeding into Manchuria, while the rest visited Taishan, Shantung, and Nanking. Side trips were made to Hangchow and Soochow, from where Professor P. H. Elwood took eleven students to Hongkong and Formosa to study landscape gardening.

THRILLING SIGHTS All the ancient glory of the Orient was unfolded to the eager young students from the Occident. The age-old temples of Japan, famous Mount Fujiyama, beautiful old shrines and tea houses, quaint people, and other Oriental beauties have become familiar to the North Americans by their wonderful tour. In China the teeming millions of impoverished people

made an impression on their young minds, while the European quarters of Shanghai and Hongkong seemed to be not very far distant from the great cities of their own continent.

“It was a wonderful trip,” one of the teachers in the party was heard to say yesterday aboard the ship, “and the most wonderful part of it, I believe, is getting home again. I can hardly wait until I get to San Francisco. I have so much to tell my friends there.” Most of the party left the ship yesterday to make a short trip around Victoria. Outbound they had little time to do this, and so yesterday was for some the first time they had ever been in Canadian territory. This alone was somewhat unique and lent a still further thrill to the tour.

Upton Close continued to lead tours to Asia in 1930, 1931, 1932 and 1933. However, a news article appeared in the *Tacoma News Tribune* of August 2, 1933, “Author Banned From Manchukuo Zone as Undesirable Alien.” Close had written unfavorably about Japan’s occupation of Manchuria and the Japanese authorities were not pleased. Close had to fly to the Korean border to meet up with the rest of the tour group he was leading, following his expulsion.

That was the last tour Close led to Asia. He spent a year in Hawaii in 1934 and then returned to the continental United States, where he focused on his lectures and books, speaking largely about the Asian political situation and where he saw that heading (he mentioned the probability of a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor as early as 1934). But nobody listened to his prescient advice.

3. Landscape architect students on Japan Trip

One question about Professor Elwood's Asia tour is how it might have affected the students who went on the trip. Did they become landscape architects, and did what they saw in Japan and China influence their future work? Below, I'll detail what I was able to find out about the careers of the four students who undertook the excursion: Max Bird, Bethane Carpenter, John Hall and Norman Morris.

One thing is clear upon looking into their lives after college: several of them remained close friends after traveling together and after graduating. John Hall stood as best man for Max Bird's 1933 wedding. And Bethane Carpenter (Fister) and John Hall ended up marrying each other much later in their lives (in 1968).



Figure 16: The 1930 yearbook photo of the Vistonian Club for Iowa State College landscape architecture students and faculty. Norman Morris, John Hall and Bethane Carpenter are standing in the front row, 2nd, 3rd and 4th from left. Faculty members Walter Popham and P.H. Elwood are standing at center in the back row. (*The Bomb*, 1930)

Max Bird

Max Bird, son of Stanley R. and Mabel Bird of Clear Lake, Iowa, was born in 1906 in Parkersburg (northwest of Waterloo). He graduated from Iowa State College in 1931 with a degree in landscape architecture, and in 1933 he was appointed supervisor of construction at Ledges State Park in Boone, Iowa. He married Pearl A. Wheeler of Clear Lake, and the best man at their wedding was John Hall, his friend and classmate from Iowa State College who went on the Asia trip.

Bird remained at Ledges for the rest of his career, and died suddenly in 1953.

Bethane Carpenter

Bethane Carpenter, born January 28, 1910 in Coon Rapids (northwest of Des Moines in Carroll County) was the daughter of a farming family. She attended Iowa State College, studying Landscape Architecture, and participated in a number of activities while in school there: she was a member of the Visitation Club for LA students and faculty and served as circulation manager for the LA Department's *Horizons* publication – as well as traveling to Asia with Elwood & company. She graduated with a degree in Landscape Architecture in 1931.

In January 1933, she gave a talk to the Ames Women's Club, according to the *Ames Daily Tribune* of January 21, 1933: "Miss Bethane Carpenter, graduate student at Iowa State College who made a tour of Japan with Prof. P.H. Elwood, will give a lecture on Japan."

Bethane Carpenter was an artist as well as a landscape architect and worked in both fields. She married E.J. Fister in 1940 and had a son, Jon Charles Fister and a daughter, Virginia Fister, but was later divorced from Fister.

Notably, in 1968 (age 58) she married her old friend and classmate (and Asia traveling companion), landscape architect John Hall. This demonstrates the close friendship that endured between the two after their travels.

