A Brief History of Morgan County Gardens and Garden Club Activites

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Susan also worked as an intern for the National Park Service, Cultural Resource Planning unit of the Southeast Area Field Office under historical landscape architects. She worked to help inventory and document all the historic landscapes under the Parks Service.

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Two of Susan's articles included in ***Georgia Landscape*** are "Using Greenways as Wildlife Migration Corridors" and "Sea Grass Basketry of the South Carolina Low Country."

In 1995 the Morgan County Landmarks Society was awarded a $7,000 grant by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, an arm of the National Park Service, to research and document the heritage gardens of Morgan County, and, also, to document the gardeners who created them. The documentation collected through this grant will be added to the extensive information already compiled through a Heritage Education grant received in 1992 from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.

Morgan County's architectural heritage has received much attention over the years. With the county seat of Madison recognized as a bastion of many architectural styles, there has never been much question about the need to preserve these structures. Morgan County's historic landscapes, however, have never been the subject of an extensive study. Only the most celebrated gardens, Boxwood and Bonar Hall, were included in the Garden History of Georgia published in 1933. The heritage landscapes study, begun in 1996, has revealed that Morgan County's gardens have historically been as impressive as its architecture, although, sadly, not as well preserved.

Antebellum Gardens

Antebellum Morgan County was in many ways still a frontier, only having been established in 1807 on land ceded by the Creek Indians in 1802. Madison, which grew up around well-known Round Bowl Springs, was incorporated in 1809. Morgan County quickly became the destination of many landowners from Virginia and the Carolinas who were seeking fertile soil. Due to the devastating effects of cotton farming on the land, it became common practice among the planters to simply move on to better land after the soil gave out. Others were first-time landowners who had gotten property in Morgan County as recompense for service in the Revolutionary War. Many made their fortune from the plantation economy, and many planters built town houses in Madison, as well as fine homes on their plantations. Professional people and craftsmen moved to this thriving town to enjoy the fruits of the cotton economy. George White's 1849 edition of *Statistics of the State of Georgia* described Madison: "In point of intelligence, refinement, and hospitality, this town acknowledges no superior" (White 1849, 435).

The dominance of the South's agricultural economy, directly affected specific conventions of southern landscape practice. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of many of the gardens of antebellum Piedmont Georgia was the well-ordered geometric regularity of the house-lot and its dependencies, reflecting the spatial character of the agricultural landscape. Piedmont Georgia planters transformed vast acres of wilderness into handsome country residences, and the dominance of axiality, symmetry, and compartmentalization in the plantation landscape reflected the idea of imposing a civilizing order upon the land (Howett 1985, 78). Thus, antebellum gardens were generally formal in nature and consisted of geometric patterns that were associated with Italian and French Renaissance designs. Within this formal framework, however, areas of more informal or 'picturesque' design, borrowed from the 18th-century English Landscape Gardening School, and espoused by American landscape gardener Andrew Jackson Downing, were sometimes incorporated. Curving paths and irregularly patterned beds, as well as the retention of creation of a grove of trees and other shrubs away from the house, were part

of this 'natural style' of garden design. Foundation plantings did not occur during the antebellum period, although one or two specimen shrubs might be planted close to the house for fragrance or flowers. Vines were used extensively on porches or on trellises built against the house. Grass was not a common feature in southern gardens until after 1825 when Bermuda grass was introduced, and even then it was used sparingly. Most Georgia gardens continued to be 'swept' or clay yards (Cothran 1991, III-4).

Snow Hill

The gardens created in Morgan County during this time were certainly a part of this model. Excerpts from the *Southern Miscellany*, Morgan County's earliest newspaper, have provided much information about the 'pleasure gardens' created by Lancelot Johnston at Snow Hill. Johnston, one of Madison's most renowned early citizens, patented a process for removing the oil from cottonseed. He mixed this oil with white lead and painted his house, roof and all, pure white--hence the name, Snow Hill. In an article entitled "Mr. Johnston's Flower Garden," the May 13, 1843, *Southern Miscellany* described the gardens as follows:

