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Garden designed by Katherine Bashford for Mrs. Harry Gray in Pasadena. Garden and Home Builder magazine, 1927.

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With this issue, we're launching a "new look" for *Eden*. Let us know what you think.

Virginia Kean, editor
eden@cglhs.org

On the Cover: *Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Off*, H. Roy Kelley, architect; Bashford and Barlow, landscape architects, 1940. Photo by Maynard L. Parker, courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Opposite: *Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Barber*, Pasadena, 1926. Roland E. Coate, architect; Katherine Bashford, landscape architect. Photo from California Gardens, 1931.



The California Landscapes of Katherine Bashford

Steven Keylon

In a relatively short career of 25 years, Katherine Bashford (1885-1953) would design some of Southern California's most beautiful residences, hotels, churches and housing projects, often with her long-time partner, landscape architect Fred Barlow Jr. Though she was for the most part self-trained, Bashford with her confident artistic sense, social connections and business savvy was one of the most respected and highly sought-after landscape designers working in Southern California in the 1920s and '30s. Architects Roland E. Coate, Wallace Neff, Reginald D. Johnson, Gordon B. Kaufmann and, in particular, H. Roy Kelley worked repeatedly in collaboration with Bashford, trusting her refined style.

At the time, there were very few women landscape architects, though in 1930 architect Myron Hunt observed that "the profession of landscape architecture is fortunately attracting an increasing number of able, highly trained, much-travelled and experienced women, who handle with firmness and decision those broad background essentials of the good

garden—the ground plan and the mass planting." He added, "They also have what seems an inborn interest in that other essential element of continuing success—the planting and the yearly renewal of the annuals and perennials whose blending colors make the jewels of the garden."¹

Today Katherine Bashford is primarily known for the grand gardens she designed during the Golden Age of estate planning. These gardens used historical classic detail and Mediterranean-influenced hardscape and plant materials, while consistently maintaining the regional California spirit. However Bashford should also be remembered as one of a handful of forward-thinking innovators who were experimenting with an early transitional modern style. These creative and contemporary landscapes, like her more stately traditional gardens, possessed restraint, dignity and charm, but in them even greater attention was paid to the indoor/outdoor relationship and an easy, comfortable usability. This, with her focus on the ecological side of landscape design—emphasizing native California

or compatible Mediterranean climate plant species, and the creation of socially responsible landscapes for modern housing, make her work particularly relevant today and worthy of further study.

Early Life and Influences

Katherine Bashford was born into a respected and influential "American Colonial" family who would go on to become "one of the fine, substantial families of Southern California."² Not only were they politically prominent, they were also socially progressive. Katherine's great-uncle, Coles Bashford, (1816-1878) was one of the founding members of the Republican Party, a party that was created in opposition to slavery. While serving as the first Republican governor of Wisconsin, Coles Bashford appointed the first African-American to Wisconsin state office when he made barber and entrepreneur William Noland a notary public in 1857.

Later, Coles and his brother Levi (surveyor general and Katherine Bashford's grandfather) were part of a group

(continued)

tasked by President Lincoln with organizing the Territory of Arizona. Once there, the brothers opened an upscale general store in Prescott—the Bashford Mercantile Store, which was said to be the largest store in the region. Levi's son, Coles Allen, met and married Miss Henrietta Parker in 1879. One of four children, Katherine Emelie Bashford was born in Prescott on August 19, 1885, to Levi and Henrietta. The family moved to Los Angeles in 1894, where the local newspapers reported on Katherine's many activities, which were typical of a young high-society girl of the day—teas, debutante balls, beach excursions, and performances. Bashford graduated from the exclusive Marlborough School for Girls in 1905.

Around 1909, Bashford began a lifelong and influential friendship with a new neighbor, Miss Mabel Alvarez (1891-1985), who had recently moved to Los Angeles from the Territory of Hawaii. Alvarez's father, Dr. Luis Fernandez Alvarez—a Spanish-born doctor with a humanist streak—had been physician not only to Queen Liliuokalani but also to the island's Chinese and Japanese laborers.

Alvarez and Bashford became fast and intimate friends. Alvarez, the youngest of five, was a talented painter with a restless intellect and yearning for experiences both practical and metaphysical. Though primarily a fine artist, she was active in all aspects of the arts—music, writing, and dance. Eventually, through Katherine, she would become interested in architecture and landscape design. According to Alvarez's biographer, Dr. Will South, Alvarez had a “temperamental openness to new ideas and her willingness to experiment kept her from fixating on one style or one teacher.”³

Alvarez came from “a home forever tingling with intellectual energy and associations with interesting people.”⁴ Bashford responded to this energy and creativity, and the two friends encouraged and influenced one another's artistic pursuits. Together through the years they would travel the world, collecting materials and inspiration that would assist each in their careers.

It was after a trip to Europe just prior to World War I that Bashford made the decision to become a landscape architect.⁵ Though never formally trained, Bashford had an instinctive talent for landscape design and a disciplined drive to acquire the proficiency she would need to succeed



in this field.⁶ It was reported in *California and Californians* that Bashford “began an intensive course, largely without special instructions, since there was no school in the West at that time, and she desired to study in constant contact with the environment where she determined to apply her skill. Consequently she did a great deal of pioneer work in acquiring the knowledge and experience she has regarded essential to her profession.”⁷ As part of that self-education, Bashford began amassing a large collection of books, folios, photographs, and sketches covering all aspects of landscape design, horticulture, architecture, art and sculpture, which she would prize and refer to throughout her career.

Beginning in 1917, a time when it was still uncommon for an upper-class (let alone single) woman to take up a profession, Bashford began a small-scale landscape practice out of her home, primarily designing flower gardens.⁸ After several years working on her own, in 1921 she began an apprenticeship with established landscape architect Florence Yoch (1890-1972). Her two years with Yoch exposed her to the workings of the office of a professional landscape architect. Bashford, who was initially drawn to the profession because of her intense love of flowers, gained practical experience with construction and business practices, in addition to a broader exposure to horticulture. Yoch's influence on Katherine

Bashford's style would be profound and lasting.

With an unprecedented building boom exploding in Southern California, Bashford made a bold move in 1923 and opened her own large-scale landscape architecture firm in Pasadena. By this time she had met Hinda Teague Hill, a schoolteacher and published author with a passion for horticulture.⁹ Supportive and driven, Hill quit her teaching job and joined Bashford as office manager, where her shared enthusiasm for flowers was an asset, as was her writing expertise. Dynamic, assertive and creative, she helped Bashford write and publish articles on landscape design, knowing that the publicity and attention would promote the firm.¹⁰

Bashford spent most of 1924 traveling with Mabel Alvarez. After a lengthy tour of the East Coast, the two friends set sail for Europe in April 1924, planning to stay five or six months. Bashford wanted to continue her study of classic European gardens and add valuable resource material to her growing collection. Reporting on their return in September, the *Los Angeles Times* said that Bashford, “one of the most charming young Angelenos, has taken up the study of landscape gardening and during her summer tour visited the famous gardens of Italy, Spain, France and England.”¹¹

Ready now to focus on her practice with new energy, Bashford astutely



realized that she was limited by her lack of practical expertise in creating the large-scale gardens that were increasingly in demand. Knowing that her team needed a trained landscape architect, Bashford hired Beatrice M. Williams (1903-2002), a recent graduate of the landscape architecture program at the University of California, Berkeley, who excelled in engineering and construction.¹² With Bashford's talented eye and broad social connections, Williams' strong technical knowledge and horticultural expertise, and Hill's creativity, management skills and talent for publicity, Bashford and her team were soon getting widespread attention. By 1926 the office was humming with activity. Apologizing to a favorite flower supplier for her delay in responding to a recent letter, Hill wrote, "we have been so swamped with work in the office that correspondence has languished."¹³ By the end of the 1920s, Bashford's exquisite gardens created in partnership with leading architects and their discriminating clients would be widely published and praised in *Architectural Digest*, *California Southland*, and *California Arts & Architecture*.

