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Beatrice Farrand and campus landscape at Vassar: pedagogy and practice, 1925-29

YVONNE ELET & VIRGINIA DUNCAN

In 1925, Vassar College, one of America's preeminent women's colleges, hired Beatrice Jones Farrand (1872–1959), arguably the foremost woman landscape architect in the United States, as Consulting Landscape Architect. Farrand was by then well known as the only female founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), celebrated for her domestic commissions and — unusual for a woman at the time — also for her institutional landscape designs, notably at Princeton and Yale. And though she would go on to design for many more campuses, Vassar was her one opportunity to work at a women's college. Vassar hired her on the strength of her work at these Ivy League schools, at a moment of significant campus expansion, charging her with initiating an arboretum, advising on siting new buildings, providing circulation and planting plans for key areas, and a host of minor projects. Her tenure at Vassar was short-lived — just over three years — but in this time, her ideas changed the campus in important ways. Her planting plans were partially realized, leaving surviving traces down to the present, and she was instrumental in initiating the Vassar arboretum, proposing the conception of the entire campus as arboretum — a notion that has come to be central to Vassar's identity.

A full length study of Farrand's campus work remains to be written, and her designs beyond Princeton and Yale have received scant study.¹ These commissions, however, formed a significant aspect of her body of work; as Diana Balmori noted, 'In campus work, [Farrand] created a philosophy of landscaping.'² Farrand herself wrote little about her work and archived little of her correspondence, so it is to campus archives that we must look to understand

her design principles.³ There has been no study of the correspondence between Farrand and her Vassar clients, which survives in the Vassar Archives and Special Collections Library, nor any analysis of her 15 surviving plans and drawings for the campus, now in the Berkeley Environmental Design Archives, of which only one has been published.⁴ Together, they enable a fine-grained portrait of her ideas and working methods for the Vassar campus, as well as the quagmire of obstacles she faced, from the territorial groundskeeper to divergent ideas about her role and authority, which led to a parting of ways.

Moreover, Farrand worked at Vassar during a period of profound social and cultural upheaval over women's roles, amid concerns that educated women were choosing career over marriage and motherhood in unprecedented numbers.⁵ Vassar responded to these issues with several diverse curricular initiatives that engaged environmental and landscape issues — in particular, progressive programs in native plant ecology and landscape architecture — that reformed women's training and career prospects. This article considers Farrand's Vassar projects in these socio-cultural and educational contexts, as well as presenting a chronicle and a formal analysis of her designs.

Modern women and landscape at Vassar

While botany and horticulture had long been considered appropriate subjects of study for women, opportunities for the formal, professional study of

landscape architecture by women lagged behind, first appearing around the turn of the century.⁶ Farrand, like other women of her generation, had had no access to formal, professional training, so she drew on family connections to apprentice with Charles Sprague Sargent (1841–1927), the leading figure in American horticulture, at the Arnold Arboretum he founded outside Boston, where she lived with his family for three years, becoming a favored pupil. She also traveled extensively to study gardens in Europe and England with her aunt Edith Wharton (1862–1937).

By the time Farrand came to Vassar, contemporary tensions over women's roles and training were being addressed by a varied group of professionals. Henry Noble MacCracken (1880–1970), president of Vassar from 1915–46, had narrowly survived an attempt to sack him by several Board members in 1918, thanks to the support of faculty, women trustees, and students. He proceeded to reform the college governance, promote progressive curricular reform and initiate campus expansion projects linked to the curriculum. He allied himself with wealthy alumna Minnie Cumnock Blodgett (1862–1931), who championed the emerging field of eugenics, an application of the sciences and liberal arts to domestic and community environments.⁷ This loosely defined field encompassed subjects from environmental chemistry, public health, and innovative sewage management to more traditional Home Economics. Various views were promoted as progressive or regressive roles for women and tinged by its connections to eugenics, the controversial discipline was not favored by the Vassar faculty. But Blodgett's offer to make the largest single donation in Vassar's history was decisive in its establishment as a multidisciplinary division in 1923.⁸

At the same time, Vassar became a laboratory for progressive ideas in plant and landscape studies. By the 1920s, botany students at Vassar additionally took courses in landscape gardening and ecology, using the campus itself as a 'field laboratory' to gain practical experience in landscaping and planting projects, such as the Athletic Circle and Shakespeare Garden, which was laid out by students (Figures 1 and 2).⁹ The hiring of Edith A. Roberts (1881–1977) as Professor of Botany in 1919 introduced forward-looking ideas about what is now known as sustainability to Vassar's classrooms and fields. A recent Ph.D. from the University of Chicago under Henry Chandler Cowles (1869–1939), Roberts was a plant ecologist specializing in the conservation of native plantings, at the forefront of those translating Prairie Style ideas about native landscape to the east coast, and advocating a 'sense of place' in American landscape.¹⁰ She quickly

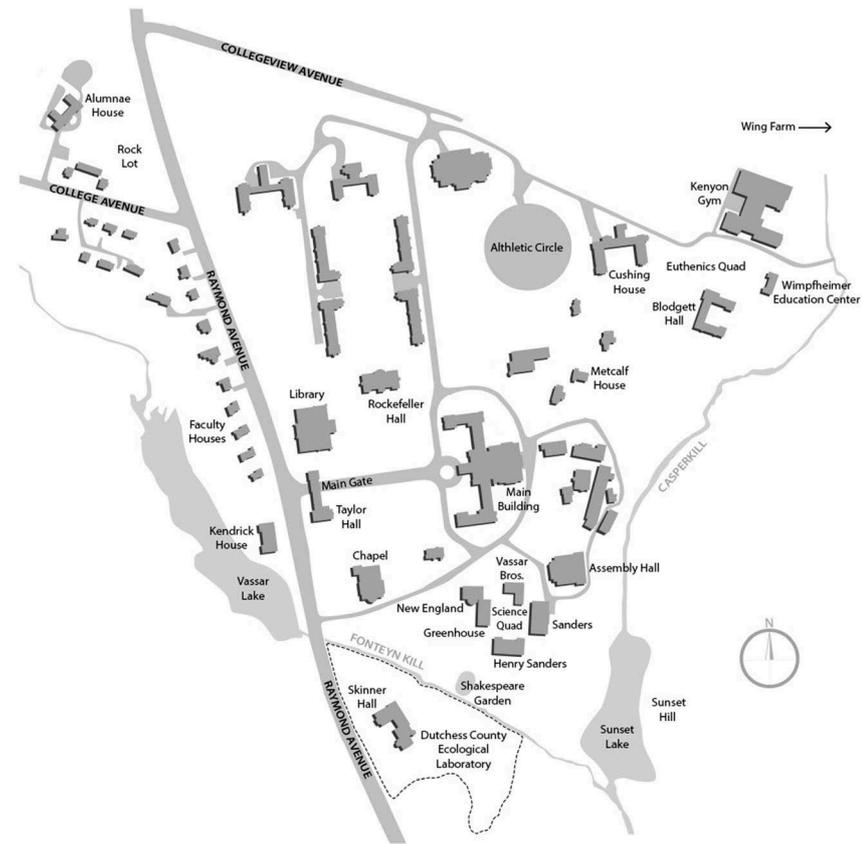


FIGURE 1. *Vassar campus, c. 1929.*

became Chair of Botany at Vassar, where she designed the curriculum around these new ideas. In 1920, she and her students initiated a four-acre garden on campus along the Fonteyn Kill stream dedicated to native plants (location shown in Figure 1).¹¹ Originally called the Dutchess County Botanical Garden, Roberts subsequently renamed it the Dutchess County Ecological Laboratory to reflect her goals.¹² When Farrand arrived in 1925, significant portions of the garden plan were well-established, and she had the opportunity to see other areas come into being during her tenure.¹³ Developed over 30 years, the garden grew to seven acres, comprising over 600 species of plants — nearly all the plants of the



FIGURE 2. *Vassar botany students laying out the Shakespeare Garden, c. 1916 (VASC).*

county, in their natural environmental associations (currently the subject of ongoing revival).¹⁴ This unique resource prompted the Garden Club of America to establish a two-year graduate scholarship to study botany and conservation at Vassar in 1923.¹⁵ Based on her work in this garden, Roberts co-published (with Margaret F. Shaw) a booklet for the Conservation Committee of the Garden Club of America on *The Ecology of the Plants Native to Dutchess County, New York* in 1925. She also wrote a series of 12 articles with Elsa Rehmann (1886–1946) originally published in *House Beautiful*, then gathered in the 1929 volume *American Plants for American Gardens*, an important early manifesto on ecologically-based landscape design. Rehmann, a landscape architect and author who integrated native plantings and ecological concerns into her work, taught landscape gardening in Vassar's Botany department from 1925–27, where she also promoted opportunities for women in the field, and advised students about undergraduate coursework and travel sites to advance their education.¹⁶ The

new ideas of Roberts, Rehmann and contemporaries about plant ecology in relation to natural habitat were supplanting the traditional botanical focus on taxonomy; Farrand was dealing with similar ideas at this moment as she implemented the Marsh Botanical Garden at Yale.¹⁷

The most familiar figure engaged in landscape pedagogy and practice at Vassar was Henry E. Downer (1885–1968), the Horticulturalist and Superintendent of Grounds from 1921 until 1952. Born on the Isle of Wight, Downer earned a diploma from the Royal Botanical Garden, Kew, where he became head of its tropical propagating department, before emigrating to the U.S. and working as head gardener at Smith. At Vassar, he was also on the Botany faculty teaching horticulture,¹⁸ and he taught in the Euthenics program and the Euthenics Summer Institutes begun in 1926. Downer was a popular campus figure from the classroom to the grounds, who participated in faculty-student plays and baseball games, and supplied students with free corsage flowers for formals. Students referred to him with familiarity and affection in newspaper articles about his campus and civic activities, and his evidently fruitless pleas for the students to respect the grass — a running joke. Unlike the previous gardener who had reported directly to the Board, Downer answered to the Grounds Committee, which MacCracken maneuvered under his thumb. A MacCracken hire, Downer became a close colleague and ally of the president. He also became the face of Vassar landscape, integrating and implementing ideas of Farrand and Roberts into the campus grounds.

Beginning in the mid-1920s, Vassar sought to add landscape architecture to the curriculum in a focused way, for which Farrand's presence was surely an impetus. Roberts secured alumnae donations to hire instructors to teach landscape architecture in the Botany department during the 1920s, including Rehmann and Frank A. Schrepfer, and pressed the president to make it a full-time position.¹⁹ When Farrand was hired in 1925, MacCracken raised the possibility that her junior associate Anne D. Baker (1890–1949, VC 1912), could give needed lectures in the subject.²⁰ In 1926–27, the Grounds Committee — then working closely with Farrand—discussed initiating a Landscape Architecture major, which was finally realized in 1931. For the plan of study, Vassar sought advice from colleagues at Cornell, Ohio State, and the Universities of Illinois and Pennsylvania — institutions that admitted women for graduate study in landscape architecture — and especially from Henry Atherton Frost (1883–1952), founder and director of the Cambridge School of Domestic Architecture and Landscape Architecture, a pioneering program for women.²¹ Roberts researched the educational

recommendations of the ASLA, showing how Vassar's proposed curriculum would satisfy them.²² The chair of the Vassar Art Department worked with MacCracken and Roberts to develop the course program, which would be housed in Art, with coursework in the departments of Botany and Math.²³ At this point, Vassar needed a professor of landscape architecture and history, for which MacCracken also turned to Frost for recommendations.²⁴ In 1932, the college hired Elizabeth Meade (1905–83), a 1927 Vassar graduate in botany (and thus a student during Farrand's tenure) who went on to earn a certificate from the Cambridge School and a masters' degree in landscape architecture conferred by Smith. Meade taught the history as well as practice of landscape architecture — a rarity in an undergraduate curriculum at the time — and kept up a private practice.²⁵

In the same years, Vassar organized events to promote new opportunities for women's graduate study and professional practice in landscape architecture. Vassar career days featured talks including 'Landscape Architecture, a Desirable Profession for Women,' given by Nellie Dryden Merrell (Mrs. Cyrus Winslow Merrell), president of the Lowthorpe School — another important landscape program for women.²⁶ Frost lectured many times at Vassar on the subject beginning in 1921.²⁷ In tandem with the introduction of the new major in 1931, Frost spoke about landscape architecture as, 'a new profession, open to modern girls,' as the newspaper noted, and the Cambridge school mounted an exhibition at Vassar of landscape designs and executed work by students from the Cambridge school — many of them Vassar alumnae — and by women practitioners.²⁸ Frost's office prepared a list of the drawings by former Vassar students, naming the 24 Vassar graduates who had gone on to the Cambridge School during its 15-year existence, and noting those in independent practice.²⁹ A survey of Vassar alumnae post-graduate occupations from 1918–29 revealed landscape architecture to be one of the fastest growing fields — and fourth in popularity after teaching, writing, and social work.³⁰ This surge of interest in landscape fields reflected the college's educational and career initiatives, and surely also Farrand's example on campus.

The confluence of so many leading landscape architects and botanists at Vassar within the same few years — many of them women—made the campus a center for the exchange of new ideas about landscape design and plant ecology. (Frustratingly, however, no evidence has emerged to document specific meetings of Farrand with Roberts or Rehmann.) Vassar's concurrent curricular initiatives in eutenics, botany, and landscape architecture represented diverse ways of engaging contemporary interest in using ecological

approaches for the betterment of society, and in women's roles and preparation for effecting progressive change.

The campus landscape

Before engaging Farrand, Vassar College had hired several distinguished landscape architects to shape its bucolic Hudson Valley campus in Poughkeepsie, New York, although most important areas of the grounds still remained to be developed, or had only rudimentary plantings.³¹ James Renwick, Jr. (1818–95), architect of Vassar's Main Building that originally constituted the whole college, doubled as the original landscape architect for the surrounding roads, paths, and plantings. Renwick received input from Howard Daniels (1815–63) of Baltimore, and especially from college founder Matthew Vassar, based on ideas he had learned working on his Springside estate with the late Andrew Jackson Downing.³² Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. (1822–1903) and Calvert Vaux (1824–95) were hired to propose revisions to the campus in 1868, although it remains unclear what they proposed or implemented, and no designs have been found.³³ In 1905, Vassar employed Samuel Parsons (1844–1923) to create a landscape master plan for the college, including an unexecuted planting plan for Main Building (discussed below).³⁴ Loring Underwood (1874–1930) served as campus landscape architect from 1915–25, when he participated in damming the Casperkill stream to create Sunset Lake for ice skating, designed the adjacent open-air amphitheater, worked with botany students to create the Shakespeare Garden, and contributed to a campus masterplan.³⁵

In the early 1920s, several projects set the stage for Farrand's hiring. In 1923, Vassar acquired neighboring farmland (the Pheil, Worrell, and Wing Farms) that allowed for major expansion. Some of the new land was planted as a pinetum for the study of forestry by students and local community members.³⁶ MacCracken earmarked another parcel for a new northeast campus comprising four buildings dedicated to the study of eutenics. In May of 1925, Downer and Roberts organized the first of a series of gardens conferences for alumnae featuring lectures, student demonstrations of horticulture and botany projects, visits to local gardens, and campus walks highlighting areas of need, to elicit donations for landscape projects.³⁷ The conference was inspiring to alumnae and students, one of whom editorialized a few months later:

The possibilities for landscape garden development at Vassar are many.... I cannot too strongly urge on trustees, faculty, and alumnae the importance of bearing

constantly in mind the desirability of increasing appropriations for planting and maintenance. Considering the extensive land possessions of Vassar, the variety of beauty of their natural conformation, we have here an opportunity to surpass every other woman's college in botanical and horticultural development.³⁸

These events soon prompted a donation to establish an arboretum on the Vassar campus. (And the conference proved so popular it was reprised in subsequent years, with guest speakers including Frost, and an increasing focus on women's education in landscape fields.) With the new euthenics campus, the arboretum, and a few other projects in mind, Vassar fired Underwood in 1925 and sought a new landscape architect.³⁹