> But we doubt not that . . . the pleasure he derives from his lovely arbors and flower-environed walks, is enjoyed in common by his fellow citizens. . . . Such a spot--with its "purling brook," its umbrageous trees, its rippling pool, its fragrant flowers . . . would be regarded as a miniature paradise . . . and even here the garden has attractions for all who love to contemplate nature in her loveliest garb. At evening . . . how delightful to stray 'mid its embowered walks, to feel the cool zephyr that comes breathing the breath of blooming roses, to watch the gold-tinted humming-bird, as he hovers from flower to flower. . . . It is indeed a lovely retreat, and as we have said, one for which we cannot feel too grateful.
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> We have been told that it was formerly much more beautiful than now, and that it has been permitted to fall into comparative neglect, in consequence of the depredations which have committed upon the rare flowers and trees with which it had been planted by its proprietor. We remember upon visiting it last spring to have seen the walks strewed with choice roots and cuttings, which seemed to have been torn up from very wantonness, and left to perish upon the ground. This, we have no doubt, was the work of mischievous servants, and should be prevented in future. It is to be regretted that Mr. Johnston should find any difficulty in preserving the garden from such depredations, and we hope that hereafter his present reason for neglecting it, will cease to exist. Such a lovely spot should be cherished by all as one of the chief luxuries and ornaments of our town.

In March 1844 the paper reported: "We are pleased to learn that this delightful spot is at present undergoing a thorough improvement, under the superintendence of Mr. Kaas, a skillful Horticulturist--to whom, in common with our citizens, it has been granted for a series of years, by our liberal and public spirited townsman, Lancelot Johnston, Esq., as a place of public resort. We shall hereafter speak of the Garden, and improvements, more at length." (*Southern Miscellany*, May 15, 1844)

Antoine Poullain, son of Thomas Poullain who owned the cotton factory at Scull Shoals, married Johnston's only daughter, Elizabeth Jones Johnston, in 1842, and the property eventually passed to the Poullains. In a September 23, 1898 article, the Madisonian described a party given by the Poullains.

> The Butterfly party, given at the residence of Mr. Antoine Poullain last Friday night, was a delightful social event. The lawn and verandas surrounding this lovely old home had been beautifully illuminated by Chinese lanterns, kindly furnished and arranged by Mr. Charlie Atkinson. The soft silver rays of the September moon added a beauteous glow to the scene, the whole presenting a bright glimpse of fairy land.

Sadly, this garden has not survived, as Snow Hill burned in 1962.

Bonar Hall

One garden that has survived is located at Bonar Hall, the property bought by John Byne Walker and his heiress bride Eliza Fannin Walker in 1832. There is an undocumented oral tradition that when John B. Walker, once one of Morgan County's wealthiest planters, left each year to visit his Texas plantations, his wife would plant flowers in an area near the house. On his return, he would have the gardens plowed up and plant more cotton, but finally succumbed and had the formal boxwood maze garden created for her. Research has shown that he and his son, John B. Walker, Jr., did own property in Wharton County, Texas. In John Burney's March 1, 1895 "Bits of Reminiscences" column for the *Madisonian* he recounts:

> Jno. B. Walker, the youngest, was born in Burke county February 1805. In early manhood he married Miss Eliza Fannin, and the first permanent home was on Little Indian Creek, now called the Butler place. Here he was greatly prospered in basket and store. His servants and lands grew in number and area . . . . Here he had a model farm for years. But, a family of children soon to be educated demanded that provision be made, and feeling that his finances warranted, he proceeded to execute a plan projected some time previous of erecting a handsome home in Madison. Preparations were made, the site chosen and materials collected, and his fondest hopes materialized in the magnificent home now owned and occupied by Hon. Wm. A. Broughton.

Apparently, after the Civil War the son acquired large debts, which John B. Walker, Sr. began assuming in 1871. According to local legend, he moved out of Bonar Hall after an argument with his son-in-law, having already deeded the property to his daughter. In fact, in 1880 John B. Walker, Sr.'s daughter, Ida F. Harris, sold Bonar Hall to John A. Broughton, and in 1884 John B. Walker, Sr.'s estate inventory showed that he owned only thirty acres of land valued at $120 and household goods.

