HISTORIC LANDSCAPE REPORT

1852
SPRINGSIDE
Landscape Garden

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

Hudson River Sloop CLEARWATER Inc.
112 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

SCENIC HUDSON INC
9 VASSAR STREET · POUGHKEEPSIE, NY · 12601

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE REPORT

for

SPRINGSIDE

National Historic Landmark

Poughkeepsie, New York

Prepared for:

Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.

and

Scenic Hudson, Inc.

Prepared by:

Robert M. Toole

THE OFFICE OF R. M. TOOLE

Landscape Architecture

Historic Landscape Study and Restoration

215 Regent Street

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

(518) 584-0727

May 20, 1987

Reprint: July 1, 2015

ODE TO SPRINGSIDE

"Oh, tell me not that Paradise
Bloomed in the distant East,
Ere culture o'er this darkened world
Her radiant light had cast."

No: Paradise near home is found,
As future poets will sing,
And nature's beauties ever crown
"Springside's" returning spring.

The old Dutch barn and farm-house gone,
Wild grasses, bogs and thistles,
The untilled hills and barren knolls
Now yield their golden fleeces.

Sour grow the rough and stunted fruit,
Within the wild, full bough,
But now amidst the pruned limbs
Delicious fruit doth grow.

Where stagnant pools and miry sloughs
With croaking frogs all over;
The willow, larch, and myrtle grows
Like pigs in luxuriant clover.

The gardener's cottage dimly seen
In distance, thro' the wood,
The rural lawns and evergreens
Replace the wild abode.

The clustered pile of farm-yard steads
With artistic skill arranged,
Tho' last, are not the least to claim
Our admiration's praise.

Thus in the future, brighter years,
Progression's laws provide,
Unfolding still, with newer charms,
Fresh beauties of "Springside."

Then glowing hope with heavenly fruits
Shall cheer our labors on,
Till this once dreamy barren waste,
"Springside," we'll call "sweet home."

- Poughkeepsie, June 7th, 1852.
(anonymous author)

<u>Poughkeepsie Eagle</u>, 6/12/1852.

Preface to 2015 Reprint

This document is a digitized reprint of the original 1987 Springside Historic Landscape Report. Thirty years ago the 1987 Report was a last-of-its-era, typewritten manuscript where the original was photocopied to make six finished copies. Today these copies are hard to find. Still, unlike dated planning studies, the 1987 Springside Historic Landscape Report remains relevant to ongoing research and restoration activities. The 1987 Report was primarily a research document presenting and delineating on scaled plans the known history of the Springside site based on then available documentation and on-site evidence, interpreted within the context of the antebellum era of its creation, and the history of landscape gardening in America of which Springside is a supreme example.

In the future, ongoing study – as for example from archaeological investigations or newly discovered written or pictorial evidence – could require some of the findings from 1987 to be amended, but, to date, this document is, to the best of my knowledge, the most complete study of the historic resource represented by the Springside National Historic Landmark. In preparing this digital version, the author does not identify any egregious errors or needed revisions. Other than typos and some punctuation corrections this is a facsimile of the 1987 Report. The only additions are to the selected bibliography, bringing background information on Springside more up to date. These bibliographic additions are printed in bold typeface to distinguish them from the original 1987 Report.

As noted on the list of illustrations, the quality of the historic images – notably old photographs and maps – available for reproduction in 1987 project was very limited. Most needed to be copied from secondary sources. Despite their limitations the original 1987 plates have been retained, scanned – which has not improved their quality – and included here, as in 1987, but anyone seeking serious study of their content is referred to the original documents as noted in the list of illustrations.

Two, full-scaled plans (scale: 1” = 50’), the first delineating Springside in 1852 (Figure 10) and the second the existing conditions in 1985 (Figure 22), were attached to the final 1987 Report. The Mylar and pencil originals of these plans are in the collection of Springside Landscape Restoration.

It has been an honor to have had the opportunity to reissue the 1987 Report in a digital format and to have contributed to appreciation of Springside, the Hudson River Valley’s most significant historic garden. Thanks are extended to Springside Landscape Restoration for encouragement in completing this reprint.

Robert M. Toole, landscape architect, July 1, 2015

ILLUSTRATIONS

Due to cost constraints and restrictions on available primary source material, several illustrations reproduced in this Historic Landscape Report are taken from secondary sources with predictable decrease in their quality. In addition, historic plans, notably the Jones Map (Figure 6) and the Jacob Map (Figure 8), as well as the Gritten paintings (Figures 11, 12 and 13), and several old photographs, are not fully legible due to their reproduction at a drastically reduced scale from secondary sources. Despite these limitations, these illustrations are included here to present a record of the most important documents utilized in this study.

Figure 1 Location Map, R. M. Toole, 1986.

Figure 2 Matthew Vassar, from *Vassar College and Its Founder*, Benson J. Lossing, 1867.

Figure 3 Andrew Jackson Downing, from *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, 6th ed., 1859.

Figure 4 & 5 Plans of Coach House/Stable and Cottage, from *Springside – A Partnership with the Environment*, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968. Original: Vassar College Library.

Figure 6 Map of Property, W. C. Jones, c. 1850, from photocopy of reduced original. Original: Vassar College Library.

Figure 7 Portion of a map of Poughkeepsie, E. Jacob, 1857, from photocopy of reduced original.

Figures 8 & 8A Map of Springside, E. Jacob, n.d., c. 1857-68, from photocopy of reduced original. Original: Adriance Memorial Library Historical Room.

Figure 9 Map of Springside, from *Vassar College and Its Founder*, Benson J. Lossing, 1867.

Figure 10 Design Elements – 1852, R. M. Toole, 1985; original at scale 1" = 50'.

Figures 11, 12 & 13 Paintings #1, #3 and #4* (see footnote below), Henry Gritten, 1852, from Springside – A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968.

Figures 14-20 Photographs, Dutchess County Department of Planning, c. 1968. Figures 16 and 17 appear in *Springside – A Partnership with the Environment*, DCDP, 1968; Figures 14 (right) and 15 appeared in Landmarks of Dutchess County, 1683-1867, DCDP, 1969. Figures 14 (left), 17, 18, 19 and 20 were taken for publication in *Landmarks of Dutchess County*, but never included.

Figure 21 Barn Complex – West Elevation, R. M. Toole, 1987.

Figures 22-24 Existing Conditions, May, 1985; Illustrative Restoration Plan and Preliminary Restoration Plan, R. M. Toole, 1985. Original at scale 1" = 50'.

*Number designations for the Gritten paintings are assigned for the purpose of this Historic Landscape Report. While painting #2 (view with Cottage in foreground and looking southwest from Poplar Summit) survives, no reproduction was available for inclusion in this Report.

OUTLINE

IN APPRECIATION

The author of this Report would like to thank Poughkeepsie residents Jeanne Opdycke and Tim Allred whose independent research and compilation of documents aided the preparation of this Report. Appreciation is also extended to Stephanie Mauri (Dutchess County Landmarks Association) for valuable background information and long term counsel, and Ellen McClelland Lesser (Horticultural Historian), for knowledgeable and insightful review. Thanks are also extended to George B. Tatum and Arthur Channing Downs, Jr., eminent A. J. Downing scholars, who responded to ideas, answered specific questions and offered encouragement.

PREFACE

"Landscape Gardening bids fair to become a profession in this country."

- A. J. Downing, Letter to John Jay Smith, 11/15/1841

This Historic Landscape Report is the product of a deliberate and lengthy process, described here in brief.

In January 1984, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. commissioned Robert M. Toole, Landscape Architect, to serve as a consultant and expert advisor on litigation proceedings brought by Clearwater, Hudson River Heritage and five area residents against Springside Associates, owners and proposed developers of the site of the Springside National Historic Landmark and adjacent parcels. The consultant's involvement included study of the proposed development and the historic landscape, and the preparation of a brief report entitled: "Evaluation Report for Restoration Potential and Proposed Development," dated January 28, 1984.

In January 1985, after a legal settlement was reached with Springside Associates, Clearwater commissioned Mr. Toole's office to act as consultant/advisor in negotiating specific development issues that resulted from the settlement. These negotiations continued from February to June, 1985. During this same period, as part of the agreement with Clearwater, the consultant analyzed and evaluated available documentation related to the Springside site and began the process of preparing a draft historic landscape report. Three months later, as agreed, this report was presented as a working draft so that it could serve as a support document for Clearwater's participation in the City of Poughkeepsie's final site plan review procedures related to the development proposals of Springside Associates. The draft report, dated May 15, 1985, was submitted without immediate review and finalization. At the time there was no organized restoration group in place to take responsibility for ongoing administration of the Springside historic site. It was agreed by Clearwater and the consultant to defer a final version of the report in appreciation for the importance of having an organized review body in place.

Approximately thirteen months later, in June 1986, a review body was constituted as a committee of the newly formed, not-for-profit group, Springside Landscape Restoration, Inc. By August 1986, collaboration was started between the consultant and the review committee, working towards a final version of the historic landscape report. In January 1987, after about five months of effort, the review committee decided unilaterally to forego further involvement with the development of the report. In this event, the process continued, regrettably without the review committee's input. The final version of this Springside Historic Landscape Report is submitted in fulfillment of the consultant's 1985 agreement with Clearwater.

Methodology

The Springside Historic Landscape Report is prepared in accordance with the criteria and standards suggested for such reports by the State of New York, Bureau of Historic Sites, and

others. While there is no universally accepted methodology for the preparation of historic landscape reports, the approach used here amounts to a professional compilation and analysis based on existing, available documentation and current research, background information and the consultant's technical expertise. Within the effort level established by the fee, this report amounts to an initial overview of Springside's existing conditions, history and historic context, significance, design characteristics and general restoration requirements and potentials.

As noted in the OUTLINE, historical background pertinent to Springside's development, the basis of the site's significance, is discussed first (Introduction and Chapter 1), followed by a recounting of the site's history (Chapter 2), and a description of the historic design (Chapter 3). Existing conditions are outlined next (Chapter 4), followed by a preliminary discussion of restoration requirements and potentials (Chapter 5). Footnotes, which appear in the text in parenthesis ( ), are referenced to endnotes, listed at the end of the narrative. A selected bibliography is provided to identify important source material and further reading. In an attempt to standardize nomenclature, reference to Springside and its component parts used in this report utilizes names taken primarily from *Vassar College and Its Founder*, Benson J. Lossing, 1867. Components not actually designated with formal names by Lossing are used here with quotation marks to identify names used informally in Lossing's text or suggested for the purpose of this report. See Figure 10, Design Elements, 1852 and fold-out Map A.

In keeping with accepted practice, the report generally adheres to explicit evidence and known background in describing the property and its history. When appropriate and as needed, the analysis includes inferences based on informed judgement, as described in the text. Reasoned conjecture and professional evaluation are considered essential to formulating preservation goals and implementing restoration measures. As can be expected with any initial study, it is anticipated that understandings developed from future research may alter the evaluation and conclusions reached in this study. Subsequent analysis should be persuasive and presented in a formal, documented format.

Two fold-out maps are included in the report. These maps are at scale 1" = 50'. Reduced, simplified versions of these maps are also bound into the report (see Figure 10 and 22). Fold-out Map 'A' depicts the historic landscape as it is thought to have appeared in the autumn of 1852. The Existing Conditions Plan, Map 'B', dated May 1985, is a preliminary compilation of available survey information and limited field investigation. While Map 'B' may serve the needs of initial planning, considerable additional field work, beyond the scope of this study, would be required to verify and detail a fully amplified existing conditions plan.

INTRODUCTION

"And, because this [Springside] is one of the few surviving gardens – that can be called that – that is maybe associated with some certainty with Downing's name, it makes it particularly important for the history, and its preservation particularly important for the history of landscape architecture in America."

- George B. Tatum, transcript of a lecture (unpublished) delivered at Lyndhurst, Tarrytown, New York, June 20, 1970.

The 20-acre Springside National Historic Landmark is one of the most significant historic landscapes in the United States. The site is a landscape garden(1) attributed to Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852), an important American landscape architect/landscape gardener(2), horticulturist and author. From available evidence and documentation it appears that Downing designed this landscape garden, its buildings and other features beginning in 1850. Additionally, he seems to have participated to some extent in the design's implementation during a two-year construction period. At the time of Downing's death, in the summer of 1852, the garden was a finely crafted, quintessential example of his landscape and architectural design themes. Other sites attributed to Downing are either unsubstantiated or changed beyond recognition. Springside represents the only remaining, documented, and unaltered example of Downing's work as a landscape architect/landscape gardener and as an architect.

Andrew Jackson Downing can be described as a culminating figure in the history of landscape gardening, which developed in England over a 150 year period through a series of defined themes and expressions. This English background, which began in the early 1700s, is described, in brief, as follows:

In the early decades of the 18th century, a less formal, through obviously artificial garden design emerged as a reaction to the grandiose formality of 17th century French and Dutch gardens. These early English landscape gardens showed a sophisticated artistic taste and were the first gardens in Europe to depart from a focus on rigid, formal layouts. These early landscape gardens, by such designers as William Kent (d. 1748) and the poet Alexander Pope (d. 1744), provide the foundation of the landscape garden tradition.

The early English landscape gardens, developed in the decades between 1710 and 1740, were often emblematic, that is full of allusions to classical and literary themes. In turn, 16th and 17th century Italian gardens, with their emphasis on architectural definition and statuary, and the era's love of theatre and stage set, provided design models for garden layouts which were dominated by ornamental structures, numerous features and obviously man-made effects. This display of features was accomplished in a loosely arranged layout that was to reflect the "genius of the place," as Alexander Pope defined it. This transitional phase of garden history, between the future and the ageless garden formality of the past, lasted until the mid-18th century.

By the time of the American Revolutionary War, English landscape gardener, 'Capability' Brown (d. 1783), and others, had revolutionized the earlier landscape gardens by making natural effects the dominant design component. In these landscape gardens nature provided a focus that did not require sophisticated taste or elaborate upkeep. As a result, the landscape garden gained a broader appeal. Brown created pastoral and domesticated landscapes maintained with few man-made associative elements, relying instead on the aesthetic enjoyment of composed, idealized, manipulated scenery. In England, the aristocratic gentleman farmer adapted this approach to realize the *ferme ornee* (ornamental farm), an English term despite the French words, that was epitomized in the decades before the American Revolutionary War and is represented by such American example as Mount Vernon, George Washington's home in Virginia.

Brown's abstraction of nature was followed, inevitably, by an awakened appreciation for more varied and wilder natural situations. This evolution culminated in the 1790s with an emphasis on "sublime" and "picturesque" effects best experienced not in the garden as much as in wild scenery. This theme was interpreted by such writers as William Gilpin in *Remarks on Forest Scenery* (1791) and by garden critics and theorists Uvedale Price (d. 1829) and Richard Payne Knight (d. 1824).

In England, the true "Picturesque" landscape garden, as the term was used in the 1790s, was realized in comparatively few examples. It had limited possibilities, being suited only for wilder terrain as, for example, the Welsh and Scottish highlands. The topography of central England, where most of Brown's designs were created, was often unsuited to "Picturesque" landscape gardening. In truth, as a design theme it was appreciated only by the esoteric connoisseur. Instead, a more practical and less ethereal attitude prevailed in popular taste. This approach was exemplified by the work of Humphry Repton (d. 1818). The English landscape garden at Repton's death mixed overt, even formal; man-made improvements close to the house with refined, generally picturesque natural effects out in the 'park'.

In this way the Repton era was followed by the Victorian and Gardenesque styles exemplified by John Claudius Loudon (d. 1843). Loudon emphasized designed effects and featured highly varied and often exotic plantings displayed as specimens. The emphasis was not on large estates and garden design was often motivated by scientific curiosity. Gardens were commonly seen as botanical collections and exhibit areas. Changing motivations created design effects diametrically opposed to the subtle use of native trees and shrubs and empathy for nature that dominated the earlier Brown and Repton landscape gardens. In this way, J. C. Loudon represented a significant alteration of the English landscape garden tradition, a change with special relevance to Springside (see Chapter 1, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND).

This then, in synopsis, is the English background that directly shaped American landscape gardening in the 18th and early 19th century. Andrew Jackson Downing's importance is directly linked to his place in this historic continuum. As described in Chapter 1, Downing, at a critical moment in American cultural history, served as the American promoter of landscape design, drawing from the English traditions of Brown/Repton, and the new ideas of Loudon, and

interpreting these aesthetic themes in light of the peculiar characteristics of democratic life, in a new nation, in the near wilderness setting of the New World.

> If the 17th century witnessed Italy as the dominant practitioner of the landscape art and the 18th century was represented by the English landscape garden, the 19th century belongs to the American landscape architect. The most important of these was Downing.(3)

Despite his renown, Downing's career as a landscape designer has not been adequately explored. Owing to the loss of Downing's files, even the facts of his professional life, client's names and billings, for example, are very fragmentary and there has been to date only isolated attempts to piece together the documentation that does exit for sites associated or attributed to Downing,(4) and almost no attempt, to date, to analyze the nuances of Downing's design approach within the landscape garden tradition.

For these reasons, Springside is a significant national and even international treasure. Its design was exceptionally well handled and was characteristic of Downing's themes as recorded in his numerous writings. Because of the maturity of its magnificent specimen trees, the garden's loveliness is in some respects more evident today than during Downing's lifetime. Design quality and the site's basic preservation reinforce Springside's potential as an historic garden of considerable importance.

In turn, an historic and quality Romantic period landscape garden such as Springside, provides the Hudson River Valley community with a unique, indigenous patrimony. If restored, the site could serve recreational needs, interpret important personages and display a central design theme of the Valley's environmental heritage as a major public attraction that can enhance understanding and appreciation for landscape aesthetics and visual environmental quality.

These benefits can never be addressed by historic architecture alone. In the past, historic landscape architecture has not been given the attention its significance or educational potential deserves. Springside offers an opportunity to develop an important historic landscape as a unique preservation project. For all these reasons, it is critical that Springside's history and design be fully documented, and that the site is recreated and interpreted as an historic landscape.

This Historic Landscape Report provides a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the Springside landscape, based on presently available documentation (see PREFACE). Specifically, the report is intended to outline the site's history, design character, general existing conditions and, in a preliminary way, restoration potentials and requirements.

CHAPTER 1 – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Gardening World of Andrew Jackson Downing and Matthew Vassar

Andrew Jackson Downing was born on October 31, 1815 and lived in Newburgh-on-Hudson, fifteen miles south of Poughkeepsie. His father, a successful nurseryman, died in 1822 and Andrew and his older brother Charles inherited the business while still quite young. After mastering much of the technical aspects of the nursery trade Andrew, as a teenager in the mid-1830s, began to absorb the complex aesthetics of landscape design. As a nurseryman, Downing visited many of the Hudson River Valley estates and their relatively well established landscape gardens, and his "tastes were refined and broadened by association with some of the prominent men of the time."(5) This apprenticeship acquired Downing with landscape gardening as it was then practiced, and Downing quickly assimilated the basic elements and design themes, as well as the history of landscape gardening, by reading such well known English theorists as Humphry Repton and John Claudius Loudon.

By 1841, at the age of 26, Downing reported on landscape gardening as he had experienced it and outlined his interpretation of the basic elements and design tenets in his landmark book, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America.* This book has been called "probably the most popular and influential book of its kind ever published"(6) and it established Downing's career. Initially his achievement in presenting *Landscape Gardening* was that of a reporter and publicist as he related history, described worthy examples and generally praised landscape gardening as an activity appropriate to the emergence of cultural like in the young United States. Downing's chapters on such technical topics as horticulture and engineering serve to give creditability to the book's landscape and architectural design focus. As Downing published further works (7) and became editor of the widely read periodical, *The Horticulturist*, in 1846, his professional position quickly evolved.

In 1850, when he first visited the site of Springside, Downing had ascended to a near singular position as the premier spokesperson for a broadly defined aesthetic movement, sometimes referred to then as the "Rural Arts." This movement amounted to the first environmental design movement in the history of the United States. Downing's significance has been described in several ways. He has been seen as a leading author and practitioner,(8) a codifier of design themes,(9) and an arbiter of taste.(10) Downing's broader importance evolves from his role as a design authority, similar to the focal role played by Repton and Loudon in England. As with these English landscape gardeners, Downing's writings established his crucial role without full reliance on individual examples of his work. While critical to his creditability,

Downing's practice as a landscape gardener has been overshadowed by a broader based evaluation.

Working from his Newburgh office, Andrew Jackson Downing became involved in the Springside development at the initiative of Matthew Vassar (1792-1868), a Poughkeepsie businessman and later the founder of Vassar College (1861). Matthew Vassar was born in England. His family immigrated to America in 1796 and moved to Dutchess County, purchasing a small farm and starting a small brewery before 1800.(11) After Poughkeepsie was incorporated as a village, the Vassar family moved to the promising Hudson River settlement and expanded the brewery trade. Matthew worked as an apprentice in business until 1810 and then quickly assumed a leadership role in the family's brewery operation. By age 40, Vassar had experienced financial success enhanced by fortuitous transactions during a real estate depression in the 1830s. As he reached his 50th birthday, Vassar was a wealthy man, prepared to reflect on his business accomplishments and use his considerable resources and energy on philanthropic undertakings.

Returning to Poughkeepsie in 1848, after an extensive European grand tour, Vassar began to involve himself in a variety of worthy undertakings and civic minded projects. One such project was the community's search for expanded cemetery space. It was this public endeavor that led to the development of Springside in 1850, when Vassar was nearly sixty years old.

Cemetery design was one aspect of landscape garden design influenced importantly in the pre-Civil War decades. "Rural cemeteries" as they were called were developed in this period as reactions to the unhealthy, unattractive and overcrowded conditions of older church-yard burial plots inherited from the Colonial period. The new cemeteries, beginning with Mount Auburn Cemetery outside Boston (1831), were designed as expansive landscape gardens dedicated to the dead but appreciated by the living for their artistic design qualities. It was the need for public cemetery development that prompted the Springside project. The Village of Poughkeepsie, as was the case with many of the older eastern communities, required replacement land for its crowded, old burial yards by 1850, and so a committee was formed to search for a suitable site. Matthew Vassar took the lead in this public endeavor as the chairman of the cemetery committee which began the process of site analysis and evaluation that led to the realization of Springside.

While additional research is needed to confirm the point, Matthew Vassar does not appear to have had substantial previous experience with landscape gardening, or landscape design, prior to the Springside development. A listing of Vassar's library books,(12) published before 1850, reveals several technical garden volumes, but few, beyond Downing's *Landscape Gardening*, that discuss the design themes and practices of landscape gardening. On this matter it seems that Vassar was an enthusiastic novice when he commissioned the professional landscape gardener, A. J. Downing in 1850. In turn, Downing is likely to have been given a free hand by Vassar in directing architectural and landscape design work at Springside. Vassar's secondary role focused on day-to-day decisions, a role that was, in other circumstances, decisive in the design, so that the owner of a landscape garden in Downing's period was typically the most important determiner of its design. For this reason a professional like Downing can be

credited with only a limited number of commissions. If Downing visited an existing estate and walked the grounds dispensing advice, even if his ideas were eagerly noted by the owner who had paid Downing a fee for the day's effort, Downing could not often be credited with the property's design. Properties evolved over time.

This typical situation does not seem to hold for Springside. Instead, Downing seems to have provided a decisive input in Matthew Vassar's landscape garden development, involvement that extended from the basic layout to the important architectural elements, other garden features and technical aspects as well. While full documentation is presently lacking, Downing seems to have provided Vassar with a comprehensive professional consultation and to have kept up with the work as it proceeded through two years of implementation.

The design approach that Downing brought to the Springside commission was influenced by his apprenticeship that began in the early 1830s, as well as the experiences of the intervening years. By 1850, at age thirty-five and nine years after the publication of *Landscape Gardening*, Downing's professional status was in full flower. As the Springside work began Downing had just returned from a European tour where he had recruited an architectural associate, Calvert Vaux. Projects outside the Hudson River Valley were frequent, including a prestigious commission, initiated by President Millard Fillmore to landscape the Mall and White House grounds in Washington, D.C.

In a broad context, Downing experienced Jacksonian America. This was an optimistic period imbued with an "entrepreneurial psychology"(13) after the post-Revolution decades of instability and anxious nation-forming. Patriotic, energetic, driven by financial incentives, America's industry became established in the East at the same time pioneer expansion began to tame the West. The sleepy colonial past was ending in a turbulent democratic setting where the "common man" found increased expression and political power. Eastern industry and western expansion were both symbolized by the Erie Canal, which opened in 1825 when Andrew Jackson Downing was ten years old. Frantically gearing up its considerable economic and political resources, America's artistic life was a decidedly secondary, elitist consideration. Still, the energetic quality and distinction of artistic achievement in this pre-Civil War period served to define the nation's philosophical underpinning and cultural promise, and it is for this reason of considerable importance, especially in the Hudson River Valley.(14)

The sensibilities of the Age were fundamentally influenced by Romanticism and its modest, ephemeral, nearly religious appreciation of nature. Romanticism was a mental attitude devoted to imagination and feeling over purely rational and logical considerations. The paintings of the Hudson River School, notably Thomas Cole, and writers like Washington Irving and William Cullen Bryant, represent the romantic milieu that nurtured landscape gardening and in some respects defined its design characteristics in the pre-Civil War period under consideration in this report.

Beyond the spirit of romanticism and the entrepreneurial drive of Jacksonian America, Downing's early influences were focused on his hand-on experience with landscape gardening in the Hudson River Valley. Since its first appearance in the pre-Revolutionary period of the mid-

1700s, American landscape gardening remained an occasional and individually initiated pursuit until the end of the 18th century. Landscape gardening was a sporadic Colonial activity based primarily on limited and often second hand experience with English models.(15) Older themes, even geometric design whose roots pre-date the English landscape garden, tended to be perpetuated even after the Colonial period ended. The few legitimate landscape garden compositions that were created, Jefferson's Monticello and Washington's Mount Vernon for example, were highly individualized, isolated and do not seem to constitute the sort of consistent group that could be evaluated as a distinct national style within the landscape garden tradition as it had evolved from England (see INTRODUCTION).

By 1800, evidence of consistent American themes in landscape gardening begins to emerge. In 1808, for example, the English artist William Birch published *The Country Seats of the United States of North America*, which illustrated a number of estate landscape gardens near Philadelphia developed primarily in the 1790s. In 1806, the Philadelphia plantsman, Bernard McMahon, published *American Gardener's Calendar*. This first successful American gardener's guide devoted eighteen pages (out of 666) in a discussion of "Ornamental Design and Planting," and it does appear that from the 1790s landscape gardening took on more or less consistent themes in America, at least on those properties whose size and situation made landscape gardening a relevant undertaking.

To support this increased activity, ornamental nurseries were established and tentatively nurserymen and horticulturist, such as the foreign-born landscape gardener, Andre Parmentier, began to give design advice and put common ideas into writing. By the early 1830s, as Downing set out to familiarize himself with landscape gardening, the previous generation had completed a significant body of experimentation and a fledgling sense of common practice seems to have emerged.

During the 1830s, Downing made easy contact with several sophisticated estate owners who practiced landscape gardening as informed amateurs. While our knowledge of these personalities and their properties remains limited, Downing's acquaintances included those able to articulate the current state-of-the-art, for indeed the Hudson Valley was a hot bed of this activity.(16)

Landscape gardens familiar to Downing included recently developed schemes such as Blithewood, Robert Donaldson's reworking of an older Livingston property, Mill Hill, on the Hudson at Annandale, New York. An engraving of Blithewood appears as the frontispiece of Downing's *Landscape Gardening*.