'Woman appointed consulting architect': Farrand comes to Vassar

MacCracken was continually on the lookout for new talent in landscape architecture. When he first arrived at Vassar in 1915, he had asked Princeton's president about Farrand and, despite receiving an excellent recommendation, hired Underwood instead.⁴⁰ A few years later, in response to MacCracken's request for a landscape architect to teach and also design campus landscape, an architect-colleague had suggested Ellen Shipman, going so far as to ascertain that she would be interested, although Vassar did not pursue the lead.⁴¹ The selection of a landscape architect was actually the responsibility of Vassar's Grounds Committee, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees. In 1925, the committee included a distinguished group of legal and financial titans, patrons of architecture (notably of Frank Lloyd Wright), and Franklin D. Roosevelt, and it was chaired by Raymond G. Guernsey (1878–1959), a local attorney, college counsel, and MacCracken confidant.⁴² They considered hiring Charles Downing Lay (1877–1956) as well as Farrand, but MacCracken thought Lay too focused on urban planning.⁴³ Farrand's patrician New York upbringing and her northeast social network provided connections to some Vassar Board members (including MacCracken, who admired her ongoing work on the Bishop estate in Lenox, Massachusetts, and Roosevelt, who surely knew her Bellefield garden for his next door neighbors in nearby Hyde Park.)⁴⁴ But her work at Princeton and Yale were the impetus for inviting her, rather than social connections. Guernsey presumptuously summoned her to campus on short notice for a meeting with members of the Grounds and Building

Committees on October 14, 1925, asking her to give ideas about arboretum sites and plantings, and proposed new buildings. Initially, he had no intention of offering her a consulting position, but was thinking of asking both her and Lay to advise on discrete projects.⁴⁵ Farrand came to Vassar for the meeting, and followed up with a letter in which she outlined how she proposed approaching the project, with cost estimates, concluding, 'The beauty of Vassar has long been known to me by report and it was with real pleasure that I made even so hurried a visit to its attractive grounds. The opportunities for improvement and educational work seem almost boundless and the work of organizing and preparing the planting scheme and general plan of development will be an interesting work to the person who undertakes it.'⁴⁶ Farrand also offered to procure plants at a discount from the nurseries she had established at Yale and Princeton, and from the Arnold Arboretum, with which Vassar was keen to build a relationship. The Grounds Committee initially recommended that Farrand be hired just for a 'preliminary survey of the campus, both in reference to general planting and arboretum.'⁴⁷ MacCracken instead urged the Board that, 'it was time to go further than a tentative arrangement with a landscape architect whose work evidenced the ability and vision shown by Mrs. Farrand,' although at the same time, he equivocated that, 'The definite appointment of a Consulting Landscape Architect did not preclude the employment of another landscape architect for any specific work, provided the recommendations submitted by such an architect received the approval of the Consulting Landscape Architect' — a problematic arrangement for all parties when commissioning a visionary designer.⁴⁸ In any event, the Board approved appointing her as Consulting Landscape Architect, and on November 13, Guernsey wrote to Farrand announcing the news.

There is no evidence that Farrand's gender or reputation as a path-breaking woman was a factor in the decision, but it could hardly have escaped consideration given the national and campus focus on women's education in landscape at this moment. The students trumpeted her selection in the school newspaper with the headline, 'WOMAN APPOINTED CONSULTING ARCHITECT.'⁴⁹ Farrand accepted the position noting, 'It is with much pleasure that I accept the appointment as Consulting Landscape Gardener of Vassar, as the beauty of its surroundings has long been known to me by reputation. *It is also a privilege to be associated as Consulting Landscape Gardener with a woman's college,* and I shall feel it a great honor to be associated with the College in this relation.'⁵⁰ [added emphasis] Although Vassar hired Farrand as 'Consulting Landscape

Architect' — a title popularized by Olmsted to reflect the design aspects of the profession, she chose the title of 'Consulting Landscape Gardener', as she did elsewhere.⁵¹ Nonetheless, the fact that she set out her terms in writing before setting foot on campus for an initial meeting — surely in response to Guernsey's presumptuous summons — clearly communicated that she expected professional treatment.⁵² Moreover, her fee of \$75 per day reflected that she was an established professional.⁵³ Farrand was then 54 years old and at the height of her career, with offices in New York and Maine and a large staff, composed entirely of women.⁵⁴ She began making trips to the Vassar campus in December, 1925.

Farrand was already known as the first woman to design campus landscapes when she arrived at Vassar. She shaped large areas of Princeton's campus, where she worked from 1912 until 1943, becoming known for her use of native plants following Arts and Crafts ideals and the model of Gertrude Jekyll (1843–1932). At Yale, where Farrand served as Landscape Gardener from 1922 to 1945, her landscaping is still visible, notably in Branford College. She went on to consult for campuses across the country including the University of Chicago, California Institute of Technology, and Occidental, Hamilton, and Oberlin Colleges.⁵⁵ Farrand considered the campus an esthetic background to architecture, a utilitarian environment for pedestrian circulation, and also an educational tool in itself. She focused most of her attention on framing and circulation using trees, shrubs, lawns, and vines.⁵⁶ Her campus designs characteristically eschewed flowers other than spring bulbs, in part an element of style (related to Edith Wharton's disdain for 'flower loveliness'), but also a pragmatic consideration of when campuses are populated: Farrand repeatedly told her campus clients that spring and fall color should be privileged over summer flowers.⁵⁷ Vassar's country setting offered the opportunity to work in different modes than her previous campus commissions. With her brilliant plays of formality and informality, embrace of native species, and attention to local landscape, Farrand was ideally suited for Vassar's mix of formal and informal design modes, pedagogical emphasis on indigenous plant ecology, and its sense of place in the Hudson Valley.

Characteristic of all her projects, institutional and private, Farrand combined field work to study the site with work on paper: studying land surveys and generating plans, planting lists, and drawings. She gave considerable attention to practical and aesthetic considerations of movement, carefully designing paths and steps with an eye to circulation patterns, views, connecting architectural

elements, grading, and drainage.⁵⁸ About a dozen blurry snapshots of the Vassar campus dated December 1925 in her possession (now at Berkeley) presumably document her early field visit. After her initial meeting at Vassar, Farrand proposed how she would go about studying the campus and preparing a report:

In our talk last Wednesday week we spoke of the advisability of having a short report written, outlining the general policies to be pursued in the planting and development of the college grounds. This report would be submitted to the Grounds Committee and if they acted favorably upon it the work might be systematically started and one unit after another studied and gradually brought into the lines of the general scheme. The preparation of this report would take at least two, and more probably three or more days of study and close observation on my part on the grounds, during which time I should like to wander and drive around the campus in company with one or other members of the committee as well as alone. Recommendations would be made of types of plant material suited for use in connection with the buildings, as well as suggestions for representative plantings which might be considered part of the educational scheme suggested by the name "arboretum". Written suggestions and possibly a rough planting plan of one unit would be submitted as a tentative example....The cost of such preliminary study on the ground, and written outline report and suggested plan for one unit would cost \$350.00, plus approximately \$100.00 for traveling and office expenditures. Some of the suggestions for the group plantings for shrubs would be a part of this preliminary study, but the general scheme for these educational and representative groups should be carefully noted in order to avoid as many false moves as possible. A study of the campus, means of communication (roads and paths), would also be made and preliminary suggestions made with the first report. It is difficult to say exactly what a yearly fee would amount to until the work was organized and the approximate number of yearly visits necessary determined. If it would be possible to associate one of my assistants with me, a Vassar Graduate [Anne Baker], my own time would be minimized and used mainly for suggestions of policies and attendance at committee meetings when required.⁵⁹

Also at her first meeting, she requested a 'comprehensive plan of existing conditions,'⁶⁰ and her archives contain about two dozen supplementary maps, plans, and elevations from Vassar and its outside architects (York & Sawyer and Allen & Collens) providing information about topography, extant plantings, water mains, and proposed buildings, some with her superimposed pencil sketches. (Balmori stressed the importance of detailed land surveys to Farrand's planning process from the start of each project, noting that they are the most prominent items in her archives, and remarking on Farrand's facility

at visualizing three dimensional design from these maps.⁶¹) Since Farrand was known to convey her design ideas most compellingly through verbal explanation and elaboration of her sketches, we must extrapolate from surviving documents the ideas she presented at client meetings.⁶² The Vassar archives preserve over a dozen of Farrand's letters, her meeting-notes, and extensive correspondence generated by college officials, which are indeed revealing about her ideas, as well as the vicissitudes of her projects. These documents reveal that Farrand's rapport with MacCracken and the trustees started off on a high note, although questions of control and authority arose quickly, and her role first brought her into conflict with the resident gardener, Downer, over plans to establish the arboretum.

Arboretum: the dream of the future

While Vassar has long been known for its verdant, tree-covered campus, the central campus was originally a treeless plain.⁶³ (Figure 10 below gives a sense of the flat plain set at the foot of hills.) Founder Matthew Vassar's original conception for the college called for a varied terrain planted with ornamental trees, conifers, fruit trees, flower gardens, and a Botanical Garden, although these wishes would take decades to materialize.⁶⁴ A tradition instituted in 1868 that graduating classes plant a class tree contributed significantly to the campus's greening, albeit in piecemeal fashion.⁶⁵ MacCracken had been collecting planting lists of gardens he admired since arriving at Vassar, and in October, 1923 he had discussed with Downer possibilities for establishing and siting an arboretum.⁶⁶ The 1925 gardens conference organized by Downer and Roberts prompted the class of 1875's reunion gift to establish the arboretum, providing a capital fund of \$3,000 and an endowed maintenance fund of \$4,100.⁶⁷ The newspaper notice of Farrand's hiring later that year declared the arboretum to be foremost among her projects.

The Vassar arboretum was begun at a time of changing ideas about what a campus arboretum should be in concept, form, and function. The documents variously refer to the arboretum as a collection of rare trees and shrubs, or as a collection of different varieties of the same trees and shrubs. There was also disagreement over whether to privilege native species. Additionally, the arboretum was variously thought to occupy a discrete site, or else to comprise plantings distributed across the grounds. Vassar constituents emphasized varied purposes, from teaching tool to campus beautification.

Farrand was particularly well suited for this task, with her training and close connection to Sargent's Arnold Arboretum, and her ongoing work at Yale, where she thoughtfully addressed the practical and ideological functions of the arboretum, botanical garden, and nursery.⁶⁸ She had already established nurseries at Princeton and at Yale, and would ultimately propose a nursery for every campus she served.⁶⁹ She typically justified her nurseries on the practical grounds of cost (it is cheaper to raise plants than buy them commercially, especially for large stock), selection (universities and the Arnold Arboretum could swap stock, thus expanding their range), and the preservation of local species (that grow best in place). But the nursery, more than a practical supply place, was also part of Farrand's philosophy of campus planning, as Balmori noted:

Farrand believed that establishing a nursery related to the educational function of the university in fundamental ways: landscape practices would contribute knowledge of plants and would link departments at the university... Her ultimate aim, however, was only imperfectly achieved and it never received recognition. She wanted each campus to be a museum of trees, native or natural to the region that would educate students to the plants around them. The nursery made the landscape 'site specific,' linking it to the environment through plants which grew best there.⁷⁰

Farrand variously described the arboretum as a *museum*, *gallery*, or *out-of-door exhibition*.⁷¹ Just months before she was engaged at Vassar, she wrote of her work at Yale:

With the energy characteristic of Yale, a new organization was started for the care of the grounds and planting around the buildings. In order that the plantations should be of use botanically as a sort of small outdoor museum, as well as settings for the various groups, a scheme was planned in cooperation with the Departments of Botany and Forestry. According to the plan the plants around each building or cluster of buildings are used as a sort of small exhibition ground of certain types of trees and shrubs, and the campus as a whole should, in time, become a sort of fragmentary botanic garden, exhibiting the plants, both native and exotic, which grow naturally or thrive if set out in the soil and climate of this vicinity.... The scheme of educational planting which has been started at the University has been noted by other institutions, some of which have already followed Yale's lead.⁷²

Thus, Farrand thoughtfully interpreted the slippage among arboretum, botanical garden, and nursery, and the varied meanings and functions of such

collections — historical, botanical, and ornamental — in concept and in practice. In her earliest correspondence at Vassar, Farrand referred to the ‘educational scheme suggested by the name arboretum’, which reflected her emphasis on landscape as an educational tool, as instructive as the interior classroom.⁷³ At Vassar, as she had at Yale, she surely voiced her opinion that a whole campus should be an inspiring and educational outdoor museum.

Vassar already had a thriving, if small, nursery when Farrand arrived. Downer had compiled an inventory in July, 1924 of about a thousand trees and shrubs comprising many varieties, noting their size and value.⁷⁴ Trustees on the Grounds Committee focused on the nursery as a way to contain plant costs: Guemsey noted that ‘At Trustee Roosevelt’s suggestion, we are purchasing less expensive trees and letting them grow to such size that they can be transplanted and be immediately effective. We hope to add greatly to this nursery so that in a few years, we will have in the possession of the College a large number of needed varieties.’⁷⁵ Farrand indeed folded Vassar into her network of clients swapping specimens, fostering a closer connection with the Arnold Arboretum which sent seeds of 70 varieties of small trees and shrubs in 1927.⁷⁶ MacCracken specified that the Vassar arboretum should be developed through its nursery, for financial reasons.⁷⁷ So, Vassar’s linkage of nursery and arboretum was thus far limited to practical concerns, rather than philosophical ones.

Farrand discussed the arboretum’s function with the Grounds Committee at her first on-campus working session in late 1925. Curiously, the trustees emphasized the decorative over the educational function of the arboretum, citing limitations not only of funds but of grounds: ‘The Landscape Gardener will make recommendations for...the beginning of an arboretum. The principle was agreed upon...that beauty of display and form in the design should be the first desideratum, the botanical use of the ground being secondary. In general, the selection of specimens should be illustrative rather than complete, since size of the grounds and the limited budget prevent full treatment.’⁷⁸ Shortly thereafter, Farrand, Guemsey, and Downer determined the initial site, if not the general plan of the arboretum: on parcels of land across the road from the main campus, along Vassar Lake. As Farrand described:

It was also decided that the arboretum should be started in the area behind the Faculty Houses north and west of the new Kendrick Hall, and that the preliminary planting should be made of viburnums of some thirty species backed by a border plantation of different sorts. A list of varieties has been prepared and

prices will be submitted regarding this material...We further agreed that study of the grounds was advisable before committing the Grounds Committee to the general arboretum plan, as it was felt that a further study of the grounds was needed before a wise choice of sites for certain groups could be made.⁷⁹

Students characterized this arboretum as a campus dream come true.⁸⁰ In April 1926, viburnums were ordered at Farrand’s direction as a starter for the arboretum,⁸¹ which were planted along the lakeside path behind the faculty houses up to the north end of the lake (see Figures 3–6). Downer detailed that this section contained 20 kinds of viburnum, and that nine kinds of bush honeysuckle donated by the Arnold Arboretum were planted nearby, with the intent of adding additional varieties as they were obtained.⁸² Farrand also suggested flowering crabapple and cherry trees for the slope east of Sunset Lake, which were planted (Figure 7).⁸³ So, the Vassar arboretum began with plantings along both campus lakes. (Around the same time, in discussion with Sargent, she was also planning a flowering cherry and crabapple plantation along Princeton’s Lake Carnegie, where she described how the beauty of the flowering trees would be ‘reflected in the quiet surface of the Lake.’⁸⁴)

At this point, Downer began to undermine Farrand’s authority over the arboretum design. It is clear that as a Kew-trained horticulturist accustomed to wide-ranging campus authority, Downer resented Farrand’s input from the

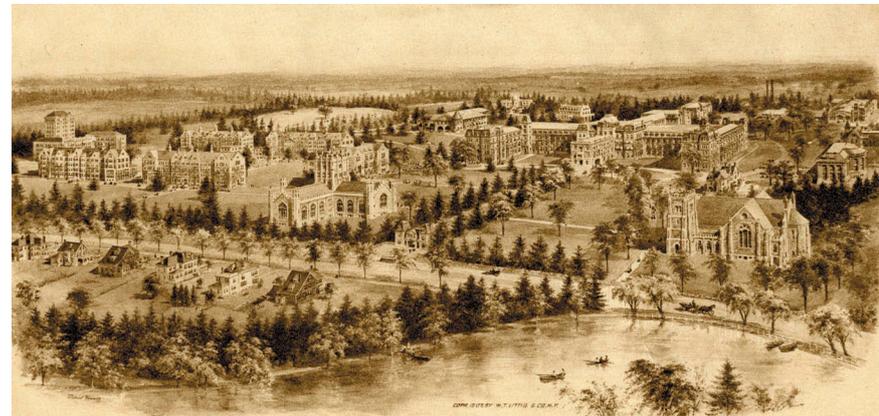


FIGURE 3. *Vassar College, aerial view of campus looking northeast, watercolor (postcard), c. 1907 (VASC).*