The 1920s—The "Golden Age" of Estate Planning

It was said that "Miss Bashford's gardens were dignified and restful," and Bashford herself was dignified as well, obtaining

commissions because she "behaved like a lady and did not give a hard sell."¹⁴ An early commission in 1925 turned out to be one of her largest—an enormous estate in San Marino for Mr. and Mrs. Arthur K. Bourne. Bashford worked with the architect, Wallace Neff, who designed an expansive Andalusian-style farmhouse, sited on a 4.5-acre parcel. To give the large gardens warmth and livability, Bashford's Spanish-inspired landscape design featured intimate, human-scaled patios and outdoor rooms, some containing colorfully tiled benches and fountains, which she made informal with a profusion of potted plants and flowers.¹⁵ Restraint was shown in the planting immediately surrounding the house, as Bashford explained in an article in *California Southland*:

Fortunately the phrase, "the relation of the house to the garden" has taken on a new significance. No longer does it conjure up its sister phrase, "the tying of the house to the ground." The architecture of today grows naturally from the soil, springing up with strong, graceful lines that need no blurring base planting to hold them down.¹⁶

Many of the walled gardens of the San Marino estate enclosed spirited displays of boldly flowering color, which lent relief to the expanses of white patio walls and paved walks. Bashford describes them thus: The walled garden, the patio, the

living terraces have all made for a common meeting ground. And while the landscape architect may—in proper places throughout the grounds—indulge in all the delights of color schemes, seasonal effects, and the love of plants for themselves, close to the house he chooses thoughtfully, selecting for type, for texture, for form, putting in his shapes frankly and definitely, always dominated by the keynote of the best in modern architecture—simplicity.¹⁷

Throughout her career, Bashford was perhaps most widely known for her bold and sophisticated flowerbed plantings. Flowers were a particular passion for Bashford, not only for the sensory pleasure they offered but for their utility in creating abstract art compositions. Through her long relationship with Alvarez, Bashford was exposed to the theories, concepts and proponents behind the various modern art movements that captured Alvarez's attention. During the 1920s, Alvarez was energized by the influence of her mentor

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Opposite Left: Katherine Bashford, circa 1930. Courtesy Margaret Foster.

Opposite Right and Above: Arthur K. Bourne residence, Wallace Neff, architect; Katherine Bashford, landscape architect, 1925. Photos from *Architectural Digest*, 1928.

Stanton Macdonald-Wright, who had cofounded a movement in art called Synchronism, which promoted the theory that color in art was a phenomenon similar to harmonization in music.

Macdonald-Wright explained that “Synchronism simply means ‘with color’ as symphony means ‘with sound’, and our idea was to produce an art whose genesis lay, not in objectivity, but in form produced in color.”¹⁸ Synchronism argued for a rich chromatic palette, which may have influenced Bashford as she designed her flowerbed plantings. For one garden, she asked the supplier to send her flowers for a “lavender and mauve scheme,” for another “varieties which will give the full range of color from reddish tawny to light yellow, with a slight predominance of the yellows.”¹⁹ For most of her clients Bashford would return throughout the year to redesign their flowerbeds, each time creating an entirely new abstract composition of flowering color.

At the Barber residence in Pasadena, designed by Roland E. Coate, Bashford’s landscape featured a long brick pathway to the front door, bordered on either side by rectangular panels of turf and flanked by rows of fruit trees underplanted with long exuberant flowerbeds. Bashford believed these long, flower-lined walks would “make promenades for nervous house dwellers.”²⁰

At “Kencott,” the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kenyon Reynolds in Pasadena, Bashford overcame a very difficult site, which had a bowl-shaped arroyo at the rear of the house, dropping 60 feet below street level. Preserving two massive live oak trees and a small stream, Bashford and her team oversaw the 85,000 hours of labor needed to create terraced rock gardens, ponds and fountains, which were built using 700 tons of Santa Susana sandstone. Mr. Reynolds, who was president of the Pasadena Flower Club and the local Daffodil Club, and the founder of the Pasadena Floral Show, worked with Bashford on the flowering color, which cascaded dramatically down the terraced pathways.²¹ In addition to rhododendron and azalea, the flowers included “mats of aubretia, dianthus,



Right: Walled gardens filled with fountains and flowering color. Arthur K. Bourne residence, 1925. Photos from House & Garden’s Second Book of Gardens, 1927.

sedums, campanulas and other suitable wall plants. Narcissi bring long sweeps of gold, of pure white, of softest yellow, with accents of richer color.” One wall of the canyon was thickly planted in natives, primarily blue varieties of ceanothus—*Ceanothus arboreus*, *C. thyrsiflorus*, and *C. cyaneus*. Enlivening the flowering color and shades of green foliage were touches of white, such as white birch and the white-flowering Japanese quince, its snow white blooms reflected in a nearby lily pond.²²

In early 1928, Bashford moved her office from Pasadena to downtown Los Angeles, to the seventh floor of the newly opened and prestigious Architect’s Building at 816 West 5th Street, and she would remain in this office until she retired. The building was the eye of the creative storm in Southern California, and would be the genesis of the vast majority of her work for the next fifteen years.²³ The architects with whom Bashford worked most frequently, Reginald D. Johnson and Roland E. Coate, were also on the seventh floor of the Architect’s Building, in an adjoining suite of offices. Architect H. Roy Kelley, a good friend and probably Bashford’s most frequent collaborator from 1930 onward, was on the eleventh floor.

Bashford found that such close proximity to the architects with whom she would repeatedly work fostered an easy means of collaboration on projects in the early design stages—a collaboration they all believed would yield superior results. On this subject, she observed:

There has been of necessity a revision in the technique of landscape architecture, influenced first by the crystallization of the modern tendencies in architecture, and fostered by the very general co-operation of the architect and the landscape architect. With the common desire of giving to the client a home possessing all the charms of liveableness both inside and out, the architect realizes fully the necessity of bringing the garden into close relationship with the house, while the landscape architect thinks in terms more architectural and less purely horticultural.²⁴

Bashford and Barlow

In early 1930 Beatrice Williams was ready to move on, as she was preparing for an extended trip abroad.²⁵ Needing someone with a similar background, Bashford hired Fred Barlow Jr., who had recently been let go by landscape architect Paul Thiene when his practice came to a halt after the Stock Market Crash of 1929.²⁶ Barlow had

spent the previous four years as supervising construction engineer at “Greystone,” the massive Doheny (Edward L. Doheny Jr.) estate, which was perhaps second only to Hearst Castle in vastness and grandeur. Barlow began working first as assistant landscape architect, then also as office manager, when Hinda Teague Hill decided to return to teaching in 1931.

Barlow would learn much from Bashford during their 13-year partnership, and in him she found a protégé with considerable taste, drive and talent. Barlow didn’t look to Europe for design inspiration, and was more focused on the garden as a functional means to enhance the living of its inhabitants. Bashford, who was naturally drawn to innovation and practicality, responded favorably to his fresh and forward-thinking approach. Theirs would be a mutually respectful and productive relationship.

An early example of this contemporary California spirit is well represented in the Pasadena residence of Mrs. Daniel Burnham, the widow of legendary architect and planner Daniel H. Burnham. Designed by architect H. Palmer Sabin and completed in 1932, the stylishly simplified Hacienda ranch-style house was built on property adjacent to the Huntington Hotel. Working in partnership with Bashford, Sabin sited the house so that a fine group of mature eucalyptus trees would be preserved in the center of the patio at the rear of the house. Every room of the house opened out onto patios, terraces or a porch. According to Bashford, the house and garden were truly complementary:

The importance of the relation of house to garden has in recent years been fairly well established. The greater importance of the relation of the house and garden to the building site has often been unaccountably overlooked. [Here], the architect and landscape architect have collaborated in designing a house and garden which gracefully accept and make the most of their natural setting. Neither has been allowed to dominate the picture [which has been] created. There is simplicity in both architecture and planting which gives this home its greatest charm. Shrubbery has been kept away from the house, allowing the sweep of lawn across the front to emphasize the long lines of the building, the few plants used serving only as accents to the architecture. The ivy border, interspersed with shrubbery for occasional screening, successfully creates an illusion of depth between

the house and street. The rear garden has been simply planned. There is nothing unusual or *gardenesque* in the small area. A paved terrace, a pool, flower borders and lawn contribute to the glory of the [existing eucalyptus trees] and its outdoor living possibilities.²⁷

While the streetside façade was relatively restrained, at the rear of the house the designers created an innovative solarium with walls of glass that opened the interior of the house to the private gardens and eucalyptus-shaded patio. To maximize the indoor/outdoor relationship, the floor of the house into the solarium, the patio directly outside, and the lawn beyond were all one level. The lines between indoor and out were further blurred by planting beds that ingeniously lined both sides of the glass walls, which were lit by a perimeter of skylights above. Inside, a stylish fountain made of marble, chromium and mirror related visually to a round pool just outside the solarium, accessible through French doors.

Though Bashford remained comparatively busy in the first few years of the Depression, by 1933 the strain was showing. Flower supplier Dr. Samuel Stillman Berry, one of her favorite vendors, wrote to Bashford, hoping “that business is not entirely stagnant with you. For my own part, I will welcome even the smallest orders and will give them equally careful attention with the largest.”²⁸ In a letter to Dr. Berry, Bashford echoed his bleak assessment:

I wish I had some immediate requirements for iris or bulbs but things are still very much in the future. Everything is in a strange chaotic state but evolving, I think, into something real for the not too distant future. If I can use some small orders on the little jobs that are going I will ask for prices.²⁹

In their nearly four years together, Bashford had developed a great appreciation for Barlow’s contributions, relying on his horticultural expertise, his engineering and grading experience, and most importantly, his collaborative input in the design process. He had earned the respect not only of Bashford, but also of the architects, contractors, craftsmen and laborers with whom they worked. He was also comfortable with discriminating clients, who appreciated his personal charm.³⁰ But with no work coming in, Barlow took a temporary leave in the spring of 1934 to work

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for the National Park Service, overseeing teams of young men in Civilian Conservation Corps camps at Yosemite. During the 18 months he was at Yosemite, Bashford kept busy judging small garden contests and flower shows, and did at least one model home for the Los Angeles Housing Exposition with architects H. Roy Kelley, Edgar Bissantz, and Harold Spielman.

