

The Planning of Country
Home Grounds,
by
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The Planning of Country Home Grounds.

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Location of buildings,
fences, walks, and vegetation.

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The main necessities for improvement of country home grounds are harmony, good taste, fine plants, good care, and cleanliness.

The Planning of Country Home Grounds.

The average country man of today, is working toward making his home one of the most pleasant spots on earth, for his family and himself. The log cabin on the prairie is changed for a better house with a front lawn, and later, these surroundings do not satisfy the prospering farmer, until the home is again changed into a large, artistic house, with such home grounds as he desires.

Observations have proven to us that country home grounds can be improved, and because of the economical and moral values that arise from the influence of well planned country home grounds, I do not hesitate to say that country home grounds can and should be improved. But too often sad mistakes are made in the planning of these grounds. Many little

corrections in the laying-out of the lot and location, does much toward their artistic improvement.

In finding a good location for a home, several things should be taken into consideration; the harmonious effect to be obtained, the kind of soil, and its drainage. In planning the home grounds, you should first have a definite idea in mind that should prevail throughout, as to what it should be like - then make all details subordinate to it. Some particular style of expression must be determined, then closely followed. Unity and harmony are not realized unless the planner has a clear conception of the construction he is to make. This means that a definite plan should be made on paper, in which the smallest details are included. He must decide if the lot should have a natural style which includes open lawns, curved walks, grouped trees, and groups of shrubbery. He may desire odd plants, uneven surfaces, dark-colored masses of trees, and scattered groups of shrubs.

After deciding on the style to be carried out, the landscape gardener, must find a suitable site. In choosing a location for a country home, a dry, fairly open and sunny situation, and a pure, dry, and porous soil is best. If possible, it should be in an elevated position and favoring natural drainage both on the surface and in the subsoil. The best kind of soil is composed of gravel mixed with pervious soil. This soil is easily drained, and is dryer as the air has greater access to the separate particles of soil. Primitive rock, sand-stone, or limestone mixed with a pervious soil makes a good kind of soil on which to locate. The clays, marshy lands and "made" soils should be avoided as they are heavy and hold the organic impurities that are always present.

The hygienic conditions of the home depends, to a great extent, on the amount of impurities that occur between the particles of soil. These inter-spaces are filled, principally with ground-air and ground-water, which contains more or less decomposing matter. These

impurities are due to the decomposition of the various organic matters which are washed into the soil by the rain, or which are naturally present in some soils (marshy).

A condition of dampness and moisture have been proven many times to have assisted in the production of rheumatism, catarrh, neuralgia and pulmonary diseases. Thus a well-drained site is necessary for the sanitary condition to be obtained. The low water level should be at least fifteen feet below the surface, five feet is considered ^{one} very unhealthy. There should be no ponds, or stagnant waters near the site for house. It must be remembered that moisture favors putrefiable material. therefore a dry soil is cleaner, and the ground-air is purer than in a damp one.

The size of site is determined by the farmer himself, as he knows how much land he cares to use for this purpose. Here, a great mistake is often made, for the farmer thinks that the land is of no use when not under crop production. The farmer forgets that the value of his farm is determined, to a great extent, by the

improvement of his home grounds, for beauty predominates over utility in money-value of all things. Ten acres for the home grounds, and it should never be less than one acre of land. However the size of the farmer's pocket-book, and his individual tastes should govern this question.

The house should be of easily access from the public way; near the crossing of main roads is a good place to locate. Just where it should be located must be decided from the situation of site. It is best to build on the gentle slope of a hill to avoid the dampness which may be at the bottom, and the horizontal strata at the top which has every chance to hold water. The house should be placed back from the road the distance of three to five times the height of the building, that the house and a part of the lawn at least, may be seen at one time. For instance, a house thirty feet high should be placed back one hundred fifty feet from the main road. It should be in plain view from the public road and should not be hid by large trees before

it. In general, the house should be in harmony with the planning of grounds, that it may appear to be a part of the home lot.