BEATRIX FARRAND AND CAMPUS LANDSCAPE AT VASSAR



FIGURE 4. *Vassar College, aerial view looking northeast, photograph, 1929 (VASC). Shown are Kendrick Hall (A), Main Gate (B), Chapel Gate (C), and part of Roberts' Dutchess County Ecological Laboratory (D).*

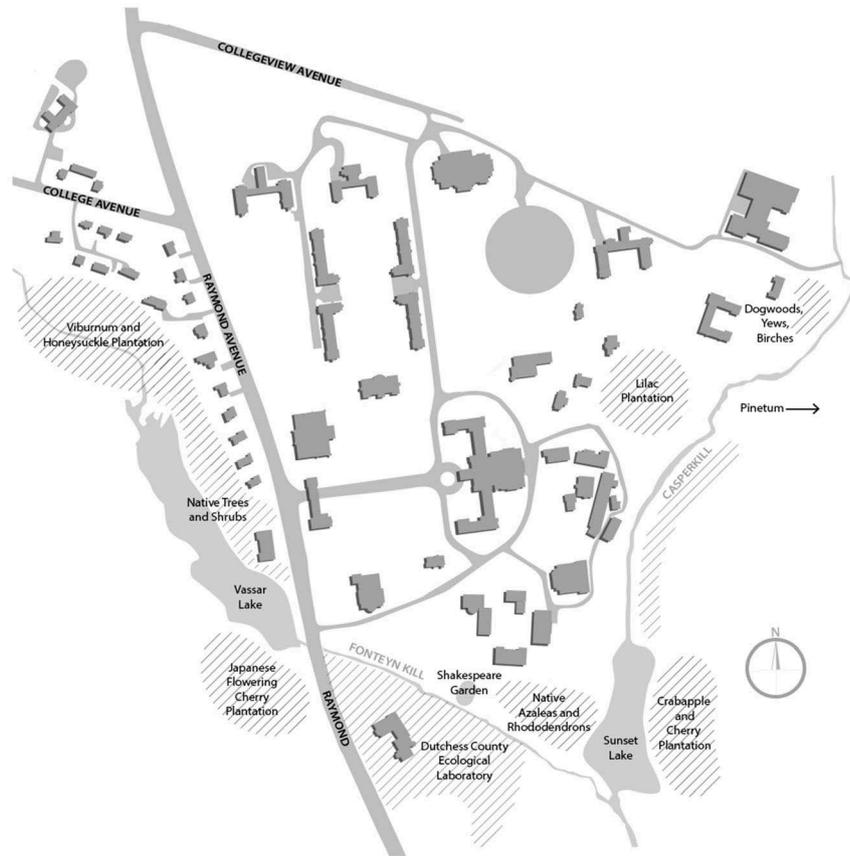


FIGURE 5. *Vassar arboretum, c. 1931. Shaded areas designate plantations described by Henry Downer. Not shown are specimen trees and plantings around buildings in central campus, also understood as part of the arboretum.*

outset and bristled at executing her directions. As early as December 1925, he had gone directly to MacCracken arguing to separate the arboretum from the general landscape treatment, asking to control the arboretum himself. (A shrewd strategy, since Farrand was advocating that the arboretum encompass most of the campus.) MacCracken initially did not trust Downer to supervise it, writing to Guernsey, 'With all due respect to Mr. Downer's ability as a horticulturalist, I should not feel safe in allowing him to develop the



FIGURE 6. *Vassar Lake path, c. 1930 (Photo: Edmund Wolven, VASC).*

arboretum without the guidance of a professional artist in landscape gardening.'⁸⁵ In February 1926, Downer complained to MacCracken that Farrand's delay in submitting arboretum recommendations risked missing the planting season. In April, MacCracken reported to Guernsey that 'Mr. Downer has had an offer from Cornell which gives him more independent work than he has at Vassar, and he will probably accept the offer. He is very discontented with the manner in which Mrs. Farrand met him some weeks ago,' to which Guernsey replied, 'I am sorry to hear that Mr. Downer is thinking of accepting an offer at another college, and regret that he misunderstood Mrs. Farrand's manner in his interview with her. ...Mr. Downer evidently would like to be more independent than he is, but I hope that he can be persuaded to remain with us because, in my opinion, he is an invaluable man for such a position.'⁸⁶ The trustees addressed the problem by quietly giving Downer control of the arboretum.⁸⁷ So, he pressed ahead with the design, presenting a proposal to the Grounds Committee in June for an arboretum spanning the campus, to



FIGURE 7. *Vassar arboretum, flowering tree plantation along Sunset Lake, view from across the lake, c. 1950 (?). (Vassar Biology Department).*

include: 1. the Vassar Lake region; 2. South of the Chapel; 3. Head of Glen; 4. Sunset Hill slope; 5. Along the creek; 6. East of Metcalf House; and '7. The campus as a whole being considered to come within this scheme...It will be seen that, as outlined, a continuous belt of planting from Vassar Lake to beyond the Euthenics group would be established, on land hardly likely to be taken for building sites. The development of what is now mostly rough ground along these lines would have great educational value in the study of plant material as well as produce good landscape effects.'⁸⁸

But no one at Vassar told Farrand of Downer's new authority. In her notes following a late June conference with MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer, and Richards, Farrand recorded that, 'Mr. Downer is kindly going to send the Landscape Gardener a list of *Viburnums* in the new *Viburnum* plantation and their approximate grouping. He is also kindly going to prepare a list of crab apples for use in the large crab apple plantation and suggested groupings which are to be discussed with the Landscape Gardener before plantations are started.'⁸⁹ This caused a stir: MacCracken complained to Guernsey, 'With reference to the

arboretum — you will note again Mrs. Farrand's determination to have special supervision of Mr. Downer's activities. This does not agree with the assurances given him last winter....' and Guernsey replied that he had noted the 'danger signs' in Farrand's notes.⁹⁰ Farrand reassured MacCracken that, 'No copy of the notes has been sent to Mr. Downer or Mr. Richards, therefore no milk has been spilt. It seems to me advisable for Downer to discuss lists of proposed plant material with me as often I might be of use in getting some of the plants he wants by special favor with the [Arnold] Arboretum, or possibly by exchange with Yale or Princeton,' thereby softening her position and trying her leverage.⁹¹ Later, Farrand straightforwardly questioned who was directing the arboretum at Grounds Committee meetings,⁹² but the situation continued to be ill-defined and poorly-managed, and the relationship between Downer and Farrand strained.

So, although Vassar hired Farrand specifically with the establishment of the arboretum in mind, they picked her brains, then stripped her of authority over its implementation, in part to placate the resident gardener. Given this history, it is difficult to attribute specific ideas for Vassar's arboretum with certainty. But the concept of a distributed, campus-wide arboretum that Farrand had advocated even before coming to Vassar can surely be seen as her contribution. It was quickly embraced by all at Vassar following their first meeting with her. In June 1926, Downer declared that the arboretum now covered most of the campus (although he had his own motivation),⁹³ and a notice in the alumni magazine by the arboretum's key donor, Emma Chamberlain Zehe (d. 1930), explained that it was to be 'quite an extended affair'.⁹⁴ In 1932, the Chair of the Committee on Building and Grounds revealed the trustees' mistaken belief that Vassar's distributed arboretum was unique, and an invention of Downer: 'The Arboretum ... differed from those in other college campuses. Instead of being placed in one spot to be visited for its botanical interest, Mr. Downer has originated the idea of placing it in different parts of the grounds, thus adding to the beauty of the entire campus.'⁹⁵ This understanding was promulgated by Downer himself, who described the arboretum in two long articles about the grounds in 1931 and 1934:

Through the generosity of the late Mrs. Paul E. Zehe and her classmates of 1875, it has been possible to start a small arboretum. Besides the numerous American trees and shrubs that should be better known and appreciated in landscape planting, a great many beautiful woody plants from Asia have been introduced in recent years that have been proved to thrive in this climate. Thanks to the

work of the Arnold Arboretum, under the jurisdiction of Harvard, the general interest in trees and shrubs has greatly increased in recent years, and several colleges in different parts of the country are now establishing sizable collections. There are several places about the grounds where the possibility of a building's being erected is very remote. Some of these are so situated as to allow of a collection of related groups of small trees and shrubs to be placed for intimate study as well as decorative effect. The lower slope of Sunset Hill for example has been given over to Flowering Crabs to take the place of the fast disappearing old apple trees higher up. Some twenty-five varieties are now getting established there, which in a few more years will give a grand display of colorful flowers in the spring and attractive looking fruit in the fall.... On the slope south of Vassar Lake a collection of Japanese Flowering Cherries is coming along.... Crossing directly from the Main Gate to the lake, paths lead through a mixed planting of native trees and shrubs.⁹⁶

Downer further explained the 'logic of the planting,' tracing a long itinerary from the head of Vassar Lake to the Casperkill — essentially a greenbelt encircling three sides of the campus (Figure 5).⁹⁷ He also noted the variety of soil types and plants that thrive in them — a reference to plant ecology:

The Arnold Arboretum is a botanical institution. Vassar's Arboretum subordinates the collection-idea to emphasize planting effects. The specimens of native and foreign shrubs and trees are there in groups, for students and visitors to study; but the approach is through one's delight in the effect of families placed each according to its preference on high, moist or sandy soil. To grasp the scope and geography of the Arboretum, you begin your walk at the head of [Vassar] Lake... Thus the geography becomes simple. The Arboretum follows a main artery — the water route of the Campus.⁹⁸

Downer's omission of Farrand's involvement in the arboretum is striking. In fact, curiously little was written about Farrand's presence in the campus publications after her hiring, despite the Grounds Committee's calls to publish her planting plans.⁹⁹ Moreover, he included within his arboretum areas that comprised Roberts' Ecological Laboratory and referred to plant ecology without mentioning Roberts. Whether Downer was territorial, sexist, or simply perpetuating a campus understanding that the Superintendent of Grounds was responsible for all landscape initiatives, he was instrumental in blurring the record.¹⁰⁰

Significantly, Vassar did not follow Farrand's idea for an arboretum of predominantly native plantings. She recorded her recommendation to emphasize

indigenous plants for the arboretum and other campus plantings in her notes for the June, 1926 conference, presumably reflecting the group's agreement.¹⁰¹ However MacCracken, who had attended the meeting, subsequently vetoed the idea, even dismissing it as faddish.¹⁰² No evidence has emerged that Roberts or Rehmann were directly involved in arboretum planning, although the Executive Committee had directed from the outset that the Grounds Committee invite suggestions from Botany, and Roberts pressed MacCracken to involve her in all campus grounds planning.¹⁰³ But any cooperation between Downer and Roberts was unlikely; Downer tried to thwart Roberts' garden plans, too, and the pair shared an antipathy so strong she exacted professional revenge, and even threatened suicide because of his actions.¹⁰⁴ In the end, the very fact that the campus arboretum included so many native plantings, and that Downer called attention to indigenous plants and plant ecology, reflected his and Vassar's debt to the work of these three women.

Thus during Farrand's tenure, indebted to her ideas, Vassar established an arboretum as a campus-wide entity, and as a multivalent vehicle for the propagation of trees and shrubs — native and foreign — for practical, educational, and aesthetic reasons. In concept, if not in design, Farrand's aim for the campus arboretum was achieved. Vassar's campus today is still called an arboretum, a term that is used loosely to designate an extensive collection of trees and plants across the entire campus landscape.¹⁰⁵

Kendrick House

The planning of Kendrick House for female faculty housing (York & Sawyer, 1927), constitutes an epilogue to the arboretum narrative, since both were planned in tandem and, ultimately, in the same area. When Farrand came to Vassar, Kendrick was first being discussed and its placement debated. She recommended siting the building on the Rock Lot, at the corner of Raymond and College Avenues, suggesting an interior faculty garden and rock garden, and the committee was in agreement.¹⁰⁶ But they were overridden by MacCracken, who bowed to the wishes of the building's donor to place the building instead on the site directly across Raymond Avenue from the Main Gate.¹⁰⁷ Although the arboretum would be placed between Kendrick and the professors' houses and along the lakeside path behind them, effectively surrounding Kendrick by the arboretum,

Farrand prepared a separate sketch plan for the plantings immediately around the building (Figure 8). She drew the grove of existing pine and birch trees just to the north that would screen a new service court, and proposed unspecified wall plantings along the rear façade, as well as massed viburnums, laurel, and azaleas by the lakeside path. (We refer to drawings signed by Beatrix Farrand as her own, although we recognize that not all drawings from her office were by her hand.¹⁰⁸) This plan ties the landscaping of Kendrick to the main campus arteries: directly across from Main Gate and the Chapel Gate are pathways leading to the Kendrick service court and the lakeside walkway, respectively (visible in Figure 4). Work proceeded swiftly; the building was built in 1926–27, a gift of \$375 in April of 1927 was earmarked for the surrounding planting, Farrand generated her plan in December, and the Grounds Committee declared the planting was completed in June, 1928.¹⁰⁹ A photo a couple years later shows the area around Kendrick densely planted with her recommended viburnums and birches, as well as native dogwoods, sweet pepper bush, spice bush and redbud (Figure 9).¹¹⁰



FIGURE 9. Vassar College, arboretum and view of the north side of Kendrick Hall, photograph c. 1930 (Reproduced from Henry E. Downer, 'The Grounds at Vassar,' *Vassar Quarterly* 16, 1 (February, 1931): 2.).

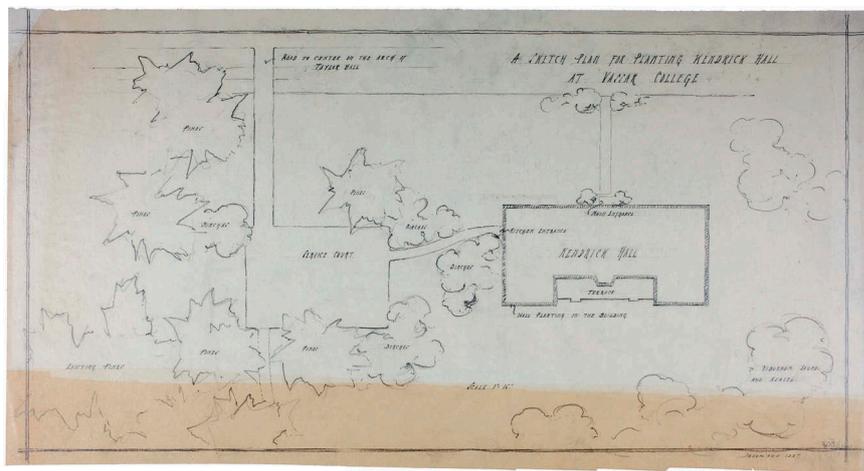


FIGURE 8. Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Planting plan for Kendrick Hall, December, 1927 (EDA-UCB).

Main Building Forecourt

The most prominent project Farrand undertook at Vassar was the circulation and planting in front of Main Building, which has been the central edifice on the campus, visually, spatially, and functionally, since the college's founding (Figures 10–12). It was designed by Renwick in 1861 as a country-house analogue, modeled on the Tuileries Palace, but on an enormous scale: it was known as the largest building in the US in the 1860s, until the completion of the US Capitol. The Main Gate of the college, although changed over time, has always framed the axial view of a long drive leading to Main Building (Figure 11). As the campus grew, Main anchored the east side of a large quadrangle-park loosely bordered by the Chapel on the south; Taylor Hall and the Library on the west; and Rockefeller Hall on the north. An 1893 expansion to Main Building, protruding from the façade's central bay, was



FIGURE 10. Egidius C. Winter, *Vassar Female College*, lithograph, 1862 (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division).