The entry for Bethane Carpenter Fister Hall at Findagrave.com includes a long article about Bethane Carpenter's career. The article likely was accessed from Mt. Mercy University's website, from their Busse Library work about "The Stone City Art Colony and School 1932-1933" and the artists that participated (the colony was established by Iowa's most famous artist, Grant Wood). The original articles on the university's website have been removed, so the author cannot be determined:

A native of Coon Rapids, Iowa, where her ancestors were pioneer settlers and sustained a century of history, Bethane Carpenter graduated from the local schools in 1926. She then enrolled at Iowa State University (1926-1930); during her junior and senior undergraduate years, Carpenter travelled to China and Japan, studied public parks and gardens, and brought Asian theories of design to her remaining coursework. She received her Bachelors degree in landscape architecture (March 1931) and embarked on ambitious applications of her knowledge.

Carpenter briefly worked as an apprentice to Clarence Fowler, the noted New York City landscape architect, who served as president of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She returned to Ames during the summer of 1932 and took a single graduate course in "Instructive Manual Labor." While on campus, Carpenter's class may have had a role in preliminary designs for a reflecting pool (gifted by the 1937 VEISHA Committee) adjacent to the ISU Memorial Union.

In 1933, Carpenter attended the second session of the Stone City art colony, and while there, met Ruth Eby Stinson, who led the children's art classes. The two artists maintained a lifelong friendship, and the Stinson family routinely visited Coon Rapids. By 1937, Carpenter resided in



Figure 17: Bethane Carpenter's yearbook photo. (*The Bomb*, 1930)

San Francisco, where she assisted architects and engineers to design migrant labor camps for workers who assisted with California's long harvests. Her tenure on the west coast coincided with opening ceremonies for the Golden Gate Bridge (May 1937).

Bethane returned to Iowa and worked for the noted landscape architect, Francis Asbury Robinson of Des Moines. She soon joined the Iowa State Conservation Commission's landscape department as its first female employee. While there, Carpenter did preliminary groundwork for the future Geode State Park (Danville, IA), sighting its boundaries, natural aspects, and visitor use areas. She also carried the same responsibilities for the future Springbrook State Park in Guthrie County, Iowa and designed the roadways for George Wyth State Park in Waterloo, Iowa.

By the early 1950s, Carpenter's professional goals shifted to art education. In January 1954, the Carroll, Iowa school board initiated action to hire a county-wide teacher for its new arts program. Bethane received the job offer, joined the local school district in August, and began her classes for junior high and high school students. Eventually, elementary students also participated and high schoolers experienced a single-room approach with students of various abilities.

While employed in Carroll, Carpenter took summer, graduate classes at Drake University (1958-1960). With a painting emphasis in her coursework, the artist received her MFA from Drake in August 1960; her thesis was titled "Design and Construction of Three Horizontal Mosaics." At Drake, her teachers included Karl Mattern, husband of Mary Mattern, another Stone City art colony participant.

Carpenter completed studies in Mexico, exhibiting watercolors at the Des Moines Art Center and the Iowa State Fair. One notable work, "Drying Nets," was selected for a national, watercolor tour, the Watercolor USA exhibit. She also studied with Dong Kingman, the master watercolorist, in workshops offered across Asia (Manila, Singapore, and Hong Kong).

Bethane retired from the Carroll Public School system in 1972; she served as secretary-treasurer of the Iowa State Educators Association and as president of the Carroll County Educational Association. She was active in her local PEO chapter (Chapter EB, Carroll, Iowa), Friends of the Public Library, and the local Methodist church.

Carpenter was an avid gardener and invited friends to sketch while visiting her home. She is remembered, in Carroll, as a committed teacher and an advocate for the arts in her community.

As noted, Bethane Carpenter clearly remained interested in Asian art for the remainder of her life, traveling to Asia to take classes there. She also gave at least one talk about Asia, to the Methodist Church in Carroll in March 1955, according to the *Carroll Daily Times Herald*.

Bethane Carpenter Fister Hall died December 15, 2006 (age 96) in Carroll. Incredibly, someone who made that 1929 trip to Asia lived until 2006 – probably outliving every other person on that voyage aboard the Africa Maru.

John Hall

Jonathan M. Hall was born in Centerville (in south-central Iowa) in May 1906, according to his obituary in the *Carroll Daily Times Herald* of December 11, 1973. He attended Wesleyan College

and Iowa State College, from where he graduated with a landscape architecture degree in 1931. His career details were noted in his obituary:

He had worked for the Iowa Highway Commission as a landscaper. At one time he was superintendent at Mt. Arbor Nursery in Shenandoah. He later became associated with the Army Engineers Corps and was stationed in Omaha working on the project to control the Missouri River floods. He resigned from that work a few years ago and became associated with the Earl May Nursery. He worked as a landscaper for the May Company, going from store to store as an adviser for store managers on landscaping programs.