The original portico of Bonar Hall was removed by the Broughtons and the present Victorian-era veranda was added. When John A. Broughton died in 1881, his brother, William Broughton, was already living at Bonar Hall. The July 8, 1898 *Madisonian* described a lawn party given by the Broughtons:

> Madison's society circle has been unusually active the past two weeks, and a number of elegant and delightful entertainments have followed in quick succession.
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> Among them all there has been none more elegant and enjoyable than the reception tendered by Miss Annette Broughton at her palatial home on West Avenue on Wednesday evening. . . . The Broughton home is one of the most cultured and refined in the state, and the imposing residence, beautiful grounds and location make it an ideal one in every respect. For the occasion the lawn had been beautifully arranged with cozy seats and illuminated with Japanese lanterns, and the scene was one of indescribable loveliness.

The William T. Bacons bought the property in 1920, and Mrs. Bacon's daughter, Miss Therese Newton, continued to live there until her death.

In 1933 the *Garden History of Georgia* described the garden:

> It stands a couple of hundred feet from the road on a hundred-acre tract of lawn, garden and orchard development which formerly was enclosed on the front by a brick wall and picket fence, on the rear and sides by an impenetrable hedge of osage orange.
>
> The grounds show careful planning and a classical sense of balance. The lawn was surrounded by a brick wall pierced in a diamond shape pattern. Bisecting the lawn and encircling the house is an eighteen foot walk edged by a six foot bed of bulbs. Within the borders stands a line of granite posts supporting standards of vines, between which madonna lilies were planted. A summer house and an orangery of matching design flank the house. The very fine boxwood garden lies to the left, outside the brick wall. It contained rare shrubs and trees, many of which still live; beyond this was a water garden of which practically nothing remains. The family burying ground, now removed, was box bordered and approached by a long walk edged with the same shrub. The vegetable garden, orchards, slave quarters and plantation buildings lay to the rear (Cooney 1933, 84).

Boxwood

Also documented in the *Garden History of Georgia* is the antebellum garden at Boxwood, the house with a double facade built in 1854 by Wilds and Nancy Kolb. The Academy Street facade is Italianate and the Old Post Road facade is Greek Revival. Complementing these two styles of architecture are twin boxwood parterre gardens, created at the same time that the house was built. Unfortunately, we have found no information that documents who laid out this very intricate garden, enclosed on both sides by a white picket fence. The property was purchased in 1869 by Lewis W. Pou from the estate of Wilds Kolb, and occupied by this family until 1906, when it was purchased by John Thomas Newton. In an April 29, 1951 article in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, his daughter, Miss Kittie Newton, described the gate at Boxwood: "Father took the gate down years ago and stored it in the basement. It stayed there until I put it up again about 10 years ago". The article goes on to describe the garden: "On either side of the wide, swept-sand walk to the front steps the boxwood hedges fill the yard with a maze of geometric designs that enclose beds of bulbs and old-fashioned flowers. This garden has mothered hundreds of boxwoods all over town. When Miss Kittie clips the low, green hedges--once every 8 or 10 years--she puts a notice in the paper that cuttings are available for anybody who will come and get them" (Sparks 1951, 11). Her nephew, Floyd C. Newton, Jr., and his wife bought the house after her death and are the present owners. Two antebellum outbuildings also survive--the smokehouse and the slave quarters.

Victorian-Era Gardens/Early Twentieth-Century Gardens

In the years immediately after the Civil War, most of Morgan County struggled to maintain the lifestyles that they had previously enjoyed. During the Victorian period of garden design, 1860-1900, a great interest was placed on horticulture, as many new plants were introduced into this country from China, Japan, Asia, and South America. Groups of

annuals were planted in arrangements referred to as 'carpet bedding.' Specimen trees and shrubs were randomly planted throughout the lawn and in the surrounding landscape. With the introduction of the lawn mower in the late 1860s, along with improved varieties of grass, lawns became more popular in southern gardens during the Victorian period.

In the early years of the twentieth century, many gardens in Morgan County were laid out in a style that has come to be known as 'grandmother's garden.' According to Mae Brawley Hill, who has researched the subject for her book of the same name, these gardens were usually arranged in rectangular beds bordered by planks, stones, or some low-growing plant, preferably dwarf box. The arrangement of the flowers within the beds was informal and lush, which particularly appealed to the southern gardener. Old gardens filled with a wealth of annuals, perennials, bulbs, and fragrant shrubs not hardy farther north were common in the South at this time. Felder Rushing and Steve Bender's recent book, *Passalong Plants*, describes many of these.