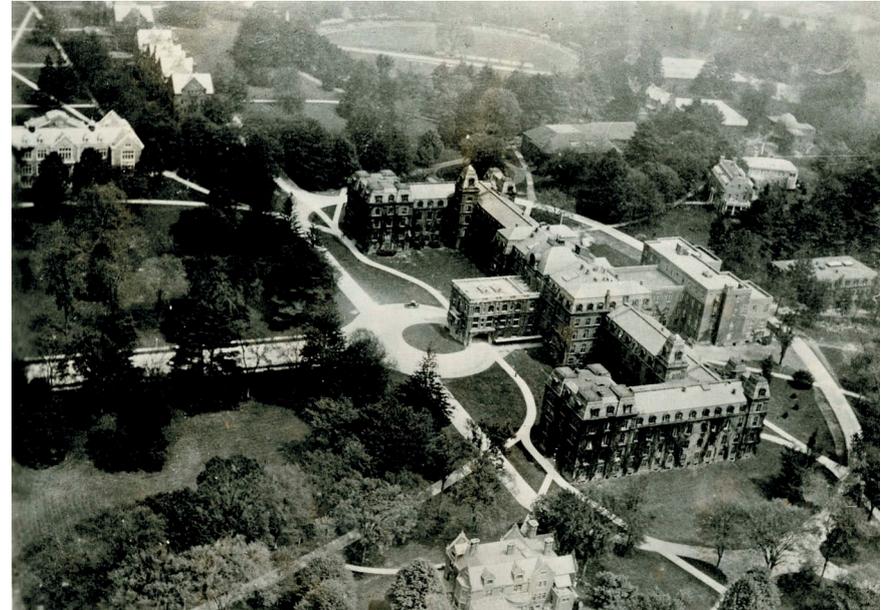


FIGURE 12. *Vassar College*, aerial view of Main Building with Thompson Annex, photograph, 1921–24 (VASC). This image closely corresponds to the configuration of roads, walkways, and existing trees when Farrand began.



FIGURE 11. Benson J. Lossing and Alice Barritt, *Vassar College, Main Building and Drive*, etching, 1867 (VASC).

built to house the library and serve as a porte-cochère, effectively inserting a small three-storey building into the forecourt (visible in Figure 12.) This carbuncle, officially known as the Frederick Ferris Thompson Annex but

dubbed ‘Uncle Fred’s Nose,’ remained in place until 1960. Farrand was asked to address the area directly in front of this annex — the culmination of the axial view — as well as the two quadrangles formed by Main Building’s arms. From the earliest sketches for the college through the realization of Renwick’s building in 1865 and beyond, the area in front of the building had featured three flat, green circles of grass, each centered before one of Main Building’s three pavilions, presumably formal vestiges of French garden fountains and parterres, or perhaps placeholders awaiting more robust planting budgets (Figures 10, 11). Parsons’ campus planting plan (Figure 13) had indicated roads, walkways, and a circular plat in front of the nose, which corresponded closely to what existed when Farrand began (visible in Figure 12). Parsons’s plan also called for scattered spruce trees and ligustrum shrubs in the quadrangles, an important unexecuted precedent for Farrand.

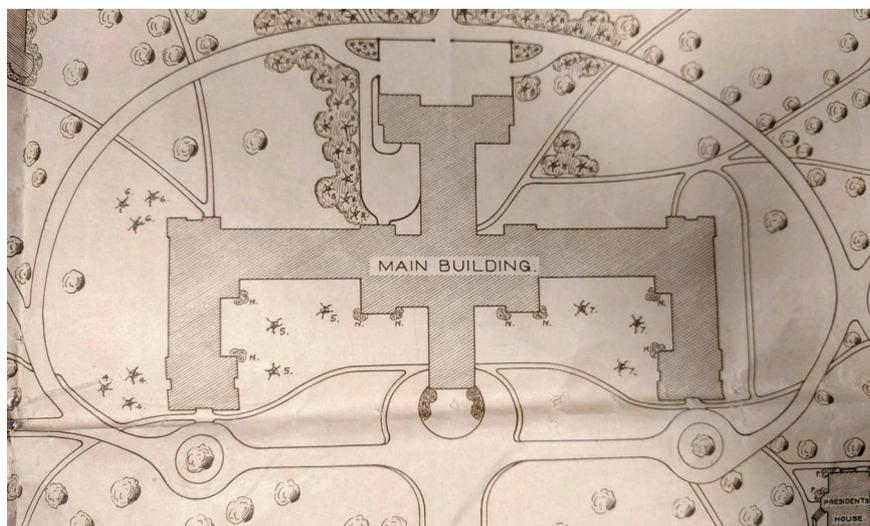


FIGURE 13. *Samuel Parsons & Co., Landscape Architects, New York, NY. Planting plan for Vassar College, detail, 1906–11. (VASC) The key notes that 5 = Abies Polita; 7 = Abies Engelmannii; N = Ligustrum Regelianum; existing trees are unnumbered.*

In December 1925, Farrand wrote Guernsey with rough ideas and estimates for treating the front of Main, providing a strikingly comprehensive vision that merits citing at length:

Probably the most effective first piece of work would be the planting of Main... to include the west façade, a total of approximately 470 ft. in length. Provision should be made for a large court about 130 ft. square, or whatever size should be found is convenient to place within the line of evergreen trees bordering the main approach road. This large court should be surrounded by an evergreen hedge. The most desirable plant to be used would probably be Japanese yew. The cost of this hedge alone would amount to not less than \$1000 and possibly more. Adequate space for bicycle racks should be provided as part of the design and this space also enclosed in a hedge. Additional road surface would be required, which could almost certainly be made at a cost of less than \$500. Large yews and other taller growing evergreens could be placed in the north and south quadrangles of Main in small groups which should be large enough to give the effect of color in winter but not so large as to obscure window light or give an impression of crowding. In combination with these evergreens probably not

more than four or five small growing trees should be planted in each court, of the type of dogwood, English hawthorns, crabapple, American thorn, or some of the small growing green-leaved maples. These plants would be chosen from varieties especially effective either in spring flower or autumn color. Over and above this planting in the courts, gradual removal of the Boston ivy now growing on the walls is suggested, and its replacement with more interesting plants trained on the wall, which would give a difference in texture at various times of the year — flowers, fruit or bark color, giving an interest to the large wall surface which is now blanketed by too heavy a coat of the same texture throughout. The cost of the planting of the quadrangles would certainly not amount to less than \$750 each, making a total of \$3000 to \$3500 for the whole enterprise. If this sum is larger than is at once available, one quadrangle after another might be planted and the court added still later.¹¹¹

An anonymous donation of \$3,500, exactly the amount Farrand estimated for Main plantings, was announced by the Grounds Committee in January of 1926. Farrand wrote, ‘I could not wait to tell you how delighted I am that the Grounds Committee feel they wish to go ahead with what to my mind will be quite the most conspicuous piece of work to attempt as a starter.’¹¹² Seven drawings for this area survive in her archives, from working sketches to presentation drawings, reflecting the evolution of the plans over the next four months, although the extant documentary evidence of meeting notes and letters does not line up exactly with the drawings. Farrand sketched designs for roads, walkways, plantings, and furnishings (Figures 14–19). The earliest of these, dated February 1926 (Figure 14), details 580 ft of Japanese yew hedges to create a square courtyard in front of Main’s central pavilion, encompassing the porte-cochère at the tip of the extension, which protrudes into the east side of the square at its midpoint. A small rectangle of grass is indicated just in front of the tip of the nose. The axial road to Main and the north-south road in front of the building enter the square at the center of its other three sides, creating an axial, symmetric entry court, which would remain a key element of her design throughout subsequent revisions. She punctuated each corner of the courtyard with a yew tree, set in a bed that rounds off the corner, effectively creating a near-circle within the square. For the quadrangles, she indicated the placement and variety of trees, although she strayed from the species she had listed in her letter for these, instead indicating only yews and several varieties of crabapples in the plan (*Malus floribunda*, *sieboldii*, *coronaria*, *spectabilis*, and *sargentii*, the last variety named for

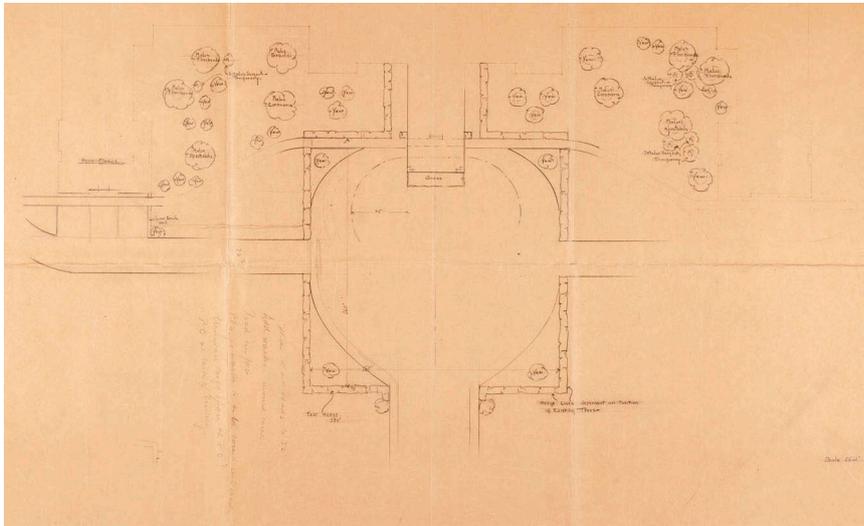


FIGURE 14. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Sketch plan for Main Forecourt, February 1926 (EDA-UCB).*

her mentor, and annotated ‘temporary’). Her recommendation of Japanese yews for the hedge and all Asian varieties of crabapple for the forecourt plantings reveals that she was not exclusively devoted to native plantings for her Vassar projects.¹¹³ This juxtaposition of the formal, hedged courtyard as an entry pavilion with the informal plantings scattered in the wings is characteristic of Farrand’s work: she employed a similar approach for the entry to Princeton’s campus.¹¹⁴ She attended a meeting at Vassar on February 10 when this drawing was reviewed,¹¹⁵ and the jotted annotations record the revisions discussed: widen the north-south road (parallel to the Main façade) to 32 ft, reconfigure the walkways, and move the Post Office to the rear of the building. These changes were made in the next plan dated March 1926 (Figure 15), which has additionally compressed the square court into a rectangle to accommodate existing trees, and thus the shape inside it to an oval.

MacCracken responded to her proposals — seemingly to a plan close to Figure 15 — in a detailed letter to Guernsey. MacCracken’s critique was detailed and harsh in tone: ‘I shall certainly regret the lack of any green

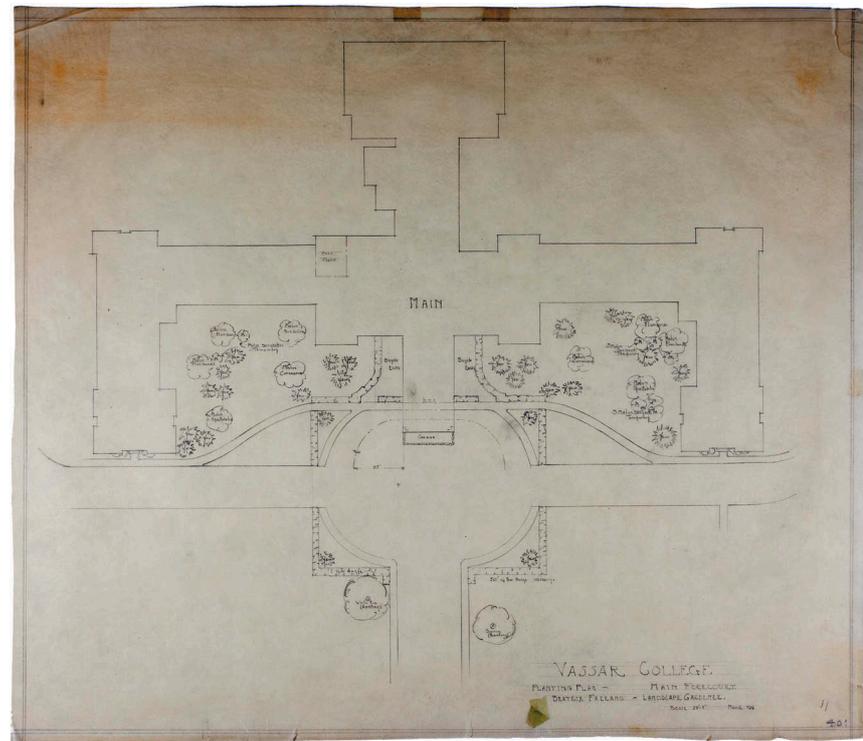


FIGURE 15. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Planting plan for Main Forecourt, March, 1926 (EDA-UCB).*

immediately in front of the porte-cochère. A big area of dusty asphalt or macadam immediately in front of the office windows will not be agreeable, and it will inevitably be filled up with parked cars which will be an eyesore, and the noise and odor of their engines will be an added nuisance.¹¹⁶ He also noted that the space she allowed for bicycle racks was too narrow, and that student foot paths should not abut the road: ‘You are well aware of traffic conditions in winter, with snow piled high on both sides of the road, and with water splashed by passing automobiles. Anyone who could see our road this morning, with snow on either side to a height of two or three feet, would realize the problem raised by Mrs. Farrand’s arrangement.’ He concludes by suggesting that in future, Farrand should

BEATRIX FARRAND AND CAMPUS LANDSCAPE AT VASSAR

submit her plans in advance of meetings to allow time for evaluation by those who ‘live and labor at the college.’ Oddly, the Grounds Committee had already approved this initial, sketchily rendered plan on the spot. MacCracken’s annoyance that Farrand had not anticipated and addressed all the college’s needs in the first draft was naïve, although his criticisms were valid. Presumably his tone reflected his exasperation at having to walk back the committee’s approval. (His letter also mentions that he had just discussed Farrand’s plan with Downer, then angling for more control, who presumably fueled the criticism.) This is one of many instances revealing that MacCracken and colleagues had not yet formulated project management methods.

In response to MacCracken’s critique, Farrand drafted three alternatives (Figure 16, A-C), clearly enlarging the space for bike racks, adding a grass

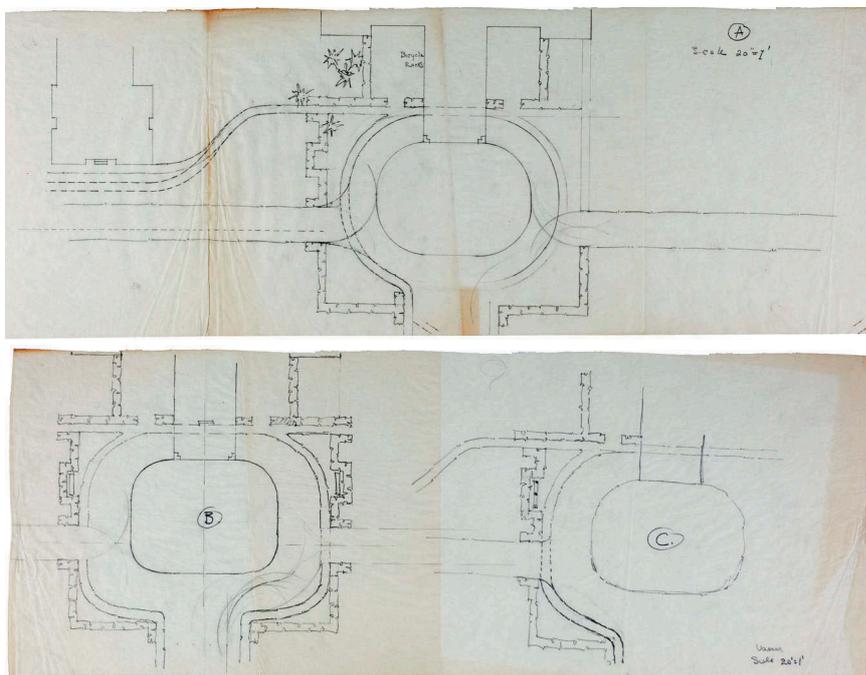


FIGURE 16. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Two sketch plans showing options A-C for Main Forecourt, undated (EDA-UCB).*

plat in the center of the court and playing with its shape, and altering the placement of foot paths as well as the width and placement of the road. There must have been a request for seating, for the yew hedge is now rendered in a saw-tooth pattern to shelter benches. An annotation on the verso of option A calls for ‘sketches for seats in hedge’, which are visible in options B and C. She refined the ideas from option A in another plan dated March 1926 (Figure 17), which figured in further discussion of paths and roads, recorded in notes jotted at the edges.