John Hall clearly enjoyed the hands-on gardening aspect of landscape design far too much to spend all his time sitting at a drafting desk.

As noted above, John Hall and Bethane Carpenter married each other later in their lives, and he had a daughter and a son from a previous marriage. John Hall died in Carroll December 10, 1973.

Norman Morris

Norman A. Morris was born June 25, 1907 in San Diego, California to A.N. and Edith Morris, and his family moved to Sioux City, Iowa before 1915, where his father was the recreation director for the YMCA and then for the local schools, and served at Camp Knox during WWI. Norman attended Iowa State College, and while there participated in the ROTC program, training at Fort Knox during the summer too.

After graduation in 1931, he worked in the Wisconsin State Extension program until 1934, when he returned to Ames to fill a position in the Iowa State Extension program, and perhaps also as a professor in the Iowa State College Department of Landscape Architecture from which he had graduated. He married Susan Conley in Cook County, Illinois in October 1931 and had at least 2 children with her.

Morris must have tired of his extension work, because around 1938 or 1939, the Morris family moved to Los Angeles, California, where he worked as a “building contractor” (probably doing landscape work for new construction projects), and then likely spent wartime in some kind of government service.

In 1944, Morris started a landscaping correspondence school in Los Angeles, the National Landscape Institute, which he advertised in newspapers nationwide. He recognized that numerous landscapers would be needed for the postwar building boom that was coming. Morris offered formal study of the principles of landscape design, through a reasonably priced alternative to the college landscaping degree that he had obtained, and that was available to anyone anywhere, even people



Figure 18: Norman Morris' 1930 Iowa State College yearbook photo. (*The Bomb*, 1930)

Figure 19: A 1954 ad from the Los Angeles Times for Morris' National Landscape Institute. (*L.A. Times*, June 13, 1954)

who needed to continue working full-time while studying. "For a Secure Postwar Income, Learn Landscaping – Don't go back to a low prewar income – Learn in your spare time, in the meantime Keep On The Job!"

Hundreds of landscaping contractors advertising their services during the 1950s and 1960s mentioned that they were graduates of Morris' program, and numerous obituaries of retired nurserymen and contractors through the 1990s and 2000s included the deceased's credentials from the National Landscape Institute.

Norman A. Morris also published at least one book, *Your Book of Garden Plans* (1946), and spoke to garden clubs, high schools and other groups. He published articles about landscape planning in the *Los Angeles Times*, and a series of five monthly articles in *Better Homes & Gardens* during 1950.

Morris clearly thought he would be able to disseminate his landscaping knowledge to reach more people through his correspondence school, magazine articles and book than as an Extension employee and professor of landscape architecture – and he was probably correct.

Morris ran his landscaping school until around 1970, when he was in his 60s, and may have sold the school and its parent company, Lifetime Career Schools.

Norman A. Morris died in Los Angeles in 1996.



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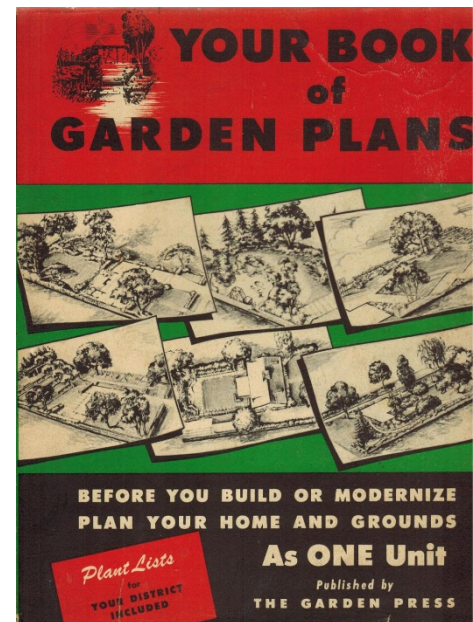


Figure 20: Morris' 1946 book of garden planning. (*abe.com*)

Figure 21: One of the five articles Morris wrote and illustrated for *Better Homes & Gardens* in 1950. (*Better Homes & Gardens*, February 1950, *bhg.com*)

4. Articles, Lectures and Paper Following Elwood's Japan Trip

Following his trip to Asia, Professor Elwood employed what he had seen and learned abroad to deliver a number of lectures about Asia and Asian gardens, illustrated by photos and the moving picture films he took while traveling. He published a paper about Chinese and Japanese gardens in *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, and at least one major newspaper article about his trip.