Excerpts from the *Madisonian* during this period reveal that a love of gardens and gardening was still very much alive in Morgan County.The May 14, 1886 edition describes Madison's gardening legacy:

> When it comes to flowers and monumental shrubbery, Madison excels in beauty and lovely exquisiteness. . .If any doubt this assertion let them visit our city. at the present time she is comparable to a mammoth bouquet composed of the richest, most variegated, unrivaled flowers and rarest shrubbery. Dr. Andrews, we learn, has one hundred different varieties of the rose alone, which we mention to illustrate the beauty of our flower gardens and the excellent taste of our lovely women in selecting, planting and cultivating them.
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> If our flower yards lend great attraction to our city,. . .our two beautiful specimens of combination fish ponds caps [sic] the climax and render the attraction faultlessly complete. These are owned by Messrs. Heyser and Atkinson who have probably bestowed more labor and displayed better taste than any two men in Georgia in making them complete in every particular. Mr. Heyser, who is an authority on the cultivation of fish, has the prettiest and best stocked of any like age in the State, whilst Charley Atkinson is fast placing his in the same superior condition.

The above passage mentions two people who were well-known citizens and apparently well-known gardeners as well. The Dr. Andrews referred to was Dr. Albert E. Andrews, a medical doctor and pharmacist who owned a drug store in town with his brother Charles. His house was located on South Main Street (the old Bearden place on S. Main Deed Book T197 and 529), but nothing of the garden survives.

Silver Lakes

Charles B. Atkinson, the son of early Madisonian Atharates Atkinson (owner of the Madison Variety Works), was a bachelor who devoted most of his later years to the development of Silver Lakes, an attractive park with walks around the lake edged with mulberry and magnolia trees (Cumming 1951, 134). A blurb in the June 6, 1884 *Madisonian* reported that "C.B. Atkinson is fixing a track around Silver Lakes for the walking match. It is the prettiest spot that could have been selected, and when completed, it will be the best arranged road for a walking match, in the State. The track will measure

six laps to the mile." Silver Lakes continued to be enjoyed by the citizens of Madison for some years and was often referred to in the newspaper, as in this July 1898 description: "Mr. Charlie Atkinson had the walks, grounds, and pavilions beautifully cleared and illuminated by Japanese lanterns suspended from the trees and shrubbery."

Thurleston

One of the few gardens for which descriptions in letters were found is located at Thurleston. Built in 1818 by John Walker, the house was originally a five-room Piedmont Plantation Plain style farmhouse located at Three River Farm. He left the property to his three sons (John Byne, Edmund, and Isaac) and daughter. After their sister's death, the three sons gave the house to her husband, Rev. John Dawson. The house was dismantled and reassembled in 1841 on its present site in town. After passing through several hands, and serving for a time as a select boy's school, the house became the property of Elijah E. Jones, who added the massive front gable in 1848. A new house emerged under the guidance of architect Benjamin Peeples, more than double its original size. The house was sold in 1863 to Col. David E. Butler and his wife, Virginia Walton Butler. Col. Bulter and his wife had six children: Edward W., Peter W., Mary Francis, Elizabeth (Bessie), Virginia (Daisy), and Annie (O'Rourke 1989).

Miss Bessie Butler inherited Thurleston from her father, where she lived with her sister, Daisy, until her death in February 1942. The Feb. 8, 1907 *Madisonian* describes the Madison Floral Circle and states that "Miss Bessie W. Butler will deliver a short talk on 'Rose Culture' at some future meeting. Miss Butler has had fine success with the queen of flowers. . . ." The letters of Miss Bessie and her sister Daisy are a delightful insight into the gardens at Thurleston. Correspondence between the Butler sisters and Dr. Benjamin Hunt of Eatonton, a noted horticulturist of the day, reveals a keen interest in plant selection. In a letter of January 2, 1920, Dr. Hunt writes:

> I have been thinking more of your dogwood trees.
>
> I believe you could get better effort by planting an avenue of them on the other side of your home, toward the water.
>
> They are so of the woods, woodsy, and the sunken ground with a road way needs to have the walk way outlined, why not use Cornus there?
>
> Then use on the side of your home toward town flowering cherries, crab apple, hardy citrus, Japanese persimmon etc. etc. ie civilized trees.
>
> This is my idea as I think it over (Butler Family Papers).