Since Farrand was tied up with travels and illness that spring and Vassar was eager to move forward with planting, Guernsey and Downer went to see her in New York about the revisions. She summarized their conversation in an undated letter to Guernsey, presumably in March:

As we discussed the planting and necessary road changes in front of Main, it was decided that in order to meet the traffic requirements of the students and to preserve certain trees, that it would be advisable to alter the shape of the court yard originally suggested to a smaller area, making necessary the rebuilding of the roads in front of Main. This is so serious an

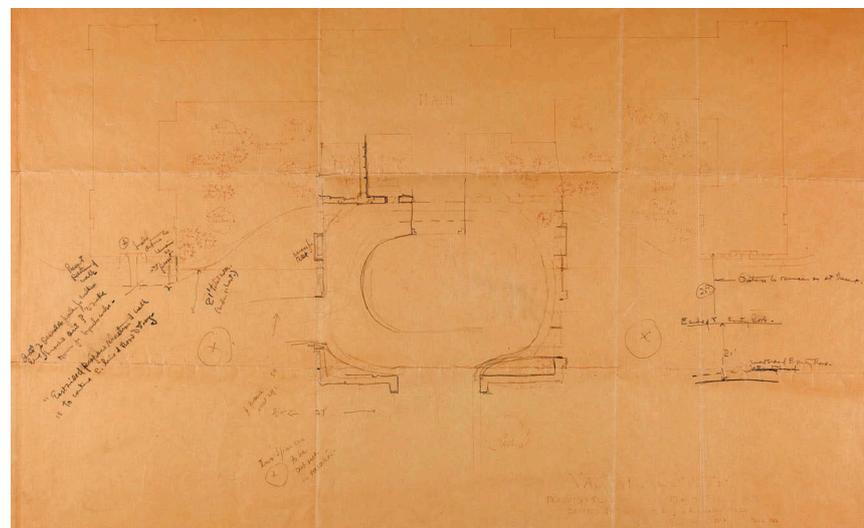


FIGURE 17. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Planting plan for Main Forecourt, March, 1926 (EDA-UCB).*

undertaking that we felt the court and its hedge should wait until the completion of the roads and therefore the hedge could not wisely be planted this spring. We therefore determined to concentrate our efforts on the areas enclosed by the wings where the crab apples and large yews are to be set out and the grades improved and wall shrubs planted against the building itself.¹¹⁷

Farrand attended a Grounds Committee meeting on campus on May 24, then revised the design one more time to produce the final surviving planting plan for Main (Figures 18, 19), which she sent to Guernsey with a letter describing her changes. The court is now rectangular with a toaster-shaped plot of grass at its center. It reroutes the walking paths

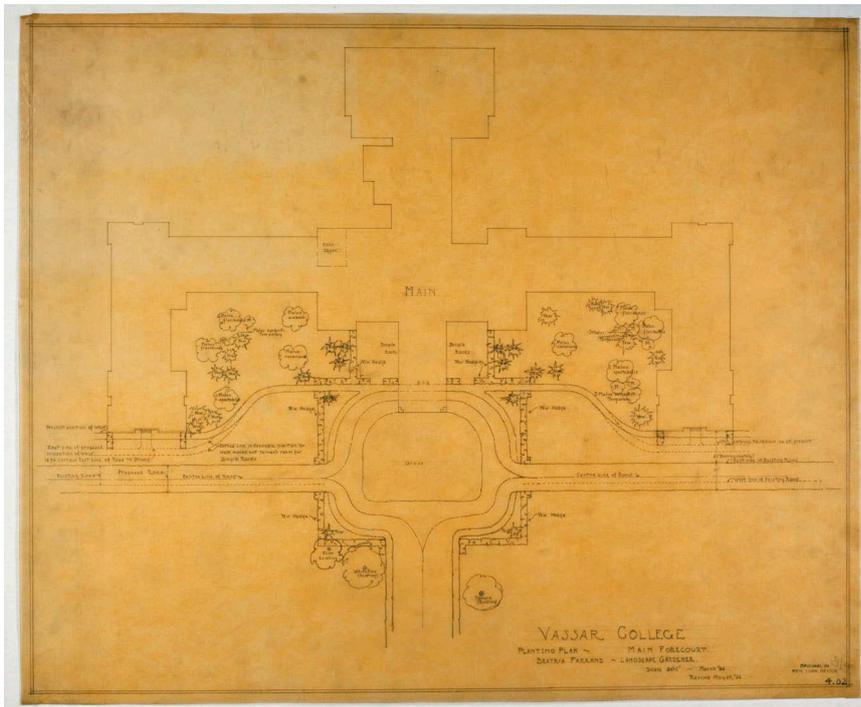


FIGURE 18. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Planting plan for Main Forecourt, March 1926, Revised 29 May 1926 (EDA-UCB).*

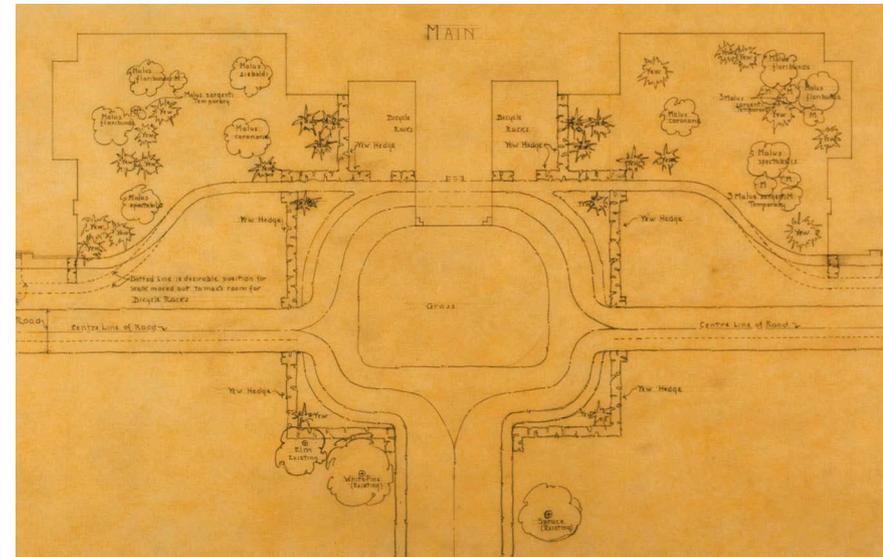


FIGURE 19. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Planting plan for Main Forecourt, March 1926, Revised 29 May 1926; detail of Figure 18 (EDA-UCB).*

to avert the winter snowbanks along the road, expands the bike storage, also screened by yew hedges, preserves the extant trees on the west side of the court, and moves and widens the road in front of Main to allow enough room for all the other elements. This plan neatly satisfies all the campus concerns, while preserving her original conception for the entry court, as she emphasizes: ‘The court has been re-designed, but dignity and simplicity have been the controlling ideas in the new design as well as the old. The Japanese Yew hedge is meant to give color and form to the enclosed area at all seasons of the year.’¹¹⁸

Finally, she defended her plans to replace the Boston ivy on Main’s facade, which she had begun to remove, only to encounter objections from the Executive Committee and MacCracken, who liked it and thought its removal impractical¹¹⁹:

The cleaning of certain creepers from the walls of Main has left them at present in a condition which requires explanation. When certain of the Boston Ivy

plants (*Ampelopsis veitchii*) have been removed they are to be replaced with wall plants of fine form, color, and textures, such as Wisteria, Trumpet creeper, Bittersweet, Climbing hydrangeas, Forsythia, and other foreign as well as native material. It is found that there is a great opportunity for legitimate wall decoration in this place and that, although the upkeep necessary for the new plants will be slightly larger than what was implied in the shearing of the Boston Ivy, it is felt that the position and dignity of the principal building of the college should justify a slightly added expense of this character. The ultimate covering of the walls will be probably fuller than in the old days, but will be more diversified in color, texture, and form.¹²⁰

(She would later wage a similar battle against Boston ivy at Oberlin, where she declared: ‘Boston Ivy was meant to hide the ugly buildings.’¹²¹) Although the wall plantings do not appear in the planting plan, her letters detail how at Vassar, as on other campuses, she considered walls as planting spaces, privileging the controlled use of vines and espaliered trees that complemented, not obscured, the architecture, in varied textures and colors.¹²²

So it happened that Farrand’s plan for Main was only partially executed. The one fully-realized aspect of her plan was the planting in the quadrangles, which began in April of 1926. Downer ordered the plants, Farrand’s assistant Baker went to campus on 23 April to supervise the planting, and Farrand further documents planting crabapples and yews there in May.¹²³ Later that month, the Grounds Committee detailed the completion of this campaign according to Farrand’s ideas: ‘Large Yews and other taller growing evergreens have been placed in the north and south quadrangles of Main which will be large enough to give the effect of color in winter but not so large as to obscure window light to give an impression of crowding. In combination with these evergreens, five or six Flowering Crabapple trees have been planted in each court. These plants have been chosen from varieties especially effective either in spring flower or autumn color.’¹²⁴ Later photographs of these naturalized quadrangles reveal that Farrand’s planting plan for scattered crabapples and yews continued to be followed, as well as her direction for pruning varied vines including Wisteria to give visual interest to sections of the façade, rather than blanketing it (Figures 20, 21). Crabapples still exist today where she marked them on her original plan (although they cannot be the same trees).

The most crucial part of Farrand’s plan for Main, the entry court enclosed by the yew hedge, was not implemented during her time at



FIGURE 20. *Vassar commencement procession, with Farrand’s plantings in one quadrangle of Main Forecourt, 1936 (Photo: Edmund Wolven, VASC).*

Vassar, for reasons of budget. The Grounds Committee had discussed purchasing plants a year before the area would be ready in view of the ongoing ‘furious’ rise in cost of yews, and concerns that it would soon be impossible to acquire plants of a sufficient size within the budget.¹²⁵ They additionally considered substituting other plants for the hedge, presumably for cost reasons.¹²⁶ But the real stumbling block was the cost of widening the road to reconfigure the space, necessary before the planting of the yew hedges could begin. Both Farrand and MacCracken referred to delaying this expense, and in his letter to Farrand after her resignation, he expressed hope that her design for the Main court would yet be fulfilled.¹²⁷ Perhaps he was sincere, for a yew hedge and bike racks were added in 1941 (visible in Figure 21).¹²⁸ This later hedge did not follow Farrand’s plan—it lined the road and bike racks, rather than forming an enclosed courtyard—but it is interesting that an echo of her idea was realized two decades later. With



FIGURE 21. *Vassar College, Main Building, photograph, c. 1950, showing yew hedges along the road and bicycle racks added in 1941, as well as flowering crabapples and yew shrubs in the quadrangles, and wisteria on the building as Farrand had planned. (Vassar Biology Department).*

the demolition of the Thompson annex in 1959, the road was finally widened and a round plot of grass was placed in front of the entrance (subsequently transformed into a space for bedded-out annuals in the 1970s). This work was supported by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (1874–1948) and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874–1960), patrons and close associates of Farrand, who landscaped their estate in Seal Harbor, Maine from 1926–35.¹²⁹ The Rockefellers probably recommended Farrand’s hiring at the University of Chicago c. 1930,¹³⁰ and conceivably they supported reviving her earlier plans at Vassar. Whatever the impetus, the area in front of Main today contains the basic elements of Farrand’s design, if not the unifying logic: visible architecture punctuated with assorted vines, naturalized quadrangles dotted with spring flowering trees and yews, bike racks, one central grass plot, and formal, clipped yew hedges (Figures 21–22).



FIGURE 22. *Vassar College, Main Building and Circle, with flowering crabapples in the quadrangle and yew hedges along the road. (Photo: Steve Taylor, Google Earth Street View Panorama, 2017).*

Northeast campus: The Euthenics Quadrangle

Farrand was hired in part to advise on the creation of the new northeast section of campus dedicated to euthenics, including the planning of four new buildings that would frame a quadrangle: Blodgett Hall of Euthenics (York and Sawyer, 1925–28), Kenyon Gym (Allen and Collens, 1933), Cushing House (Allen and Collens, 1925–27), and Wimpfheimer, a nursery school and early childhood education center (Allen and Collens, 1927). Vassar’s formal model for this area was Yale’s Harkness Memorial Quadrangle — which Farrand had been landscaping since she was hired at Yale in 1923.¹³¹ Farrand participated in the conference at Vassar on 26 June 1926 with MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer and Keene Richards (1889–1953, the campus General Manager), in which they asked her opinion about the siting of these buildings, the sight lines between them, approach roads, and their relation to existing topography and landscape. Her archives suggest she did significant preparatory study for this area. She acquired plans, elevations, and grade figures from the architects designing Cushing and Blodgett, as well as two General Maps of the area (prepared by Richards, dated 1–29–24 and 1–25–26), and a plan of water mains. On her copy of a Topographical Map of Northeast Campus (including heights of individual trees, also by Richards and dated 11–24–26) are superimposed pencil sketches inserting the new buildings and playing with the connecting walkways,

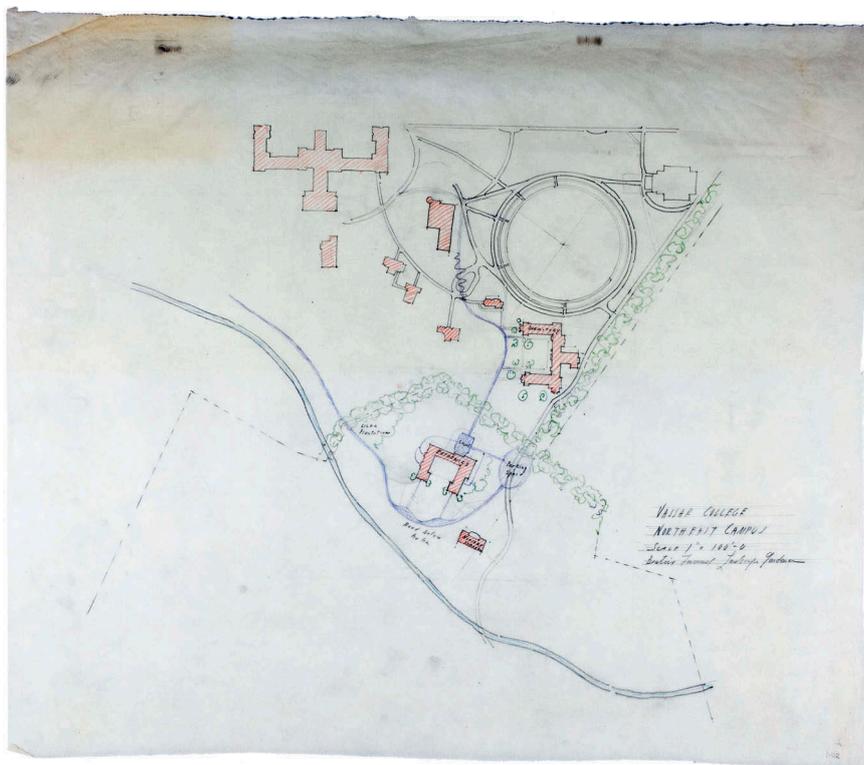


FIGURE 23. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, Northeast campus, 1928 (EDA-UCB).*

presumably Farrand's generative sketches. She produced two drawings of the northeast campus in colored pencil on trace (Figures 23, 24). In the second, later version (Figure 24), she has proposed a site for the new gym with a question mark—on the spot where it would indeed be built a few years later, although oriented slightly differently. Both drawings show her proposed roads connecting the four buildings. She has indicated spaces for parking, a courtyard in front of the Euthenics Building, service drives behind it, the location of an extant row of giant pines, and a proposed lilac plantation. Most interestingly, she conceived a ha-ha behind the building, below which she placed the road. This idea took advantage of the natural terrain: Blodgett Hall would be on a bluff, beyond which the ground slopes sharply down to the Casperkill. Her plan placed the

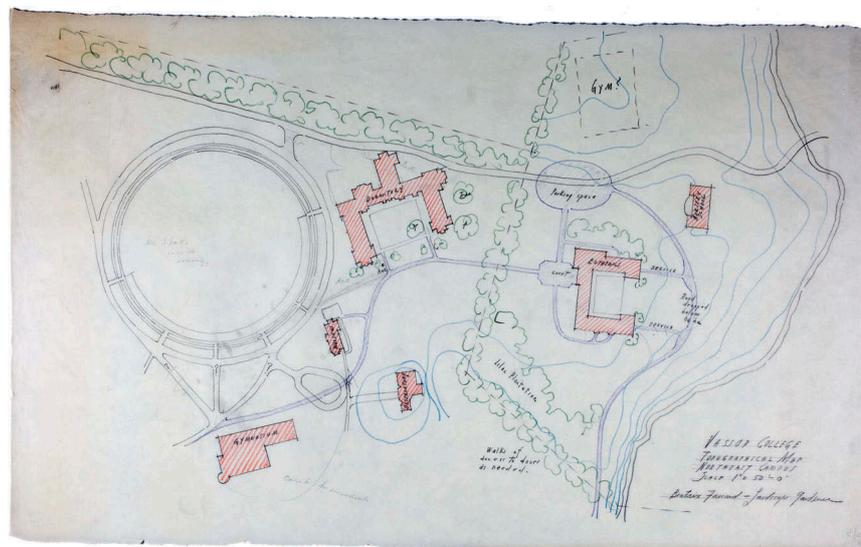


FIGURE 24. *Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, topographical map showing proposed roads, walkways, plantings, and gym site, Northeast campus, 1928 (EDA-UCB).*

service road along the creek, hiding it from the building, and preserving the building's view of the Wing farmland and the hills to the east.