The barns should be located below the house that the drainage may come from house towards barn instead of from the barn towards the house. They should be located well back of house and the public road, that no disagreeable odors might find their way ^{to} this place. The barns should be of easy access to the correls and outbuildings, as well as to the pastures. All outbuildings should be painted so as to correspond with the paint of house. The correls should be located near and below barns and on a gentle slope that they may be well-drained. It is necessary that the barns and correls should be protected from the west and north winds. This may be done by shedding or by rows of trees. All barns and correls should be kept as dry as possible, thus all low places should be filled up with a porous soil. The watering places should be placed above the house, barns and correls.

The best road for home ground is that of the Telford system, where broken stone are set edgewise and are then packed together by great pressure. The Macadam road makes a good, solid road. It is made by filling the road-bed with several layers of crushed rock, the largest at the bottom. In either case curbing is laid in on both sides. Cinders and well-drained soil roads are cheap and makes a good road. A brick walk is the best cheap walk that can be constructed. Its good points are that it is easily repaired and can be laid in curves. The best walk made is of cement concrete. It is costly, but when once made, it will last indefinitely. The double galvanized wire with white oak painted posts are preferable for general fencing. The posts should be of the same height, and the portion placed below surface of soil should be treated with hot coal tar, to prevent decay. A high fence around a home lot is always a mistake. A fine and excellent is of the different kinds of hedges, especially the Cedar Hedge. These, if well-trimmed, are as handsome and serviceable as one could wish. An ornamental shrub called

Privet is very satisfactory but does not grow in Kansas very well.

No country home is complete without a kitchen garden, small fruits, and an orchard, where vegetables and fruits are produced year after year for the family needs. The site for the kitchen garden should be well-drained, and a light, sandy loamy soil is best as it is easily worked and may be enriched to suit any kind of fruit, or vegetable. The kitchen garden should be as near the house as possible for convenience, and should be large enough to furnish plenty of vegetables for the family. It should be well-enclosed with a high, tightly-woven net fence that no fowls may enter. Small fruits such as strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, currants, and grapes may be grown in special quarters here.

The orchard should be one of the most pleasant spots on the farm. It should be of the same kind of soil as the kitchen garden. Some think the orchard is made picturesque by planting the trees in groups, but I would not advise such a plan. The trees should be planted from from ten, twelve to eighteen feet apart.

varying with the kind of fruit. In small places it is more practical to place all trees closer together than they are to be when fully grown, then thin out superfluous trees some years later. The least permanent fruit trees are plums, peaches, and apricots. the most lasting, pears and apples, and as these grow much larger than any other fruit trees they should be planted further apart. Grass in the orchard may be allowed to grow freely, red clover, daffodils, lilies, daisies, wild tulips, and many other sweetscented and beautiful wild flowers should be allowed to grow wild among the grass.

A shelter-belt is very necessary where protection is needed for the stock as well as the home. Of the deciduous trees, none is more desirable than the White Elm. It grows rapidly, has a dark foliage which appears early in the spring, and it lasts from fifty to a hundred years. Another tree that makes an excellent shelter-tree is the Hackberry. It has all the good qualities of the Elm except that its leaves are thinner and lighter. A fine tree is the Sycamore. This tree is the most

beautiful because of its large leaves and silver-grey bark. But it is hard to grow. The Catalpa is an excellent tree to plant, but is a slow grower. The Honey Locust, thornless variety, makes a beautiful lawn tree, because of its feathery foliage and pleasing form. Any of the above named trees make excellent trees for the lawn.

Evergreens make fine shelter, but are objectionable because of their slow growth. It has been found that an unlimited number of evergreens grow successfully in Kansas. The Austrian Pine is most useful for decorative purposes. Its straight trunk and strong branches, with its dark foliage of needles give the tree a southern appearance. A pine very similar to the Austrian Pine is the Scotch Pine. This evergreen has a lighter and smoother bark than the former, and is less green and strong in its growth. The Table Mountain Pine has short needles and irregular growth. It is much used to decorate home lots by being planted at the edge of groups of Austrian Pines.

A low evergreen that will grow in Kansas is the Colorado Blue Spruce. Its bluish-green foliage makes it one of the most beautiful trees in America. It is probable that this pine will not grow in dry or in exposed localities. Evergreens should be pruned for the purpose of giving a dense form, but they should never be clipped in a geometrical form, or in fantastical shapes. In training a tree we bring about an artificial growth which loses the beauty of naturalness.