Following are the articles about and by Professor Elwood pertaining to the Japan trip, as well as excerpts from his published paper:

Newspaper Articles

Following the Iowa party's return, the *Ames Daily Tribune* of September 26, 1929 had this article:

Prof. P.H. Elwood, head of the department of landscape at Iowa State college and his party of landscape architecture students who toured the Orient the past summer studying gardens, historical monuments and other places of interest to landscape artists, have returned to Ames. Other members of the party were Prof. W. D. Popham of the landscape architecture department; John Hall, Centerville; Max Bird, Clear Lake; Bethane Carpenter, Coone Rapids; Norman Morris, Seattle; and Mrs. Anna Breeze, Ames.

The party visited Japan, Korea, Manchuria, China and the island of Formosa.

Among the most astonishing facts noted on the trip was the recovery which Tokio and Yokohama have made since the earthquake, according to Professor Elwood. Much planting has been done there since the earthquake. Trees three or four inches in diameter were used and the system is much better than that in most American cities says Professor Elwood.

Often one is embarrassed by the many gifts of the Japanese, Professor Elwood says. He was presented, among other things, with a historic stone lantern about 350 years old. It is four or five feet high and was made for a great military leader. A parchment scroll containing its history accompanies the lantern.

Women in Japan are not prominent as they are in America, Mr. Elwood explains. They are treated very courteously but their position is below that of men.

Japan, he continued, is modern clean, up-to-date, industrious and picturesque. Gardens, houses and people are small. Gardens there are beautiful thruout year the since the Japanese plant trees and shrubs rather than so many flowers.

China was different, he added. Trouble was brewing with Russia. China does not seem to be keeping up the old Manchu temples and other beauty spots. However, the forbidden city, Peking, contains great gates, avenues and elaborate detail. Little is being done now in China except around Nanking where good roads are being built.

The *Ames Daily Tribune* of October 8, 1929 had this announcement: "7:00 p.m.: Cosmopolitan club meeting. Prof. P. H. Elwood will talk on "What I Saw in the Far East," with moving pictures."

The Ames Garden club announced in the October 30, 1929 *Ames Daily Tribune* that their late November meeting would include this presentation:

Prof. P. H. Elwood, head of the landscape architecture department at the college, will speak on "Some Gardens of China and Japan." His talk will be based on his trip to the orient this summer and will be illustrated with colored slides and moving pictures.

Regarding the Japanese stone lantern that was mentioned in the first article, above, another article And the *Waterloo Courier* of November 9, 1929 had this interesting piece:

Japanese Lantern, 350 Years Old, Is Given Ames Tutor

A Japanese stone lantern, 350 years old, made especially for a tea party of Hideyoshi Toyotomi, Japanese hero of several centuries ago, in the future will decorate the interior of the Memorial union at Iowa State college, a monument to some of Iowa's world war dead.

The lantern was presented to Prof. P. H. Elwood, head of the landscape architecture department of Iowa State college, by a famous Japanese landscaper while Elwood was touring the Orient with a group of students last summer.

Elwood said he intended to present the lantern to the Memorial union upon its arrival here this week.

It is not known what happened to the lantern: whether it ever arrived in Ames or was displayed in the Memorial Union. (If it did make it to the memorial Union, it would certainly have been removed during WWII.)

It is possible that the "famous Japanese landscaper" referred to in his article might have been Ogawa Jihei (1860-1933), probably the most famous Japanese garden architect of the early 20th century. Ogawa designed the Kyoto villa of a Mr. Hirai, which was visited and photographed by Elwood, who included photographs of it in his April 1930 *Landscape Architecture Magazine* article.

In the March 2, 1930 *Des Moines Sunday Register*, Professor Elwood published a long article about his travels in Japan and China, his admiration for the Japanese people, and also about how westernization was making Japan into a less beautiful place.

Elwood mentioned toward the end of the article the gifts of garden books – and again, the stone lantern – that he received in Japan:

As soon as one arrives (in Japan or China) gifts of the things he would seem to desire begin pouring in upon him. In my own case it was books, until I now have as a treasured possession an excellent library of Japanese garden books, some in English.

Before leaving the country, I was presented also with one of the real garden treasures of Japan. A stone lantern, 350 years old, built for the great Hideyoshi himself and used by him at a court tea party at his Osaka castle upon the occasion of his celebration when made chief war lord by the emperor.