Newspapers also carried articles about the gardens at Thurleston. A March 9, 1930 *Atlanta Journal* article about the house and garden showed the once numerous drifts of irises, "declared to be one of the most beautiful sights in Georgia." In this article Miss Bessie stated: I have evolved a wonderful hardy garden. In March the jonquils, the forsythias and the spireas bloom; in April the iris come, when there are thousands of feet of the flowers of Louis; in May and June we have the lilies and roses and the rest of the year the hydrangeas and the lovely hardy sweet peas, all on the same walks and beds, all perfectly hardy and thriving, without work, water or enriching."

Thurleston eventually became part of the vast inheritance of Virginia Butler Nicholson, the granddaughter of Senator Joshua Hill and the niece of Bessie and Daisy Butler. Virginia Nicholson left it to her husband, Dr. J. H. Nicholson, who, in turn, left it to his second wife, Gladys and her children. The second Mrs. Nicholson moved the boxwoods from their house on S. Main Street to Thurleston. A 1919 Vanishing Georgia Collection photograph shows a tree-lined front entrance, before the boxwood was moved here. Col. Harold Wallace, her son, sold the house to Kathy and Clarence Whiteside in 1983, who have carefully restored the main body of the house under the guidance of Atlanta architect Norman Askins. Since acquiring the property, they have been clearing out the Japanese honeysuckle, smilax, etc. which had taken over the back part of the property, and they are also putting in other garden areas adjacent to the house.

Trammell House

This house and garden was built in 1898 by Lee Trammell on the site of the Godfrey and Walton house, which was built in the early 1800s. This property was often written about in the *Madisonian*, as the following article from 1908 illustrates:

> No prettier reception has been given in Madison than the one given by Miss Mary Walton Trammell to her guests, Miss Virginia Anderson, Miss Sara Vaughan, Miss Frances Stockton and Miss Cora Vaughan. The beautiful colonial home was made most attractive by many lights over the house and on the lawn--here many cozy corners and tête-à-tête chairs were to be found. On the broad veranda Miss Virginia Butler and Miss Hattie McHenry served refreshing punch.

Mrs. Floyd C. Newton, Sr. (Mary W. Trammell Newton) inherited the house from her father, and it was she who created the boxwood gardens there. According to Floyd Newton, Jr., the boxwood for the garden there came from the Newton country place. 1966 aerial photography of the garden shows an oval and fourpart formal garden. The Tom Duprees are the current owners and have made many changes to the landscape.

Honeymoon

This Greek Revival house, built in 1851 by Charles Mallory Irvin, a distinguished Baptist minister and political leader, is located on the Eatonton Road. This was the old Ed Walton home place, which stood empty for many years until Mrs. Peter Walton Godfrey (Miss Carrie) restored the house and garden to its former elegance. The property is now owned by Mrs. Frances Godfrey Candler Shumway, Mrs. Godfrey's granddaughter. This 6-acre garden contains many old-fashioned shrubs and perennials, as well as a daylily and iris garden, as Mrs. Shumway and her father were hybridizers of daylilies. There are also several very large specimen boxwoods, said by Mrs. Shumway to be over 100 years old. A reprint of an undated *Madisonian* article described the garden before Mrs. Godfrey revived it:

> For a long time the stately old house on the hill was vacant, sleeping in the sun and dreaming in the moonlight. The lilacs and rose bushes were tangled in the unkempt gardens and flung upon the air a fragrance mingled with old memories. The pale pink petals of the wild

crabapple tree drifted dreamily down to the ground. The wisteria clinging to the greying Doric columns, untrammeled in its growth, hung over the edges of the eaves and drooped around the windows as if peering into the old rooms, where moonlight made long slanting shadows across the bare floors.

Like magic the house was beautiful again, within and without, with neatly clipped hedges, landscaped gardens, myriads of flowers. . . .