By the beginning of 1936, however, President Roosevelt's New Deal policies had begun to have a positive effect on the economy and the building industry. Barlow returned to Los Angeles in January as partner in the firm, which was known from then on as "Bashford and Barlow." These years, from 1936 to the beginning of World War II, would be very rewarding. They would ride an unparalleled wave of creativity and innovation, made even more satisfying as they were honored multiple times for their work by the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In addition to their countless residential projects during this period, Bashford and Barlow also did non-residential work, including the grounds of Pepperdine University, the Chapman Park Hotel, and the Twentyfifth Church of Christ Scientist.

Both Bashford and Barlow had been very active in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)—Barlow joining in 1928, and Bashford in 1930. Bashford was elected a Fellow in 1936, cited for "the outstanding quality and quantity of her work, her high ethical standards as a member of the profession, and her close collaboration with fine architects."³¹ Bashford and Barlow were part of a small core group of landscape architects (which included Ralph D. Cornell, Tommy Tomson, Hammond Sadler, and Edward Huntsman-Trout) who broke from the Pacific Coast Chapter of the ASLA to form the Southern California Chapter in 1937. Both Bashford and Barlow served terms as officers, with Bashford being elected chapter president in 1938. She

had previously served as secretary to the Pacific Coast Chapter.

Modern Concepts in Landscape Architecture

Towards the end of the 1930s, more radical concepts in modern landscape architecture were being explored in articles published by three young Harvard students—Garrett Eckbo, James C. Rose, and Dan Kiley. Both Bashford and Barlow were naturally inquisitive and open to experimentation, and while they were aware of and welcomed these new ideologies, they would interpret them in their own way, maintaining their own strong ideas and vision, incorporating their signature warmth and comfort into elegant, functional and restrained landscapes, and doing it with great vitality.³²

In 1937 the San Francisco Museum of Art hosted an innovative exhibition called *Contemporary Landscape Architecture and its Sources*. The show, the first of its kind in a large museum in the United States, sought "to illustrate tendencies in modern non-period garden design with its historical sources and background as exemplified in the development of landscape architecture from the earliest period to the present."³³ In the exhibition's catalogue, architect Richard Neutra in his direct style argued that while "modern buildings may express and frankly acknowledge industrial methods and materials, the landscaping around them is not manufactured but *planted to grow*," and should be equally honest and indigenous, and "laid out for the enjoyment of bodily exercise and mental relaxation in a setting that is an ensemble of plants which can keep natural company—which are not arbitrarily assembled like a masquerade party, in opposition to climate, exposures, soil conditions and biological decency."³⁴ Neutra's views were compatible with Bashford and Barlow's own. Along with other members of the Southern California Chapter of the ASLA, including Ralph D. Cornell, Edward Huntsman-Trout, and Hammond Sadler, Bashford and Barlow showed recent examples of their work in photos and plans.

Completed in 1937, the spectacular Palm Springs residence of Lt. Col. and Mrs. Howard C. Davidson was an example of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total design. The team included the clients, architects (Erle Webster and Adrian Wilson), interior designer (Honor Easton), landscape architects, and even artist Millard Sheets

as color consultant. Widely covered in the design journals of the day, the house was featured on the covers of *California Arts & Architecture* and *Sunset*, which dubbed the house "The Ship of the Desert" because of its streamlined nautical detail. Responding to the desert climate, with its warm winters and summer evenings, every room of the house opened onto an outdoor patio or deck.

For the landscape design, what Bashford and Barlow left out was as important as what was included. Barlow believed that the design should not attempt to compete with the inspiring beauty of Palm Springs' natural landscape:

It is inevitable that any garden will be dwarfed by the immensity of its surroundings and could not compete with the endless vistas and ever-changing colors of the desert and mountains. How, then, to treat a garden so that it will not be an incongruous note in such a picture? Simply by relating the garden to the house, making of it a purely architectural feature and as such limiting its extent by clearly functional considerations.³⁵

Referencing the shape of the nearby living room, they created a small, semi-circular panel of turf, its shape emphasized by a bordering arc of grapefruit trees underplanted with gold and yellow flowering annuals, accented with touches of red. Down one level was a small decomposed granite area for outdoor dining, with Bashford and Barlow's distinctive pots of red flowering geraniums lining the walk. The garden was described by Barlow as "a spot for quiet contemplation of the beauties of the desert, a cool and restful place for relaxation and play."³⁶ All of this was enclosed by a rock retaining wall, built with the same granite boulders of the adjacent mountainside. Weathered a deep brown, this retaining wall helped to "carry the sweeping architectural lines of the house in the color and material of the site, thus effecting a harmonious tie between the two." The horizontal line of granite continued along the front of the house, where Bashford and Barlow planted a mass of native desert shrubbery.

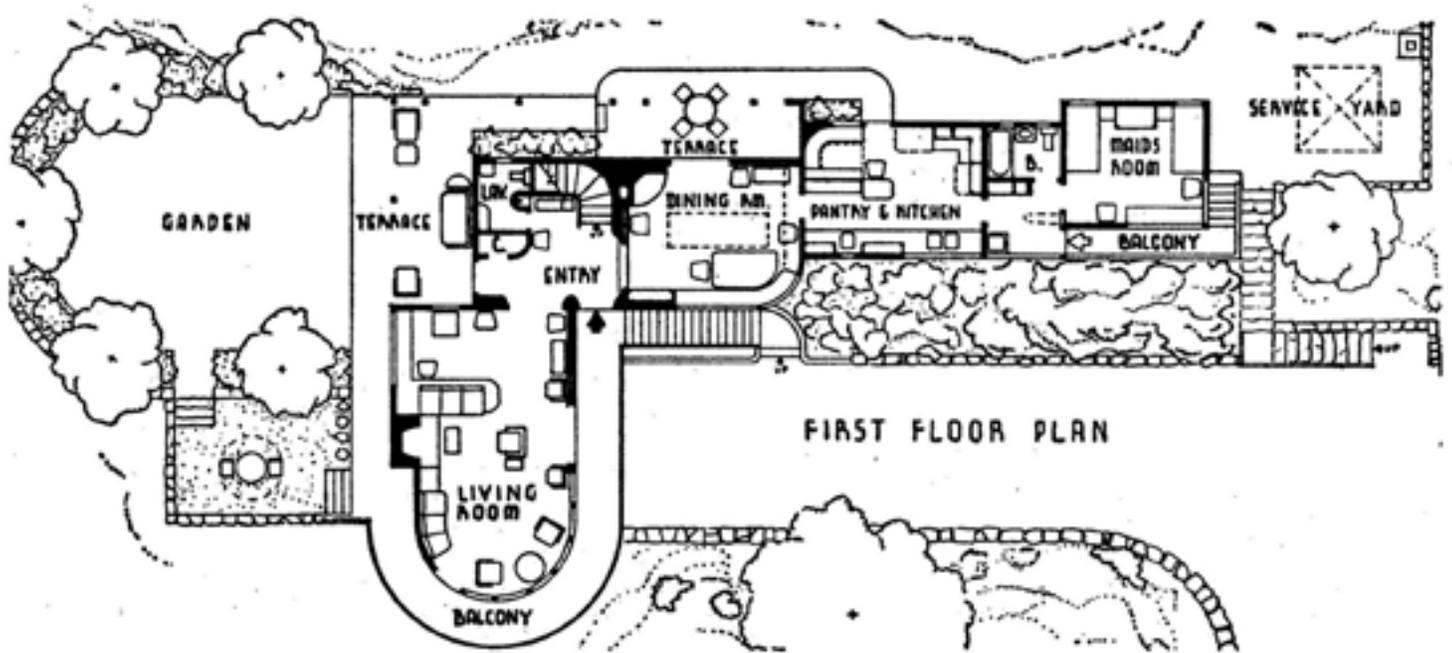
Bashford and Barlow had a fortunate ally in architect H. Roy Kelley, collaborating with him on the bulk of his residential work from 1930 to 1941. Their projects received much attention and many awards. In an unpublished memoir, Kelley later wrote that "landscape architects are indispensable to an architect...I

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Opposite, Top to Bottom: *Relaxed and comfortable patio of the Woodward Residence, Holmby Hills, 1933. Roland E. Coate, architect; Katherine Bashford, landscape architect. Courtesy Roland E. Coate papers. Architecture and Design Collection, Art Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara.*

Chapman Park Hotel and Bungalows, 1936. Carleton Monroe Winslow, architect; Bashford and Barlow, landscape architects.





