



# How Did Their Gardens Grow? Planting Historic Landscapes

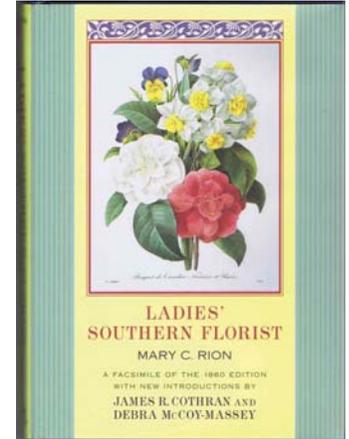
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## Introduction

Interest in garden history, period gardens, and heirloom plants was very high during the antebellum period in the southern United States. Publications such as the *Ladies' Southern Florist* (1860) provided the first comprehensive lists of ornamental trees, shrubs, flowers, and bulbs, that were ideally suited to the South's climate.

Also highlighted were new specimens, recently introduced from places such as China and Japan, which included camellias, crape myrtles, and a wide variety of roses.

Interest in these historic landscapes is still prevalent today, and many historical sites work to re-create the period gardens of yesteryear for the continued public enjoyment.



## Intricate Garden Designs

The age-old practice of creating gardens in decorative geometric patterns using boxwood and low-growing herbs as edging material is a gardening tradition that dates back to ancient times. The practice spread to northern Europe during the Middle Ages, and by the 17th century, the French had refined and perfected geometric garden design. These 'parterres' (to divide on the ground), were best viewed and enjoyed from elevated positions, such as a raised terrace, portico, or upper-story window.

When these designs were used in 19th-century antebellum gardens of the South, elements were altered in response to local and regional conditions of climate, terrain, economics, fashion, taste, and cultural traditions. Most often this was demonstrated through smaller garden size and somewhat simpler design, with native stands of poplars, oaks, magnolias, and the like, replacing the exotic ornamental groves seen in European gardens.



The Compleat English Gardener: or, A Sure Guide to Young Planters and Gardeners, Eleventh Edition, 1710.

The Compleat English Gardener by Leonard Meager provided practical information on the management of fruit, kitchen, and pleasure gardens, as well as prototypical plans for the layout of formal gardens.

## Historic Plants

The antebellum era (1820-1860) represented a period of unique economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors.

Antebellum gardens were recognized for their special collections of ornamental plants which included American natives, Old World favorites, and newly introduced exotics from the Far East.

References Cited:

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Favretti, R.J. & Favretti, J.P. 1997. *Landscaping and Gardens for Historic Buildings (2d ed.)*. AltaMira Press.

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Garden vase.



Bed of subtropical plants.

Vick's Monthly Magazine, 1880.

# Examples of Southern Garden Landscape Plants: 1850-1900

## FLOWERS

Yarrow or Milfoil variety (*Achillea millefolium rosea*)  
Carpet Bugle, Bugle-weed (*Ajuga reptans* var. *alba*)  
Swamp Mallow, Marsh-Mallow (*Althaea officinalis*)  
Hollyhock (*Althaea rosea*)  
Alyssum (*Alyssum repens* var. *wierzbickii*)  
Anemone (*Anemone pennina*)  
Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum glutinosum*)  
Goat's Beard (*Aruncus sylvester*)  
Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)  
Caladium (*Caladium bicolor*)  
Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*)  
American Senna (*Cassia marliandica*)  
Chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum* sp.)  
Virgin's Bower (*Clematis integrifolia*)  
Dahlias (*Dahlia* sp.)  
Larkspur (*Delphinium* sp.)  
Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*)  
Hyacinth Bean (*Dolichos lablab*)  
Sneezeweed (*Helenium hoopesii*)  
Day Lily (*Heemerocallis flava*)  
Marsh Rose-mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*)  
Blue Plantain (*Hosta caerulea*)  
Iris (*Iris* sp.)  
Tiger Lily (*Lilium tigrinum*)  
Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*)  
Daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*)  
Primrose (*Oenothera* sp.)  
Peony (*Paeonia* sp.)  
Western Prickly Pear (*Opuntia compressa*)  
Common Garden Petunia (*Petunia x hybrida*)  
Phlox (*Phlox* sp.)  
Goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.)  
Spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*)  
Trillium (*Trillium* sp.)  
Vinca (*Vinca minor*)  
Bird's-foot Violet (*Viola pedata*)  
Yucca (*Yucca filamentosa*)  
Calla (*Zantedeschia* sp.)

## BEDDING PLANTS

Century Plant (*Agave americana*)  
Begonia (*Begonia semperflorens*)  
Dusty Miller (*Centaurea gymnocarpa*)  
Coleus (*Coleus* sp.)  
Dwarf Lantana (*Lantana camara* var. *hybrida*)  
Geranium (*Pelargonium* sp.)  
Scarlet Salvia (*Salvia splendens*)  
Garden Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*)  
Tulip (*Tulipa gesnerana*)  
Pansies (*Viola tricolor* var. *hortensis*)

## SHRUBS, TREES, AND VINES

White Fir (*Abies concolor*)  
Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)  
Black Alder (*Alnus glutinosa* var. *imperialis*)  
Hercules Club (*Aralia spinosa*)  
White Birch (*Betula papyrifera*)  
Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea* sp.)  
Boxwood (*Buxus* sp.)  
Beauty-berry (*Callicarpa dichotoma*)  
Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*)  
American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*)  
Catalpa (*Catalpa* sp.)  
Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*)  
Bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*)  
Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus* sp.)  
Clematis (*Clematis* sp.)  
White-flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)  
American Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)  
Russian Olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)  
Spring Heath (*Erica carnea*)  
American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)  
Forsythia (*Forsythia* sp.)  
Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)  
Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*)  
Kentucky Coffee Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*)  
Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)  
Althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*)  
Oak-leaved Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*)  
St. John's Wort (*Hypericum patulum*)  
American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)  
Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)  
Jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*)  
Creeping Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*)  
Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)  
Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)  
Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)  
Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)  
Magnolia (*Magnolia* sp.)  
Crab Apple (*Malus* sp.)  
Moon-seed (*Menispermum canadense*)  
Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)  
Mock Orange (*Philadelphus* sp.)  
Spruce (*Picea* sp.)  
Red Oak (*Quercus borealis*)  
Azalea (*Rhododendron* sp.)  
Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)  
Weeping Willow (*Salix babylonica*)  
Spirea (*Spiraea* sp.)  
Lilac (*Syringa* sp.)  
American Linden (*Tilia americana*)  
Japanese/Chinese/American Wisteria (*Wisteria* sp.)