Prof. P. H. Elwood of Ames Finds in Japan a Nation of True Nature Lovers

INVADING WEST THREATENS OLD ORIENTAL CHARM

Ugly Influence of West-
ernization Is Growing.

BY PROF. P. H. ELWOOD.

(Professor of Landscape Architecture at
Iowa State College.)

It is discouraging to one interested in the preservation of natural beauty to return to the United States after visiting China and Japan. Those who have not seen the flowery kingdom or perhaps heavenly Nippon will understand that statement the better after noting the following.

It will be decades if not centuries before Americans and westerners in general approach the oriental respect and honest love for beauty and surround themselves with it everywhere, as is witnessed in the orient, particularly in Japan.

Japanese Are Thorough.

The most devastating, ugliest and least stimulating influence in Japan today is westernization. Unless checked and controlled much more effectively than now, it will surely cast a hopeless blight over the whole country. The Japanese are thorough. That is the terrifying fact. When Commander Perry and his fleet entered Yokohama harbor and the Japanese admitted the western world, they were in dead earnest, and have been so ever since. They are in many ways outdoing us at our own game. Just a little example tells the story.

The Japanese lady has in legend and art always carried a fan. It is one of the three accomplishments of the young ladies of Japan. From girlhood they are trained in (1) the use of a fan; (2) flower arrangement; (3) cheerful deportment. Even the men of Japan handle a fan with skill and as naturally as an Eng-



Upper left, a bridge in Tokio; upper right, a Japanese pagoda; below, a view of Mount Fuji.

skill and as naturally as an Englishman carries a cane. It adds a delicate, graceful touch and has been in universal use by both men and women in Japan for centuries. It surely promotes comfort during the hot, humid summer days.

Adopt Electric Fan.

But we think carrying a fan undignified, and effeminate, although we do not object to seeing electric fans here and there, but almost over night the Japanese and the Chinese have adopted the electric fan until every hotel room, every shop of any importance has its electric fan. And the climate is very similar to our own, but how many, even of our first class hotels, have electric fans in every room?

In Washington, D. C., recently I did not see facilities for a single fan. In how many American shops and homes when you enter do they turn the great fans to waft gentle soothing breezes in your direction? Yet in all the shops visited last summer, both in Japan and China including the important shopping cities of Peking, Shanghai and Canton, the electric fans were never absent.

Towels Given to Guests.

Another thoughtful courtesy noted everywhere in Japan is the generous use of the moist towel so cooling when entering an inn from the hot, dusty streets. And when you leave an inn, though you are a guest for one night only, you are presented with a towel with the crest of the establishment for your comfort in traveling and as a pleasant memento of your visit.

Traveling in Japan is much easier, more convenient, comfortable and punctual than in continental Europe. In the dining cars and all Japanese Pacific liners for example, excellent western food is served ordered from beautifully decorated menu cards printed in English. English is spoken much more generally than in Europe and nowhere have I met with such sincere courtesy and a desire to promote the comfort and enjoyment of the traveler.

Much Like America.

Oriental climate is also much misinterpreted and misunderstood as are the printed precautions in regard to drinking water and food. Of course one is likely to encounter rainy days in summer, both in Japan and China, but the same is true of England and parts of the United States. The humidity reminds one of middlewestern United States. Therefore, no one familiar and accustomed to the climate of the central United States latitudes need worry at all.

People often pass an entire summer in the orient as I did in 1929 without even a raincoat as an impediment. A wet, soggy rain garment is a loathsome thing on a hot, sultry day, and the heat, even of Shanghai and Canton, is of the sort we hear people long

for and even praise in the corn belt; hot sultry nights and blistering days.

Must Wear Hats.

But so near the sea is Shanghai that the nights are comfortable, often very invigorating. Of course, one cannot go about without a hat in the brilliant sun anywhere in the orient or fatal results follow as surely as in southern Italy.

As to the drinking water, that used in the better hotels is as safe as in hostleries of the same class here. One always finds in his room at The Imperial in Tokio, for example, a thermos bottle of ice cold water as pure and refreshing as that of New York. The water supply of Tokio is obtained in precisely the same manner as that of New York City. Boston and other large American cities, and the beautiful reservoir lake with their forest clad encircling hills remind one strongly of the Croton country of Westchester county, New York, and the Wauchusett reservoir of Boston.

Fever in Plants a Myth.

But the green vegetables we were warned so much about because of the fever infested water from the rice fields? Another myth. One can as safely eat green salads in the Kyoto hotel as at the Plaza in New York. True if one stops at some of the native inns certain care and precautions about drinking water must be taken, but one can usually feel perfectly safe in drinking tea. Such tea, and the famous tea ceremony! But that is a separate story for another time.