Downing's apprenticeship also focused on prominent older properties where landscape gardening had evolved over several generations. Consider, for example, Hyde Park (today's Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site). Landscape gardening developed here during the 18th century under Dr. John Bard (d. 1799) and his son, Dr. Samuel Bard (d. 1822), and was then elaborated on by Dr. David Hosack (d. 1835) who undertook extensive landscape development from his purchase of the property in 1828 when Downing was thirteen years old. Hosack commissioned Andre Parmentier, whose work Downing later said "contributed not a little to the

dissemination of a taste for the natural mode of landscape gardening."(17) In turn, Downing called Hyde Park "one of the finest specimens of the modern style of Landscape Gardening in America.(18)

The Hosack/Parmentier period at Hyde Park brought the heightened emotional reaction of the Romantic period to the more reasoned and classical approach of the Bards and their contemporaries. This evolution had subtle design ramifications producing regional variations that only generally mirrored the English background. Basic to the landscape garden experienced by Downing at Hyde Park, its "natural mode" and "modern style" as he termed it, was the long tradition of the English landscape garden as it had come down from 'Capability' Brown (d. 1783) and Humphry Repton (d. 1818) (see INTRODUCTION). Within this framework must be added the picturesque design themes which gained special favor in America by the 1820s, after their introduction in England in the late 18th century by such writers as William Gilpin (d. 1804), Uvedale Price (d. 1829) and Richard Payne Knight (d. 1824).(19) The picturesque influence is very important because in a pervasive way it defined the visual characteristics that people found pleasing in the outdoors. In this reference "picturesque" is understood to relate to visual appreciation for wild and pastoral scenery which was "like a picture" typified by the paintings of the 17th century Europeans, Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa. It is in this general sense that the "picturesque" influenced garden design in the Hudson River Valley.

In addition to this broad sense of the term "picturesque" must be added Downing's technical usage. Downing, in *Landscape Gardening*, defined two possible design modes which he called the Beautiful and the Picturesque (note the capitalization). Despite a consensus of appreciation for picturesque situations, a Beautiful design treatment might be (and often was) applied to the landscape garden, especially on smaller properties and in areas close to the house. In this case the garden might then be described as carefully polished, somewhat artificial looking, but also artful, even formal, producing a refined aspect somewhat removed from the natural situation. Alternatively, a devotee of landscapes with obvious picturesque aspects and potentials could develop a Picturesque treatment involving irregular, informal and subtle design manipulations, where art is concealed to stress such natural features as sublime views, animated waterfalls, or even melancholy swamp areas, rather than man-made features. Whatever man-made elements were included were usually designed to look natural – rustic furniture or a thatched summer house, for example (see discussion on "Design Mode," Chapter 3).(20)

Within this design diversity, the important Hudson River landscape gardens of Downing's Age were compositions that evoked pleasing imagery with abstraction and some artifice, combined with nature, on ground intended for leisure use and visual delight. Landscape garden design was, at times, a nearly subconscious undertaking directed by social traditions and pursued as social instinct. In many instances, knowledgeable amateurs developed thoughtful expressions and rarely true talent and expertise produced high quality examples of the style.(21)

Tracing the maturation of American landscape gardening, from the legacy of Brown, through Repton to the picturesque, as modified in the American context, is important to appreciation of the themes that influenced Downing. These themes showed themselves in a

variety of ways. Two central tenets of English landscape gardening direct the designer to "consult the genius of the place" and "in all, let Nature never be forgot," both thoughts as expressed at an early date by the poet Alexander Pope.(22) During the mid to late 1700s, England's greatest practitioner of landscape gardening, 'Capability' Brown, followed these maxims to articulate landscape design that was, and remains, a perfect abstraction of the English countryside. Humphry Repton followed as Brown's successor, reaffirming the need to respond to local circumstances and asserting that "it [landscape gardening] must studiously conceal every interference of art…making the whole appear the production of Nature alone."(23) Seventy-five years after Pope, the American, Bernard McMahon, paraphrased the earlier considerations when he advised the landscape garden designer to "consult the rural disposition in imitation of nature."(24) Andre Parmentier agreed and went further to promote a decidedly picturesque treatment, saying "the charms [of the landscape garden] are generally injured by any interference of art."(25)

In the Hudson River Valley, dominated as it was by a varied, near wilderness setting, landscape gardening arose in a logical way from the assets of the native scenery. This approach relied on the always picturesque and often sublime natural effects that so characterized and distinguished this environment. In the landscape garden, architectural and sculptural features – *fabrique* as the French called it – was used sparingly, perhaps more from disinterest and cost as out of conscious aesthetic choice, after all, what was *fabrique* as compared to the Hudson's sublime prospects. Commonly, landscape gardens were simple informal and expansive compositions. Rural wooded areas and open pastures were sculpted and arranged with the essential man-made components, the house, farm areas, outbuildings, river landing and roads, in a process of ornamental scene-making. Limited features, such as flower beds and urns, a summer house perhaps, were traditionally located close to the house or at prominent overlooks. Horticulture was given considerable focus depending on the interest of the owners and the skill of the gardener.

From his writings, it is clear that Andrew Jackson Downing understood that much of the Hudson River Valley fell quite appropriately into this picturesque formula. The Valley was widely understood to be a paragon of the sublime and picturesque and this was the sort of landscape especially prized by those wishing to portray and experience distinctive garden themes in the New World.

While Downing, as a landscape gardener, was grounded in these romantic associations and picturesque motifs, the young practitioner was also influenced by innovative garden design trends that were the 'new wave' in Downing's time. This influence came from John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843), preeminent English landscape gardener during Downing's lifetime. In England, Loudon remained a lesser influence until Repton's death, but soon thereafter, by the mid-1820s, he quickly assumed the position of modern spokesperson for garden design. This status came from Loudon's work and more importantly, like Downing, from Loudon's numerous and persuasive writings. Loudon's approach differed importantly from the Brown/Repton tradition and from romantic and picturesque sensibilities, with its emphasis on park-like

landscapes. Instead, Loudon focused on a lengthy list of eclectic design components that represented a neo-classical revival, especially in areas close to the house. Loudon also gave particular attention to smaller sites that had become a focus of English residential landscape design with the emergence of the middle class and suburban lifestyles.

The ascendency of Loudon's ideas marked the end of the romantic and picturesque focus and forms a clear demarcation between the landscape garden compositions experienced in Downing's apprenticeship and the dominance of Victorian treatments that followed.(26) Loudon's ideas were built on modifications to Brown's design work already begun by Repton. Loudon was also influenced by French fashion in this period and the era's increasing interest in botanical collection and display, all on decreased site areas. While Loudon discussed formality as only one aspect of garden development, he emphasized art over natural effects and this was pivotal to the emergence of Loudon's Gardenesque style and ultimately to landscape design as it was practiced in the Victorian period. As such, Loudon is cited as "an important influence on the return to formality in garden design,(27) an approach "in explicit opposition to the picturesque."(28) In reference to Springside it should be noted that Loudon also published design ideas and undertook design commissions related to cemetery development.(29)

In England, Victorian gardening built slowly from the close of Repton's career in the early 1800s before arriving in full fashion in the late 1830s. In America, the design trends represented by Victorian taste were significantly diluted and generally delayed at least until the end of the Civil War, the mid-1860s, nearly fifteen years after Downing's death. To call pre-Civil War landscape gardening, as practiced in the Hudson River Valley, "Victorian" is to mid-identify the period. Landscape gardening known to Downing, and the themes of landscape gardening as applied in the Hudson River Valley of Downing's period, were not decisively influenced by Loudon's Gardenesque and Victorian themes; ideas indigenous to England but slow to germinate in an American context and a romantically inclined and sublimely picturesque Hudson River Valley.

Downing, as a young and eager professional, ahead of his time so-to-speak, certainly admired Loudon and appreciated his stature, but his grounding in the older landscape garden tradition as it had evolved in America seems to have modified his enthusiasm. For example, Downing obtusely labelled Loudon "deficient as an artist in imagination"(30) and otherwise cautioned against the eclectic approach he promoted. In 1841, Downing called Loudon's Gardenesque style "evidently founded rather upon a cultivated taste for botany and horticulture, and a desire to exhibit every variety of rare ornamental tree and plant, then upon any new element of design."(31) Downing seems to have been concerned that Gardensque design, with its emphasis on distinct parts threatened design unity. Subsequent garden history in the Victorian period confirms Downing's concerns and shows him to have been a perceptive landscape designer and critic.

In short, Downing did not seem to regard Loudon so much a great designer for Americans to copy as a great contemporary professional and a model for his own professional

aspirations. Spanning the ocean to link the gardening work of America with England, Downing called Loudon "the most distinguished gardening author of the age."(32)

Downing's involvement in landscape gardening as a livelihood and a profession necessitated his understanding of landscape design in all its modes and options. In this Downing was engaging the latest international design ideas. Springside and other sites suggest that Downing had a real affinity for Loudon's reliance on explicit design (art) over the more benign approach he often experienced in the American romantic/picturesque landscape gardens described above. Downing, for example, qualified his comments on several Hudson River landscape gardens by saying that their beauty was mostly due to "nature," code word for a complaint expressed by Loudon and others that picturesque landscape gardening could go too far in ignoring art and relying only on natural effects.(33) As discussed above, American landscape gardens in the pre-Civil War period could be very casual composition, nearly subconscious in aesthetic intent, where art was dominated by 'picturesque' natural situations.

Responding to what he no doubt felt were aesthetic limitations, Downing often presented Loudon's ideas, utilized his analysis and "sought to adapt Loudon's views to American conditions of soil, society and climate."(34) Downing, as landscape gardener, both articulated and redefined the traditions of the romantic/picturesque, and reigned as artistic innovator, broadening the canvas and diversifying the palette of American landscape design. As such, Downing was bringing the past to the present and the present to the future.(35)

It seems unlikely that Matthew Vassar knew Andrew Jackson Downing personally before their Springside contact in 1850. The two men were of different generations and had no known or apparent connections. It seems Vassar may have owned a copy of Downing's book, *Landscape Gardening*, and he no doubt knew of Downing's work, which was "everywhere accepted as authoritative."(36) Contemplating landscape garden development, Vassar may well have quickly focused on Downing's reputation and close proximity. The gardening world of A. J. Downing and Matthew Vassar merge and are immortalized at Springside, Downing's only well documented and extant garden, substantially completed at the apex of his career, just before his death in July 1852.

CHAPTER 2 – SITE HISTORY

1850

In January 1850, Matthew Vassar was appointed chairman of a special committee organized to select a site suitable for a public cemetery in the Village of Poughkeepsie.(37) After its investigation the committee was to arrange for the purchase of the property provided enough investors could be found to cover the cost.(38) On May 29, 1850, the committee reported that a 44-acre portion of the "Allen Farm" or "Eden Hills" property, south of the village, was "the most suitable and attractive grounds" considered.(39)

The property was located about one mile from the center of the village, with an 800-foot frontage on Academy Street. Today, the 44-acre original site includes all of the present national Historic Landmark (about 20 acres) and two additional parcels: the site of a private residence, today's Spring Gable property (about one acre) inserted into the north boundary, and about 23 acres lying east of the Landmark site (see Figure 1).

The cemetery committee's report discussed the site's attributes and outlined possible development. The site was described as "undulating," with "a portion of meadow, groups of forest trees of luxuriant growth, about 10 acres laid out in an apple orchards; there are also several curious mound formations of rocky character, studded with oak, hickory, chestnut and evergreens." A "rivulet" is mentioned as flowing through the site. Landscape development was anticipated and the site is said to be "susceptible of tasteful embellishment;" a "spacious lake" is suggested, with "its outlet enlivened by small cataracts." Access is seen as coming from Market Street (today's South Avenue) and would be developed "thence under Academy [Street] by a stone archway."(40) The report, read by Matthew Vassar at a public meeting, was accepted, and the committee was asked to continue its work by adding members, purchasing the recommended site and evolving into a full-fledged cemetery association.

About a month after the committee's report, Matthew Vassar purchased the Allen Farm property for $8,000 intending to hold the site for cemetery use.(41) From the first, Vassar, with the collaboration of the other cemetery committee members, offered the site to subscribers who would invest in a partial share of the cemetery venture. Despite newspaper accounts that assert the inevitable need for new cemetery grounds, and the seemingly well organized campaign, the idea did not catch on. Two months later it is reported that "nothing has been done in the matter,"(42) and after a meeting in September 1850 it was reported that the situation "suffered to pass off without any show of interest among those who are most interested in the subject."(43) The following spring of 1851 the lack of interest is described as "unaccountable" and "a subject of surprise."(44) The continuing failure of the cemetery venture was never clearly explained.

The property purchased by Vassar was conducive to cemetery use, being of ample acreage and generally undulating, open terrain. Still, to transform the site's rough agrarian appearance would take considerable landscape development. As attested to in the committee's report, substantial site improvements were considered essential to the cemetery scheme. While the newspaper accounts give the issue considerable coverage, they do not report that Vassar or

the committee made site improvements during the summer of 1850, after purchase of the property by Vassar in early July. It is not until December 1850 that any work is described. In contemplating site improvements Vassar may have contacted Andrew Jackson Downing at an early date, understanding that landscape design work would be needed before actual improvements were begun. Downing's proximity, experience with cemetery design (45) and reputation would have recommended him to Vassar, and this expertise would have been valued from the earliest planning. While it is not certain when Vassar first contacted Downing, it is possible that he was sought out shortly after the selection of the cemetery committee, which Vassar chaired, and before the selection of the Allen Farm site. In any event, Downing sailed for England on July 6, 1850, just days after Vassar purchased the land, and he would not have been available until his return in September. The newspapers report that Vassar undertook site improvements in the autumn of 1850. It may be that after initial contact, Downing first visited the site after his return and that Vassar held off starting actual improvements until that visit. At any rate, despite these uncertainties, the autumn work may be said to mark the start of Springside's actual development. By December, a newspaper article reported the property was still being offered as a cemetery at the purchase price of $8,000, plus the cost of "subsequent outlays and not a dollar of which has been expended unnecessary for Cemetery purposes."(46) Clearly improvements had begun.

As early as November 25, 1850, at least two months after Downing's return, Vassar's 22-year old nephew, Matthew Vassar, Jr., recorded his uncle "exhibiting plans for his Farm and Villa below town."(47) The specifics and author of these "plans" are not recorded but the Jones Map (see Figure 6), discussed below, may have been available and the ideas may have been Downing's. From his earliest visit, which no doubt occurred before young Vassar's diary quote, Downing's observations would have influenced the design process.

Matthew Vassar, Jr.'s mention of a planned "Farm and Villa," some four months after the site's purchase, marks the earliest reference to Vassar's option to use the site as a private estate property if cemetery use did not materialize. This was an option considered at an early date, and the thinking was confirmed by the December newspaper account quoted above. It described Vassar as keeping the cemetery use firmly in mind as "that object in his disbursements and plans as far as would be compatable (sic) with its improvements as a private residence."(48) The history of the intended use of the property and the relation of that history to the site's design is discussed further in Chapter 3, DESIGN DESCRIPTION.

Andrew Jackson Downing's professional relationship with Matthew Vassar, and Downing's role in the landscape garden design at Springside, is not fully documented or understood at this time. Still, much is known and other aspects can be inferred based on background information regarding Downing and methods of landscape design practice during the mid-19th century.

In assessing his involvement, Downing himself provides the first clue. In an article in the periodical, *The Horticulturist*, published in February 1851, Downing presented plans for the Coach House/Stable (49) and commented that Vassar's development – which he described as an

"establishment" – "will be remarkable for the completeness, convenience, and good effect of the various buildings, joined to much natural beauty of features of the locality in which they are placed."(50) This statement indicates that site design and planning had been substantially completed by this date. In addition, by asserting the character and quality of the site's design, the statement indicates that Downing had been involved or at least approved of the selection of building sites. In turn, this involvement would have necessitated site design as well as the design of the individual structures. Whether this initial design concept was wholly submitted by Downing as a planned set-piece is not known. Vassar had no known experience with landscape gardening, but it is possible that he had some ideas in mind from his earliest consideration of the site and that Downing was asked from his initial visit to comment and refine those ideas. In any event, with Downing's involvement Vassar's role in the basic design would have been secondary.

After Downing's death, as the years passed, Vassar preserved the original design layout but did not shy away from further construction. In this way the site took on more of his preferences, especially as related to the garden's maintenance and the introduction of new architectural features and other focal elements. In 1867, and elderly Matthew Vassar, answering questions submitted by his biographer, Benson J. Lossing, stated that Downing designed the buildings, but that he "worked out myself [the road and walk arrangement]."(51) In Lossing's publication Lossing states that Downing "was called to explore it [Springside], suggest a plan of avenues for walks and drives, and a design for a portal and porter's lodge."(52) These discrepancies are not what they appear to be. Downing can be said to have "suggested" (i.e., "designed") the scheme, even if he worked from Vassar's general ideas. As to day-to-day development, Vassar certainly "worked [it] out" during Downing's long periods of absence and after his death. Downing's involvement seems to have continued through the substantial two-year construction period. There is no evidence of rancor between client and consultant and later, Downing's partner, Calvert Vaux, continued to advise Vassar.

Given all the testimony and available documentation, Springside's landscape design can be attributed to Andrew Jackson Downing. While Downing's involvement in the site design would have been decisive it was probably not complete. Matthew Vassar must be credited with a complementary role, especially in the on-site direction of the actual construction during the summers of 1851 and 1852. Indeed, Vassar seems to have "worked out" the design as day-to-day modifications and detailed decisions were needed.

Generally, the owner of a landscape garden in this period had an important role in the design and especially in the design's maintenance over time. Well-known professionals like Downing would have been consulted through their writings, and would have provided decisive on-site direction for a fee. It seems likely that Downing played a comprehensive, primary role in the Springside design and that he and Vassar then collaborated on the site's development over a two-year active construction period.

Vassar's initial work on the site took place in the area immediately east of Academy Street. The Coach House/Stable, close to the Cottage, combined with the Kitchen Garden and

the barn complex to form a clear architectural boundary line about 1,000 feet east of Academy Street. The area east broadened to the south and was developed as a farmstead to be visually sympathetic to the whole, but intended primarily not as an immediate cemetery grounds or residential pleasure ground but as farmland, albeit ornamental farmland, to support the cemetery superintendent and/or resident owner, and be available for future expansion. The area between Academy Street and the architectural demarcation was to be developed as a highly ornamental landscape garden intended as a cemetery grounds or residential pleasure grounds. While Springside was a unified design it clearly had this subdivision, especially notable in its earliest period when the Academy Street frontage was developed as the first phase of the cemetery facility.(53)

Work in the autumn of 1850 was confined to partial road development and the development of the south entrance as a main entrance to the cemetery grounds. It appears that existing farm roads, as well as new road sections, were initially incorporated into a rudimentary "circuitous road" (54) that gave comprehensive access through the property by the end of 1850. A north avenue "lately opened" (55) had been established and the future main entrance was developed with a pond. A south avenue that led east from the pond was "in the process of construction."(56)

Beyond actual construction, much planning was accomplished during the last months of 1850, as for example the "plans" that Vassar's nephew recorded in his diary notes of November 25, 1850, and that were reported on in detail by "A Citizen" in the newspaper account of December 7, 1850.

At this point Downing had made his first inspections and a scheme for the south entrance had been prepared. Farm buildings had been designed and sited and mention was made of "the site of a contemplated Family Villa."(57) Plans for the Coach House/Stable, described by Downing in *The Horticulturist* article of February 1851, survive, signed by A. J. Downing and dated 1850 (see Figure 4). While not decisively dated, the Cottage (Vassar's future residence on the site) may also have been suggested by the end of 1850. These plans also survive (see Figure 5).

1851-1852

By early April 1851, Vassar still offered the property for sale under his philanthropic plan of the previous autumn. In fact, Vassar is described as going forward with improvements and "would complete about one-third (or 15 acres) of the grounds ready for internments the present summer."(58) This acreage is the landscape garden preserved today between Academy Street and the Cottage (actually 18 acres). While it seems obvious that Vassar would have been happy if cemetery use had materialized, his plans to make substantial landscape improvements suitable to his personal use of the site is also obvious.

Vassar's planning at the start of the construction season of 1851 was focused on pursuing a unified road/path arrangement, starting construction on outbuildings and undertaking the

clearing of vegetation and planting of new trees. Other improvements and the development of features were planned to embellish the site generally within the circulation plan. While the design seems basically intended as a cemetery garden the grounds could be easily adapted as a residence. In fact, a villa site was identified from an early date.

In the spring of 1851, the site was described as in a "crude and unfinished state,"(59) but Vassar had plans for extensive development. Planning documents for the construction season ahead included Downing's drawings for the Coach House/Stable, as well as a map (see Figure 6) prepared by William C. Jones, Chief Engineer for the Hudson River Railroad Company, that showed the boundary lines and topography of the site and the road work that had been completed the previous December. A portion of the illustrated road system may have been older farm roads, the north entrance and a road extending along the north boundary line, for example, while the rest of the route was composed of road sections that were described as "lately opened" and "in the process of construction" in the December 1850 newspaper account. The origin of the north boundary road is not known with certainty, but it seems that this was either an existing road or a early idea initially incorporated but by 1852 considered secondary perhaps because of the abandonment of the cemetery venture. This road section still appears as a remnant on a map drafted in 1857, (60) but is not seen after that date. The haphazard, meandering alignment of this road, in several places directly against the property line, is somewhat incongruous considering Downing's design approach and the basic loop arrangement that was finally constructed.(61)

Jones's map was displayed publically in April 1851 to promote the cemetery scheme. Also exhibited at this time was a "draught of as (sic) gate or keeper's lodge . . . executed by A. J. Downing."(62) This building was an imposing stone portal/gatehouse, never constructed. The design, a drawing of which survives, is elaborate, appropriate for a cemetery entrance but out of character for a residence and incongruous with the refined timber Gothic Revival designs planned for the Coach House/Stable, Cottage and other outbuildings. Apparently drawings of these other buildings were not exhibited and it could be that the stone portal/gatehouse was prepared as a sketch simply to promote the cemetery scheme. In any event, the stone portal/gatehouse was superseded quickly by the surviving timber Porter's Lodge, which was constructed by the autumn of 1852.

After its original preparation, the Jones Map was altered in at least two ways: in the first instance the map was annotated with thumbnail sketches showing the Cottage, Coach House/Stable, the proposed villa and the proposed stone portal/gatehouse described above. The older Jones graphics, a dotted road surface for example, were altered slightly to accommodate the architectural drawings. While there is no conclusive evidence, these sketches were probably drawn by either Downing or Vaux, persons with the understanding needed to so abstractly and minutely depict the highly personalized architectural ideas. Later, a second overlay was added showing the road and path layout that was developed at Springside by 1867.(63) It is not known when or by whose hand this information was added. The overlay scheme shows road and path alignments and most importantly features that were not implemented during Downing's lifetime but constructed later and in some cases replacing work known to have been carried out before

Downing's death in 1852. It appears likely therefore that this overlaid information was added after Downing's death as an "as-built" plan drawn to illustrate the completed scheme. It is possible that this rendering was sketched as the basis for the later Jacob's Map, discussed below (see Figure 8).

Fortified with Jones's base map, Downing's architectural schemes and, more intangibly and critically, by Downing's trained and experienced eye, Vassar began the 1851 season prepared for major construction. The next eight months were busy times as the grounds evolved to the point of a roughed-out but essentially completed design. The possible cemetery use remained active. At one point in the summer of 1851 half the original $8,000 price had been subscribed and it was reported that "the prospects are now good" that the cemetery use would go forward.(64) Again, the improvements were called "suited to a Cemetery."(65) Still, the venture never did materialize. As the design scheme was realized with major landscape development in 1851, Vassar became more and more personally associated with the property he would by the spring of 1852 call Springside.(66)

A focal element in the 1851 work was the construction of the Cottage, Coach House/Stable, and other architectural elements. In addition, hundreds of evergreen trees were planted, additional roads constructed and a path system added to the road layout. The following spring "more than one thousand forest trees" (67) were added. This major design work, as completed in the late autumn of 1851 and the early spring of 1852, was described as "A Paradise."(68) The transformation of the site inspired a front-page poem in a Poughkeepsie newspaper: "Ode to Springside" (see Frontispiece), which hailed – in appropriate romantic verse – "the newer charms" and "fresh beauties" of the design.(69) Throughout the summer of 1852 there appeared several accounts that praised the site's aesthetic design quality. In July, for example, the site was called the "realization of a painter's dream, the embodiment of the poet's glowing thought."(70)

As these accolades came in, on July 28, 1852, Andrew Jackson Downing died in steamboat accident on the Hudson. Shortly after this tragic and widely mourned event, Vassar commissioned the English born landscape painter, Henry C. Gritten (1818-1873) to undertake a series of four oil paintings showing the design at Springside. These paintings were executed in a realistic manner as the foliage was changing in the autumn of 1852. Three of the paintings are overviews and together they provide a nearly comprehensive picture of the property. Numbered for the purposes of this Report, Painting #1 looks west over the farmstead, farmyard complex, Kitchen Garden and Cottage (see Figure 11). Painting #2 views the site from high ground north of the Kitchen Garden and looks west over the Cottage, Kitchen Garden, north pasture and "summer house hill." This paining is not reproduced in this Report. Painting #3 looks from the Lawn Terrace south to the Porter's Lodge, and then east over the center of the landscape garden, showing Jet Vale and Center Circle (see Figure 13). Painting #4 views the garden from within the grounds, showing the Cottage, Knitting Knoll, the Coach House/Stable and, in the foreground, the approach along the South Avenue (see Figure 12). These paintings, which

survive, are important historical documents related to the design and early development of the Springside property.

Springside as it is thought to have appeared in the late summer of 1852 is illustrated in Figure 10, Design Elements – 1852; see also fold-out Map 'A'. The Gritten pictures, as described and numbered above, are located on this map. The map is based on current survey information, The Jones Map (c. 1850) and, most importantly, the Gritten paintings. As noted on the plan, the details are conjectural outside the views presented on these paintings.

1853-1868

After Downing's death, and with the cemetery scheme finally abandoned,(71) Matthew Vassar began a sixteen year residence at Springside during which he continued to develop the garden's design. Together, the changes made by Vassar were not major alterations so much as embellishments, yet their cumulative impact, coupled with the growth of vegetation and maintenance changes, significantly altered the site's aesthetic character.

Vassar continued to contemplate construction of a large villa with designs for such an edifice prepared first by Downing in 1850-51 and again by Calvert Vaux in 1854. These designs were never executed and Vassar was apparently content to remain in the intended gardener's cottage and made the property a summer retreat. During this period, until 1867 when Vassar retired and closed the site to all but invited guests, the landscape garden was open to public access (except on Sundays) and served as a quasi-public garden.

Sometime after 1857, a map of the property was prepared by E. Jacob, Engineer and Surveyor (see Figure 8). The map shows that Springside hosted nearly twice the number of features in 1868 as were in place in 1852. Some of these additions were simply culminations of the initial design as recorded in the Gritten paintings. The summer house, for example, was constructed in the raised, open circle of a path shown in the Gritten painting. It was clearly intended for the spot. Other changes were more significant; the altered path arrangement in Jet Vale, for example, and the development of the greenhouse and gardener's cottage on the old orchard site, in clear view of the original Cottage. In addition, new features had been added, and the farmyard area had been expanded with additional buildings. Beside the summer house/gazebo, called a "pagoda" on the Jacob Map, again labeled a "pagoda" by Jacob, had been constructed. A fountain had replaced the "glass house" in Center Circle and some water features had been modified. Imported statuary was set out along the South Avenue.