The Grounds Committee discussed Farrand's sketches for the Euthenics Quad at their meeting of 9 May 1928, as reflected in pencil notations on Figure 24 and written comments by the president, who was in attendance. MacCracken vetoed most aspects of her design in a private letter to Guernsey the following day, saying that: 'I think Mrs. Farrand's suggestion of the service area and the ha-ha quite impossible on account of the contour of the ground,' that her plan for the road is 'displeasing,' that traffic near the preschool is 'the very last thing we want', that she is 'entirely mistaken in her idea' for the parking area, that her comments on Downer's proposed Cushing Hall planting were 'somewhat ungracious', and concluding with the sarcastic, 'I'm sorry Mrs. Farrand does not like Forsythia,' noting its use by the Arnold Arboretum and his own taste for it.¹³² (This is a curious comment given Farrand's extensive use of the shrub — in fact, she had proposed espaliering it on Main. She favored

Forsythia intermedia 'Spectabilis', deploying it as the backbone of many northeastern campus plantings, and planted an acre of it in the Forsythia Dell at Dumbarton Oaks.¹³³ Presumably MacCracken had missed a subtler point, or else was looking to find fault.) The committee proceeded to approve Farrand's proposed foot path between Cushing and Blodgett and her proposed parking lot, but not the ha-ha,¹³⁴ and she continued working with Mrs. Blodgett and committee members to refine ideas for grading, roads and plantings.¹³⁵ About the lilac plantation, she clarified her intent to 'let these lilac species ramble down the hill rather informally.'¹³⁶ The rambling lilac plantation was realized (see Figure 5), and the foot path between Cushing and Blodgett was created closely following her designs, as it still does today. Farrand's ideas for this area reveal her sensitivity to Vassar's mixture of formal landscape (imposed on the land according to cardinal directions, such as Main) with informal design that takes its inspiration from the existing terrain.¹³⁷ But Blodgett Hall's position at the edge of campus soon came to reflect the marginality of euthenics in the curriculum,¹³⁸ and the notion that these four buildings constitute a quadrangle has been upended by later planting initiatives.

Other campus projects

Farrand also offered ideas and created plans for other parts of Vassar's campus. Before the Grounds Committee had decided, at her recommendation, to focus attention on Main rather than the Chapel, she described her rough ideas for planting around the chapel: "wall shrubs, low-growing and hardy evergreens, banked to emphasize the architectural details and the approach walks."¹³⁹ She advised on the relocation of foot paths between Main, a nearby Assembly Hall, and the adjacent Science Quadrangle, preparing a drawing (Figure 25) that was discussed at a meeting with MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer and Richards; as she recorded, they agreed that, 'The walk in front of the Sanders Laboratory is to be designed so that the curves on the opposite east and west ends of the building should approximately balance, in order that the whole space may be made as symmetrical as possible. The west walk should be carried to the west side of the elm trees which are on the east side of the New England building.'¹⁴⁰ The relative simplicity of the plan belies the complexities of

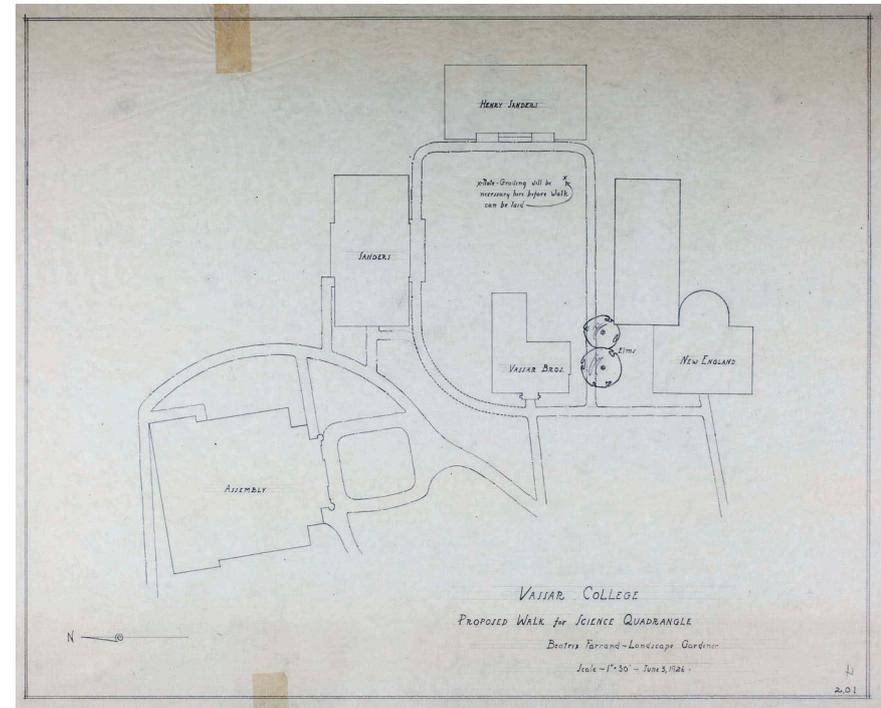


FIGURE 25. Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, proposed walks for Science Quadrangle, 3 June 1926 (EDA-UCB). (The unlabeled building above New England Hall is the Teaching Greenhouse.).

grading that bedeviled these walkways, and correspondence reveals Farrand's dedicated attention to addressing small drainage issues.

She participated in various discussions of how to treat the campus boundaries, especially along Raymond Avenue, with trees and fences. Farrand supplied drawings for an iron fence with a stone or brick base, presenting two variations and subsequently, two revisions, in response to discussions at Grounds Committee meetings in June and October, 1926 (Figure 26). She recommended forged Swedish iron for practical reasons of rust resistance, and noted that the fence should preserve an informal character, reusing old wall stone with deeply raked joints 'for a rustic feel.'¹⁴¹ Her fence drawings, like those of seating outside Main, reflect

BEATRIX FARRAND AND CAMPUS LANDSCAPE AT VASSAR

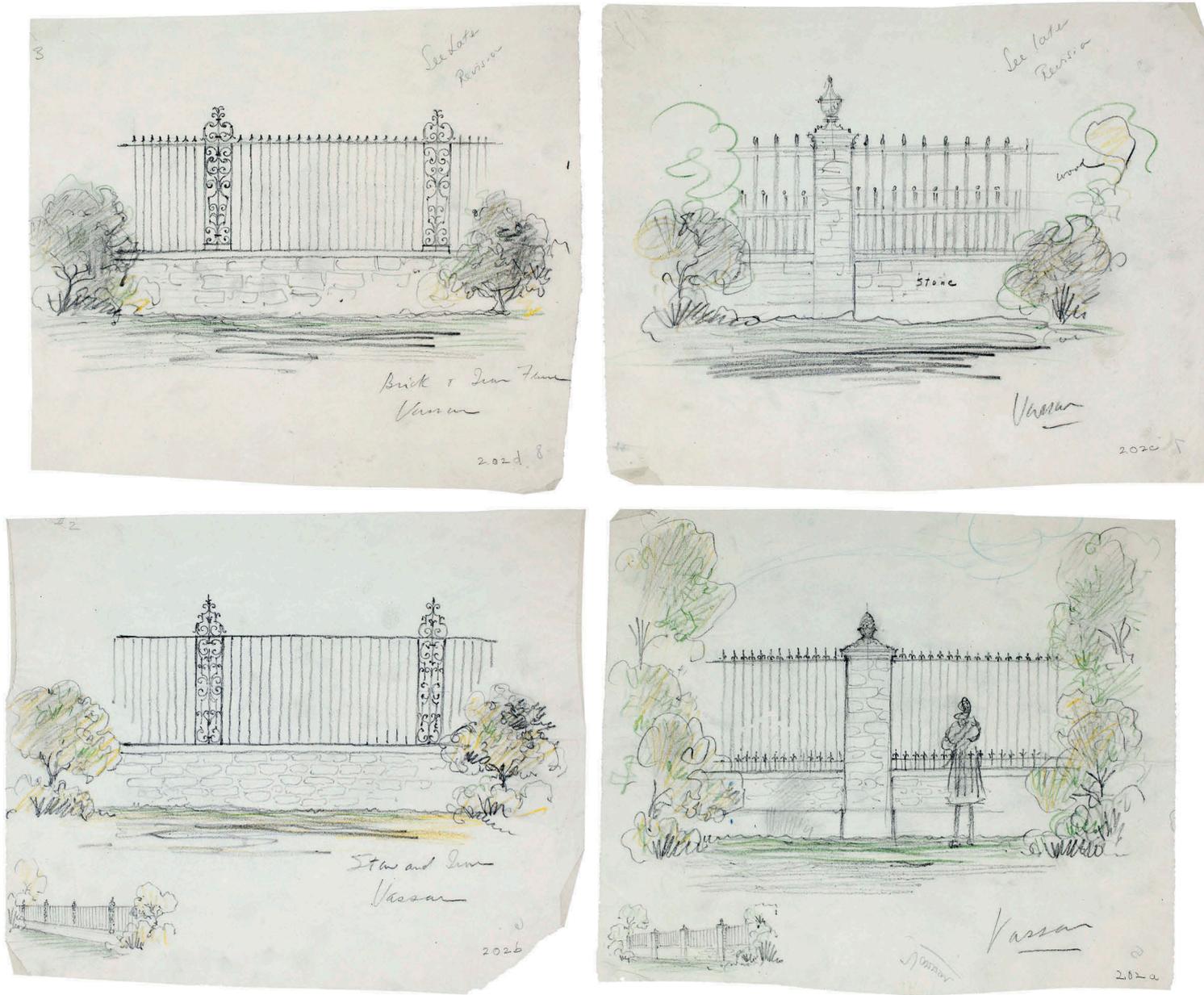


FIGURE 26. Beatrix Farrand, Vassar College, variant designs and revisions for an iron, stone, and brick fence for the Raymond Avenue campus border (EDA-UCB).

her characteristic attention to garden furnishings and other details to complete her plans.

Thus, Farrand was engaged on a broad range of projects at Vassar, which were spread across nearly the entire campus (visible in [Figures 1, 5](#)). Her writings and drawings reveal an impressive depth of analysis, reflecting the extensive study and thoughtful planning she and her staff devoted even to a small client, who gave her limited authority over the execution of her designs.

Farrand's Vassar projects stall

The great irony of this narrative is that a progressive women's college eager to equip women for the study and practice of landscape architecture was not able to sustain a working relationship with a path-breaking woman at the forefront of the field. There were problems on both sides that hampered, and ultimately halted progress. Some of the discord at Vassar was consistent with difficulties Farrand encountered elsewhere. Her infrequent visits and inaccessibility during her frequent travels caused delays and impatience, especially for her smaller clients. Well-known for being imperious, she projected a social and professional hauteur that could raise hackles. One early client recalled her mien: 'striding about and giving orders to the head gardener, a magnificent Scotsman, very austere, in her long skirt and high lace collar.'¹⁴² At both Yale and Princeton, Farrand faced resistance from campus colleagues. At Princeton, she butted heads with Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942), who objected to many aspects of her designs, asserting his own desire for more control of the landscape around buildings.¹⁴³ At Yale, James Gamble Rogers (1867–1947) complained that her plantings blocked important vistas, or were stylistically incompatible with the architecture: 'At each door is put two evergreens...that give a very flippant effect to the otherwise dignity of the colonial architecture and gives an effect of a suburban milliner's cemetery.'¹⁴⁴

Rarely was sexism articulated so clearly, but it certainly fueled many of these conflicts. In 1925, a woman designer managing projects and directing men was in a nearly impossible position.¹⁴⁵ Marian Cruger Coffin (1876–1957), Farrand's contemporary, had lamented when she first sought a job in the field that, "My dear young lady, what will you do about supervising the work on the ground?" became ... a constant and discouraging query¹⁴⁶ Even a 1938

New York Times article celebrating women's new dominance of landscape architecture marveled that, 'Students and visitors who admire the scope of the landscape work done on the campus of Yale and Princeton Universities will find it difficult to realize that these huge undertakings are directed by a woman.'¹⁴⁷ At both Princeton and Yale, some of the staff referred to Farrand as 'the bush woman.'¹⁴⁸ Balmori noted, 'She faced the usual pejoratives applied to women who worked in a professional world from which they were customarily absent.'¹⁴⁹ Nonetheless, Farrand successfully navigated these shoals at Princeton and Yale to develop long-term, fruitful collaborations. As Balmori observed, 'That Farrand should have prevailed against such entrenched interests must indicate a high degree of tact as well as rightness and persistence on her part.'¹⁵⁰

At Vassar, however, she encountered other obstacles. First, despite the college's desire to emulate Yale and Princeton, Vassar did not have a fraction of their budgets, and could not treat landscape on the same comprehensive scale. Both MacCracken and trustee May Childs Parsons, then Acting Chair of the Grounds Committee, told Farrand they were hamstrung by lack of funds to complete her designs (notably moving the road in front of Main), and bemoaned the comparatively low endowment of women's colleges, which was indeed a point of discussion among the Seven Sisters colleges in late 1928.¹⁵¹ However, funding was also an excuse.

In large part, the tensions were fueled by Downer, who felt his authority seriously threatened by Farrand's involvement, as detailed with the arboretum. The gardener had the president's ear; the two shared an understanding based on their campus-focused lives, and they frequently spoke and exchanged notes about planting plans and upkeep, and general campus issues, as well as recommendations for nurseries and gardens Downer should visit.¹⁵²

Ultimately, all landscape matters went through the hands of MacCracken who, at this point in his tenure, was intimately engaged in the smallest details of campus life, planning, and management. Although he was a perceptive and hands-on steward, MacCracken had yet to manage building and landscape projects or outside designers at the time they hired Farrand, and he was still negotiating authority with the board that had nearly ousted him. The documents reveal a young administration, inexperienced at project management and struggling to establish decision-making processes. MacCracken expressed his annoyance whenever he perceived Farrand overstepped her authority, and unloaded his irritation in blistering missives to Guernsey, peevishly nitpicking

her ideas, and at times even overriding the Grounds Committee that had already approved them.¹⁵³ But he and the Committee never established the scope of her authority, as she repeatedly requested. MacCracken remarked that Farrand, ‘made the suggestion to me that there should be a special meeting of the Grounds Committee to determine exactly what the authority of the Landscape Gardener should be, and it was apparent that she desired that this authority should be absolute. To this I for one would never consent. Neither a consulting architect nor a landscape gardener who do not live in the college ought to have the final decision on the matter of living arrangements.’¹⁵⁴ He proposed that the Landscape Gardener make recommendations to the Grounds Committee, who would give instructions to the Superintendent of Grounds, but concluded, ‘From what Mrs. Farrand told me ... she does not approve of the procedure I have outlined above, and wishes to have *carte blanche* in landscape gardening. The difficulty with this is the limited amount of our budget, and her absence from the college. We cannot give her the same authority she has at Yale and Princeton.’¹⁵⁵

There was indeed a serious mismatch of expectations about the role of a consulting landscape architect. Farrand preferred to have complete control of her projects; she managed the campus gardeners at Yale, Princeton and later the University of Chicago, and even declined some commissions where she could not control the entire landscape.¹⁵⁶ Vassar, instead, kept a very tight rein over campus projects, treating Farrand — as others before and after her — as an occasional consultant, rather than an adjunct member of the staff with any say over the execution of her designs. In a private note to Guernsey, MacCracken even revealed his preference to create designs in-house, relegating Farrand to reviewing Vassar’s own proposals:

My objection to Mrs. Farrand’s procedure is this — that it appears to limit unnecessarily the scope and authority of Mr. Downer in his work. With so good a superintendent it seems to me neither necessary nor politic to assign to an absent landscape gardener the elaborate planning of a road or a walk. What we would like from Mrs. Farrand, it seems to me, is rather a general opinion upon our proposals and then carry them out ourselves.... The difficulty consists in our limited budget, in our personnel on the grounds, and in our policy of responsible trusteeship. Mrs. Farrand, so far as I can learn, has never worked under any of those conditions. She has had unlimited budgets, she has directed the personnel herself, and the trustees with whom she has worked have left her a completely free hand.¹⁵⁷

Vassar indeed had a very different culture from Farrand’s Ivy League clients. The college focused on multiple discrete projects, rather than an overarching vision or philosophy for campus landscape. In part, this practice reflected Vassar’s longstanding cultivation of a heterogeneous, picturesque landscape: the campus had developed via evolutionary expansion rather than following an initial holistic plan, favoring an eclectic mix of architectural and landscape modes.¹⁵⁸ But Vassar’s proclivity at the time for hiring a succession of landscape architects denied the college the opportunity to work with a designer over time — a crucial component of landscape design, which involves the long-term growth and development of living materials. It was a particular loss in the case of Farrand, who devoted significant attention to dynamic, diachronic garden development.¹⁵⁹ Ultimately, it seems that these Vassar clients did not fully appreciate the value of a unified landscape plan, or Farrand’s sophisticated melding of aesthetic, educational, and ecological values through her campus designs.

