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Brought up among the extensive grounds of her family home at Diddlington Hall in Norfolk, Alicia Amherst (1865–1941) was a keen gardener from an early age. Especially interested in socially beneficial gardening, she sat on the board of the Chelsea Physic Garden from 1900, encouraged the growing of smoke-resistant flowers in poor urban areas, and promoted the greater use of allotments and school gardens during the First World War. The product of four years' research, this learned and engaging work of horticultural history since Roman times was first published to great acclaim in 1895. It notably discusses the manuscript kept at Trinity College, Cambridge, of a fifteenth-century treatise in verse, *The Feate of Gardening*, which is the earliest existing account in English on the subject. Highly illustrated, Amherst's book also includes her annotated and chronological bibliography of printed works on gardening since 1516.

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ALICIA AMHERST



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GARDENING IN ENGLAND

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A HISTORY
OF
GARDENING IN ENGLAND

BY
THE HON. ALICIA AMHERST

“They set great store by their gardeins”

SIR THOMAS MORE

LONDON
BERNARD QUARITCH, 15 PICCADILLY, W.

1895

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Dedicated

TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER.

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P R E F A C E

K NOWING that I was fond both of practical gardening and the study of old garden literature, Mr. Percy Newberry suggested to me in the Spring of 1891, that I should edit some articles he had written on the History of Gardening in England down to the reign of Elizabeth, which had appeared in the *Gardener's Chronicle* in 1889; and that I should carry on the History from that point. I became so much interested in the subject, and had collected so much new material, that I decided to enlarge on the original plan, and not only to continue the history, but to traverse again all the earlier part, drawing my information afresh from the original authorities. I wish, therefore, to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Newberry, who so kindly put his articles and notes at my disposal in the first instance.

This work does not pretend to be a history of the Gardens of England, which would indeed be a delightful task to carry out, therefore many well-known gardens have not been mentioned in the following pages, only a few examples having been cited to serve as illustrations of

each successive fashion ; and to enumerate others would only have been to multiply instances. It is hoped rather that this work, inadequate though it is in comparison with the vastness of the subject, may in some measure serve as a handbook by which to classify gardens, and fix the dates to which they belong. In many cases it must always be difficult to assign an exact date to a garden, as although frequently a garden adjoining the house has existed from very early times, the changes, though few, have been so gradual that it is almost impossible to determine for certain the time at which they assumed their present condition. I have to thank the many friends who have very kindly afforded me information respecting their gardens, and provided me with plans or photographs, or who have given me ready access to the MSS. in their possession in public or private collections.

I also wish gratefully to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. J. G. Baker, F.R.S., in looking over the following pages whilst still in proof sheets. The correction of the proofs had been rendered an easy task for me by the kind co-operation of my friend, Miss Margaret MacArthur. My thanks are also due to Professor Skeat and Mr. James Britten for their help in the identification of some of the plants mentioned in the fifteenth century MSS., and to Mr. R. E. G. Kirk who assisted me in decyphering some of the earlier Latin ones, also to Mr. Michael Kerney for revising my bibliography of printed books on gardening to the end of the seventeenth century. I regret that the

PREFACE.

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continuation from the year 1699 has not received as much time and attention as I wished to bestow upon it, as I have had to complete it rather hurriedly on account of my having been absent abroad for several months.

ALICIA M. T. AMHERST.

DIDLINGTON HALL, NORFOLK.

September, 1895.

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