Shrubs should not be used so much by themselves, but should be planted in separate groups and masses, as in combinations with flowering trees and other forms of vegetation, in rounding off and finishing large masses of trees, or in making detached groups and single specimens on the outskirts of such masses. When planted in groups, too dissimilar must not be brought together in one of the same groups: for while a difference is desirable and necessary, there is a limit to contrast over which

the result may be disagreeable instead of pleasing. On bare hillsides and sandy, sterile ground, low tufted and spreading bushes may be used instead of grass covering the surface, such as Crowberry, Sand Myrtle, Crossleaved Heath, and Purple Heather. They are insignificant as individuals and effective in masses only. St. John's wort and several plants of the Heath family are useful for covering the ground in shady places.

No lawn is complete without the numerous flower decorations that help to produce the bright and cheerful effects so much desired on the home grounds.

These displays should be a source of interest and enjoyment and interest from early spring till late in the fall. The first flowers to appear in spring are the bulbous plants, as tulips and daffodils. They are planted in fall in light and rich soil. The edge of bed must be cut clean and the surface raked. As in all bedding neatness and cleanliness are necessary to produce a good effect.

As soon as bulbs and other spring flowers have been removed the material for summer display should be ready for planting. For large places the plants may be grown in a greenhouse or warm frame; for small lawns, a sufficient number may be started to grow in flat boxes in a light and warm cellar or the kitchen window. Where this is impracticable they may be obtained from a florist at a very moderate cost. Many exceedingly fine annual plants may be used with advantage for summer borders. None will form a permanent display throughout the season. The border is a special place is a special place set aside for herbaceous plants, annuals, perennials, bulbs etc, and is generally located in an out-of-the-way place in the front of shrubbery, by the side of house. They should if possible have a back ground of dark-leaved trees, or shrubs, a low hedge or wall, and they will afford shelter and protection.

The success of beautifying the country home grounds may be summed up in perfect specimens, good care, and cleanliness. All the plants used must be