Downing's role in master planning these changes is not known, but it appears unlikely that his design intent could have taken into consideration the variety of components added after his death. In fact, many of Vassar's additions and alterations can easily be evaluated as contrary to the original design. Gardenesque and Victorian garden design themes seem to have gained ascendency, and the multiplicity of features, and their effect on the site's visual unity, might call into question Vassar's design sensitivity to the delicate balance of variety with unity, of art and nature, which was basic to Downing's original scheme. Vassar's intentions during this period

have not been fully studied and cannot be related to theoretical design principles as is possible with Downing's work.(72)

In addition to changes in the design, maintenance might have been significantly modified over the course of Vassar's stewardship. Lawn mowers, for example, were introduced after 1852, but may have been used at Springside before 1868. The use of mechanical mowers would have altered the form of open areas, due to a mower's limited access on steep banks, and this might have led to the introduction of understory and herbaceous vegetation in areas that are known to have been previously subjected to grazing. Also, the evergreen transplants of two to five feet height, planted by 1852, were in 1868, sizable trees with lower branches that would have screened many formerly open views. Given the widely scattered pattern of the original evergreens, Springside may well have been a vastly altered design during this period.

Before Vassar's death in 1868, Benson J. Lossing published *Vassar College and Its Founder*, which included a detailed description of Springside as it had evolved over the course of Vassar's stewardship. This account is accompanied by a map (see Figure 9) showing a scheme virtually identical to the earlier layout documented in the Jacob Map. In fact, incorrect identifications of some features, made originally in the Jacob depiction, are reprinted by Lossing, indicating that he used the earlier map as the basis for his new engraving. The fact that mistakes were left uncorrected seems to suggest that Jacob's map may not have significantly pre-dated Lossing's rendition.

1868 – Present

After Vassar's death Springside was purchased by a neighbor, John O. Whitehouse. His son-in-law, Eugene Howell, occupied the property before it was eventually sold to William Nelson, who built a substantial house on the property south of the original Springside garden. Nelson's heirs held the property until the 1970s.

Beginning in 1966, proposals to develop the site for public and commercial use spawned efforts to record the historic importance of the property and prompted its designation on the National Register of Historic Places. The ultimate recognition came in 1969 when the property was declared a National Historic Landmark because of its association with Andrew Jackson Downing.(73) One of only about 1,600 Landmark designations in the United States, Springside is unique as specifically cited for the national significance of its landscape design.

Springside and the southern Nelson property were eventually purchased by a Poughkeepsie developer, Robert S. Ackerman, in 1970. In 1971, despite preservation concerns, plans were prepared and city approval given for the construction of an apartment complex that would have obliterated the landscape garden. These plans were not executed, but the site has been neglected for nearly twenty years. Vandalism and fire led to the destruction of the Cottage, Coach House/Stable and other farm buildings, and most of the landscape features have today disappeared. In 1982, a new proposal to develop the property was unveiled. New preservation and environmental objections led to litigation that resulted in a settlement that could lead to the

preservation and restoration of the historic site. In January 1985, the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., with partial funding provided by Scenic Hudson, Inc., commissioned this historic landscape report to document the historic landscape garden design and analyze its restoration potential. A draft report was completed in May 1985 (see Preface).

CHAPTER 3 – DESIGN DESCRIPTION

(see Figure 10, Design Elements, 1852 and
fold-out Map 'A,' scale 1"=50' attached to this report)

"[Springside was] a charming spot, [with] park-like and pastorial (sic) landscape . . . meadows, woodlands, water courses, jets and fountains, elevated summits gently sloping into valleys, forming the natural openings for the roads to girdle the hills and knolls."

- Professor Russell Comstock*, as reported in the *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, June 12, 1852
  * Comstock was called "a man of good taste and superior judgement in rural matters"

A. General Concepts

1. Site Character: In 1850, when Matthew Vassar and his fellow committee members set out to find a suitable site for a public cemetery, they would have been influenced by several considerations. Ample acreage, proximity to the center of the village of Poughkeepsie and reasonable cost were certainly requirements. While less tangible, a conducive natural site was also a prerequisite. In keeping with the romantic design approach then fashionable, the site was to be developed as a landscape garden in a style that would evolve from the site's natural assets. Concern for this factor was suggested by a local newspaper which stated that the committee's task at the outset was "to fix upon a desirable location, one that nature has endowed with beauties which art could not accomplish."(74)

The land's innate character was then an underlying and essential component of the design composition. Springside – and any romantic landscape garden – is ultimately an expression of the site's physical characteristics and these were clearly evaluated as crucial to the cemetery garden scheme envisaged by Vassar and his committee. The Allen Farm site was well suited for its purpose. This was the sort of varied, finely-scaled and insular landscape that would have been suited to the romantic landscape designer.

Basic to a perception of the site as a distinct place is its secluded valley formation, fostered by a strong sense of enclosure. The 44-acre property purchased by Vassar forms the north side of a broad irregular valley formation. The south facing slope provides a desirable orientation. The site is set beside an east-to-west flowing brook, the south property line lying just south of this brook where the land was varied in configuration but undeveloped forming a wooded backdrop. North of the brook, in the interior of the site, the land rises over rolling topography and is punctuated by hillocks (knolls) that are formed around exposed bedrock. These conical mounds are numerous and vary in size from Maple Hill (an abrupt rise of 35 feet on a 1:2 slope) to a diminutive swelling of the ground. These geological formations were utilized in the landscape garden design as important structural and focal elements. The knolls would not have dominated the landscape if hidden in dense woods, but agricultural use had cleared much of the surrounding ground by 1850 revealing these as features accentuated by semi-mature, native, primarily deciduous trees left on the steep slopes.

At the time of its purchase, the site's vegetative pattern resulted in a generally open character. The landscape garden, the core of today's National Historic Landmark, as well as original site areas extending east, formed an elongated composition of generally open ground interspersed with wooded thicket usually associated with the conical mound formations described above. This sequence created a flow of space that meandered through the low areas from the proposed main entrance gate to the future farmyard area and beyond. Within articulated boundaries the site's distinctive land forms, combined with the existing deciduous wooded conditions, provided the three-dimensional structure on which the landscape garden design was predicated.

2. Site Boundaries: In keeping with the valley formation of the site, and responding to the cemetery scheme first envisaged for the property, the landscape garden design was directed towards achieving an internalized composition with a strong inherent sense-of-place. Outward views were possible from some exposed highpoints (e.g., "summer house hill") but these were less indicative of the design than the inward orientation which resulted in the scheme being described from an early date as an "enclosure."(75) The clarity of the garden's boundaries was of first importance as this condition allowed Springside to be perceived as a separate place, and this situation contributes decisively to the site's success as an enclosed garden "paradise."(76) While documentation is not decisive, it seems that the north boundary was originally defined by a field-stone wall and hedgerow, separating adjacent parcels along this boundary line. The south property line seems to have been loosely bounded by open meadows backed by dense woods south of the brook. The Academy Street frontage, while open, was defined by the street line. The eastern limit of the ornamental landscape was defined by the walls of farm structures and the picket fence line opposite the Cottage entrance. East of this line were the farmyards and geometric cultivated beds of the Kitchen Garden.

3. Basic Design: Within its established, insular boundaries the landscape was sculpted into a spatial design, using vegetation and road layout most critically in a careful manipulation designed to achieve variety and define individual settings within a unified, natural-appearing whole. This compositional quality, the basic three-dimensional arrangement of the garden, formed by the site's physical form, combined with "art," (77) distinguishes Springside a designed landscape, and is the foundation of the site's ornamental quality.
While space definition was essential to landscape gardening in this period, it was seldom as carefully articulated as in this instance. The quality may be credited to Downing's design skills as applied to the cemetery scheme originally envisaged by Matthew Vassar. The "rural cemetery" was to be a park and space definition was integral to the design, which sought to subdivide the site to form areas that were small in scale, and private, suited to meditation and reflective thought. Responding to the site and the cemetery use, Downing was not concerned with the placement of individual monuments and graves, but he was consciously creating

individual settings within a strongly unified scheme. The result is a garden of unusual intimacy with multiple, separately defined sub-areas, each focused on a decorative feature.

The alternative use of the site as a residence was apparently considered from an early date and it seems certain that for Downing this was to be a flexible garden composition. Still, the cemetery use does appear to have dictated basic design considerations. In mid-May 1851 it was reported that "All the improvements that [Vassar] has thus far made in serpentine roads and walks, in setting out trees, and in a beautiful lake, are just those that would be wanted for a cemetery."(78) The design's distinctive use of space definition might be added to this list.

4. Design Mode: Intrinsic to a description of Springside's historic design is the intended design mode. This consideration has crucial implications in defining objectives for future restoration and appropriate maintenance of the site.

Downing's writings and landscape design practices in the period identify two opposing visual effects; the Beautiful and the Picturesque (see also, Chapter 1). Neither word is used here in its common usage, but rather is understood as a technical, period design term related to well-defined visual situations and effects. While Downing's use is analytic and somewhat abstract, he and his contemporaries used the words more casually and interchangeably when speaking in a less technical context. As such, Springside has often been referred to as "picturesque" or "beautiful" and each is a fitting description outside the defined limits of technical usage. It is perhaps unfortunate that Downing chose such pedestrian terms to identify divergent design modes. Alternatively, such terms as "rustic" and "refined" would probably prove less confusing to our present day considerations. Despite the difficulties of terminology, Downing's description of design intent and the dichotomy of design effects, as stipulated in the breakdown of the Picturesque and Beautiful, are important to a full understanding of Springside.

Downing explained the difference between these design modes in this way: The Picturesque or Rustic effect, as it was sometimes called in the Hudson River Valley, produced "outlines of a certain spirited irregularity, surfaces comparatively abrupt and broken, and growth of a somewhat wild and bold character."(79) The Picturesque, summarized Downing, is an "idea of beauty strongly and irregularly expressed."(80) In contrast, the Beautiful was identified as more formal, more embellished, more graceful and more refined in its effects. The Beautiful design was "characterized by curved and flowing lines" and was "an idea of beauty calmly and harmoniously expressed."(81)

Given these definitions and the documentation that survives and it appears certain that Downing and Vassar developed the core of Springside using the Beautiful rather than Picturesque mode. While not exclusive, with Picturesque aspects also present, the Beautiful effect appears to have been a dominant theme at Springside in 1852.

Basic to this evaluation was the innate natural attributes of the Springside site, the "genius of place," which counted greatly in the design concept. While pleasant and insular, the site had little of the sublime prospects or stunning physical assets that prompted Picturesque garden development elsewhere. Instead, the site appears to have been largely pastures and

abandoned fields, with extensive wet areas, farm buildings located on the raised north side of the property and an orchard extending across a gentle south facing slope. Wooded areas were interspersed especially as related to the mound formations. These rock outcroppings were the site's most prominent physical features. Unusual in their setting, the mounds were seen as "curious formations."(82)

In summary, the site was physically suited to its intended cemetery use and could "be rendered as romantic and beautiful as any public burial ground in the State,"(83) but it could not be called remarkably picturesque as compared with others.

Another indication of the motivation behind the use of the Beautiful design mode at Springside are period accounts that stress the derelict character of the property before improvements were made. The landscape garden design was contrasted as embellishing the "rude forms" and "barren state" of an original site. One report addressed the pre-development site in foreboding terms, asserting that "wings of wildness and desolation brooded darkly over thy scenes. Hoarse voices at nightfall were heard chanting dismally from thy swamps and the noisome reptile held its course unchecked."(84) This was not the sort of landscape likely to gain wide support as a public cemetery and it must have been obvious that a striking change of image was needed. Vassar's intentions were to develop a public cemetery and the cemetery venture remained a public focus at least through the summer of 1851. Springside was initially a public betterment project and this indicates an appropriate approach to its development as a landscape garden. The drama of the Picturesque may have been ill-suited to the need for public recognition. It is likely that this requirement would have been decisive in the selection of Beautiful themes.

By 1852, the Downing/Vassar scheme elicited praise that further hints as the design's Beautiful effects. The site's improvements are described as formed by the "hand of nature, closely joined with that of art." A Picturesque approach would obscure man-made involvements and art would be concealed in favor of natural occurrences. The Beautiful mode sought overt man-made forms and composition.

The use of features was critical in this regard. The Springside features were, by and large, formal in form and positioning. The glass house in Center Circle is an elaborate embellishment clearly decorating a nearly geometric open space. Likewise, Jet Vale focused its aesthetic effect on the Swan Fountain and its geometric, circular basin. "God Fish Pond" was a circular pool and provided the focus around which separate roads converged. The wooded mounds, such as Rock Roost, were also features. Described as "curious formations," these mounds were not experienced as culminating a wild picturesque scene, but as statuesque oddities, islands of rock and old trees dotted across an open lawn. This sort of aesthetic manipulation in a natural garden suggests an artful, fantasy effect that would be a subtle realization of the Beautiful design mode.

The use of water for ornamental purposes also points not to the Picturesque but to the Beautiful design mode. Water from the underground springs that dot the site was channeled underground to enhance the focal impact of the water features. Swan Fountain, "Gold Fish

Pond," and even the Entrance Pond, were developed with concealed water sources and outflows. This would tend to promote their isolation and separate identities as clearly artificial features appropriate to the Beautiful design mode.

The site's road development was also undertaken in a way that can only be described as flowing in gently sinuous curves that clearly defined separate settings like Center Circle. This too is a rendition indicative of the Beautiful design mode. The wide roadways, which appear to be at least thirty feet wide in some areas, tended to impart a certain grandness to the design.

The site's original vegetation pattern included woodlands where agricultural open land had been impractical to maintain. By 1852, these primarily deciduous woodlands had been altered. At least some of these tree groupings, well-illustrated in the Henry Gritten paintings, had been thinned and cleared of small saplings and understory vegetation. The selected remaining trees are arranged, sometimes awkwardly due to their chance positions, in open turf. The high branching and thin trunks of these trees attest to their former positioning in more crowded and shaded woodland conditions. The garden development appears to have incorporated these existing trees as specimens and components of open groves, again a decidedly Beautiful approach as defined by Downing.

Extensive new tree plantings were installed during the initial two-year construction period. Of utmost importance were the numerous evergreen trees planted in 1851. As illustrated clearly by Gritten a year later, these scattered plantings seem to have been meant as a dominant theme, and again this can be shown as related to both the site's apparent deficiency of evergreens and the intended cemetery development. In themselves, there is little of the Picturesque design mode in these tree plantings which as placed impart a decidedly spotty character, familiar to many newly planted schemes. Again, Downing is creating a "lawn" not a "forest."

As related to vegetation, it is appropriate to note here that picturesque aspects appear to have been consciously maintained at Springside along the perimeters and especially along the south portion of the landscape garden, including Maple Hill and the brook that formed the natural boundary line of the property. This area is not well illustrated in the Gritten paintings, but its wooded backdrop (south of the property), lack of overt man-made features in this area, and the known preservation of the brook as a natural water course, more or less as it existed, indicates an emphasis on a fully natural effect that could well have been intended as a Picturesque motif, especially as a backdrop to the Porter's Lodge, Entrance Pond, Maple Hill, mound formations and farmyard complex experienced travelling the South Avenue. After 1852, the development of the Deer Park (85) and introduction of statuary along the South Avenue might have compromised the purity of the Picturesque motif that seems to have existed in 1852.

Finally, the Gritten paintings of 1852 show sheep (and some cattle) grazing the site's extensive open turf areas. While the circumstances under which animals were used at Springside is not fully understood, the paintings provide the basis for reasoned conjecture. In landscape gardens during this period, turf management would have been limited to the scythe or grazing, with the latter offering the possibility of a uniform, closely cropped Beautiful effect. With some supervision, it appears that sheep could have roamed freely within the boundary lines of the

landscape garden. The perimeters seem to have been enclosed by fence and wall. Also, herbaceous plants, which would have been threatened by open grazing, do not appear to have been included as a major element of the garden design. The small flower beds on either side of the Cottage entrance (Gritten painting #2, not reproduced in this Report) are conspicuously fenced.

Gritten's paintings illustrate a closely cropped lawn without meadow grasses or understory vegetation. Depending on the frequency of grazing, the use of sheep would have been very effective at producing this uniform treatment.(86) Except in precipitous areas, grazing would have precluded the advance of understory and incidental herbaceous growth. Again, this surface treatment would tend to unify the garden as a distinct, ornamental place and enhance the display of features. The grazed surface would accentuate an obvious sense of improvement and embellishment which is central to the Beautiful design mode.

Springside, in 1852, was substantially complete and from the Gritten paintings looks to have been maintained as a showplace. Though somewhat immature and unfinished, the garden exhibited its varied features in a refined, well maintained setting, using themes and expressions of the Beautiful design mode. The Picturesque was included, dominating the steep slopes and the property boundaries as a frame around the Beautiful core.

B. Individual Components
(see Figure 10, Design Elements, 1852 and
fold-out Map 'A,' scale 1"=50', attached to this Report)

Springside's general design concepts, described above, were defined by the site's inherent character and Downing's circulation system, planting concepts, use of water, buildings and features. Individual components are discussed separately as follows:

1. Mound Formations: The natural mound formations, with their rocky outcrops and plumage of mature trees, provided features that were easily incorporated in the dominant natural effects of the brook and meadow. Rock Roost, in company with "gentler knoll" and "shady knoll" were experienced as a three-dimensional sequence from South Avenue and are most important as elements in the open "Deer Park" area. The largest of these formations, Maple Hill, Knitting Knoll, and the future Stonehenge were used more as area definers and backdrops, into which roads and other developments could be placed.

2. Road and Path System: The road system related closely to the pattern of topography and vegetation that existed on the site. Roadways and footpaths were laid out to form a loop arrangement that provided access to all areas. This development, as it was in place at the end of 1852, was certainly in response to the cemetery, cum residential pleasure grounds, Vassar wished to develop. The circulation layout reinforced the variety of the land forms and produced a sequence of finely-scaled sub-areas, each distinct to itself but interrelated in a unified scheme.

The alignment of roads and paths was basic to the design because they defined the view points from which the garden is experienced by anyone moving through it.

The road/path arrangement developed over time. First, a new entrance gate located at the southwest corner of the property was established to form a main approach road – the South Avenue. This alignment did not exist before 1850. South Avenue followed the base of Maple Hill and then traced the northern side of the low-lying land, later known as the Deer Park. As noted above, this unified open ground was studded with a number of the conical mound formations. The Cottage was the logical visual terminus of the new South Avenue. The west or garden frontage of this structure is glimpsed first. The approach road then continues, via Cottage Avenue, around Knitting Knoll to the Cottage entrance on the east façade. This sequential road alignment is visually pleasing and a typical romantic design form. The Cottage Avenue gate marked the terminus of the landscape garden and a transition to the farmland (see Gritten painting #4, Figure 12).

The North Entrance on Academy Street may have existed prior to Vassar's purchase of the property. There is some indication that a farm complex (house and outbuildings) – the Allen Farm – may have existed on the higher ground in the area of today's Spring Gable house.(87) In any event, a road linked the North Entrance to this possible farm site and continued along the north boundary before dropping down to the site of the Cottage. This road may have been developed from an old farm road which then linked to the new South Avenue to form the "circuitous road" in place by December 1850. The existence of a secondary "service" road, such as the north boundary road, would be common on an farm property but the road's eventual abandonment may be an indication of its superfluous role in Downing's scheme.

Following the completion of this basic road system, additional new interior roads were added. These connecting road sections provided access for carriages to areas not reached by the "circuitous road." The interior road scheme included four separate routes: the direct Locust Grove Drive that linked with the South Avenue, Summit Avenue that linked the North and South Gates, and two looping alignments that formed the oval at Evergreen Park and Center Circle. These road sections, which seem to have been of equal width to other drives, formed separate sub-areas that were not defined by the main approach road (South Avenue) alone. These sub-areas were in turn given descriptive names, again to enhance their perception as distinct places in the overall garden scheme.

A path system supplemented the road arrangement. Pedestrian traffic was accommodated on the carriage drives, but was provided with a special scale and exclusiveness on the paths in the well- sheltered Jet Vale area. In addition, a looped path led to the top of "summer house hill" and a short path section cut behind the Entrance Pond at the South Gate and led from the main South Avenue up to the rear or garden front of the Cottage. All these paths were important design components not only because of their inherent use for pedestrian circulation, but also due to their contribution in defining a sinuous pattern related closely to the land's natural characteristics.

The road and path circulation system seems to have been initially surfaced using a gritty, natural washed gravel of varied gradation (fines to sizable pebbles). From the Gritten paintings, the color appears to be a tan/brown. While not definitively identified at this time, the road material was undoubtedly locally available.

3. Vegetation: As a method of space definition, trees played an important role in the landscape garden design. The tree cover before 1850 was closely related to the topography unsuitable for the previous agricultural use. This existing composite of vegetation and topography was used as a major structural element in the design. For example, natural woodland on steep topography was uniformly set along the north side of South Avenue, thus creating a natural backdrop and orientation towards the low open ground to the south. This attractive effect was repeated along Summit Avenue and along South Avenue leading into the farmyard (via the Archway/Dovecote). This treatment was also used in the design of the avenue that skirted Center Circle, where groups of trees served as a farme around the open lawn and its central feature – the "glass house."

In general, large trees and tree massing that existed in the wooded areas of the original site seem to have been retained. Saplings were thinned out and understory growth was largely removed. Much of the garden area was provided with a uniform lawn surface, well-cropped by grazing sheep and cows. It seems that only the more precipitous slopes, outcrops and buffer areas along the south boundary remained in native shrub growth by 1852. The resulting visual character was of primary importance to the design mode and the garden's historic Beautiful aesthetic effect as discussed above.

It is known that considerable open ground was planted with small evergreen trees in 1851 and that hundreds of deciduous trees were added the next year. The distinction between areas intended originally as open and ground planted with these new trees is an important one because it indicates the design's intended spatial form. The cemetery scheme first envisaged by Downing, as illustrated in the Gritten paintings, suggested well defined open areas. New evergreen trees are scattered widely. Most appear in groups at less than twenty feet apart, some are isolated individually. Figure 10 shows these plantings as identified and located from the Gritten paintings.

In the Rural Cemetery style, graves and monuments were ideally associated with a sheltered aspect, rather than an exposed in open areas. Mature evergreen trees provided an especially suitable canopy, contributing to the somber mood while holding out the promise that eternity was ever green. The original site appears to have had few native evergreens, and so the general treatment of the informal planting of evergreen trees may have been intended as an investment in the intended use of the site.

It appears that the future Deer Park and the orchard that extended along sloping ground in the north part of the garden were left unplanted. Some future open areas, parts of Center Circle and "summer house hill," for example, were originally planted with evergreen trees. Some of these seem to have been removed later perhaps a modification deemed appropriate once possible

cemetery use was abandoned after 1851. The Jacob Map, drafted after 1857 (see Figures 8 and 8A), clearly shows Center Circle and "summer house hill" as open ground setting off their individual features (fountain and summer house respectively). Elsewhere this map shows the maturation of evergreen trees in areas wet of the Jet Vale and Evergreen Park, indicating that these plantings had been left undisturbed. This change in planting concept followed Downing's death and seems to have been a response to the evolution of the site as a residential pleasure grounds as well as a reaction to the density of these plantings as they matured.(88)

Both evergreen and deciduous trees were planted along sections of the new drives and paths. These plantings were intended to emphasize the circulation system as the primary form of the design. The roadside trees were spaced irregularly to negate any sense of a formal treatment.

Except as features at the entrance to the Cottage and around and in the "glass house" in Center Circle, ornamental herbaceous plants do not appear to have had any important role in Springside's landscape design. The Kitchen Garden, a typical landscape accompaniment in the period, served a utilitarian and aesthetic purpose, as a vegetable and fruit garden and flower cutting garden.

4. Water: Water features were a hallmark of the Springside landscape garden. The ornamental use of water far exceeded what was typical on a property of this size in the mid-19th century. At Springside water was used for nearly all its inherent potential; ushering from the earth as a spring, splashing in a fountain, placid in ponds and artificial basins and rippling over a stream bed. In total, this was a clever and creative exploitation of the site's watery resource.

In addition to it ornamental use, the management of groundwater was an important aspect of the site's technical design. As the garden took shape, it was developed with what was called in the period "thorough drainage," a term used to describe a comprehensive subsurface drainage system that would isolate standing water to intended basins and provide a generally dry surface overall. Details of the system constructed at Springside are not known at this time. It appears likely that water was carried from high elevations to the site's low point (the Entrance Pond at the South Gate) via the various water features.

(a) Willow Spring: This "old spring" (89) would have provided romantic associations as a basic natural phenomenon and for its sense of antiquity. In turn, the highly visible location of the spring –at the northwest corner of the landscape garden – made the site's name, Springside, particularly appropriate. The old sycamore tree that dominates the spring site even today pre-dates Vassar's purchase of the property. Apparently a mature willow tree also grew nearby in the historic period.(90) A statue of a sleeping dog, illustrated in one of Lossing's engravings, was in place by 1852, but little else is known of the landscape treatment here as the area does not appear in the Gritten paintings. The water surfacing at Willow Spring re-entered the ground before reaching the North Avenue. From this point the spring's outflow seems to have been carried by conduit to the Jet Vale Fountain.

(b) Jet Vale Fountain: As illustrated in Henry Gritten's painting #3 (Figure 13), this feature was set amid major trees from its original construction. It seems to have been scooped out as a basin and filled by water piped directly from the Willow Spring. The Jet Vale Fountain basin was fitted with the Swan Fountain (see under Site Appurtenances, below). A path wrapped around the basin and branched off to the north, east and southwest from this focal point. This path arrangement, as shown in the Gritten painting, was altered after 1852 to the layout shown on the Lossing map, Figure 9.

(c) The Entrance Pond: This important entry gate feature was first developed in the autumn of 1850 utilizing what seems to have been a natural low area at the junction of two drainage paths.(91) Initially this area was simply scooped out as a basin and then, over time, embellished and improved. The pond's state of development at the end of 1852 is not clear as this area does not appear on Gritten's paintings and is otherwise undocumented until the late 1850s. At this point the pond was illustrated as a rather refined, stone-edged duck pond framed with willow trees and ornamented with a gothic-styled duck house on a diminutive center island. There was also a timber pedestrian bridge at the path crossing. The general development with a different bridge is confirmed in Lossing's 1867 engraving. The condition in 1852 may have been simplified, perhaps without the stone edging or island but planted with young willows, but this is not known with certainty.

(d) "Gold Fish Pond": Originally located as an appendage of the Evergreen Park oval, this placid pool was also located at the one spot on the South Avenue where low open ground allowed glimpses up into Center Circle and the northern areas of the site. A natural location for this feature, the deep basin was easily formed due to the concentration of drainage, no doubt aided by subsurface piping that brought a concentrated flow to this spot. The pond was ornamented with gold fish by 1852.(92)

(e) Brook: The brook served a sizable watershed to the east that provided a constant flow except in periods of severe drought. As a design element in the landscape garden, the book issued from under the farmyard complex into the natural valley formation of the future Deer Park. South of Rock Roost a small pond was formed. Together, the low-lying pond and high rock outcrop would have served as a natural ensemble, and this would have been a dominant focal scene while entering along South Avenue. It is not conclusively documented that this pond had been formed by 1852. Exiting the pond area the brook quickly entered a thicket. It then flowed into the Entrance Pond described above. Within the garden the brook was a natural appearing water course, perhaps edged with an appropriately diverse natural association of plants, and then managed to enhance an ornamental effect.

5. Buildings: Several structures were intended as focal elements in the landscape garden

scheme, while others served as members of grouped structures contributing to an ensemble presentation. The Springside buildings were designed in the Gothic Revival style and except for the "glass house" in Center Circle were wooden structures of a regional motif called the "Bracketed style" closely associated with Andrew Jackson Downing and now understood as synonymous with the romantic heritage of the Hudson River Valley.(93) Consequently, the Springside buildings constitute a collection of mid-19th century architecture that represent a significant aspect of architectural history in the United States.