Bashford (continued)

made it a practice to induce my clients to engage a landscape architect following my appointment so that we could develop site plans together, and develop the garden in harmonious relationship to the building. This always resulted in enhancement of the building and was to my advantage. Related planting could either 'make or break' a well-designed home."³⁷

Comparing the work of Kelley to his northern California peer William H. Wurster, David Gebhard observed that "Kelley displayed an adroit ability to maneuver the various popular architectural images of the time: Monterey Revival, the California ranch house, the Anglo-Colonial, the English and French types."³⁸

Kelley was also experimenting with modern design in the 1930s. One such project was designed as a model showcase for *Woman's Home Companion* magazine and called the "House of New Ideas." Over 50,000 people visited the Westwood residence in Los Angeles in the spring of 1936.

Above: Davidson Residence site plan. From *Sunset magazine*, October 1937

Opposite Top: The restrained landscape of the Davidson residence, overlooking an undeveloped Coachella Valley, 1937. Kodachrome courtesy Chuck and Honor Webster Morehouse.

Opposite Bottom: Flower-lined pathway in walled garden at the Harry J. Bauer residence (photo from California Gardens).

Bashford and Barlow's restrained, somewhat formal landscape plan complemented the geometry of the home's modern architecture. The front of the house featured an *allée* of *Pittosporum undulatum* trees lining the brick-paved walk to the front door, the sloping lawn terraced with long, low retaining walls, the tops of which were planted with strips of flowering color. At the rear of the house, French doors opened to a comfortable patio that led to a panel of grass and a mature olive tree, all of which was enclosed by a stucco wall and a semi-circular grouping of trees. Off to one side was Bashford's signature flower-bordered reflecting pool and a cutting garden.

While many of his clients sought him out for his historicist-based interpretations, Kelley's preferred projects were his contemporary versions of the California ranch or the Monterey Colonial Revival styles. One example is the 1940 residence of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Off in Westwood, which was "a transitional house, modern in spirit and performance yet not unfriendly to a blend of today's and yesterday's furnishings."³⁹

Bashford and Barlow worked from the beginning stages with Kelley, siting the house so that the spacious rear garden would retain a pair of enormous, mature live oak trees. The simplified, contemporary Monterey Colonial Revival house was constructed of wide horizontal redwood planks stained an interesting shade of pinkish tan, with white wood trim. The wood shake roof was left natural to

weather and grey over time. At the front of the house, clusters of sycamore trees in a foreground of English ivy framed the entrance to the motor court. Made of low painted Adoblar brick walls and covered in flowering vines, the motor court offered seclusion and was enclosed by the attached garage wing of the house. Native California grapevines and accent shrubs graced the front façade.

Every room of the house opened up to outdoor living spaces, whether they were balconies, patios, or terraces. At the rear of the house, the living room featured enormous wood-framed sliding walls of glass that opened onto a "living porch." This fully furnished, screened-in porch featured an unusual corner window arrangement, with a deep wooden grid into which Bashford and Barlow placed potted red and white geraniums. The floor of the house, the living porch, and the brick-paved patio and lawn just beyond were all one level, creating a continuous flow of usable space. This was further enhanced when the huge sliding screen doors of the living porch were opened, the house and garden becoming one. The property was enclosed by a row of fast-growing eucalyptus, affording privacy.

Bashford and Barlow analyzed the living requirements of the Off family in order to create a practical but graceful landscape, with an easy informality. Because the family had two young daughters, the private garden behind the house had a large lawn for the enjoyment of the

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Bashford (continued)

family. To the left of the lawn, and in view of the kitchen window, was a geometric boxwood-hedged parterre planted with flowering color, providing cut flowers year-round.

Modern Housing

In the final phase of Katherine Bashford's career, she became involved in the Modern Housing movement, which offered Bashford and Barlow the opportunity to work with legendary architect and urban planner Clarence S. Stein. Stein had adapted Ebenezer Howard's Garden City planning principles in order to provide the best, most affordable housing to the widest group of Americans.

At first, according to H. Roy Kelley, Bashford "was not interested in the public and medium-cost housing projects which replaced private estates as the main form" of their practice.⁴⁰ However, Barlow, had become passionately involved in the movement and through his influence, Bashford

Above: Bashford and Barlow's simple California landscape enhances the ranch-inspired architecture of Avalon Gardens Housing Project. Carleton M. Winslow, chief architect; Roland E. Coate, Samuel E. Lunden, architects. 1941. Photo courtesy Los Angeles Public Library.

was convinced to become involved, placing her distinctive stamp on these developments. Faced with very limited budgets, they were challenged to provide the most optimum, livable landscape plans—plans that emphasized functional, low-cost spaces that could survive with limited attention. Bashford and Barlow infused these developments with a regionally appropriate feeling by using native California species or other plants that conveyed the feeling of "Old California." This was also a practical consideration, as these sustainable plantings would have low water and low maintenance requirements.

For the first of their several public housing projects, the Harbor Hills housing development in Lomita, Bashford and Barlow worked with lead architect Reginald D. Johnson and consulting architect Clarence Stein. Located on a captivating site overlooking San Pedro Bay, the project's buildings were arranged to follow the contours of the site in a chevron pattern that broke up the repetition of the parallel rows common in other housing projects, which gave it a unique character. Because of several deep canyons and gullies, only 27 acres of the 102-acre site were ultimately developed.

"The project is designed to provide living space with a measure of charm and informality for families who previously lived in substandard quarters," Stein explained. "The buildings have the

appearance of well-planned private residences. Seen from a distance, they become a part of the terraced hillside on which they stand. The architecture is distinctly western in treatment."⁴¹

For a nursery school placed adjacent to one of the residential buildings, Bashford and Barlow created an ingenious spray pool for youngsters—a shallow concrete basin with a pair of shell-shaped concrete forms that sprayed water at the children. So that the residents might gather and socialize, the team designed small outdoor "rooms" provided with benches, enclosed by shrubbery and paved with decomposed granite. These spaces offered a place for people to sit and watch their children play, and were enlivened with a variety of plant material. While some of it was native, the origins of the non-native species, described by Bashford and Barlow in an article in the *Torrance Herald*, gave the plantings an exotic flair as well:

In keeping with the modern design of the buildings in the 300-unit project, landscaping will be simple but attractive. Motor courts and walks will be lined with a few carefully chosen varieties of trees, while only five varieties of shrubs, each particularly handsome and hardy, will be used.

For walks and motor courts Brazilian pepper, Arizona ash, Victorian box, carob, European sycamore, olive, and New Zealand sandalwood have been chosen. Around the children's play areas scarlet eucalyptus will be planted. The Brazilian jacaranda, which in early summer is a mass of violet-blue flowers, will be used on terraces as a specimen tree, contrasting with the light apricot, buff, eggshell and pale green buildings.

Throughout the grounds picturesque effects will be obtained with masses of Monterey cypress and Aleppo pine. Around the boundaries of the development five kinds of eucalyptus, including the rose ironbark and the fragrant lemon gum, will be planted, forming a background for 52 buildings in the development.

The native California holly and Catalina cherry are among the shrubs selected. Others are the strawberry tree, which bears fruit that turns from yellow to bright red as it ripens, Japanese tobira and Sandankwa viburnum, both of which have rich green foliage.⁴²

Besides Harbor Hills, which was completed in 1941, Bashford and Barlow created the landscape designs for five more large-scale public housing projects—Ramona

Gardens, Rancho San Pedro, Aliso Village, Avalon Gardens, and Normont Terrace.

Epilogue

With the advent of the Second World War, landscape work came to a halt. In 1943, with a heart condition slowing her down, Katherine Bashford decided to retire, leaving Fred Barlow their landscape practice. But by then her legacy was well established. In *California and Californians*, Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez wrote of her:

A woman whose aesthetic sense and experienced judgment Southern California is indebted to in many ways, today Katherine Bashford's name is known to all who love the beauty of landscape in Southern California, and many of her achievements have been mentioned in magazines and other publications devoted to landscape architecture. Her chief desire and aim has been to make gardens and home settings comply with the California spirit, and consequently she has decried processes of forcing abnormal features on the lovely hill-sides of this district. She is first and last a real artist.⁴³

In the years after World War II, Fred Barlow adopted modern design principles and focused on non-residential work, creating landscapes for Hollywood Park racetrack, the Lever Brothers factory, Harbor Junior College, the University of California, Riverside, as well as countless hotels, parks, cemeteries and businesses. He died at the relatively young age of 50 on March 19, 1953.

