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1917



The
REPTONIAN

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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THE REPTONIAN

E. M. FICKETT, *Mgn. Ed.*

THE 1917 REPTONIAN

*An Annual Publication Representative of the Work in the
Professional Course of Landscape Gardening at
the University of Illinois*

Compiled and Published by

The Reptonian Board of Publication,
The University Landscape Architect's Society
R. R. Root Chapter,
and
The Faculty and Students in
Landscape Gardening



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Introductory Note

THE desire of the students in Landscape Gardening to present to professional men and the general public a collection of representative work is reached with the publication of our second annual, the 1917 Reptonian. Since this is an annual publication, the name "The Reptonian" has been selected with the hope that this book will always be associated with the profession of Landscape Gardening, as is Sir Humphrey Repton, from whom the name is derived.

A strictly competitive system is followed in the selection of drawings for the book. All material of the current year is laid before a jury composed of the Board of Publication and the faculty of the Division. From this mass of material three or four solutions of each problem are kept for final judgment. The drawings to be used are then picked from these. An effort is made in the selection of this material to get at least one problem from each upper classman taking the professional course. In attempting to do this, however, the competitive system is followed, the work appearing in each division being chosen strictly on its merits.

—THE EDITOR.

THE LANDSCAPE CLUB

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THE FUNCTION OF THE LANDSCAPE CLUB

The Landscape Club is composed of the larger portion of the students in the course and is open to all upon application. It was organized primarily to take care of the various things which can be done to help the student in such a course by the members working together for a common aim. From this function it has branched out into the social line, with a view to bringing the students in the various classes into closer touch with each other, and assisting in the interchange of ideas between the classes and the faculty.

This year the club is issuing sets of specifications covering various types of construction found in actual practice. In addition to this, sheets of good plant combinations, blue-printed photographs of notable pieces of landscape work, and tracings of plans and details which would be of value to the young professional man who does not have access to a library, are being prepared.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL COURSE IN LANDSCAPE GARDENING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

It is always interesting to trace the development of any movement which has for its ideal and aim, something not utilitarian only, but tangibly beautiful as well. Any scheme of things which can claim as its ultimate goal such apparently divergent and differentiated aims is likely to move rapidly because of its appeal. It seems safe to say, then, that it is to this combination of the theoretical and the practical, the useful and the beautiful, that much of the rapidity of development of landscape gardening in its various phases is due.

Going back to delve in the earliest archives of the University, one finds that in 1868 a course in landscape gardening is mentioned as part of the work in the Department of Horticulture. In 1869 the Third Annual Circular of the Illinois Industrial University, announces that the "School of Horticulture will include the formation, management and care of gardens, hotbeds, orchards, tree plantations, and ornamental grounds".

By 1871 there had been mapped out a much more complete course of study for the School in Horticulture, and we find for the junior year, second term, a course in Garden Architecture; third term, "Landscape Gardening", with the illuminating remark that "Ladies and gentlemen alike engage in the studies and exercises of the course".

In 1876 the circular announces that "Eleven weeks are devoted to the study of landscape gardening", but since only 24 men were registered in the entire "School of Agriculture", and 2 men in the "School of Horticulture", it is safe to assume that there was no congestion in the landscape division!

It is as true in educational affairs as in agriculture that men must attend to the utilitarian needs and then after a clearing has been made and a food supply has been assured, they can take time for the refinements of culture and beauty. So we find that horticulture and landscape gardening came in for small attention in the Industrial University for many years,

but in 1895 things were looking up, and a course called "Gardens" was announced in this fashion: "Kitchen and market gardens are made the first subjects of study after which ornamental and landscape gardening occupies the time." The "School of Horticulture" had by this time become a department of the College of Agriculture, and one instructor was its entire staff. Indeed, it was not until 1904 that the exigencies of the case seemed to demand a special instructor to teach landscape gardening. He was designated as Assistant Professor of Landscape Gardening, one undergraduate course being offered dealing with "ornamental and landscape gardening with special reference to the beautifying of home surroundings". The following year saw a course in Landscape Design added, and the graduate course known as Landscape Horticulture was placed in the undergraduate list. That year (1905-1906) then, marks the departure of landscape gardening from the Graduate School, and it has never been re-established there. It also marks the first leaning toward a special and well-defined professional course.

Two years later (1907-1908), five new courses were added, making eight in all, and the professional course in landscape gardening, leading to the degree of B.S., was offered, the Head of the Department of Horticulture and the Assistant Professor in Landscape Gardening being the only instructors. The course is described in the annual register for the year, as follows:

"The artistic instruction of the course consists of work in composition throughout the four years, two years being given to architectural design and the rest to landscape design. This is supplemented by another almost continuous course in freehand drawing and the use of water-colors. Technique, or the means of execution of art ideas, is provided: first, by some acquaintance with engineering methods, such as surveying, road construction, grading, and wall building; and, second, by horticulture, where a familiarity with plants and their propagation, culture, and care are emphasized, together with such practice as will enable a student to make a planting plan. These are accompanied by their allied sciences and by such general subjects as modern language, rhetoric, and history".

The requirements of the courses were made less stringent and arranged so that some were available to first-year students.

The next year a new Instructor in Landscape Gardening was appointed. After this the landscape work was regarded as a separate division of the department and naturally went through various ups and downs. We had but one instructor teaching ten courses in landscape gardening for the years intervening, until 1912. The following year saw an

unprecedented increase in registration, and with additional instructors to carry on the work, the professional course in landscape gardening was fairly launched and is now in the front rank of landscape gardening courses in the country. This institution was the first to establish a professorship in Civic Design, a most important phase of landscape gardening.