The fact that the Springside buildings can be so closely associated with Andrew Jackson Downing is especially fortunate given the general scarcity of Downing documentation and his historical importance as an arbiter of architectural design. Downing designed his own house in Newburgh in the late 1830s (94) and showed continued interest in architectural design from the publication of *Landscape Gardening* in 1841.(95) Despite its focus in his writings, Downing had limited technical expertise or architectural graphic skills and this seems to have more or less precluded architecture as a focus of Downing's professional career. Recognizing a limitation, Downing tried unsuccessfully to arrange a formal business association with Alexander Jackson Davis, the important period architect who had been Downing's collaborator on architectural matters since their first contact in 1838. During the summer of 1850, Downing visited Europe and returned with a 26-year old English architect, Calvert Vaux (1824-1895).

Calvert Vaux's subsidiary role in the Springside architectural designs is not fully understood. Benson J. Lossing (96) and Vaux himself (97) generally seem to credit the Springside architecture to Downing. It is reasonable to assume that Vaux's role would be restricted by his recent arrival in America. As such Vaux would have been given an initiation/orientation under Downing's tutelage, and this period would have just started with the Springside design commission. It is clear, therefore, that the architectural designs at Springside can be attributed to Downing, though he certainly discussed the work with Vaux and was influenced by Vaux's expertise and newly imported ideas. Vaux may have offered suggestions and provided design and technical assistance and he seems to have contributed some of the drawings. Still, in 1850 and early 1851 this was Downing's practice and Springside was Downing's commission and the building designs can be attributed to Downing alone.(98)

Because of their use and focal purpose, Downing's major designs – The Cottage, Porter's Lodge, and Coach House/Stable are especially significant structures. Except for the Porter's Lodge, the drawings for these buildings have survived. The designs perfectly and uniquely illustrate Downing's elegant and reserved approach to the Gothic Revival. This motif was to be carried forward in the major house designs completed by Calvert Vaux in the years after Downing's death.(99) The Porter's Lodge and the site's lesser structures, like the Archway/Dovecote and Dairy/Ice House, were erected before 1852 and were probably designed by Downing, though documentation proving this has not been found. These buildings may have been sketched as ideas and then interpreted by Vassar and his builders. This was common practice in the period.

Most importantly, Downing would have been responsible for placing various structures as features and together to form ensembles, an aspect of the design that is a hallmark of the Springside landscape garden. Calvert Vaux relates: "each [building] having been studied with some reference to its position and artistic importance in the landscape, as well as its more immediate useful purpose."(100) As always in the romantic landscape garden, architecture is visually subservient to the landscape composition. Downing's Springside work is an excellent example of that discerning harmony of architecture and site that so distinguished the romantic design approach.

The association of Springside's architecture with the garden's Beautiful design mode requires explanation as the Gothic style is linked to the Picturesque by Downing. In the first instance all these structures were seen in general picturesque circumstances. The Porter's Lodge against a wooded backdrop, south, and the Cottage set into Knitting Knoll. The farmyard complex was also framed by undeveloped thickets and a wooded foreground, as seen from the west. Also, these structures area all outbuildings meant to complement a main house structure. Other estate properties, such as Locust Grove just south of Springside and Mandara in Red Hook were developed in this period with outbuildings in the Bracketed style. Yet in these examples the main house was an Italianate design and was complemented by landscaped grounds in the Beautiful mode, especially near the house. At Springside, the Beautiful core would have formed the house environs if Vassar had constructed a main house on the proposed villa site. In summary, there is not a discrepancy between Springside's architecture and the garden's dominant Beautiful design mode.

(a) Porter's Lodge (see Figure 14): This structure was apparently built according to Downing's design sometime during the construction season of 1851 and 1852. The design replaced an earlier, more elaborate scheme illustrated on a plan and sketch displayed in April 1851. Aspects of the design appear in a prototype as Design IV of Downing's 1850 work, *The Architecture of Country Houses*. The final composition is, however, significantly altered and some details suggest Vaux's involvement.(101) The Porter's Lodge is symmetrical in some elevations, but the massing is fully organic, seemingly melding three sides of the structure into one façade as seen entering the property. The Porter's Lodge was a similar board and batten construction and finished with the same color scheme as the other outbuildings. No drawings have been found for this building.

(b) The Cottage (see Figures 15 and 16): Designed by Downing before the start of the construction season of 1851, the Cottage was probably originally intended to be a dwelling for a cemetery superintendent or gardener but it was used by the Vassars as a summer cottage until Matthew Vassar's death in 1868. This is one of the few residential structures known to have been designed by Downing and it has been said that this Cottage is of "considerable importance for the history of American architecture."(102) The design is believed to be an adaptation of a prototype included as Design III in Downing's book, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850.

The Cottage is notable for its split level arrangement, with ground level entrance to the basement on the rear (west) façade. This layout sets the Cottage into Knitting Knoll and highlights a first-floor veranda (balcony) overlooking the landscape garden. The main (east) façade is formal and symmetrical. By contrast the rear (west) façade is a far more asymmetrical composition with dormers and the "cottage annex" offset on the south. In addition, the wooded topography of Knitting Knoll into which the Cottage is nestled orients the structure towards the northwest into an open lawn area and the old orchard.

(c) "cottage annex (see Figure 16, lower right structure): Apparently this small auxiliary building was built at the same time as the adjacent Cottage. In any event it was in place by the autumn of 1852 indicating that its role in the architectural ensemble was intended in the original scheme. While the "cottage annex" may have been designed by Downing – who would have suggested its subtle placement – it is a simple adaption of the main Cottage, possibly executed by Vassar's builder without detailed plans. The historic use of this structure is not known.

(d) Coach House/Stable (see Figure 17 and 18, right structure): This important building was designed by Downing in 1850 and erected during the 1851 building season. Signed and dated plans for the Coach House/Stable have survived. The structure is illustrated and discussed in the 1852 edition of Downing's book, *Cottage Residences*. It is a symmetrical composition placed perpendicular to the Cottage. Like the Cottage, this building is a split level structure with access from both the farmyard and the Cottage Avenue frontage. Otherwise the design related closely to the color and detail used on the other Springside buildings. Notable features include a unique roof ventilation system incorporated into an ornamental cupola.

(e) Dairy and Ice House (see Figure 18, left structure, and 19, right structure): Apparently designed by Downing and built at the same time as the Cottage, "cottage annex" and Coach House/Stable, this unusual steeply roofed structure is juxtaposed to the symmetrical Coach House/Stable, much as the "cottage annex" offsets the symmetry of the Cottage to form an architectural ensemble. Apparently a hayloft above insulated the ice storage area below. Access is restricted to the farmyard as the north façade is fitted only with a high hayloft door. No drawings have been found for this building.

The Farmyard Complex: While there is no conclusive evidence that Downing designed all these structures, the next several buildings (f-i) join with the Coach House/Stable and Dairy/Ice House to form a cohesive farmyard complex. The subtle interrelationship of the various architectural elements in this ensemble produced an exceptional harmony of scale, proportion, space definition, massing and detail, all the elements of three-dimensional design that combine to render an organic but well-ordered and pleasing visual effect. If attributed to Downing, this grouping is a testimony to his design abilities in a way that no single structure can ever be. No drawings have been found for these buildings.

(f) Archway/Dovecote (see Figure 20, left structure, and Figure 21): This small but carefully proportioned architectural feature was built as a covered gateway between the landscape garden and the farmyard. A dovecote provides a suitably ornamental use for the attic space.

(g) "auxiliary building" (see Figure 20, right structure, and Figure 21): This is another feature structure that breaks the shed line that extended for more than 200 feet along the east boundary of the landscape garden. The structure's use is not known. It may have been a small dwelling or a tool shed.

(h) Sheds (see Figure 21): These arched/open structures were used for a variety of farm purposes and formed the west side of the farmyard. The west façade of these structures formed a 200 foot long architectural definition on the east boundary of the landscape garden (see Figure 10). Two separate sections are identified. In the first instance, the line extending from the Coach House/Stable and linking the Archway/Dovecote and the "auxiliary building" was a timber row structure with vertical siding and post and lintel arcades. The row extending approximately 110 feet to the south of the "auxiliary building" appears to be a somewhat different design. It is narrower in plan but similar in massing. The façade treatment facing the landscape garden was probably not different from the north sheds. However, from within the farmyard the massive, rounded arches of this shed row were quite distinct from the timber north section.

(i) Granary (?): This independent building was located on the east side of the farmyard which it divided into north and south sections. The massing is well handled with a simple form that related well to the focal Coach House/Stable, Dairy/Ice House and Archway/Dovecote. Fitted with numerous windows and door openings, the structure does not appear to be a granary and this designation, which comes from the Lossing account, may well apply to an adjacent structure added after the historic period. Additional study is needed to verify the use and to suggest an appropriate name for this building.

(j) "glass house" (see Figure 13, extreme left structure): The general size and proportion, in fact the very existence of this structures, is known only from its illustration at the edge of Gritten's painting #3 (see Figure 11). No other reference to this circular conservatory is presently known. A structure of this type would have been a sophisticated and evocative garden ornament and a curiosity in its day. The "glass house" illustrated appears to be a circular, domed, metalwork structure, approximately 15 feet in diameter and perhaps 20 feet high at its apex. Glass panels appear to cover the entire façade and dome. A door provides access on the west.

6. Appurtenances

The Springside landscape garden was basically formed by its inherent topography and the site's original vegetation. This established a pattern of space definition that was then reinforced by the road and path system described previously. The resulting settings were then developed with new plantings, architectural elements and water features to complete the ornamental design. Finally, furnishings were introduced as accessories. These mad-made details had an inherent visual attraction and would have been features in their respective settings. It would seem that the basic garden construction came first, and so only a limited number of these detail fittings were in place by the autumn of 1852.

(a) Entry gate and Academy Street wall: The main entry gate that remains is a typical Romantic period arrangement laid out with a concave form, with cut stone piers fitted with pyramidal caps. The double gate is unusual and allows a theoretical division between entering and exiting traffic. The gateway existing today is not conclusively documented by the Gritten painting and seems to post-date an earlier, simplified entry gate in place in 1852.

(b) Swan Fountain: While Gritten's depiction of this ornamental feature is sketchy, it is believed to be the same fountain shown in Benson J. Lossing's 1867 engraving, perhaps with some changes in the mounting. The swan fountain of this type is illustrated by Downing in his book, *Landscape Gardening*.

(c) The "sleeping dog" statue: Described in period accounts and illustrated in a Lossing engraving, this sculptural piece ornamented Willow Spring. It is noted that "sleeping dogs" were typical cemetery ornaments/grave markers in the mid-19th century.

(d) Gate piers: Two sets of stone piers were placed to denote the Cottage environs. One set flanked the path leading to the Cottage from South Avenue and the other was located along Cottage Avenue just west of an open area fronted the Coach House/Stable. The piers were fitted with gates, but the Gritten paintings do not show fence lines extending beyond these portals indicating that they may have been ornamental intended only as suggestive demarcation. A wire fence, considered invisible at a distance, and so perhaps left out of the Gritten painting, may have been installed to keep grazing animals away from the immediate Cottage grounds, but this is not known with certainty. Downing, in his writings, did suggest the use of such fencing. See Gritten painting #4, Figure 12.

(e) Picket fence: An alignment of approximately six foot high picket fencing extended from the east corner of the Coach House/Stable to the retaining wall that existed along Poplar Summit and formed the north side of the Kitchen Garden. Fitted with gates, this fencing enclosed the Kitchen Garden on the south and east as well as west side. Picket fencing also

extended between the Dairy/Ice House and Granary to define a portion of the farmyard. All this timber fencing was painted to match the related buildings, which it visually linked together.

(f) Fence at the Cottage entrance: A small fenced area was set off on the east façade of the Cottage to form garden beds, no doubt planted with flowers and other ornamental plants. This fence is shown in the Gritten painting #2.

(g) Wall in farmyard area: A stone wall, perhaps finished with mortar grout, appears to have been in place along the east side of the farmyard, opposite the south sheds. This wall and other details in the farmyard are visible in the Gritten painting #1 (see Figure 11).

(h) Stone feature at Center Circle: A prominent stone wall appears on the southeast side of Center Circle in Gritten painting #3 (see Figure 13). The identification and purpose of this feature is not known.

CHAPTER 4 – EXISTING CONDITIONS (1985)

(see Figure 22, Existing Conditions – May 1985, and fold-out Map 'B' scale 1"=50', attached to this Report.)

A. General Concepts

In the spring of 1985, analysis of the existing conditions of the Springside National Historic Landmark showed that the most important aspects of the historic landscape garden design were preserved. While the man-made components had largely disappeared, the site's natural situation remained unaltered. In addition, there had not been intrusive development, either on the site itself or at the immediate property boundaries, that would preclude or seriously compromise an effective restoration.(103) This favorable situation is a positive incentive for renewal of the historic resource because it allows the garden's historic design to be authentically recreated.

Boundary definition was an important visual condition in the historic situation. Despite change, and a need to enhance the effect, the sense-of-place and separation from the outside that were characteristic in the historic period have been preserved. These boundary conditions continue to provide an accurate sense of the general proportions and scale of the landscape garden as it was originally developed.

The Spring Gable property and other residential developments north of the site are generally well screened my mature vegetation. This favorable situation is reinforced by the sloping ground of the north pasture which directs orientation to the south into the garden interior. The south boundary line is impacted by the proposed new housing development but distance, existing vegetation and a new bermed and planted buffer should mitigate this impact. The Academy Street frontage is well preserved. The South Entrance gate and the boundary wall are in need of repair but remain sympathetic to the historic situation. The immediate Academy Street environs are reasonably free of modern development and visual clutter is at a minimum. Views from "summer house hill" are, however, significantly impacted by modern development. The east boundary of the National Historic Landmark extends beyond the Kitchen Garden, Lack Lawn Knoll and the farmyard area. These elements tend to buffer and screen the landscape garden to the west. A mature evergreen plantation screens views east of the Kitchen Garden.

It must be emphasized that the conditions of the site's edges, as described above, were far different in the historic period from that experienced today. Originally less wooded, the boundary definition was also of less concern given the compatible agrarian landscape that surrounded the landscape garden composition. Today residential, industrial and transportation land uses are close at hand requiring more concern for edge definition to maintain the site's essential insular character that is to a large extent the garden's historic sense-of-place. Fortunately the existing boundary conditions simulate favorably the garden's historic boundary definition and this is of fundamental importance to an effective restoration of the site.

In addition to the property's boundaries, the important fence and architectural definition that separated the landscape garden from the Kitchen Garden and farmyard is today obliterated. This critical delineation relied on Springside's farm structures and the picket fencing that surrounded the Kitchen Garden, and it had the effect of isolating the geometric forms and utilitarian function of the farm from the landscape garden development lying to the west. Today, this boundary line has disappeared (except for the foundation walls of the Coach House/Stable). Compatible wooded conditions do exist north of the Kitchen Garden where mature evergreens screen residential development that now replaces the formerly open expanse on Poplar Summit north of the Kitchen Garden.

The garden's historic spatial composition was predicated on natural elements which remain basically unchanged except for overgrown vegetation. Second growth conditions mask the design character but simple clearing would reveal much of the historic spatial form. The area's historic visual effect is of course fully indecipherable due primarily to the wild vegetative conditions, lack of the extensive, well-cropped and uniform lawn surface and disappearance of most buildings, features and site appurtenances.

B. Individual Components

Existing conditions are described for each individual component as follows:

1. Mound Formations: Except for incidental changes at Maple Hill and "summer house hill" the site's distinctive mound formations (and the historic topography generally) remain remarkably unchanged. While the once open Lack Lawn is today covered by mature trees, all other mounds are wooded as in the historic period, though specific trees and tree species have inevitably changed. These changes are not inappropriate and the present situation is fully compatible with the historic situation. Some mounds, notably the Stonehenge Knoll and Pagoda site retain remnants of artificial rock-work and masonry installed after 1852. The site's topography as in some instances been altered by recent earthwork, but again these are incidental changes. The large pond in Little Belt, and surface grading in the Jet Vale area and on "summer house hill" are examples of these changes.

2. Road and Path System: The South and North Avenues (including Locust Grove Drive and Cottage Avenue), together with paved areas on the east side of the Cottage, are today easily traced on the ground. The road width and exact alignments have been modified somewhat and the roadways have not been maintained consistently. Some sections have been surfaced with modern materials. Other road and path alignments that made up the historic circulation system, including Summit Avenue, Dale Avenue, the loop roads around Center Circle and Evergreen Park, and all path alignments, are indecipherable. The dirt/gravel surface originally maintained in the farmyard and between the Cottage and the Coach House/Stable can no longer be detected on the surface.

3. Vegetation: The site's tree and shrub pattern is quite different from the situation in the 1850s. In some cases young trees that existed or were planted in the historic period are today fully mature, while some of the older specimen trees in Downing's day have now fallen. In the past twenty or thirty years numerous saplings have invaded the former open areas and the unchecked vegetation produces a jungle effect that obliterates the garden design. Still, with the exception of these "second growth" stands the existing pattern of vegetation is fully compatible with the original situation. In fact, it can be said that the maturity and variety of the present tree cover is a glorious realization of Downing's landscape design.

Most formerly open areas are today overgrown with saplings. The most radically changed condition is in the north orchard. This was open ground in the historic period but is today studded and encroached on by mature trees. Poplar Summit, on the extreme east side of this area, once provided panoramic views of the grounds with the Hudson River beyond. Today a dense stand of mature hemlock trees covers the slope except in the northwest corner where second growth dominates. The same situation occurs at the Lawn Terrace, another formerly open vantage point that is today a dense evergreen plantation.

In summary, the basic tree canopy existing today resembles the historic situation except that the trees are more mature and in denser stands than previously was the case.

4. Water: Preliminary investigation indicates that the site's water resource has not been significantly altered from the situation in the historic period. Runoff that flows to the brook may be even greater today because of increased paved areas in the watershed. The Willow Spring still issues from its historic source though its rate of flow and water quality may have been diminished. The historic system of underground drainage as well as the piping of water from one feature to another no longer functions. Any subsurface piping has long ago silted up and/or collapsed. As a result water flowing down slope from the north has in some instances cut erosion ditches and is pooled in low spots. The site's historic water basins – Jet Vale Fountain, "Gold Fish Pond," and the Entrance Pond are today filled in. The east/west flowing brook remains but a large pond has been formed east of Rock Roost. The brook continues west as in the historic period but without feeding the Entrance Pond. Instead a deep drainage swale directs the flow to a concrete headwall just east of the Porter's Lodge. A culvert ultimately carries water under Academy Street and off-site.

5. Buildings: Except for the Porter's Lodge, remnants of the Cottage and the foundation walls of the Coach House/Stable, nothing remains of the site's historic architecture. Historic plans document the design of the Cottage and Coach House/Stable. The Dairy/Ice House, Archway/Dovecote, "auxiliary building," Granary (?) and the north section of the "Sheds" are documented in photographs. The south shed row and the "glass house" are seen only in the Gritten paintings #1 and #3 respectively.

6. Appurtenances: The existing conditions of site accessories are summarized as follows:

   (a) Entry gate and Academy Street wall – all these elements are extant but in need of considerable restoration.
   (b) Swan Fountain – no trace remains of this feature.
   (c) The "sleeping dog statue – no trace remains of this feature.
   (d) Gate piers – stone piers on Cottage Avenue remain. The pair that flanked the walk leading to the rear (west) front of the cottage have disappeared.
   (e) Picket fence – no trace remains.
   (f) Fence at Cottage entrance – no trace remains.
   (g) Wall in the farmyard – no trace remains.
   (h) Stone feature at Center Circle – only a small rock outcrop is visible today.

CHAPTER 5 – PRELIMINARY RESTORATION ANALYSIS

(see Figure 23 – Illustrative Restoration Plan, and Figure 24 – Preliminary Restoration Plan)

A. General Concepts: Based on the history and the landscape's recognized significance, it has been suggested that the Springside National Historic Landmark be preserved, restored, maintained and presented as a landscape garden composition designed by Andrew Jackson Downing working with Matthew Vassar in the period 1850 to 1852. Within this program, the Springside restoration project might have the goal of developing a living monument to the national and international importance of Andrew Jackson Downing. Downing's role at Springside began in the autumn of 1850 and may be considered to have ended at his death on July 28, 1852, a span of time that represents an appropriate restoration date and described in this report as the "historic period." The term "restoration date" would be set at that point in the design's evolution corresponding to Downing's death, or late summer 1852.

During this initial development period Springside was realized as a substantially complete work. Restoration within this context would assure that the Downing attribution is retained in the contemporary renewal of the site. Springside, in its historical context, was a union of nature and art, a combination that was considered the essential requirement of sensitive and enlightened landscape gardening as practiced by Downing. The Springside National Historic Landmark remains intact as a distinct place, ready for the re-application of art that will complete a restoration process.

In evaluating Springside's restoration potential consideration must be given to identify the importance of conceptual and individual components that made up the garden's historic design. Aspects of the restoration that are essential must not be overlooked or ignored, while time, effort and resources may not be merited by secondary concerns, especially in undertaking first priority restoration measures. Unlike architectural restoration which can be quite literal, a duplication of certain aspects of a historic landscape may not be critical determinants in a successful restoration. Then too, the Romantic period landscape garden is fundamentally an organic composition that evolved within a pre-determined framework. Change in the natural world is an integral component of the garden design and this has an obvious impact on the mechanism of an effective restoration process. It is clear from this analysis that the Springside landscape garden can be successfully restored only by skilled, knowledgeable and insightful supervision applied to the myriad decisions that necessarily make up the garden restoration effort.

Given these restoration principles and the existing site conditions at Springside there would seem to be excellent prospects for effective restoration of the landscape garden as it existed at the end of the historic period and was documented, primarily by the Gritten paintings, in the late summer of 1852.

As discussed in earlier sections of this Report, boundary definition will be an important goal of the restoration project. Insofar as it is possible all incongruous elements lying outside the site, but seen from within the historic area, should be screened as a first priority. Even where outward views may once have occurred, as for example to the south and east, and into the farmstead area, a subtle but effective visual barrier is now needed to screen adjacent development that is incompatible with the garden's historic sense-of-place. This single consideration will be of decisive importance to the success of any restoration effort. Along the eastern limit of the core landscape garden there is also a need to replicate the approximately 500-foot long delineation that existed between the landscape garden and the farmyard/Kitchen Garden areas. This line follows the picket fence (west side of the Kitchen Garden), the Coach House/Stable, and the west façade of the shed row (see Figure 21).

The garden's historic spatial composition was predicated on topography and natural elements which remain unaltered or could be replicated. Second growth conditions mask the design character but simple clearing would reveal to some extent the historic spatial form. The design's important historic visual effects are of course indecipherable due primarily to the wild vegetative conditions. The site's refined visual effects need complete restoration followed by consistent, ongoing maintenance that would perpetuate the historic design character. In summary, regarding all aspects of Springside's intrinsic and conceptual design, present conditions either preserve or do not exclude and effective restoration.

B. Individual Components

Preliminary restoration potential and requirements for individual components are described as follows:

1. Mound Formations: In general, the site's mound formations (and the historic topography generally) requires only incidental reshaping and judicious thinning of vegetation to return to the historic situation.

2. Road and Path System: In general, road and path sections can be located with study of the topography, existing trees and stumps, and reference to historic maps as well as the Gritten paintings. Archaeological investigation would also provide information regarding the historic layout and construction of the road and path circulation system. The road and path system as it existed in the autumn of 1852 needs to be fully restored to replicate the historic widths and alignments. It would not be essential to recreate the original construction method but the width, alignment and surface treatment must closely match the historic conditions. This restoration prerequisite may be effectively and economically accomplished as a re-grading of the existing road foundation followed by carefully selected surface treatment to match the historic condition. Some road sections and the path system will need to be totally reconstructed.

3. Vegetation: The basic tree canopy existing today resembles the historic situation except that the trees are more mature and in denser stands than previously was the case. Apart from their inherent beauty as individual specimens and as features in small groups, the historic use of tree massing for space definition could be easily renewed because of the maturity and density of the present tree cover. Along the site's boundary lines this condition will significantly aid the development of an effective buffer/screen. Elsewhere, it will be a matter of sculpting the garden design by carefully selected clearing and thinning to reproduce the historic visual effect. Only a few large trees will need to be removed and these are often "weed" trees, not the variety of evergreen and hardwoods that typified the historic situation. The process of returning an accurate sense to the tree massing, as it existed in the historic period, will entail thinning and pruning pursued as landscape art. A duplication of the historic tree cover would never be realistically accomplished and would, in any event, be an absurd undertaking. Instead, the restoration efforts will need to skillfully recreate the historic design process.

Some valued hardwood saplings and small evergreens need to remain where their present locations are appropriate, but most existing sapling stands need to be removed and returned to a turf surface. In turn, many of the historic tree groves were opened enough to allow turf to penetrate into these sheltered areas. From the evidence it seems that only the rocky outcrops and precipitous slopes of the mound formation were left with understory vegetation in the historic period. The final composition of the tree groves must rely on a carefully selected, mixed planting dominated by the venerable old specimens but complemented by the full range of tree sizes and types – deciduous and evergreen – old specimens to small trees, all artfully arranged to replicate the historic situation. While the restoration process is not based on literal recreation, the modern tree composition can closely reflect the historic situation. As depicted on the Illustrative Restoration Plan (see Figure 23), the retention of the site's mature trees will modify the historic sense because of the maturity of the present trees in relation to the more moderate tree sizes and extensive newly planted areas that existed in 1852. It must be remembered that the present mature trees were deliberately saved or planted for an ornamental purpose. In this context the natural evolution of these trees is fully consistent with the original planting design, which was never considered a static effect. The present large trees are not an intrusion but the living essence of the garden's ornament.

4. Water: All the water related systems and features could be recreated in settings that are fully sympathetic to the historic effect. Sub-surface drainage, to eliminate marshy ground and direct ground and surface water, needs to be reestablished using a modern effective system which need not recreate the original scheme. Archaeological investigation would provide information regarding the historic water system.

In restoring specific water features, such as Jet Vale Fountain, "Gold Fish Pond," and the Entrance Pond, recirculated systems may be suggested because of their reliability and ease of maintenance over the historic system of direct piping from spring or groundwater sources. This

restoration approach is appropriate because these elements were not linked by open channels in the historic period.

Each of the water features has particular needs related to its reconstruction, as follows:

The Entrance Pond site was recently obliterated by the modern "Primary Access Road."(103) It will require a realignment of the modern road before the Entrance Pond can be rebuilt. The Entrance Pond is not fully documented and restoration planning will need to strike an appropriate aesthetic effect in this area. The margins of the Entrance Pond could be turfed opposite the road edge and maintained without shrub or pond edge vegetation. This treatment would change to a more natural effect against Maple Hill. In this way the Pond would be set into the natural backdrop as originally intended. Willow trees might be planted around the pond margin beside the road. A pedestrian bridge/path could be introduced across the narrow arm of the Entrance Pond. This path could serve as the walk planned for development as part of the "Primary Access Road." The use of the Entrance Pond for water fowl may have started after the historic period. No definitive documentation of this use is available before the late 1850s. While appropriate, this use would present difficult restoration problems and, if undertaken at all, should be a secondary restoration project. The primary challenge to the restoration of the South Entrance will be the need to offset the current dominance of the north-south sweep of the "Primary Access Road." Instead, the entry experience, looking east from the South Entrance gate, needs to be replicated in a restoration motif. In summary, the Entrance Pond illustrates the myriad decisions – many based on conjectural and artistic evaluation – that would be needed to restore any of Springside's important water features.

The Jet Vale Fountain and "Gold Fish Pond" may have been rudimentary basins with stone edging in the historic period, but they could be replicated today as concrete basins fitted with an appropriate stone copping. The "Gold Fish Pond" would require special design and maintenance considerations to provide for the fish life.