Poullain Heights

The house was built in 1905 by Mrs. Harris Campbell (Sallie Poullain Campbell) and the C. L. C. Thomases. The August 18, 1905 *Madisonian* reported: "Workmen are busy erecting Mr. C. L. C. Thomas' new residence on Hancock Street. It will be a large and handsome home after the colonial style. Mr. John Ingram is superintending the building." The garden there was established by Mrs. Thomas, who had all the stone used in the garden brought to the house from the surrounding cotton fields. Some of the rock walls are still standing. Features that have not survived are twin Colonial Revival arbors with built-in garden seats. There was also a lake, with a boat house and pavilions, which the current owners are restoring.

Neil Vason House

This old inn built by John Colbert is now known as the Neil Vason House. Mrs. Mary Chiles Ware, the daughter of the Rev. James M. Chiles and Frances Butler Chiles (the sister of David E. Butler), lived here for many years. She later moved both wings of the main house to one side of the garden, described in an October 23, 1939 *Albany Herald* article as " this alluring cottage behind a hedge, under oaks and pecan trees." Her garden was described in the July 27, 1900 *Madisonian*:

The fall meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society at Mrs. Ware's on Friday afternoon of last week was charmingly entertained . . . with pleasant conversation delightfully interspersed with delicious refreshments. . . . We feasted our eyes as well on a vase of handsome roses of several varieties, and there was an arrangement of nasturtiums and tube roses that we particularly admired, and just across from there was a stand that held the queen of all roses--the marechal niel--and these claimed our lingering gaze. They were all beautiful, and the arrangement was artistic in the extreme. Mrs. Ware has time to keep books for the Garden Club, the Aid Society, the Memorial Social, and as president of the Missionary Society, she still finds time to cultivate flowers. . . .

These flowers that we enjoyed are the especial care of Mrs. Chiles, who is now more than eighty years of age. We had a walk in this lovely old-fashioned flower garden, where the greatest variety of choicest blossoms are found, and here and there an apple tree laden with fruit. . . . We noted with interest that the magnificent grape-arbor was the dividing line between the flowers and the vegetable garden. Wherever our glance might reach there was [sic] flowers, fruits, and vegetables, all so nicely worked, not a sprig of grass could be seen. All of these well cared for vegetables squares and nicely worked walks, I am told, is [sic] Mrs. Ware's especial delight.

The Cornelius Vasons later purchased the property and created the formal boxwood garden that separates the main house and the cottage.

Billups-Van Buskirk House

The house was built c. 1853 by Gen. Jeptha Vining Harris, for his daughter, Susan, the first Mrs. Joel Abbot Billups. She died and he married Jane Victoria Cone of Greensboro, Georgia, in 1885. Mrs. Billups was for many years the President of the Ladies Memorial Association. There is a pit garden still surviving on the property, whose contents were described in the Feb. 1, 1907 *Madisonian*:

> On one side are healthy vigorous geraniums, just dozens of them rejoicing and glad because they are living. One that side, too, are the primroses so pale and sweet and dainty they seem a mute reproach to anything unclean or impure. Near the geraniums are the pink cyclamens, and the dark red ones too,with beautiful foliage standing proudly on guard around them.
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> The sunny azaleas have been blooming beautifully since November. Fern fronds everywhere wave you a graceful welcome, and many tropical looking plants with gorgeous striped or spotted leaves allow you to survey them admirably. The dracena is noticeably beautiful. A lynum with numerous yellow blossoms fairly illuminates one side of the greenhouse. And when you leave two gracious gentle women receive your thanks for a happy time and fill your hands with tea olive and Christmas honeysuckle and branches of spicy things that murmur to you for days with sweet smelling voices.

It was later the home of Dr. and Mrs. W. R. Van Buskirk, who established an outstanding fruit orchard.

Landscape Features: Walls, fences, outbuildings, pit gardens

Small-scale landscape features have been a hallmark of Madison's historic gardens. According to the Georgia Catalogue of the Historic American Buildings Survey, the fences in this area were probably made of split boards in the early days, with more ornamental designs, wooden pickets being the most common, used later (Linley 1982). Indeed, a drive through Madison reveals that a great variety of picket fencing has survived, as they generally varied from period to period--late nineteenth-century pickets tended to be more elaborate.

Masonry walls were not that common in these heritage gardens, although some were used as foundations for picket fences. There was a masonry garden wall at Bonar Hall, reported to be a pierced brick design. The wall at the Lowry Hunts on North Main is said to be a copy. The Johnston/Poullain family cemetery is enclosed by a low brick wall, greatly in need of repair.