Katherine Bashford died at 67 on June 3, 1953. The following month Hinda Teague Hill, after donating a large library of horticultural books to a local Garden Society, sold her house in Los Angeles and moved back home near her family in Conway, Arkansas, where she died on October 5, 1953, at age 69. And Bashford's old friend Mabel Alvarez died on March 13, 1985, at the age of 93. ■

Steven Keylon, an independent landscape historian, serves on the Stewardship Council of The Cultural Landscape Foundation and on the Board of Directors for Docomomo Southern California. He has co-authored the Garden Apartments of Los Angeles: Historic Context Statement with Architectural Resources Group, as well as the Cultural Landscape Report for Baldwin Hills Village, a National Historic Landmark community in Los Angeles. He is working on a biography of Baldwin Hills Village landscape architect Fred Barlow Jr., and his article on Katherine Bashford for Eden is adapted from that manuscript. srk1941@gmail.com

Endnotes

1. Winifred Star Dobyns, *California Gardens* (Macmillan Company, 1931), 12.
2. Van de Grift Sanchez, *California and Californians*, 203
3. Dr. Will South, "Mabel Alvarez." <http://www.mabelalvarez.com/about/south.htm> (accessed September 5, 2013). According to the Smithsonian, "As a young woman, Alvarez was influenced by the philosophical writings of Will Levington Comfort, who espoused the principles of Theosophy and Eastern mysticism. She attended lectures and meditation sessions at Comfort's Highland Park home, experiences which fostered artistic experimentation and departure. Alvarez became part of the 'Group of Eight' in 1922, a forward-thinking artists collective which veered away from the predictable standards of the California Art Club."
4. Glenn Bassett, "Mabel Alvarez: A Personal Memory." <http://www.mabelalvarez.com/about/bassett.htm> (accessed September 5, 2013).
5. Though it has been commonly believed that Bashford began her career apprenticing with Florence Yoch, Pasadena City Directories list her as landscape architect or landscape gardener beginning in 1917. Bashford even placed her name in Landscape Architects in the 1917 LA City Directory, along with Wilbur Cook, Charles Gibbs Adams, and A.E. Hanson.
6. After graduating from Marlborough, Bashford is said to have attended classes at Polytechnic High School, which by 1914 was offering courses in architecture, the curriculum being provided by the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects of America. She also later studied art at the Otis Art Institute, as did Mabel Alvarez.
7. Van de Grift Sanchez, *California and Californians*, 12.
8. *Los Angeles City Directories*, 1917-20, list Katherine Bashford as either "landscape designer" or "landscape architect."
9. Hinda Teague Hill (December 2, 1883 to October 5, 1953). Born in Conway, Arkansas, attended Galloway College in Searcy, Arkansas, and also attended both the Sorbonne in Paris and the University of Berlin. Hill received her M.A. from Johns Hopkins University in 1916, and went on to teach Romance Languages at North Carolina State Normal College in Greensboro. She moved to Los Angeles in 1921 (same year Bashford starts with Yoch), taught school for two years before joining Bashford in 1923. Worked with Bashford until 1931, when the Depression slowed work. Though she remained close to Bashford and often assisted in getting articles published, following her time as Bashford's office manager, Hill had a long and rewarding career teaching creative writing, and was much beloved by students. She also published many articles and contributed to books through the years.
10. Bashford's loft-like studio and office was at the Central Building on N. Raymond in Pasadena, in Room 810
11. "Society; Of Interest to Women," *Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 1924, A6.
12. Geraldine Knight-Scott oral history. Beatrice M. Williams would later be named a Fellow of the Society of Women Engineers, and had a long and distinguished career in engineering. Born 1903, died 2002.
13. Correspondence from Hinda Teague Hill to Dr. Samuel Stillman Berry, May 20, 1926; Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7335, Box 7 of 15, S. Stillman Berry Papers, 1880-1984.
14. David C. Streatfield, Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington, e-mail to the author, December 21, 2010.
15. "California's Gardens Cling to Their Spanish Ancestry," *House and Garden's Second Book of Gardens* (Condé Nast, 1927), 34.
16. Katherine Bashford, "A Course in the Appreciation of Architecture: The Relation of House to Garden," *California Southland*, April 1926, 28.
17. Ibid.
18. "To make a Synchromist painting, one must choose a color as the 'tonic' or base note (thus the Synchromy in Orange, etc., like, say, Symphony in D Major), and create a scale beginning there. One must then find the colors that occur on the spectrum where the third and fifth tones would occur in a musical scale. In this way one creates color "chords" or harmonies that can be manipulated along what Adams calls 'a sort of sinuous ladder.' Synchromist abstractions typically originate from a central vortex and thrive on complex color harmonies. Peers of Picasso, Braque and The Delaunays, Macdonald-Wright and Russell believed that color had sound equivalents and that if they painted in color scales as music is composed in scales, their paintings would evoke musical sensations." From *Art and Antiques* magazine, February, 2012. <http://www.artandantiquesmag.com/2010/02/symphonies-of-color/>
19. Letters to Dr. S. S. Berry from Katherine Bashford, 1930 and 1931. Stillman Berry Collection, Smithsonian Museum.

20. "Two Little Gardens," *California Southland*, January, 1924, 8.
21. Father Bede Reynolds, *A Rebel From Riches* (The Riehle Foundation, Milford Ohio, 1984), 80.
22. Helen W. King, "In a Canyon, Too. But This Garden is an Informal One," *Los Angeles Times*, April 9, 1933, H12.
23. The only other landscape architect in the building was the esteemed Charles Gibbs Adams.
24. "A Course in the Appreciation of Architecture: The Relation of House to Garden," Katherine Bashford, *California Southland*, April 1926, 28.
25. "The Axis", article on Alumni of University of California, Berkeley, Landscape Program, 1930. Unpaginated.
26. Like Beatrice Williams, Fred Barlow Jr. also graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, the year after Williams—1926.
27. Katherine Bashford, "When the Site Dictates the Design" *American Landscape Architect* (ASLA, September, 1930), 20-21.
28. Letter from Dr. Samuel Stillman Berry to Katherine Bashford, November 10, 1932; Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7335, Box 6 of 15, S. Stillman Berry Papers, 1880-1984.
29. Letter from Katherine Bashford to Dr. Samuel Stillman Berry, July 12, 1933; Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7335, Box 6 of 15, S. Stillman Berry Papers, 1880-1984.
30. Interview with Ray O. Kusche, Pasadena, October 8, 2011.
31. Arthur G. Barton, "A Biographical Minute," *Landscape Architecture Quarterly*, October, 1953, 29.
32. James C. Rose was even invited to speak at Fred Barlow's invitation at a meeting of the Southern California Chapter of the ASLA in 1940. He gave an illustrated presentation about modern landscape design and the functional garden.
33. *Architect and Engineer*, January 1936, 66.
34. *Contemporary Landscape Architecture and its Sources*, exhibition catalog (San Francisco Museum of Art, 1937), 21-22.
35. Fred Barlow Jr., "Palm Springs Gardens," *California Arts & Architecture*, February 1937, 32.
36. Ibid.
37. H. Roy Kelley, "Fifty Happy Years in Architecture," unpublished memoirs, 106. H. Roy Kelley Manuscript Files, Box 1, Folders I-VII; University of California, Santa Barbara.
38. *An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster*, University of California Press, 1999; David Gebhard; p. 179. Marc Treib, ed.
39. "Emphasis on Modern," a two-page article from an unidentified periodical in the H. Roy Kelley papers, University of California, Santa Barbara.
40. Michael Laurie and David C. Streatfield, *75 Years of Landscape Architecture at Berkeley: An Informal History*, (Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, Berkeley, 1988), 19.
41. "Public Housing," *California Arts & Architecture*, July 1941, 32.
42. "Landscaping at Harbor Hills to Be Attractive," *Torrance Herald*, March 20, 1941.
43. Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, *California and Californians*, Vol. 4 (The Lewis Publishing Company, 1930), 203.



June Meehan Campbell

Phoebe Cutler

If books are for people
Then me without you is
a Church without a steeple¹
a boat without a crew

My infinities were broken
And my asterisk askew —
So this is just a token
Of what I owe to you!

Thomas Church wrote the above dedication in 1956 on the title page of June Meehan Campbell's copy of *Gardens are for People*. Twenty years later, Campbell was a participant in the Bancroft Library's oral history of Church. A look at the events of this pioneering woman's life, intertwined with excerpts from that interview, reveals Campbell's unheralded talents, her modesty about those abilities, and the challenges faced by women in the early decades of landscape architecture on the West Coast. Her tentativeness entering into the profession hardly predicts that she would end up as the mainstay for two decades for the office of the country's most eminent landscape architect of the post Second World War period.

As a child I liked flowers, and when I was in about tenth grade my mother kept asking me what I was going to be: she'd say, "Now, be a librarian." "No, I don't want to be a librarian." "Well, then, be a P.E. teacher." "No, I don't want to be that." All of a sudden I grasped at the pansies because somewhere I had heard about landscape architecture.