The brook needs to be re-channeled including installation of underground portions that carried the surface water under the farmyard in the historic period. The large modern pond needs to be removed and a rational connection made with site drainage entering the historic landscape from the south. The duck pond, which widened the brook west of Rock Roost, is not conclusively documented as in existence in the historic period, but could be included in the restored brook alignment as a fully sympathetic variation of the brook's width and as an appropriate complement to the integrated restoration of this area. A fully natural assortment of native aquatics, semi-aquatics and terrestrial vegetation could be introduced and maintained in conjunction with the brook restoration.

Willow Spring can be kept generally as it is today. Its condition in the historic period is not conclusively documented. The modern outflow basin should be replaced by a simpler trough-like basin that would take the water to an underground inlet. The environs should be treated simply to highlight the spectacular old sycamore. New willow trees might be planted nearby and the sleeping dog statue could be reintroduced as a feature.

5. Buildings: Detailed restoration plans, including a full historic structures report, should be prepared for each of the buildings. These plans are a prerequisite before actual restoration work begins. The ornamental role of architecture in relation to the landscape garden development needs to be identified before detailed restoration plans are prepared. While some structures are more significant than others, all the site buildings should be replicated in a completed restoration. This level of architectural restoration is required because of the importance of ensemble arrangements in the ultimate design scheme. In this situation the site's architectural component was more than the sum of its parts as individual structures were juxtaposed as integral elements of the three dimensional landscape composition. As a first priority, essential restoration would require the reconstruction of the Cottage/"cottage annex," Coach House/Stable, Archway/Dovecote, and "auxiliary building." The shed row could be temporarily simulated by a solid fence line as part of the definition line that existed between the landscape garden and the farmyard (see Figure 24). The Dairy/Ice House and Granary (?) could also be left for a second phase as these do not directly front on the landscape garden. These subsidiary buildings are critical to a complete restoration of the farmyard/Kitchen Garden complex.

In addition to consideration of which buildings need immediate reconstruction, it is important to understand that the exterior treatments of the buildings need to march the historic situation. Details and color scheme should be identical to the original design. Still, while the significant Cottage and Coach House/Stable buildings might be literally and meticulously reconstructed (at considerable added cost), other lesser buildings in the farm area could be considerably simplified using modern materials and construction techniques that could nevertheless match the historic exterior effect. The interiors of these buildings were not directly linked to the outdoor garden experience, though windows in the Cottage and elsewhere were important vantage points for indoor appreciation of the landscape. At least initially, the timber structures could be exterior shells, serving their primary visual role as sculptural objects in the landscape garden. In this situation the relative unimportance of the building interiors would have a significant impact on the cost of landscape restoration.

Once detailed restoration plans and specifications are prepared, the reconstruction of Springside's architectural components can be implemented using familiar building techniques. The timber structures, erected without interior fittings, could be reconstructed using standard carpentry and house construction methods. Details should be identified in a comprehensive way and efficiently fabricated under shop conditions before installation on the site. Where it is appropriate, modern materials and construction techniques should be used. Again it is critical that all the planning for this work be completed before actual work begins.

The "glass house" is unique and must be considered separately from the other timber related structures. The "glass house" should be completely researched and a restoration plan prepared. This building will be an expensive restoration project, far exceeding its relative importance in the total garden design. If other priorities take precedent, the role of the "glass

house" as a feature in Center Circle could be temporarily substituted. A circular mounded flower bed, for example, would be an appropriate alternate focus at a minimal cost. The "glass house" could then be added as a secondary restoration embellishment (see Figure 24).

6. Appurtenances: The restoration potential of site accessories is as follows:

(a) Entry gate and Academy Street wall – all these elements are extant but in need of considerable restoration. The stone retaining wall needs to be repaired in several places. The entry piers need to be re-grouted and refinished and the iron gates refinished and remounted.

(b) Swan Fountain – no trace remains of this feature. A detailed restoration plan is required using illustrations from Benson J. Lossing's account and Downing's writings as guides.

(c) The "sleeping dog" statue – no trace remains of this feature. A newer stone sculpture has replaced this statue as a feature at Willow Spring. A detailed restoration plan is required using illustrations from Benson J. Lossing's account as a guide.

(d) Gate posts – the stone piers on Cottage Avenue remain. The pair that flanked the walk leading to the rear (west) front of the Cottage have disappeared. Timber gates need to be remounted at both locations.

(e) Picket fence – no trace remains but the design is illustrated in the Gritten paintings and this appears to be identical to that shown in later photographs. Detailed restoration plans are needed.

(f) Fence at Cottage entrance – restoration should be as part of architectural reconstruction.

(g) Wall in the farmyard – following the arrangement illustrated in the Gritten painting, this wall could be rebuilt to complete the farmyard enclosure.

(h) Stone feature at Center Circle – only a small rock outcrop is visible today. Archaeological investigation is required to ascertain the composition of this stone element.

Essential restoration would require the entry gate and Academy Street wall, the fence at the Cottage entrance, and the picket fence around the Kitchen Garden to be first priority projects. All other items under this heading could be accomplished as secondary considerations.

FOOTNOTES

(1) Warner L. Marsh, *Landscape Vocabulary*, Miramar Publishing Co., Los Angeles, CA, 1964, p 188. "Landscape Garden – A naturalistic style of garden popular in the later part of the 18th and the 19th centuries. It came about as a reaction from the grandiose, formal styles common in England and Europe during the Renaissance and later. The landscape garden style had perhaps its finest development in England under Humphrey (sic) Repton, later in America under Andrew Jackson Downing, the elder Frederick Law Olmsted, and Jens Jenson."

While the term "landscape garden" was first used in England in the 18th century, and continued to be referred to as the product of "landscape gardening" in 19th century America, its meaning emphasized design intent and was somewhat technical for common usage. Other terms were substituted and these related more directly to the function of the landscape, for example, "pleasure grounds," a vernacular term out of favor today often used by Downing and others to differentiate land areas improved and maintained for the purpose of ornamental and leisure use as distinct from agricultural and pastoral areas. The term "demesne," although of French derivation, is of Irish origin. It is used interchangeably with "landscape garden and "pleasure grounds" by Downing, an indication, perhaps, of the prominence and involvement of Irish immigrant gardeners, and Irish influenced landscape gardening, in the Hudson River Valley of Downing's period.

(2) Ibid. "Landscape Architect – A practitioner of the science and art of designing and developing landscapes and gardens. In some states the right to use this designation is restricted by law to licensees."

The term "landscape architect" was first used in America by Calvert Vaux in 1863, more than ten years after Downing's death. Earlier, the term "landscape gardener" was used to describe specialization in landscape design and development. In modern usage A. J. Downing would be called a landscape architect. The two terms are used interchangeably here.

(3) Michael Hugo-Brunt, "Downing and the English Landscape Tradition," Preface to *Cottage Residences*, A. J. Downing (1842), reprint 1850 edition by the Library of Victorian Culture, Watkins Glen, NY, 1967, np

(4) For the most complete biography of Downing see George B. Tatum, A. J. Downing: Arbiter of American Taste, 1815-1852, University Microfilm, pub. No. 11,042, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 1950 Also: Arthur Channing Downs, Jr. "Downing's Newburgh Villa," *APT Journal*, The Association of Preservation Technology, Toronto, Canada, Vol. IV, Nos. 3-4, 1972. Mr. Downs has also completed a comprehensive biography of Downing in manuscript form and has assembled considerable

information regarding Downing and his career. This work has not been published and is not currently available for study.
***2015 Note: See Bibliography, below, for recent references re: A. J. Downing.**

(5) J. E. Spingard, "Henry Winthrop Sargent and the Early History of Landscape Gardening and Ornamental Horticulture in Dutchess County, New York," *Year Book*: Dutchess County Historical Society, Vol. 22, 1937, p. 42. Downing's friend, painter Raphael (or Rafael) Hoyle (1803-1838) was probably an important influence in encouraging Downing's artistic attitudes and landscape design approach. *** 2015 Note: see recent works on A. J. Downing in Bibliography.**

(6) George Tatum, "The Emergence of an American School of Landscape Design," *Historic Preservation*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1973, p 34.

(7) *Cottage Residences*, 1842; *Fruits and Fruit Trees of America*, 1845; *Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850.

(8) Ann Leighton, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 1986, pp 145-46.

(9) David Schuyler, "Gems of Home Beauty on a Small Scale: Aspects of the Victorian Garden in America, 1840-1870," *Catalogue of Old Lancaster Antique Show*, Lancaster, PA, 1983.

(10) George Tatum, "The Emergence. . ," pp. 34-41.

(11) Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, New York, NY 1867. Biographical information regarding Matthew Vassar including in this Report is based primarily on Lossing's work.

(12) List of Vassar's library books provided to the author by J. Opdycke.

(13) John W. Ward, "The Politics of Design," *Who Designs America?,* Anchor Books, Garden City, NY 1966, p 54.

(14) Walter L. Creese, *The Crowning of the American Landscape: Eight Great Spaces and their Buildings*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1986, pp 45-98. Also: James T.Callow, *Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 1967. Also: Hans Huth, *Nature and the American*, University of California, Berkeley, 1957, Chapter 3, "The Romantic Period" and Chapter 4 "Play and Rest."

(15) James D. Kornwolf, "The Picturesque and Landscape Before 1800," *British and American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century*, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 1984, pp 93-106.

(16) U. P. Hedrick, *A History of Horticulture in America to 1860*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 1950, pp 186-211.

(17) A. J. Downing, *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, (1841), 6th ed., 1859, reprint: Funk and Wagnalls, New York, NY, 1967, p 25.

(18) Ibid., p 29.

(19) Lancelot "Capability" Brown and Humphry Repton can also be associated with the picturesque approach, though application of Picturesque design themes was limited because of the clients and situations addressed by these earlier landscape gardeners.

(20) Both the Beautiful and the Picturesque design modes were used during the pre-Civil War period and, in the Hudson River Valley, both functioned within generalized picturesque sensibilities. Typically picturesque settings lent themselves to Picturesque gardening, but even when design was undertaken in a Beautiful mode the dominance of the picturesque natural setting often overwhelmed the visual experience and resulted in reinforcing picturesque appreciation. It is interesting to note that many writers in the period use the terms picturesque and beautiful interchangeably, an indication of the sense of unity that was commonly seen between what others found technically divergent. For the layman, the picturesque Hudson River Valley was beautiful. The picturesque persuasion was fully appropriate to America's environmental condition. Picturesque sensibilities were triggered by the romantic sentiments that gained fashion in the early decades of the 19th century and were reinforced by liberal political views, beginning with American independence itself. David Chase, in his excellent essay, "The Beginnings of Landscape Tradition in America," *Historic Preservation*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, Vol. 25, No. 1, 1973, provides further evidence that the prevailing attitudes in landscape gardening in the decades of Downing's youth were inclined toward a reliance on picturesque effects. John Adams, for example, is quoted by Mr. Chase as asserting in the late 18th century the "nobility" of America's natural circumstances which are described as superior to those of England as the basis for landscape gardening. The artist William Birch is quoted by Mr. Chase as commenting that the beauty of American country residences is more in the "situation" and that the need for "expenditures of Art is not so great as in Countries less favored," this from Birch's 1808 publication, *The Country Seats of the United States of America*. In a like way, Washington Irving is quoted by Mr. Chase from his 1820 *Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.,* describing English landscape gardening with

a decided emphasis on the Picturesque elements nearly ignoring man-made effects and structures in praise of fully natural themes. Mr. Chase summarizes: "Virtually unlimited expanses of natural scenery provided easy opportunity for translating the ideals acquired from literary and pictorial sources into landscape settings for country houses." Without using the work, Mr. Chase is here identifying a reliance on picturesque considerations over any blatantly man-made, artistic effort.

(21) Robert M. Toole, "Inventory and Evaluation – Landscape Architecture in the Sixteen Mile and Clermont Estates Historic Districts," professional report for Hudson River Shorelands Task Force, Red Hook, NY, 1980.

(22) Alexander Pope, "An Epistle to Lord Burlington," London, England, 1731.

(23) Humphry Repton, *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening*, London, England, 1795, p 76.

(24) Bernard McMahon, *American Gardener's Calendar*, (1806), 11th ed., 1857, reprint: Funk & Wagnalls, New York, NY 1976, p 74.

(25) Andre Parmentier, "Landscapes and Picturesque Gardens," *The New American Gardener*, Thomas G. Fessenden, ed., Boston, MA, 1828, pp 184-85.

(26) Most of the older Hudson River Valley landscape gardens were not altered significantly before the Civil War. Even then the romantic/picturesque approach persisted, as at Olana, Frederic Church's landscape garden composition developed in the period 1860-1890. Some properties were altered significantly after the Civil War. The Locust property in Staatsburg, Dutchess County, for example, was originally a romantic/picturesque landscape established from 1812 by James Duane Livingston and in 1835 by William Emmet, who built an early Gothic Revival house. The property was purchased by W. B. Dinsmore in 1854 and transformed into an elaborate Victorian display landscape after the Civil War. Likewise, Lyndhurst, the National Trust property at Tarrytown, NY experienced a landscape transformation from the romantic/picturesque to Gardenesque/Victorian themes when the property was purchased in 1864 by George Merritt after the site's original development by William and Philip Paulding in 1838.

(27) T. H. D. Turner, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens,* p 345.

(28) Dr. Brent Elliott, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, p 171.

(29) J C. Loudon, *On the Layout, Planting and Managing of Cemeteries* (1843), reprint: Ivelet Book, Ltd. Redhill, Surrey, England, 1981.

Also:

James Curl, "John Claudius Loudon and the Garden Cemetery Movement," *Garden History*, The Garden History Society, London, England, Vol. II, No. 2, Autumn, 1983, pp 133-156.

(30) A. J. Downing, *Landscape Gardening*, 2nd ed., 1844, p 26. While not included in the first edition of 1841 this evaluation was made in the 2nd edition and in subsequent editions.

(31) J. E. Spingarn, "Henry Winthrop Sargent . . ., p 58. The quote is from Downing's *Landscape Gardening*, 1st edition, 1841. The comment was omitted from subsequent editions.

(32) A. J. Downing, *Landscape Gardening*, 1st edition, 1841, preface.

(33) See under "Loudon," "Picturesque," and "Gardenesque" in *The Oxford Companion to Gardens.*

(34) Ann Leighton, *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, p 574.

(35) Downing's embrace of Loudon's ideas on landscape design has been criticized. See, for example: Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving*, NY, 1944: "There was much of the rococo that later seemed absurd in Downing," p 364; and Norman Newton, *Design on the Land*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1974: "So far as actual work is concerned, Downing offered no particular system or method, nor do the examples shown in illustrations of what he did or admired appear materially different from what was then being done by the gardenesque school in England," pp 264-65.

(36) J. E. Spingarn, "Henry Winthrop Sargent . . .," p 53.

(37) Poughkeepsie's older burial grounds were overcrowded. The situation was described locally as follows: "The different benevolent associations have been waiting . . . to purchase a separate plot for the burial of their dead, most of our churches are anxious to have a cemetery (sic) established because they have no ground of their own, and eight out of every ten of our citizens generally are in want of some spot to lay their heads when they "sleep the sleep that knows no waking." *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 4/5/1851. Poughkeepsie's problems were typical of many older eastern communities. The resulting trend to develop larger, non-sectarian cemeteries outside built-up centers has been termed the "Rural Cemetery Movement."

(38) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 1/5/1850.

(39) Quotes from the committee's report (May 29, 1850), reported in the *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 6/1/1850.

(40) Ibid.

(41) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 7/3/1850.

(42) Ibid., 9/4/1850.

(43) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 9/7/1850.

(44) Ibid., 4/5/1851.

(45) Downing had written an article on rural cemetery development in the periodical, *The Horticulturist*, July 1849. Vassar may have read the piece and otherwise have known of Downing's work.

(46) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 12/7/1850.

(47) Matthew Vassar, Jr., diary entry, 11/25/1850.

(48) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 12/7/1850. The dual objective of cemetery or residential use confuses somewhat a clear understanding of Vassar's earliest intentions for the site. The design does suggest a cemetery scheme (see Chapter 3, DESIGN DESCRIPTION). In turn, it seems from the December 1850 report that Vassar may have received some criticism for his self-directed improvements on what was to be a public project.

(49) Downing, in his article, called the building a "barn stable." In an attempt to standardize nomenclature, reference to Springside and its component parts used in this report utilizes names taken primarily from *Vassar College and Its Founder*, Benson J. Lossing, 1867. Components not actually designated with formal names by Lossing are used here with quotation marks to identify names used informally in Lossing's text or suggested for the purpose of this report. See Figure 10, Design Elements, 1852 and fold-out Map A.

(50) A. J. Downing, *The Horticulturist*, 2/1/1851, p 98.

(51) Letter, Matthew Vassar to Benson J. Lossing, 2/4/1867. In this quotation, Vassar may have been eluding to all improvements, including changes made after Downing's death, that was Springside in 1867, not 1852.

(52) Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, 1867, p 63.

(53) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 4/16/1851. "One-third (or 15 acres)" of the property are described as being prepared for cemetery use and the "residue of

the grounds" is considered future development area. Later, a description is offered that "one half [the total site] is devoted to pleasure and ornamental grounds" – unidentified newspaper article, n.d. The "15 acres" corresponds closely to the site area between Academy Street and the architectural demarcation line, an area that would have served the burial needs of the Village of Poughkeepsie for many decades.

(54) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 12/7/1850.

(55) Ibid.

(56) Ibid.

(57) Ibid.

(58) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 4/16/1851.

(59) Ibid.

(60) E. Jacob, *Map of Poughkeepsie*, 1857 (see Figure 7).

(61) The Springside design included crucial boundary definition and a major drive would not likely be located so close to the property line. In turn, a boundary access road would have been typical of the site's previous agricultural use. The North Boundary Road may be a remnant from that previous use.

(62) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 4/9/1851.

(63) See E. Jacob, *Map of Springside*, c. 1857-68 (Figure 8).

(64) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 5/27/1851.

(65) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 6/14/1851.

(66) Ibid., 6/12/1852. "The name now adapted for these premises is (sic) significantly and appropriately 'Springside' from the fact that it abounds in springs of water."

(67) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 5/8/1852.

(68) Ibid.

(69) "Ode to Springside," anonymous author, *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 6/12/1852. (see frontispiece of this report).

(70) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 7/10/1852.

(71) By mid-June 1852 it was reported that the site "originally purchased by [Vassar] for a public cemetery, and which have since been improved for a private residence." *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 6/12/1852. A new cemetery committee was formed with Matthew Vassar as a member in late 1852 and a site purchased in May of 1853. This is today the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery across the Rout 9 arterial from Springside (see Figure 1).

(72) Calvert Vaux, Villas and Cottages, 1st edition, 1857, 2nd edition, 1864, reprint: Dover Press, New York, NY, 1970, p 300. Referring to Springside: "In country places of this size it is sometimes thought necessary to aim at increased artistic effects by a copious introduction of architectural ornament at the salient points about the grounds; and . . . the result is seldom agreeable." These sentiments express criticism of Vassar's alteration to Springside, specifically, and of the Gardenesque style generally.

(73) U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *Designation Report, Springside National Historic Landmark*, 1969.

(74) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 1/5/1850.

(75) Ibid., 6/12/1852.

(76) Ibid., 5/8/1852. The concept of "paradise" is closely linked to garden history. In fact the word itself is derived from a Greek word meaning "garden."

(77) Reference to "art" is as used by Downing and his contemporaries and synonymous with "design." The preface "rural" as in "rural art" connotes the mix of "artful" (i.e., designed) elements (architecture, landscape architecture, furnishings) that would be combined in residential life.

(78) *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, 5/14/1851.

(79) A. J. Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America* (1st edition, 1841), 6th ed., 1859, p 59.

(80) Ibid., p 54.

(81) Ibid.

(82) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 6/1/1850.

(83) Ibid., 7/6/1850.

(84) Ibid., 7/10/1852.

(85) There is no evidence that the Deer Park was established by the end of 1852. An early mention of "deer-pens" is recorded in 1857. The extent and details of the Deer Park, including location of related structures and fence lines, are not known from available documentation.

(86) Ellen McClelland Lesser, "The Lawn Mower and Its Influence on 19th Century Landscape Design," draft, unpublished article, 1987. "Cutting grass with a scythe was a costly and labor intensive activity, undertaken at two week intervals during the growing season at great effort. Grazing animals could keep the grass in better condition at a fraction of the cost and were thought to have the additional benefit of enlivening the scene."

(87) Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, 1867. Describing the original site, Lossing says: "A quaint, old farm-house stood near a fine spring, a close by it was Dutch barn," p 60. There is also an engraving entitled "Springside in 1851," that seems to show the Spring Gable situation, if the spring shown is the so-called Willow Spring.

(88) As the evergreen trees grew they would have created eye-level screening in perhaps 7 to 10 years (i.e., 1859-62). This condition might have prompted removal of some trees.

(89) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 7/31/1852.

(90) Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, 1868, pp 77-78.

(91) *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, 12/7/1850. ". . . we reached the main entrance, at the junction of a ravine, where is located a tasteful artificial pool or pond."

(92) Ibid., 7/31/1852.

(93) Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*, Penguin Book, NY 1958, p 104, see also pp 102-107, 256-57.

(94) Arthur Channing Downs, Jr., "Downing's Newburgh Villa," *APT Journal*, Vol. IV, Nos. 3-4, 1972.

(95) A. J. Downing, *Landscape Gardening* (1841), Section IX, "Landscape or Rural Architecture."

(96) Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, 1867, p 6. "From the design of Mr. Downing, a porter's lodge, barn, carriage-house, ice house and dairy-room, granary, an aviary for wild and domestic fowls, an apiary, a spacious conservatory and neat gardener's cottage, and a log cabin . . . were

erected." There is no evidence that the last four structures listed were built before Downing's death in July 1852, they do not appear on the Gritten paintings. In addition, there is no separate corroboration that the designs for all the structures listed were by Downing himself.

(97) Calvert Vaux, *Villas and Cottages* (1857), 2nd ed., 1864, p 299. "A roomy coach-house and stable illustrated in the last edition of Downing's cottage residence," Vaux then lists other buildings saying they "have been erected from time to time." This reference does not explicitly cite Downing as the sole designer, but it seems to be implied.

(98) Letter: Jane B. Davies to Prof. Thomas J. McCormack, 4/17/1968, reprinted in *Springside – A Partnership with the Environment*, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, pp 27-28. "There is no trace of any Vaux influence [in the design of the Springside Cottage], which is apparent in the heavier proportions of the later designs made by the Downing & Vaux firm."

(99) Other examples include: "The Point" (Hoyt House), Staatsburg and several examples in Downing's neighborhood in Newburgh. Many others are scattered through the Hudson Valley.

(100) C. Vaux, *Villas and Cottages*, p 299.

(101) Letter: George Tatum to Prof. Thomas J. McCormack, 3/11/1968, reprinted in *Springside – A Partnership with the Environment*, 1968, p 24.

(102) Ibid.

(103) Since this analysis, recording site conditions in the spring of 1985, residential site development has taken place, beginning in 1986. Today, a "Primary Access Road" to that development has been constructed across the Springside National Historic Landmark using the original north entry gate as a point of access onto Academy Street and then following the general route of Summit Avenue to the South Entrance area where the modern road curves through the site of the original Entrance Pond to the South Avenue, crosses the brook and leads into the development area south of the National Historic Landmark. Residential units have been constructed just south of the Springside property line. The recent development has had a significant impact on the historic landscape. Most notable in this regard is the obliteration of the site of the Entrance Pond which would have been a focal element of a restored South Entrance. The residential units south of the historic landscape could be screened from the Springside site in the buffer zone (varies 50 to 100 feet wide) between the brook and the south line of the National Historic Landmark.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Selected source material in **bold typeface** at the end of each section generally post-date the 1987 Historic Landscape Report but have relevance, and are added here as updates.

Project Related:

Specific references directly or indirectly cited in this report are included in this section.

Brooks, Van Wyck, "Downing and the New Taste for Landscape," *Landscape Architecture*, Vol. 35, No. 2:77, January, 1945.

_____, *The World of Washington Irving*, New York, NY 1944.

Callow, James T., *Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855*, University Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 1967.

Chase, David B., "The Beginnings of the Landscape Tradition in America," Historic Preservation, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, Vol. 25, No. 1, 1973.

Downing, Andrew Jackson, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America, with a View to the Improvement of Country Residences*, 1st ed., Wiley and Putnam, New York, NY, 1841. Reprint: 6th ed., (1859), Funk and Wagnalls, New York, NY 1967.

_____., *Cottage Residences, Rural Architecture and Landscape Gardening*, 1st ed., Wiley and Putnam, New York, NY, 1842. Reprint: Library of Victorian Culture, Watkins Glen, NY 1967.

_____., *The Fruit Trees of America*, 1st ed., Wiley and Putnam, New York, NY. 1845.

_____., untitled article related to "rural cemeteries." From *The Horticulturist*, Albany, NY, July 1849

_____., *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1st ed., D. Appleton & Co., New York, NY, 1850. Reprint: Dover, New York, NY, 1968.

_____., "Our Frontispiece" (describing the Springside Coach House/Stable). From *The Horticulturist*, Albany, NY, February 1, 1851.

_____., editor (1846-1852), *The Horticulturist – Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste*, Albany, NY.

_____., G. W. Curtis, ed., *Rural Essays*, Putnam Co., New York, NY, 1853. Reprint: Da Capo, New York, NY, 1974.

Downs, Arthur Channing, Jr., "Downing's Newburgh Villa," *APT Journal*, The Association of Preservation Technology, Toronto, Canada, Vol. IV, Nos. 3-4, 1972.

Dutchess County Department of Planning, *Springside, A Partnership with the Environment*, Poughkeepsie, NY 1968. Note especially: Lynes, Russell, "The Smiling Lawns and Tasteful Cottages of Andrew Jackson Downing." Original publication: *Harper's Bazaar*, Sept., 1953; and Baldwin, Sarah Laird, "Mr. Vassar and the Hand of Taste." Original publication: *Vassar Alumnae Magazine*, May 1955.

Goode, Patrick and Lancaster, Michael, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 1986.

Hedrick, U. P., *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York*, State Agricultural Society, Geneva, NY, 1933.

_____, *A History of Horticulture in America to 1860*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 1950.

Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*, Penguin Book, New York, NY1958.

Huth, Hans, *Nature and the American*, University Press, Berkeley, CA, 1957.

Kornwolf, James D., "The Picturesque in the American Garden and Landscape before 1800," *British and American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century*, Colonial Williamsburg, VA, 1984.

Lesser, Ellen McClelland, "The Lawn Mower and Its Influence on 19th Century Landscape Design," unpublished article, 1987.

Letters: to M. Vassar from B. J. Lossing, 2/2/1867.*
to B. J. Lossing from M. Vassar, 2/4/1867.*

Lossing, Benson J., *Vassar College and Its Founder*, New York, NY 1867.

Loudon, John Claudius, *Encyclopedia of Gardening*, London, England, 1822.

_____., *Repton's Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture*, London, England, 1840.

_____., *On the Laying Out, Planting and Managing of Cemeteries and on the Improvement of Churchyards*, London, England, 1843.

Maps:

Map of Property (Springside), by W. C. Jones, Engineer, c. 1850.*
Map of Poughkeepsie (partial, showing Springside), by E. Jacob, Engineer and Surveyor, 1857.*
Map of Springside, by E. Jacob, Engineer and Surveyor, c. 1857-1868.*
Map of Springside, from B. J. Losssing, *Vassar College and Its Founder*, 1867.

Marsh, Warner L., *Landscape Vocabulary*, Miramar Publishing Co., Los Angeles, CA, 1964.

McMahon, Bernard, *American Gardener's Calendar*, 1st ed., 1806, 11th ed. 1857. Reprint entitled: *McMahon's American Gardener*, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, NY 1976.