Madison has a number of outstanding antebellum outbuildings, some of which have been mentioned already. Smokehouses survive at Thurleston, Honeymoon, and Boxwood. Garden houses survive at Bonar Hall and the Broughton house. Slave quarters survive at Honeymoon and Boxwood.

At one time Madison had an outstanding collection of pit gardens, but many have been lost. This nineteenth-century version of the greenhouse was popular for forcing, propagation, and storage of "hothouse" plants the year round. The gardening books of the

last century are full of drawings of different models of pits to be used for various purposes. Robert Leuchars' 1851 book entitled A *Treatise on the Construction, Heating, and Ventilation of Hot-houses; Including Conservatories, Green-houses, Graperies, and Other Kinds of Horticultural Structures* describes several forcing pits. Pit gardens in Madison that have survived are at the Billups-Van Buskirk house, the Shepherd-Carter-Newton house, and the Bracewell house. One of Bonar Hall's matching garden buildings was used as an orangerie, and there is a twentieth-century greenhouse at Thurleston. Pit gardens that have not survived were located at Hilltop, Honeymoon, and the Thomason-Miller house.

Garden Clubs

The very first garden club in Madison was organized in 1893, a representative from Athens coming over for the organization. This was one of the earliest garden clubs in Georgia, being organized a short while after the Athens Ladies Garden Club, the first garden club in the United States. The Madison Garden Club continued active until 1920 when it was forced to disband. The *Madisonian* often announced upcoming meetings. Spring and Autumn Flower Shows included exhibits of cut flowers, potted plants, and vegetables from around the county and "reflected great credit on the gardeners and flower lovers" (*Madisonian* May 8, 1908). Some of the more interesting information on the flowers grown in Madison can be gotten from descriptions of house parties written up in the *Madisonian*. Typical descriptions include:

March 17, 1905: "The spacious rooms and halls were decorated in bamboo and jonquils, dozens and dozens of these flower trumpets of springtime being used. Masses of these flowers were in bowls and vases all over the house."

March 31, 1905: "In the spacious rooms violets held high carnival. From vases and bowls theses lovely blossoms appealed to the artistic sense with their glowing color and delicious perfume, and in contrast was rich green smilax over mantels and mirrors." (Mrs. H. W. Baldwin)

May 26, 1906: "In the dining room, where cakes and ices were served, pink and white sweet peas in all their dainty bloom made every nook and corner a delight to the eye. . . . From a cut glass bowl masses of sweet peas were reflected in a mirror plateau which rested on a lace cover. Pink ribbon entwined with smilax defined the table and fell in graceful garlands from the corners." (Mrs. Charles Sanders)

February 2, 1906: "Bowls and vases of fragrant violets were on the tables and mantle in the hall and parlor. The same lovely flowers fringed the mirror in center of the tea table and were arranged with dainty ferns in slender vases in other parts of the room." (Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius Vason).

April 27, 1906: "The decorations on Tuesday were a veritable 'feast of roses.' In the hall . . . pink rose bowls on the tables vied in grace with the luxuriant ferns in handsome

jardinieres. In the reception room fragrant Paul Neron roses filled urn shaped vases of white and gold. The same roses were banked over the mantels, their rich coloring in exquisite contrast to the white enameled wood work and green tinted walls of the rooms." (Mrs. William E. Shepherd)

"Quantities of lovely white roses and ferns were used in the parlor. LaFrance roses adorned the dining room. On the round tea table a mirrored plateau fringed with pink roses and maiden hair ferns and a silver cupid holding a crystal vase of the same lovely flowers made an exquisite center piece. (Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vason)

"The rooms were most beautifully decorated in flowers. In the hall and reception room pink roses were used in artistic profusion. Garlands of these flowers were twined round the stairway, banked on the mantels and filled vases and bowls . . . . On the handsome lace centerpiece on the dining table rested a round mirror bordered with apple geranium leaves and blossoms--reflected in the mirror was an exquisite basket of white roses tied with green tulle. Quantities of those quaint old flowers, snow balls, filled the handsome vases on the mantle and buffets, and maiden hair ferns defined the mirrors and trailed their graceful foliage over the curtains and windows."

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