

**THE FORMAL
GARDEN
IN ENGLAND**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649586714

The Formal Garden in England by Reginald Blomfield & F. Inigo Thomas

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

REGINALD BLOMFIELD & F. INIGO THOMAS

**THE FORMAL
GARDEN
IN ENGLAND**

THE FORMAL GARDEN
IN ENGLAND



THE FORMAL GARDEN IN ENGLAND

BY

REGINALD BLOMFIELD, M.A., F.S.A.

ARCHITECT

AUTHOR OF 'A HISTORY OF RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE
IN ENGLAND'

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

F. INIGO THOMAS

ARCHITECT

London

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1901

All rights reserved.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
The Library of the Schools
of Landscape Architecture and City Planning

5695

First Edition, January 1892

Second Edition, October 1892

Third Edition, 1901

1892
1892
1892

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

DURING the last few years the question of garden design has been discussed with a zeal possibly out of proportion to its intrinsic importance, and the subject, as merely literary material, appears to possess a dangerous fascination for writers with a turn for pretty sentiment rather than for exact habits of thought. It is therefore necessary to recall the attention of the thoughtful lover of gardens to what for the purpose I may call first principles, and it has been the object of this short history to show, by some account of what was actually done in the past, that the gardens which we all admire were not laid out at random, but in accordance with a theory of æsthetic which embraced all the arts in its application. I do not mean by this that the garden designers of the seventeenth century went to work with the deliberate intention of realising a theory, but that, living as they did at

a time when tradition was active and when there existed a sense of the arts in their general relationship, as opposed to the merely skilled individualism of modern art, they inevitably maintained in garden design the habit of mind which they maintained in all the other arts. In other words, garden design took its place in the great art of architecture, with the result of that well-ordered harmony which was characteristic of the house and garden in England down to the middle of the eighteenth century. It has been the work of the last century to destroy this invaluable instinct, and all that it has offered in its place has been a habit of specialising which may sometimes arrive at technical excellence, but has assuredly lost us the architectural sense. It is the absence of this sense which is the most glaring fault of modern design, and it is shown most conspicuously in the work of the modern landscape gardener.

At the date at which the first two editions of this book were issued, a somewhat acrid controversy raged between landscape gardeners and architects. The gardeners said the architects knew nothing about gardening, and the architects said the gardeners knew nothing about design, and there was a good deal of truth on

both sides. The first point to be cleared up was the confusion between horticulture and design, and, having handed over horticulture to the gardener, the question of design came fairly within the province of the architect. In the attempt, however, to dislodge a tradition of bad taste, a somewhat polemical treatment was necessary. The occasion for this no longer exists, and I have therefore omitted the preface to the second edition. Indeed the danger at this moment is rather that one trick of design should be substituted for another, and that in our admiration for certain beautiful old gardens we should attempt to reproduce them blindly under impossible conditions. There are, for instance, sites which make a purely formal garden out of the question; and others in which, even if it were possible, it would not be desirable; and it would be as absurd to make the desperate attempt as is that favourite device of the landscape gardener who cannot resist the manufacture of a hummock in order that he may wind his path all round it. For in design we want not only a sense of beauty, but also common sense; and the amateur should be on his guard against abstract rules and recipes. What looks well in one place may look very ill in another, and when