National Park Service, *Designation Report, Springside National Historic Landmark*, U. S. Department of Interior, Washington, DC, 1969.

Newspapers: *Poughkeepsie Eagle* and *Poughkeepsie Telegraph*, Poughkeepsie, NY (selected articles from 1/5/1850 through 7/31/1852).*

*Note: Listings in this section, marked with an asterisk, connote materials supplied to the author of this report by T. Allred and J. Opdycke whose independent research related to Springside has been of importance to the formulation of this report. Full references and source data for some of these entries is, however, not available to the author at this time. R.M.T., 3/1987.

Newton, Norman T., *Design on the Land*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1974.

Parmentier, Andre, "Landscapes and Picturesque Gardens," *New American Gardener*, Thomas G. Fessenden, ed., Boston, MA 1828, pp 184-85.

Pope, Alexander, *Epistle to Lord Burlington*, London, England, 1731.

Repton, Humphry, *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening*, London, England, 1795.

_____., *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, London, England, 1803.

_____., *An Enquiry into the Changes of Taste in Landscape Gardening with some Observations on Its Theory and Practice*, London, England, 1806.

_____., *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening,* London, England, 1816.

Schuyler, David, "Gems of Home Beauty on a Small Scale – Aspects of the Victorian Garden in America, 1840-1870," *Catalogue of Old Lancaster Antique Show*, Lancaster, PA, 1983.

Spingard, Joel E., "Henry Winthrop Sargent and the Early History of Landscape Gardening and Ornamental Horticulture in Dutchess County, New York," *Yearbook*, Dutchess County Historical Society, Vol. 22, 1937, pp 36-70.

Tatum, George B., "Andrew Jackson Downing, Arbiter of American Taste, 1815-1852," University Microfilm, pub. No. 11,042, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 1950.

_____., "New Introduction to Rural Essays." Reprint of *Rural Essays* by A. J. Downing (G. W. Curtis, ed.) DaCapo, New York, NY 1974.

_____., "The Emergence of an American School of Landscape Design," *Historic Preservation,* National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1974.

_____., Transcript of lecture delivered at Lyndhurst, Tarrytown, NY, June 20, 1970.

Toole, Robert M., "Evaluation Report for Restoration and Proposed Development at the Springside National Historic Landmark," professional report for Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. and Scenic Hudson, Inc., January 28, 1984.

_____., "Inventory and Evaluation: Landscape Architecture in the Sixteen Mile Historic District and Clermont Estates Historic District, on the Hudson River, New York," unpublished report for the Hudson River Shorelands Task Force, Red Hook, NY, 1980.

Ward, John Williams, "The Politics of Design," *Who Designs America?*, Anchor Books, New York, NY, 1966.

Vaux, Calvert, *Villas and Cottages*, Harper & Brothers, New York, NY, 1857. Reprint: 2nd ed., (1863) Dover, New York, NY, 1970.

Added to 2015 reprint:

Schuyler, David, *Apostle of Taste, Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore Maryland, 1996. A comprehensive biography, including discussion of Springside (pp 164-70).

Tatum, George B. and MacDougall, Elizabeth Blair, eds. *Prophet with Honor, The Career of Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852*, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC,

1989. Explores the career of A. J. Downing, including a discussion of Springside (pp219-57).

Toole, Robert M., *Landscape Gardens on the Hudson*, Blackdome Press, Hensonville, NY, 2010. This volume provides a full background on landscape gardening in the Hudson Valley and includes a chapter on the Springside project (pp 127-36).

_____., "Springside: A. J. Downing's Only Extant Garden," *Journal of Garden History*, London, England and Philadelphia, PA, Vol. 9, No. 1, January-March 1989, pp 20-39. This article summarized the 1987 Historic Landscape Report.

1. Background, Hudson River Valley

The particular social, cultural and physical situation of the Hudson River Valley, as it relates to the Romantic period, is a focus of references included in this section.

Blossom, Harold H., "Andrew Jackson Downing, Landscape Architect," *American Magazine of Art*, Vol. 8, May 1917.

Bryant, William Cullen, ed., *Picturesque America* (2 vols.), D. Appleton & Co., New York, NY, 1873.

Carmer, Carl, *The Hudson*, Grosset and Dunlap, New York, NY, 1968.

_____., "The Lordly Hudson," *American Heritage Magazine*, October, 1958.

Creese, Walter L., *The Crowning of the American Landscape*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1986. Chapter on the Hudson Valley, pp 45-98.

Ellis, David M., *Landlords and Farmers of the Hudson-Mohawk Region*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 1946.

Gekle, William F., *The Lower Reaches of the Hudson River*, Wyvern House, Poughkeepsie, NY, 1982.

Howat, John K., *The Hudson River and Its Painters*, American Legacy Press, New York, NY, 1972.

Hugo-Brunt, Michael, "Downing and the English Landscape Tradition," Preface to *Cottage Residences* (A. J. Downing, 1842). Reprint: Library of Victorian Culture, Watkins Glen, NY, 1967.

Johnson, J. Stewart, "Introduction," reprint of *Architecture of Country Houses* (A. J. Downing, 1850). Reprint: DaCapo, New York, NY, 1969.

Major, Judith K., "The Downing Letters," *Landscape Architecture*, Louisville, KY, Vol. 75, No. 1, January/February 1986.

O'Brien, Raymond J., *American Sublime: Landscape and Scenery of the Lower Hudson Valley*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY, 1981.

Pattee, S. L., "A. J. Downing and the American Landscape," *Landscape Architecture*, Louisburg, KY, January 1929.

Poe, Edgar Allen, "The Domain of Arnheim" and "Landor's Cottage" from *The Works of Edgar Allen Poe*, Walter J. Black, Inc. New York, NY 1927.

Schermerhorn, Richard Jr., "Andrew Jackson Downing, the First American Landscape Architect," *House and Garden*, Vol. 16, pp 43-46, 1909.

_____., "Early American Landscape Architecture," *Architectural Review*, Vol. 12, pp 105-111, 1921.

_____., "Country Places of Old New York," *Bulletin of the Horticultural Society of New York,* New York, NY, 1923, pp 473-85.

_____., "Homes and Gardens of Old New York: Colonial Gardens: The Landscape Architecture of George Washington's Times," George Washington Bicentennial Commission, Washington, DC, 1932.

Schuyler, David, "The Sanctified Landscape – Scenic Values and Historic Preservation in the mid-Hudson Valley, 1820-1850," draft article, 1985.

Shepard, Paul Jr., "The Cross Valley Syndrome," *Landscape*, Santa Fe, NM, Vol. 10, No. 3, Spring 1961.

Shopsin, William C. and Marcus, G.B. eds, *Saving Large Estates*, Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1977. Note especially: Cawley, Frederick D., "Conservation of the Historic Landscape," pp 27-31. Also, Toole, Kenneth R., "Estate Conservation and Land Use Planning in Dutchess County, New York," pp 138-149.

Simond, John O., "An Appreciation," Preface to *Landscape Gardening* (A. J. Downing, 6th ed., 1859, reprint: Funk & Wagnalls, New York, NY 1967.

Toole, Robert M., "Roots of the America's Suburban Landscape Style," *NAHO Magazine*, New York State Museum, State University of New York, Albany, NY, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1980.

_____., "The Point," *NAHO Magazine*, New York State Museum, State University of New York, Albany, NY, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1984.

Van Zandt, Roland, ed., *Chronicles of the Hudson: Three Centuries of Traveller's Accounts*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 1971.

Willis, Nathaniel Parker, *Letters from Under the Bridge*, C. Scribner, New York, NY, 1853.

_____., *Out-Doors at Idlewild*, C. Scribner, New York, NY, 1855.

Added to 2015 reprint:

Major, Judith K., *To Live in the New World, A. J. Downing and American Landscape Gardening,* M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997. Discusses A. J. Downing within the cultural context of his era.

Schuyler, David, *The Sanctified Landscape*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2012. Discusses A. J. Downing within the cultural context of his era.

Sweeting, Adam, *Reading Houses and Building Books, Andrew Jackson Downing and the Architecture of Popular Antebellum Literature, 1835-1855*, University Press of New England, Hanover, NH: 1996. Brief discussion of Springside (pp 33-35).

2. Background: Garden History

These sources define the themes of landscape garden design in the Hudson River Valley within the broadest sweep of garden history.

Adams, William Howard, *French Gardens 1500-1800*, G. Braziller, New York, NY, 1979.

Appleton, Jay, "Some Thoughts on the Geology of the Picturesque," *Journal of Garden History*, London, England and Philadelphia, PA, Vol. 6, No. 3, July-September 1986, pp270-91.

Berrall, Julia S., *The Garden, An Illustrated History*, Penguin Books, London, England, 1966.

Clark, H. F., *The English Landscape Garden*, Bannister, London, England, 1948.

Clifford, Derek, *A History of Garden Design*, Praeger, New York, NY, 1962.

Cowell, F. R. *The Garden as a Fine Art,* Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA, 1978.

Curl, James S., "John Claudius Loudon and the Garden Cemetery Movement," *Garden History*, Garden History Society, London, England, Vol. II, No. 2, Autumn 1983.

Fleming, Lawrence and Gore, Alan, *The English Garden*, Michael Joseph, Ltd., London, England, 1979.

Hunt, John D. and Willis, Peter, ed., The Genius of the Place – *The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820*, Paul Elek, Ltd., London, England, 1975.

Hussey, Christopher, *English Gardens and Landscapes 1700-1750*, Westcastle, London, England, 1967.

Hyams, Edward, *The English Garden*, London, England, 1964.

Jackson, J. B., "From Monument to Place," *Landscape*, Santa Fe, NM, Vol. 17, No. 2, Winter 1967-68.

Jellicoe, Geoffrey and Jellicoe, Susan, *The Landscape of Man*, Thames and Hudson, Ltd., London, England, 1975.

Kassler, Elizabeth B., *Modern Gardens and the Landscape,* The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, 1964.

Lees, Carlton B., "The Golden Age of Horticulture," *Historic Preservation*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, Vol. 24, No. 4, 1972.

Leighton, Ann, *American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA, 1976.

Lockwood, Alice G. E., ed., *Gardens of Colony and State – Gardens and Gardeners of the American Colonies and of the Republic Before 1840*, 2 Vols., Scribners, New York, NY 1931.

Maccubbin, Robert P. and Martin, Peter, eds., *British and American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 1984.

Manks, Dorothy S., ed., *America's Garden Heritage: Explorers, Plantsmen, and Gardens of Yesterday – The Origin of American Horticulture, Plants and Gardens*, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn, NY, 1968.

Martin, Peter, *Pursuing Innocent Pleasures – The Gardening World of Alexander Pope*, Archon Books, Hamden, CT, 1884.

O'Malley, Therese, "Landscape Gardening in the Early National Period," *Views and Visions, American Landscape Before 1830*, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 1986.

Pevsner, Nikolaus, ed., *The Picturesque Garden and Its Influences Outside the British Isles*, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC, 1974.

Reps, John W., "Downing and the Washington Mall," *Landscape*, Santa Fe, NM, Vol. 16, No. 3, Spring 1967.

Schuyler, David, "The Evolution of the Anglo-American Rural Cemetery: Landscape Architecture as Social and Cultural History," *Journal of Garden History*, London, England, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1984.

Scott-James, Anne and Lancaster, Osbert, *The Pleasure Garden*, Penguin, New York, NY, 1979.

Thacker, Christopher, *The History of Gardens*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1979.

Van Mello, P. J., "Andrew Jackson Downing, Landscape Gardener 1815-1852," *Garden Club of America Bulletin*, Vol. 41, No. 5, pp 15-19, September 1953.

Ward, Alan and Linden-Ward, Blanche, "Spring Grove Cemetery," *Landscape Architecture*, Louisville, KY, Vol. 75, No. 5, September-October, 1985.

Added to 2015 reprint:

Adams, William Howard, *Nature Perfected: Gardens Through History*, Abbeville Press, New York, NY, 1991.

Andrews, Malcolm, *The Search for the Picturesque*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1989.

Barlow Rogers, Elizabeth, *Landscape Design, A Cultural and Architectural History,* Harry N. Abrams, New York, NY, 2001.

Goode, Patrick, and Lancaster, Michael, eds., The Oxford Companion to Gardens, Oxford University Press, New York, NY 1986.

Hunt, John D., *The Picturesque Garden in Europe*, Thames & Hudson, Ltd., London, England, 2002.

Jacques, David, *Georgian Gardens – The Reign of Nature*, Timber Press, Portland, OR, 1983.

Lasdun, Susan, *The English Park*, The Vendome Press, New York, NY, 1992.

Leighton, Ann, *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century, For Comfort and Affluence,* The University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, MA, 1987.

Simo, Melanie L., *Loudon and the Landscape,* Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1988.

3. Background: General

A selection of general studies, many of which include references to A. J. Downing, the Romantic period and the Hudson River Valley landscape gardens, are included in this section.

Andrews, Wayne, *Architecture, Ambition and Americans*, Macmillian, New York, NY, 1964.

Ciampa, Thomas, "The Landscape: Preservation and Restoration," *Preservation Manual*, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Albany, NY, 1984.

Early, James, *Romanticism and American Architecture*, A. S. Barnes, New York, NY 1965.

"First Interpreter of American Beauty: A. J. Downing and the Planned Landscape," *Landscape*, Santa Fe, NM, Vol. 1, No. 3, Winter 1952.

Fogle, Richard H. ed., *The Romantic Movement in American Writing*, Odyssey, New York, NY, 1966.

Gifford, Don, ed., *The Literature of Architecture*, Dutton, New York, NY, 1966.

Gloag, John, *Images of American Housing: Four Centuries of Architecture and Furniture as Cultural Expression*, Wilson/Howe, Philadelphia, PA, 1964.

Harris, Neil, *The Artist in American Society*, Penguin, New York, NY, 1966.

Hipple, Walter John Jr., *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth Century British Aesthetic Theory*, University Press, Carbondale, IL, 1957

Jackson, John B., *American Space: The Centennial Year*, Norton, New York, NY, 1972.

Lynes, Russell, *The Tastemakers*, Dutton, New York, NY, 1949.

Phibbs, John, "An Approach to the Methodology of Recording Historic Landscapes," *Garden History*, Garden History Society, London, England, Vol. II, No. 2, Autumn 1983.

Shepard, Paul, *Man in the Landscape*, Knopt, New York, NY, 1967.

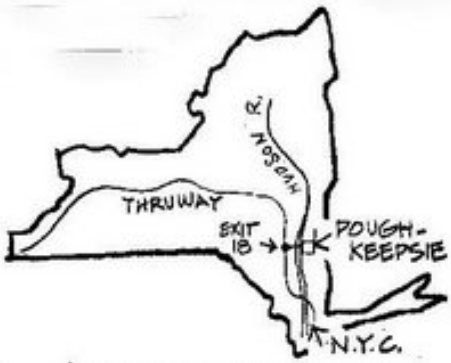
Tunnard, Christopher and Reed, Henry Hope, *American Skyline*, Mentor, New York, NY, 1956.

Added in the 2015 reprint:

Kennedy, Roger G., *Architecture, Men, Women and Money*, Random House, New York, NY, 1986.

Novak, Barbara, *Culture and Nature, American Landscape and Painting, 1825-1875*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 1980.

Pierson, William H. Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects – Technology and the Picturesque*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY 1979.



LOCATION MAP

1852 SPRINGSIDE

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

Figure 1

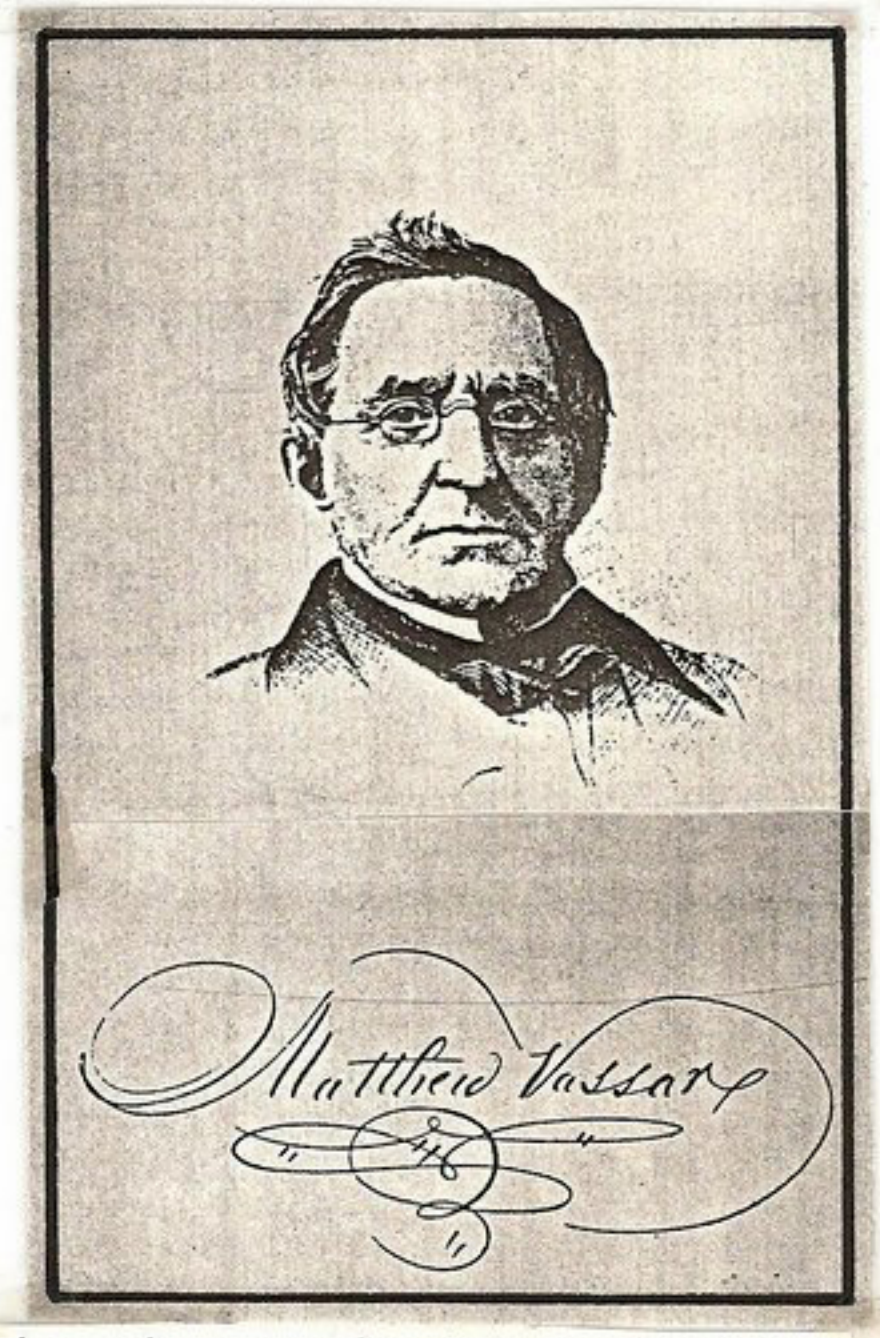


Figure 2 - Engraving from Vassar College and Its Founder, Benson J. Lossing, 1867.

Matthew Vassar
(1792-1868)

Brewer
Businessman
Community Leader
Philanthropist
Developer of Springside
Founder of Vassar College

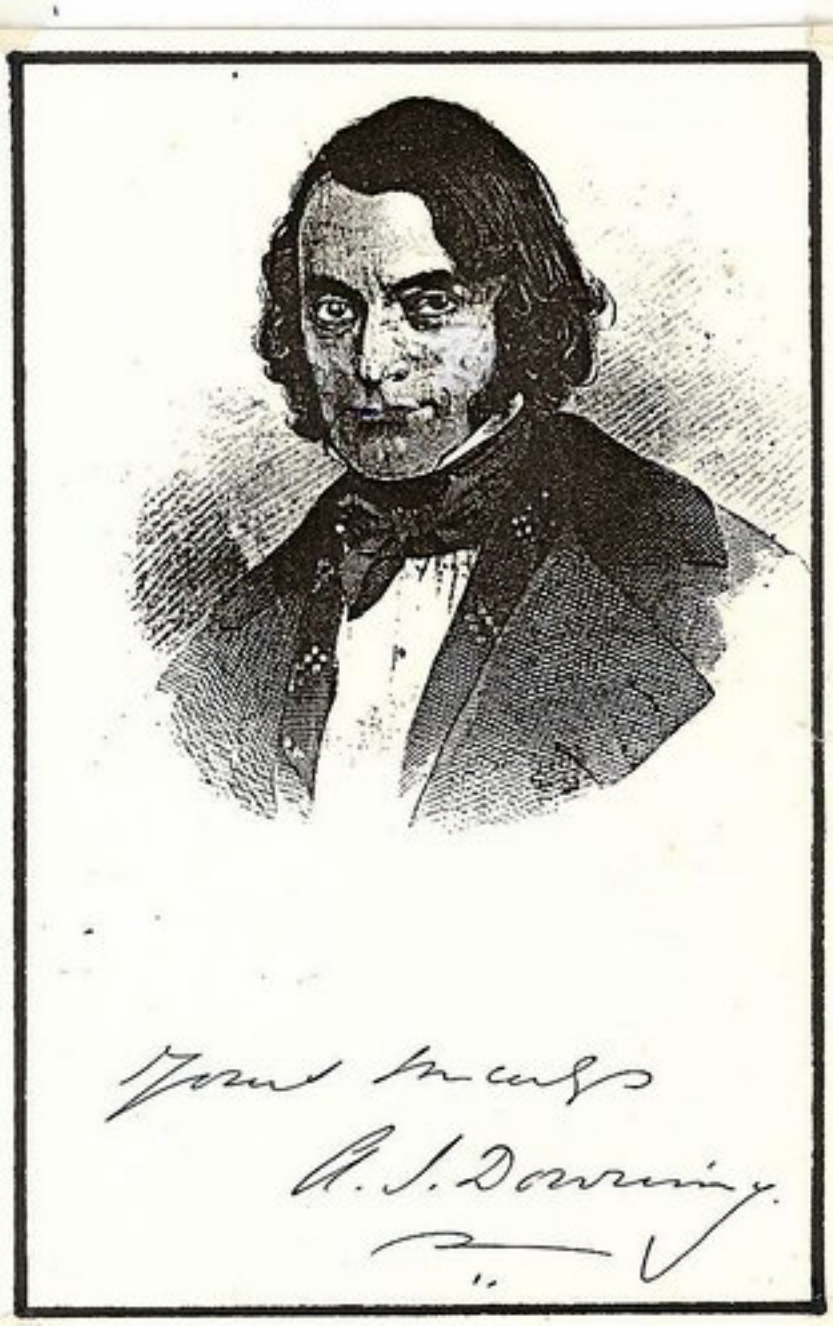


Figure 3 - Engraving from A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, A.J.Downing, Sixth Edition, 1859

Andrew Jackson Downing
(1815-1852)

Nurseryman
Horticulturist/Pomologist
Landscape Architect/Landscape Gardener
Architect
Author/Journalist
National Tastemaker

Figures 2 and 3

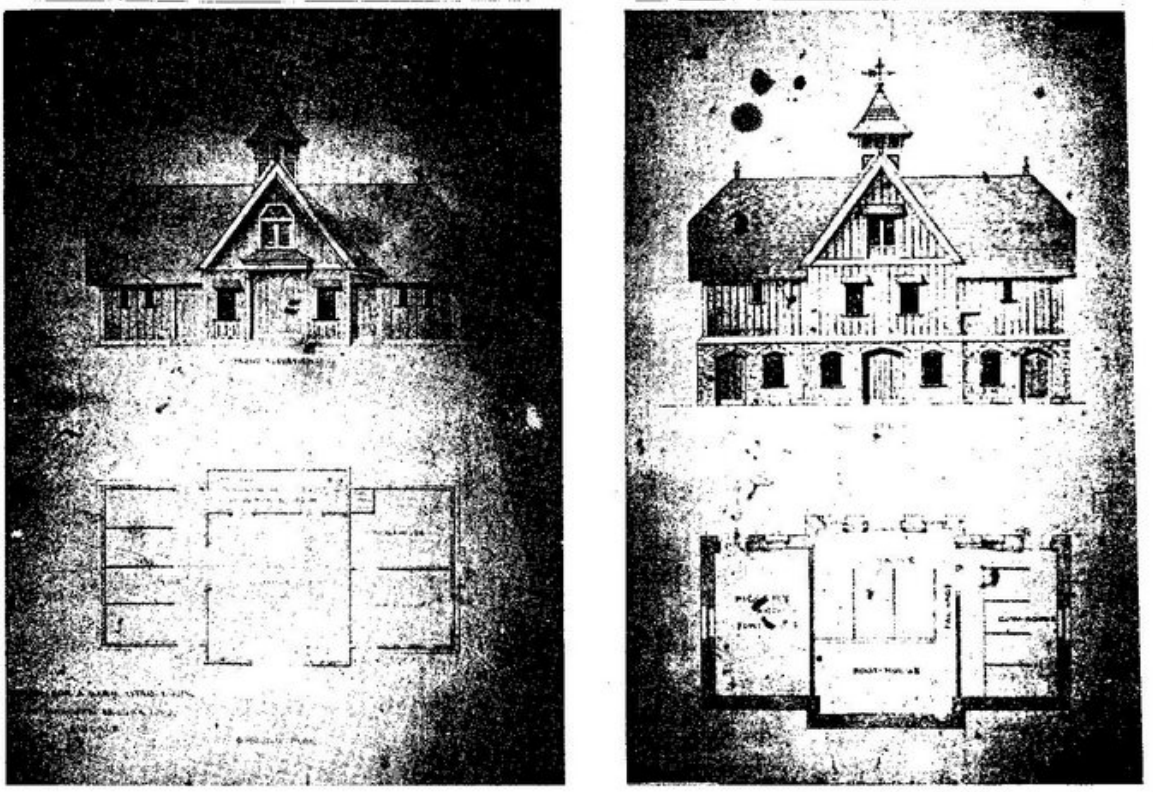


Figure 4 - Plans for the Coach House/Stable, A.J.Downing, 1850
(from Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, p.16)

This design links gothic sentiment with formal massing and symmetry in a classic example of Downing's romantic, Hudson River Valley, "Bracketted" motif. See also photographs, Figures 17 and 18.

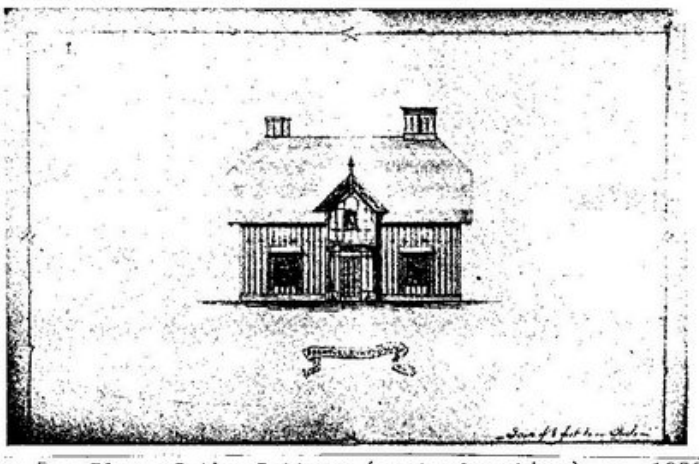


Figure 5 - Plan of the Cottage (east elevation), c. 1850
(from Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, p.16)

Like the Coach House/Stable, the Cottage, Vassar's House, melded gothic whimsy with formal symmetry (see Figure 15). The drawing is not signed and there is some evidence that the graphics may have been by Calvert Vaux.