We are proud, and justly so, of the fact that the division of landscape gardening has attained so great a measure of distinction in so short a time. We are, however, still in a process of development. It has been impossible to maintain the desired measure of efficiency in the face of the rapidly increasing demands for instruction. We have simply tried to provide instruction and practice for those who wished it. We have now to standardize our methods in order to give all students an equal chance for development. It is hoped to increase the teaching force, thus enabling the faculty to take added responsibility for the welfare of the students, who heretofore have been forced to be content with a minimum of guidance and instruction from their overworked instructors.

It is a part of our plan ultimately to extend the landscape gardening work into the graduate school, offering courses which will lead to the degree of M.L.A. It is a matter of regret that we have not so far been able to give this advanced instruction. With this opportunity provided, some of our ambitions in the way of instruction for the students of this art will have been provided.

It may be of interest in this connection, to quote a few words from a recent letter to me from an enthusiastic friend, for among other things he says:

“It is a source of great satisfaction to hear from time to time the landscape gardening division referred to, as I have heard it in the West and in communications from the East, as a school of more than ordinary standing among the professional schools in this line. From fellow members of the American Society of Landscape Architects, letters have been received from time to time inquiring about graduates to fill office positions in some of the best offices in the country, and I am glad to refer them to you. It is further interesting and encouraging to compare your school with those of other colleges, for especially noticeable is its even development of curriculum”.

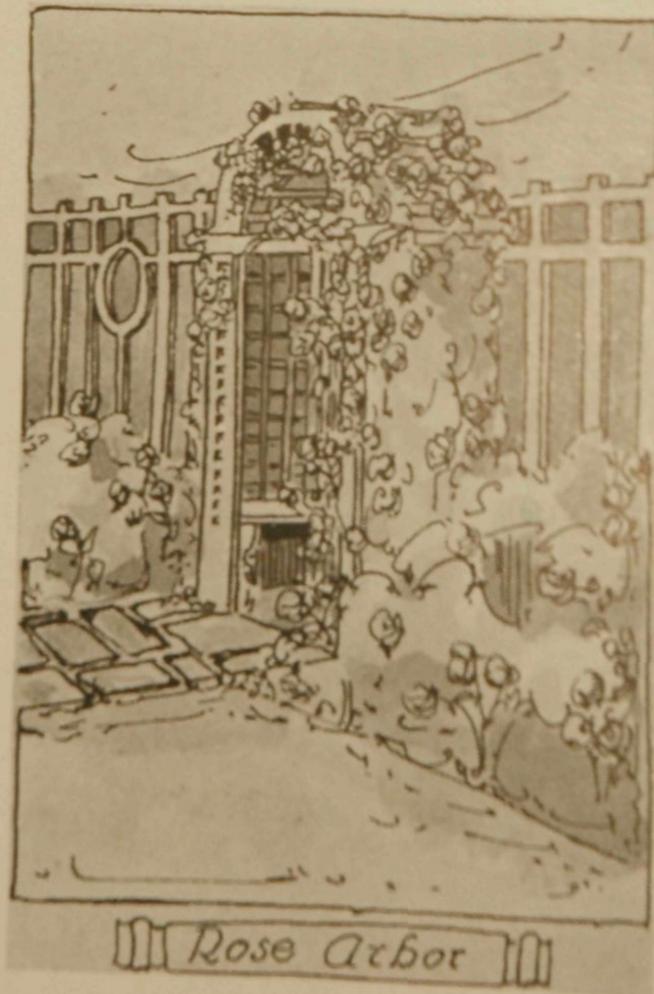
We are glad of course, to have these expressions of encouragement and appreciation from others. We feel, however, that in the development of this important work at Illinois, we have just made a beginning. The ul-

timate development of the landscape division here will be determined in large measure by the character of the work done elsewhere by our students who have gone into the professional field. We are very proud of our graduates, 33 of whom have received the degree of Bachelor of Science in landscape gardening during the past five years. In 1916 alone, twelve people took this degree. This year there will be a graduating class of nine.

These people working in the professional field, together with the state's activities in landscape extension, will surely bring landscape gardening in the rich prairie states of the Mississippi Valley to its highest possible development. It is this home of abundant harvests and large industrial enterprises which will be eventually the best medium for the true expression of the landscape art.

JOSEPH C. BLAIR.

May 4, 1917.



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Instructor in Landscape Gardening

TELL WILLIAM NICOLET, B.Sc., M.L.A.

Instructor in Landscape Gardening

COMPETITIONS

While there are no set prizes offered annually, there are a number of competitions held in various branches of Landscape work during the school year.

During the past year Mr. J. C. Hegeler, of Danville, Illinois, offered prizes amounting to \$50 for the best solution of a subdivision problem in Danville. Shortly afterwards, Mr. William G. Hibbard of Chicago, offered prizes of \$25 and \$10 for the two best designs of a Wayside Park in Winnetka, Illinois. During the month of April, Mr. Allen F. Moore of Monticello, Illinois, offered a first prize of \$75 and additional prizes of \$50 and \$30 for the designing of a Country Estate near Monticello.

These competitions are open to all students registered in the division and they provide a stimulus to work, thus serving as a means to create much interest in the division.

PRIZE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY AT ROME

Graduates of the professional course in Landscape Gardening are eligible to compete for the Prize of the American Academy in Rome, offered by the American Society of Landscape Architects.