I went to a junior college for a year first and our English theme was to write on "Our Chosen Profession." So I went and did a lot of research on it and that's when I really found out what landscape architecture involved, and the flowers kept fading further and further into the background and along came things like engineering and math, and more and more requirements, none of which I really thought I liked. But I thought I'd go north and try it anyway.²

June arrived in Berkeley in 1934. She lived in boarding houses. Her chief nourishment came in the form of Baby Ruth bars, which were sold by Garrett Eckbo, who tended "the little store in the lab." Less welcome was Garrett's and Ed Williams's inexplicable amusement at her and her friends' expense.

Eckbo and Ed Williams were both in the department when I first came, and I don't know what it was, but for some reason it seemed that everything we said—there were three of us girls who started in together at the same time, which was fairly unusual—Garrett and Ed would just go into gales of laughter every time we opened our mouths and it was so intimidating. They'd giggle at us over nothing.³

Matriculating in 1938 into the last years of the Depression, June was fortunate to find work with the Golden Gate Exposition on Treasure Island. She was subsequently hired by William Penn Mott to do secretarial duty and to work on his projects, including Oakland's Woodminster Cascade. Mott couldn't keep her busy, so she was soon unemployed again.

She was not unemployed long. She next took the job that would essentially be her career. Recalling that her college training did not prepare her for a landscape architecture office, she, with typical modesty, conceded that, in her mind, she had "very little to contribute to anything for some time other than being helpful" and that "anyone else could have been here and things would have gone just as well."

From the vantage of the post-feminist revolution, Campbell's revelation that her clerical skills were the key to obtaining both her short-term position with Mott and her succeeding long tenure at the office of Thomas Dolliver Church is a discomfiting one. Jack Stafford, who joined the office in 1950, recalled Campbell as the person who answered the phone, and dealt with clients, all the while doing design. He omitted the chore of lighting the coal-burning stove, which was the sole source of heat for the office. In her Bancroft interview with Suzanne B. Riess, which was attended by Church's wife at the outset and two others, Campbell tactfully referred only to the chill of the office—but not her role in warming it—by declaring, "Ask Ted Osmundson about the temperature before it warmed up."⁴

By 1940 Tommy Church already enjoyed a strong regional reputation, if not yet an international one. At the age of 38 he could boast an impressive and growing portfolio of residences belonging to an affluent and well-connected strata of the local society. He had recently received

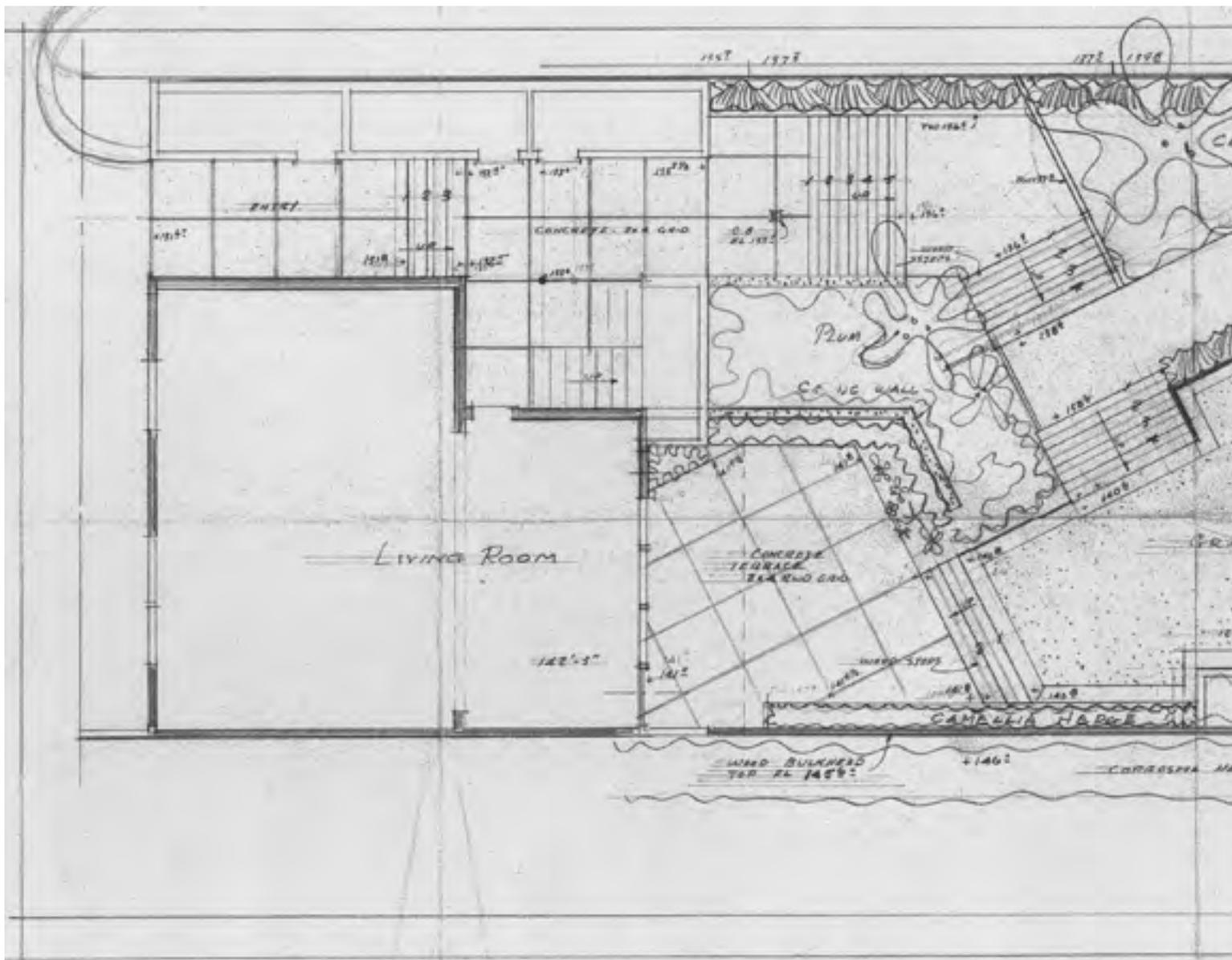
exposure at the Golden Gate International Exposition, and earlier at an exhibition on contemporary landscape architecture at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In addition, he had already launched his fruitful rapport with the shelter magazine sector. Campbell confessed to being "in awe of him and his fame...."

Despite that burgeoning fame, the office remained small, rarely exceeding four landscape architects, and eventually, as the practice prospered, a *bona fide* secretary was hired. Draftsmen-cum-designers—or in Campbell's words, "the boys"—came and went. When she started, the staff numbered three. With the advent of the war, Bob Royston and George Martin departed, to be replaced after the war by Lawrence Halprin and Casey Kawamoto. This pattern of short apprenticeships was more the norm than otherwise.

Because of the subject's undue modesty, one has to read into the interview her centrality to the operation of the office. It is possible to extract from her detailed description of projects the intensity of the training she was receiving. In the case of San Francisco's Parkmerced housing complex, built during the war years, she and Church set up an office on the site:

The thing was done in an accelerated manner to try to get it built as soon as possible, so the ground was broken and they started building without all the information they might have had, and the drawings were often incomplete. Sometimes they'd set the grade of the building at a certain elevation, but because of field changes or errors there might be these very embarrassing situations where the floor adjacent to another was four feet lower. Tommy's problem was designing retaining walls and then deciding how to float the grade around them to make the two areas work together. And that's where we, and Floyd and Alec [contractors who later worked for Church on his gardens], learned a lot about header boards—how to swing them and just how far you can really bend them before they snap. And we certainly had wonderful latitude in design—in block after block with these courts.⁵ (continued)

Opposite: *Garden of Mrs. George (Jean) Wolff, Chestnut Street, San Francisco. Photo by Saxon Holt, 1986.*



Campbell (continued)

In another part of the interview she gives a vivid description of the different building materials they experimented with: redwood rounds, integral concrete stains, asbestos fencing, and exposed aggregate paving.