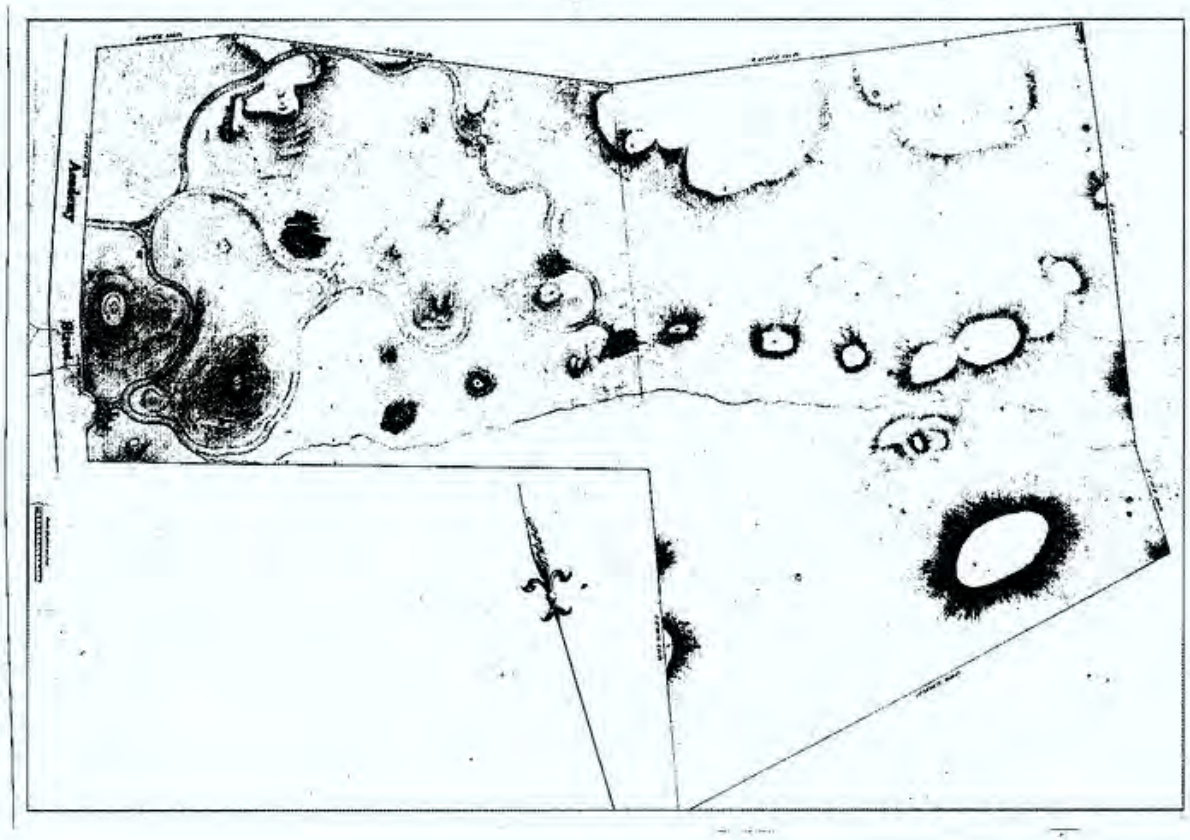


Figure 6

Figure 6 - Map of Property, by W.C.Jones, Engineer. c.1850
(from photocopy of reduced original). Original: Vassar College Library.

Drastically reduced from the original, this badly blurred photocopy only hints at the interesting puzzle represented by the earliest surviving map of the Springside site. Study of the original reveals the landscape and architectural design initially planned for the property, as well as subsequent changes. The left (west) portion of the map is the National Historic Landmark site.

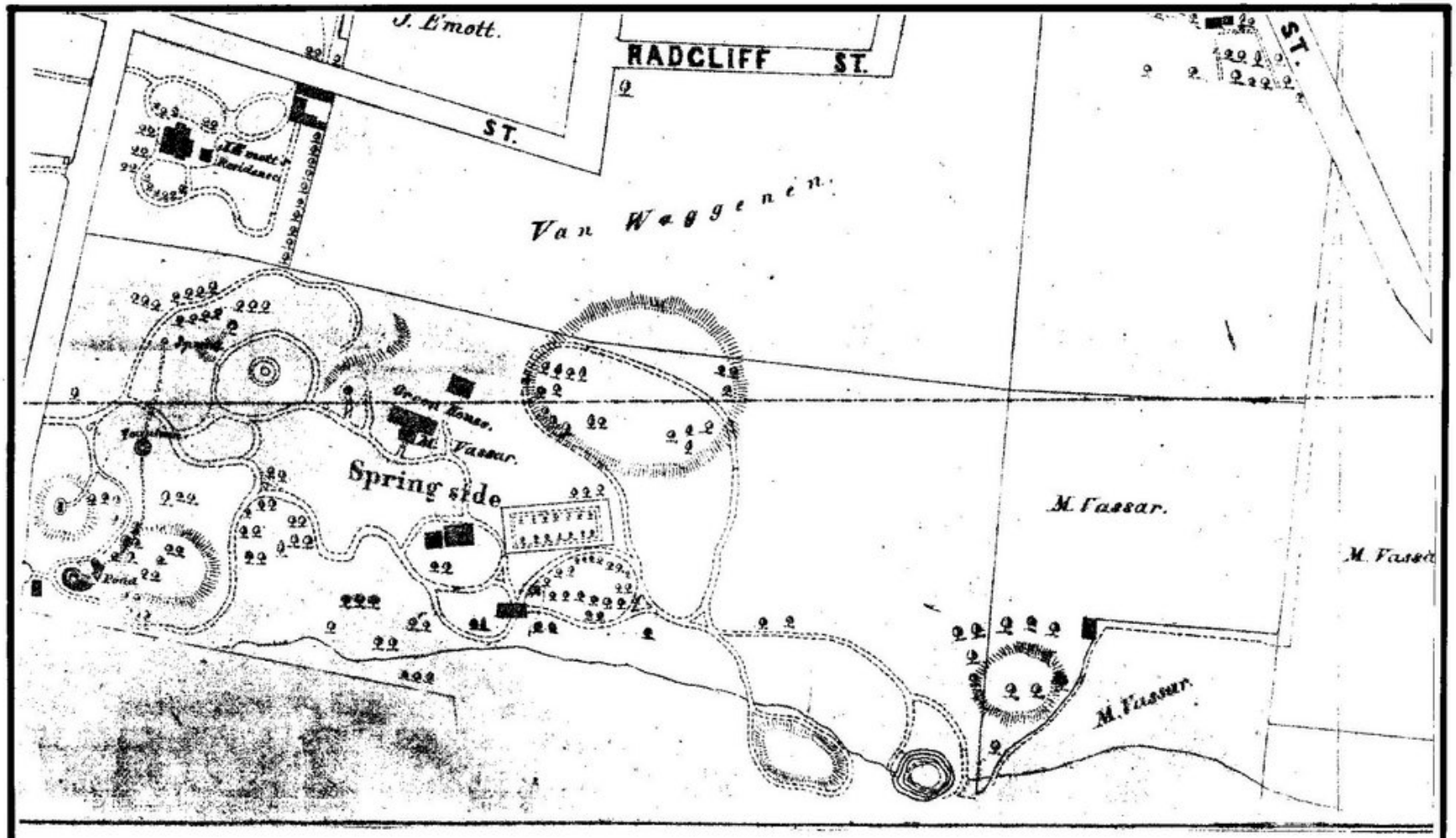


Figure 7 - Portion of a Map of Poughkeepsie, by E. Jacob, Engineer and Surveyor, 1857 (from photocopy of reduced original).

There are a number of questions associated with this haphazard depiction of Springside on a map of Poughkeepsie drafted five years after Downing's death. The basic layout is confirmed, with post-Downing additions, including the greenhouse and gardener's cottage, but much remains unclear. For example, does the circle in Center Circle represent the "glass house" structure? Did the survey party miss the farmyard complex, where only the Coach House/Stable is shown? What is the tiny feature shown as a black circle midway along the path linking Center Circle and the new greenhouse (labelled "M.Vassar")? - could this be the "glass house" moved to a new location?

Figure 7

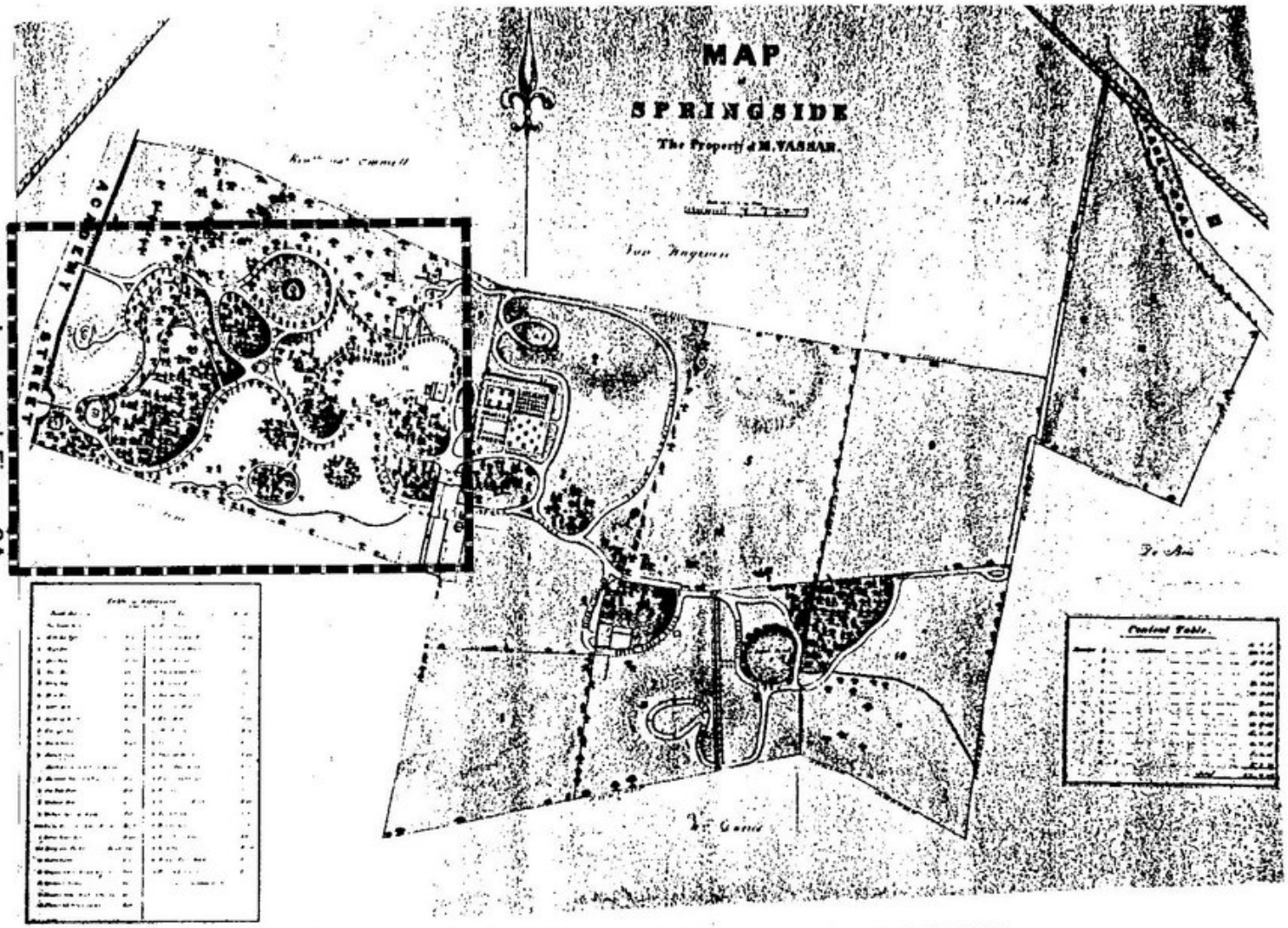


Figure 8 - Map of Springside, by E. Jacob, Engineer and Surveyor, n.d., c.1857-1868
(from photocopy of reduced original. Original: Adriance Memorial Library Historical Room)

While undated, this map may have been drafted in preparation for the biography written by Benson J. Lossing and published in 1867. Mistaken identifications shown here seem to have been left uncorrected by the engraver of the Lossing map (see Figure 9 and Chapter 2, Site History). The National Historic Landmark is shown within the overlaid rectangle (enlarged in Figure 8A). Vassar's land east of the landscape garden was an ornamental farmstead.

Figure 8

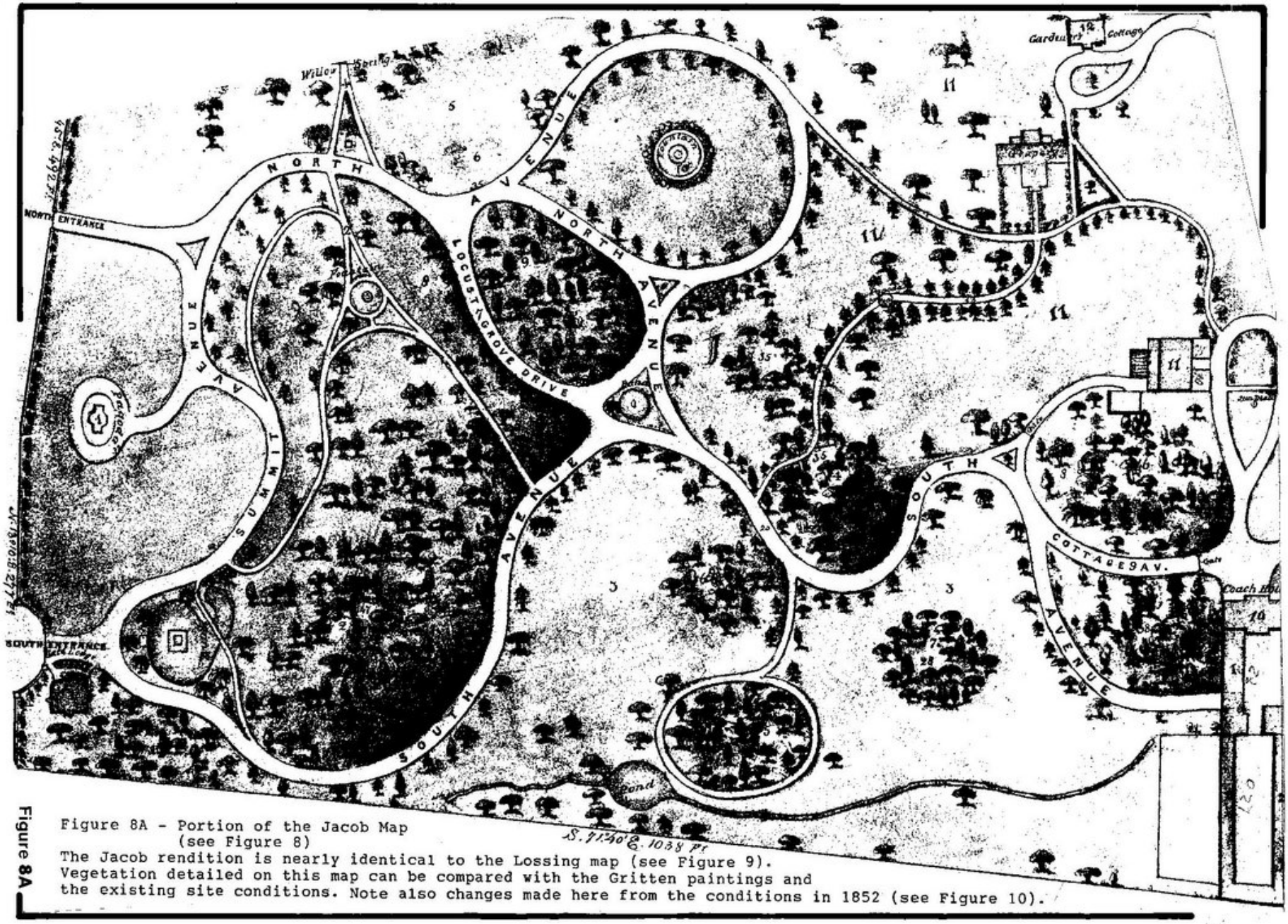
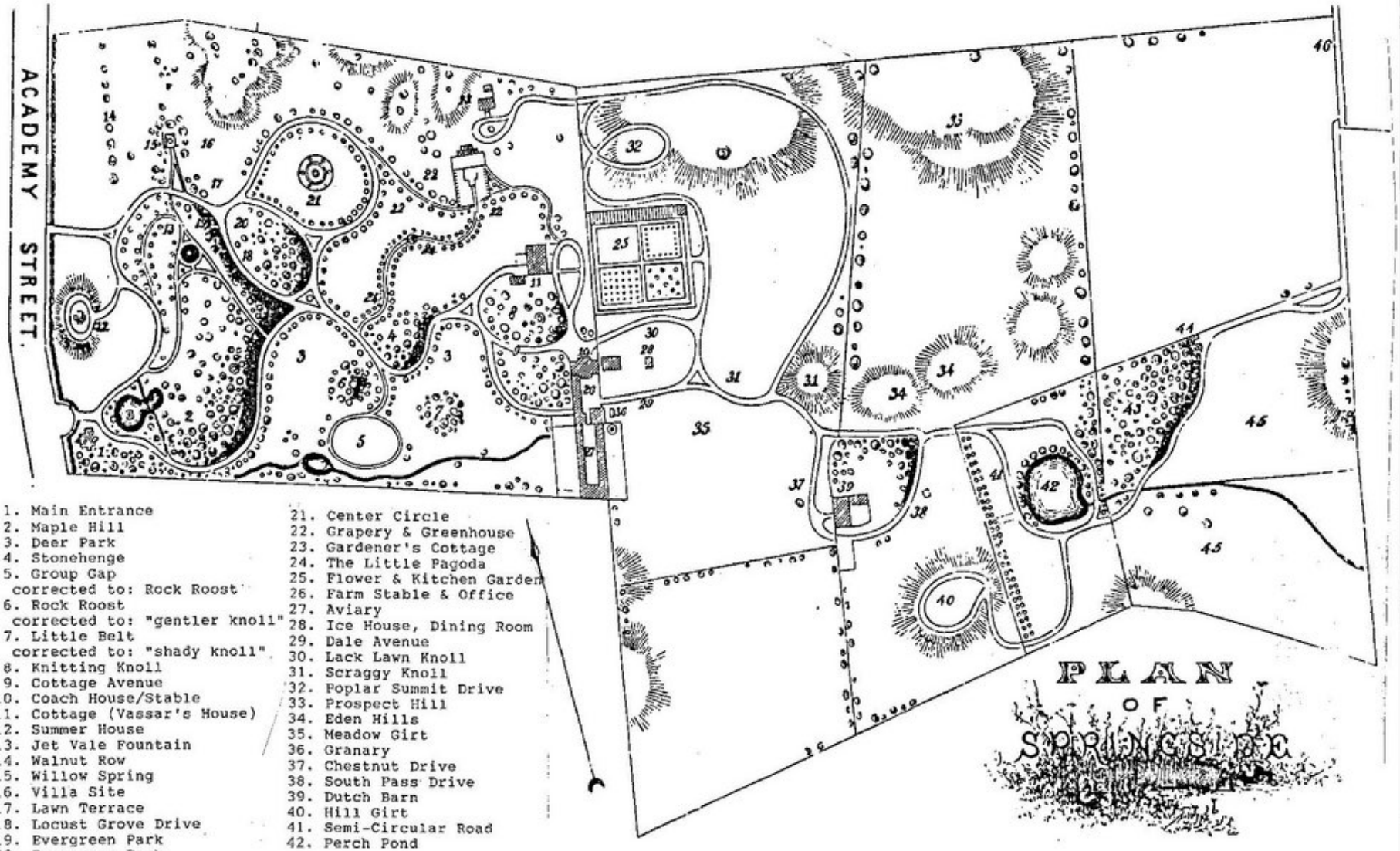


Figure 8A

Figure 8A - Portion of the Jacob Map
(see Figure 8)
The Jacob rendition is nearly identical to the Lossing map (see Figure 9). Vegetation detailed on this map can be compared with the Gritten paintings and the existing site conditions. Note also changes made here from the conditions in 1852 (see Figure 10).



1. Main Entrance
2. Maple Hill
3. Deer Park
4. Stonehenge
5. Group Gap
   corrected to: Rock Roost
6. Rock Roost
   corrected to: "gentler knoll"
7. Little Belt
   corrected to: "shady knoll"
8. Knitting Knoll
9. Cottage Avenue
10. Coach House/Stable
11. Cottage (Vassar's House)
12. Summer House
13. Jet Vale Fountain
14. Walnut Row
15. Willow Spring
16. Villa Site
17. Lawn Terrace
18. Locust Grove Drive
19. Evergreen Park
20. Evergreen Park
21. Center Circle
22. Grapery & Greenhouse
23. Gardener's Cottage
24. The Little Pagoda
25. Flower & Kitchen Garden
26. Farm Stable & Office
27. Aviary
28. Ice House, Dining Room
29. Dale Avenue
30. Lack Lawn Knoll
31. Scraggy Knoll
32. Poplar Summit Drive
33. Prospect Hill
34. Eden Hills
35. Meadow Girt
36. Granary
37. Chestnut Drive
38. South Pass Drive
39. Dutch Barn
40. Hill Girt
41. Semi-Circular Road
42. Perch Pond

Figure 9 - Map of Springside, Benson J. Lossing, 1867
(from photocopy of original, in Vassar College and Its Founder, B.J.Lossing, 1867)

It appears that this map was engraved using the Jacob Map (see Figures 8 and 8A) as a surveyed base. Lossing nomenclature for the landscape components is keyed above. In general, these names have been adopted in this Historic Landscape Report, with modifications as noted (see Figure 10).

Figure 9

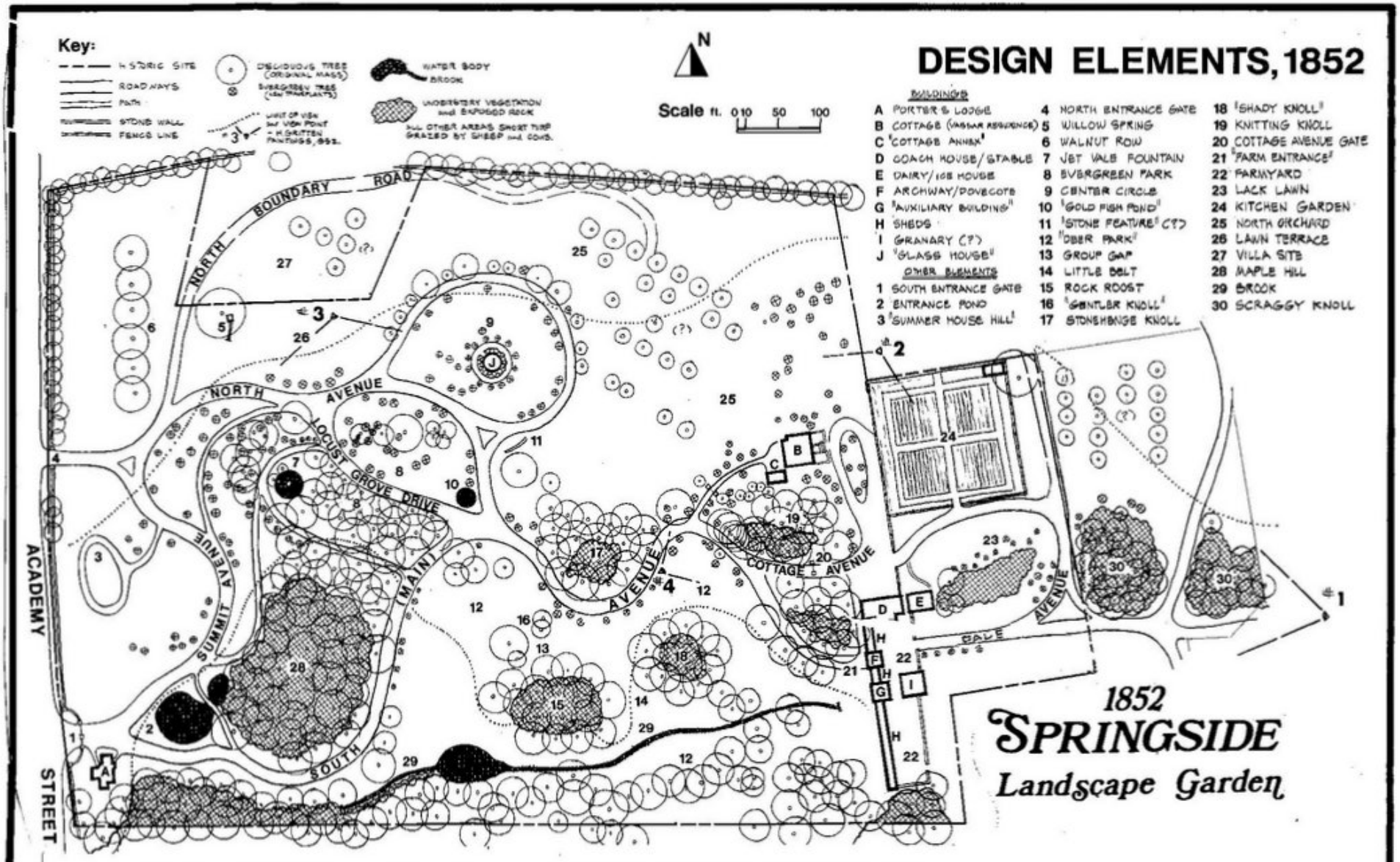


Figure 10 - Historic Elements - 1852, R.M.Toole, Landscape Architect, 1986

This map is based on modern survey information (scale 1"=50' see Figure 22), historic written and cartographic documentation, and the Gritten paintings, as noted. The map illustrates the Springside National Historic Landmark as it is thought to have appeared in the Autumn of 1852. Note the limited features compared with the Lossing Plan of 1867 (see Figure 9). The map also highlights the extensive evergreen plantings and dominance of open ground. This map and the Existing Conditions Map (Figure 22), serve as the basis for the Illustrative Restoration Plan (Figure 23). See fold-out map 'A', scale 1"=50'.