So for a confluence of reasons, Farrand’s landscape projects at Vassar stalled. In November, 1928, Farrand met privately with May Parsons, and immediately afterward offered her resignation:

You do not know what a pleasure it has been to meet you and have a frank talk with regard to the Vassar situation with a person who knows and really cares about the college and its grounds. It has possibilities of such beauty that one longs to see them fulfilled. If, after your next visit to Vassar and a frank investigation of the conditions as they are, it seems wise to accept the resignation which I now place in your hands as acting chairman of the Grounds Committee, I shall quite understand although I shall be sorry to separate myself from the work as the campus is beautiful and has great possibilities. But so little has been accomplished in my term as consulting landscape gardener that it almost seems that at present there were no room for such a functionary.¹⁶⁰

In her final letter to MacCracken, Farrand was similarly gracious and also pointed in her disappointment at the glacial, piecemeal progress and limited authority, although she was politic in offering to send all her notes and plans for the project to Vassar for further reference, saying, ‘I feel I am leaving friends at Vassar.’¹⁶¹

Despite Vassar’s ostensible limitations of funds, they immediately began looking for her replacement.¹⁶² Several members of the Grounds Committee were interested in the Olmsted Brothers firm, at the urging of the powerful Mrs. Blodgett. (Olmsted was then landscaping Blodgett’s Brookby estate in

Grand Rapids, and she was under the misimpression that the Olmsted firm had done an original Vassar campus layout.¹⁶³) In March, 1929, May Parsons wrote to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (1870–1957), who begged off citing recent illness, suggesting instead his partner, Percival Gallagher (1874–1934), the Landscape Advisor at Bryn Mawr.¹⁶⁴ Over MacCracken's objections at hiring a consultant from as far away as Boston, Vassar invited Gallagher to visit the campus in April, and hired him.¹⁶⁵ So, Vassar treated Farrand as they had Parsons and Underwood before her: accepting plans, mining them for ideas which they implemented only partially, and moving on.¹⁶⁶ Despite the Depression, as well as past assurances to Downer that he controlled the arboretum, Gallagher presented plans for an 'Arboretum of Ornamental Woody Plants' as well ideas for the Ecological Laboratory plantings in late 1931, which were approved by the Grounds Committee the following February.¹⁶⁷ At the same time, MacCracken was seeking referrals for yet another landscape architect.¹⁶⁸

§ § §

It is tantalizing to think how some areas of the Vassar campus might have developed had budgets, personalities, and other factors been different when the college hired Beatrix Farrand. But if Farrand's plans for Vassar were not fully realized, traces of her ideas survive in the placement of buildings, the selection and placement of walks, roads, and plantings, and, fundamentally, the understanding of the campus itself as an arboretum. Moreover, her presence as consulting Landscape Gardener on this women's campus in the mid-1920s was an important example to a generation of Vassar students learning that landscape architecture was indeed a profession open to modern women — if not an easy row to hoe.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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NOTES

References to the *Vassar Encyclopedia* (hereinafter VE) can be found at <http://vcencyclopedia.vassar.edu/>. References to the *Vassar Quarterly* (hereinafter VQ) and the *Vassar Miscellany News* (hereinafter Misc) can be found at <https://newspaperarchives.vassar.edu/>.

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 15. Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 173.
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 17. Phillips, "'Connecticut motive'," 20.
 18. His duties included collaboration with the Botany department for "instruction and demonstrations in Horticulture," and "close co-operation with the Botany Department on all matters concerned with Botanical development of campus and grounds," and he was reappointed as Horticulturist in the Botany Department in 1925. Duties of the Superintendent of Grounds, June 12, 1922; Downer to MacCracken, February 14, 1925 (VASC-M, 3.18).
 19. Correspondence between MacCracken and Roberts (VASC-M, 33.11, 37.27).
 20. At Roberts' request; MacCracken to Guernsey, October 27, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55). It is unclear whether Baker ever gave the lectures. She rose from being Farrand's assistant to her New York office manager, and supervised Farrand's planting plans on the Vassar campus. In 1933, by then director of Lowthorpe, she wrote an editorial for Vassar alumnae outlining new roles for women in landscape architecture; Anne Baker, "The Landscape Architect," *VQ* 18, 4 (November, 1933): 363-65. On Baker, see also Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 43.
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 22. In the categories of Landscape Architecture; Landscape Engineering and Ground Forms; Architecture; Plants; Graphical Expression; and Verbal Expression;

- ASLA, "Minimum Educational Requirements in Landscape Architecture," May, 1928; Roberts to MacCracken, July 20, 1931 (VASC-M, 37.23).
23. The major consisted of the following courses: Art History, History of Landscape Architecture, Studio Practice in Architecture, Interior Decoration (Art Department); Ecology and Horticulture (Botany); and Descriptive Geometry and Mechanical Drawing; and Shades, Shadows, and Perspective (Math). Plan for the Proposed Course in Landscape Architecture (VASC-M 35.20).
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 26. Calendar, *Misc* 9, 23 (January 10, 1925) and "Landscape Architecture," *Misc* 9, 24 (January 14, 1925.)
 27. M. S., '22, "Landscape Architecture to the Fore!," *Misc* 5, 38 (March 19, 1921); *Misc* 12, 48 (May 12, 1928); *VQ* 13, 3 (July 1928): 182. However, Frost demurred that his school did not urge Cambridge students to undertake the profession, instead warning them of the difficulties; Frost to MacCracken, March 12, 1926 (VASC-M, 30.14).
 28. C. B., '35, "Dr. Frost Gives Talk on Landscape Architecture. Emphasizes Fact That This is New Profession, Open to Modern Girls," *Misc* 16, 12 (November 21, 1931); "Architect To Talk Here; Plan Student Exhibit," *Misc* 16, 10 (November 14, 1931).
 29. Louise Leland, Assistant to Henry Frost, to Zita Thornbury, Vassar Vocational Bureau, November 12, 1931 (VASC-M, 35.20). The seven in private practice were: Mary P. Cunningham (VC 1910); Anne D. Baker (VC 1912); Elizabeth Clark (Mrs. John Gunther, VC 1919-21); Faith Bemis (VC 1920-22); Anne Waterman (Mrs. Haskins Canfield, VC 1922); Elizabeth Blaney (VC 1927) and Emily H. Cooley (VC 1927).
 30. Architects – mostly consisting of landscape architects – made up the fourth largest group, jumping from 4 in 1918 to 23 in 1929. Mary Jean Bowman, "Plans and Preparation of Vassar Students for Occupations after College," *VQ* 16, 3 (July 1931): 185-88.
 31. For the early history of Vassar campus landscape, Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 29-43; Daniels, *Main to Mudd*; Rosalie Thorne McKenna, "A Study of the Architecture of the Main Building and the Landscaping of Vassar College 1860-1870," M. A. Thesis, Vassar College, 1949 (advised by Richard Krautheimer, and written with input from MacCracken, Downer, Meade, and Richards); Botany Department, *The Vassar Campus 1861-1921* (Poughkeepsie, 1923); Benson J. Lossing, *Vassar College and its Founder* (New York: Alvord, 1867), 157-63.
 32. McKenna, "Main Building," 102-103 and *passim*.
 33. McKenna, "Main Building," 121, 132-35; Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 32. Olmsted, Sr. wrote to his wife on August 4, 1868, "We went to Vassar College yesterday. They have a miserable plan to be amended." Smithsonian, Frederick Law Olmsted Papers: Subject File, 1857-1952; School buildings and grounds; Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 1868, Box 46 Reel 41. In 1921, Roberts and the Olmsted firm both searched unsuccessfully for any Olmsted designs for Vassar: VASC-M, 17.51.
 34. Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 36.
 35. "Changes at Vassar during the Summer," *Misc* 1, 2 (October 1, 1915): 6; MacCracken, "The Campus and the Living Endowment," *VQ* 3, 1 (November, 1917): 55-57; Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 129; Correspondence in VASC-M, 17.48.
 36. Enabled by a 1924 gift from the Saratoga Nursery. "10,000 Trees Given Vassar," *Misc* 8, 45 (April 30, 1924); Henry E. Downer, "Forestry Demonstration on the Wing Farm," *VQ* 9, 3 (May, 1924); "Timber Experiment Proves Successful," *Misc* 9, 47 (May 6, 1925).
 37. *VQ* 10, 4 (August 1, 1925): 287-288.
 38. Neff, "Gardens at Vassar," 266.
 39. Letters between Guernsey and MacCracken, May and June, 1925 (VASC-M, 3.3.7); Underwood to MacCracken and Helen Kenyon, June 18, 1925 (VASC-M, 17.50).
 40. John Grier Hibben, president of Princeton, to MacCracken, May 12, 1915 (VASC-M, 17.49). Curiously, MacCracken wrote to Farrand in 1922 asking her to advise on treatment of diseased pine trees, to which she kindly replied (VASC-M, 17.51).
 41. Joseph Howland Hunt to MacCracken, June 8, 1922 (VASC-M 17.48).
 42. The committee members were Queene Ferry Coonley (VC 1896, the patron of Wright), Russell C. Leffingwell (prominent banker and former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury), May Childs Parsons (Mrs. Walter W., VC 1895), and Roosevelt (then in private legal practice until his 1928 election as New York's governor).
 43. MacCracken to Guernsey, September 30, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 44. Roosevelt's neighbors were Farrand's distant cousin Thomas Newbold and his wife Sarah Lawrence Coolidge, for whom Farrand designed Bellefield in 1912.
 45. Guernsey to MacCracken, October 2 and 7, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 46. Farrand to Guernsey, October 24, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 47. Report of the Grounds Committee to the Board of Trustees, November 10, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 48. Minutes, Board of Trustees meeting, November 10, 1925 (VASC-M, 5.37).
 49. "Woman Appointed Consulting Architect," *Misc*, 10, 19 (December 5, 1925).
 50. Farrand to Guernsey, November 16, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 51. This preference has variously been explained: she followed nineteenth-century terminology, which

- reflects a rejection of Italian and French formal architectural garden style in favor of the ostensibly natural English landscape tradition; or, it reflected her belief that architecture should be reserved for buildings; or else it reflected her mentor Sargent's objection to considering gardening a type of architecture; Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 25-6, 41, 60. See also Ann Komara, "The Glass Wall: Gendering the American Society of Landscape Architects," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 8, 1 (2000-01): 22-30. Farrand's professional stationery also read, "Beatrix Farrand Landscape Gardener".
52. "I trust you will forgive the business-like method which I invariably follow, in writing my terms in advance, before visiting a possible new piece of work. My charges are \$75.00 a day for work done whether in the field or in the office, plus my travelling expenses in the field, motor, mileage, etc., and office expenses in the office. These consist of long distance telephones, telegrams, the client's share of office expenses such as drafting, typewriting, bookkeeping, etc., and where my assistants are associated with the work, their time is charged at approximately \$25.00 to \$35.00 a day, plus their expenses, whether in field or office. Occasionally, a salary is arranged, based on the time which the client thinks will be necessary for supervision, plus, of course, the usual travelling and office expenses. If the client should wish purchases made, this is done by a special Beatrix Farrand, Agent, account, which is rendered half-yearly and vouchers submitted for all purchases made. The Client may make deposits to this account, and purchases made from nurserymen are given the benefit of the trade discount allowed to me, as no commission is charged on any purchase at any time. As the Committee will not have had time to discuss these questions, my visit tomorrow will be in the manner of a preliminary consultation, involving obligation on neither the part of the Committee nor on my own." Farrand to Guernsey, October 13, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 53. In January of 1928, Guernsey reports that Farrand's fee has gone from \$75 to \$100/day, but that she kept the former rate for Vassar, for which he was grateful; Guernsey to MacCracken, January 31, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.67). Farrand's fee when she started at Princeton in 1912 was \$50/day; at the University of Chicago beginning in 1929 it was \$75/day; and in 1939 at Oberlin it was \$100/day; Balmori, "Campus Work," 152, 176, 178.
 54. On Farrand's career, Robert W. Patterson, "Beatrix Farrand 1872-1959. An Appreciation of a Great Landscape Gardener," *Landscape Architecture* 49, 4 (1959): 216-224; Balmori et al, *Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes*; and Jane Brown, *Beatrix: The Gardening Life of Beatrix Jones Farrand, 1872-1959* (New York: Viking, 1995); Robin Karson, *A Genius for Place. American Landscape of the Country Place Era* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 135-79; Tankard, *Beatrix Farrand*.
 55. Tankard, *Beatrix Farrand*, 159-171; Balmori, "Campus Work".
 56. McGuire, "Plants and Planting Design," 114. In a letter to Oberlin, Farrand declared, "A campus is a place for trees and grass, nothing more... And shrubs, but not in thickets," cited in Balmori, "Campus Work," 130.
 57. Farrand to Guernsey, December 19, 1925 (VASC-M, 17.29); McGuire, "Plants and Planting Design," 63ff; Balmori, "Campus Work," 131, 136-7.
 58. Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 47-55; Balmori, "Campus Work," 137-40; Robin Veder, "Walking through Dumbarton Oaks: Early Twentieth-century Bourgeois Bodily Techniques and Kineshetic Experience of Landscape," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 72, 1 (2013): 5-27.
 59. Farrand to Guernsey, October 24, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 60. Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes, December 14, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 61. Balmori, "Campus Work," 149.
 62. Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 48.
 63. Main was built on the site of the earlier Dutchess County Race Course, cleared of all trees, although early photos show trees on other areas of the campus, if not the variety or number that would come to characterize it. Henry Downer, "Vassar's Distinguished Trees," *VQ* 17, 2 (May, 1932).
 64. McKenna, "Main Building," 109, 118, 139 and *passim*.
 65. Julia Vandevelder, "Class Trees," *VE*, 2005.
 66. Correspondence between MacCracken and Charles Collens, October 9, 1916; and MacCracken with Doubleday Page, June 2, 1917 (VASC-M, 17.48).
 67. *VQ* 10, 4 (August 1, 1925): 287-288; *Misc* 9, 53 (June 15, 1925).
 68. Balmori, "Campus Work," 168-70; Phillips, "Connecticut motive". Additionally, Farrand had accompanied Sargent to meet with Olmsted to plan Vanderbilt's arboretum at Biltmore: Karson, *A Genius for Place*, 135-6.
 69. As noted by Balmori, "Campus Work," 140-4, 173; Lyon, 64-5.
 70. Balmori, "Campus Work," 141. She interprets Farrand's thinking about the nursery as an outgrowth of Arts & Crafts principles of creating a total environment by raising plants in place, as opposed to the industrial-age practice of buying them commercially.
 71. Phillips, "'Connecticut motive'," 7; Beatrix Farrand, "The Debt of Landscape Art to a Museum of Trees," *Architectural Record* 44 (1918): 407-13.
 72. Beatrix Farrand, "Landscape Gardening at Yale," *Yale Alumni Weekly* (June 12, 1925): 2-9 at 3, 9. Farrand interpreted the educational mission of landscape for many modes, from botany to esthetics. In her draft report on Oberlin, where she began consulting in 1937, Farrand noted, "The effect of unconscious training of beauty absorbed in daily familiarity is hard to exaggerate. The campus may well be a useful, if unlisted, part of the college curriculum." Cited by Lyon, "The Campus Designs," 72.
 73. Farrand to Guernsey, October 24, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55); Lyon, "The Campus Designs," 63.
 74. Downer to MacCracken, July 17, 1924 (VASC-M, 3.18). The nursery was on the site of the current Skinner Hall from 1921 until 1930 when the construction of the building forced its relocation to the Wing farmland; "Vassar Nursery Moved from Site of Music Building to Wing Farm," *Misc* 14, 42 (April 16, 1930). Loring Underwood had first proposed that Vassar start a small nursery for trees and shrubs on