Even though one is traveling alone, he can get about with almost as much ease as at home; therefore it isn't necessary to enroll as a member of any tour or special party. If you have a few letters of introduction to Japanese and Chinese gentlemen, you need not worry about your program and the prospect of not seeing the most worth while things or getting first hand impressions of native home life.

"Americans Just Talk."

Americans, we think, are so nature loving, too. How we rant about conservation, write poems about trees and flowers, and do nothing about it but talk. Love for flowers is not demonstrated by frantic voting for national and state flowers.

There is a bus line in the mid-west called the Prairie Rose trail. Follow that trail mile after mile and you can search in vain for the poor, overwhelmed, ignored prairie rose. Yes, we "say it with flowers," but it usually ends just there. Did that slogan originate from sheer love of flowers? This simply represents our superficial, commercial, grandstand methods of thinking and doing.

His Great Tribute.

There was a real love of nature and plants in the soul of

the common little Japanese sailor I met. He picked up a Ginkgo tree seed in Japan, planted it in a pot, and kept it aboard his ship for months until the time when a chance American admired it. At once he wished to present it as a token of friendship between his country and ours—his greatest tribute—a living, growing plant.

In the Shinto and Buddhist precepts there must be something akin to "it is more blessed to give than to receive." One has but to visit Japan or China to realize the truth of this statement. As soon as one arrives gifts of the things he would seem to desire most begin pouring in upon him. In my own case it was books, until I now have as a treasured possession an excellent library of Japanese garden books, some in English.

Before leaving the country, I

was presented also with one of the real garden treasures of Japan. A stone lantern, 350 years old, built for the great Hideyoshi himself and used by him at a court tea party at his Osaka castle upon the occasion of his celebration when made chief war lord by the emperor.

I take strong exception to the historian who says that the Japanese grow plants merely for the flowers. They grow them for the beauty of the whole living, growing, ever changing plant in every season, in every changing light of day, and even into the silvery moonlight.

Noted Art Critic Recuperates.

NEW YORK (U.S.)—Sir Joseph Duveen, internationally known art critic and connoisseur, was reported recuperating Saturday in Doctors' hospital after an operation three days ago.

In the January 28, 1931, the *Ames Daily Tribune* had an article, "Elwood Addresses Garden Short Course," about Elwood's lecture at the annual garden Short Course held at Iowa State College for amateur gardeners.

While illuminating the differences between historical and geographical garden styles, Elwood *specifically cautions against* "bodily transplanting" these foreign styles into our American gardens, recommending instead choosing elements of some of them that are appropriate to our modern age:

A judicious choosing of elements from historical styles of various peoples should be practiced in modern landscape designing, Prof. P. H. Elwood, head of landscape architecture at Iowa State, Tuesday told the more than 250 amateurs of gardening at Iowa State this week for the annual garden short course.

The bodily transplanting of a classic style into our modern environment is absurd, Professor Elwood inferred, because any style is the result of a slowly maturing adaptation of architecture and the garden arts to the needs of the culture, the life, and the aspirations of a people.

American landscape designing should and does draw from the older styles, the Egyptian with its primitive block plan and elevation, the Italian, formal in tradition, the intellectual rather than emotional French, the Spanish, with its Moorish and semi-oriental influence, beautiful in detail, and the English which combines characters of Italian and Chinese.

The Chinese style, developed thru centuries, and the Japanese as well, have had profound influences upon the western styles, Professor Elwood pointed out. In slides accompanying the lecture examples of gardening in many lands were shown.

And the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* of March 31, 1931 had this article about a presentation Prof. Elwood was scheduled to make at that year's Garden Short Course in Ames:

Illustrated Talk By Prof. Elwood Is Garden Event

"How modern is modernism?"

Some of the slides shown by Prof. P. H. Elwood in the talk he is to give on Thursday in the Crystal room of the Montrose hotel will make folk wonder just what difference there is between the modernistic and the primitive.

The lecture by Prof. Elwood is a part of the Garden Short course which is sponsored by the nature and garden department of the Woman's club and is scheduled for April 2 and 3. All other meetings will be held at the Woman's club home.

Prof. Elwood, who is head of the department of landscape architecture at Iowa State college, is a practical gardener as well as a ready speaker. His lecture will be illustrated with colored slides showing some of the most beautiful gardens that he has visited in all parts of the world.