Figure 10

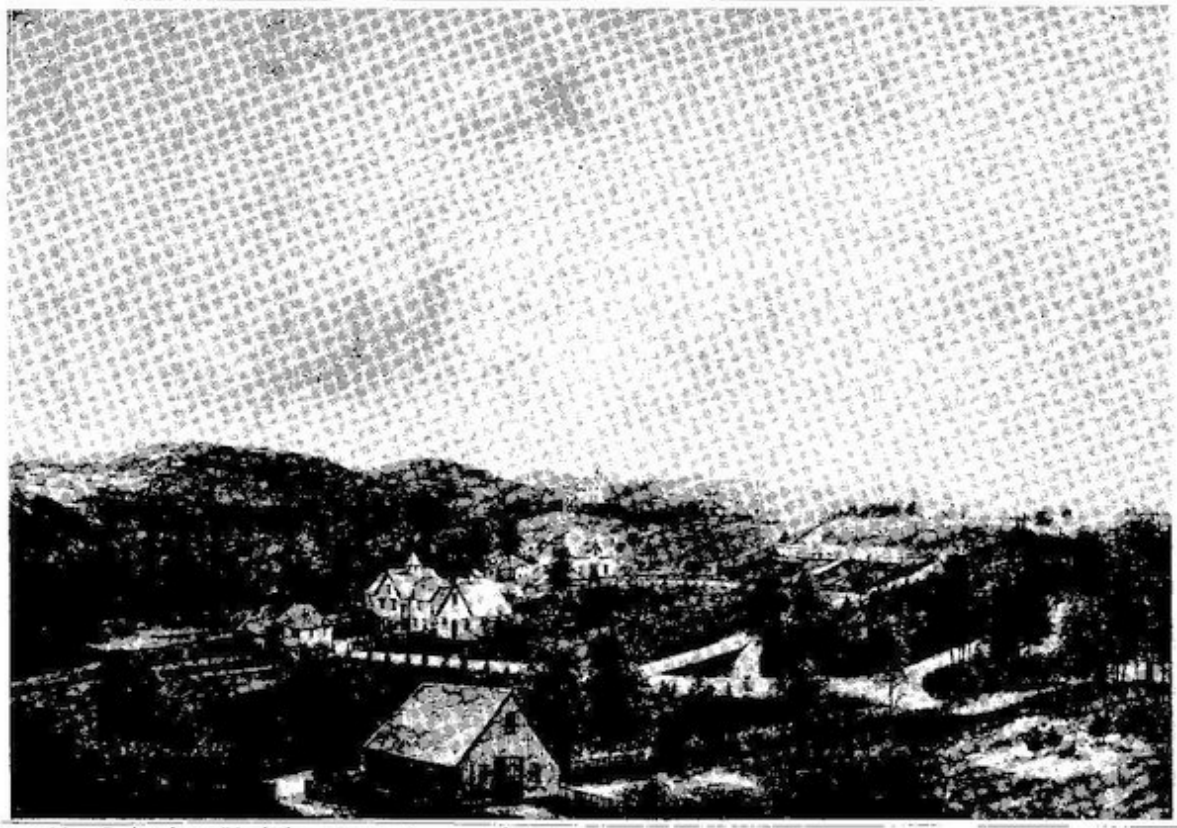


Figure 11 - Painting #1 (View from the east), by Henry Gritten, 1852
(from photocopy of reduced original, in Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, p. 19).

The panoramic view overlooks the farmstead east of the National Historic Landmark. Vassar's Cottage is seen in the rear, center, in front of a neighboring, hilltop building, with the farmyard complex to the left. The view confirms utilitarian aspects of the landscape layout east of the landscape garden preserved today as the National Historic Landmark.

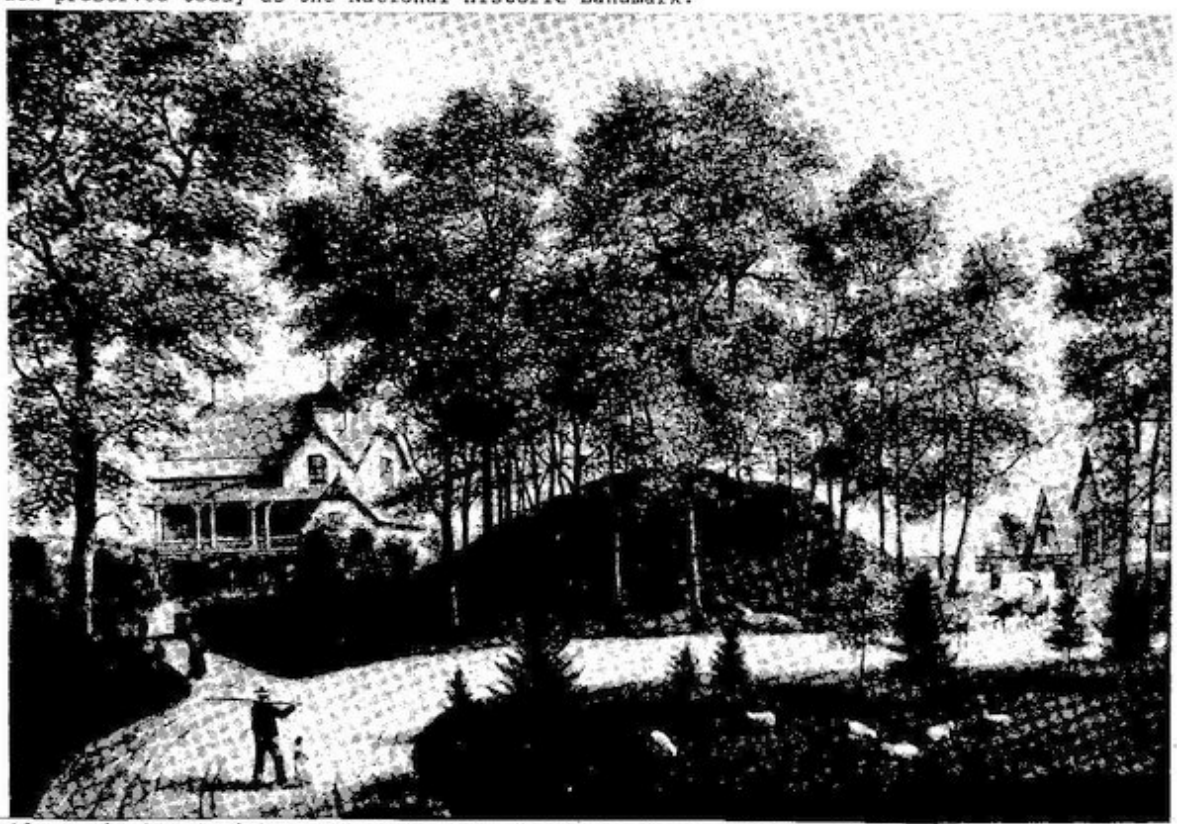


Figure 12 - Painting #4 (View of Cottage from west), by Henry Gritten, 1852
(from photocopy of reduced original, in Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, p. 19).

This view, looking east, shows the interior of the landscape garden with Knitting Knoll set between the Cottage (left) and Coach House/Stable (right). The detailed rendition illustrates animals grazing the area a maintenance practice likely to restrict herbaceous vegetation. Note that the knoll is almost devoid of vegetation under the mature tree canopy.

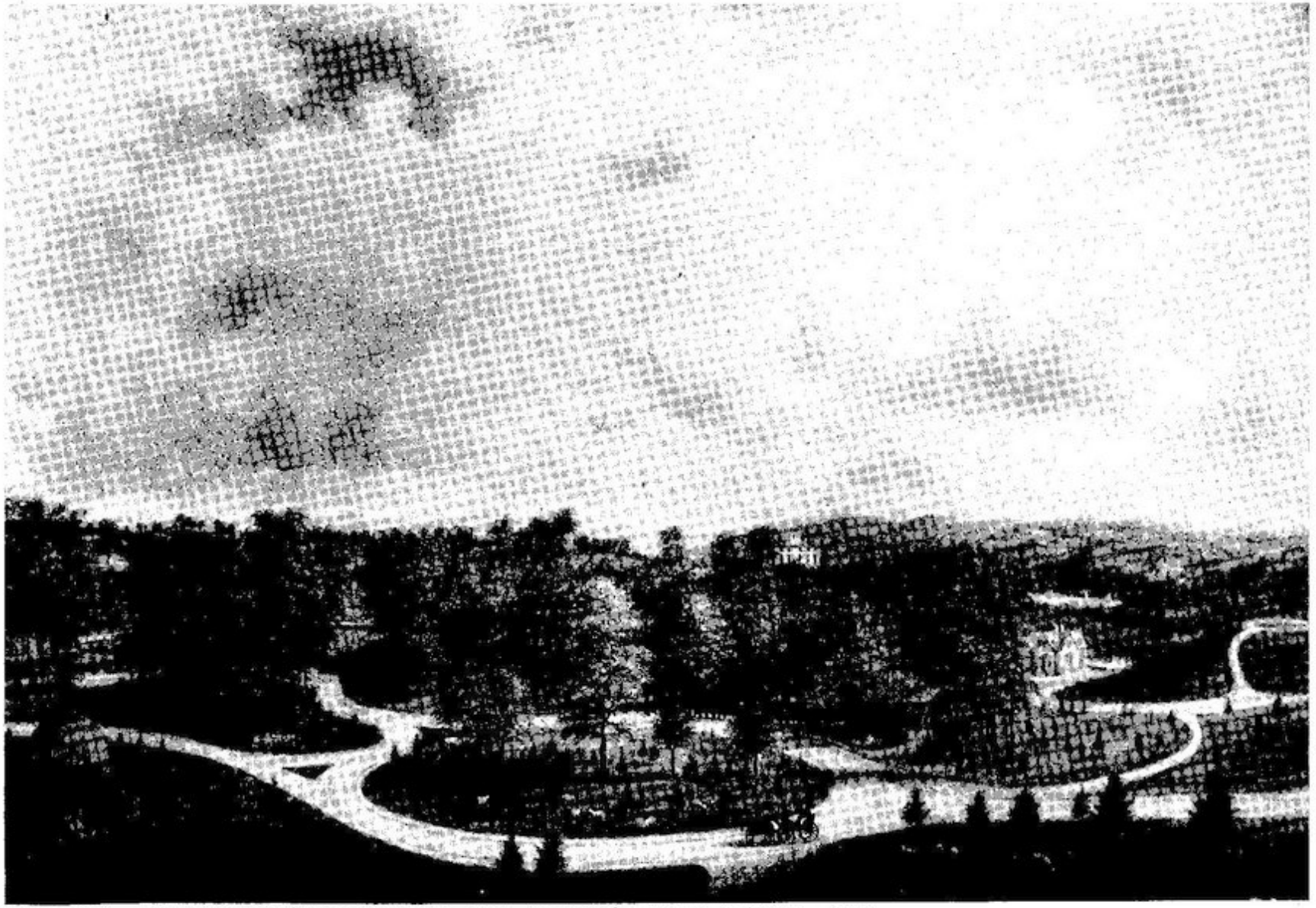


Figure 13 - Painting #3 (View from the Lawn Terrace), Henry Gritten, 1852
(from photocopy of reduced original, in Springside - A Partnership with the Environment, Dutchess County Department of Planning, 1968, p. 17).

This painting represents a comprehensive overview of today's National Historic Landmark site. On the right is "summer house hill" (with later shelter building yet to be constructed). Left of the Porter's Lodge and South Entrance Gate, seen in the distance, Jet Vale is shown with its original path layout. The numerous evergreen trees are shown in detail. A "glass house," otherwise undocumented, is depicted on the far left, ornamenting Center Circle. The turf surface is shown closely cropped by grazing sheep.

Figure 13

Figure 15 - The Cottage, east elevation, Dutchess County Department of Planning (from Landmarks of Dutchess County, 1968, p. 195)

The dormers and chimney placement are notable variants from the drawn elevation (compare Figure 5). The structure was also raised above the grade, necessitating steps not shown on the drawing. Paved areas on either side of the doorway were originally fenced plant beds.

Figure 16 - The Cottage, west frontage (showing the "cottage annex" in lower right), Dutchess County Department of Planning, Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, DCDP, 1968, p.7

In contrast to the simple east facade, the west frontage constitutes a complex ensemble, with exposed basement, veranda (balcony) and juxtiposed "cottage annex" forming an irregular scene, set into a sloping wooded backdrop (see Gritten Painting #4, Figure 12).

Figure 17 - Coach House/Stable, south frontage, Dutchess County Department of Planning,c. 1968

The exposed basement space opens onto the farmyard, while the second level opens onto the grade opposite (see Figure 18, below). Note the remnant roof line of the shed row, on the left, and placement of the Dairy/Ice house, on the right.

Figure 18 - Coach House/Stable, north frontage, Dutchess County Department of Planning, Springside-A Partnership with the Environment, DCDP,1968, p.8

The second level carriage entrance is shown, with the Dairy/Ice House, left. Note the cupola, which provided important ventilation, as well as serving as an architectural ornament, and the hooded windows, a motif common on the Springside buildings. These structures burned shortly after this photograph was taken.

Figure 19 - Dairy/Ice House, south frontage, Dutchess County Department of Planning, c. 1968

The Dairy/Ice House is seen on the far right, juxtiposed with the Coach House/Stable,center. The Archway is on the left. A shed row linked the gateway to the Coach House/Stable across the gap seen here.

Figure 20 - Archway/Dovecote and "auxiliary building," Dutchess County Department of Planning, c. 1968

The proportions and miniature scale of the gateway, with its attic dovecote, responds to the elegant landscape garden lying to the west. Combined with the "auxiliary building" and shed rows, these structures provided an architectural definition along the east side of the garden as shown in the sketch below.

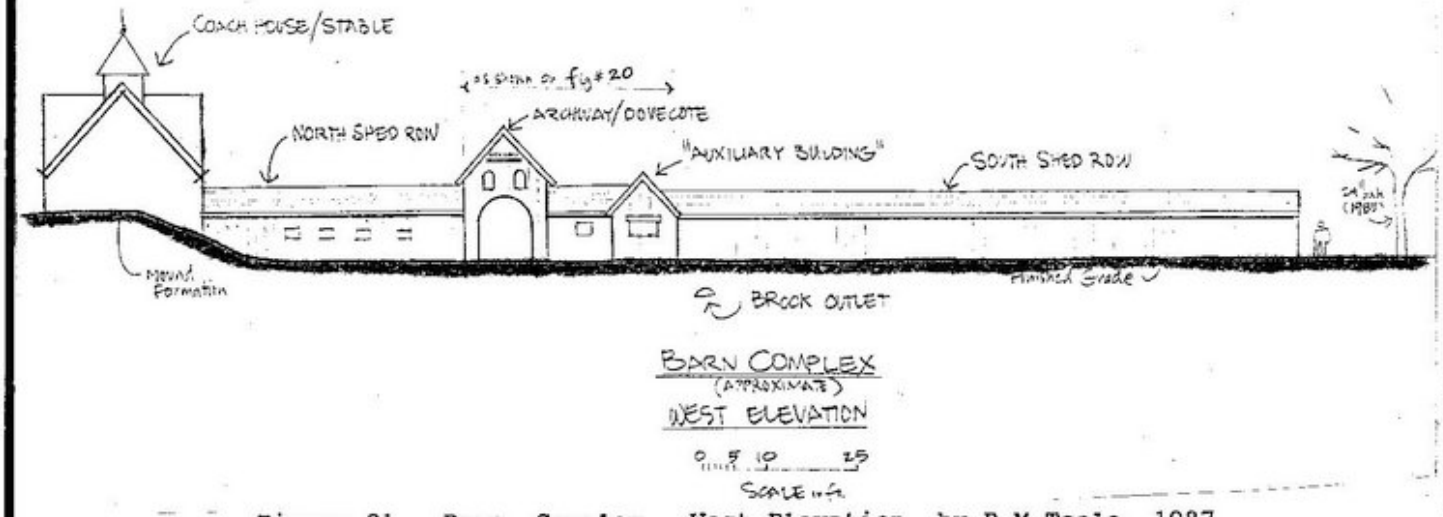


Figure 21 - Barn Complex - West Elevation, by R.M.Toole, 1987.

This sketch elevation shows the elements that combined to form an architectural definition line on the east side of the landscape garden. The definition line continued north as the picket fence that extended along the Kitchen Garden.

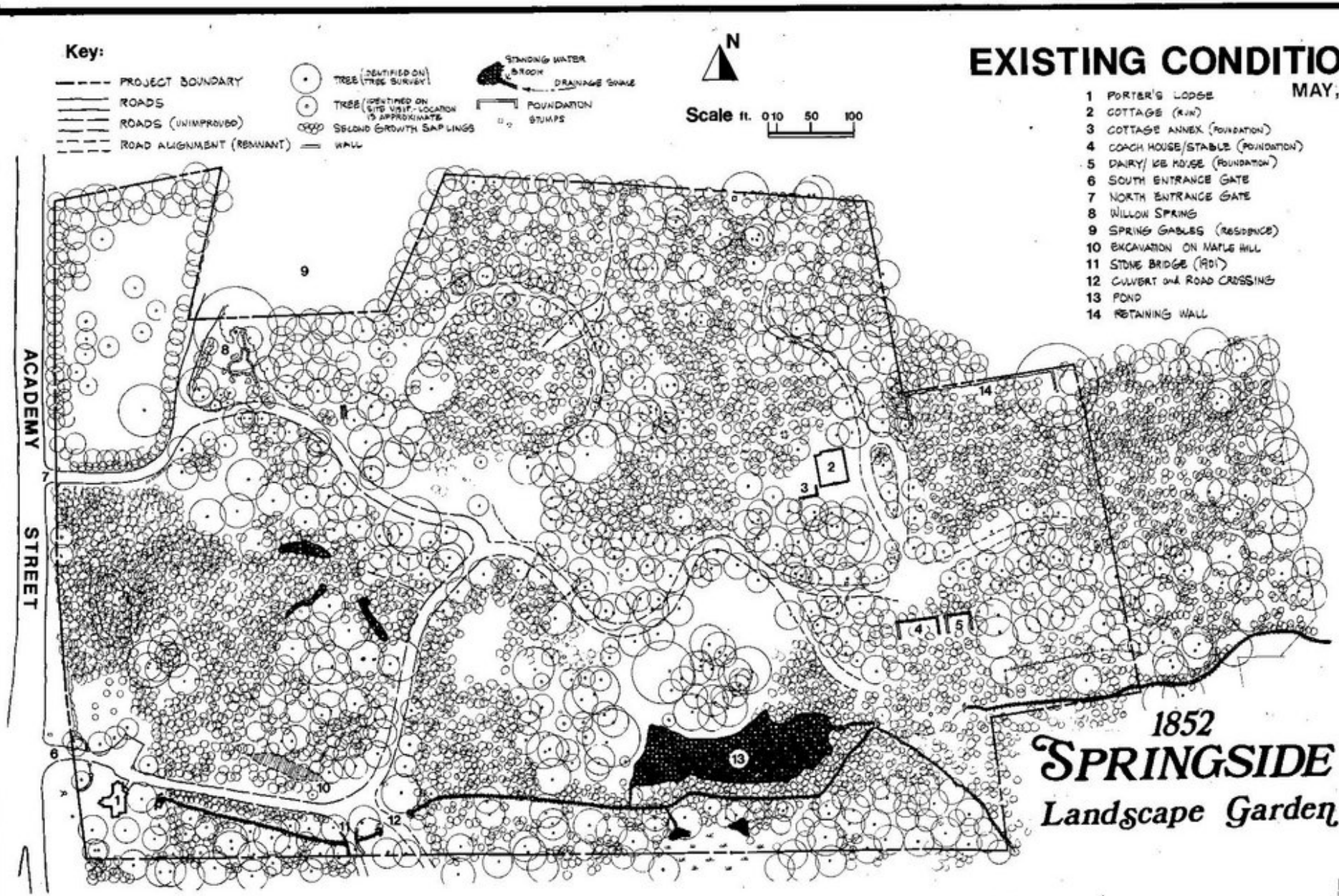


Figure 22 - Existing Conditions, May, 1985, R.M.Toole, Landscape Architect, 1985

This map is based on a survey (scale 1"=50') entitled "Topographic Map by Aerial Photogrammetry," by F.R.Pokorny, Consulting Engineer, 4/7/1973 (revised 7/5/1982) as modified and enhanced by on-site investigation by R.M.Toole, Landscape Architect, 3/1985 (see fold-out Map 'B' - scale 1"=50', 5/15/1985, revised 10/25/1986). The map shows the extent of sapling vegetation, as well as the pattern of the mature tree cover. Note also the remnant roads, architectural remains and standing water. Additional information related to existing conditions is shown on the fold-out map included in this report.

Figure 22

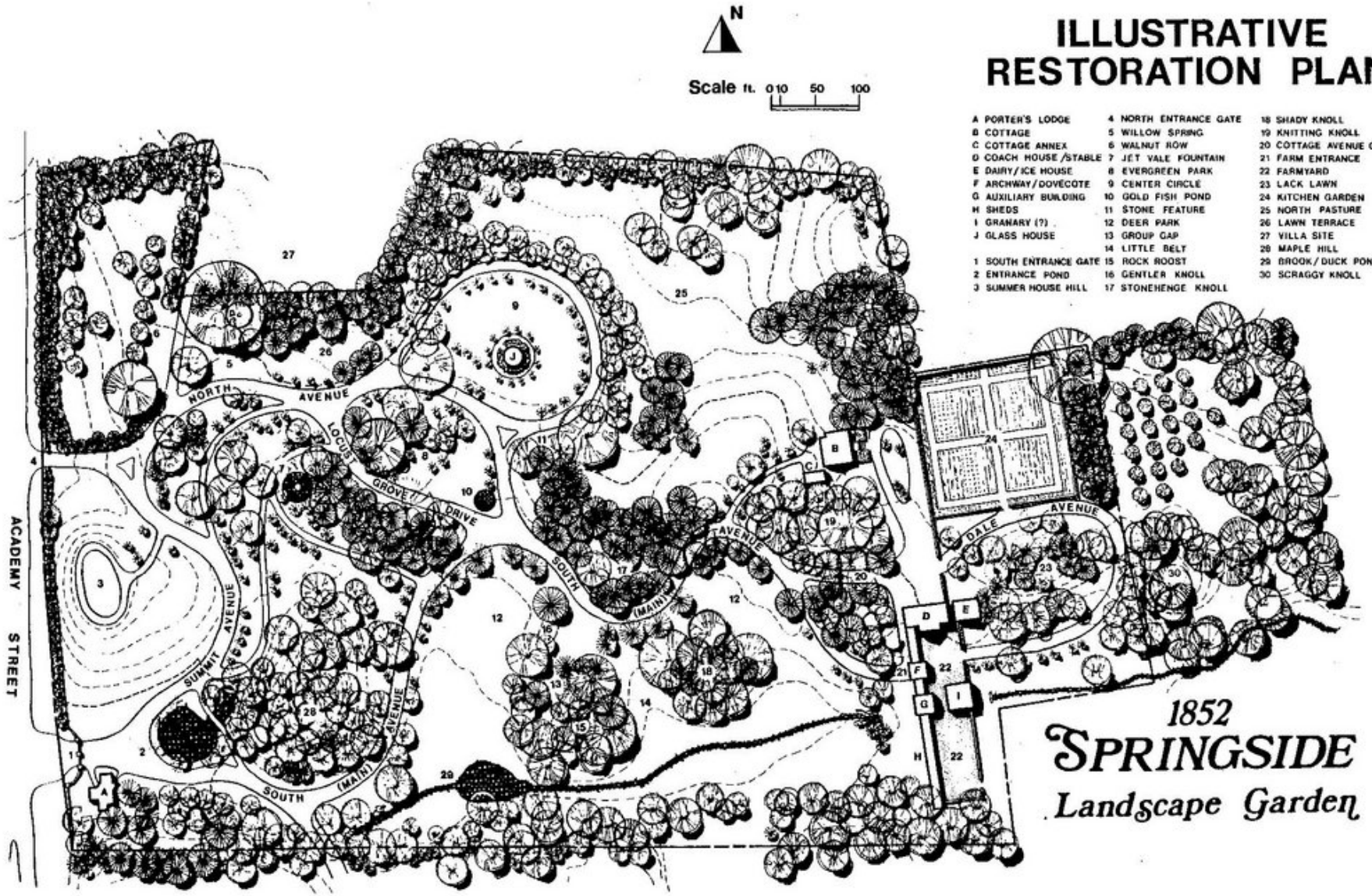


Figure 23 - Illustrative Restoration Plan, R.M.Toole, Landscape Architect, 1986

This map is based on modern survey information (scale 1"=50' see Figure 22), the historical situation as documented and recorded on Figure 10 (Historic Elements - 1852) and the site's present situation illustrated on Figure 22 (Existing Conditions). The map illustrates a restored landscape using the site's present mature tree cover, new plantings, reconstruction of all roads, paths, architectural elements and garden features, as well as replication of water systems and horticultural activities.

Figure 23

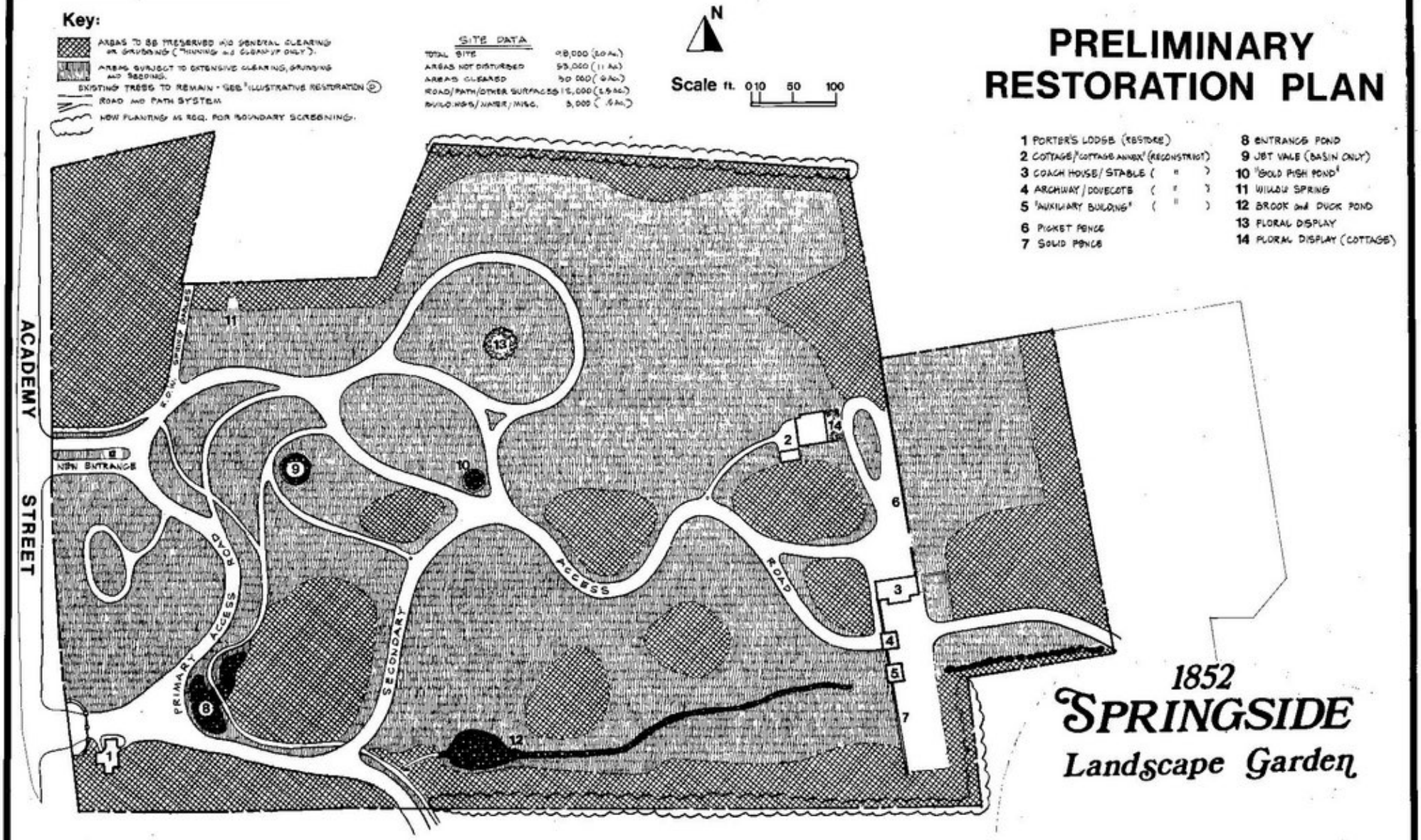


Figure 24 - Preliminary Restoration Plan, R.M.Toole, Landscape Architect, 1986

This schematic plan illustrates renewal of turf surfaces, initial reconstruction of roads, paths, buildings and features, and reestablishment of water systems that would together represent a preliminary restoration of the landscape. Note that the plan indicates a number of secondary restoration considerations, such as delay in reconstruction of some architectural elements and the Kitchen Garden. The plan also suggests a substantial provision for site buffer, using existing and new plantings to screen surroundings. The treatment of the "Primary Access Road" would allow reconstruction of a facsimile of the Entrance Pond (8) and the environs of the Porter's Lodge (1) to stress the visual integrity of the South Entrance Gate.

Figure 24