- the farm: Underwood to MacCracken, May 8, 1915 (VASC-M, 17.49). MacCracken described a nursery with stock worth over \$1,000 in 1917, presumably Underwood's: Henry MacCracken, "The Campus and the Living Endowment," *VQ* 3, 1 (November, 1917): 55-57.
75. Report of Grounds Committee to Board of Trustees, May 20, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 76. "Through the Campus Gates," *VQ* 12, 4 (September 1, 1927): 250; Trustee Minutes, Feb. 8, 1927 (VASC MacCracken, 5.37).
 77. "We are still awaiting Mrs. Farrand's suggestions as to what should be done in developing our arboretum through our nursery. It is obvious that the college cannot spend a great amount of money on the arboretum, consequently we must work for twenty-five years ahead through our planting, and I hope there will not be a long delay in this matter. It is not easy to secure plants." MacCracken to Guernsey, February 27, 1926 (VASC-M, 3.3.7).
 78. Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes, December 14, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 79. Farrand to Guernsey, undated, spring 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55). She further clarified her terms for supplying planting materials: "I do not know whether I have previously explained to you that by my method of work my time is charged for on the per diem basis and that no commission on any expenditure is charged by me; also that where clients desire it (as most of them do) a deposit is made by the client with Beatrix Farrand, Agent, from which purchases are made for the client and accounting made half-yearly with vouchers accompanying the statements. As nurserymen frequently allow me a substantial discount it is often to the client's interest to order through my office, not so much perhaps as a money saving arrangement as because my orders to nurseries are so considerable that it is to the nurseryman's interest to supply me with good material."
 80. "An Arboretum is one of the dreams of the future...A dream made immediately possible at this commencement by the gift...for this purpose." Neff, "Gardens at Vassar, 265.
 81. Guernsey to MacCracken, April 5, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 82. Downer to Guernsey, June 5, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 83. MacCracken to Richards, May 16, 1929 (VASC-M, 16.41).
 84. Beatrix Farrand, "Princeton Landscape Gardening," *Princeton Alumni Weekly* 26:34 (June 9, 1926): 949-65.
 85. MacCracken to Guernsey, December 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 86. MacCracken to Guernsey, April 12, 1926; and Guernsey to MacCracken, April 13, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 87. Executive Committee Minutes, April 14, 1926. MacCracken later reminded Guernsey of the arrangement: "When Mr. Downer refused the Cornell offer the trustees...authorized that the arboretum, as a specific project, be committed to his professional care, subject to the direction of the Committee on Grounds. With respect to the professional services of the Consulting Landscape Gardener, these are to be in the form of recommendations to the Committee on Grounds, and such plans as are approved by the Committee on Grounds shall be executed under the sole responsibility of the Superintendent of Grounds." May 10, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.67).
 88. Downer to Guernsey, June 5, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 89. Farrand's notes on a conference of June 26, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 90. MacCracken to Guernsey, August 16 and 18, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 91. Farrand to MacCracken, August 24, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 92. President's Memorandum of Conference of Grounds Committee, October 14, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 93. Downer to Guernsey, June 5, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 94. Class of 1875 Notes, *VQ* 11, 3 (June 1, 1926): 267.
 95. "Spring Council Meeting," *VQ* 17, 2 (May, 1932): 166, citing Ida P. McKean, VC '96.
 96. Henry E. Downer, "The Grounds at Vassar," *VQ* 16, 1 (February 1, 1931): 5.
 97. This design evokes contemporary urban planning ideas, such as Olmsted's "emerald ribbon" around Boston. But the verdant quadrangles, plantings and specimen trees of Vassar's central campus makes the analogy imperfect.
 98. M.A.P.S., "Department of Grounds. Vassar's Arboretum," *VQ* 19, 2 (May, 1934): 139-40.
 99. "A Photostat is later to be made of the planting plan for Main for publication in the News with a short descriptive article," in Farrand's notes of a conference with MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer, Richards, and Farrand, June 26, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 100. E.g. "Mr. Downer Plans for Improvements of Campus," *Misc* 10, 48 (May 12, 1926) attributes plans for Main plantings, the arboretum, and plant supplies to him, at a moment when Farrand was most actively involved, to cite one among many such examples. Downer even went so far as to blame Farrand after her departure for the lack of arboretum progress, although MacCracken corrected him: MacCracken to Richards, May 16, 1929 (VASC-M, 16.41).
 101. "Emphasis is to be primarily placed upon the use of native plants of the district in campus plantings." Farrand's notes on a conference between MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer, and Richards, June 26, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 102. "It was also not my understanding that in the planting of specimen trees on the campus we should necessarily be limited to native trees both for botanical purposes and for the purposes of landscape gardening. This would be a self-denying ordinance quite unnecessary and a mere concession to a temporary fashion. Any one who recalls the magnificent cedars of Lebanon in the finest gardens in England realizes how absurd this is. Personally I can see no reason why fine specimen trees of any type should not be planted." MacCracken to Guernsey, August 16, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
 103. Executive Committee Minutes, June 1925, cited in the "History of the Class of 1875 Arboretum," May 1, 1931 (VASC-M, 16.41). In 1921, when Roberts had been on campus for a year and Downer just three months, Botany controlled the Circle, Shakespeare Garden, and Dutchess County Botanical Garden. Roberts proposed instead to MacCracken forming a committee including herself (as Chair of Botany),

- Downer, and the General Superintendent to plan the development of the whole campus, subject to approval of the Grounds Committee, to coordinate "business, practical, and educational viewpoints." Roberts to MacCracken, Annual Report, Department of Botany, 1920-21.
104. Roberts had recommended Downer's hiring, but the relationship quickly deteriorated. They fought over the boundary of Roberts' garden and Downer's nursery; he refused her any help from the groundskeepers, despite direction by the trustees to do so; and she excluded him from Botany department resources, sidelined his horticulture course, and tried to discredit his teaching credentials. It is unclear whether her suicide threats, recorded by MacCracken, were genuine or a tactic. Correspondence among Roberts, MacCracken, and Henry Frost (VASC-M, 30.14, 37.15, and 37.27).
105. Maryann Bruno and Colton Johnson, "Arboretum," *VE*, 2004. Downer detailed arboretum plantings and plans in reports to MacCracken in June, 1929, May, 1931, September, 1938, and January, 1944 (VASC-M, 16.41). A brochure produced in the 1970s by Downer's successor Sven Sward maps the trees: "The Vassar Arboretum. A Tree Map of the Campus" (VASC, Horticulturist 1973-8, 62.13). The current inventory of Vassar's arboretum resides with SavATree; our thanks to Jeff Horst and Mark Schlessman on this subject. The initial site of the arboretum north of Kendrick is now a parking lot, and the Vassar Lake path now an overgrown tangle, though it retains viburnum and birch trees. Flowering trees still bloom on Sunset Hill.
106. Minutes of a Meeting of the Trustees: Committee on Grounds, December 14, 1925 (VASC-M, 4.55).
107. MacCracken to Guernsey, February 27, 1926 (VASC-M 3.3.7).
108. For her office practice, Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 48-50.
109. Paul Cassat (Comptroller) to MacCracken, July 12, 1927; Guernsey to MacCracken, July 19, 1927; and Report of the Committee on Grounds, June, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.67).
110. M.A.P.S., "Department of Grounds. Vassar's Arboretum," *VQ* 19, 2 (May, 1934): 139-40, citing Downer.
111. Farrand to Guernsey, December 19, 1925 (VASC-M, 17.29).
112. Farrand to Guernsey, January 7, 1926 (VASC-M, 17.29).
113. For George Rogers Hall's "transformative botanical introductions" of the yew and other Japanese plants, Sara A. Butler, "The Garden Network. George Rogers Hall's Horticultural Activism," in *Foreign Trends in American Gardens. A History of Exchange, Adaptation, and Reception*, ed. Raffaella Fabiani Giannetto (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), 257-288.
114. "On the west side of Pyne, the main walk from the station to the University is planted with small yews, which are later to be clipped formally in order to accentuate the principal entrance to the campus. The clipped trees will also act as foils to the more informal planting of the asymmetrical quadrangles to the north." Farrand, "Princeton Landscape," 960.
115. As Guernsey reported to MacCracken, February 16, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
116. Farrand to Guernsey, February 27, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
117. Farrand to Guernsey, undated (VASC-M, 17.29).
118. MacCracken to Guernsey, May 26, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
119. "It was at first suggested by the Landscape Gardener that the Boston Ivy now growing on the walls be removed gradually and be replaced by more interesting plants trained on the wall which would give a difference in textures at various times in the year. Only two or three of these vines have been replaced. Upon reconsideration by the Executive Committee, it was voted that the original plan of the development of Main be reconsidered and especially that no more Boston Ivy be eliminated at present." Report of Committee on Grounds to Board of Trustees of Vassar College, May 20, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
120. MacCracken to Guernsey, May 26, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
121. Balmori, "Campus Work," 136.
122. McGuire, "Plants and Planting Design," 104-114; Balmori, "Campus Work," 131-6; Alice L. Dustan, "Handsome 'Vines' of Princeton are Really Trees and Shrubs," *New York Times* (October 26, 1941): 8D.
123. Guernsey to MacCracken, letters of April 5 and 13, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
124. Report of Committee on Grounds to Board of Trustees of Vassar College, May 20, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
125. Farrand's notes on the Grounds Committee Meeting, October 14, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
126. "The Superintendent of Grounds will also try to hunt up some good *Taxus Cuspitate Capitata* for the hedge at Main for use in planting next spring." Farrand's notes of a conference with MacCracken, Guernsey, Downer, Richard, and Farrand, June 26, 1927 (VASC-M, 4.55).
127. "It has been a matter of great regret to some of us on the Board of Trustees that funds have not been forthcoming to provide changes in our roads and walks necessitated by plans for landscape gardening, and that for this reason so little has been done. May I express as a member of the Committee on Grounds my appreciation of your very real interest in our problem and of the comprehensive thought you have given towards its solution? I hope that one day your design for Main Building may, in a large measure, be fulfilled." MacCracken to Farrand, December 21, 1928 (VASC-M, 17.29).
128. The walkways in front of Main were also relocated to the west side of the road. The design changes were attributed to Molly S. Drysdale (VC 1931), and funded by Richardson Pratt, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Keene Richards, "Changes on Campus this Summer," *VQ* 27, 1 (1941): 7.
129. Tankard, *Beatrix Farrand*, 116-123.
130. Lyon, "The Campus Designs," 66.
131. MacCracken memo of meeting with Prof. Annie MacLeod, Director of Euthenics, concerning the Euthenics Building, October 1, 1924, cited in Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, 298 and 392 n. 11. Edward

- S. Harkness (1874-1940) was an important client of Farrand's; he was instrumental in hiring her at Yale, and she landscaped his Connecticut estate Eolia from 1919-35. Alan Emmet, "Mr. and Mrs. Harkness's Eolia: Beatrix Farrand's Work with an Existing Plan," *Garden History* 13 (1985): 45-59; Tankard, *Beatrix Farrand*, 125-134.
132. MacCracken to Guernsey, May 10, 1928. Guernsey's response of May 24, 1928 was to-the-point and measured in tone, suggesting he did not share MacCracken's animus, and he defended Farrand on some points. (VASC-M, 5.67).
133. As noted by McGuire, "Plants and Planting Design," 101-2 and 116.
134. Minutes of the Grounds Committee Meeting held May 9, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.67).
135. Report of the Committee on Grounds, June, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.67).
136. Farrand's notes on the Grounds Committee Meeting of October 14, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
137. Characterized by Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 29-42.
138. As observed by Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, 319.
139. Farrand to Guernsey, December 19, 1925 (VASC-M, 17.29).
140. Farrand's notes from a conference with Guernsey, MacCracken, Richards and Downer, June 26, 1926 and her notes on the Grounds Committee meeting, October 14, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55). This quad then comprised the Sanders Classroom Building, Vassar Brothers Laboratory (1880-1938), New England Building, the newly-built Henry Sanders Physics Building (Ewing and Allen, 1926), and the Teaching Greenhouse, also used by Downer for his work.
141. Farrand's notes on the June 26, 1926 conference and the Grounds Committee meeting, October 14, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
142. Cited by Eleanor M. McPeck, "A Biographical Note and a Consideration of Four Major Private Gardens," in Balmori et al, *Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes*, 25.
143. Balmori, "Campus Work," 158-9.
144. Balmori, "Campus Work," 171.
145. Karson, *A Genius for Place*, 117-119; Way, *Unbounded Practice*.
146. Cited in Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 138.
147. Anne Petersen, "Women Take Lead in Landscape Art. Field is Dominated by a Group of Brilliant Designers of Horticultural Vistas. Countrysides Made Over. Saga of Feminine Achievement Tells of Miracles on Estates, Parks and Fairgrounds," *New York Times* (March 13, 1938): D5.
148. Balmori, "Campus Work," 128, citing professors at each institution who heard the slur.
149. Balmori, "Campus Work," 128.
150. Balmori, "Campus Work," 159.
151. Daniels, *Bridges to the World*, 168ff.
152. In VASC-M, 3.18.
153. E.g. MacCracken to Guernsey, February 27, 1926 (VASC-M, 3.3.37); MacCracken to Guernsey, August 16, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55); MacCracken to Guernsey, November 3, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
154. MacCracken to Guernsey, February 27, 1926 (VASC-M, 3.3.7).
155. MacCracken to Guernsey, April 13, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
156. Way, *Unbounded Practice*, 57, 76.
157. MacCracken to Guernsey, August 16, 1926 (VASC-M, 4.55).
158. On modern notions of the picturesque as a juxtaposition of eclectic styles, John Dixon Hunt, "The Picturesque Legacy to Modernist Landscape Architecture," in *Gardens and the Picturesque* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992): 285-303.
159. "Trees do not grow overnight, and transformations are not made by waving a fairy wand. It takes years of constant effort to accomplish the large results for which those in charge of the University planting will not cease to strive." Beatrix Farrand, "Landscape Gardening at the University of Chicago," *The University of Chicago Magazine* 27:4 (February 1935): 136-140. McGuire, "Plants and Planting Design," 93-96.
160. Farrand to Mrs. Walter W. Parsons, November 12, 1928 (VASC-M, 17.29).
161. Farrand to MacCracken, January 14, 1929 (VASC-M, 17.29); Farrand to Parsons, March 6, 1929 (VASC-M, 5.67).
162. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees, November 13, 1928 (VASC-M, 5.39).
163. "It would seem wise to consult Mrs. Blodgett; she is under the impression that the firm laid out the original grounds of the college, but there is, apparently, no evidence of this. Evidently they were called in to amend it about 1868, and whether they ever did is unknown. I should hesitate to employ a landscape architect so far away as Boston, would not you?" MacCracken to Parsons, March 14, 1929 (VASC-M, 5.67).
164. Frederick Law Olmsted to Parsons, March 6, 1929 (VASC-M 5.67).
165. "I have received a letter from Mrs. Blodgett suggesting the name of Mr. Percival Gallagher of the firm of Olmsted Brothers of Boston as landscape architect for the college. Would it not be well to postpone this matter until our annual meeting, at which time you can hold a meeting of the Committee on Grounds and discuss the whole situation?" MacCracken to Mr. J. Lionberger Davis (new Chair of Grounds Committee), April 9, 1929 (VASC-M, 5.67). Gallagher's rate was also \$75 per day, reiterated by Gallagher to MacCracken, November 17, 1931 (VASC-M, 16.41).
166. "Throughout the college's history, the administration has engaged professional planners and landscape architects but has rarely followed their advice. Instead, they formulated their own plans in consultation with the board, the faculty, students, and alumnae/i", Van Lengen and Reilly, *Campus Guide*, 32.
167. Gallagher, Report of discussions with MacCracken and Downer during a campus walk October 22, 1931 (VASC-M, 16.41); untitled reports in the *Misc* 16, 13 (December 5, 1931); and *Misc*. 16, 25 (February 20, 1932).
168. MacCracken to Rev. S. S. Drury, Rector, St. Paul's School, Concord New Hampshire, May 29, 1931 (VASC-M, 16.41).