Each year a selected group of students from the landscape department of the college is taken on a tour to study foreign gardens. Last year Prof. Elwood took his group to Italy, Egypt and Turkey. Two years ago he took them to Japan and China where they saw the most beautiful oriental gardens. Previous to that they visited England, France and Germany. It is from these expeditions that the pictures which will illustrate Prof. Elwood's talk have been gathered.

Some of the slides that are shown will show large and extensive gardens but there will be many that can give inspiration to the owner of the small place, unexpected bits of beauty caught by the eye of an artist. There will be a time during the program when individuals will have an opportunity to ask Prof. Elwood about problems in planning their own planting.

Paper Published in Landscape Architecture Magazine

After his trip, Professor Elwood published a paper about Chinese and Japanese garden art in the April 1930 issue of *Landscape Architecture Magazine*. In it, he focuses mainly on Chinese gardens (“China, Mother of Gardens”), with the caveat that since so few old Chinese gardens still existed in 1930, he quoted Mr. E.H. Wilson (a British plant hunter who explored China in the early 20th century) that “the best place to study Chinese gardens is in Japan.”

In the last several pages of his paper in which he focused on Japanese gardens, Elwood outlined eleven key characteristics of Japanese gardens:

1. the absolute unity and interdependence of house and gardens
2. the perfect scale and balance maintained in the planting and open spaces
3. the picturesque and skilled training of evergreens, including dwarfing (*Bonsai*) and the miniature tray gardens (*Bonkei*)
4. the planning for seasonal effects, such as in the spring the Plum and Cherry blossoms, the Iris, the Wisteria, then the Azaleas and Laurels, and later still the Hibiscus and the Chrysanthemums, and the final autumnal glory of the Maple
5. the well-nigh total absence of all other floral effects: no flower beds, no struggle for the phantom of continuous bloom
6. the love of the Japanese for the plant as a whole and throughout the year as clearly shown in the garden
7. the very skillful use of water and rocks, lanterns, and torii
8. the absence of paint and the beauty of natural weathered wood surfaces
9. the picturesque beauty and finish of the garden settings and the country as a whole
10. the apparent age of recently constructed gardens, due to unusual skill in dwarfing and moving trees and shrubs
11. the tea house found in every garden its various parts since the introduction of the famous tea ceremony (*Cha-no-yu*) during the time of Soami, a garden architect, in the 15th century

Elwood’s closing remarks in his paper emphasize, though, that it is easy to get lost in the technicalities of Japanese garden design, while losing sight of the philosophy, spiritual significance and artistic inspiration of the best among Japanese gardens.

IMPRESSIONS OF GARDEN ART IN CHINA AND JAPAN

By PHILIP H. ELWOOD, JR.

CHINA provides the proper and logical introduction to the study of Oriental garden art. It might be said also that the proper approach to Chinese garden art is through Chinese painting, poetry, and porcelain,—probably because of the scarcity of authentic examples of this ancient art in China, except as seen through the other arts. This fact no doubt led Mr. E. H. Wilson to say that “the best place to study Chinese gardens is in Japan.” For us the best place to begin the study of Oriental gardens is in the great museums of the Western world. The Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Boston Museum inspire a profound respect and an insatiable desire to know and see more of the Oriental work which in its mystery, poetical appeal, and delicacy is incomparable.

The art of painting and garden making are closely related in China; and the early gardens, as well as portions of modern examples, are in fact often faithful miniatures of the scenes represented in historic paintings. Although this is a fundamental conception of Oriental garden art, we can best think of the Chinese garden not alone as a reproduction of some painting or some famous scene, but as a work of art in itself giving pure esthetic pleasure from many viewpoints without the necessity of extensive travel. One must remember that the Chinese usually viewed their gardens while sitting, and seldom cared for long walks as we Anglo-Saxons do. Indeed, Chinese women until very recently were unable to walk with pleasure any great distance, and to-day one sees an occasional woman on the street mincing her way on those poor little deformed feet once so much admired.