Plans, not dedications or reminiscences, form the most convincing proof of June's talents and indispensability. Two plans from a cache of four surviving ones for Mrs. George Wolff's garden on San Francisco's Telegraph Hill bear the name of "June Meehan." Since Jean Wolff was a professional gardener and a very old friend of the Churches, the garden is something of a special case; but that does not detract from the competence of the drawings.⁶

Although small, the garden proceeds from the house to the rear in an intricate

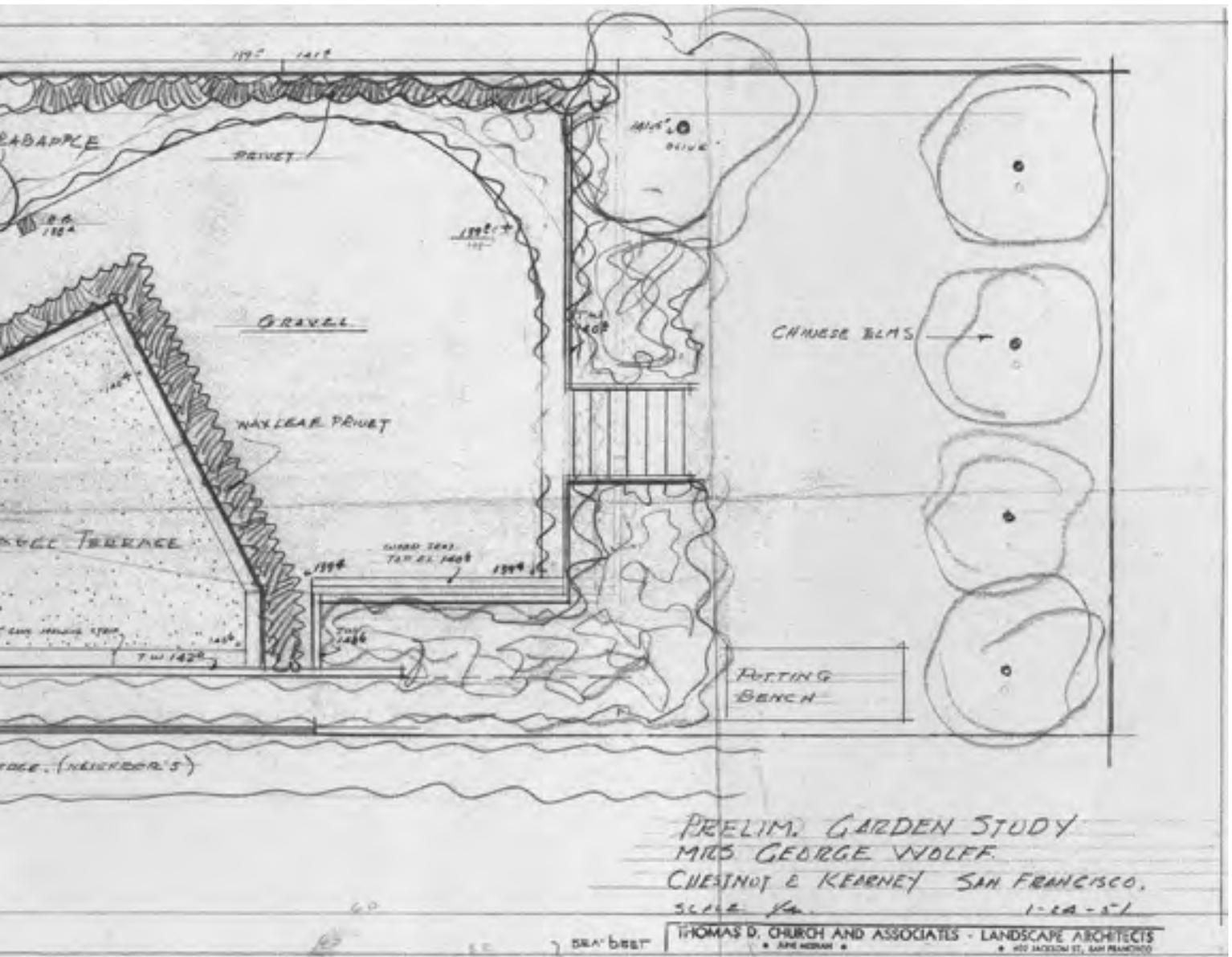
series of interlocking stairways, terraces, and planting areas that entail eight different elevations. Campbell tracks the changes, noted in spot elevations, on both the "Prelim. Garden Study" and the "Garden Working Drawing," through a process that she as the drafts person would have had to calculate. About this aspect, she commented, "You try to do everything you can in the way of grades; everything is documented on paper, and in the specifications too, so that there is just no doubt that this is what you want."⁷

The same attention to details appears in the enlargements of the steps and retaining walls where every dimension and weep hole is recorded.

Less detailed is the planting, which is presented in the cursory manner typical of the office. In that plan his boon assistant

borrowed from her boss's fluent style. The plant palette—olives, plum, privet, and camellia (not all adopted by Mrs. Wolff)—reflect the office's practical approach to flora and the reductive spirit of the period. The Wolff garden, so precisely presented by Church's associate, garnered even more fame than usual for the increasingly celebrated practice.

As Church's renown grew, he was often absent from the office on far-flung commissions. Jack Stafford, who, after Campbell, was the firm's longest-serving employee, recalled that, during those absences, he, Jack, might have as many as five projects needing construction drawings.⁸ Campbell would have experienced a similar level of responsibility. However, whereas Stafford would often go out into the field to supervise construction, June's



attention was increasingly diverted to the writing that became a sizeable part of Church's output—and a by-product of Campbell's prowess, as referenced in her boss's dedication. Jack maintains in his interview that for several months Church worked exclusively on *Gardens are for People*, assisted by both June and the office secretary, Elsie Sculthorpe.⁹ June, who may have ghost written some of Church's articles, in 1960 ventured into using her own byline. In two pieces for *House Beautiful* she explored the subjects of privacy screens and gazebos.¹⁰

These articles were in their small way declarations of independence, and as such, a harbinger of events to come. June's life had been adamantly that of the single working girl; but around this time she met a World War II veteran named

Harold Campbell about whom we know next to nothing, except that in 1965, after 25 years of employment, Tommy's right-hand woman left the office to pursue a new career as Mrs. Campbell.

In the early 1990s Harley Jessup, a production designer at Pixar Studios, bought a house with a 1956 Church garden in Kent Woodlands, a Marin subdivision for long favored by architects and landscape architects (notably Lawrence Halprin). Intent upon restoring the neglected garden, he pursued the name on the plans. In this way June Meehan Campbell, now a widow living in Kenwood in Sonoma County, gained a new and devoted friend and, at the same time, reconnected with her past. June advised Harley and Ann Campbell on their restoration effort, suggesting, for instance, that a non-conforming tree be

removed and that the juniper be allowed to grow naturally. Long schooled in construction, she also advised them that their deck might need inspecting.

Harley and June formed an annual New Year's Day luncheon engagement. When Betsy Church died and their house was being sold, he escorted June to an informal memorial in 1998 given for both Churches. To his regret, however, he was not able to attend the same for June when
(continued)

Above: Jean Wolff was a plantswoman but the Church office, as was the case here, would often sketch in the floral bones with the assumption that the owner would tend to the *Senecio cineraria* and such. The drafting style of this 1951 preliminary planting plan conformed to the office practice.

she passed away in 2009. Jessup attests, however, that June Hirshfeld Meehan Campbell was lovely, bright, and modest to the end.

June Meehan Campbell is one of a host of design professionals who through their selflessness, or for other reasons, have made important but unheralded contributions to their fields. She stands out because she was a woman when that was a rarity and because it was still early days for landscape design on the West Coast. Even rarer is the existence of someone with skills such as hers who cheerfully dedicates 25 years of his or her life—without notable material reward—to the building and enhancement of a superior's career. ■

Endnotes

1. In the original, Church mistakenly wrote “with” instead of “without.”
2. “June Campbell: An Associate Details the Church Office Workings, 1940s-1960s,” interview by Suzanne B. Riess, *Thomas D. Church Oral History Project*, vol. 1 (Berkeley, CA: Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1978). The interview took place on 24 March 1976. Church at that time was terminally ill.
3. In 1940 Garrett Eckbo and Ed Williams, his brother-in-law, founded the firm that became EDAW.
4. Years later June Campbell told Harley Jessup about lighting the stove. Telephone interview with Harley Jessup, 13 July 2013. Church biographer Pamela Messenger and Grace Hall, office manager at the time, were also present. Ted Osmundson worked with Church very briefly in the mid-1940s before starting his own firm in San Francisco.
5. Campbell, “Associate,” *Thomas D. Church*, 170. Parkmerced, launched by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., (The La Brea complex was the sister development in Los Angeles) has endured several owners. A proposed renovation, which would destroy the aging townhouses, has been a recent subject of controversy.
6. Jean Wolf is one of the interviewees in the Church oral history. “Jean Wolff: A Garden and Flower Care Expert Analyses (sic) Her Thomas Church Garden,” *Thomas D. Church*, vol. 2, . 249-62.
7. Campbell, p. 160. The Church archive is at the Environmental Design Archive in Wurster Hall at UC Berkeley.
8. “Jack Stafford: An Associate Surveys the Church Office,” *Thomas D. Church*, vol. 2,, 559.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 574.
10. June Meehan, “How to Arrange for Privacy in Spite of—But Not to Spite—Close Neighbors,” *House Beautiful*, May 1960, 164-65, 252-53; “The Return of the Gazebo,” *House Beautiful*, June 1960, 11, 100-101.