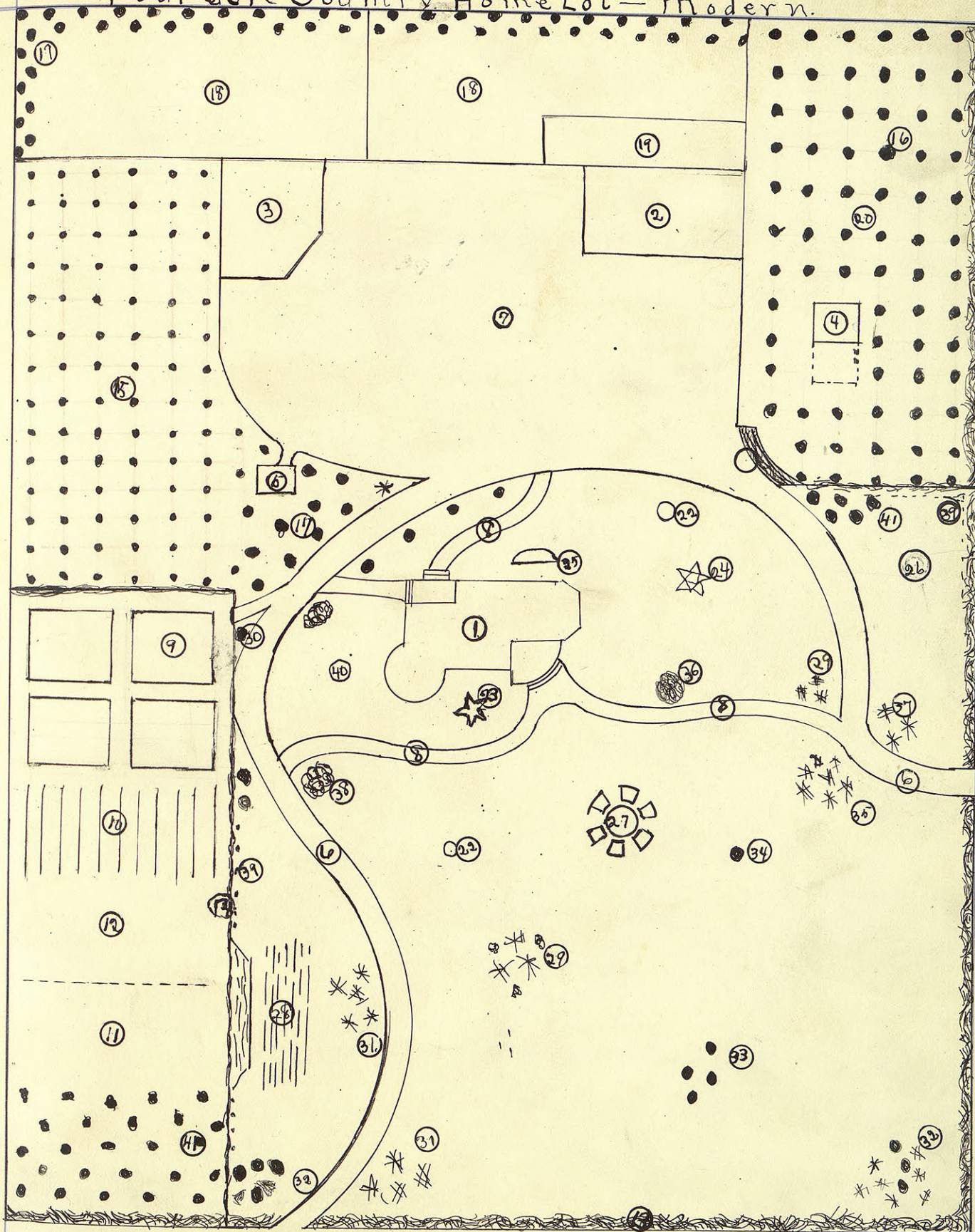
good of their kind. The individual plants must be excellent in proportion to their conspicuousness. Good care is required to keep trees thrifty, to keep the plants growing vigorously. Cultivation and manure are needed. Pruning must be done. Crowded clumps must be trimmed out. All walks and drives must be kept graded and free from weeds. Fences must be well repaired, buildings painted, as well as many other things that must be well taken care of. The greatest necessity in beautifying the home lot is cleanliness. No rubbish, as brushes, etc., should be allowed to lay around on the lawn. All chicken coops, grindstones, etc., should be placed well back of house out of sight of the main drive.

Plan for a Four-Acre Modern Country Home Ground.

- 1- House
- 2- Barn
- 3- Buggy shed.
- 4- Chicken house
- 5- Windmill house
- 6- Graveled drives

Four-acre Country Home Lot - modern.

560



- 7- Graveled barnyard.
- 8- Concrete walks.
- 9- Kitchen garden
- 10- Grapes
- 11- Raspberries, gooseberries, etc.
- 12- Strawberries
- 13- Privet or box-wood hedges.
- 14- Tightly woven wire fencing with Mountain Fringe vines
- 15- Peach, cherry, and plum orchard.
- 16- Apple orchard.
- 17- Shelter-belt of oak, elm, hackberry, sycamore trees
- 18- Correls
- 19- Driveways.
- 20- Grass with wild flowers.
- 21- Honey locusts.
- 22- Peonies
- 23- Tulips, later in season, geraniums, and begonias.
- 24- Daffodils, later maiden pinks, and lily of the valley
- 25- Narcissus, later pansies.
- 26- Petunias
- 27- Tuberoses, later, malope, muskmallow, petunias
- 28- Grandmother's garden, of phlox, larkspur, etc.
- 29- Spruces
- 30- Weeping willow.
- 31- Austrian and Scotch pines.
- 32- Sycamore with Ailanthus, Alder shrubs.
- 33- False Indigo, spice bushes, spireas.
- 34- Mountain ash.

- 35- Austrian and Noble Mountain pines
- 36- Lilacs, spruces.
- 37- Scotch and Colorado Blue spruces.
- 38- Cilanthus and white elms.
- 39- Roses, different colors, some monthly.
- 40 Yucca.
- 41- Maples.
- 42- Arch with morning glories.

At all times, harmony, good taste, fine plants, good care, and cleanliness are necessary for the successful beautifying of country home grounds