Furthermore the visitor to China and Japan must be sympathetic toward the religious and spiritual background, as symbolism plays a most important part in the gardens of both China and Japan. Without this appreciative understanding, the real significance and appeal of the gardens of the Orient are lost or misunderstood. In short, it is folly to

Figure 22: The first page of Prof. Elwood's nine-page paper about Chinese and Japanese gardens. The paper mainly focused on Chinese gardens, “China, Mother of Gardens,” before considering Japanese gardens in the last three pages, which are printed following. (*Landscape Architecture Magazine*, April 1930, *American Society of Landscape Architects*, JSTOR)

The customs and habits of China and Japan differ more than one would expect, and so do their gardens. The whole Japanese Empire seems a series of pictures, even the people, their colorful, graceful costumes, and their winsome, indescribable gardens. Among the outstanding characteristics of the Japanese gardens that make them world-famous and distinctive are: (1) the absolute unity and interdependence of house and gardens; (2) the perfect scale and balance maintained in the planting and open spaces; (3) the picturesque and skillful training of



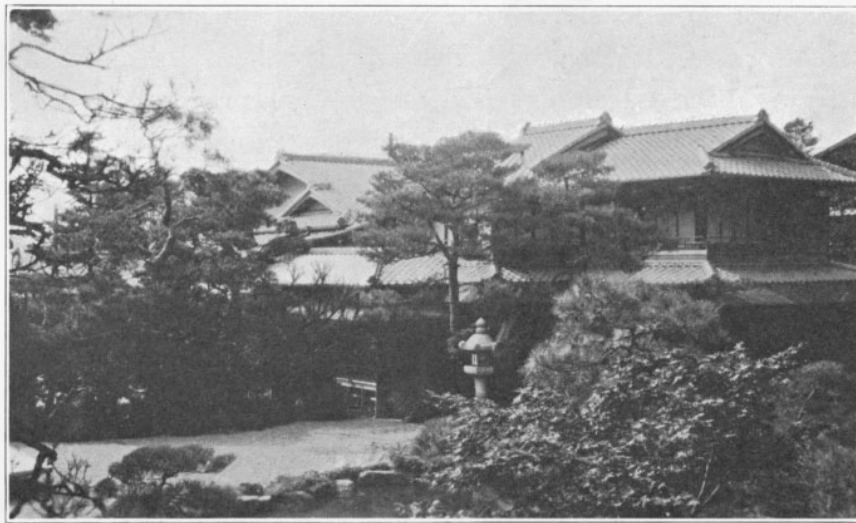
Lower Garden, Hirai, Kyoto

evergreens, including dwarfing (Bonsai) and the miniature tray gardens (Bonkei); (4) the planning for seasonal effects, such as in the spring the Plum and Cherry blossoms, the Iris, the Wisteria, then the Azaleas and Laurels, and later still the Hibiscus and the Chrysanthemums, and the final autumnal glory of the Maple; (5) the well nigh total absence of all other floral effects: no flower beds, no struggle for the phantom of continuous bloom; (6) the love of the Japanese for the plant as a whole and throughout the year as clearly shown in the garden; (7) the very skillful use of water and rocks, lanterns, and torii; (8) the absence of paint and the beauty of natural weathered wood surfaces; (9) the picturesque beauty and finish of the garden settings and the country as a whole; (10) the apparent age of recently constructed gardens, due to unusual

Figure 23: The first of three pages in Elwood's paper that focused specifically on Japanese gardens. (*Landscape Architecture Magazine*, April 1930, *American Society of Landscape Architects*, JSTOR)



Garden Entrance



**View of Residence from Upper Garden
HIRAI GARDEN, KYOTO**

Figure 24: The next page in Elwood's paper, devoted to two more photos of the garden of Mr. Hirai (*Landscape Architecture Magazine*, April 1930, *American Society of Landscape Architects*, JSTOR)

skill in dwarfing and moving mature trees and shrubs; (11) the tea house found in every garden and serving as a center for enjoyment of its various parts since the introduction of the famous tea ceremony (Cha-no-yu) during the time of Soami, a garden architect, in the 15th century. It was he who designed the famous gardens of Daisen-in and Ryuanji in Kyoto, the latter built entirely of rocks and sand to represent picturesque islands in a calm sea. Kyoto might be called the center of garden art in Japan: it is to Japan what Florence is to Italy and Andalusia is to Spain.

Probably in no country is garden art so closely linked with the great names of history as in Japan. Much has been written in Japanese on the history and technique of Japanese garden art, but little is to be found in the English language except in Mr. Josiah Conder's classic work.

In studying Japanese gardens and parks, it is easy to become lost in intricate technicalities of garden types and minute details, and one is prone to lose the basic philosophy, spiritual significance, and artistic inspiration of these masterpieces. When garden design is reduced to a science, it ceases to be an art. Undoubtedly the most lasting impression of Japan, the Japanese, and their gardens, is the natural beauty of the whole country and the innate sense of reverence and appreciation and profound love for the great and the little in Nature,—from the tiny seed to the sacred Fujiyama.

Figure 25: The final page of Elwood's paper. (*Landscape Architecture Magazine*, April 1930, *American Society of Landscape Architects*, JSTOR)

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