Right, top: *Kent Woodlands garden, Marin County, 1956; formerly the English garden, now owned by Harley and Ann Jessup. Photo by Harley Jessup, 2013. Campbell's construction drawings guided its formation.*

Right, bottom: *A memorable occasion from among the office's time-honored coffee breaks: June and Larry Halprin (on right) celebrate their 30th birthdays with Tommy and his secretary Elsie Sculthorpe (on left). Courtesy Mark Treib. Gift from June Meehan Campbell.*

Book Review

Women in Landscape Architecture: Essays on History and Practice

Pamela Burton

The book *Women in Landscape Architecture* might have been more appropriately titled “The Development of Landscape Architecture in the United States as a Profession for Women.” The essays in the book are written by different people. Some explain the contributions not only of well-known landscape architects like Marion Coffin, Beatrix Ferrand, and Ellen Biddle Shipman, but also of gifted practitioners like Elsa Rehmann and Marjorie L. Sewell Cautley.

Dorothy Wurman’s chapter on Elsa Rehmann demonstrates her development as an “ecological pioneer.” In Rehmann’s 1933 essay “An Ecological Approach,” which is included in the book, she writes about “plant associations” and “the inherent adaptation of plants to the environment in which they grow.” Studying which plants grow together and what they have in common “becomes the study of plant ecology.” Rehmann emphasizes the “artistic waste” of using the English landscape school as the model for landscape design “instead of our native vegetation in its own characterful distribution.”

I was particularly taken by the work of Marjorie Sewell Cautley, who was a hands-on builder of spaces for large housing projects that didn’t merely “frame the architecture” but actively engaged the community and erased the boundary between architecture and landscape. As described by Thaisa Way, Cautley had a thorough knowledge of “plant materials and horticultural requirements.” She worked by closely studying “topography, soil, climates, and vegetation, and developed her plan accordingly.”

From Judith Tankard’s essay, I learned about female trailblazers in the profession. I found Terry Clements’s timeline of women in landscape architecture revealing. The earlier articles in the book show how women entered and contributed to the profession of landscape architecture in the United States.

I want to emphasize, however, that I have never approached my profession from the point of view of being a woman. People are successful in all professions, depending on the care and quality of their work, which is a result of knowledge, understanding, passion, and motivation. In that regard, think about important garden makers from other countries who worked in the first half of the twentieth century—Gertrude Jekyll and Vita-Sackville West in

England and Edna Walling in Australia.

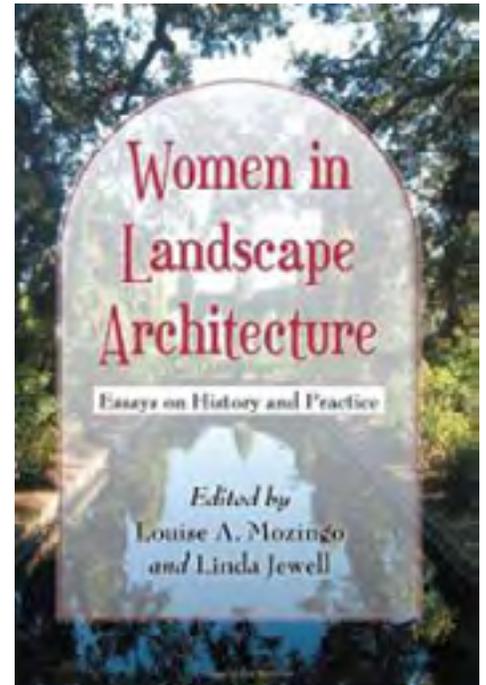
While the book is said to be about women in landscape architecture, three related themes also emerge. The first, which is stated in the introduction, is that women and men work differently. “What characterized this work [by women] was a fine-grained, additive quality and the eschewing of a grand vision approach” (page 2). “Women are said to be better designers for residential landscapes than men” (page 156). A second theme is men and how they prevented women from being successful in the profession. The third is a feminist stance that argues that spaces are gendered, which in one article means that playgrounds should serve the needs of both girls and boys, and in another that the “power” of outdoor spaces is differently engaged or disengaged by men and women.

Whatever the validity and interest of these themes, for me they are tangential to a book on the history and professional practice of women in landscape architecture. Rather than the last five essays on Celebration, Florida, engendered spaces, and trans-pacific homes, this book could have looked at the development of the landscape architecture profession since 1975 and the work of Catherine Brown, Andrea Cochran, Lisa Gimmy, Kathryn Gustafson, Mia Lehrer, Pamela Palmer, and Martha Schwartz, among many others.* It’s worth noting that since Laurie Olin stepped down, the chief executive officer of OLIN, arguably the most important landscape architecture firm in the country, is Lucinda Sanders.

There remains a golden opportunity for someone to write a comprehensive book on the history of women in landscape architecture in the United States.

*Editor’s note: Thaisa Way’s paper in the autumn issue of the *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, “Unbounded Practice: Women and Landscape Architecture in the Early Twentieth Century,” may not be comprehensive, but is a good starting point. ■

Pamela Burton is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and the author of Private Landscapes: Modernist Gardens in Southern California (Princeton University Press, 2002) and Pamela Burton Landscapes (Princeton University Press, 2010), a survey of her company’s civic, commercial, and residential projects.



Women in Landscape Architecture: Essays on History and Practice

Louise A. Mozingo and Linda Jewell, editors
McFarland & Company, 2012, 232 pages

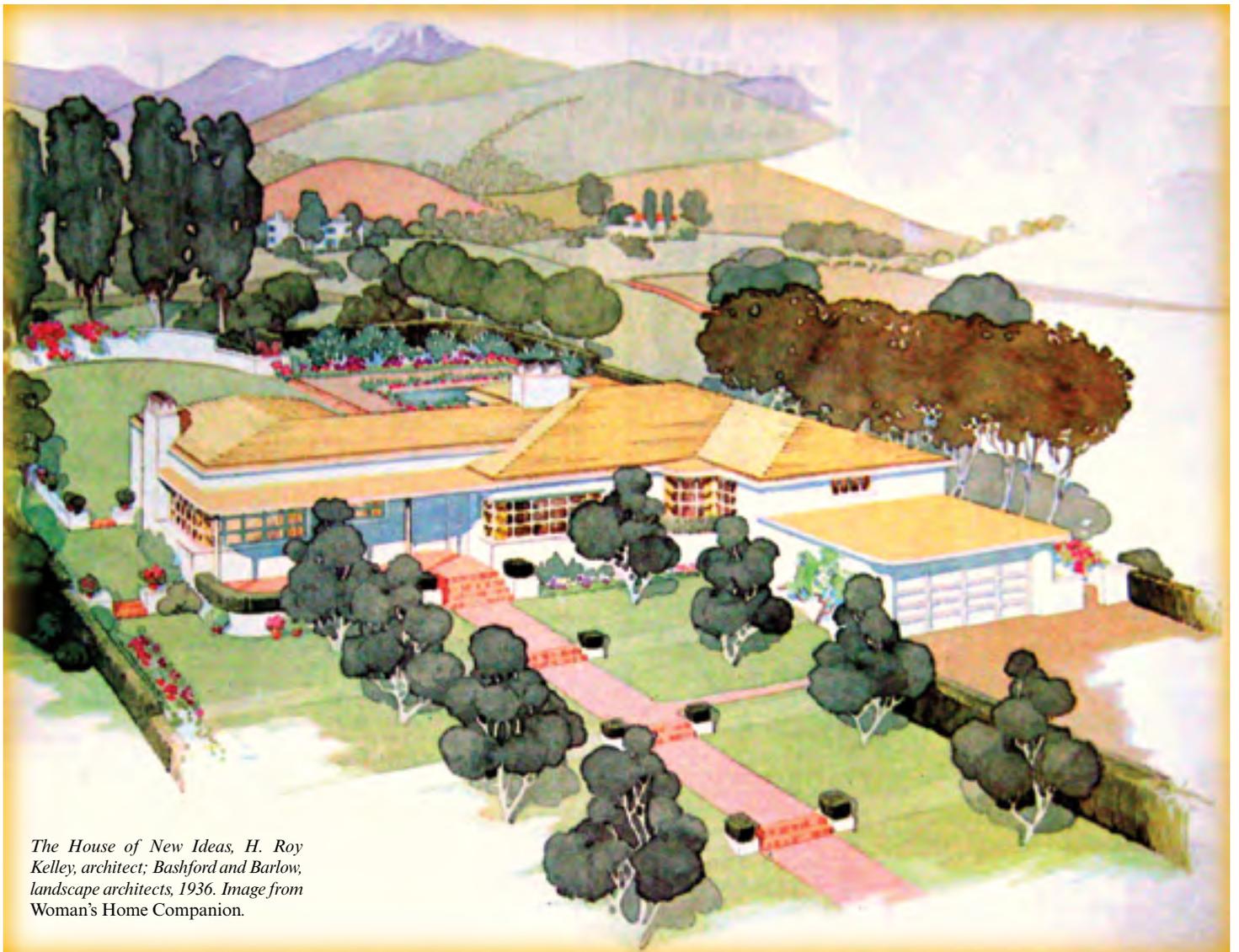


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The House of New Ideas, H. Roy Kelley, architect; Bashford and Barlow, landscape architects, 1936. Image from Woman's Home Companion.